

# new wine

APRIL 1974

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE  
DEDICATED TO CHRISTIAN GROWTH



A Needed Victory —

## Husband & Wife Reconciled!

**FAMILY**  
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There are a few things I would like to share out of Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse's "The Sound of a Heart" [Feb. 1974]. I fully agree on the central theme and theory of the article, but I cannot agree on its particulars.

Dr. Barnhouse stated that fellowship is a must. I fully disagree and so does the Scripture. The Bible warns us not to have fellowship with the workers of darkness. Paul also warns that if a man or angel preach any doctrine contrary to what I have preached let him be accursed (damned). Paul didn't say, "Let him have his convictions and you have yours."

Scores of books have been written on "unity" at the sacrifice of "order and discipline." There is too much permissiveness in our charismatic circles all for the cause of "unity." Unity should rather be something that exists in our hearts in obedience to His Word. I have love for my brothers no matter what their church is called — as long as they obey the Word of God. But I do not love those who bring lies and false doctrine into the Body. Let us not sacrifice God's order for "love and unity" which cannot come apart from love and unity to the Word.

G.P.  
Mansfield, Ohio

*Dr. Barnhouse was quite careful to qualify the limits of fellowship and he did not lay it open to an all inclusive embrace. He said, "If you believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord God Almighty, and if you believe that He died on the cross, being wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, then you are my brother and sister in Christ. We have the same life within us." — Ed.*

Dr. Barnhouse's article "The Sound of a Heart" was especially moving because it moved me from "Baptist truth" to God's life in the Lord Jesus. Not three days after I read that article, none other than a dear, humble Adventist minister came to my door. We had prayer and fellowship for almost two hours. He led me to a born-again brother who is still in the Mormon Church. This really went against my grain because not one week before I had refused to sing along with a secular high school group for a pot luck supper at their church on the basis of "coming out and being separate." As long as this brother holds to Jesus Christ as being God's perfect and complete revelation to man and the divine authority of the Bible minus additions, God will bless.

Mr. & Mrs. M.I.  
Craig, Colorado

# Letters to Editor

I was disturbed by the statement of Mr. Buckingham (New Wine, February 1974, page 31) advising the young Mormon school teacher to remain in her church.

I was born and raised a Mormon and have come to believe, after some study, that they cannot be classified as Christians but that they are a false cult. I would wish otherwise as most of my family are Mormons.

Mormons believe Jesus is the Son of God, but He did not save us from sin. Our place in heaven is determined by our good works on earth, but we will be promoted in heaven — as we pass our tests — until we become gods. Mormon salvation is through good works not through the finished work of Jesus on Calvary.

I praise Jesus for revealing the truth to me which set me free. We are clearly told in 2 John 10-11 not to partake in their evil doings. I wonder — what does light have to do with darkness?

Mrs. L.R.F.  
Northglenn, Colorado

## WHAT'S YOUR ELEPHANT?

Praise the Lord for your issue on unity in the body of Christ. For years I have felt that denominationalism is like the story of the blind men and the elephant. Each thought that the part they clung to was the truth. Well it was, but the others had hold of truth too.

Our Episcopal brethren would have us all hold tight to a sense of the awe and majesty of God, and they do well. Our Baptist brethren insist on total immersion baptism and they are right — that's what the word baptize means. Our Pentecostal brethren insist we give more honor and glory to the Holy Spirit and so we must.

My point is that as we hold fast to the truth God has revealed to us let us not assume that our brethren can't also hold truth. As God removes our blindfolds we see more and more of how truly glorious and universal is the body of Christ. And if we truly love Him we're all part of His body.

Mrs. R.R.L.  
Glen Rock, N.J.

## THIS IS UNITY —

I have begun reading the series in the latest issue on unity of the body of Christ. As a pastor "dominee" in the Christian Reformed Church, I am about to be "dis-unified." I do not say, "Praise the Lord" for this, but "Praise the Lord" for his great mercy and grace, and for the chance He has given me again of acknowledging His great work of grace.

I was baptized in the Holy Spirit some three years ago, but I hid the light under a bushel due to pressure and subservience to authority. The Lord led me into the valley of depression, but now He has lifted me up again. I know there are trying days ahead but I thank the Lord that the body of Christ is ministering to me. This is unity — not only that we are one in Christ, but that we minister and are ministered unto by Christ through the Body.

Rev. M.P.V.  
Rapid City, S.D.

## SUPERNATURALLY NATURAL

I appreciate your magazine very much but sometimes it is implied too heavily that all that happens through Christians is supernatural. I wonder if this is really true. God has ordered cause and effect in His divine law. A natural fruit comes through obedience in our lives which is not always supernatural.

"What the world needs now is love, sweet love" — the love of Jesus Christ flowing through us as Christians. Part of this love is to treat others with a "I believe in you" attitude (the you God sees). Too often inspired Christians imply, "You'll never make it until you see it my way."

C.R.A.  
Shawnee Mission, Kansas

## TAPES ???

There is something I do not understand about teaching tapes. Why is it that Spirit-filled Christians duplicate copyrighted teaching tapes and share them with their friends? Isn't this stealing? (See p. 12, February '74 issue).

P.S.  
Hart, Michigan



# Editorial

## RELATIONSHIP

On every hand pressures are mounting. The energy crisis, turmoil in our government, financial pressures — but none are quite as severe as those in the home.

God has been speaking for the past couple of years about getting our homes in order. Most of us have been trying to do so and have experienced tremendous resistance endeavoring to communicate and find unity with our mates and children. One of God's most powerful weapons seems to be the relationship of two people. No wonder the Scripture says, "Where two or three agree as touching anything, it shall be done," and "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them."

As two people come together and open their hearts to each other in honesty and love, something powerful takes place — a communion of spirits. When there is unity of spirit there is revelation, creativity and life. From reading the book of Acts, relationships must have been the heart of the early church — how they loved one another. The enemy knows this and uses all in his power to divert us from certain relationships — husband/wife, father/child, shepherd/sheep — because he knows that if he can prevent those relationships from forming, the Church will never come to maturity.

In preparing this issue of *New Wine*, which deals with relationships in the home, we have met with more resistance than at any other time. We want to encourage those of you who are striving to build right relationships and are meeting this kind of resistance — you will reap in due season if you faint not!

# new wine MAGAZINE

APRIL 1974

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by Derek Prince

*Great emphasis has been laid on studying and understanding the offices God has ordained in the Church: Elders, Deacons, Pastors, and so on. In the next two issues of NEW WINE Derek Prince will examine one of the most important, but under-emphasized offices in God's government — the father.*

"Success" is a byword of western civilization. By environment and up-

bringing we are continually challenged to seek success in all that we do — in our professions, in sports, in politics, in our personal lives. It is an overriding motivation.

Success in God's eyes, however, is often measured by a standard quite different from our own. God brought this home to me in a very personal way. I once heard a fellow minister define an "expert" as "a man away from home with a briefcase." Since I



traveled a great deal, and always had my briefcase with me, I was, by that standard, an expert. However, while I was meditating on this one day, the Lord spoke to my spirit, "You may travel all over the world with your briefcase and preach to thousands of people and have them flock to the altars when you finish, but if your home is not in order — in my eyes, *you are a failure.*"

Having a great desire to be a success in God's eyes, I took this to heart. As a result, there opened up to me a new understanding of home life and parental responsibility.

### "I WRITE UNTO YOU, FATHERS"

In 1 John 2.13 the apostle says, "I write unto you, fathers . . ." Let me do the same. Let me speak very directly to each one of you who is a father: You may succeed in every other area of life, but if you fail as a father, then in God's eyes you are a *failure at life*.

In Ephesians 6.4 Paul sums up in one verse the primary responsibilities of fathers: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition (or education) of the Lord." In Colossians 3.21 Paul repeats the initial warning, "Fathers, provoke not your children," — adding, "lest they be discouraged." Mothers, of course, are intimately involved in the care and upbringing of children. Nevertheless, the primary responsibility rests upon the fathers.

A father has two obligations toward his children: first, *communication*; second, *education*. The order is important. If the channels of *communication* between father and children are not kept open, then the father will be frustrated in his task of *education*. It is not enough for the father to *give* instruction. The child must be willing also to *receive* it.

In order to maintain communication, a father must guard against two opposite attitudes in his children: rebellion on the one hand, and discouragement on the other. Therefore

he must give time and attention to each child. He must cultivate each child as an individual personality. No two children in a family are the same. Discipline that will benefit one child will crush another. One child will receive correction in a form that will merely provoke rebellion from another. In frequent counseling sessions with adults, I have discovered that many of their problems can be traced back to a situation in which a father — by anger, or unfairness, or indifference — *provoked* his child.

### THE HOME IS THE CENTER

It is not merely the New Testament that lays these responsibilities upon fathers. The same principle runs through the whole Bible. In every dispensation alike God has ordained that the spiritual life of His people be centered in their home. Deuteronomy 11.18–21 speaks very directly about this to us as parents:

Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul . . .

And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:

That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

God places upon us, as parents, the responsibility to teach His words and His ways to our children at home. This responsibility cannot be relegated to some special religious institution — temple, church or Sunday School. Nor can it be delegated to some special professional class — priests, preachers or Sunday School teachers. As parents, we must instruct our children at home in the words and the ways of God.

This is not a question merely of setting up a "family altar" or holding "family devotions." To be effective,

spiritual instruction and discipline must be continuous. God says, "When thou sittest . . . when thou walkest . . . when thou liest . . . when thou risest up . . ." This covers all our waking hours. It is our business to interweave the teaching of God's word with all the daily activities of our home life.

The late Dr. V. Raymond Edman, one-time president of Wheaton College, wrote a book: "Looking back on the way I brought up my children, if I had to do it over, I'd spend more time with them in simple, non-religious activities." He had found that the things the grown children remembered most were the informal times of just being together. Real communication with a child is not achieved in five minutes. Often the most important things are said with a child at the time you would least expect it — in a casual or off-hand way. If the casual contact is not there, these things will never be said.

### "HEAVEN UPON EARTH"

Meditating upon the passage in Deuteronomy 11.18–21, I was gripped by the concluding phrase — "as the days of heaven upon the earth." We often hear people talking in an extravagant way about "heaven on earth," but I confess I had not realized that the phrase is taken from the Bible. I was even more surprised to discover that it is there applied to the home life of God's people. How many Christian homes today could accurately be described as "heaven upon earth"?

Yet this is truly God's purpose. He desires that each home be a living representation of the nature of heaven here on earth, reproducing in time the eternal love relationship which exists between the Persons of the Godhead — Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We often assume that home life began with the human race, but this is not so. In John 14.1 Jesus says, "In my Father's house are many mansions." "House" in Scripture has a deeper meaning than a material build-



ing; it is used to portray an entire family under the headship of a father. God has always had a home and that is heaven. Home life has a much richer meaning than a few people living under one roof. It is bound up with the very nature of the Godhead.

### FATHERHOOD, HEADSHIP, FELLOWSHIP

The relationship between the Persons of the Godhead in heaven is intimate and eternal. It has three aspects which God desires to be projected into our homes on earth.

The first is *Fatherhood*. God, the Father, has ever been the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Christ has ever been His Son. In Ephesians 3.14-15 Paul says: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom every *fatherhood* in heaven and earth is named."

The Greek word here translated "fatherhood" is *patritia*, formed directly from *pater*, "father." The King James Version says "family," but J.B. Phillips renders it "fatherhood," which is a more faithful translation of the Greek. This passage shows us not only that God is the Father of Christ, but also that the *office* of fatherhood in all the earth is derived from and established on the pattern of the office that the Father holds within the Godhead. All fatherhood is a projection of the nature of God, the Father.

The second eternal aspect of relationship within the Godhead is *Headship*. In 1 Corinthians 11.3 Paul says, "I would have you to know that the head of every man (meaning the *male*) is Christ; and the head of the woman (or *wife*) is the man; *and the head of Christ is God*." In the order of the universe we find that the headship of the Father over Christ is eternal — it has always been so.

The third eternal aspect of relationship within the Godhead is *fellowship*. In John 1.1 we find that Christ (the Word) is described as being from eternity "with (Greek *pros*) the Father." The Greek word means

"toward" or "face to face with." John 1.18 tells us that Christ was "in the bosom of the Father." This beautifully pictures the love and mutual delight that exists between the Father and the Son, being continually maintained by the Holy Spirit. Indeed, someone has described the Holy Spirit as being "the love relationship between the Father and the Son."

Through the gospel, and by the Holy Spirit, God desires to project this divine fellowship into our lives on earth — and in particular, into our homes. In 1 John 1.3 the apostle presents to us God's invitation to share the eternal fellowship of heaven:

That which we have seen and heard [i.e. the record contained in the gospels] declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: *and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

We see, then, that heaven provides the eternal pattern of a home, and that in this pattern there are three main aspects of relationship: Fatherhood, Headship and Fellowship. If our homes on earth are to fulfil God's purpose, they must reproduce these three relationships.

In our society the wife is often referred to as the "homemaker." However, this is true only in a secondary sense. In the economy of God, the man is primarily the homemaker — because he will make it whatever it is to become. The father is the key to the establishment of the home. It is upon his shoulders that God has placed both the responsibility and the authority to establish a home that will fulfil the design of a loving heavenly Father. When the man takes his rightful position, then the woman takes hers beside him as "helpmeet" (Genesis 2.20).

### THE CHAIN OF AUTHORITY

We can begin to see that the husband/wife relationship has an importance that transcends time, in that it is a picture of the eternal relationship between the Father and

Christ. Referring back to 1 Corinthians 11.3, we find that there is a very definite chain of authority which originates in the Godhead and is extended into the home. God is the head of Christ; Christ is the head of the man, or the husband; the husband is the head of the woman, or the wife. All authority is derived ultimately from the Father and depends upon a right place in the chain that goes back to Him. Christ has authority because He submits to the Father; the husband has authority because he submits to Christ; the wife has authority because she submits to the husband.

A very wise Roman centurion with a sick servant once came to Jesus to ask for his servant's healing. As he observed the life and miracles of Jesus, he introduced himself by saying, "I also am a man *set under authority*, having soldiers under me . . . (Luke 7.8). He did not say, as some of us would have done, "I've got authority!" No, he recognized that the authority which he had over the soldiers under him depended upon the fact that he himself was *under* authority. As a Roman officer, he was a link in a chain of command that went right back to the Emperor himself. Thus anyone who refused to obey the commands of the centurion was in effect rejecting the authority of the Emperor.

In introducing himself to Jesus the centurion said, "I *also* am a man set under authority . . ." Why did he use the word "also"? Because he was comparing himself with Jesus. He recognized in the spiritual ministry of Jesus the same principle that applied in his own military command. Jesus, too, was "a man set under authority." Just as the authority of the centurion depended upon his relationship to the Emperor, so the authority of Jesus depended upon His perfect submission to the Father. In every realm the principle is the same: to *have* authority we must be *under* authority.

*May's issue will continue with part two of "Fatherhood."* ☞



# SIMPLICITY

by George D. Watson

The simple things to confound the wise . . .

From: *Soul Food* by George D. Watson.

**G**od's best gifts are the simplest, such as air and light and water and bread. So, in religion, the greatest things are unmixed love, pure humility, fixed obedience, a single eye to please God. A sunbeam refracted gives seven colors; that is complexity, which is the opposite of simplicity. The simple white light is infinitely more blessed and useful than the complex, colored rainbow. To be fond of complex things indicates childishness of taste. Complexity in religious life bespeaks a baby condition of moral nature. The more pure and advanced the mind is, the more it admires perfect simplicity in every thing. Simplicity in the Christian life is the state of perfect transparency, unbiasedness; no mixedness in the desires or tempers or affections; oneness of motive, oneness of intention, where the conscience, desires, and will

all flow one way in sweet agreement; where faith and hope and love exist without being mixed with their opposites of doubt and fear and hate.

But no definition of spiritual simplicity will satisfy the heart. The Holy Spirit, who is the God of simplicity, must reveal it to the eye of the soul. When the blessed Spirit softly unveils to all our inner perceptions the perfect simplicity of the Christ-life, the unmixedness, the unsullied transparency of God's Word and His inner kingdom, there is a holy charm and a sweet satisfaction to the mind beyond the expression of words. When all doubleness and tangled complexity of every sort is purged out of us, and when the Holy Spirit floods all our inner being with the very same simplicity that is in Jesus, how it makes us love simplicity in everybody and in everything! We then have a keen appreciation of simplicity in character, manners, dress, speech, worship, business. Anything extravagant, grand, pompous, puffy, stilted, far-fetched, loud, slangy, odd, smart, brilliant, or confused or complex, in experience, life, or expression, becomes very offensive. The soul that is living in sweet oneness with Jesus will intuitively detect and recoil from everything that is mystical, shady, tricky, or complicated. Such a soul abominates the secret lodges, the tricks of trade, the keeping up of appearances, or anything subtle or selfish; it deals only with what is open, straightforward, and translucent. A person may have intellectual simplicity, which is the characteristic of all great minds, and yet, if he is not purified by the Holy Ghost, he will still be lacking in simplicity of moral nature. A person whose heart is rendered perfectly simple by the full indwelling of Christ will be inundated with simplicity in every other direction of mind and manners and business.

Perfect simplicity of spirit is the heavenly shield against foolish, fanciful forms of religious experience. When people fancy they have found something startling and new, and profoundly hard to be understood, and transcendently fine in religion, it

is always because they have left the old, eternal path of white simplicity and become tangled in Satanic fog. A soul that is possessed by the Holy Spirit seeks ever to live in an ocean of pure, tender love, and be full of good works; and it will instinctively avoid rash, unnatural, and overstrained views of religious life and duty. The light the Holy Spirit pours into us is pure and white, not a red, startling aurora borealis; the visions of God He gives to us are lucid, wide, calm, elevating, sweet, restful, and loving, and not those complex, wild, and overstrained notions which are always indicative of fanaticism. The Holy Spirit will turn us into the simple, quiet, non-combative lamb, and not into some great, towering extraordinary giraffe. He will mold us into the lowly, uncomplaining, unostentatious dove, not into some enormous, far-famed albatross.

Thousands of people ruin their religious experience by forming fictitious and abnormal notions of advanced experiences. They stretch and pray; strain after some unique, great, dazzling monstrosity of spiritual life, utterly outside the mind that was in Jesus; and the devil is ever looking out to gratify such unscriptural desires with counterfeits of grace. They lose their dovelike simplicity, and are soon tangled up with all sorts of absurdities. The Bible reveals to us simplicity of desire — "Thy face, Lord, will I seek"; simplicity of will — "This one thing I do"; — simplicity of motive — "Do all to the glory of God"; simplicity of guidance — "Lead me in a plain path," because the enemy is on the complex path. Let us ever seek a Jesus-like simplicity, not only in our experience, but also in work for Him; never attempting startling and brilliant things; never wittingly drawing notice to ourselves; never overtaxing ourselves with huge enterprises; never parading the feats we have done, or the extra things we are going to do.

Oh, for that perfect, guileless simplicity of heart and life which befits with equal grace an angel or an infant, and makes both of them feel at home with each other! 🍷



# ECHOES OF THE SPIRIT

## Significant events in the body of Christ.

### ECCLA II

BOGATA, COLUMBIA — The occasion was ECCLA II (Charismatic Catholic Encounter of Latin America II), where a fresh brand of ecumenism for Latin America came into being. From January 26 — February 1, 1974, Catholic brethren opened their doors and their hearts to evangelical observers, who, on the workshop levels, actually became participants. The host was Father García Herreros, and his famous community, El Minuto de Dios, where the the Holy Spirit has been poured out on many lives.

From all over Latin America over 240 delegates, including 80 priests, plus perhaps over a 100 observers, gathered to worship in the Spirit with songs of praise and joy, with clapping of hands and worship in tongues; to report the wonders God is doing in each of their spheres of activity in the vineyard; to testify of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their areas; and to exhort and encourage one another. There was an exhortation to respond to the call to evangelize Catholics throughout Latin America: "... why have evangelicals evangelized to the extent that they have in Latin America? Because we have failed to do so, and God raised them up to do it. . . ." There were expositions on the ministry of the Word of God, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the true Christian community and its importance. And in all, the emphasis was on the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the conversion of the individual, and the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church today.

Out of ECCLA II was born ECCLA III, to convene in Puerto Rico in 1975, and ECCLA I (Charismatic Ecumenical Encounter of Latin America I) at the suggestion of an evangelical minister,

which tentatively is to meet in Brazil in October of this year.

"This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

A priest stands and confesses: "... I was sent here by my bishop. I came in obedience, but I now see that it was the Holy Spirit that sent me. . . . I have long hated Protestants . . . but I have been converted . . . ." A minister stands and answers "... I first came to your country (Columbia) in 1940 (during the years of opposition and suffering for evangelical Christians), and I, too, had my difficulties. . . . I wish to state my apologies for the times I and my brethren have reveled in a wrong carnal spirit. . . ." Another priest tells of his experience in his own country: "There are several Protestant and Catholic churches in our city that exchange pulpits once a year. Their people are surprised and say, 'Look, the minister preaches the Gospel like our priest'; and the Protestants say with surprise, 'Look, the Catholic priest preaches the Gospel like our pastor'. . . . I have been accused of being a Protestant pastor disguised as a priest."

A priest stands in a crowded mass and cries out with hands raised to heaven: "Lord forgive me for my hatred of the Protestants." In another mass a priest, during communion, calls out an evangelical missionary and on the altar-podium washes his feet and asks forgiveness in the name of his fellow servants for past attitudes, hatreds and misunderstandings.

Another priest declares before the general assembly: "There are many kinds of Protestants and I feel closer to some Protestants than to some Catholics, because of our common experience (of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit)."

### THE CHURCH IN CHINA

Paul E. Kauffman, President of Asian Outreach, recently spent a few days in Ft. Lauderdale, and while he was here he shared some fascinating information about what is happening in mainland China:

There is a significant church in China. This is the underground church. It is composed of believers in every province of China who have lost all identity except that of believers. Suffering and persecution have brought them all to one faith and realization that we are all members of one body — the body of Christ.

There are an estimated 800 million people in China. Over half of the present population of China have been born since the Communists came to power. For these there has been virtually no Gospel penetration — we can say the average Chinese has never once heard the Gospel.

Things are changing. Mao no longer holds the position he once had. The military now rules the country. Because of the massive military threat of Russia, the possible military threat of Japan and the Japanese economic supremacy of traditional Asian markets, the more pragmatic generals took control from the isolationist Mao. To survive China must open its doors.

There are no foreseeable floods of white western missionaries pouring into China. Rather, history reveals that when a country opens its door to trade and tourism there is no way they can keep the Gospel out. A certain percentage of tradesmen, tourists and diplomats will be Christians, a vanguard of a fresh Christian witness. Behind all this is the hand of a sovereign God.



# These Two Shall Become One Flesh

by Dick & Lydia Key

Dick Key comes from a Christian Church background. He received his education at Pacific Christian College in Long Beach, California, and at Cincinnati

Bible Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was ordained at Melody Land Christian Center in California. In 1967 God called him to begin a ministry to the hippies in Haight-Asbury in San Francisco. There he met and married Lydia, a New England girl, who had met Christ at Francis Schaeffer's L'Abri Fellowship in Switzerland. Dick's ministry, Clayton House, dissolved in June of 1971 and in August of that year with Lydia and their three children, he moved to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. He became administrator of Christian Growth Ministries in February of 1972 and a few months later took over the duties as editor of NEW WINE. Dick and Lydia have four children, ages one through five.





"The key word in learning how to love my wife as Christ loved the Church has been *sensitivity*."



"Once you taste *real* submission, you're hooked!"

## A husband and wife dialogue on the problems of building a Christian home.

**W**hen my house ministry in the Haight-Asbury district of San Francisco dissolved, it was probably one of the most critical points of my entire life! To see four years and all the people to whom I had given myself suddenly vanish was an emotionally devastating experience. Rather than the usual confident self, I was questioning everything in my life — including God's calling. On top of this, to hear that my wife was leaving me when I needed her most was nearly more than I could bear. You could never have convinced me of it then, but this was to be the turning point in our marriage.

### PROBLEMS IN COMMUNICATION

**DICK:** Our marriage began in a somewhat unorthodox fashion in that we were married three weeks after we first met. At that time I was the pastor of a commune called Clayton House. God had sent me there in 1967 to share Christ with the hippies. Since there were 35 to 50 kids living at Clayton House, my time was pretty well taken up with ministry and counseling. In fact, I was so involved with the ministry that sometimes Lydia (my wife) had to make an appointment to see me! Since we had so little time for communication there was no chance for a real relationship to develop. All I knew was that we didn't think alike!

At the time we were married I was doing the cooking for the whole

house. Lydia would try to help me in the kitchen, but it was a frustrating experience for both of us. I would go to the drawer for a spatula, and she would have put it somewhere else. I would measure the sugar and she would have already measured it. This type of frustration typified our efforts to work together.

Not knowing how to communicate with each other affected our entire relationship. Our personalities were so different — I would blurt out my feelings while she would keep everything inside. I remember going to bed at night knowing something was wrong between us, trying to get her to talk it out, only to have her lie silently, holding everything in. I could not understand why she had such a difficult time.

**LYDIA:** I entered marriage with some rather selfish motives. I had just completed training in Europe to begin a ministry of smuggling Bibles into Russia when I ended up at Clayton House. (To me, ministry, or being an evangelistic heroine, was the most important thing in my life).

Shortly before coming to the House, I had received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and God had begun to open my eyes to the selfishness of my goals. By the time I met Dick I was scared to death of what might happen to me in Russia and I wanted someone to protect me.

I saw Dick as a means whereby I could achieve my goals. His political convictions and experience in moving with God were just what I needed to help bring my visions to fruition. I never bothered to take into account all that would be required of me in marriage. I just saw all the benefits — love and security — which my husband could afford.

We had not been married long before I began to suffer some disillusionment. The glamour of living in Haight-Asbury began to wear off. The hours Dick spent with those close to him — his secretaries and the kids in the commune — became a jealous sore spot which continually festered. Soon I found myself hating the House and everyone in it. I gradually became suspicious of his actions and motives. I criticized him continually and excluded from my mind the wonderful qualities that made me fall in love with him in the first place.

The worst part was never being able to tell anyone — and especially my husband — how I felt. It bottled up inside until I found I was thinking of myself as a prisoner held captive by a petty tyrant who was concerned with no one but himself. I was sure he wanted me for a bed partner and nothing more. Many times I prayed for an end to this ministry. I wanted to pack my bags and run home to Mama!



## THE BIRTH PAINS OF SUBMISSION

DICK: About the time we were married there was an overemphasis on submission in our particular ministry. In my zeal to serve God and have a godly home, I took the Scriptures somewhat one-sidedly. I had certain concepts and convictions about marriage, and Lydia suffered for them. Though I would not have admitted it at the time, I thought a wife was for her husband's benefit — to serve him, love him, keep his home, have his children, and submit in everything. Women did womanly things, and men attended to "the things of God."

Being a strong, super-organized person, I tended to view my wife and her efforts to relate to me as rather dumb. I felt that most of her ideas didn't make sense and her conclusions and viewpoints were absurd. I had a way of cutting her off when she tried to express herself or share an opinion that opposed mine.

Not too long before our second child was due, our first daughter, Elizabeth, got very sick. The doctor diagnosed it as pneumonia and prescribed various kinds of medication. As the days went by and she did not respond to treatment, it became obvious that God was dealing in the situation and that He was expecting us to trust Him for the healing.

During this illness Lydia had devoted herself almost continuously to Elizabeth and I began to see the effects of her staying in the house for so long a time. At that time I was holding evangelistic meetings in Oakland, and one evening a strong impression from the Lord came to me that Lydia should get away from the House for a while. When I mentioned it to Lydia I was not prepared for her reaction:

"I don't want to go."

"Well, I really feel you should go. You need to get out of the house and I believe God will heal Elizabeth."

"God can heal her here just as well as He can at that meeting!"

"But God can heal her at the meeting, too," I said.

"I don't care. I am not going. I will not take my child out of this house."

Even though she was becoming quite agitated, a calm in my spirit enabled me to stand in what I felt God had said without becoming angry or belligerent. Then I insisted, "You *are* going to go to that meeting."

"This child will go out of this house over my dead body."

I knew her threat was her final word and there was nothing more I could do. Forgetting that the Scripture commands the husbands to love their wives, to cherish and nourish and help them — even when they are having a struggle and they don't want to have anything to do with their husbands — I retreated to my office where I spent the next two days and nights.

LYDIA: During this time all I could see was that Dick was threatening my life and worse than that, the life of my child. I had stood a lot, but there I was prepared to draw the line against him. I was not prepared, however, for what happened next.

That night I felt as if all the forces in hell were turned loose on me. The presence of God which had comforted me through my life was withdrawn and I felt utterly lost, alone, and without God. To complicate matters, Elizabeth began to get worse. When Dick had stood his ground without arguing or getting upset himself, he had "stayed out of God's way," allowing God to deal with me as He saw fit. A husband's displeasure cannot compare to what God does if a husband stands aside! After two terrible days, during which I came to the end of myself, God began to open my eyes. He showed me that Dick was my husband, and right or wrong, God expected me to obey and honor him — even if it cost me my life and the life of my child. My problem was quite clear — it was *rebellion* against my husband.

With some reluctance I went to him and confessed. The weight of a hundred lifetimes was taken from me and the presence of God returned to my life. God honored my obedience

and from that moment Elizabeth began to improve. In a few days she was completely well. Though I was far from seeing the entirety of God's workings, at least I was becoming aware of the fact that everything going on in my life was not *all* Dick's fault, but that God might have a work to do in me as well.

Even though we learned a great deal from the incident with Elizabeth, we were still a long way from where God wanted us. As my frustrations with Dick and Clayton House continued, I sought relief by counseling with an older woman who was staying at the House. Deep inside I felt like this was wrong, but knew of no other way to handle it.

While my personal problems had been building, problems had also begun to develop in the ministry at Clayton House and the only solution seemed to dissolve the ministry. I remember quite vividly the night the House broke up. A second woman in whom I had confided mistook my intentions in talking with her to mean that I wanted to leave Dick. Through this misunderstanding word got back to Dick that I was going to leave him.

Dick, of course, was crushed and felt that now, at the lowest point in his life, even his wife had turned against him. I begged him to trust me, just to trust me one more time. He said he was sorry, but he just could not. We were at a desperate impasse. I cannot explain exactly what happened, but God sovereignly came to our rescue, and somehow we found ourselves stumbling on — taking a second chance.

## THE "LOVE RELATIONSHIP" OF SUBMISSION

DICK: After four years of intense community living with no family privacy, Lydia and I found ourselves strangers — alone with our three little girls after leaving Clayton House. It was during this period that God began to remove the scales from my eyes and show me the marriage relationship in an entirely new light. My mate had



been given to me by God to help me see myself as I really was. Many times she would try to help me, only to be rejected. Now I know that if I had embraced my mate as God's way of speaking to me, there would have been less pain, and God's discipline would not have been so severe.

We began to realize that we were "one flesh" — that means we are on the same team — on the same side. I saw that my wife was not a "thing" — an object to do what I wanted done; but rather, she was an individual who had God-given abilities and gifts that needed to be unlocked and exercised.

LYDIA: Submission has become a dirty word among many Christian women today. It has been over-emphasized as an end in itself without seeing that it is a part of our growth, with steps leading to it and steps that go beyond it. One day I saw that I had been striving for submission by self-will without doing what the Scripture tells us to do first. Ephesians 5:22 and Colossians 3:18 give us the command to be subject to our husbands, but the verses just prior to these tell us *how* to prepare our hearts for an *attitude* of submission. These verses tell us to (1) be filled with the Spirit; (2) praise; and (3) be thankful. I had been missing the first three steps!

Realizing that Dick was the Lord's representative to me, I began to take the same attitude toward my husband that I was taking toward the the Lord. I began to compliment my husband. At first I was so bound by my negative attitude that I couldn't see much of the positive! As I admired him for the good things I saw, however small they might have seemed, the wonderful qualities that he had began to come into focus again.

I began to thank him . . . for working every day to put food on the table, for his heart for God, for the concern he showed for me, and all the little things I had seen as his "duties." How Dick "changed" into the most wonderful, loving, thoughtful husband in the world! Honestly, I feel there is no one quite like him. When I began

to see him like this, submission started to come naturally.

God used submission to show me that I was not really the spiritual giant I had thought. My spiritual maturity had been measured in terms of revelations, spiritual disciplines, moving in the spiritual gifts, and so on. As I continued to submit to my husband, God began to show me that *real* maturity is a condition of the heart. Through my husband, I began to realize I was moody, self-centered, critical, suspicious, sometimes revengeful, childish, and a host of other negative qualities which rocked my self-image as a great woman of God. I did not know *how* to love my husband, or be a godly wife and mother. I guess you could say that this is the *negative* aspect of submission. God had to bring me to the place where I was broken and miserable with myself. There were times when I felt I was losing my identity as well as my sanity.

Now I understand what it means to lay down my life. If ever I was to be anything, Dick was going to have to make me into that — surely I couldn't do it alone! Yielding myself to him, I said, "Make me into what you want." I suddenly realized what the Scripture meant when it said, ". . . the woman is the glory of man" and ". . . man was not created for the woman's sake, but the woman for the man's sake" (1 Corinthians 11:7,8).

Now I had a way to truly love my husband; I could respond to his initiative to make me into what he wanted me to be as his wife. How true this was to the picture of Christ and the believer when Jesus said, "If you *love* Me you will keep My commandments." This has brought a peace and security in my relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as my husband, I never dreamed possible. I have advised many people since that time, "Once you taste *real* submission, you're hooked!"

DICK: A great many of God's dealings in our lives have been to get us to communicate and love each

other. Every time we have a "situation" (as we call them) we know that God is trying to point out something in one or both of us that needs to be adjusted. Upon finding ourselves in a situation, we keep working through the problem until we reach the "hugging point" — that is, the place where we are free enough to hug each other and mean it! We have begun to feel we have had so many situations that occasionally in jest we will refer to an incident as "Situation number 4869!"

Around the time of the birth of our fourth child, Ricky, God gave us a tremendous lesson in submission and communication. Lydia, in her desire to have as rich an experience in motherhood as possible, wanted to nurse the new baby. In discussing it, however, we came to the conclusion that it would be better if she did not, since we were leading extremely active lives at that time and desperately needed to spend as much time together as possible. Nursing a baby was not the real issue — it was our need to be together.

The night Ricky was born, I went back to the hospital and she shared with me that she was having a very hard time because she was not going to be able to nurse the baby. I faced a dilemma: I loved her so much that I wanted her to be able to do what she wanted; yet, I still felt very strongly that she was not to nurse the baby. As I was thinking about this, the thought was quickened to me of Jesus kneeling in the Garden of Gethsemane and saying, "If possible, let this cup pass from me. But not *my* will but thine be done." Suddenly I saw that in real submission there is *freedom to express exactly how one feels*. I had always thought that Lydia had an easy time submitting because she never expressed her inner feelings about what she was submitting to. This is exactly the opposite of the submission that was expressed in the love relationship of Jesus with the Father. So often I had labeled someone's desire to express themselves as "rebellion" simply because I did not understand.



## CREATIVE HEADSHIP

DICK: As our communication began to deepen and my sensitivity to Lydia's needs began to grow, the Lord showed me that my wife was like a garden and I was her gardener. My responsibility was more than just "keeping her in line." I had to plant seeds, till the soil, water the plants and keep out the weeds. As I looked at my garden, I realized that I didn't like what I saw — it was my fault!

When the weeds of criticism, moodiness, irritability, and lack of enthusiasm grew, it was an indication of my own neglect of my God-given duties. I was now reaping what I had sown.

I had planted criticism. She would serve me a wonderful dinner and I would criticize the over-cooked beans and never compliment the rest of the meal or give recognition for all the effort that went into its preparation. No wonder I reaped discouragement and irritability.

I sowed neglect. If the work load around the house got heavy or the children got out of hand, she was to blame. When the sink leaked or a light burned out, I let it go rather than taking care of it, forcing her to live with it. For this I reaped moodiness and criticism. My wife was never created to bear the emotional burdens forced upon her, and unless I shouldered the responsibility she would begin to go under.

It took me a long time to understand the necessity of planting the seeds of encouragement, praise and love. Now when she gets dressed up I tell her how wonderful she looks. When she does something I like, or excels in a certain area, I compliment her and tell her what a wonderful wife she really is.

The key word in learning how to love my wife as Christ loved the Church has been *sensitivity*. My wife does not always know *why* she is having the struggles she does, or *why* she acts the way she does, but I have found that by listening carefully to the cry of her heart that God will help me to love her into a woman that reflects

His desire as well as mine in His creation.

Of course there are still times when I find it necessary to lay the law down and take a stand in my home. But as we grow together and I become more sensitive to her needs, I find these times are fewer and farther between.

Since I have begun to understand my role and Lydia has responded to it we don't "go at" each other like we used to. When a situation comes we discuss it and try to find where the problem really is. When she is confident that I am genuinely trying to help, she finds it much easier to open herself and tell me how she really feels.

## EFFECTS OF RIGHT RELATIONSHIP ON OUR CHILDREN

LYDIA: As God has changed us, the work that has been done in our children is just as amazing. Before the relationship between Dick and myself was right, I was so possessive and protective of the children that it actually caused them frustration and rebellion. I demanded from them the love and affection which should have come from my husband. As I began to focus my attention on pleasing Dick, and our love began to flow, the children were less demanding, more satisfied and peaceful. One Saturday morning shortly after Ricky was born, Dick and I were lounging around the house. We were snuggled up together, still basking in our new-found love when Elizabeth, our three-year-old, came by. Instead of demanding our attention, as she usually would, she simply stood and watched us. After a few moments she was evidently satisfied that all was well with the world and she left. A new security she had never experienced was coming into her life.

DICK: Very recently God has dealt with me about relating to my children (ages one to five) on *their own* level! I had been waiting for my children to grow up so I could enjoy them, but now God was demanding that I "grow

down" in order to be a father to them. It was difficult to learn to play their games when I felt I had more "spiritual" things to do; or to listen to their stories about Stinky, the neighborhood mongrel upsetting the garbage. Gradually, however, I began to be fascinated by the intricate world of a child's mind and I began to understand how my children look at life . . . what their problems are . . . and how much wealth they really have.

Getting closer to my children I realized that I had been their teacher, not so much by what I said, but by what I did. I would scold them for their messy room; yet leave my clothes and tools out of place. I would become frustrated with them for not opening up and telling me what they were thinking and feeling; yet my wife and I had held things inside ourselves for days at a time. Was it any wonder my children fought, had problems, refused to share, and generally made life difficult for each other?

As the children began to feel that they had a relationship with their father, and as they began to feel a confidence and security in my love, some wonderful changes, for which we had longed and prayed, began to occur. They fought less, began to express love for each other, spent less time whining and crying, and generally seemed more secure and well-adjusted.

All that God has done in our family came home to me one evening recently when we had some friends over. We were in our living room fellowshiping when suddenly I felt a little hand rubbing my back. It was my youngest daughter giving her Daddy a back rub! Soon she was joined by the middle daughter. After a few minutes the youngest girl went into the bedroom and brought a blanket and pillow for the oldest (who was not feeling well) so she could be more comfortable — a rare expression of love and concern from our three-year-old! My heart overflows to see my children loving and serving one another.

Since Lydia and I are their examples, how important it is for God to really make us one flesh. 🍷



# BIBLE STUDY

## FAMILY

The Bible is the best book on family life. The Scriptures have much to say about the origin, history and pattern for family life. Since God inspired the writers of Scripture (2 Peter 1:21; 1 Timothy 3:16), the Bible is the Creator's handbook for successful family living.

Answers to Bible Study are found on page 27.

1. Can you name four chapters in the Scriptures that include sections on family life? \_\_\_\_\_
2. True or false: God blamed Eve for causing the fall of the first family. *Genesis 2:16,17; 3:9,17*. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The Bible definition for the home is found in *Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5,6, Ephesians 5:31*. In each definition, one person is commanded to leave parent and cleave to the other. Which is it, husband or wife? \_\_\_\_\_  
One person in the family is commanded to love the other. Which is it, husband or wife? *Ephesians 5*. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The first five chapters in *Isaiah* describe Israel's rebellion against God 700 B.C. National rebellion was closely linked to family rebellion. In *Isaiah 3*, God warned that because Israel had rebelled against Him certain results would follow. Three of the following statements are *True*. The rest are *False*. Check the true ones.
  - a. ☐ Men would become more domineering.
  - b. ☐ Inexperienced children would rule over older experienced leaders.
  - c. ☐ A lot of qualified people would want to become leaders.
  - d. ☐ Women and children would become more domineering.
  - e. ☐ There would be a shortage of bread and water.
5. True or false: Though Jesus and the Pharisees disagreed on many things they did agree on marriage and divorce. *Matthew 19* \_\_\_\_\_
6. Jesus' statement on marriage: "And I say to you whoever divorces his wife except for \_\_\_\_\_ and marries another commits adultery." *Matthew 19:9*.
7. One of the ten commandments is to honor Father and Mother. God promises that if one does, he will be blessed with *Exodus 20:12*. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Read 1 Corinthians 11.  
The Head of Christ is \_\_\_\_\_  
The Head of woman is \_\_\_\_\_  
The Head of man is \_\_\_\_\_
9. The home is a parable — or a physical manifestation of the eternal relationship between Christ and the Church. The relationship of Christ and the Church is called a "great mystery." Understanding the relationship between a husband and his wife will help you understand the spiritual relationship between Christ and the Church. Check the true statements. *Ephesians 5 & 6*.
  - a. ☐ The home is a partnership between husband and wife.
  - b. ☐ The husband is commanded to love his wife as *Christ loved the Church* and gave Himself for it.
  - c. ☐ The wife is commanded to love her husband as *Christ loved the Church* also.
  - d. ☐ It is a woman's business to see that her family serves the Lord. If necessary the Scripture tells her to take the lead.
  - e. ☐ A woman is commanded to respect her husband.
  - f. ☐ Correcting the children is mainly a wife's job.
10. Circle the correct answers.  
The first passover was observed in: *Exodus 12*
  - a. Babylon, Israel, Egypt
  - b. The Synagogue, Temple, Private homes
11. If a woman's husband is unsaved she can win him best with *1 Peter 3*.  
(a) Tracts, (b) A visit from the pastor, (c) Quoting scripture, (d) Her godly behavior.
12. The following is highly prized in the sight of God: *1 Peter 3*
  - a. ☐ One who could answer all the questions on the family.
  - b. ☐ One whose home is in perfect order.
  - c. ☐ One who has a meek and quiet spirit. (Meekness is not weakness, but strength under discipline.)





by David J. duPlessis

**A vital key to freedom in our relationship to God and man.**

**L**ocked up in that one word, forgiveness, is a message that was intended by God to change mankind. It was His desire that the good news of forgiveness be preached to the ends of the earth — not that it should be blocked and hindered in its effectiveness by the hardness of men's hearts or the blindness of their eyes. Why hasn't the news of the possibility of man's being reconciled to God — and to each other — been more widespread? Why is the path of history lined with casualties of hate, revenge and plunder, rather than with the peace that God made possible? Herein lies one of the greatest tragedies of Christianity — *forgiveness made available to all men by God, and yet not accepted and actuated in their living.*

#### **GOD PROVIDES FORGIVENESS**

How did this transaction of forgiveness of sin by a God of judgment transpire? Let us go back to the introduction of the Law to God's people, the Israelites, and see His wondrous workings.

Following the release of the Jews from their years of slavery to the Egyptians, they were brought into the Sinai wilderness. Here God provided for their every need — protection, food, water, guidance in their travels, health and shoes that never wore out! God also wanted to speak to them, but as He came a little closer, His brightness seemed to the people as lightning and His voice as thunder. So the people said to their leader, Moses: "We can't stand this anymore! Tell God to speak to you and we will do what you

say." That is how they came to receive the Ten Commandments — how they came under law.

But before Moses even had a chance to deliver to them the tables of stone upon which the Laws were written, he broke them. The sight of the sinning of his people proved too much for him. This was an indication of what would always be the result of law — broken!

After centuries of constant sinning and coming under the chastisement of God, word came through the Prophet Ezekiel (36:26–27) that God planned to make a new covenant with His people:

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will



give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Instead of laws of stone, God set into process His arrangements for making possible the writing of His laws upon the hearts of men. The removal of the stony heart and replacement with a heart of flesh, may be called "divine heart transplants." But you realize, I am sure, that if there is to be a heart transplant, you have to have a dead man's heart to replace the faulty heart. In the physical realm, all who have received new hearts have received them at the expense of someone who has died. Because one man dies, another lives! Even God had to wait until one man, His Son, died before divine heart transplants could take place.

However, medical science has discovered that after the heart transplant is over, there comes the rejection of the new organ. Physicians say man has to have an "immunal suppressent" in order to make the new heart operative and effective. God has supplied that immunal suppressent in the divine transplant of a new heart through the Person of the Holy Spirit. Without Him, no believer could ever hold the new heart. The Holy Spirit makes this possible.

A later prophet, John the Baptist, heralded the news of the coming of God's provision for the New Covenant and the new heart that would result in forgiveness. He preached faithfully day after day the message: "He that cometh after me is mightier than I, He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit just like I baptize you in water" (cf. Mark 1:7-8). He said that to every candidate who came for baptism.

When Jesus appeared on the scene, John said: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." How was this to be accomplished?

Here we will return to the dealings of God with the Jewish slaves in Egypt. We get a perfect picture of the Lamb of God and the plan for our



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redemption as we look at God's instructions to the Israelites as they prepared for their deliverance from bondage.

Each family was to kill a lamb and put the blood from it on the door post. This insured that the angel of death would pass over that home and the members be spared. The blood of the lamb sheltered them . . . they were absolutely safe.

Exodus, chapter 12, records the story: "When I see the blood I shall pass over you. You shall be sheltered behind the blood and you are "in" the lamb. You must eat that lamb until the lamb is in you. There must be nothing left of the lamb — not a bit!" So, when every man, woman and child left Egypt, do you see that the lamb left Egypt with them? That depicts the transaction. Redeemed by the blood . . . Christ in you — the hope of glory. There is the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world!

How did Jesus begin His preaching ministry? With the same message of repentance and forgiveness of sin that John had preached. After three years of public ministry, He was crucified on Calvary, truly shedding His blood that judgment might "pass over" us.

The body of Jesus was laid in a borrowed tomb and three days later when some women went to the sepulcher to anoint the body, they couldn't find it — for He was risen — the tomb was empty.

What next? When He met one of the women who had come to the tomb, He said, "Touch me not. I have not yet ascended to my Father, but go tell my brethren I go to my Father." That very night He returned from the Father and joined the group of believers who were hiding behind locked doors for fear of persecution. His first words were, "Peace be unto you." When you say these words, you mean that there is nothing between the two of you. Now God and man were reconciled.

As soon as God and man had been reconciled, Jesus gave to the disciples the ministry of reconciliation. As the Father had given Him authority to preach forgiveness . . . "even so, send I you . . . And when he said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

This was the message of the early church. Paul preached it wherever he went. Here are some of his words.

And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death . . . (Colossians 1:21-22).

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

After we accept the offer of forgiveness for all our trespasses, made possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, then it is our privilege and responsibility to carry the message of alienation and reconciliation to all men.

## JESUS TEACHES ON FORGIVENESS

In order to prepare His disciples for



this responsibility that was soon to fall upon their shoulders, Jesus stressed over and over again the necessity for forgiving one another. He not only taught it, but He lived it. This is what we must do.

As Jesus commissioned the disciples just before His Ascension, He gave them this command:

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 27:19-20).

One of the most neglected teachings of Jesus is that on forgiveness. *We shall look at three of these teaching sessions.*

Upon one occasion the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Teach us to pray." His reply is probably the most quoted portion of Scripture and contains one of the most awesome references to this matter of forgiveness ever to be put before man.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom and the power and glory forever. Amen.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses (Matthew 6:9-15).

Did you realize those last few phrases on forgiveness followed immediately after Jesus' words on prayer? Most of us do not. Note, too, that he did not say in the body of the prayer, "Father, help us to forgive others like you have forgiven us," — but rather, "Father, forgive us as we forgive others." Then He reiterates that fact in no uncertain terms.

Does this bring to you the realization that unless you have forgiven

every last one of your "debtors," you are saying, "God, don't forgive me." Forgive me only as I forgive others? What a request . . . I shudder when I think how for many years I went to sleep unforgiven. And yet I complained I could not get the victory over sin. How could I get victory when I had not even been forgiven — *because I refused to forgive others.*

Listen to another lesson on forgiveness, this one in response to a question by Peter, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" Peter must have staggered at Jesus' reply, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22).

When I began to grasp the enormity of that necessity, I figured out that I may need to forgive 490 times a day in a day of 16 waking hours. That, in turn, means 30 times an hour — once every two minutes! That is a full-time assignment . . . forgive . . . forgive . . . forgive. The society of Peter's day probably occasioned as much need for forgiveness as does ours today. How well is this important lesson being put into practice? How about in your own life? Yet, Jesus is presenting forgiveness as one of the cornerstones of the gospel message. Without the message of forgiveness, we are not "teaching all things" — either by example or edict.

For years I had the audacity to think I was God's public prosecutor and judge. When I was an evangelist, I would pray, "Lord, help me to preach these people under conviction. Help me to prove them guilty." But He told me to preach the gospel and stop judging. The role I now attempt to fill is that of public defender — having mercy on everybody. God can take care of the judging.

A third lesson on forgiveness was presented in the form of a parable. It is recorded in Matthew 18:23-35 and goes like this:

A certain king discovered one of his servants owed him ten thousand talents — and that is quite a sizeable sum! He judged him for the debt and commanded that he should be sold,

along with his wife and children, until full payment was made. The servant prayed for mercy and received it. The king had compassion . . . loosed him and forgave him the debt . . . withdrawing judgment and marking the debt as paid in full.

Then comes this sequel to the story: The servant returned to his home and there found a man who owed him a hundred pennies. What was the treatment this debtor received? In answer to his plea for mercy, the forgiven servant refused to consider the request and cast his fellow servant into prison until full repayment could be made.

The story has a sad ending. When the king was told of the unforgiving treatment the servant who had been forgiven the large debt had rendered to a fellow servant owing the much smaller amount, the king was angry — and rightly so. The penalty for the unforgiving spirit displayed was prison — with the command to stay there until the entire ten thousand talents was paid.

Jesus began this parable with these words: "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants." And it closes with this stern warning: "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

A lesson from life was afforded me when at the close of a message on forgiveness, a woman came forward and testified, "Brother duPlessis, these two friends had to literally almost carry me to this meeting. Now I feel that I could carry them out! When you began to preach, I saw for the first time that from my girlhood I have had bitterness and hatred and contempt against God and man. It ruined me physically, as well as spiritually. Tonight, as I became convicted of my sin of unforgiveness, I prayed that I might be able to forgive each of those against whom I was harboring resentment. The more I unloaded the bitterness, the more strength came into my body. My feverishness left and a calmness came over me!" In one hour, this



woman experienced the healing she had been praying for over many years. I tell you, if you forgive, then your body will know and respond.

### A KEY TO FAITH AND MIRACLES

In my own life, forgiveness played a key role. While a boy, born of Dutch parents, growing up on a mission in South Africa where my father was a carpenter building for the missionaries, I often asked myself, "What must these Africans think about our Christianity?" Here we were, talking to them about living in peace, and they were witnessing divisions and fightings within the Christian ranks. Yet, I saw in the lives of the black people the love and forgiveness I read about in the Bible. So, I was a little white heathen whom God saved through the ministry of those black Christians.

Most Africans could not read, but they could hear; and they became convinced the Bible was true. I had read the Bible, but I thought it was a history book. But, because I saw it alive and active in the lives of the people among whom we worked, I became convinced the Bible presented Truth. They proved to me that it was a work book. You work according to it and things happen — even miracles — that is, if you do everything Jesus said and taught.

Do you remember the words of Jesus' mother at the time of the first miracle of her son? They were attending a wedding . . . the wine gave out . . . and Mary spoke to Jesus about it. Then she said to the servants who were pouring the wine, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." They followed her advice, and we have recorded (John 2:1-11) water became wine at the spoken words of Jesus.

I marvel at the grace of God and His patience with us as I think back on how many years I failed to do what Jesus said. Because of divisions within the churches, I became bitter against that church . . . then this one . . . then another. I knew Jesus had said, "Forgive us as we forgive others," but I never stopped to think about the

implications involved. Realizing that we preach forgiveness and practice judgment, I asked God to help me reconcile the two in my life. He led me to see the wonderful thread of forgiveness woven throughout the Bible.

New light was shed upon my place in the ministry of forgiveness. I saw that my forgiveness, or my unforgiveness, would "bind or loose" others in the workings of God. Jesus spoke these words to Peter: ". . . whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19). The words spoken by Jesus and Stephen asking for forgiveness for those who were causing their deaths also took on new meaning to me.

When Jesus was on the cross, He said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." If Jesus hadn't prayed those words, do you know what could have happened? After his death, judgment could have come upon humanity, and we would have perished. With His request for our *forgiveness*, we were loosed from judgment.

In the case of Stephen, his last words — as the mob was stoning him to death — were, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." At his feet stood a young man, Saul of Tarsus. That request for forgiveness loosed Saul from judgment on earth and he was loosed in heaven. Before long the very Prince of heaven rose from His throne and personally pressed His claims upon Saul as he was on his way to Damascus to persecute believers. That prayer of *forgiveness* changed the course of history.

It pays to forgive. I have seen it work so many times in my own life. We must, of course, realize that if we forgive a person, that does not signify that we approve of their actions. Stephen did not say, "Lord, forgive them for they are not doing anything wrong." He just said, "Lay not this sin to their charge." No, *forgiveness* does not mean you justify sin, but you forgive sin. Only God can justify.

Unforgiveness in our lives hinders

God's working. It affects our faith and our ability to perform the works God would have us carry out for him, and hinders His forgiveness being taken to others. Jesus linked faith and forgiveness in Mark 11:22-26:

And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever that ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

When I read this one time, I began reasoning with the Lord. (He tells us to do this in Isaiah 1:18.) I admitted, "Lord, I don't have this kind of faith." To which He responded, "There is nothing wrong with your faith. But there is something that hinders your faith. Read those last two verses again." So I did.

"Ought against anybody!" The words leaped out at me. Should I stop and count up all my "oughts," I might stagger as Peter did when he was told to forgive 490 times. I gather that I must not even harbor any ill feeling against anybody, even if he doesn't know a thing about it. What about you? Are there any "oughts" in the way of moving mountains? Any grudges? Any desire for revenge?

I learned a lesson on forgiveness while traveling on a plane. That phrase, "Ought against any," kept puzzling me. It happened on this particular trip that I was seated between two women and before the plane was even in the air, they had their cigarettes and lighters ready to get into action. Now, I don't like air pollution, especially on both sides of me. I began wishing the tobacco fields



would wither up . . . that the factories would burn down . . . and I ended up complaining, "Lord, I am Your servant. You could have arranged a better seat for me than this one."

His reply was, "Now, see how foolish you are. Here you've got ought against two anys. Why don't you forgive them? You want to go to sleep, don't you? Forgive them and go to sleep!"

I acknowledged the error of my ways and said, "Lord, forgive me please." And I forgive them. With that I fell asleep and two hours later awakened . . . and there was no smoking on either side of me. Even after the serving of our snack, no smoking! So I asked, "Lord, did You stop them?"

Then came these words, "When you wanted to burn down the factories and let the tobacco perish, I couldn't answer your prayer. That would prove a calamity for many people. But when you forgave these two women, I could answer your prayer. Remember my saying, What you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven and what you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven? And you loosed them from your judgment, so heaven could do something for them — and loose you from your troubling situation, as well."

That is when I cried, "Oh, Lord, why didn't I learn this a long time ago? Please tell me more. If I keep on forgiving people like this, will I stop them from sinning?"

His answer to that question was, "If the church would forgive everybody, sin wouldn't last very long."

### FORGIVENESS AFFECTS SIN IN THE CHURCH

Let's go back and take a look at the words referred to about "loosing and binding." We find them a part of Jesus' teaching just before He left to return to the Father. It was the night of Resurrection Day. The believers were gathered together sharing the strange happenings of the past few days. Jesus appeared before them and said:

Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive you the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained (John 20:21–23).

Very often we hear that the church was born on the Day of Pentecost, but I believe that when Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," — right there the church was born. Those present at that time had their sins forgiven . . . they were born anew from above . . . they were born of the Spirit.

Immediately following the receiving of the Spirit came this responsibility and privilege: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." What did that mean to the disciples? What does it mean to us today? I would answer, the same thing. "You have now, by the Lamb of God, been forgiven all your trespasses. Now do to men as God did to you and forgive men their trespasses." If you do not forgive after God has forgiven you, neither will your Father again forgive you. When I saw that I shuddered! Is that why so many remain unforgiven today?

Another question I would like to raise is — do you know why many Christians are sick today? Let Paul answer that one for us. "When you come together around the table of the Lord, the blood of the Lamb of God has purchased your redemption, *reconciled* you to God and now you sit around this table, but you must be *reconciled* to your fellow man.

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the

Lord, that we would not be condemned with the world (I Corinthians 11:27–32).

Three things need to be realized in these searching words:

(1) It is not the body and blood on the table Paul is speaking of, but the Lord's body which is seated in the pews beside us. They are the ones to consider.

(2) We must ask, how am I related to my brothers and sisters . . . to my neighbors and relatives? That is where we are to judge ourselves.

(3) Forgiveness is a great and glorious privilege; but it is not easy. It takes effort — and more than effort, for it takes the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit to forgive.

This was forcibly brought home to me through an incident in my own home. One morning my son spoke to his mother in a way that I considered "out of order," and I judged him . . . condemned him and punished him for it. As he left, I sat there feeling sick about it. I said, "Lord why do I feel like this when I was just doing my fatherly duty?" His reply, "A father loves and forgives. He doesn't treat a child like that. What if I treated you like you treat you son?"

I quickly cried, "Oh, God, please don't. I think I would perish. Lord, I forgive him and I ask you to forgive me." To which came, "If you forgive him, he doesn't know it. Go and tell him."

I did. That event cemented a fellowship and friendship that has stood throughout the years. Forgiveness has changed my relationship to my wife and to my children. To everybody!

Understanding this principle of forgiveness will change your entire life, too. Do you realize this is a matter of life and death . . . sickness and health — not only for ourselves but for the world! When we learn, with God's help, to habitually do nothing but forgive, the day will come when our prayers will not fail to be answered. Then, and only then, will we be prepared to carry out the Great Commission, and do the works that Jesus did. ☞



# FAITH OR PRESUMPTION

Real faith is a fine line between unbelief and presumption.

by Charles Farah

**B**ad theology is a cruel taskmaster. It is like Procrustes, a cruel giant of ancient mythology. Procrustes was a highwayman from Attica who used to bed strangers down for the night by attaching them to an iron bed. If they were too short, he stretched them until they fit. If they were too long he cut off their legs. Bad theology, like Procrustes, tends to say, "If the facts don't fit, then stretch them. If there are more facts than the case allows, then cut off the excess facts."

Many people have been destroyed by a few words of bad theology. A friend of mine recently related how his mother had become a gnarled old woman before her time, bereft of joy, because of five words of bad theology. She had married a man who had been scripturally divorced and a minister left her with five crippling words of bad theology, "You are living in adultery."

Lives all over the Christian community have been wrecked by a bad theology. It says, among other things: Miracles are not for today; the enemy cannot bother a Christian, he is off limits; everyone who is prayed for must be healed since the only condition for healing is faith. And on it goes.

Listen to some classic words of bad theology:

Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he stood Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, *'He will give His angels charge concerning you; and on their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone'*" (Matthew 4:5-6 NAS).

In this passage of Scripture we see the enemy tempting Jesus. Satan, the master of temptation, had recourse to any temptation he wanted to use — the sins of the senses or spiritual pride — but he chose the sin of presumption. It is strange we do not hear more about the sin of presumption, because it is one of the most prevalent problems in the body of Christ.

The devil said, "If you are the son of God, then prove it, jump off the temple." This was a short cut! A way to instantly win the allegiance of the people. Jesus was on the defensive. Satan knew Jesus' strong point was the Word of God, so he quoted a proof text to back up his statement, "... He will give His angels charge over you..." Here is the sin of presumption.

I thank God for a sound tradition which says you need more than one text of Scripture, you need the *whole* counsel of God. For proper guidance

we need to know and understand all that God has to say on a subject. The devil knows the Bible backwards and forwards and he knows how to get us in trouble with it.

Notice how carefully the devil quoted Psalm 91:11-12. He says, "He shall give His angels charge concerning you," but he carefully omits the phrase which follows, "... to guard you in all your ways." This phrase qualifies the verse by saying that God will guard you in all your *ordinary* ways of life. But without this phrase Satan can turn it into a universal and say, "You can climb up on the temple and jump down and expect God to take care of you."

Satan wanted Jesus to believe, as he would us, that He could do anything He wished and God would have to take care of Him. The Lord has allowed many of us to live with the tragedy of our mistakes. We find out that God's protection does not necessarily apply in *all* situations.

On the other side of the sin of presumption, is the sin of unbelief. In between is the golden mean of faith. Jesus lived in the realm of faith. So when the devil tempted Him, Jesus, knowing the whole counsel of God, answered, "On the other hand, it is written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God'" (Matthew 4:7 NAS). He was saying that by casting himself off the temple He would be committing the sin of presumption in tempting the Lord God. Not even He, the Son of God, had that right.

Many times we have been guilty of playing the devil's advocate by telling people to jump off the temple. "I've prayed for you, now take off your glasses, you're healed. It doesn't make any difference if your driver's license says you must wear them and you still can't see." Or "Since you have been prayed for, you are healed of diabetes. Don't take your insulin even though the symptoms are still there. The symptoms are lies." I have seen lying

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symptoms turned into harsh reality, doing great damage to the cause of Christ. This is why we must come to understand the whole counsel of God.

### RAYMA AND LOGOS

There are two Greek words which should throw a little light on the difference between "faith" and "presumption." One is the word *rayma*; the other is the word *logos*. Both of these words are translated in the New Testament as "word." Karl Barth speaks of this difference as the "the word of God *to you*, which is *rayma*, and the word of God, *logos*, which is *universal*."

Romans 10:17, which is so freely quoted, says, "So faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." In Greek it is "the *rayma* of Christ," which is the word of God *to you*. Let me illustrate what this means. How many of you became Christians the very first time that you heard the gospel? I dare say you heard it many times before you repented and believed. There was one moment in your life when God spoke a word to you and it sank into your spirit. The *logos* became a *rayma*.

The Bible, the Ten Commandments, the gospels are all *logos* — the universal word of God to all men. Jesus Christ is the final *logos* to all men everywhere. He never changes, He is the same. But before the *logos* can do us any good, it must become *rayma*. Some of you may have read the Bible yet it never meant a thing to you. It was *logos*. Then one day it came alive — it was *to you, rayma*.

We can apply this to four areas which are often troublesome in finding balance in the life of the believer: Guidance, Healing, Prophecy and Finance.

### GUIDANCE

We are usually not very advanced in the Christian life until we realize that the word of the Lord which is spoken *to us* may not be the word of the Lord which is given to another person. God's guidance for me is not the same as it is for my friends.

There are two wonderful examples

of this in the New Testament. The first is in Matthew 14:22–33, where we find the story of Peter walking on the water. The disciples had been through a rough day ministering to the multitudes. Toward evening Jesus made them take their boat and start home across the Sea of Galilee while He went off to pray. The boat had not gotten far out when it was hit by a storm. The disciples rowed for all they were worth, but they did not seem to have much success against the wind and the waves.

To make things even worse, a ghost showed up about three o'clock in the morning. Frightened, they began to panic and yell with fear, but Jesus said, "Don't be afraid, it's me!"

Peter became a little bolder at this point and challenged, "Lord, if it is really you, tell me to come to you." (I don't really think Peter had any idea of walking on the water, but he asked anyway.) Jesus answered him, "Come." Now here is the point of the whole story. Who came to Jesus on the water? *Peter*. None of the other disciples jumped overboard to join in the fun — only Peter. They were quite happy to let him go it alone. When Christ said, "Come," it was clearly a *rayma* for Peter and no one else.

Christians have never taken this verse and said, "The Scripture clearly teaches from this that we don't need boats, we can all walk on the water." That would be absurd because it was a *rayma* for Peter and no one else.

The second such incident again involves Peter and is found in John 21:18–22. Looking very briefly at this passage we find that Jesus is with His disciples by the Sea of Galilee one morning after His resurrection. Sitting at breakfast, Jesus turned to Peter and said, "I have a word for you. The day is going to come when you are going to be crucified and you are not going to want to be. Now, follow me."

Peter asked Jesus, "What about my friend, John?"

Jesus told him, "John is none of your business, follow me."

Jesus' *rayma* to Peter was not intended to be His *rayma* to John. He had a word for each of them and all

they had to worry about was following their shepherd. Your guidance and my guidance may not be the same, but the thing which we have in common is hearing the voice of the shepherd.

I learned while visiting Scotland how really dumb sheep are. Believe me, it is no compliment to be called a sheep. They get themselves caught in fences; if one jumps off a cliff, the rest will follow. But in spite of their stupidity, the sheep do know how to follow their master's voice. It is the voice of the master that we must learn to hear in this matter of guidance.

It may be God's word (*logos*), but is it God's word (*rayma*) to me? We can begin to harangue the Lord, "Lord, it's in your word, You've got to do it, it's in the book!" That is what the devil did, "It's in the book, Jesus. If you believe the book, you'll jump off temple." It is possible for us to set our beliefs above God, Himself. We say, "God, it's there in the book, it's got to happen." You may discover, as I did, that it does not always happen. I have argued with God when things did not go according to the rules. "God, if I had a son who was doing all he could to serve you, I wouldn't have treated him like you've treated me!" I forgot how God treated His Son. What God does to us may not always be "fair."

Man's glory is to walk upright and gaze into heaven and argue his case with his Creator. But his glory can also be his mistake as it was with Job's theologians. They had God boxed in with their little syllogisms. They said: A godly man does not suffer. Job, you are suffering. Therefore, you are not godly. Bad theology! Formulas scare me to death. Do you remember how Job and his friends ended up? When Job saw God he said, "... Now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

Then God told Job, "Make an offering for your friends, they have sinned *presumptuously* against me." The sin of presumption — putting God in your little box.

I lived for a time in the book of Job and the message God gave me through that time was His sovereignty. The secret of Job is in Job 33:12. It says



simply, "God is greater than man." God does as He wills and no one can stay His hand.

We need to understand our place under the sovereignty of God. When Jesus came to the end of the road at Gethsemane, he knelt and prayed. When we as Christians kneel in prayer for guidance, there must come a higher prayer than, "What is fair?" or "Why is this happening to me?" We need to ask, "What is your will, Lord?" And when we come to the place where Jesus came in Gethsemane, we need to bow our heads and say, "Not my will, but thine be done."

### HEALING

Healing has caused severe problems because many of the things which are supposed to work do not bring the desired results. Sometimes people are healed, sometimes they are not.

The arguments run like this: Is healing in the atonement? Isaiah 53:4, "Surely our sicknesses He Himself bore and our pains He carried . . . by His scourging we are healed." No question — healing is in the atonement. With this in mind we box God into our little syllogism that goes like this: Healing is in the atonement. Faith is the key that unlocks the healing of Jesus. Since I have prayed for you in faith, you are healed, right? Not necessarily so. There are other factors that enter into the picture.

It is a great tragedy that we have placed so many of God's children under condemnation because we have told them, "You were not healed because you did not have the faith."

A friend of mine went into the home where a little girl was dying of leukemia — he had the *logos*. It was in the book, she would be healed. He told the parents not to worry about a thing, prayed for the little girl and went out praising God. Three weeks later the little girl was dead. My friend went into a spiritual tailspin for six months.

I recently returned from a city where one of our young graduates from Oral Roberts University was emerging from a shattering spiritual experience.

A man had joined his church who practiced a brand of theology which says: Faith, if exercised, would always save the sick. This man prayed for a fine Spirit-filled, Christian professor who was a diabetic and told him, "You are healed, get off your insulin." This was on a Thursday and by Sunday the man was almost dead. The wife was frantic with fear. When the man who practiced this type of "faith" returned to the home, he found the wife on the floor and began casting demons out of her. He said to the professor, who was approaching death, "You are going to be all right." My friend finally took over and got the professor to a hospital an hour away from death. He was convinced that this man would have let him die.

Bad theology is a cruel taskmaster. If, however, God speaks a *rayma* to you, you can be sure it will come to pass.

Some time back a young wife of a professor at Oral Roberts University called my wife. She had just returned from a visit to her doctor and was quite shaken. After the doctor had finished all his tests he told her, "You have an obstruction in your heart. We don't know how great it is, but this obstruction has to be viewed and we are going to give you an angiogram. This procedure itself can induce a heart attack. You must understand the dangers that are involved."

When she called my wife immediately there was a word, a *rayma*, spoken to my heart. "Honey, she is going to be all right," I said. We went over and spent an evening with her and her husband and together we were refreshed in the spirit. After we had prayed, she asked, "Do you still believe I am going to be all right?"

"You are going to be all right," I answered.

During the night my wife and I were awakened individually to intercede and pray for her. The next day president Roberts came over to see her. He told her, "I didn't need to come, you are going to be all right." The word had been confirmed by the witness of two.

That night in the hospital she faced the terror of a serious operation the following morning. I cannot explain it, I only know God let me feel that terror, and I prayed specifically that when they did the angiogram there would be no terror for her. God answered and she had perfect rest.

When the doctor came in after the operation he said that it looked very encouraging. They had found nothing. Confirming it with X-rays, he reported there was absolutely no obstruction. There was no explanation. Her heart was perfect, and he sent her home.

Now that was a *rayma*. We did not need twenty-nine verses of "Only Believe" to work up faith. It was a gift from God. I had nothing to do with it. How do we know this was a *rayma*? Because the facts proved it. God was at work. He spoke and He healed.

When we tell people, "You are healed," we had better be sure that we have a word from God. Many times people are healed because they exercise faith in God, but Mark 11:22 tells us that there is the faith of God. When God speaks a *rayma* it is from His own mountain-moving faith and it is unshakable, no matter what the circumstances are. This kind of faith is from a sovereign almighty God.

### PROPHECY

Prophecy normally falls into the category of *rayma* since it is a word for a particular time and situation. This is why we must be most careful about publishing magazines full of prophecies. These prophecies, however valid, were given by God to a particular assembly for a particular time and situation, and are not necessarily meant to be universal prophecies.

Prophecies circulated around from group to group may be listened to, if they witness to your spirit, but the normal means of receiving a prophetic word is found in 1 Corinthians 14. It is to be given to a specific congregation and judged by others. Such words given to other groups may not fit what is happening in your own congregation.

Often we do not know it, but we



are speaking a word of prophecy. I was in Jacksonville, Florida, staying in the home of a Presbyterian minister and his wife. In the course of a conversation one evening on healing, I told them, "Sir, you may have a bachache and your wife may have arthritis, but when the Lord heals, it will be a gift of healing to each of you."

Later when they had both beautifully received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, the wife told me, "One of the factors in our receiving the Baptism was what you said about my arthritis and my husband's backaches. There was no way you could have known except from God." It was a word of knowledge, even though I did not know it at the time. This is what 1 Corinthians 14:25 means when it says, "The secrets of a man's heart will be revealed."

Personal prophecy is the area in which we most generally find difficulty. I would venture to say that 60% — 70% of the personal prophecies which have come to me in my life have not proved true. Many of them had to do with specific times and details. We often hear people say, I want a word of prophecy from this person or that person. Often the word of the Lord is "Wait on me," and we never hear it because we are so busy running around.

Do not take this wrongly. I have received and believe in personal prophecy. The other day one of the elders in our group brought a prophecy which said to beware of Elymas the Sorcerer when I went to a certain place. I arrived at that place and sure enough there was Elymas the Sorcerer — only it was a woman. That word of prophecy was an aid to help me receive understanding in a given situation. Prophecy is meant to be *confirmatory* rather than directive.

In the Church the Spirit is in the *community* of believers and the community of believers has the right to judge prophecy. It will be necessary occasionally to judge the prophecies that come and reject those that are not of the spirit of the meeting.

One time during a beautiful spirit of praise a young lady brought a  
**NEW WINE**

prophecy that was terribly condemnatory. She said, "You must likewise repent or go to hell."

I had to say, "I'm sorry but we do not accept that prophecy as coming from the Lord." The lady and her bevy of followers got up and left. That proved that it was not from the Lord, because the body is given the right to judge.

If someone has a word for you, ask if they mind if you put it before the body to be judged. If he refuses, he is not a true prophet. A true prophet will say, "Of course, let's judge it." If it is received, then it is true prophecy.

### FINANCES

God is speaking to the Christian community about finances. I believe His special message to the American church is, "Get out of debt." He wants us to be free to move and go where He wants us. Any man in debt is not free to go, he is tied down.

I am afraid that we have become lax in our handling of money. Financial integrity is the basis for spiritual leadership. It becomes very easy for pastors to feel that certain things are due them — certain privileges, certain tabs picked up, certain discounts, and so on. They excuse it by saying, "Well, we don't make as much as we could in another field. We feel that God should supply us with new cars — the best of everything."

Very soon we are burdened with debt. I must admit with regret that pastors are considered to be among the worst at paying off their debts. It is tragic. You may not realize it, but God is very interested in our debts. Did you realize that Jesus speaks about money or material possessions in one out of five verses in the Gospels? Paul often talked about money. It is nothing to be ashamed of. In 1 Thessalonians 4:10-12 he writes:

For indeed you do practice it [love] toward all the brethren who are in Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you; so that

you may behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.

There are many young men here in Tulsa who really believe that work is not the Lord's will for them. If the Lord ever leads me into community living again I am going to hang a little motto in a prominent place. It is a quotation from an early Christian community. It reads, "No idler can be a believer." Underneath I would like to put something like, "Three days for nothing, after that work or leave."

Work is ordained of God — it is not a curse, but a blessing. Paul worked with his own hands to support himself, but too often the young men of our day are not willing to do this.

A few years back I was in Washington, D.C. after a disastrous spiritual adventure. When I got through bouncing around, I began going to employment agencies looking for a job. They all said, "You have a wonderful education, but you are short on experience." I finally landed a painting job.

I muttered and complained about it and finally said, "All right, I'll paint until Jesus comes if I have to."

Then the Lord said, "You don't have to paint anymore." About that time I was called to teach at Oral Roberts University. I would much rather teach than paint, but God wanted me to be willing to work.

Christians sometimes think that if it is a good idea, then it must be God's work and He will pay for it. An all inclusive *logos*. There is a principle, however, which says: What God orders, He pays for. What God does not order, He does not pay for, even if that something is for Him.

I once helped an enthusiastic young man in our town put on a Jesus Festival. It was a wonderful idea and his only motive was to win people to Christ. However, he did not have a *rayma*. The Lord had not ordered it and no one had conferred with the elders. A few were won to Christ and some are still going on. For that we thank God. But that young man is still trying to pay off the debt of that festival. It was a good idea, but God

(continued on page 27)





The fourth in  
a series of articles  
on the moral  
and ethical crisis  
in our society.

## FACING THE PAST



### The problem of facing the guilt of sexual sin.

by Herbert J. Miles

*This second of two articles on the biblical understanding of sex will deal with receiving forgiveness for the burdening guilt of sexual sin.*

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit.

Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise (Psalm 51:1-4, 7-13, 16-17).

There are thousands, even millions

of people, young and old, who have committed sexual sins in the past and are living under a burden of personal anxiety, misery, and agony over these past sexual sins. In many cases their consciences continually smite them within. They can truthfully say with David, "My sin is ever before me" (Psalm 51:3). Their one interest is to free themselves in some way from this burden, this anxiety, but they do not know what to do or how to proceed to receive forgiveness and release. In many cases their anxiety is increased because their sexual sin is a secret, except for the other person or persons involved, and must be borne by the individual alone.

There are other cases where the individual, after sexual sin, works hard to rationalize, to control, and to ease his conscience. But even though he may succeed in forcing the guilt into his sub-conscious mind, there will be many circumstances that will cause it to surface, to thrust itself boldly into the stream of conscious thought, and periods of guilt feeling and anxiety will plague him.

How does a person go about receiving complete forgiveness and release from past sexual sins? A college student's experience should throw some light on this problem.

John, a college junior, asked me for a private conference. When he came to my office, he carefully closed the door, indicating the serious nature of the problem at hand. He was pale and rather tense, but had control of himself and seemed determined to do something about his problem. He

started by saying, "I should have come to see you a long time ago. My problem is . . . well, I am ashamed to tell you about it. I have never told a living soul about this. But I just have to tell somebody." He hesitated, his lips quivered, and tears welled up in his eyes. I interrupted to give him support and to allow him to regain the courage to continue. I assured him that he was not alone in having a personal problem, and that he was doing the right thing to seek help. I explained that whatever he said to me would be kept in the strictest of professional confidence. Then, I suggested that he go ahead and tell me frankly, in simple language, the details of his problem.

In a halting but determined manner, he began, "Two years ago in the summer, when I was nineteen years old, I went to do some work for a family in my hometown. I was to do some general cleaning and repair work in the home. They were good people, I thought. The children were in school during the day, and the father, a salesman, was out of town for a week. His wife directed my work. She visited with me much of the time while I worked. We talked about many subjects. She was complimentary of me and my work and showed me much kindness. She was thirty-four years of age and was an attractive person. On the fourth day, after we were well-acquainted, she tempted me to have sexual relations with her, and I yielded." At this point John was temporarily overcome with emotion.

After he regained control, he



continued. "My conscience bothered me so much that night and the next day that I called and made an excuse and did not go back to finish the work. A few months later the family moved from the community. I have never seen her since. I have never told anyone from that day to this, but I still feel very guilty about it. I came back to college the following fall hoping I could lose myself in my school work and forget the incident. But I couldn't. No matter how hard I've tried, I haven't been able to forget. My guilt feelings have grown steadily worse. I have dated some fine girls, and I really want to get married and have a Christian home and family. Now, I am nearly twenty-two years old, but I feel so unworthy of any girl that I cannot date one more than a few times. Then I turn to another one. My grades have been getting lower and lower, and lately I've been extremely discouraged and depressed. I hate to take up your busy time like this, but I just have to get release from my guilt somehow. I thought maybe you could help me."

At this point, John ceased talking and waited for me to take over. To give him support, I pointed out that the woman involved was much older than he was and that she had been the aggressor; seemingly, she had willfully planned to trap him and was, therefore, because of her age and her motives, responsible for the experience. He quickly replied, "Yes, that is true, but I am responsible too because I gave in to her." I agreed that he could share a part of the responsibility but suggested that we have to measure responsibility by motives. I asked him if he, in any way, had thoughts, plans, or motives in this direction before she tempted him. He replied, "No! Never! But I did give in to her. I was weak. I should have been stronger. I am guilty." Then he described briefly the experience in the Bible when Joseph slipped out of his coat and fled from Potiphar's wife after she tempted him. "I should have been strong as he was."

Realizing that it was necessary to help John come to grips with his own guilt, I suggested that we accept the

fact that he shared some of the responsibility for the experience and that we deal directly with his sin and guilt. I asked him to explain to me how the Bible says a Christian should deal with his sins. He quickly described repentance and confession. I interrupted, "John, it is obvious that you are very, very sorry for your part in this experience. Doesn't this constitute repentance on your part?"

He said, "If I knew how to repent any better, I would have done so a long time ago."

I continued, "Have you ever asked God to forgive you for this sin?"

He quickly said, "Yes, many, many times!"

"Then," I said, "doesn't it follow that God always forgives those who repent and ask for forgiveness?"

"Yes," he said, "but I have not been able to get any release at all. When I try to stop feeling guilty, I seem to be up against a stone wall."

At this point, I attempted to summarize his feelings and show him that he had not succeeded in accepting God's forgiveness. He agreed on this. I went on to explain that when a person repents and asks for forgiveness God completely forgives him immediately. Then we looked at some Scriptures describing the nature of God's forgiveness. We read, "As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12 RSV). "John," I asked, "how far is the East from the West?" Without waiting for an answer, I pointed out that each is an infinite distance from the other. "And this," I said, "is simply a picture of how God removes our sins when we repent and ask for forgiveness."

Then we read from Micah 7:19, another illustration of God's complete forgiveness. "He (God) will have compassion upon us . . . thou (He) wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." I mentioned that in some places the ocean is deeper than the mountains are high. Those things that are cast to the bottom of the ocean are left there permanently. By this time, John was quiet and listening intently, literally hanging on every word. We

continued, looking at another familiar passage, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18). I explained that the color scarlet, or the brightest color, is used often in the Scriptures to describe extreme sin. In contrast, the whiteness of fresh snow is used to describe the condition of God's complete forgiveness of sin. The picture here is that when God forgives us of sin, the forgiveness is as complete as the change from crimson red to the whiteness of snow.

We read one other passage in which the prophet Jeremiah quoted the Lord God, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:34). John saw that the context of this verse, and the rest of these Scripture passages, was saying literally that God not only forgives our sins completely, but He never remembers them again.

I suggested to John that we now apply these illustrations of divine forgiveness to his problems. I repeated them. "The Lord removes our sins an infinite distance away from us — as far as East is from West, and as far as it is to the bottom of the ocean. God changes our guilt from crimson red to the whiteness of new snow. He forgets our sins forever. Even these pictures are feeble descriptions of the reality of God's true forgiveness. Now, John, in looking at your situation, we can say that you have definitely sinned. And we can say, secondly, that you have thoroughly repented. Also, you have petitioned God for His forgiveness. Now, God *has* forgiven you as fully and completely as these pictures describe. In other words, it is a fact that you are now completely forgiven. You must accept this fact, respond to it, and live by it. John, this really means that *in the sight of God, you are now as if you had never had this experience* with this woman."

I paused and inquired, "Have you followed me?"

"Yes," he replied, "this helps a lot." In finishing the conversation that day, we discussed the completeness of God's forgiveness that fits into God's



plan of infinite love and grace for all of us.

"Before you go," I said, "I want to suggest that you never tell this experience to another person as long as you live. The only possible exception would be that, previous to your marriage, you might tell your prospective marriage partner. It was right for you to tell me as a private counselor, but since your forgiveness is complete there is no reason ever to tell anyone else. If, in the future, you are tempted to feel guilty, remember these four Bible pictures we have described today. Remember that in God's sight, you are as if you had never done this thing. So, in the future, live, feel, and act as if it had never happened. As you finish your college work, continue the normal processes of courtship. Select the girl of your choice. You are worthy of her love and devotion. Move into the occupation of your choice as God leads you. And, of course, since God has done so much for you, you will want to put Him first in your life and love and serve Him."

John said, "You don't have to worry about that!" He paused, a flood of emotion crossed his face, and then he made this significant statement: "The road a person must travel to get back to the Lord after he has sinned is too hard for him to have to travel it very often." Presently, John stood up to leave. He said, "I haven't felt like this in two years." Gripping and pumping my hand, he thanked me over and over again as he left. It was three days before our paths crossed again. This time he wore a smile, and we exchanged a friendly greeting in passing. During the days until he graduated, I saw John many times. He always went out of his way to speak and to be kind. He always appeared happy, but never did he discuss or refer to the matter again . . . nor did I.

Let us note the processes involved in John's experience:

(1) He admitted to himself that he had sinned (Psalm 51:3).

(2) He possessed genuine regret, sorrow, and contrition for his sin (Psalm 51:9).

(3) He realized that he could not solve his problem alone (Psalm 51:16).

(4) In his inner distress and guilt feelings, he was anxiously seeking forgiveness and pardon (Psalm 51:9).

(5) He prayed and asked God to forgive him (Psalm 51:1,7,10).

(6) When he could not understand or accept God's free forgiveness, he sought out a counselor to help him. He trustingly shared in confidence the details of his problem, anxious to receive help (Proverbs 12:15).

(7) When the nature of God's forgiveness, through the study of the Scriptures, was made clear and simple to him, he was able to accept God's personal forgiveness. Thus he received and welcomed total joyful release (Psalm 51:8).

(8) The experience drew him spiritually near to God, and he used it as a wall, a dike, to protect him from further sexual sin (Psalm 51:12-13). Thus John went his way in life determined to follow the instructions of Jesus, "Go, and sin no more" (John 8:11).

It is obvious that John made two mistakes in handling his problem. First, he *waited too long* to seek help. He could have been spared many months of anguish had he sought help earlier. People should feel free to talk to their pastor or a Christian counselor, psychologist, nurse, doctor, a trusted Sunday school teacher or friend who is qualified to give spiritual help.

Second, John seemed to have the *false idea that sexual sins are more evil, immoral, and ungodly than any other sin*.

It is easy to understand why many people make this mistake. Four reasons appear which may help explain it.

(1) Another person has been violated.

(2) The social implications involved are major.

(3) Sex is a broad, deep, drive that is related to total life.

(4) The more highly developed and mature a person's Christian ideals and

values, the more intensely he suffers from guilt feelings.

But this reasoning is looking at sin from the human point of view and overlooks the teachings of the Scriptures on the nature of God, sin, and forgiveness. When a person seeks forgiveness, what stands in the way of God's willingness to forgive any sin is basically an attitude of unbelief and rebellion toward God on the part of the sinner. It is this *unbelief and rebellion that causes specific acts* such as the abuse of sex, telling a lie, cheating on an examination, or stealing. Both the inner rebellion and the fruit of the rebellion, the specific act committed by a person, are evil in the sight of God. But the Scriptures teach that no one specific human act is really any more sinful than any other specific act. (Readers concerned about this point should study thoroughly the following Bible passages: Nehemiah 9:17; Psalms 85:2, 86:5, 103:3, 107:19; Isaiah 55:7; Jeremiah 33:8; John 2:32, 3:16; Philippians 4:19; Hebrews 11:6; 1 Peter 5:7; 2 Peter 3:9; and Revelation 22:17.) A sexual sin, telling a lie, cheating on an examination, or stealing are all alike in the sight of God and are all fully and equally forgiven when the person committing the sin repents and asks God for forgiveness.

To help deal efficiently with past sexual sins, it is well for us to discuss more fully some Biblical ideas about the nature of men and women, sin, and forgiveness. The central core of Bible teaching is that our infinite, eternal God created both man and woman in His image (Genesis 1:27). Being created in the image of God means, among other things, that we live in a world of ideas, that we are creatures of feelings, motives, attitudes, aspirations, and values. It means that we are endowed with freedom of choice. The sacredness of the personality of both men and women is evident by the fact that we are created in God's image and by the fact that Christ died for us. Since we were created in the image of God, every person possesses dignity and is



worthy of personal respect and Christian love, regardless of color, race, creed, or culture.

Because we men and women were created free to choose between right and wrong, we are capable of sin. Sin is an inward condition of the heart that causes us to rebel against God our Creator, against His plan and His will for our lives. It causes us to make bad choices. When we sin and rebel against God, we develop guilt feelings and our conscience smites us. Conscience is the personal inner acceptance and internalizing of the spiritual and moral teachings and standards of our family and community as being right and necessary for our own conduct and character. It normally produces a feeling of guilt and shame when we violate or are tempted to violate right conduct. Conscience is inherent in the social and psychological nature of human nature. However, it can be trained in evil directions.

Salvation from sin involves two inseparable ideas: (1) repentance and (2) faith. Repentance means "change of mind." It involves genuine sorrow for our sins and an actual turning away from all our sins. When a non-Christian turns away from his sins in genuine repentance, he turns to God and in "faith" accepts Christ as his personal Lord and Savior, committing his total personality and life to Him. Faith is complete acceptance of, total, absolute commitment to, and confident dependence on Christ. Faith includes knowledge, but it goes beyond knowledge. It is God's Holy Spirit who leads the non-Christian to repent and to exercise faith in Christ. Yet, the non-Christian is not passive in this process. God respects the freedom of man, and man is freely active in the processes of repentance and faith. Repentance and faith are experiences of God's mercy and grace and are often called "Regeneration" or the "New Birth." Persons who have received Christ through repentance and faith are called believers or Christians. Thus, a non-Christian in receiving salvation in Christ is forgiven of all sins, including all sexual sins. In

the sight of God, it is as if he had never committed these past sins.

However, believers, having freedom of choice, may fall into sin through neglect and temptation. They may commit many types of sin, including sexual sins. When one sins, he grieves the Holy Spirit and becomes a stumbling block to the cause of Christ and His Gospel. But a believer who has sinned, when led of the Holy Spirit, can repent of his sin, confess his sin directly to God, and ask for forgiveness. His sin is then fully forgiven.

God, by His very nature, loves those created in His image — all men and women. When we repent of our sins, God always deals with us in love and mercy. His complete forgiveness is the result of His grace. The word "grace" is a beautiful word because it refers to the total, outgoing nature of God. It describes His sovereign goodness, His infinite wisdom, His perfect holiness, and His loving-kindness toward repenting sinners. It is God's grace that causes Him to give us the undeserved favor of complete forgiveness of all our sins — including our sexual sins. It is God's grace that causes Him to forget our sins forever. ♡

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had not ordered it and God was not paying for it.

A man with a special ministry at state fairs used to come to our fellowship occasionally. As time went on this man began to find himself short of funds and he discovered a new gift — writing checks on faith. It is also known as writing hot checks in less spiritual language. I think we can all see his line of reasoning: "Lord, you know that I have a need. 'My God shall supply all your needs.' That's what your word says, Lord. I'm writing this check on faith. I know you own the cattle on a thousand hills and I believe you will have a few of those cattle to the bank before the check gets there." He had a *logos* and that's all. He was operating on presumption and not faith.

The Lord is calling us to live lives of sober integrity, to begin to hear His voice in these four areas. Jesus was tempted, as are we, by the sin of presumption, but He did not succumb. We must learn to distinguish between the *logos* which is universal, eternal and objective; and the *rayma* which is particular, temporal and subjective. ♡

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#### BIBLE STUDY ANSWERS

(1) Genesis 3, Isaiah 3, Matthew 19, Ephesians 5, Colossians 3, 1 Peter 3, 1 Corinthians 11. (2) False. (3) Husband. (4) b,d,e. (5) False. (6) Immorality (NAS), Fornication (KJV), Unfaithfulness (Phillips), Unchastity (RSV). (7) Long life. (8) God, husband, Christ. (9) b,e. (10) a. Egypt. b. Private homes. (11) d. (12) c.



# Forum

## FAMILY

Bob Mumford — Author, Bible Teacher • Jimmy Moore — Conference Leader and Teacher •  
Derek Prince — Bible Expositor, Conference Speaker, Author •

The topic under discussion this month is **THE FAMILY**. Every day we receive questions through the mail regarding matters related to this subject. Wives, husbands, young people alike are desiring to know God's will regarding relationships within the family circle.



**How does the individual family relate to the structure of a church body under a group of elders? Specifically, in the spiritual family of the church, does the family unit become of secondary importance in the life of the individual?**

**PRINCE:** The individual family is the "cell." Out of such "cells," multiplied, the "body" of the church is built up. In the spiritual realm, as in the physical, it is impossible to build a healthy body out of unhealthy cells. Therefore, the scriptural order and well-being of each family is of primary importance for the church as a whole.

Personally, I have come to set the following order of priorities for myself: first, God; second, my family; third, my ministry to the church. It is

my conviction that a person who fails to fulfill his duty to his family cannot ever be truly successful in ministry to the church. 1 Timothy 5:8 emphasizes this principle: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house [kindred], he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel [unbeliever]."

However, "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" (1 Corinthians 14:33). In a life fully yielded to God and controlled by the Holy Spirit, our responsibilities to family and church should not conflict, but rather complement and strengthen each other. Let me say that this overall harmony between our various obligations and responsibilities is not easily achieved, but demands that we consistently maintain a right order of personal priorities. Being a successful Christian is a full-time job!

**MUMFORD:** As Derek has said, God's order of authority begins with the basic unit — a family — husband and wife, plus children. God is the head of Christ . . . Christ the head of man, and the man is head of the woman. Attempts to bring together a church family prior to the painful process of establishing the authority of the father in the home, and the consequent submission of the wife and children to him, is erroneous and frustrating. Blessed is the wife and family who have seen the spiritual authority of

their husbands and fathers.

Once we see the husband and wife as the basic cell, whatever the vision, call or commitment, the family unit never becomes secondary in importance. When this priority becomes clear, health comes to the cell — resulting in a healthy body when these cells come together.

Next, we need to understand that a church family must needs have an authority established which the fathers of the families can respect, obey and hold in esteem. When this is true in the individual families toward their father, it will be true when the families come together. The elders of the church body then are capable of function, maintenance or order, and discipline — because this is *already* established in the home. The church is simply a larger expression of what we already have experienced.

**MOORE:** The individual family must function in its proper role and so must the larger church family. The individual family cannot relinquish its responsibility in the area of husband/wife relationships and parent/child teaching and discipline.

The larger church life should be geared so as not to over-tax or compete with the individual family. At the same time the individual family must see that *self-interest does not become selfish interest*.



**What is meant by the husband's role as "prophet, priest and king" in the family?**

**PRINCE:** As "prophet," the husband *represents God to his family*. It is his responsibility to provide spiritual instruction and direction both for his wife (1 Corinthians 14:35) and for his children (Ephesians 6:4). In this respect Abraham provides a good pattern (Genesis 18:19).

As "priest," the husband *represents his family to God*. God has assigned to him both the right and the responsibility to claim, by faith and intercessory prayer, the blessings which God has promised to the family and descendants of a righteous man (see Psalm 112:1-3). Jesus required the father of the epileptic boy to exercise faith for his son's deliverance (see Mark 9:23). Paul told the Philippian jailer that he could exercise faith for the salvation of his household (see Acts 16:31). In the ordinances of the passover this is typified by the father sprinkling the blood of the lamb over the door of his house (see Exodus 12:3-7).

As "king," the husband *exercises government over his family on behalf of God*. This is indicated by the requirement that an elder must be "one that *ruleth well* his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity" (1 Timothy 3:4-5). Note that success in the exercise of authority in the home should precede the exercise of authority in the church. In this respect also Abraham sets a good example. He was expected by God to "*command* his children and his household after him" (Genesis 18:19).

**MOORE:** Let me emphasize that these are areas of responsibility that husbands/fathers receive from God; and we must *prove* ourselves faithful. Any of these responsibilities abused will bring great harm to the family. This is especially true if the man is more impressed by the power and



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*Jimmy lives with his family in Ruston, Louisiana. His warm Southern mannerisms have made him welcome and loved wherever he goes. His particular interests lie in the area of home and family life.*

prestige of the office than with the responsibility and obligation of the work.

That work consists that as *prophet*, a man hears from God and speaks for God to his family. As *priest*, a man hears from his family and speaks for his family to God. As *king*, a man sees that proper provision, protection and peace are maintained for the family. We should be careful not to overspiritualize these responsibilities. *Our family life should be balanced*. Being a "king" entails providing proper recreation as much as proper prayer meetings!

**MUMFORD:** In the economy of God, the husband has an office to fulfill. This office is not due to human ability or spiritual maturity, but *simply because* he has a wife and children.

Without seeming to be simplistic or to be overgeneralizing a condition, my conviction is that the absence of Christian men fulfilling these three

functions we have discussed is the *root* cause of the degeneration of any society. Especially is this true in ours today.

**What is the place and ministry of singles, the divorced, and the widowed in a church that is structured around primarily couples and families?**

**MUMFORD:** For years, when reading the Old Testament and the New, also, I was impressed at God's concern for the widow and orphan. Somehow, I interpreted this in purely a temporal manner. For instance, "the poor widow has no one to chop her firewood . . . hence God's instruction to us to provide for the widow and the orphan."

As we have come to understand *spiritual* authority, as well as a term we use called "covering," a new depth of understanding and appreciation has come through for God's continual concern for the orphan, widow, the divorcee, single, and for that matter, the widower.

The principle of spiritual authority and need to belong is very practical, as well as extremely spiritual. In Psalm 68:6, the solution is given — "God setteth the solitary in families." When this is seen and obeyed, it yields a most wonderful fruit of lives redeemed from despair and loneliness to one of joy and usefulness.

**PRINCE:** Paul had some suggestions along these lines. In 1 Timothy 3:2, he states that "a bishop (overseer, or elder) . . . must be . . . the husband of one wife . . ." This suggests that an elder needs a wife who is capable of working with him in caring for the flock. There are situations in which *a man alone* cannot give adequate counsel or help to a *woman alone* — whether she be single, widowed or divorced. But a husband/wife team working together can fully meet these needs.



If the church is functioning as it should, there is a place in it for every type of individual and every type of need. If a group is led by a husband/wife team, such as described, a single woman can find within it the fellowship, protection and authority that she needs.

The man who leads the group will minister either directly *with* his wife or indirectly *through* his wife. In Titus 2:1-6, it is noteworthy that Paul instructed Titus to minister *directly* to men, both young and old, and to older women; but to the younger women only *indirectly* through the older women.

It is well to note, also, that the verse Psalm 68:6, which Bob mentioned, ends with a warning: "... but the rebellious dwell in a dry land." A woman on her own who desires fellowship and protection must, by the same token, submit to authority and discipline.

**In certain situations single people living with parents seem to be caught in a conflict of family authority and church authority. Are there some guidelines for discerning the limits of church leaders and parental authority?**

**MOORE:** A starting place to consider is whether a young person is living with the parents. It seems to me if a young person is still dependent economically upon the parents, he is in a place of greater liability than if he is not dependent upon the parents.

Also, a good principle to operate on is to ask, "Not how far *must* I go, but how far *can* I go in obeying my parents." Major on the maximum rather than the minimum in obedience. With this attitude, we might greatly reduce the possibilities of conflict.

Another point to remember is that simply because parents are not professing Christians does not mean they are not good parents. Certainly Christian

parents are to be preferred, but I have known non-Christian parents who love and care for their children, and who are able to pass on some practical wisdom and skill much needed for a wholesome life.

Some questions a young person might ask when in conflict with a parent are: (1) Is what the parents ask immoral, illegal, or unchristian? (2) Will what I am asked to do, or not to do, damage the health or reputation of myself or another? If the answer is "no" in both cases, it is much easier.

I do realize that parents might not ask any of these things, but still treat the young person disrespectfully or deceitfully. If a young person felt this was the case, he would then need to seek the counsel of an older Christian, recognized by others as a good man or woman. They might very likely bring understanding or on some occasions help bring reconciliation between the young person and the parent.

**PRINCE:** So long as children continue to live in their parents' home, their situation requires them to be subject to the authority which God has set in the home — that is, the authority of their parents. If a child is too young to move out from his parents' home and set up some kind of household of his own, then he has no alternative but to remain under the authority of his parents. Later, if he moves out and sets up his own household, he is no longer directly under the authority of his parents, but he is still obligated to honor them (see Ephesians 6:2-3).

In dealing with a young person still under parental authority, a shepherd would do well to minister to such a young person either *indirectly* through the parents, or *directly* with a specific authorization from the parents. If a shepherd by-passes the parents and ministers to such a young person without their authorization, he is working contrary to divine order and his ministry may easily produce confusion or rebellion.

If through rebellion, or some crisis in a home, a person is no longer effectively under parental authority, a

shepherd may in the first instance be obliged to minister directly to such a young person, but the end purpose of his ministry should be to cause the young person to resubmit himself to his parents.

**MUMFORD:** It is difficult to speak with dogmatism on this issue, for individual situations need to be evaluated and counselled on that same basis. May I, however, express a guiding principle which has proven to be painful for the single, but fruitful for their continuing spiritual growth.

When a single, however young or old, runs afoul of parental authority there is almost always *resentment and rebellion* against that authority. To counsel a single to leave home or "to leave parents for Jesus' sake" may be the easiest solution, but avoids a *basic* breaking in the presence of parental authority, which is so vital.

When God, in the Scriptures, advises us to "honor our parents" (not only the good ones, the saved ones, the gentle ones — but those who are unfair, unsaved, or unlovely) we, who are counsellors, should be very cautious in advising a single in such a manner as to help him or her to avoid the honor to the parents which the Scriptures require. Requiring them to stand under parental authority, whenever possible, is the best foundation we can help lay for their future usefulness to the King and His Kingdom.

**How can a balance be kept between the obligations in the family (parents to each other and to children — especially if one of the parents is unsaved) and the desire to be involved with God's work and God's people?**

**MOORE:** Perhaps the key to keeping a balance of obligation to the family and being involved in God's work is the *right attitude*. Rather than thinking of God's work as one thing and our family obligations as another, put the





**DEREK PRINCE**

"It is my conviction that a person who fails to fulfill his duty to his family cannot ever be truly successful in ministry to the church."

**BOB MUMFORD**

"God's order of authority begins with the basic unit — a family — husband and wife, plus children."



two together. It would go like this, "We are to be involved in God's work, and this work begins at home."

It might help in our understanding if we remembered that being a member of the church is not just belonging to an organization, *but living a way of life*. New Testament Christians were known as a people of the Way (Acts 9:2, 18:25).

What many people do not recognize is that it takes more spirituality to be a Christian at home than anywhere else. Also, to the degree we are able to put into practice our faith at home, so God can truly use us in the church. This is what Paul was saying in 1 Timothy 3:5 "For if a man know not how to rule [lead] his own house, how shall he take care of the house of God?" In other words, as we begin at home, we shall touch the world.

**MUMFORD:** Seeking balance in our walk with the Lord is a vital part of spiritual maturity. Establishing priorities as to time, finance and obligations to our occupation, wife/husband and children, and similar "earthly" responsibilities demands wisdom.

The Scriptures speak of a "zeal without knowledge," which is an applicable description of most of us when we first come into the Lord. After years of sin and self-will, the

glory of salvation and the zeal to share what has happened to us causes an imbalance, or even neglect, to the things we then consider unimportant.

I should like to use a metaphor that Jesus gave us in John 15:2 "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

It should be apparent to each of us that as far as Jesus is concerned, the object of the Christian experience is fruit — grapes . . . not vines!

Obligation to parents, children, family, house, work, etc., act as the pruning process, preventing our growing vines (religious activity) and not grapes (spiritual fruit)!

Embracing responsibilities and authority may *seem* like it is holding us back from the things we want to do "for Jesus," but when properly understood, they become the very power of that balanced life in the Holy Spirit.

**PRINCE:** "The desire to be involved with God's work and God's people" is not necessarily, in God's sight, a truly acceptable or spiritual desire. There may be in it a great deal of carnality and self-will. The primary desire of every Christian should be to please Jesus Christ and to do the will of God. This requires taking up one's cross daily (see Luke 9:23). It may involve sacrificing "ministry," and even the fellowship of other Christians, to the

more important demands of home life. Many a wife, by selfish indulgence in meetings and other spiritual activities outside her home, has forfeited the confidence of her husband and true spiritual fellowship with him. A proper balance between home life and church fellowship requires first of all a sincere, unreserved surrender to the will of God.

Jesus Himself is a clear example of this principle. He came from heaven to earth to provide man's redemption and preach the gospel. Yet for something like fifteen years He filled a humble, obscure position in the family carpentry shop. He only entered His public ministry when God's appointed hour had come and He was released from His obligation to His family. By this time His brothers had reached the age where they could provide for their mother and their home. Later, at the climax of His ministry on the cross, one of Jesus' last concerns was to commit His mother to the care of His disciple John (John 19:26-27). ☞

Do you have questions which you feel need to be discussed through the FORUM? If they represent a need for enlightenment or encouragement to the body of Christ, we will be happy to consider them for possible future topics to be referred to our panel.

Please state questions clearly and mail to: FORUM PANEL, *New Wine* Magazine, P.O. Box 22888, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315. We appreciate reader participation in this feature of *New Wine*.

Next month's FORUM will discuss "Shepherds." Bill Cooper of Naples, Florida, will be our Guest Panelist.

**OOPS!**

In our February issue we printed an article entitled, "The Wealth in My World," by Mr. Robert Johnson. As many of our readers have written in to point out, much of this article was taken, without due credit, from Keith Miller's *A Second Touch*. We apologize to Mr. Miller and to Word Books, Waco, Texas, for this oversight.



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