

# new wine

JANUARY 1975

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE  
DEDICATED TO CHRISTIAN GROWTH



And  
He shall reign  
for ever and ever.  
Rev. 11:15b

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## THE RESTORATION OF WOMANHOOD

After reading your October issue on "The Restoration of Womanhood," I feel moved to express my gratitude to you and your staff for doing such a good job of attempting to find God's full counsel on the subject in love — not legalism.

Mrs. Paul H. Moore  
Winter Park, Fl.

The articles on wives and submission have blessed and encouraged me, for in becoming submissive my husband has come back to the Lord. It took three years for the Lord to take the head knowledge and work it into my experience, and I praise Him for His patience!

Mrs. R. E. Hooker, Jr.  
Redondo Beach, Ca.

Yesterday a friend of mine gave me your October issue, and do you know God answered my prayer through that magazine! I was just like that woman in the article "God's Holy Household." All the time I ignored my husband's authority over me. It is so beautiful how God does things — this time through your magazine. I only wonder why I didn't understand this sooner in my life, for I am a Grandma.

Mrs. Walter H. Kosfeld  
Ocala, Fl.

I know the viewpoints expressed in your October issue were important, relevant and necessary for correction and teaching, and in many ways I praise God that He is confirming His word to me by your ministry. However, let us be aware of the dangers of imbalance in all of this — that women are taught subjection instead of submission; that they ignore God's dealings in their lives and His calling on their lives if it does not fall within certain guidelines; and that they fail to have a one to one relationship with God in their desire to obey their elder.

Mrs. John Novack  
Bethlehem, Pa.

I am afraid that we just parted company as the result of your October issue with its down-the-line advocacy of male supremacy. Your editorial distinction between ministry and government in the church is labored. It appears to be a logical "cop out" to permit you to subordinate women in fact while accounting for their often manifest leadership charisms in theory.

I believe the Holy Spirit is doing a new thing with his people. I feel that part of this new thing is to give the Body of Christ for the first time the full benefit of all that is different and complementary, but not necessarily subordinate, in women.

Geoffrey Cheadle,  
Brid. Gen. USAF (Ret.)  
Alexandria, Va.

# Letters to Editor

DEAR NANCY . . .

Your sharing in *New Wine* ["The Single Woman," October 1974] was beautiful. How I praise Him for your open and honest presentation of your growth experience. I too am 30, a school teacher, and becoming fulfilled in my place of service. It does help to know the security of that wonderful covering God provides when we are in His order. Thank you again for confirming God's work in me.

Merilyn Moon  
Temple Terrace, Fl.

I don't suppose it occurred to you that a single, 40-year-old Independent Baptist Church secretary would be blessed out of her head by your shared experiences. Having battled with rebellion against my Pastor-Shepherd-Boss over the past several days, I was depressed, cast down and ready to throw in the towel. The Lord blessed me with truth from His Word and from your article. My boss will see a new girl, I'm sure, because I too am learning to submit to His place of authority over me.

Mary DesChamps  
Rootstown, Ohio

## A MATTER OF SUBJECT

The joy and expectancy are gone from receiving *New Wine*. At one time, rich meaty nuggets were revealed in each issue by the hammer of the Holy Spirit. Where is the "full gospel" you once taught, as you give over your teaching exclusively to "discipleship"? To balloon one teaching at the neglect of another does not make a balanced diet.

Adele Lawrence  
New Orleans, La.

Since you decided to first present topical issues we have received tremendous inspiration and encouragement from each issue to the degree that we really could not believe that they could keep getting better each month. But they have!

Mr. & Mrs. Alan C. Ritter  
Richland, Wash.

My wife and I especially appreciate the Christian viewpoint and scriptural teaching given on subjects such as abortion and divorce, which the world considers as social concerns but readily accept as part of their lives.

Gary B. Fish  
Kenosha, Wis.

Some of us are sorry to see the general lack in the current magazines of messages pointing us to God Himself. The great emphasis of the pulpit and some of the leading magazines which come to us is toward man and man's need. The chief end of the Gospel, as I see it, is to bring men into God, not just unto God.

J. R. Schisler  
Paraguay, S.A.

## PRAYER AND FASTING

I fasted and prayed for the recent national elections because in my spirit I knew much was at stake. Somehow, I sensed a wrong attitude in the nationwide apathy reported on the news prior to the elections. After prayer and fasting, the news media reported much larger voter turnouts than expected in Missouri. Can it possibly be true that the earnest prayers of one believer can make a difference? I feel that the answer is yes, and that God is restoring prayer. The Body of Christ is waking up. If I am, then it must be happening all over the world! God is giving us all a vision of Jesus Christ, and men and women are responding to the challenge. Get ready for war! The victory is indeed ours.

Mr. & Mrs. Jack D. Zeller

I want to offer praise to the Lord for His faithfulness. We in America have a new government, headed by a practicing Christian. I see this as a great answer to last spring's Day of Prayer and Fasting. God is faithful! When we, His people, did our part of the job, He did His part. Perhaps this change doesn't mean an end to problems, but it is a powerful witness of God's personal concern over this earth. It is also a powerful witness to the effect of God's people everywhere coming into agreement in humiliation, prayer and fasting. I have not heard any praise to the Lord for this mighty work. But let's rejoice: God proclaims Himself and His salvation to the whole world, even in this "evil generation."

Bill Barbours  
Rustin, Tx.



# Editorial

As we reflect over the past few months, we marvel at all that God has done. We have witnessed some of the most dramatic events ever to take place in the history of the world. In a little over a year, we have seen the resignation of a president and vice-president, a world monetary crisis, a world food and fuel crisis, the large scale breakdown of the moral fabric of Western society, and an alarming rise in occult activity — especially in our schools.

Dramatic changes in the Church of Jesus Christ have also been taking place during this year. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit among the denominations continues, a Senate resolution for a Day of Prayer and Fasting called a nation to prayer, and unprecedented events are bringing a sense of God's tearing down the walls and barriers that have kept the Body of Christ divided — especially the wall between the Catholics and Protestants.

Reader response to the past twelve issues of NEW WINE has been the greatest since its introduction in 1969. We have had more requests for back issues and reprints than ever before. We are grateful for this response, as it encourages us to believe that what we have been attempting to bring you is confirming what God is saying.

As we begin this New Year, we think it is very fitting that the theme for this issue is *Lordship*. Truly the only way God's purpose will be accomplished in the Church is as we say, "Lord Jesus, come and rule over us. Establish your Kingdom in us and on earth as it is in heaven."

We believe in the coming months that Christ's authority in the Church will become more evident than ever before. As the Church comes to maturity, we are going to see the gifts and ministries come forth confirming the Word that Jesus Christ is Lord!

Let us, then, each embrace with joy the changes that must come as the Holy Spirit continues His purifying work in our lives. For it is only as we change, that we may reflect the image of Christ and be the light of the world in an hour of darkness.

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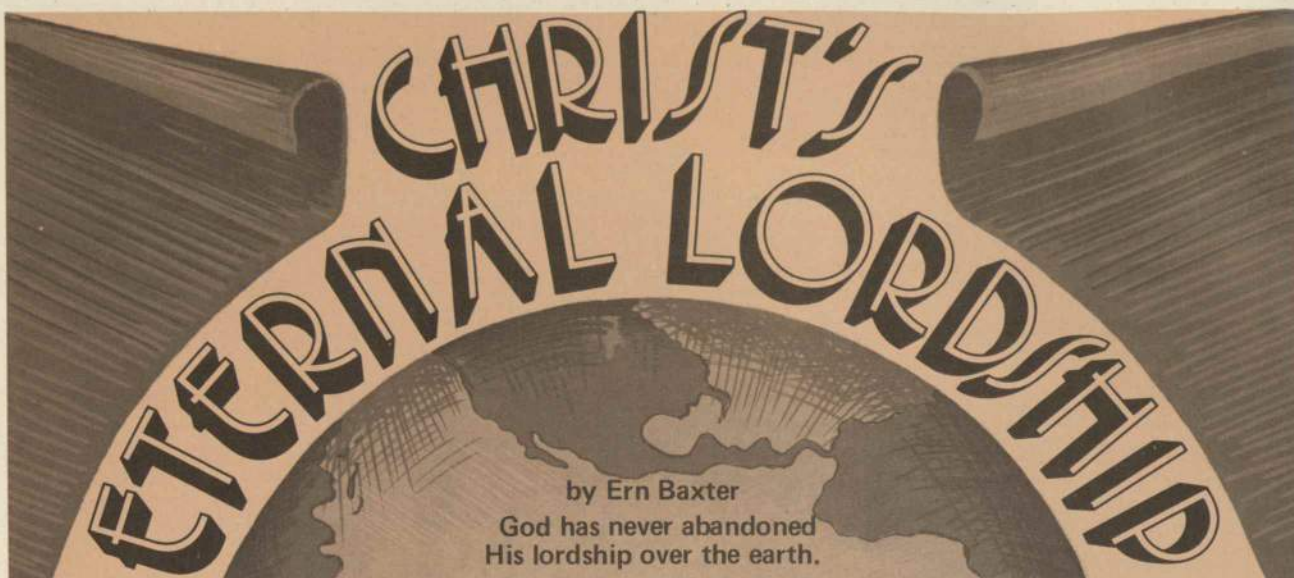
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**T**he one true God, whose name is Jehovah, is the ultimate source of all life, authority, and power. He is the self-existent, supreme, and incomparable "I Am." He is the God who created the worlds of space (Gen. 1:1) and time (Heb. 11:3), who Himself "inhabits eternity" (Isa. 57:15). Attempts to describe and define God can only be made in terms understandable to finite minds. God's underived and beginningless life is spoken of in terms of time, as the Psalmist declares, "From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psa. 90:2). From the infinite past (as men speak) into the infinite future, thou art God, the God of sovereign power.

God, speaking through the prophet Isaiah, describes Himself in terms suited to their capacity to understand. "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Isa. 43:10). All other claimants to deity are no match for Jehovah who has eternal priority. The God of Israel is superior to them, for He has no beginning nor ending.

Remember the former things long past, For I am God, *and there is no other*; I am God, *and there is no one like me*, Declaring the end from the beginning And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, "My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good

pleasure"; . . . Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it (Isa. 46:9-11 NAS).

God, being who and what He is, it follows that we are totally dependent upon His grace for a revelation of Himself and His plans and purposes. This He has granted, saying, "Truly I have spoken."

#### THE LORD OF CREATION

In the first two chapters of Genesis we have the account of creation. The climax of God's creative work was the making of man.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them *rule over* the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and *over all the earth*, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and *fill the earth*, and

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*subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth"* (Gen. 1:26-28 NAS).

Adam was to be God's king, reigning over the earth "with his consorted Eve." And his "court" must have been indescribably beautiful for "the Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed" (Gen. 2:8 NAS).

God had made the earth "and the fulness thereof" (Psa. 24:1), to display His glory in all its varied forms, and man was the most magnificent part of the display. "For *since the creation of the world* His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, *being understood through what has been made* . . ." (Rom. 1:20 NAS). David "understood," and through nature, acknowledged nature's God. In Psalm 8 he expresses the overwhelming awe that gripped him as he beheld "what has been made."

When I consider Thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, The moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him? (Vs. 3-4 NAS).

Yet, as David "considers" the wonders of creation, his understand-



able reference to human insignificance gives way to an inspired declaration of man's God-ordained purpose and destiny. Human dignity has been marred by sin, but implicit in David's words may be heard the assurance of faith in a redeeming God, who will restore man to his place of dominion.

Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God, And dost crown him with glory and majesty! Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou has put all things under his feet, All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the sea (Vs. 5-8 NAS).

"The beauty of God's plan" (Rom. 3:23 JBP) is clear. He had made a beautiful earth, in which He had planted a beautiful garden, to be the beautiful home for two beautiful creatures, Adam and Eve, who would reproduce beautiful children, who in turn would reproduce, until through the process of reproduction, the world would be full of beautiful people. All of this would, of course, be done in obedient submission to the sovereign authority and supervision of Jehovah God. Even the redeemed and sanctified imagination has difficulty envisioning such a world of morally, physically, and spiritually magnificent rational creatures, living in an unsullied and uncontaminated earth of divinely ordered splendor.

It is obvious we do not live in such a world. Our world is not the orderly and beautiful place we have just attempted to describe. Something has made it otherwise. Volumes have been written to record the account of human misery and disorder, and volumes have been written suggesting ways and means to remedy the situation. However, all remedies that have not rightly diagnosed the disease, are doomed to failure. Some superficial and temporary measures may reduce the pain, but the patient is doomed to die if the disease is not accurately diagnosed and properly treated. The malady is universal, and all men, unless they have discovered the proper

remedy, are afflicted. The Bible gives us the correct diagnosis. "For there is no distinction to be made anywhere; *everyone has sinned, everyone falls short of the beauty of God's plan*" (Rom. 3:22,23 JBP).

Genesis 3 contains the painful account of Adam's defection. Adam's authority to rule over the earth was delegated. He ruled under God's ultimate authority. He must not make decisions independent of his Creator and Sustainer. The continuation of his authority depended on his obedience to the One who had placed him in power.

Satan, who himself had disobeyed and been punished by God, deceived Eve, who in turn was successful in getting Adam to eat the forbidden fruit. The serpent, Satan's agent, and Eve, were both meted out punishment for their part in the disobedience of Adam. However, Adam was the one held totally responsible for his defection. He was God's king, and answerable to God for his conduct. And so we are told, that "by *one man* sin entered into the world, and death by sin," and, "by *one man's* disobedience many were made sinners" (Rom. 5:12, 19).

Adam forfeited his authority. The sovereign of the soil became the slave of the soil (Gen. 3:17-19). Driven from his beautiful garden headquarters, this deposed monarch with the sentence of death hanging over him, paid dearly for his disobedience. The price was terrible. An immediate reduction of spiritual awareness, the reluctance of the hostile earth to provide him subsistence, the irrevocably altered relationship with Eve, the tragedy of turmoil and murder in his home, together with the nagging memories of Edenic bliss, all combined to make his act of disobedience incomputably costly.

### DELEGATED LORDSHIP

But now the question arises, If Adam is no longer king, who is? The earth is made to be ruled, and its ruler has been dethroned. Obviously the authority reverts to the One who gave

it. The Scriptures make it abundantly clear that God reigned, delegating authority to whomever He chose, awaiting the time when man should qualify to assume the universal authority forfeited by Adam. The Old Testament writers repeatedly affirm the kingship of Jehovah over the earth, and His delegation of authority. (See Ps. 22:28; 24:1; 47:2,7,8; 66:7; 96:10; 59:13; 103:19; 75:6,7; Dan. 4:34-37).

It is evident from these scriptures, and many others which could be cited, that God reigned over the earth by delegating authority to kings and kingdoms, both Israelitish and Gentilic. His medium for delegating and dealing with earthly authority was the prophet. A prophet is "one who speaks for another." (See Heb. 1:1, Lk. 1:70).

Many names come to mind, such as Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Melchizedek, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob's twelve sons became the fathers of a nation, being named Israelites after Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, after wrestling with the angel. As a nation, the Israelites went to Egypt in time of famine and enjoyed security under the delegated authority of their brother Joseph, who had become second in command only to the king. In Egypt they became a sizeable nation. After the death of Joseph, "there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1:8). The new king, alarmed at the growth of the Israelites, subjected them to servitude to keep them from possibly overthrowing him.

God raised up the prophet Moses to be His voice to the Israelites, and also their deliverer from Egypt. He was able by the mighty power of God to lead the people out of Egypt, and bring them into the wilderness where God could prepare them for going into the land of Canaan. While in the wilderness, God entered into covenant with the nation (Ex. 19:4-6; 24:1-8). In spite of God's blessing and provision, the Israelites established a record of disobedience. They rebelled against Moses repeatedly, and eventually in the days of Samuel, they



declared their desire to be rid of the divine kingship mediated through prophets and have a king like the other nations. Samuel was displeased with the people for their attitude, and "prayed unto the Lord" (1 Sam. 8:6). God's response to Samuel is most enlightening. It makes clear that He had indeed been reigning over Israel through the prophet Samuel. "And the Lord said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but *they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them*" (1 Sam. 8:7).

While Israel thought they were being governed by their new king Saul, the fact was, that Samuel continued to be the one through whom God mediated His authority. Samuel anointed Saul as king, and he also delivered the message of God to Saul pronouncing his fate. So, while the people thought they were being ruled by Saul, they were still under the kingship of God, Samuel the prophet being His deputy in the earth.

Israel's next king was David. Although he was "a man after God's own heart," he was still subject to God through the prophet Nathan. He also was himself a prophet, so God could speak to him directly as a prophet concerning his kingly duties. And so it continued through Israel's history. God sent them prophets to direct them, warn them, and often be killed by them. But God never dropped the reigns of government. Also, whatever authority Satan had was limited by the will of God. He was only permitted to do such things as fitted in with the plans and purposes of God, as in the case of Job.

When Satan is spoken of as "the God of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4), it is well to define his territory. The "world" over which he is "god" and "prince" (John 14:30), is that number of moral intelligences willingly submitted to his sway. The "world" of Satan's dominion consists of that part of mankind organizing its life apart from God, thus leaving itself vulnerable to Satan's manipulation.

From the time of Adam's forfeiture

of authority, God began to speak of another Man who would be the woman's "seed" (Gen 3:15), and who would assume the sovereignty lost through disobedience. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, "filled with the Holy Ghost, prophesied," saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as *he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began*" (Luke 1:67-70).

We cannot deal with all the prophetic references to the coming of the new Ruler. However, three things are declared about Him from the human standpoint. He would be a man as was Adam, thus a member of the human race (Luke 3:38). He would be Abraham's "seed," blessing the world with redemption from sin (Heb.2:16). He would be David's "seed," restoring the lost royalty to man according to God's purpose (Matt. 1:1). And from the divine side, He would be no less a person than God's Son (Luke 1:32).

## CHRIST'S LORDSHIP

Since it is our purpose to consider the scope of Christ's lordship, we will confine ourselves to some of those passages which deal with His rulership, emphasizing two points. First, He was to be God's Son, and second, He was to be of "the seed of David." We will look at three Psalms which establish the character of the coming One as God's Son, Psalm 2, 45 and 110.

To David, in Psalm 2, are revealed the declarations of God and His Son, concerning rulership of the earth. The first three verses describe mankind in rebellion against God and His anointed King. Then comes the response of God, followed by the Son's report of His Father's "decree."

He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury: "*But as for me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain.*"

"I will surely tell of *the decree of the Lord*: He said to Me, 'Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and *I will surely give the nations as Thy inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Thy possession*' " (Psa. 2:4-8 NAS).

The fact and scope of Christ's lordship are here clearly delineated. God will install His King in the midst of the nations, and "decree" that His Son-King shall have the earth with all its inhabitants as His rightful "possession." The early Christians understood this Psalm to apply to God's installation of Christ as King at His resurrection, and appealed in prayer to God to confirm His promise in the Psalm, and establish Christ's lordship, through granting success to the preaching of the Gospel (Acts 4:24-33). For them the Psalm was fulfilled in the enthroning of the King, and was being fulfilled in His moving out to conquer the nations through the Gospel.

The relevant passage in Psalm 45 is quoted and interpreted for us by the writer to the Hebrews. The inspired interpretation leaves no doubt who the Psalmist is referring to or the time of this One's reign. Hebrews 1 tells us how God spoke "in *time past* unto the fathers by the prophets," but *now*, "hath in these *last days* spoken unto us by His Son" (Heb. 1:1,2). He then proceeds to speak of the absolute supremacy of the Son over all things and creatures, including angels who are servants and not sovereigns, as is the Son. But let us put the two scriptures together.

Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Thy kingdom (Psa. 45:6 NAS).

But of *the Son* He says; "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, And the righteous scepter is the scepter of His Kingdom (Heb. 1:8 NAS).

God's Son is the One spoken of by the Psalmist, and He is the One according to Hebrews who has a "throne," a "scepter," and a "Kingdom."

Psalm 110 is the most frequently



quoted Psalm in the New Testament. When Jesus used the Psalm to counteract the wrong teaching of the scribes, He made it clear that David had spoken of Him by divine inspiration, saying, "For David himself said *by the Holy Ghost*" (Mark 12:36). By inspiration of the Holy Spirit, David was permitted to hear the word of the Lord to One whom David called "my Lord." This One of course was Jesus Christ, David's Lord, and the Lord of all who have bowed the knee to Him in total surrender. Let us hear the Holy Spirit speaking through David.

The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet." The Lord will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying "*Rule in the midst of Thine enemies.*" (Ps. 110:1-2 NAS).

Thus we clearly see that the "last Adam" who would assume the sovereignty over the earth is God's Son.

The second point is, that earth's ultimate Ruler was to be of "David's seed." God had promised David that He would build him a "house," telling him that "your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam. 7:16). This pledge is incorporated in two Psalms.

"I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to *David My servant*, I will establish *your seed forever*, And build up your *throne* to all generations" (Psa. 89:3,4 NAS).

The Lord has sworn to *David*, A truth from which He will not turn back; "*Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne*" (Psa. 132:11 NAS).

Does the Word of God tell us when this promise to David was fulfilled? Turning to Acts 2, we listen to Peter giving a Spirit-inspired explanation of the happenings on the day of Pentecost. Commencing at verse 22, Peter gives a brief but graphic statement covering the life of Jesus through to His resurrection from the dead. Then at verse 25 he speaks of a Psalm of

David, (Psa. 16:8-11), which Peter declares, "David says of *him*." He then goes on to quote the last four verses of the Psalm in which David states a promise of God. "Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, nor allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay" (vs. 27). Peter has already assured his audience that David was speaking of *Him*, the Lord Jesus Christ. However, he patiently points out, that this could not be said of David, since David "both died, and was buried, and the tomb is with us to this day" (vs. 29). David could not have been speaking of himself. Peter then gives us the Spirit's interpretation of the Psalm.

And so, because he [David] was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon *his throne*, he looked ahead and *spoke of the resurrection of the Christ*, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore *having been exalted to the right hand of God*, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which ye both see and hear. For *it was not David who ascended into heaven*, but he himself says: "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet'" (Acts 2:30-35 NAS).

The "decree" of God in Psalm 2, to "install His King" was fulfilled at the time of Christ's resurrection and ascension. The "throne" of Psalm 45 was occupied by "the Son" whom we now "see *crowned* with glory and honor" (Heb. 1:8; 2:9). And Peter, quoting Psalm 110, assures us that the King-Priest is now seated "at God's right hand."

Paul says the same thing in his first recorded sermon delivered at Antioch in Pisidia. Making reference to the second Psalm, he says:

And we declare unto you the glad tidings, how that *the promise which was made unto the fathers*, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that *He hath*

*raised up Jesus again*; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee (Acts 13:32,33).

Then let us hear the words of Him who is "the true witness," even our Lord Jesus. Addressing the Father in the prayer recorded in John 17, He acknowledges that the Father had given "*Him authority over all mankind*" (vs. 2 NAS). Another rendering reads, "For thou hast made him *sovereign over all mankind*" (NEB).

Hear Him again after the resurrection as He speaks to His disciples, saying, "*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth*" (Matt. 28:18 NAS). In the light of His "*all authority* in heaven and *on earth*," He issues a commission which is possible of fulfilment. "Go *therefore* and make disciples of *all nations*" (vs. 19 NAS). It is only as we apprehend the scope of His lordship over the earth, that we can with genuine faith and God-inspired confidence expect to "make disciples of all nations."

It was the Spirit-imparted knowledge that Jesus Christ was "Lord of all" (Acts 10:36) that fired the first Christians to invade cities, provinces, and nations with the Gospel. Their Lord had "*all authority* . . . in heaven and *on earth*," and He had delegated them to affirm and establish that authority "in all the world" (Mark 16:15), by word and by deed.

The universal lordship of Christ is not just a doctrine to which we give mental assent, but the basis of all sound Christian conduct, personal and corporate. Could it be, that we as individual Christians, and as the redeemed community, have lost sight of the significance and purpose of Christ's lordship? If so, would this not account for our devastating disunity and debilitated discipleship?

Let the conquering cry of the first Christians, who "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6), be heard again as the unanimous affirmation and commitment of the people of God, until the world hears and sees and knows that "*Jesus Christ is Lord!*"



# LORD OF THE DOLLAR?



## Christ's lordship and our material possessions.

by Don Basham

**A** preacher had conducted a revival and was baptizing his converts in a farm pond not far from his church. One of the converts was a prosperous farmer, known in the community for his tight grip on the dollar.

When his name was called, this farmer, clad in overalls, left the bank to wade slowly toward the preacher. As the water reached his knees he suddenly turned back for the shore.

"Wait a minute, preacher," he said. "I forgot to take my billfold out of my pocket. I don't want it to get wet."

"Leave it where it is and come back out here," the preacher replied. "Your billfold needs to be baptized too."

Unfortunately, many a Christian's conversion and baptism seems never to have reached his pocketbook. In fact, most Christians appear bound by an inadequate concept of the lordship of Jesus Christ in relation to their finances.

By examining the Scriptures about the Lord's claim on our possessions, we may encourage some to forsake the materialistic stand that "What I have is mine," in favor of the scriptural stand that man is *not* owner, but steward of

what he has and that "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2).

Essentially what we seek is to come into a greater realization of the lordship of Jesus Christ over our material possessions. How do we accomplish this? At least three necessary steps seem indicated: (1) We must abandon our selfish ambitions in regard to achieving wealth and property. (2) We must learn to trust in God's ability to meet abundantly all our material needs, and (3) We must be willing to put all that we have at His disposal.

### REORDERING OUR PRIORITIES

First, we said it is necessary to abandon our ambition to achieve wealth. Recognizing the almost universal desire to acquire wealth and property, Jesus said to his disciples in Luke 12:15, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Then He related the parable of the rich man who stored up his wealth so that he could live in luxury the rest of his life. There was only one problem: he died before he could enjoy it!

Jesus said, *God considered the man*

*a fool* (Luke 12:20) and then added that so is anyone else who "layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Jesus' indictment of the rich man who hoarded his wealth so he could retire and take it easy is even more striking when we realize that *this is the obvious, unabashed goal of most American Christians!*

Yet the Bible is replete with warnings against placing top priority on material gain. (See Matthew 6:19-21; Matt. 13:22; Mark 10:23-25; 1 Timothy 6:6-10).

It is no coincidence that when Jesus reprimands everyone who "layeth up treasure for himself" he adds the phrase "and is not rich toward God." What a man devotes his time to becomes his master and his God, and Jesus knew this when he stated that: "No man can serve two masters . . ." (Matt. 6:24).

What is required to accomplish this first step of giving up our ambitions for wealth? A decision of the will. We must *decide* to take the Lord seriously in this matter. Unfortunately, we are bombarded day and night by a multitude of voices insisting that we do the very thing Jesus tells us not to do. We are told to earn! Be ambitious! Acquire wealth! Invest! Earn more!



Re-invest! Acquire more wealth! The so-called "good life" is almost totally equated with the acquisition of money and material possessions. Not one of us has completely escaped the brainwashing of such influences. Not only do television, newspapers, radio and magazines drill such a philosophy into us, but parents, teachers and friends add their voices to the din.

While we would wish hard times for no one, nevertheless our present economic crisis does have one spiritually healthy side effect. It has pressed home to millions the danger of relying on material possessions for ultimate security. With financial investments being steadily devoured by the twin monsters of inflation and recession, many people are confronted with the plight the prophet Haggai describes concerning those who have been preoccupied with their own welfare while forgetting their responsibility to God.

Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that *earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes* (Haggai 1:5-6).

Our first responsibility then is a re-ordering of our priorities; an adjustment of ambitions in obedience to Jesus' instruction that we "seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness and [then!] all these things shall be added . . ." (Matthew 6:33).

### TRUSTING GOD TO MEET OUR NEEDS

But in what way are "all these things" to be added? *That* is the pivotal question, and answering it brings us to our second step: learning to trust God to meet abundantly all our material needs. Strangely enough, over against the clear and repeated warnings of God about preoccupation with material possessions are the equally clear and eloquent promises of

God's desire to bless and prosper us materially.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, *if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it* (Malachi 3:10).

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom (Luke 6:38).

Beloved, I wish above all things *that thou mayest prosper and be in health*, even as thy soul prospereth (3 John 2).

How do we explain what seems to be a contradiction? How do we answer the hard-driving businessman who says, "I believe God wants me to prosper so I'm working as hard as I can to make myself prosperous"? If God is so interested in blessing us materially, why should He object so strenuously to our seeking to acquire those blessings for ourselves?

Basically, the problem is one of motive. God does not object to our being prosperous, or even wealthy. *What He objects to is our putting our prosperity ahead of Him!* He objects to our relying on our ability to provide for ourselves instead of relying on His ability to provide for us.

We are to seek *first* (not second or third) His kingdom and His righteousness. *Then*, "all these things" will be added.

We are to "bring all the tithes into the storehouse" *first*; then in response to our faithful stewardship, God will "pour out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive."

We are to give (as unto Him) *first*; then "it will be given unto us."

We are to prosper *first* in our souls (i.e. spiritual prosperity which comes from putting God first); then we will "prosper [materially] as our souls prosper."

All the promises of God's material provision for us are conditional upon

our *first* acknowledging, worshiping and obeying Him. God and His will are to have preeminence. Then, as a result of our putting Him first, He in turn begins to bless us, even abundantly. Seeking the material abundance first is idolatry; whereas, seeking God first and through faithfulness receiving His abundance, is pleasing to Him.

God knows the deceitfulness of the human heart. He knows that the more materially successful we are without Him, the more independent we become. But God wants us neither independent nor self-sufficient . . . He wants us continually dependent upon Him. To prosper without God can cost you your soul! That's what the rich man who built bigger barns discovered.

As a matter of fact, not only does all our material prosperity come from God, but even our ability to make money comes from Him. God spoke sternly to the children of Israel just before they entered the Promised Land, warning them not to forget the Source of all their blessings:

Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt . . .

And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

*But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth . . .* (Deut. 8:11-14, 17-18).

To make Jesus Lord of our material possessions then not only requires recognition of our dependency upon God, but also our acknowledgement that even the very ability to acquire wealth comes from God. But today, how many wealthy would sincerely give God the glory for their fortune-



making ability?

Moreover, how many Christians who profess the belief that God can meet their financial needs actually have little or no personal testimony of God moving sovereignly to meet some personal need of their very own?

One of the most gratifying things which can happen to a Christian is to experience God's *tangible*, miraculous assistance in a time of financial need. But countless numbers of God's people have never experienced such blessings because they never dared to trust God by undertaking service for the Lord in some manner which would require His miraculous grace to supply the money or material they may need.

My own case may not be untypical. For nearly fifteen years I was a denominational pastor whose material provision was supplied every two weeks when the church treasurer handed me my salary check. Although I believed in God's ability to provide financial help and frequently encouraged my parishioners to look to God as the source of their blessings, neither I nor they were undertaking any kind of spiritual ministry which required us to trust God for finances. We all ran our lives and managed our affairs very well by ourselves, and we didn't really need God's help in financial matters, thank you very much!

Then seven years ago, the Lord catapulted me and my family out of the pastoral ministry into what is commonly called a "faith ministry." I resigned my pastorate to become an itinerant Bible teacher with no regular income. The first three years of my new ministry proved to be the most trying, yet the most amazing years of my life with regard to financial support. I learned to appreciate firsthand the appropriate definition of the "life of faith" as "living in the midst of a miracle on the edge of disaster."

Time and again our finances would dwindle until I had only small change in my pocket. No cash, no money in the bank, and for a while no prospects for ministry which would generate income. In such times, with a wife and five children to support, I had a crash

course in trusting God's ability to provide!

Time after time, God proved Himself faithful, even though He often stretched our faith until we wondered if we had been deserted. At times His provision didn't appear until what we felt was later than the "last possible moment." During those testings I discovered that our faith grows the most in that eerie interval between the time we feel God must answer and the time — usually days later — when He finally does answer!

Without fail, we found that He *does* answer. He never let us down. We never missed a meal (although my wife, on occasion, served some rather unusual menus!) And we never failed to meet all our financial obligations, although I learned during those times of testing that God doesn't get particularly upset over the second reminder about a utility bill!

For those three years of testing we were like the children of Israel in their journey through the wilderness, where their physical needs were met day by day in miraculous fashion. Often God's timing in our situation was so precise and the amount sent by Him so specific that we knew beyond question that He was giving intimate, personal attention to our particular need. And the assurance of God's unfailing love, engendered in our hearts as a result of such providence, became tempered mortar in the foundation of our faith.

All Christians need to learn to trust in God's ability to provide for their financial needs. We'll never have the courage for the third step unless we've proved Him in the second.

### JESUS, LORD OF FINANCES

Beyond letting go our preoccupation with material possessions and beyond learning to trust in God's ability to meet our material needs, a third, and still more radical step must be taken: we must be willing for God to have His way with all we have. The longer I walk with God and the more I resolve to be faithful to Him, the more I realize that Jesus is not just inter-

ested in meeting my needs. He's determined to end up in complete charge of my life! And that entails being Lord over my finances.

When we teach about learning to trust Jesus to meet our financial needs, we are moving in the realm of His *saving* ministry. His material provision is included in His ministry to us as Savior. But when we speak of giving over total control of our lives (including finances) to Him, we move beyond His *saving* ministry into the realm of His *lordship*.

To acknowledge Jesus as Savior is commitment based on *grace* or what He can do for us. To acknowledge Him as Lord is commitment based on *obedience* or what we can do for Him. Many who are learning to trust Jesus to *provide* have not yet come to trust Him to *rule*. When we truly decide to make Jesus Christ *Lord*, any number of dramatic, unexpected, and often painful things begin to happen. They happen because the Lord quickly sets about to see if we mean what we professed in our commitment. The story of Jesus and the rich young ruler in Matthew chapter 19:16–22 is a profound study in this very principle.

The young man came asking Jesus what was required for eternal life. Jesus' first answer was more or less perfunctory: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

But the young man was surprisingly insistent. He knew he had been largely faithful in the matter of the do's and don't's of ethical behavior, yet some deep hunger in him had not been satisfied by obedience to external commands.

What he was experiencing, of course, was the effects of the divinely-engineered flaw built into each one of us. God made us in such a way that we cannot be saved or satisfied by "what we do." "Earning our salvation" is the futile attempt to run our own lives satisfactorily; a method which inevitably proves dissatisfactory.

The rich young ruler knew he needed something more. "All these things have I kept from my youth up: *what lack I yet?*"



Although he didn't understand it, what he was asking for was *lordship over his life*. He was admitting that his attempts to run his life had failed to produce the right results.

Jesus, sensing his deep heart cry, decided to show him the barrier blocking fulfillment of his heart's desire. "If thou wilt be perfect [mature], go and sell that thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me!" (vs. 21).

This was an eloquent invitation to discipleship: Jesus, offering His rule and lordship in behalf of a man who claimed to be seeking life's highest good. But spelled out in the invitation was the cost! Jesus was requiring not just the young man's wealth, *but also the right to decide what to do with his wealth*. Not just the money but the very freedom to run his life was being required. And the young man turned Jesus down.

So many of us are like that. We seek spiritual advice from Jesus Christ (or one of his ministers) and sound counsel is often forthcoming. But because we know Jesus as Savior, or Healer, or Baptizer, or Deliverer, or Provider, *but still do not acknowledge His lordship*, we feel free to reject His advice. And Jesus reminds us that to reject His counsel is to deny His lordship.

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord,  
and do not the things which I say?  
(Luke 6:46)

### ARE WE WILLING TO MAKE HIM LORD?

Any time you say, "Jesus, I surrender my life totally to you," *watch out!* You can be certain He will quickly put an authoritative finger on certain areas of your life where, up to this point, you've not allowed His lordship; areas where you've remained "independent." (Usually, what we refer to as "independence" the Lord calls "rebellion.")

"Oh Lord, I surrender everything to you. I want you to be Lord over every area of my life!"

"All right, son; I accept your offer. Now since I'm Lord over all, I'll take control of your wealth and your property, and all your salary. Quite a bit in that area needs adjusting!"

"But, Lord! That's not quite what I had in mind. I'm not quite sure I'm ready to . . ."

Is Jesus Lord of all or not?

The rich young ruler backed away from discipleship because Jesus would have assumed lordship over his finances. And any concept we may have of the lordship of Jesus Christ over our lives which ignores or slights His right to control our material possessions is a superficial and inadequate concept.

### BUT ISN'T TITHING ENOUGH?

Would you have believed we could come almost to the end of an article on the subject of Jesus as Lord of Finance without mentioning tithing even once? Believe me, the omission has been intentional. Tithing (giving 10% of one's income to the Lord's work) should be a settled matter for anyone who calls himself a Christian. The mandatory 10% is merely a proper beginning for Christian giving. Certainly as we strive to abandon our preoccupation with material possessions and learn to trust God's ability to provide for our financial needs, it would be little short of ridiculous to be disobedient at this point.

But one of the deceptions which can come with stressing the necessity of "giving a tithe" is the mistaken assumption that if the 10% belongs to the Lord, the other 90% is "my money."

Not so! Basic to the concept of stewardship, as we said at the beginning of this article, is recognition that *God is the owner*, and man is but a steward (servant) responsible for proper use of what he has been given.

So for this article we have by-passed the subject of tithing, not because it is not significant, but because we are considering Jesus as not only the recipient of our 10%, but as Lord of *all* our possessions.

### WILL GOD TAKE AWAY MORE THAN HE GIVES?

Basically, the only reason we don't want Jesus to be Lord over our finances (or Lord over many other areas of our lives as well!) is because we believe we will end up deprived in some way. We continue to believe one of Satan's most blatant lies: that God will take away more than He will give.

I want to close this article with a reminder of the loving nature of the God who seeks to be Lord of our finances. Jesus Christ is neither miserly nor pinch-penny. Why should He be? He is Lord over the wealth of the universe! He is the Lord of abundance. He is not in the *depriving* business; He is in the blessing business.

Once we fully acknowledge Him as Lord, it is His intention, *after we've been proven and tested* to bring us into abundance. His ultimate intention is not just to help us "get by"; He intends to *prosper* us. God is not glorified by poverty; the glory due His name springs from abundance, both spiritual and material!

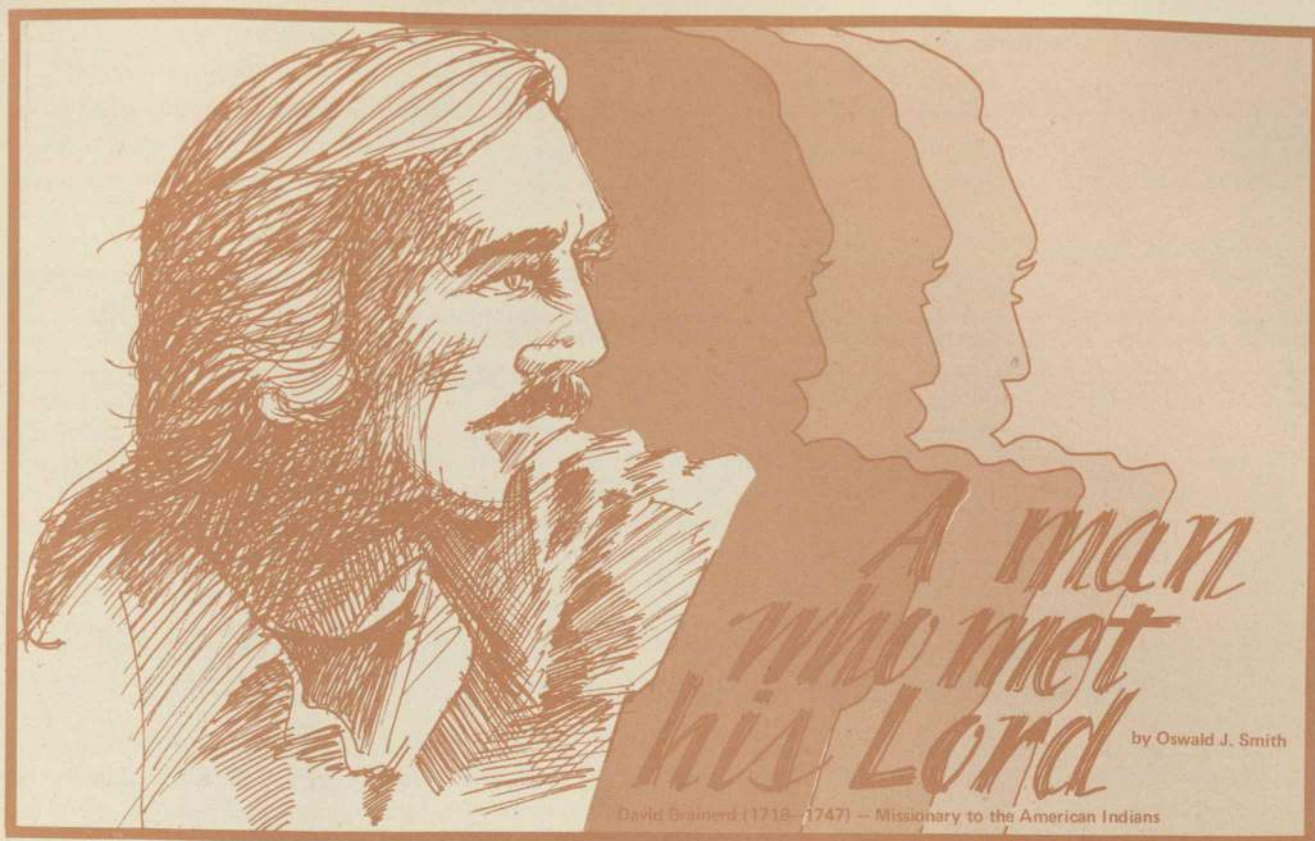
In the wilderness the children of Israel were miraculously provided for. All their needs were met on a day-to-day basis. There they had ample opportunity to discover that God was able to deliver them from all their enemies and out of all their need.

But the wilderness was never intended as a place of permanent residence. The destiny of Israel lay not in the wilderness but beyond the Jordan in Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey; a land of abundance; a land whose bounty was so rich it took two men to carry a single cluster of grapes.

We have an extravagant God. We have a God who desires, yes, who even intends to bring us into a land overflowing with both spiritual and material abundance.

But full inheritance God wisely keeps beyond the grasp of immature, untested hands. It lies on the far side of the wilderness, beyond Jordan, to be appropriated only by those who not only know Jesus as Savior, but who also have covenanted to make Him Lord of all. ♣





**D**avid Brainerd did his greatest work by prayer." This is the opening tribute paid to this man who "met his Lord and accepted His challenge." A.J. Gordon continues in his foreward to Oswald Smith's presentation of the life of David Brainerd, by saying, "The hidden life in communion with God in trying to reach the source of power, is the life that moves the world. The marvellous missionary revival of the nineteenth century is due more to his prayers than to any other thing. After he was dead, William Carey read his life and went to India; Robert McCheyne read his diary and went to the Jews; Henry Martyn read his journal and went to India."

Reverend Oswald J. Smith, founder of The Peoples Church in Toronto, Canada introduces us to Brainerd in these words: "Brainerd it was who taught me to fast and pray. I learned that greater things could be wrought by daily contact with God than by preaching. When I feel myself growing cold I turn to Brainerd and he always warms my heart. No man ever had a greater passion for souls. To live

wholly for God was his one great aim and ambition. Although Brainerd did his work more than two hundred years ago, he has a message for today. There is nothing we need more than a fresh manifestation of the power of God. Brainerd shows us how it may be obtained.

"David Brainerd was born in Haddam, in the County of Hertford, Conn., on April 20th, 1718. His father died when he was nine, and his mother left him an orphan when he was fourteen. He was the third son of his parents, there being five sons and four daughters. Following is the account he himself gives of his early life, preparation for the ministry, preaching to the Indians, the great awakening, and his last illness and death."

#### PREPARATION FOR THE MINISTRY

**CONVICTION:** From my youth, I was sober, and inclined rather to melancholy, but with no conviction of sin, till about seven or eight years of age, when I became somewhat concerned for my soul. This religious concern was but short lived . . .

In the winter of 1732 I was roused out of carnal security by the prevailing sickness in Haddam . . . I sometimes hoped that I was converted, or at least hoped for heaven and happiness, not knowing what conversion was . . .

In April, 1737, being nineteen years of age, I removed to Durham and began to work on my farm . . . frequently longing after a liberal education. When I was about twenty years of age, I applied myself to study. I became very strict, and thought I must be sober, because I designed to devote myself to the ministry.

In the winter of 1738, it pleased God, on one Sabbath Day morning as I was walking out, to give me on a sudden such a sense of danger, and the wrath of God, that I stood amazed, and my former good frames all vanished; and from the view that I had of my sin and vileness, I was much distressed all day, fearing the vengeance of God would soon overtake me . . .

One morning, while I was walking in a solitary place, as usual, I at once saw that all my contrivances and projections to effect or procure deliver-



ance and salvation for myself were utterly in vain: I was brought entirely to a stand, as finding myself totally lost. Now I saw that I had made all the pleas as I ever could have made to all eternity, and all my pleas were vain.

*CONVERSION:* I continued in that state of mind till the Sabbath evening July 12, 1739 . . . at this time, the way of salvation opened to me with such infinite wisdom, suitableness, and excellency, that I wondered I should ever think of any other way. I was amazed that I had not dropped my own contrivances, and complied with this lovely, blessed and excellent way before . . . In September I went to college (Yale College in New Haven) with some reluctancy, fearing I should not be able to lead a life of strict religion, in the midst of so many temptations . . .

God was pleased wonderfully to assist and strengthen me, so that I thought nothing should ever move me from the love of God in Christ Jesus my Lord. Oh! One hour with God infinitely exceeds all the pleasures of this lower world! The latter end of January, 1741, I grew cold and dull in matters of religion, by means of my old temptation, viz., ambition in my studies. But a great and general awakening spread itself about the college about the latter end of February, in which I was much quickened, and more abundantly engaged in religion.

[This awakening here spoken of was the beginning of that extraordinary religious commotion through the land. It was for a time very great and general at New Haven, and the college had no small share in it. The students in general became serious, many of them remarkably so, and much engaged in the concerns of their eternal salvation, thanks to the preaching of George Whitefield.

During the days of the awakening [1741-2] while in his third year at Yale, David Brainerd was expelled. It seems he had been asked by a student what he thought of a certain professor. "He has no more grace than this chair," was his reply.

NEW WINE

There were only a few of his friends present when he said it, but he was reported and expelled. He felt that he had been most unjustly treated and he carried the disgrace . . . the rest of his life.]

*Friday, April 2:* I felt something sweetly in secret prayer . . . resigned calm and serene. What are all the storms of this lower world, if Jesus by His Spirit does not come walking on the seas!

*Saturday, April 10:* I feel some faint hopes that God will return again with showers of converging grace to poor Gospel-abusing sinners. Oh, that my late distresses might prove but Christ's school, to make me fit for greater service, by teaching me the great lesson of humility!

*Monday, April 19:* I set apart this day for fasting and prayer to prepare me for the ministry, to give me divine aid and direction, and in His own time to "send me into His harvest."

*Tuesday, April 20:* This day I am twenty-four years of age. This has been a sweet, happy day to me: blessed be God. I think my soul was never so drawn out in intercession for others. Had a wrestle with the Lord tonight for my enemies, and I hardly ever so longed to live for God; I wanted to wear out my life in His service, and for His glory.

*Tuesday, April 27:* In the afternoon I withdrew to meet with God, but found myself much declined, and God made it a humbling season to my soul. It grieved me exceedingly, that I could not pray to, and praise God with my heart full of divine, heavenly love. Oh, that my soul might never offer any dead, cold service to my God!

*Saturday, July 3:* The disgrace I was laid under at college seemed to damp me, as it opens the mouths of opposers. I had no refuge but in God only.

*Thursday, July 29:* Was examined by the Association met at Danbury, as to my learning and also my experiences in religion, and received a license to preach . . . went to bed resolving to live devoted to God all my days . . .

*Wednesday, September 8:* I reckoned upon seeing my friends at Commencement, yet being denied the opportunity for fear of imprisonment . . .

*Wednesday, November 24:* Came to New York; put up many earnest requests to God for His help and direction; was confused with the noise and tumult of the city; enjoyed but little time alone with God . . .

*Wednesday, February 2:* Preached my farewell sermon last night. This morning spent the time in prayer almost wherever I went; and having taken leave of friends, I set out on my journey towards the Indians.

### PREACHING TO THE INDIANS

[It was not because Brainerd could not get a church that he decided to be a missionary . . . He had unanimous calls to both Millington and East Hampton, the latter the fairest town on Long Island . . . Millington was near his native town and among his friends. What if he had failed God? But he was true. He had caught the vision, and he was determined to be a missionary, regardless of the cost, so he left for the Delaware.]

*Friday, April 1, 1743:* I rode to Kaunaumuck, where the Indians live, and there lodged on a heap of straw.

*Lord's Day, April 10:* Rose early and spent considerable time in the woods in prayer and meditation. Preached to the Indians. They behaved soberly. Two or three appeared under some religious concern, with whom I discoursed privately . . .

*Wednesday, April 20:* . . . Am now arrived at the age of twenty-five years. My soul was pained to think that I had lived so little to the glory of God . . .

*Saturday, April 30:* I live in the most lonely melancholy desert, about eighteen miles from Albany. I board with a poor Scotsman; . . .

*Wednesday, May 18:* I have no comfort but what I have in God . . . I have no fellow-Christian to whom I might unbosom myself and open my spiritual sorrows, and with whom I might take sweet counsel in conver-



sation about heavenly things and join in social prayer . . .

*Lord's Day, October 16:* . . . I wondered whether I could be resigned, if God should let the French Indians come and deprive me of my life, or carry me away captive, and my soul seemed so far to rest in God, that the terror of these things seemed in a measure gone.

*Thursday, November 3:* Spent this day in fasting and prayer. Had some assistance in prayer . . . Was enabled to wrestle with God by prayer in a more intense and importunate manner than I have for many months past. Nothing seemed too hard for God to perform; nothing too great for me to hope for from Him.

*Lord's Day, May 27, 1744:* Visited the Indians and attended a funeral among them: was affected to see their heathenish practices. Oh, that they might be "turned from darkness to light"! Afterwards preached to them: very attentive.

*Lord's Day, June 24:* Took much pains to instruct my Indians. Some were much disaffected to Christianity. Was much burdened with the difficulty of my work. My whole hope of success seemed to be on God, who alone could make them willing to receive instruction.

## THE GREAT AWAKENING

[The year 1745 was the year of Great Awakening among the Indians. Revival came at last. David Brainerd, the Man of Prayer, was heard and his prayer answered.]

*August 8:* In the afternoon I preached to the Indians upon Luke 15:16-23. There was much visible concern among them, while I was discoursing publicly; but afterwards, when I spoke to one and another more particularly, whom I perceived under much concern, the power of God seemed to descend upon the assembly "like a mighty rushing wind," and with an astonishing energy bore down all before it . . .

They were almost universally

praying and crying for mercy in every part of the house, and many were out of doors; and numbers could neither go nor stand. Their concern was so great, each one for himself, that none seemed to take any notice of those about them, but each prayed freely for himself . . .

This was indeed a surprising day of God's power, and seemed enough to convince an atheist of the truth, importance, and power of God's Word.

*Lord's Day, August 25:* Love seemed to reign among them! They took each other by the hand with tenderness and affection, as if their hearts were knit together . . . and all their deportment towards each other was such, that a serious spectator might justly be excited to cry out with admiration, "Behold how they love one another!"

*Lord's Day, September 8:* . . . It is remarkable that God began this work among the Indians at a time when I had the least hope, and, to my apprehension, the least rational prospect, of seeing a work of grace propagated among them . . .

*Lord's Day, February 2, 1746:* Heard that I was generally taken to be a Roman Catholic, sent by the Papists to draw the Indians into an insurrection against the English . . . Alas, what will not the devil do to bring a slur and disgrace on the work of God!

*Thursday, May 22:* If ever my soul presented itself to God for His service without any reserve, it did so now . . . Oh, with what reluctance did I feel myself obliged to consume time in sleep! I longed to be as a flame of fire, continually glowing in the Divine service, and building up Christ's kingdom, to my latest, my dying moment.

*Friday, May 23:* In the evening was visited by my brother, John Brainerd, the first visit I have ever received from any near relative since I have been a missionary.

*Wednesday, August 20:* Having lain in a cold sweat all night, I coughed much bloody matter this morning, and was not a little melancholy.

*Lord's Day, October 5:* After the Sacrament could scarcely get home,

though it was not more than twenty rods, but was supported and led . . . and laid on my bed . . . Oh, how this day was spent in prayers and praises among my dear people! One might hear them, all the morning before public worship, and in the evening till midnight, praying and singing praises to God in one or other of their houses. My soul was refreshed, though my body was weak.

## LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH

[From now on we let Jonathan Edwards tell the story.] This week he consulted Dr. Mather . . . and was plainly told that there was great evidence of his being in a confirmed consumption, and that he could give him no encouragement that he should ever recover . . . My daughter who was with him writes, "Mr. Brainerd has not so much pain nor fever, since last I wrote . . . He has scarcely enough vigour to draw his breath . . . Thursday, September 17, was the last time that ever he went out of his lodging room. That day he was again visited by his brother, Israel, who continued with him thence forward till his death."

Here ends Brainerd's last entry in his diary: "Oh, why is His chariot so long in coming? My soul was this day at turns sweetly set on God . . . I felt sweetly disposed to commit all to Him, even my dearest friends, my dearest flock, and my absent brother, and all my concerns for time and eternity." He also wrote a letter to his brother John who carried on his work among the Indians. It is a spiritual classic.

He expired on Friday, October 9, 1747 . . . his body rests at Northampton, Mass. By his side lies the body of Jerusha, daughter of Jonathan Edwards, to whom he was engaged. Brainerd was but twenty-nine years of age . . . yet in spite of great physical weakness, he accomplished more than most men at seventy. ♣

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Excerpts from *Men of God* by Oswald J. Smith. Revised and enlarged edition 1971.



# A HOLY NATION

Manifesting His ways in a world of darkness  
by Charles Simpson

Sixth in a series of seven articles  
on the Kingdom of God.

**T**here are numerous metaphors in the Bible which describe the people of God. Each metaphor focuses on an attribute of the people of God. They are referred to as a Church (Assembly), Bride, Body, Kingdom, Army, Vine, Flock, Race, Priesthood, Nation and other symbolic terms. While the term Church is most popular in our generation, the whole vision of what God's people are to be, cannot be seen without consideration of the other terms. Here we will examine God's people as a nation. "But you are a *chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession*, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9, NAS).

The apostle Peter reminds the early Church that they are a holy nation among the nations. This is a reconfirmation of an Old Testament truth. Israel, God's old covenant people, were a nation. God's new covenant people are a nation also. The Lord Jesus is the King of a nation — with a definite citizenship, a constitution,

laws, leadership and a land. When one is added to Christ, and to the people of God, he becomes a citizen of a new nation and under a new government. This was the case with the early people of the new covenant. While they continued to submit to and honor all authority, they were citizens of an eternal Kingdom (Philippians 3:20; Colossians 1:13; 1 Peter 2:13-17; Romans 13:1-7). This principle presently understood has strong implications. Watch the emergence of this principle in the Scripture.

## ABRAHAM, FATHER OF NATIONS

God selected Abraham to receive His sovereign covenant and raise up a people. Abraham's seed would be God's people. Genesis 15 records the conversation with Abraham:

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; your reward shall be very great."

And Abram said, "Oh Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"

And Abram said, "Since Thou hast given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir."

Then behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir; but one who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir."

And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be" (Genesis 15:1-5, NAS).

Genesis 17 refers to Abraham's descendents as nations:

"No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; for I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you. And I will establish My covenant between Me and you for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you" (Genesis 17:5-7, NAS).

It was not until their redemption from Egypt that national identity began to be created in Israel, Abraham's descendants. Having come



into the land of their inheritance, they were to rule it under God's government as stewards. Among the nations of the world they were to become respected as God's nation — to His glory.

### LORDSHIP MEANS OWNERSHIP

Peter's reminder to the new covenant saints was a quotation from God's words to Moses concerning Israel. "Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel" (Exodus 19:5-6, NAS). All the world is God's. He loves all people; they are His creation. Nevertheless, God offered Israel a unique opportunity. In exchange for their obedience to His law, and faithfulness to His purpose, He would grant them a unique role in international affairs. They would mediate and minister to God as a nation of priests. They would be holy or special to God among all nations for the purpose of His making them a model of divine government. Obedience would bring Israel numerous benefits. (See Deuteronomy 28:1-13). Such an example would draw other nations to bless Israel and seek God's government (See Isaiah 60).

All of this sounded very good. Especially was it good in the light of Israel's enslavement in Egypt. They were in bad trouble — disease, abuse, murder of the babies, and intolerable labor. There was one major consideration, however. If they accepted God's offer, they would not be their own anymore. They would be *His* possession. "Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians" (Exodus 6:7 NAS). "Freedom would be better if we could just go out and do what we want to do," some must have reasoned. "Beggars can't be

choosers," others must have added. "But it was going our own way that got us into this mess in the first place," the wiser ones knew.

"My possession!" God had emphasized.

Suppose you were in serious trouble. No hope was in sight to alleviate the combination of poverty, disease, moral degradation, physical toil and misery. Along comes a wealthy, benevolent friend.

"Need help?"

"Man, do I! I sure could use a lot of help. I'm in deep trouble this time."

"No problem," the friend smiles. "I can pay your bills, pacify your enemies and get you medical help. Besides that, I can give you some pointers that will completely change your outlook and way of living."

"You're kidding?"

"No, absolutely not!" your friend says. "However, there is one stipulation. You will want to consider it at length before you accept my help. I have a legal document here that I'll ask you to sign."

"What does it say?" you ask soberly.

"It says that from now on I'll own your life and possessions. This document gives me sole control over your existence."

Silence . . .

This is the opportunity God offered Israel . . . and offers all men through the new covenant in Jesus Christ. Direct your own failure or succeed at being a servant of God.

The very term redeem means "to buy back." God's redeemed people are twice His. They were His by creation, but they were lost through rebellion; they sold out to another master. Now God has bought them back when Jesus paid the legal penalty of death, thus satisfying justice. By His blood, the lawless are redeemed or "bought back"; they are twice God's.

Once a person becomes God's possession, there is but one consideration: What is God's will? Paul proves this point in Romans 9:21, "Does not the potter have a right over the clay?" Having become God's possession, He has the right of usefulness. He can

choose when to use, how to use, or not to use at all for a season.

For example when I say "my watch," I mean I can wear it or not, any way I choose — all it does is tick! The consequence of accepting redemption is to become His possession.

When God's people were redeemed, they had no identity at all. They were not a nation, they were just scattered, lost individuals. Through redemption He gives them an identity and shapes them into a united nation — a universal and eternal power to reveal the splendor of His heavenly government. He has the right to do that; His people are His own possession!

### LORDSHIP DETERMINES RELATIONSHIPS

Once it is established that God's people belong to Him, it follows that He has the right to determine the borders and nature of their relationships.

When the Lord your God shall bring you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and shall clear away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you; and when the Lord your God shall deliver them before you, and you shall defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them. Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will quickly destroy you. For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth" (Deuteronomy 7:1-4,6, NAS).

God had hardly explained to Israel that they were His; when He began telling them with whom they could



make covenants. God's covenant with Israel was like a husband/wife relationship (Ezekiel 16:32 and Isaiah 54:5 etc.). Genesis 2:24 speaks of the fact that husband and wife should become one flesh. So God and His people should become one spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17). And covenant or relationship into which Israel entered involved God, once they became His. Consequently, God had the right to approve or disapprove. God is jealous over His people, as a husband or wife over a spouse (Exodus 20:5).

Paul reminds husbands and wives that their bodies are not under their own authority anymore. After entering into covenant, the wife has authority over her husband's body, and the husband over his wife's (1 Corinthians 7:4). So it is with God's relationship to His people. He has the right to select our relationships because He is Creator, Lord, Possessor, and Covenant Lover.

The apostle Paul puts it this way: "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14, NAS).

Do not make a covenant with those who will not covenant with God. This is the message. Binding relationships with non-Christians will cause us either to compromise our relationship to God, or break our vows to them. Neither is pleasing to God. Such relationships can be spiritually adulterous in God's eyes.

Perhaps you stood before an altar one day and answered a question like this one: "Do you take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife; to live together after God's ordinances in the holy estate of matrimony? Do you promise to love, honor, and comfort her in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others keep yourself only unto her so long as you both shall live?" If you said "I do," you entered into a covenant relationship. That put your spouse in a unique relationship to you. That covenant made all other human relationships secondary. Any relationship which jeopardized or violated that one, was forbidden.

God loves the whole world; but He is faithful to His people with whom He has a covenant in the blood of Jesus. If God entered into fellowship with our enemies and blessed them, we would question His loyalty. He has the same right over us. To bless the enemies of God and to commit ourselves to the uncommitted is grievous to the loving Spirit of God who desires our fellowship in purity.

Bear in mind God desires that all men enter into covenant fellowship with Him as His people — His Bride. But if we who have received His covenant are not faithful to it, then how shall the world know what it means to be the people of God? And how shall they see the glory of the Husband in the countenance of His Bride? (1 Corinthians 11:7).

To be the covenant people of God and to be aliens in the world, is to be shut up to His love. To be faithful to His grace, is to be the recipient of His secret favors and tender mercies. How good and unspeakable is His love! What love or lover can compare with Him who is love and the Father of it. To allow Him to be the Lord over our relationships is to know our Lord in a relationship that brings radiant righteousness, perfect peace and jubilant joy. What a relationship to exist between the Governor and the governed!

### LORDSHIP PRODUCES LIKENESS

Lordship means ownership. Ownership qualifies us for a unique relationship with God. Close relationship with God will change our behavior. One becomes like those with whom he associates — and this is God's purpose: to manifest His manifold wisdom and glory through His people.

The proportion and role of spiritual maturity is directly proportioned to the intensity and singleness of our fellowship with God and His people. Soon, one not only belongs to God and is related in love, but he begins to act like it.

When God's people are faithful they soon become orderly and peaceful, because He is. They soon become

merciful and gentle, because He is. They soon become meek and patient, because He is. God is majestically impressive. One cannot fellowship with Him without a marked difference in his behavior. We are becoming a nation of godly people — or a nation of people, under His government, who will manifest His ways to a world in darkness. I sincerely believe that Christians from different continents have more in common and act more alike than members of the same *natural* family, where some know the Lord and some do not. The Christian attributes of a spiritual race and a holy nation are beginning to show up more distinctly. Daniel says, They shall shine like the stars (Daniel 12:3).

God's ways are very practical and concern practical things. Israel had been so long in Egypt that they lived by Egypt's ways instead of God's ways. By close fellowship, God intended to change the way they lived and behaved day to day.

You are the sons of the Lord your God; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave your forehead for the sake of the dead. For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. You shall not eat any detestable thing (Deuteronomy 14:1-3, NAS).

God was interested in their diet. In Egypt, they had eaten animals that were disease carriers and because of this, suffered the same as the Egyptians did. Thirty-five hundred years ago there was no Food and Drug Administration to protect the quality of the food. Since God's ways are clean, and He is the architect of good health, He began to point out to Israel the foods that were unhealthy. In Exodus 15:26 He promised Israel that if they would obey Him, they would have none of the diseases that were experienced in Egypt. God knew, before medical science, that pork, for instance, carried certain kinds of diseases. God is not only interested in what we eat, but how much.

Obedience pays off even when we



don't understand. Circumcision, another of God's commandments, has kept the cancer rate low among Jewish women. This practice, too, was instituted long before it was understood medically.

"Do not cut yourselves or shave your heads on behalf of the dead." In Egypt, the Israelites had seen an unnatural fear and grief over death. Frenzies and mutilations often accompanied the loss of a relative or friend. Perhaps Moses said, as David did later, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones" (Psalms 116:15, NAS). Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had beautifully released their spirits to God in death. But not so in Egypt. While there, the Israelites had forgotten how to die in the peace of God. Now they would have to learn God's ways again.

In some pagan societies, widows have been burned alive on the funeral pyre with the body of their deceased husbands. Aren't you glad God has taught His ways concerning death? God's ways are practical and beneficial.

Some of the most victorious occasions have been at the graveside of a Christian friend. One such occasion was at the grave of a former drug addict that had been led to the Lord. We were all disappointed that his body had not been spared as his soul and spirit had. But his body had been damaged beyond belief. God alone could have spared him; but He chose not to. Grateful for the man's salvation, but saddened by his death, we gathered to worship and give thanks for his salvation. Former friends of the deceased were there, as well as family members, some of whom had come to know the Lord because of our departed friend. As we waited in God's presence, the Holy Spirit settled as a gentle presence over the small gathering. We began to remember what God had done in our friend's life and the lives of others present. Praise began to well up and overflow. Precious was death in the eyes of the Lord. Around the graveside it seemed so natural and spontaneous to sing the Doxology . . . "Praise

God, from whom all blessings flow . . ." Tears of gratitude were all around. Christians and non-Christians alike felt God's presence. "I never saw a funeral like that," the funeral director commented as we drove away.

My mind went back sixteen years to one of the first funerals I'd ever conducted as a young minister. A couple lost a beautiful 18-month-old daughter. They did not know the Lord. It was a tragedy shrouded in despair. We had to literally carry the parents from the cemetery as they wept uncontrollably.

"I never saw a funeral like that," the director said as we drove away. I had not either. To this day he and I both remember it. The ways of God are so different, so wonderfully different. His presence makes us different.

Diet, disease and death are not the only ways in which the holy nation is different. Deuteronomy 20 tells us how the nation of Israel was to face battle. Other nations had orgies or drunken parties to gratify the lusts of those who might soon be killed. Fear gave way to wild indulgence as terrified soldiers were compelled to fight under duress. It was not to be so among those of the nation of God.

As the moment of war drew near, the priest stood before the waiting troops. "Do not be afraid or faint-hearted," his voice thundered over the multitude of men. "The Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to save you. If any of you have built a new house and have not dedicated it, go home and dedicate it, lest you die in battle and another dedicate it."

"Why didn't I build a new house?" some men must have thought. "We are already outnumbered, why let *them* go home?"

The priest continued, "If any of you have planted a vineyard and have not eaten the fruit of it, go home lest you die and another eat its fruit."

"Praise the Lord for my vineyard!" some men may have exclaimed as they returned home. Others, left behind to fight, felt even more despair as the numbers dwindled.

Again the priest spoke. "And if there are any who are engaged to be married, you also may go home and marry your fiancé, lest you die and another marry her."

Could the army stand further depletion? It was outnumbered even at the beginning.

"And if there are any fainthearted and fearful men here, you also may return home. Do not go to battle and spread your fear among the others!"

This was an all volunteer army. No one need go to war in double-mindedness. Only those who believed in the cause would go. God does not draft soldiers. As a matter of fact, He usually trims down the volunteers.

How different from the command, "Every able bodied man report to the government, or be imprisoned! Any deserter will be shot!" God's ways are different. He is looking for a few committed men. Twelve would do for a start.

Whatever the time or place, eating together, in battle, or just a normal everyday situation, God's people are to stand out. Their ways are to be different, even as God's ways are different.

### LORDSHIP MAKES ALIENS

As the early Christians were being formed into a "new" nation, one which was to reflect Christ's way of life, we hear Peter admonishing them, "I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Peter 2:11-12 NAS).

We can almost hear them asking Peter, "Keep our behavior excellent among the Gentiles? We *are* Gentiles!"

"No," might have come the answer. "You *were* Gentiles. Now you are a new race — a holy nation."

If Peter were writing to a group of Christians in America, he would have written, "Keep your behavior excellent among the Americans."

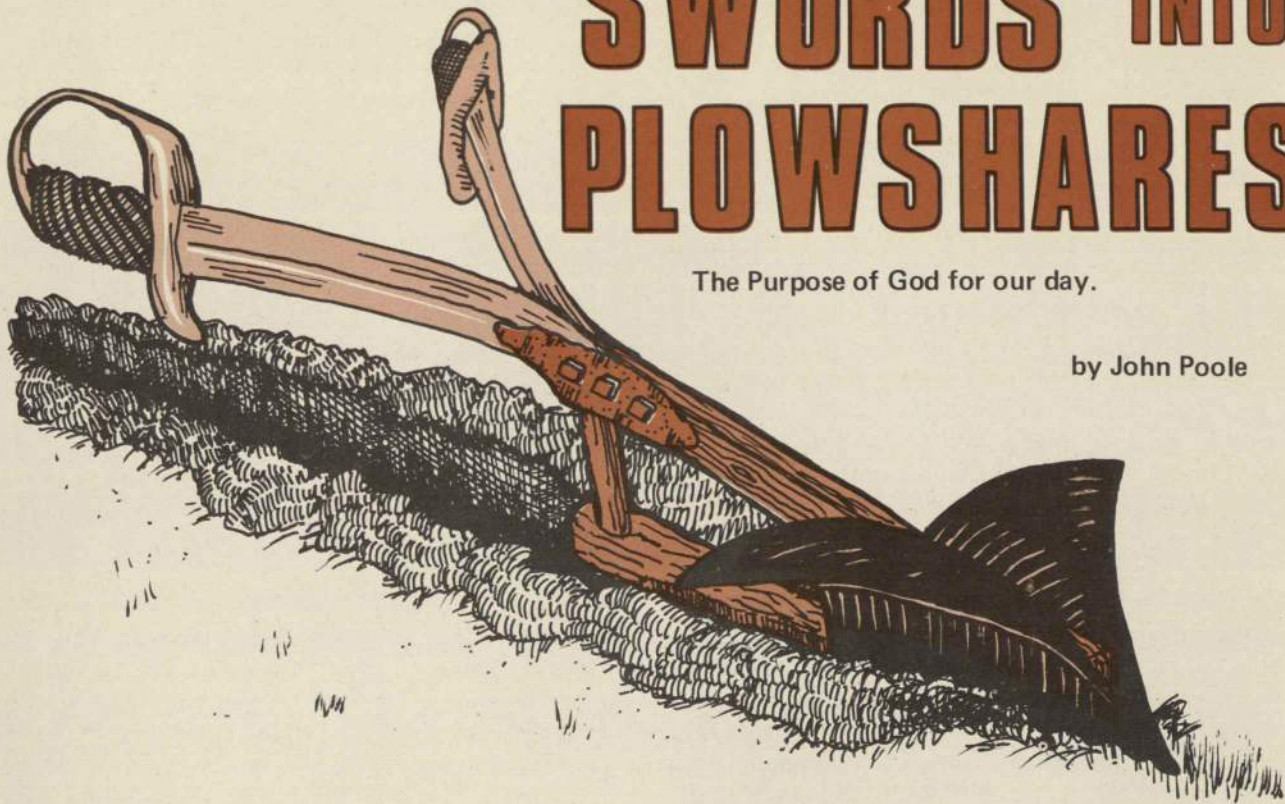
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# SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES

The Purpose of God for our day.

by John Poole



It has always been important that the people of God keep before them a vision of God's eternal purpose, for the Scriptures tell us "without a vision the people perish." This is just as true in our own day as it was in Old Testament times. We need to understand how God's working in these last days is part of an eternal plan and purpose.

Isaiah, the prophet, gives us such a vision for the day in which we live.

The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Now it will come about that in the last days, the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning His ways, and that we may walk in His paths, for the law will go forth from Zion,

and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." And He will judge between the nations, and will render decisions for many peoples; and they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war (Isaiah 2:2-4 NAS).

I believe we need first to understand what the Bible means when it talks about the last days. Over and over again we have taken the scriptures that refer to the last day period, along with all of the events that are described as taking place in this period, and confined them to a time just prior to the second coming of Christ. This time period we have called the "last days." If we look in the Scriptures, however,

we find that the last day period is that great epoch of time between the ascension of the Lord and His second appearing.

Along with this misunderstanding of the last day period, many Christians have developed a strange theology which says that this period is to be sort of a "parentheses" when God is going to take a rest and not much is going to happen. But Scripture reveals that this time is to be filled with Holy Ghost activity. "In the last days, saith God, the mountain of the house of God will be established upon the *top* of the mountain" (KJV). This does not sound like a "parentheses" to me! It sounds as though we are dealing with a God of purpose; a God of *eternal* purpose.

## THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

It was God's plan from the beginning of time to create in this world a house for Himself that He could fill with His glory. His glory fills the heaven; His glory fills the firm-

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ament; and He is now going to have a house on this earth that He can do the very same thing with — fill with His glory!

Now it will come about that in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it (Isaiah 2:2).

I do not think that God is here talking about building a tabernacle on top of a mountain. I think we need to be careful that we don't interpret Old Testament scripture *only* in natural terms. Whether or not there will be a literal rebuilding of the temple is not the issue I wish to discuss; rather I want to emphasize another interpretation — the one I believe the early Church understood.

Let's look at Acts 15:1–20. At this time the Gentiles were pouring into the Kingdom of God by the hundreds and thousands, and there arose a dispute over whether they must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. Paul and Barnabas made the trip to Jerusalem to submit the problem to the elders and apostles. This great issue that could have torn apart the Church in its infancy was resolved by James when he stood up with the word of wisdom from the Old Testament.

"I'll tell you what's going on here," he proclaimed. "This is the fulfillment of what Amos prophesied hundreds of years ago. He told us that the tabernacle of David would be built once again, and it would be raised up in the last day period. This is the fulfillment of that great prophecy; the tabernacle of David is being built once again."

May God cause us to begin to break loose from a theology that somehow wraps us in and ties us to something that is small, defeated, frustrated, confused, weak and lukewarm. We have become so blinded to our own little group, to feeling that we are the "elect of the elect," the "remnant of the remnant," that we can't see what God is doing in the earth!

Jesus says in Matthew 16:18, "I will

build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He's saying the same thing as Isaiah 2:2.

Sometimes we forget what Jesus unloosed when He came to earth. There was only one nation at that time that had any light and that light had been so covered by tradition and misinterpretations of what God had said that it was barely shining. The rest of the world was in total blindness, total darkness and total satanic dominion.

After His death and resurrection, Jesus declared that all authority in heaven and earth was given to Him. He proclaimed that He had broken something at Calvary; that He had taken the hold that Satan had had over us and the nations of the world, and had smashed it. "Now you can go and preach the Gospel; now you can go and make disciples of all nations, for I have broken something in my death and resurrection, and the Gentiles will now see the light of the Gospel and will begin to stream into the house of the Lord."

#### "COME LET US GO"

And all the nations will stream to it. And many people will come and say, "Come let us go to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning His ways."

It is a tremendous thing to see many people stream into the house of the Lord. But it is a little frightening when we begin to see what kind of people God causes to stream into His house. They are always different than we think they should be. God is not confining this stream to those who agree with our pet doctrines or our limited perspective.

Many people will come and flow into His house, and we had better be prepared for them. They may not always appear to be in the condition we think they should be in, but I have learned the hard way that God is looking for one thing — *thirst*. And when he finds people with hungry and thirsty hearts He will pour water upon them. He will pour water on people

with funny doctrines. He will pour water on people with strange traditions. When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, He will open up rivers in the desert, and streams in the wilderness (Isaiah 44:17–18). He will cause them to flow to the house of God.

God could have said, "Let us go up to the house of the God of Abraham Isaac, and Jacob." But He said, "the house of Jacob." The God of Jacob is the God of *change*. He is the one that can take a deceiver and change him to be a prince.

People are saying today, "Let us go to the God who can get past all the outer things and change us deep down within where it really counts; who can deal with personality, who can deal with character, who can deal with us as we really are." This is the cry that is in the hearts of people today.

Five, ten, fifteen years ago you did not hear God's people praying this prayer. You did not hear God's people crying out, "Teach us concerning your ways." This cry has come up with intensity in the last several years. There has come an understanding that if we are going to meet the God of Jacob and be changed, our ways have to change. We have to learn His ways if we are going to walk in the fulness of joy.

But there is a problem, and it is basically the problem expressed in Isaiah 55:8 — *His ways are not our ways*. It is difficult to learn His ways because He always does things differently than we would.

For example, I have often thought that if Jesus had had some of the advantages of 20th-century evangelism, He probably could have done a much better job. Surely Jesus could have chosen a better public relations man than a guy who hung around in the wilderness with animals and chewed grasshoppers! Or can you imagine Jesus healing people and then telling them, "Don't tell anybody about it."

Consider blind Bartimaeus. If I were Jesus I might have said, "Just a minute, Bartimaeus, hold it."

"Hey, fellas, will you get the



cameras over here . . . there's going to be a miracle."

If we can truly, in the power of the Holy Spirit, come back to the way Jesus functioned — "He will not lift up his voice in the street, He will not raise up a cry" — there will be an outbreak of the power and the glory of God such as we have never seen in all our lives!

When you get a company of people that are learning to walk in the ways of the Lord, who are learning how to walk in His paths, there will be no need to run out and beat the bushes trying to get people to come to church. There will be something about the quality of their lives that will make the world jealous. And when this happens, Zion is going to become a school. "Instruction will go forth from Zion." The church is going to become what it was supposed to be in the beginning — a teaching institution!

People ask me over and over again, "I understand the Lord is moving in your church, what do you do?" I tell them that basically we have tried to teach our people two things: (1) How to worship Jesus and (2) How to live. Christians are tired of hearing over and over, "Jesus saves; Jesus heals." They want to hear more! They don't want to know what the fourth toe on the right foot of the beast really means. There used to be a day when that was important teaching! We knew Revela-

tion backwards and forwards, but we couldn't get along with our wives! God wants to teach us how to live.

"Instruction will go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." God is going to raise up a people and the word of God is going to go forth ministering direction, life, power and healing!

### INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE

And He will judge between the nations and will render decisions for many peoples; and they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war.

In this day God is taking away from us our desire to set things right between denominations. He is more interested in bringing us into a spirit where we understand that if we learn to love one another and worship Jesus, He'll do the job.

A couple of years ago God took away my weapons of war. He spoke to me and said, "The time has come when I am not going to allow you to speak disparagingly about any of my people. I am going to demand that you take out of your vocabulary the jokes, the funny sayings, the putting down of other people who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord."

I don't have any weapons left! Jesus

took my sword and turned it into a plow. Now, instead of fighting, I'm farming!

God is not going to allow us to learn war anymore! The war is over. The weapons are either going to be changed into plowshares and pruning hooks or we are going to find ourselves fighting against God. And when we fight against God, it doesn't matter how many weapons we have, we are bound to lose.

There is a responsibility upon us to begin to become in God's hands instruments of peace. For there is something in the mind and purpose of God that is greater than any of us have imagined. God said, "I am going to build a house, and I am going to put it on top of the mountain and it will be raised above the hills and all the nations will flow into it." There is going to be a final conclusion to that which God purposed back in the beginning — and that will be the creation of a house that can contain His glory. No man can build it; it is too big for human hands. Only God can do it. And He is doing it by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let's allow God to change our weapons of war into tools to produce fruit and grain to feed the people of God so that in this world there might again be a demonstration of the quality of life lived under the lordship of Jesus Christ. ♡

### A HOLY NATION

(continued from page 18)

We might protest, "But we *are* Americans."

"No, you *were* Americans. Now you are citizens of the Kingdom of God — a holy nation. You are living in America and you must honor America. You must submit to its institutions, for the Lord's sake. It is the government under which God has placed you. You are in it, but not of it."

Radical? Perhaps. But this was the message given to the early church living under the rulership of Roman government. Are we to be different from other Americans? Yes. It is being different that takes grit. It is not your theology that will get you into trouble

— it is your way of living. Paul said (2 Timothy 3:12 NAS), "All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."

What people do not understand, they fear. What they fear, they persecute. That is the primary reason for the persecution of the citizens of the Kingdom of God. But much adversity only purifies the nation of God, its motives and its works. Though the unregenerate world slanders the nation of God as evil-doers, yet in "the day of visitation" they will glorify God because of what they *observe* in His people (1 Peter 2:12); not because of what they *hear* from His people.

Today, in the recently established state of Israel, we see this principle of purification through hostility taking place. After 3500 years of warfare and wandering, there is still bombing and terrorizing in the land. A nation is crystalizing, and this new nation will come into its true identity through adversity.

What happens in the Middle East is but a shadow of what is happening in the heavenlies (the spiritual realm) as the people of God are formed into a holy nation under the leadership of their King. For it is God's purpose that a holy nation be established upon the earth — one with its head in the heavens and its feet on the ground! ♡



# BIBLE STUDY

## LORDSHIP

The words, "Jesus is Lord!" formed the unwritten creed of the early believers. It was not only their creed, but their very way of life. In fact, they were first known as "the people of the Way." This "Way" was a daily walk under the lordship of their crucified, risen and ascended Savior — Jesus Christ. He was their Master and King and they spread the gospel of His Kingdom.

This Bible Study presents some of the ways in which the lordship of Jesus was *proclaimed, established and manifested*.

Bible Study answers are found on page 31.

1. From the prophecy in Isaiah 9:6–7, what do we learn about the child who is to be born to establish the Kingdom of God?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
2. From the angel's proclamation made at the birth of Jesus, what do we learn of His mission? (Luke 2:11)
 

\_\_\_\_\_
3. What shall Jesus show Himself to be at His second appearing? (1 Timothy 6:14–15)
 

\_\_\_\_\_
4. During His earthly ministry Jesus manifested His lordship in many situations. In what areas do these references show this lordship?
  - a. Luke 8:43–48 \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Luke 8:35–36 \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Matt. 8:23–27 \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Luke 6:5 \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Luke 7:12–15 \_\_\_\_\_
5. When the apostle Paul preached Jesus Christ as Lord in Ephesus, what were five ways in which His lordship was evidenced? (Acts 19:17–20)
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Jesus personally and dramatically proclaimed Himself as Lord to Saul of Tarsus (the apostle Paul) in Acts 9:5. To whom did this apostle boldly proclaim Jesus' lordship?
  - a. Acts 9:27 \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Acts 9:29 \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Acts 24:24 \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Acts 26:2–23 \_\_\_\_\_
7. Which of Jesus' original twelve disciples was the one to boldly proclaim his Master's lordship both to the crowds in Jerusalem (Acts 2:36–37); and to the first Gentile converts (Acts 10:34–36)?
 

\_\_\_\_\_
8. When we accept the rulership and lordship of Jesus Christ, we are not to be conformed to the world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds in order to prove what is the good, acceptable and perfect will of our King (Romans 12:1–2). What are two ways this transformation takes place?
  - a. Hebrews 12:5–10: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. 2 Corinthians 3:18 \_\_\_\_\_
9. In Revelation 4:10–11 what did the four and twenty elders declare the Lord Jesus Christ was worthy to receive?
 

\_\_\_\_\_
10. In Revelation 11:15 what was the message the seventh angel to the churches brought regarding the Lord Jesus Christ?
 

\_\_\_\_\_
11. Following his conversion, the apostle Paul left no doubt as to his loyalty to his newly discovered Lord and Master — King Jesus. We see this affected every area of his life.
  - a. In what relationship did he place himself in regard to Jesus in Ephesians 4:1? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. How much did Paul say it was worth to him in order that he might be rightly related to Jesus Christ as Lord? (Philippians 3:7–8). \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. What did he tell the Philippians was God's ultimate will for His Son, Jesus Christ the Lord? (Philippians 2:9–11) \_\_\_\_\_



The fourth in a series of five articles  
on "Entering and Enjoying Worship."

# Maintaining a life of worship

by Bob Mumford

A look at our  
spiritual E.K.G.

**P**roper maintenance is an essential part of every successful operation. If worship is the means God has established for communication with His people, and for channeling through them power to meet the needs of the world, what provision has He made for insuring, stabilizing and maintaining the flow of this vital supply? And what is our part in making the operation a success?

We have established the fact that in this matter of worship God is the seeker. He desires to have fellowship with men, and through them make Himself known to the world in which He has placed them. The means He employed to accomplish this desire was culminated in the life, death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit was given to make effective the power released through the work of Christ. We have discussed the function of praise . . . the purpose of the priesthood . . . and the privilege and responsibility each of us has as we come to see these truths.

Once we have accepted God's way of life as our way of life, we have an obligation to become a part of the operation of His Kingdom upon this earth. We need to keep the channels of communication clear in order to hear what He is saying to us . . . to know what He wants to do through us . . . to act as conductors for the power He has made available.

God desires to establish within every member of His Body a poise of

the spirit, out of which can continually ascend the praise and worship which insures coming into His presence, joins His Spirit with our spirits, and permits the flow of His power to a needy world. Understanding and appropriating this life-transforming concept of a continual connection with our Source, affords us the ability to live above circumstances and emotions. No more necessity to strive for victory "under the circumstances" of our lives; nor for remaining a victim of our vasculating human emotions.

Psalm 30:12 capsulizes the principle of "personal relationship" which forms the base from which God chooses to operate: "To this end that my glory may sing praises to thee, and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever." The words, "not be silent," might better have been translated, "never be silent." Right here is our continual communication . . . *thanks for ever!* Paul states the principle this way in Ephesians 5:20: "Giving thanks always for all things unto God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Even in the most difficult circumstances of life an attitude of thanksgiving is to be maintained. How can we ever expect to do this?

## A MEANS OF MEASURE

To help us see how God wants to work toward establishing this principle

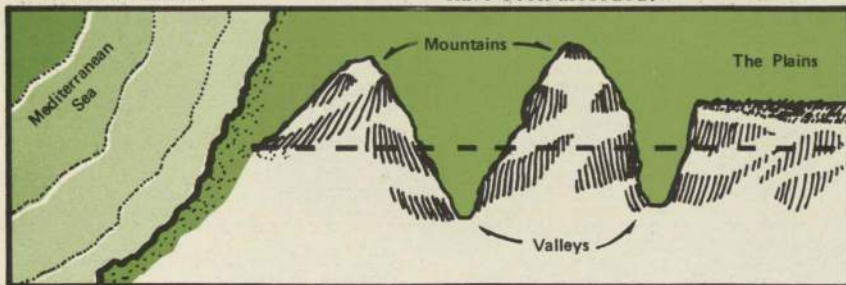
in our lives, we are going to make some comparisons. Suppose we wanted a record of the electric potential produced by the human heart — that one which so faithfully pumps blood throughout our bodies day and night. We would probably go to a physician and state our case.

We might say, "Doctor, my heart is giving me trouble. I have pains down my side. Can you tell me what's wrong and what to do about it?" Most likely he would ask us to get on the examination table and there a nurse would strap on the necessary connections to permit the heart to communicate with the outside world. Most of us are familiar with the electrocardiograph, that little machine which records the actions of the human heart. In a short while out would come a long slip of paper. Its up and down tracings would have definite meaning to those who can translate its ramblings; and diagnosis and prescription would depend upon what is recorded.

For years I had been trying to come up with a means to record spiritual "heart" action. Such a machine to record our spiritual EKG could prove invaluable in charting our progress in the Christian walk. One day I tried taking a look at the progress of the nation of Israel after their release from generations of slavery in Egypt and their movements into God's Promised Land. I wanted to compare their physical progress to the spiritual journey each of us launches out upon



following our release from the slavery of sin, and then during our journey into what God wants for us, as His children. Here is a sketch of one aspect of the Israelites' experiences after they had moved from the wilderness into the Promised Land.



The Promised Land abounded with beautiful lush plains; but there were always the mountain peaks which had to be scaled, along with the valleys adjoining them. This undulating terrain caused continual problems, and pictures in a measure, the Christian walk.

For instance: Very often when giving a testimony of the victories of the Christian walk, people forget to present the entire topography of their individual trip to the leveled-out plains of the Promised Land. They neglect to relate the drops from the mountain tops into the valleys, and the problems involved in climbing back up the next mountain which stands as a barrier to coming out onto the even terrain of the plains.

Had you ever considered the following type testimony incomplete — or even dishonest? "Oh, the Lord healed me from cancer . . . He saved my wife and daughter . . . and He has blessed me financially beyond my fondest dreams." This makes the rest of us wonder, "What's wrong with me, God?" The trouble is that the one giving the testimony forgot to say that after the cancer healing there came a tremendous valley experience containing severe dealings of God. Out of those dealings, the wife and daughter were saved. Then came another valley of dealing before the financial picture changed from almost nothing to bounty.

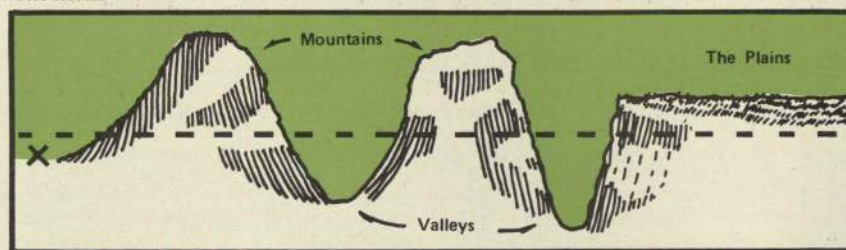
Do you see that there is no way to get from one mountain peak to the next one except by going down into

the valley and then making the climb up that next mountain? That's the way to the plains! In my own testimony, if I were to paint a true picture there would have to be some deep valleys along with the mountain tops I have been afforded.

### USING OUR MEASURE

We are going to use Psalm 30 to give us a word picture of the principle we are working on. King David is again the author and he knew the ups and downs necessary to come out onto the plains — both geographically and spiritually.

Here we have a second graph. It looks startlingly similar to our Promised Land topography, doesn't it? David traveled this route in Psalm 30 — every believer follows it — for the pathway has been the same since the beginning of God's attempts to walk with man.



Notice the dotted line. We shall call this line "normal" for lack of a better term. It indicates an indefinable standard or arbitrary line which prevails in every life — with some variations, of course. The little "x" at the starting point is where God found us. Most of us were a bit below standard when He apprehended us. We might have been in some kind of crisis — financial . . . physical . . . most certainly we were in spiritual need. Once we get our feet established in the

Christian walk, we find ourselves rejoicing in our salvation. We note this condition in the opening remarks of Psalm 30. Let's follow the progress and compare it to that of the new believer.

(1) I will extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

(2) O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

The new believer is coming into worship for the first time. He is experiencing the "lifting power" of fellowship with His Saviour. He has also experienced triumph over his foes. These may have been binding habits that needed breaking — or actual deliverance from demon activity in his life. Most of us experience overt deliverance as we claim our salvation. We are "salvaged" from the foes oppressing us. The new believer has also received physical healing. Very often we are apt to think we have "arrived," or come into it all after we have received such rich blessings.

(3) O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou hast kept me alive, that I would not go down to the pit.

(4) Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

He is still climbing up the mountain. He is beginning to sense what it is like to come from the grave and the pit into life! He has passed normal and in his rejoicing he calls upon everyone else to join him in praising God. Can't you almost hear him saying, "What's the matter with you people? Look what the Lord has done for me. He saved me . . . lifted me up . . . delivered and healed me. Glory to God! Sing!" And the Lord catches a tinge of spiritual pride starting to



creep in. Result? A dealing which I often reverently refer to as "God's tobaggan slide."

(5) For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

This makes me want to ask, "What are you crying about? I thought you were singing a few moments ago." But we see this same slide in the life of one of God's strongest prophets — Jeremiah: "Sing unto the Lord, praise ye the Lord; for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of the evildoers. Cursed be the day wherein I was born" (Jeremiah 20:13-14). Again I want to ask, "Jeremiah, what happened to you? Singing one moment — then wishing you had never been born the next?"

But what believer hasn't known the tumble from the heights of singing to the low of moaning? It can happen that quickly! After one of my slides, my wife asked, "What's the matter with you? Are you emotionally unstable?" I nodded and suggested, "You had better take my spiritual EKG." This is bound to happen somewhere along the journey to the plains.

However, did you notice that God, along with the taste of anger and weeping, sent hope? "But joy cometh in the morning." Our new Christian, though plunged down below normal, is not so far down that he cannot still look up.

The apostle Paul had his ups and downs, and as a result could advise, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15). When the devil casts a believer down, he doesn't provide any hope. But when God is dealing with us, He mixes some joy with it. He may send a friend to weep with us. At least, we are able to say from our valley of despond, "God, I don't like it, but go ahead."

(6) And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.

(7) Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.

Here our believer is on top of the mountain again — higher than the first time. We must be honest as we analyze these movements. How many of you have been through a certain dealing and come out on top and thought, *now I am ready for anything. . . nothing can ever move me again!* Are we headed for more trouble? Yes.

There is a point in most of our lives when we feel, "Lord, by thy favour. . ." Because of a special mountaintop experience, we feel that we are "special" to God. It may not be quite the pride that has previously been dealt with, but a tinge of, "God you are so much better to me than to others. I really appreciate it. You open the Scriptures to me in a more revealing way. I don't know why others can't see it my way. . . (or). . . God, You blessed me by letting me get promoted while others at the plant got laid off. . . I surely do thank You."

God has a "special" cure for this prevalent malady and it is called, "hiding His face." When I start saying, "Lord, I shall never be moved. . . I am ready for anything. . ." — watch out! He will give you a chance to see how ready you are. He withdraws the consciousness of His presence. Sometimes this puts us farther down in the valley than we were before we started out with Him. We feel forsaken, even though we know His promise never to leave or forsake us. He *is* always with us — valley or mountaintop — but it is just that we cannot see Him in the particular circumstances. We cannot feel Him in the darkness. No more goose-bumps. So there we go — down in the valley again.

(8) I cried to thee, O Lord, and unto the Lord I made supplication.

(9) What profit is there in my blood when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? Shall it declare thy truth?

(10) Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord, be thou my helper.

This is a true heartcry from one who knows his help is out there somewhere. It is not complete desperation; instead it is complete dependence.

Verse 9 affords a smile as we hear him say, "Lord, if You kill me there won't be anybody to praise You!" Perhaps God smiles at us; even as we do when our children come to us with the snarls and tangles of their little lives. We know it is all going to work out for their best — and that they will soon find it out, too.

Verse 10 brings David's cry for mercy. Never have I heard a true cry for mercy rejected. It is the longing of the spiritual man who says, "Lord, I see my instability and I am asking You to be my helper. Get me to the place where I won't need these chastenings anymore. Establish me!" Our next verse brings the answer to that cry.

(11) Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.

God has heard his cry and answered his request for help. Note that he gives God all the credit — "thou hast. . ." Also note that these are all inner changes — not outward circumstances changed. Sackcloth designates a mourning *spirit*. Gladness is an *inner response*. The dancing, too, is but an outgrowth of inner changes. He is rejoicing not because he has been delivered from outward conditions, or because of being healed or given special blessings — but because he has found God equal to the problems and adversities of life. God has proven his helper!

God exercises us like this until we are pliable, and can say, along with Paul (Philippians 4:11), "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

Our believer is now living in the provision of God. He is up on a plateau *above normal*. It is the life of continual thanksgiving, praise and expectation. For we learn that the spiritual highs are as dangerous as the spiritual lows. Until we come to this realization, our spiritual EKG will continually range all over the graph of our lives.

While in South America I came across a marvelous object lesson. There was an occasion where I was watching



an artisan making vases. I followed him in wonder — working with clay . . . molding them . . . dipping his hands in water . . . and finally putting them into ovens. Some time later, he opened the oven door, pulled out a tray of vases, and began inspecting them. Curiosity got the best of me and I asked, “How do you know when they are thoroughly cooked?”

His reply was, “Whenever you pick up a vase, you give it a little hit on the side. If it is done, it gives forth a certain sound. I say, it sings.”

My next question: “What happens if you go ‘ding’ and it responds ‘clunk’?”

“That’s simple. You just put it back in the oven!”

Do you see the comparison to this procedure and “living on the plateau” which we have designated as the level for which God is training us to be able to enjoy? The mountains and valleys level out onto a plateau; and the plains stretch out inviting us to continue on in the confidence that God is our helper and we are not dependent upon emotion, outward circumstances, or what is happening in the lives of others. *Our dependence is on the Lord.*

### WE FIND IT WORKS!

Taking another lesson from David, we consider some verses found in Psalm 57. We need to understand David’s situation at this time before we can appreciate his stand. King Saul was in hot pursuit of David. He wanted to kill him. The latter had taken refuge in a cave. We hear him say:

(1) Be merciful unto me, O God . . . in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

(5) Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.

(6) They have prepared a net for my steps. My soul is bowed down; they have digged a pit before me; into the midst whereof they have fallen themselves.

(7) My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise.

(8) Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp. I myself will awake early.

(9) I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people; I will sing unto thee among the nations.

(10) For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

(11) Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.

First, we notice where David went for help — to his God. He acknowledges his confidence in the God who is over heaven and earth. Then he admits his problem — that his life is in danger, as well as his emotional responses being taxed to their limit. But his cry of victory comes in verse 7, “My heart is fixed . . . my heart is fixed.” Not once does he declare it, but twice! He moves into high praise. He does this consciously and with the will. We hear him saying three times, “I will . . . I will . . . I will.” He has come out of his problem — big as it seems at the moment — into God’s greatness. He is trapped in that cave, quite aware that at the entrance stands men lying in wait for his very life. Yet he can say, “My heart is fixed . . . I will awake early . . . I will praise . . . I will sing.” When the heart is fixed, the emotions and the physical have to bow to it. They are not your captors — you are in command!

None of us arrives at this point of command in one lesson. Remember our two mountain peaks and the two valleys? If you learn these two lessons the first time around, you are on the way to a leveling out that will see you through every experience of life.

What if you aren’t that apt a pupil? Can you graduate to the level of God’s provision? Sorry to say, there is no skipping grades. You can graduate quickly, but you cannot skip grades. Some of us gather many scars before we manage to receive our diplomas.

One day I had a phone call at my office. The local hospital was calling and a voice said, “Your three-year old boy is in emergency. He was struck with a car. You must come right now.” Before I left my desk, I stood

and said, “Father, I thank You that nothing touches my life except that You permit it to come. Bless You for Your provision . . . for Your undertaking in this situation. I glorify Your name.” Now I couldn’t have done that a few years ago. My immediate response would have been, “Why this, Lord — to me! Here I am serving You . . . doing the best I can . . . how can You let this happen to my boy?” I have learned the way that everyone learns. We cooperate with God’s principles. They work.

The principle works corporately in the Body of Christ, as well as on an individual basis. At one time Charles Simpson, a fellow pastor, and I were scheduled for a meeting before a group of several thousand people. I was to speak and I found myself pacing the floor — just about as far down as a speaker could be. Ten more minutes and I was to stand before that crowd in behalf of the Lord. My heart was fixed and I intended to “stand” regardless, but something was missing. About that time I looked over in another corner of the wings and there was Charles worshiping and praising. Suddenly he began dancing . . . and the joy of it just overflowed to me. His joy released me in the Holy Spirit!

There is refreshing, as well as release, in worship. Say that I do not feel like making the effort to go to church service or group meeting. The inner man says, “It’s time to go.” My body and soul say, “I just don’t feel up to going out.” But my spirit begins praising . . . worship results . . . and before you know it, physical tiredness disappears, emotional strain leaves, and I find myself on my way.

In speaking of our spiritual resources, Paul says, “He that speaks in another tongue edifies [or builds up] himself” (1 Corinthians 14:4a). Spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically he is given strength. Soon the interaction of spirit upon body and soul becomes second nature. This is the best possible insurance one can take out to guard against mental breakdowns and the need to use tranquilizers in order to get through life.



The morning sacrifice . . . the evening sacrifice . . . and all of them in between constitute the means for "fixing" your heart. When that is accomplished, praise and worship are the normal responses to every situation of life. If David had asked, "Why?" as he stood in that cave instead of putting his trust in his God, he might never have become "the man after God's own heart."

There is the story of another man who had occasion to keep his eyes on God and his heart "fixed" in a time of seemingly impossible happenings. He was a man of our own generation . . . a minister. One day he found himself facing a raging fire in his home — and his little child was in that house. He stood in the yard with tears running down his face. The neighbors were watching . . . the world was watching. How would this man who had taught God's truths react to a situation in his own life, where human resources were to no avail? Would he storm and berrate his God — as many others would have done? Because of the poise

of his spirit and the strengthening of his God, he was able to lift his hands in worship and cry out, "God I thank you. I don't pretend to understand, but I thank You. I know, Lord, that You cannot do me wrong or evil. I know this God by Your character. My heart is fixed. I will give praise." Like David, if he had ever started asking "Why?" — the needle on his EKG recorder would have gone out of control. There are some situations in this life that are unexplainable. But while living in the provision of God, we can claim victory over all possible circumstances and every condition that can possibly come our way. *Don't ask why — just learn how.*

This is the level of living that God desires for us. He has made it possible and gives us the opportunity to make it our own. To this end we were created — for His pleasure and to enjoy Him. Where do we get our strength? Through worship. This is His ordained means for supplying our needs. Each experience of worship builds for the future, as well as

meeting present needs and enjoyments. Jesus told His disciples through one of the many parables which He used to illustrate Kingdom principles:

Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock (Matthew 7:25).

The rains, the flood, the winds will all beat upon our houses in this life; but that structure *can stand*. Our safety and protection has been assured. We find comfort and enjoyment in that certainty. We also experience fellowship with our Creator . . . power available for helping others . . . continual balance in managing the physical, the emotional, the financial, and every other area of life. We find that we are the possessors of an EKG that records living in God's Promised Land of plenty. And worship is the key to entering and enjoying. ♣

## ECHOES OF THE SPIRIT

Significant events in the Body of Christ.

**SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA . . .** The Great Commission PRAYER CRUSADE, a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ, is sponsoring Prayer Dynamics Conferences in an effort to marshal and channel the prayer energies of Christians. Quoting from a letter headed, "You can help change your world through prayer," we find the following objectives:

The need to gather our forces for united, specific prayer is crucial in this desperate hour of history. More and more we are realizing the power of prayer to change the lives of men and nations. Yet, as Christians, one of our greatest needs is to learn specific principles of effective prayer.

The Prayer Dynamics Conference is for you who are deeply concerned about making a greater impact upon  
NEW WINE

secular society and the entire world. Through prayer we can see our personal, church, community and national needs met. Scripture indicates that, without exception, when God's people have come together to pray unitedly and specifically, they have been delivered. Learn how you can be used of God in this troubled hour.

**KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN . . .** Clergy and lay leaders from twelve Kalamazoo area congregations and prayer communities are calling a Day of Prayer and Fasting for "Pearl Harbor Day," Saturday, December 7, 1974. In light of the grave national and international crises, this day of remembered infamy is very appropriate as a day of intercession! A close study of American history reveals that,

in accord with our Pilgrim heritage, there have been communities of Christians faithful to calls for repentance, prayer and fasting during hours of national crises. We believe this to be such an hour!

As points of intercession, may we suggest: (1) That God grant wisdom and protection to our President, his family and staff; (2) That God restore righteousness and wisdom in all public offices; (3) That God intervene in the Middle East crisis, averting nuclear war; (4) That revival, renewal and restoration continue in the Church; (5) That the flow of Satanism and the occult in education be stopped; (6) That hardship during food, energy and money crises be alleviated; (7) That family order be restored; (8) That love and unity abound in the Body of Christ. ♣



# Forum

## LORDSHIP

DON BASHAM

GUEST PANELIST:  
DE VERN FROMKE

CHARLES SIMPSON

As the people of God are seeking to come into a deeper relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, He is revealing to them the necessity of embracing His lordship over every area of their lives — not just in theory, but in the everyday confrontations of life. This month's Forum attempts to deal with some practical aspects of "lordship."



**How is lordship reflected in our lives in relation to the spiritual authority God has placed over us? (i.e. pastors, husbands, parents, etc.)**

**BASHAM:** With the powerful emphasis the Holy Spirit is bringing in the Body of Christ today concerning submission to spiritual authority we are coming to see that God's rule and authority over us is primarily expressed through delegated human authority such as pastors, husbands, parents, etc. As we recognize and submit to those authorities (and every Christian, male or female, young or old, should be under the care and protection of some spiritual authority) we are demonstrating our submission to the Lord Himself. If, as the Scripture says, wives are to be subject to their husbands "as



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unto the Lord," then their rebellion would also be "as unto the Lord." If children are to obey their parents "in the Lord," then their rebellion against their parents is "against the Lord."

Recognition of "lordship" is recognition that one's life stands in need of rule and authority. Pastors, husbands, and parents provide that oversight.

**SIMPSON:** There is a definite correlation between honoring the Lord and those whom He sends, whether it be

pastors, parents, husbands, or any other office. The Lord's representatives should be accorded the service and respect the Lord would receive had He come in person (See Matthew 10:40). The Jews mistreated Jesus whom the Father had sent. In effect they rejected not only the Son but the Father. In Matthew 23:39 Jesus warned Jerusalem that they would not see Him any more until they said, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

It should be said that all people are not worthy of this office. Nevertheless, we should honor the office and trust God to correct the person who fills it. (Study David's relationship to Saul). Our willingness to treat God's representatives with honor is a criteria for his willingness to send honorable representatives.

**FROMKE:** I have become convinced that reflecting lordship is either *forced* or *flowing*. Let me explain. Last month during a seminar in a Christian school I learned that the students were working on a headmaster's theme: "The Difference Between Honor and Obey" (as in Ephesians 6:1-3). During my four days there it became evident to me that many of the students already knew something of this distinction and reflected it toward their teachers and parents.



Honor flows out of our spirit — a right spirit toward God and all His spiritual representatives. It is an inward condition expressed in outward obedience. Yet, there can be a form of obedience which does not flow out of honor; such is the soul independently striving to fulfill rules, laws, requirements. It is *forced*.

It seems to me that in all our responding to spiritual authority there is either the free flowing of our spirit, or the forced struggle of the soul. Among many of those students I detected a spirit of preferring one another, a cheerful attitude of helpfulness, a spontaneous manner of courtesy, a quiet, relaxed spirit and obedience seemed to be strangely hidden behind the joy of learning and living.

Finally, I believe the key in our ability to reflect lordship in our lives in relation to every spiritual authority placed over us is when we can both honor and obey as “unto the Lord,” and not merely as unto men.

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#### **How and to what extent does being under the lordship of Christ affect the attitude of a person toward his or her possessions?**

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**BASHAM:** To acknowledge the lordship of Christ in regard to our possessions is to admit that nothing we have is really our own; it is God's. And if He is Lord over our lives, this means He has a right to use any or all of what we have the way *He* chooses. I confess this principle is much easier to recognize in theory than it is to put into practice!

Since what we have is really *His*, this means also that we should avoid making financial decisions of a major nature without consulting the delegated spiritual authorities we are submitted to. I believe that as we grow in our understanding, both of the lordship of Christ over our possessions and our need for obedience to authority, we will increasingly seek counsel from our shepherds concerning the use of our possessions.

**SIMPSON:** The direct consequence of lordship, as Don shared, is to acknowledge that we are merely stewards and God is the possessor of all things. Acts 2 reveals that immediately after the 3,000 repented and received the Holy Spirit they sold their possessions as needs arose. Acts 4 records a similar response to spiritual revival. They brought the proceeds to the apostles for distribution.

I do not believe God wants us to be forever stewards of a few things. But we must prove our faithfulness to seek His government first, before He can entrust us with many things.

**FROMKE:** Just as prayer is no substitute for obedience; so asceticism is no substitute for stewardship. Many years I was caught in the pseudo-spiritual asceticism which mistakenly equates utter lordship with virtual destitution. For fifteen years, as a single man, I lived out of the back seat of my car as I travelled in ministry. Indeed I learned many lessons in trusting the Lord; yet, I was relentless in emphasizing that since Jesus was our example, then possessing (many) things was both wrong and unnecessary.

I was most content in my reckless abandon, though strangely it seemed this ascetic conception always produced a constant confusion in practical reality; for the more I gave away, the more the Lord gave to me! How does an ascetic (who glories in his destitution) handle more and more things. I kept warning others, “He that trusteth in his riches shall fall . . .” (Prov. 11:28). How true! But I neglected to see the remainder of that verse — “The righteous shall flourish as a branch.” I could make little room for flourishing for I felt it was wrong to possess.

I found a whole new release from the bondage of possessions when I discovered that none were really mine to begin with. Man brought nothing into this world. It was all here when he arrived. All the wealth and resources were put here for man's benefit and God's glory. As true stewards we do

not possess, we merely handle for Another. This demands an utterly new dimension of lordship quite beyond the normal fundamental conception: that of giving to Him 10% of the increase of my possessions. As we come to view ourselves as stewards we understand that giving to God is not a matter of generosity; it is a matter of honesty — of spiritual integrity.

Finally, the attitude of any faithful steward is to rejoice in how much the Lord has dared to entrust into his hands. It is not how little the steward can get by on, but how much he rightly handles that brings honor to the steward and his Lord.

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#### **To what extent does lordship come into your life through relationship with civil authorities, educational instructors, employers?**

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**BASHAM:** In Romans 13:1–7 Paul makes it clear that all civil authorities rule with God's permission. I believe it is vital for every Christian to understand that God expects recognition and submission to authority *all down the line*. To claim to be under the lordship of Christ while flagrantly disobeying any and all civil authorities we may happen to disagree with is to make a mockery of the principle of submission.

All proper submission, God sees as submission to His authority; and all rebellion God sees as rebellion against His authority. Once a man has truly met and submitted to God's authority, as Watchman Nee points out, that man has little trouble recognizing and submitting to authority, wherever he may meet it.

If you want to see if you have met this test, check and see how well you obey the speed limit when you drive your car and how determined you are to see that the government gets its full rightful share when you prepare your income tax return.

**SIMPSON:** 1 Peter 2:11–17 reminds us to keep our behavior excellent,



though we are aliens to this society. "Honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God and honor the king." The fear of God will cause us to rightly relate to the king (secular authority). This is considered good behavior. We are further exhorted to submit to every human institution. This kind of good behavior will cause even the heathen to glorify God.

Our attitudes will reflect on God. Arrogance or rebellion are not the attitudes of our Lord Jesus. If He is Lord of our lives, then His attitude and behavior in secular society will be ours. Of course, that could get you killed.

**FROMKE:** Recently, as I stood amid several long lines of irritated citizens waiting to fulfill some legal obligations, I saw one man (who had waited more than an hour) forced to the back of another line because his specific need could not be met in that line. Tempers flared as such injustice quite naturally ignited the whole crowd nearby. Though I was outwardly controlled, my emotion stirred too, as I reflected on this wrongness and also on the inadequacies of many in civil position over us.

As I prayerfully bowed, I wondered how many deacons, elders, Sunday school teachers, etc. were caught in this emotional outburst. I know how easy it is to live in a dichotomy — a split world — where the doctrine of lordship is separated from the practical experience. Once again I realized that a great majority of God's children seem forced into such a dichotomy — making their "spiritual life" a Sunday island quite detached from the mainland of weekday existence.

But why? Because they have not discovered how to appropriate the supply of His spirit to their own spirit. I also realized anew the imperative of God's children experiencing *response-ability*. How to rightly respond to God's ability. Instead of responding emotionally or intellectually to circumstances, injustice, and all manner of external problems, one must know how to cry to the Lord as did David in Psalm 120:1, "In my

distress I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me."

What is *response-ability*? When I see the inconsiderateness of those in power and position; when I see those immature in spiritual vision promoting their own programs; when I see men using the religious platform to exalt themselves; when I see ambitious men exploiting those who are needy to carve out their own kingdom — by nature I want to join the rebellious crowd who live in reaction. I want to claim my rights — even under the facade of "spirituality." But I must not take this easy self-relating way; rather, I must allow the reality of His lordship to operate, not merely to those in spiritual authority, but even toward those in the commonplace positions of life.

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**What is meant by "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of heaven"?**

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**SIMPSON:** The immediate implication of Matthew 7:21 is that Lord is more than a title. Jesus is our Lord if we obey His instructions. A house built on sand is a good metaphor to describe one who calls Jesus, Lord, but does not obey Him. It looks good, but will not endure testing.

This verse often is interpreted in futuristic terms of going to heaven. I personally doubt that that was Jesus' intention. I believe He was stressing that Kingdom living is based upon obedience.

If one obeys the Lord, he will obey the authority established by the Lord. A rebellious or angry attitude will betray one's religious terminology. The Pharisees were a case at hand; they loved to call God, "Lord," but they crucified the One whom He sent.

**BASHAM:** I consider these words to be among the most sober words ever spoken by Jesus. Let us acknowledge that it is easy to agree with the remains of that verse; to agree that only those "who do the will of my

Father which is in heaven" will enter the Kingdom. We agree that entrance into the Kingdom of heaven isn't based on lip service, but true obedience. But what Jesus says next staggers us: "Many will say to me in that day; Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity! (Matt. 7:22-23).

With these words Jesus clearly indicates it is possible to be performing genuine miracles in His name, *yet still be in disobedience to the Father's will while we're performing them*. The word "iniquity" means "lawless" or "rebellious." Jesus calls such miracle-workers, workers of iniquity. He is describing what we call "rebel ministries"; those persons moving in the power of God, even while they exercise lawlessness, independence and rebellion against authority. Their justification of their lawlessness is "God is blessing my ministry; therefore no man can dare tell me what to do!"

Those who truly acknowledge Jesus as *Lord* will also acknowledge a genuine need to be under the discipline and authority of other men of God.

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**How do we begin to come under the lordship of Christ?**

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**BASHAM:** Perhaps the first step toward coming under the lordship of Christ is to change our way of thinking. We have become so accustomed to thinking of Jesus Christ in terms of His *saving* ministry (i.e. what He has done and will do for us) that it will take some real mental and spiritual discipline to consistently acknowledge His *lordship* or His rule over us (i.e. what we can do for Him).

I believe one major way to demonstrate His lordship over us is to make sure that we recognize, honor and obey all the delegated civil and spiritual authorities He has placed over





#### BASHAM

"Recognition of 'lordship' is recognition that one's life stands in need of rule and authority."

#### SIMPSON

"If one obeys the Lord, he will obey the authority established by the Lord."



us. I can't see how we can claim to be submitted to His lordship without also being submitted to all those He has placed over us.

**SIMPSON:** Personally, I believe the simplest way to begin to come under the lordship of Christ is to find someone whose life demonstrates that they are under God's government. Go to that one (a pastor or Christian leader) and ask him to *teach you how to submit to the Lord*.

Before you take such a step, pray and fast. Consider carefully the person's past and present influence in your life. Consider their own relationship to authority. If you still feel that the person is qualified to teach you — go in a teachable attitude. Lay your life down before the Lord and His representative. Serve the Lord, by serving your brethren. In that environment you can learn about lordship. To the degree that you learn to relate to your brethren you can measure the love of God in you (1 John 2:10–18).

**FROMKE:** In describing certain aspects of the Christian life, I like to use this triad: *an act, an attitude, a way of life*. I believe we can be helped in seeing lordship first as a crisis act, then as a continual attitude which is

finally demonstrated in a dynamic way of life.

Immediately we recognize that too many are content with just an act. At some moment in time they have acknowledged Christ's lordship (Rom. 12:1–2). But for years they have blindly continued to reckon back to that initial act as though that were all lordship meant.

God does not leave one there undisturbed. He uses many crucibles until His lordship becomes a prevailing attitude — which means one comes to see all of life related to His pleasure and His purpose. This attitude is like wearing a new pair of glasses which colors everything. The Lord Jesus continually manifested this attitude toward His Father and it became for Him a way of life.

This attitude of lordship must further be expressed in concrete action. Too often we are content with mere attitudes and come short of allowing the reality of Christ's lordship to produce a whole new way of life — one that is utterly contrary to this world's way. Could it be those early believers in Acts were called people "of the Way" (Acts 9:2) simply because the lordship they knew started with an *act*, which became a joyous *attitude* and exploded into the dynamic of a totally new *way of life*. ☞

Next month's FORUM will cover the topic of "Deception." Rev. John Hagee, of San Antonio, Texas, will be our guest panelist.

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 them to FORUM PANEL: *New Wine Magazine*, P.O. Box 22888, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33315. We appreciate reader participation in this feature of *New Wine*.

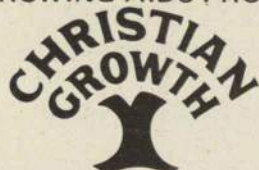
#### BIBLE STUDY ANSWERS

(1) a. Government shall be upon his shoulders; b. No end to the increase of his kingdom; c. His name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (2) He is to be a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. (3) King of kings and Lord of lords. (4) a. disease; b. demons; c. nature; d. Sabbath day; e. death. (5) a. Fear fell on the people; b. Jesus' name magnified; c. Confession of sins; d. Burning of occult books; e. Word of God prevailed. (6) a. People of Damascus; b. The Greeks; c. Felix and Drusilla; d. King Agrippa. (7) Peter. (8) a. Through God's chastening; b. Beholding Christ's glory. (9) Glory and honor and power. (10) He shall reign forever and ever. (11) a. Prisoner of the Lord; b. The loss of all things; c. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord!



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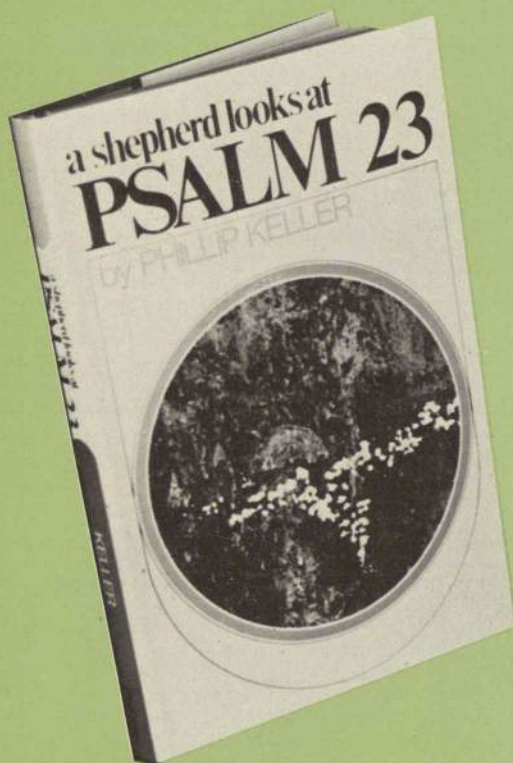
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