

new wine

FEBRUARY 1976
THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE
DEDICATED TO CHRISTIAN GROWTH



The Body of Christ

“For we being many
are one bread, and
one body: for we
are all partakers of
that one bread.”

1 COR. 10:17

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I have recently received a large number of various *New Wine's*, and in this letter I want to express my gratefulness to you for them. I am a 20-year-old, second year student of English at my local university. I am a member of the Pentecostal Church (which is under the so called "United Church in Poland"). Most of the churches in our country (99%) are Catholic churches. The situation is the same in my city. There is only one Baptist and one Pentecostal church in it.

Almost half a year ago I met a Danish brother who sent me a few copies of *New Wine*. In a short time I received a package which contained Christian literature — books and magazines. That was the first time I tried the "wine," and I found that it was fine! Personally, that "tasting" for the first time was a blessing to me. I found a new encouragement and a lot of valuable and good teaching. When I informed that brother from Denmark of my feelings and impressions about the paper, he sent me more literature. Not long afterwards I noticed that *New Wine* was coming no longer from Denmark but from the USA.

Letters to Editor

This fact motivated me to write this letter. I don't know who finances my receiving the magazine, I just thank God for that person (or people) whoever he (they) might be.

I remember you brothers and sisters in my prayers.

Name withheld
Poland

As a student of theology I am amazed at the national and, I hope, increasing international, impact of your magazine. In some circles here in Boston, *New Wine* offers a rare kind of spiritual nourishment. Perhaps its strongest point is its prophetic urge calling us to take the Lordship of Christ seriously and its correlate — the Kingdom of God. Don't be embarrassed of focusing too heavily on the Kingdom. Conservative, liberal and radical New Testament critics have discovered that the central category of the New Testament is the Kingdom of God. I am convinced that much of the barrenness and obscurantism of both evangelical and charismatic Christianity has to do with an ignoring of the meaning of this fundamental concept of the Kingdom of God.

Lyn Steffen
Appleton, Wisc.

Just a note of appreciation for the ministering *New Wine* does for so many people. A practical, gut level publication dealing with daily encounters and decisions of the Christian lifestyle.

Bill
Cincinnati, Ohio

Lutheran Statement

We have seen the controversy which has arisen in the charismatic renewal over the question of "shepherding" and "discipleship." We realize that teaching and practice has arisen in this regard which has raised theological questions as well as practical problems. Some of the questions which have been raised are . . .

- Authority and Submission
- Trans-local Authority
- Tithing to an Individual
- An Emerging Charismatic Hierarchy, with the possibility of a (new) denomination

We are disturbed to see some things taking place which are tending the situation toward unnecessary polarization. Instead of first-hand communication between responsible leaders, there is a mounting of hearsay, stance-taking, accusation, and denunciation.

It is not wise nor fair to visit this controversy on the whole Body of Christ, which includes many 'babes' in the faith. Just as a man and wife must work through certain difficulties and disagreements out of earshot of the children, leaders in the Body of Christ must work through this issue without visiting it indiscriminately on the whole Body. This would mean, in practical terms, such things as . . .

- 1) A steadfast loyalty to one another in Christ, which gives to a brother the benefit of the doubt, "putting the most charitable construction on all that he says or does."
- 2) A steadfast refusal to receive or act on hearsay information without checking it out at first hand with those involved.
- 3) A steadfast adherence to the practice of Matthew 18:15. Where an issue or criticism needs to be voiced, let it be first with the person(s) involved, i.e., those in a position to do something about it.
- 4) A steadfast refusal to make this a matter of public proclamation or debate unless all other courses of dealing with it have been exhausted.

In short, while we are aware of the theological and practical issues that need to be worked through, we feel that the main immediate need is in the area of ethics, what one might call the "ethics of disagreement." If we refuse to allow the enemy entrance at this point, we are confident that the Lord will bring us to unity on the theological and practical issues.

We believe that no man on any side of this controversy has any other ultimate purpose than to serve Christ. Disagreements

will not sunder us, only an absence of charity. Brethren, let us be fair to one another!

Finally, in the midst of our difficulties, let us bear constantly in our minds that one of the primary concerns of the Holy Spirit in this hour is the unity of the Body of Christ.

May none of us, whatever our position or involvement, be guilty of selfishly serving our own interest and ministry at the expense of that precious unity which our Lord has been steadily working among us and so desires to perfect.

Now is the time for a fresh application of Ephesians 4:1-3, "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, forbearing with patience and love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," lest God's purposes in the Renewal be thwarted.

Larry Christenson	Steven Peterson
Richard Denny	Donald Pfothenauer
Robert Ellison	Erwin Prange
Mark Hillmer	Delbert Rossin
Bruce Kirkpatrick	Paul Swedberg
Rodney Lensch	Morris G.C. Vaagenes, Jr.
Milton Markworth	George Voeks

Editorial

On the day of Pentecost, when the crowds in Jerusalem beheld the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the 120 disciples, some marvelled and some mocked. Inevitably, fresh revelation meets both acceptance and rejection. God's gifts of Kingdom truth seem to come tightly wrapped in ribbons of controversy.

It has never been the policy of *New Wine* to promote controversy. From the beginning we have pursued one major purpose: to provide sound scriptural teaching for the Body of Christ. Our desire for relevance and our focus on "present truth" have, at times, placed us in the center of theological controversy. Such a controversy exists in the Body of Christ today over principles of authority and discipleship.

When controversy arises, a practical problem follows: how to maintain a consistent spiritual walk in the midst of it. If we debate the issue, we are accused of "imposing our position." But if we ignore the problem we are charged with "exclusivism" and with "refusing to tell the whole truth."

Since some of the men who write for *New Wine* are themselves involved in shepherding and discipleship, we have been variously advised to 1) stop teaching on controversial themes, 2) present a position paper and defend our views, 3) repent and renounce our "heretical" teaching on authority, discipleship and shepherding.

Some religious publications have intensified the controversy by hasty and inaccurate reporting of accusations as if they were proven facts. As for *New Wine*, it is our intention simply to pursue our original purpose. Being human, we lay no claim to infallibility or to "having the word for the whole Body of Christ." We simply intend to abide in our calling and continue teaching on relevant themes.

To that end we call your attention to three features in this issue. First, we believe the two exceptional articles by Derek Prince will provide significant clarification to many who have been disturbed by the present tensions and misunderstandings. Additionally, we agree completely with the statement recently released by Lutheran Charismatic Renewal Services, reprinted on our "Letters to the Editor" page. We applaud their plea for loving restraint and their recommendations for "some ethics of disagreement." We trust these three features in this issue will help lower the temperature in an otherwise overheated spiritual atmosphere.



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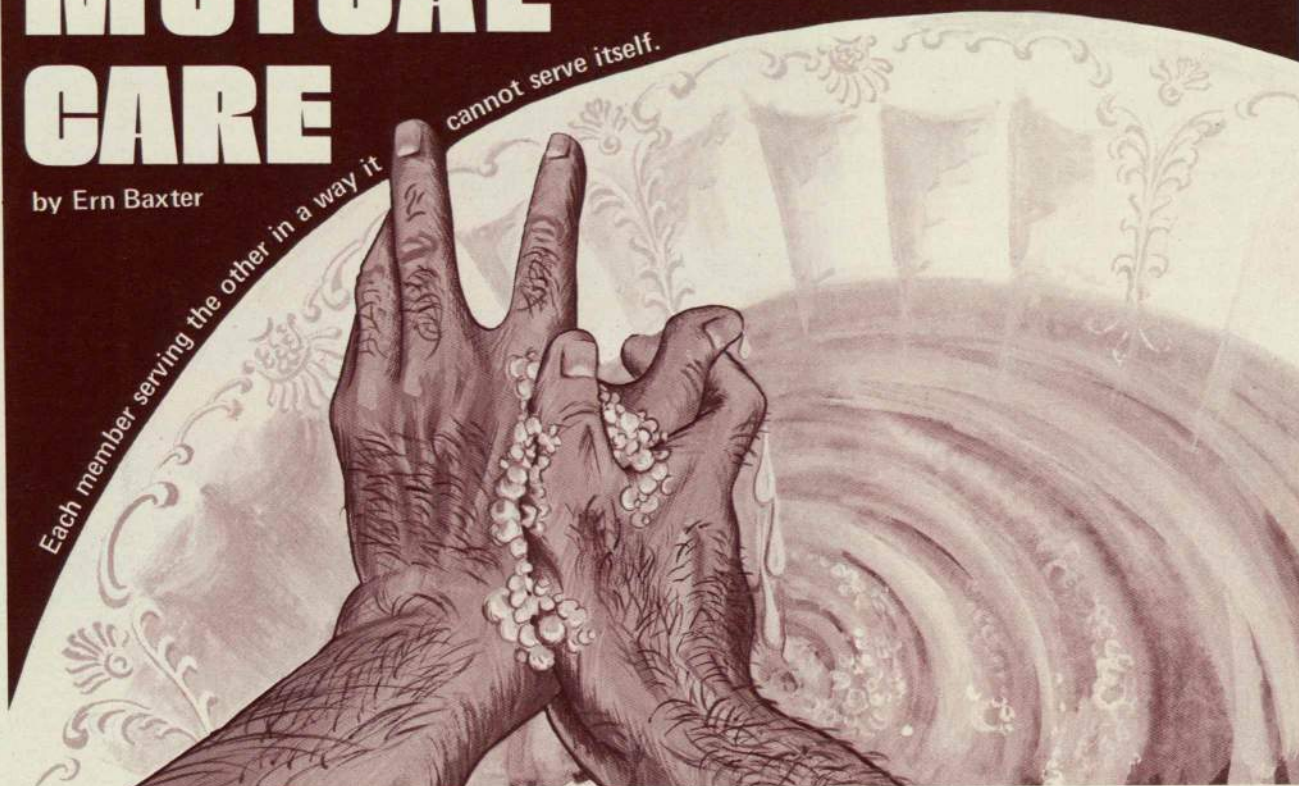
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MUTUAL CARE

by Ern Baxter

Each member serving the other in a way it cannot serve itself.



Metaphors and analogies used in the Bible to describe the redeemed people of God depict a community characterized by unity with diversity and diversity in unity. Unity is not uniformity, and diversity is not division. The human body is one metaphor the Apostle Paul chooses to illustrate the divine purpose for the unity and diversity of Christ's Body. In the Corinthian letter he adopts that metaphor to point up the divisions and distortions that existed in the life of the church in that city.

In the first chapter, speaking directly about the serious divisions among the Corinthians, Paul entreats them that they should "all agree, and there be no divisions . . . but that they may be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment" (verse 10). He next deals with the underlying causes for division, one of which is the important celebration of the Lord's Supper. He sternly states

that in the light of their division and disorder, "when you meet together it is not to eat *the Lord's Supper*," but rather *your own supper* (1 Cor. 11:20-21). The Lord's Supper is a meal of communion in which members of the redeemed community declare their organic solidarity as members one of another. They seal this unity by partaking of the blessed emblems of our Lord's body and blood. In Corinth, division nullified the meaning of the Holy Meal.

By using the body analogy, the apostle further explains what should constitute normal interpersonal relationships among the Corinthian Christians. There should be a unanimous involvement of all the members of the community, and this involvement should embrace a variety of spiritual gifts. However that variety must *not* produce division resulting from the diversity of the gift, since "to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit *for the common good*" (1 Cor. 12:7 NAS). While the gifts, ministries, and

results vary, they must not be allowed to cause division, drawing attention to the gift or gifted person, and creating cliques within the redeemed community. Diversity is intended to bring a divinely designed variety of ministry to the whole body to accomplish "the common good." If diversity does not contribute to unity then it is divisive, and self-destructing.

No one should claim credit for the gift which He exercises, nor consolidate a following around that particular gift as though it were something exclusively his. All divine enablements are sovereignly given, and that "one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually *just as He wills*" (1 Cor. 12:11 NAS). An understanding of the Spirit's sovereign giving should eliminate any tendency on the part of the gifted one to take credit for his gift, or to try to use it in any form of self-aggrandizement. Rather, the gift or enablement should be used in humble joy to bless the whole redeemed community. A beau-

tiful picture emerges when we envision a body of people all variously gifted by the Holy Spirit ministering to one another, manifesting maturity and Christian concord as a witness to the world. It is at this point that the apostle develops the analogy of the body, writing: "For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many are one body, so also is Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12 NAS). The human body is described in its unity as "one body" and yet in its diversity as having "many members." Then Paul makes a daring use of the name "Christ," as he says "so also is Christ." He is saying that this Body of redeemed men and women are, in their unity and diversity, the corporate manifestation of Christ in our time/space world.

The relationship between men and women who are in Christ is vastly different from the relationship between people who join an organization or share membership in some kind of a club. To be in Christ is to be not only organically related to God through Christ and the Holy Spirit, but to all others who are so related. This makes the community of men and women who are members of Christ also members one of another. Paul accentuates this in the following verse. "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13 NAS). Here we have both initiation and process. All have been baptized into this Body, and by continuing to drink of the Holy Spirit, healthy relationship is maintained between the various members of the body. Therefore, we have a supernatural initiation into an organic community, and a supernatural continuity in the Holy Spirit as it pervades that community as the one Source of the community's life.

He next says, "For the body is not one member, but many" (1 Cor. 12:14 NAS). Obviously, if the body consisted of merely one member, it would not be a body at all, for the very nature of a body consists in the variety

and diversity of its members. However, if the members are not functioning in both variety and diversity neither is the body a body. No member can function on its own and be a body. Each member requires the other members to form a body. And yet no member must seek to alter the distinctiveness of its particular nature and operation, otherwise it will make the body less than a body. Therefore Paul insists that the redeemed community is one organic whole, consisting of diverse members. That diversity is essential to unity and the unity can be accomplished only by the proper function of the diversities. It is the functional difference of the various parts that make it a Body. Any attempt by a single member to be the whole Body automatically rules out the existence of a Body.

It would seem obvious that the only way in which a body can operate at its maximum ability is when every member is healthy and functioning in its proper relationship to every other part. It should be equally obvious that the only way the Body of Christ can function and fulfill its destiny, is when every member of that Body is healthily exercising its distinctive role in relationship to every other part of the Body.

Paul then proceeds to personalize the various parts of the human body and give them speech. This of course is not possible in the human body, but it is very effective in showing how wrong it is for redeemed men and women to behave in a similar way in the Body of Christ. If the various parts of the human body had the ability to speak, and act independently they could throw the entire body into disorder which would result in malfunction if not death. The inference is very clear. Rebellion among its members would shortly destroy the human body. In the redeemed Body the various parts have what the members of the human body do not have, the power of moral choice. When choices are made in opposition to the normal functioning of the Body, the result is God-dishonoring malfunction.

The deploring problems Paul refers

to as he personalizes the various members of the Body in Corinth, are still seen among us today. They should draw the same kind of corrective attention from the present leaders of God's people as they did then. Let us look at those problems as Paul uses the analogy of the human body, personalizing its various members, giving them speech. We will all undoubtedly recognize familiar situations.

DOWNGRADING SELF

Paul's first point is that there should be no downgrading of one's self. "If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body,' it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body,' it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?" (1 Cor. 12:15-17 NAS). As the parts of the body speak in these verses, we note that the less celebrated parts contrast themselves with the more celebrated.

The "foot" feels disqualified because it is not "the hand." Now, the hand is a very prominent part of the body. It can wield a skillful scalpel, or pen immortal poetry and prose. It may convey genius to a canvas, bringing joy to generations. It ministers the caress of care and concern, and reaches another in the firm handclasp of fellowship. It is understandable that the foot should feel less important than the hand. Paul has made his point well. In the diversity within the body some parts are obviously more prominent, and receive more recognition.

However, while the foot may not experience the same prominence nor be given the same recognition, it is no less a part of the body. Indeed, it is very necessary to the hand. Normally it is the foot which conveys the hand from place to place, enabling the hand to perform its distinctive duties. Paul is warning the members who fill what seems to be a less prominent place in Christ's Body, not to fall into the

danger of downgrading themselves.

At this point, we must recognize a difference between the foot in the human body and the "foot" in the Body of Christ, for here our analogy ceases. In actual fact, a foot in the human body cannot speak, and thus cannot downgrade itself. Rather, the natural foot is satisfied to fulfill its function without rebuttal and without questioning its worth to the body.

However, a "foot" in the Body of Christ does speak, does make decisions, and does hold opinions of its worth to the Body, and by downgrading himself, can render himself inoperative and useless. This involves a two-fold loss. First, by virtually repudiating his God-ordained place in the Body of Christ he seriously impairs his usefulness. At the same time, by his attitude of withdrawal and self-downgrading, he is robbing the Body of a very important member, without which it functions at only a fraction of its total capacity.

The ear also speaks and compares itself with the eye, lamenting that it does not enjoy the same prominence and recognition. How many poems have been written celebrating the ear; how many love songs have been written with the ear as theme? While the ear is useful, it is not one of the more celebrated parts of the body. On the other hand, the eye is celebrated in literature, and plays a large part in the language of romance. The well-known old song says, "drink to me only with thine eyes," not "with thine ears." So it would seem that the ear has a legitimate lament concerning the prominence and attention given to the eye. However the apostle again makes his point. Because the ear is not an eye is it not a part of the body? It is a very essential part of the body! But its inclination is to downgrade itself, and, as in the case of the foot, not only miss its own true fulfillment but impair the life of the whole body. Paul also refers to the nose in the comparisons. Again we do not find the nose as a celebrated part of the body being referred to in poetry and prose. As a part of the face it can be a beautiful member or it can be an object of deri-

sion. But Paul says if the body was one organ, it would be no body at all. It would be a monstrous distortion of the divine intention. Important as the eye may be, it would be terribly handicapped without the hearing and, important as hearing is, the body would be seriously deprived without the sense of smell.

So by personalizing the members of the body, and illustrating the self-deprecating language of the less celebrated members, Paul warns Christians that they must not indulge in self-downgrading, for in so doing they charge God with having placed them unfairly, and also obstruct the proper functioning of the Body.

DIVINE PLACEMENT

Probably the most serious factor in downgrading one's self as a member of the Body of Christ is that it expresses disagreement with the sovereign purpose of God in placing the member where he is. "Now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, *just as He desired*" (1 Cor. 12:18). It is a very serious thing for anyone in the Body of Christ to feel that because he is not in a place of prominence he is of little value to the Body, and consequently succumb to discouragement or despondency. Rather he should recognize that God has placed him where he is for reasons best known to Him, and should walk in joyful submission to God's sovereign placement. "The high dignity of each member appears from the thought that it is God Himself who has placed it in the Body, and placed it where it is best."¹

DOWNGRADING OTHERS

Paul continues to personalize the members and give them speech as he makes reference to the eye, which he says "cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'; or again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'" Here we have a second problem which I am sure we all recognize — the problem of downgrading others. Paul's choice of members here is most signifi-

cant. First he relates the eye to the hand. Earlier, with the foot speaking to the hand and the ear speaking to the eye, we heard the less celebrated speaking to the more celebrated. Now we have the equally celebrated eye speaking to the equally celebrated hand, which suggests the inclination of leaders to depreciate one another. Unfortunately it is often in the realm of leadership that we find this kind of criticism. A prominent "eye" will say to a prominent "hand," "I have no need of you." It is often much easier for leaders to speak with appreciation to those who are not as prominent as they, than it is for them to speak to their peer group. We believe there is a much-needed lesson here: *leaders must not engage in the sin of downgrading other leadership.*

The second combination, that of the head and the foot, is also significant, for it speaks of the inclination of leaders to spiritual arrogance. This, too, is a danger on the part of those in leadership. Because God has given them a place of prominence in the Body, they constantly face the danger of considering their prominence as something deserved by them. They erroneously regard it as a place of privilege which permits them to lord it over those that are in lesser prominence, often to the point of despising them and thinking that they can get along quite well without them.

DECEIVED BY APPEARANCES

This brings us to a third problem — "the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor" (1 Cor. 12:22-23 NAS). "Seem" and "deem" are the same words in the Greek. The temptation is to make an erroneous judgment concerning certain parts of the Body. Some parts "seem to be weaker," and in our judgment, less "necessary" than other parts. Other parts are "less beautiful" (Conybeare) and these we instinctively "ennoble with more beautiful clothing" (1 Cor.

(Continued on page 10)



JOINTS

by Charles Simpson

God's divine network of supply to the Body of Christ.

As the congregation sang the closing hymn about fifty people responded to the invitation for prayer. Without a doubt, our church had a harvest on its hands.

I had seen harvests years earlier, but often the fruit was wasted. As a result, I had felt the deep frustration of having so few laborers. But that was not the case this time. The laborers were ready. For months we had been training them in anticipation of the harvest and these were some of the first fruits.

As I spoke to those who had responded, I asked them to identify their various needs — salvation, deliverance, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, etc. As they did, leaders were assigned to small groups for ministry. As I sat before one of these groups, I began to ask questions:

"Have you been born again?" I asked the young man seated on the end of the row.

"Yes, sir," he confidently answered.

"Have you been born again?" I asked the next young man.

"No, sir."

"Would you like to be?"

"Yes, sir, I would."

We prayed for the young man to receive Christ as his Lord and Savior, and he was wonderfully changed. Peace and joy flooded his countenance. We moved on to discuss the baptism in the Holy Spirit. As we continued in prayer and ministry the entire group was filled with the Holy Spirit. It was a glorious occasion! Tears of joy flowed amid laughter and praise. Other nearby groups were being blessed with similar results.

The critical moment had now arrived. It would be so easy to count noses and go home, happy with the results. But God had not sent us only to *see* the harvest, but to *gather* it into barns. We were not only to find lost sheep, but to bring them into the fold.

I turned to the group before me and to the young man who had just received Christ and been filled with the Holy Spirit. Tears were still flowing down his cheeks.

"Do you know anyone in our fellowship?" I asked him.

"Yes, sir. I know two men." He named two of our leaders. One of them, Ernie, had had a direct influence in the young man's life.

"Do you have confidence in Ernie?" I probed, in order to see his attitude.

"Yes sir, that's why I came." He continued, "I have a great respect for him."

"Do you believe Ernie could help you learn the ways of God so that you might grow to be a mature Christian?"

"Yes, I do."

"Then I want you to go and tell Ernie what has happened to you and let him lead you into the ways of our Lord."

I watched as he began to tell Ernie. I saw Ernie's face light up, and I rejoiced as they embraced in joy and the love of God. A *joint* was formed in the Body of Christ.

In one of the other small groups I witnessed a young black couple accept the Lord and be joined to a spiritual leader. That leader had been an example to the husband on the job. He had interceded for him and now the Lord had answered his prayer. He now

had the responsibility to care for that family and lead them in the ways of God.

I could scarcely contain my joy as I drove home that day. The Lord was adding to the Church, His Body, living joints!

A BODY HAS JOINTS

Numerous metaphors are used to describe the people of God. The Church is referred to in the Bible as a Kingdom, a flock, a vine, a nation, a Bride and a Body, to cite a few descriptive terms. The term, *Body*, is one of the most frequently used descriptions. It is especially popular where spiritual renewal is taking place, because spiritual renewal causes God's people to rediscover biblical terminology and practical function. The term "Body" is both biblical and functional. "And He put all things in subjection under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:22,23 NAS).

When the Bible describes the Church as His Body, it is using an analogy to teach us about the nature of the Church. While any analogy or parable has limitations, we can see some valid comparisons. First, God's people are to be related by *joints*. Just as the members of a physical body are related by joints, so the Church, a many-membered Body, is *related by joints*. This conclusion is not only implied in the Body analogy, but specifically stated in Scripture: "From whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every *joint* supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16 NAS).

"... and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the *joints* and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God" (Col. 2:19,NAS). A body has joints.

"Body," also implies *visibility*. The Spirit, the life of the Body, is invisible.

But the Body itself is the *visible* manifestation of the Spirit of God. The Body is not only visible to God, but to the world as well. The world is to behold its behavior and glorify God (1 Pet. 2:12). I've often thought that it's one thing for the Body of Christ to say, "Glory to God!" It is quite another thing for the Body of Christ to be such a manifestation of the life of God that it causes the *world* to say, "Glory to God!"

Such a visible, literal Body requires literal and visible joints. But these joints must be functional, not merely theoretical or mystical. A mystical body with mystical joints will never make a spiritually blind world say, "Glory to God."

JOINTS HAVE DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

After studying various scriptures and looking in the dictionary, I offer the following definition of a joint: "A joint is where members or parts connect and share in a common bond." Generally, a joint is thought of as a relationship between individual members who are likewise related to others. The sum total of members and joints make up the whole Body.

Scripturally speaking, joints have two primary purposes: (1) Joints hold the members together and in place. (2) Joints transmit life, or supply, from one member to another, and in so doing perpetuate the growth of the Body.

It is easy to see the necessity of healthy joints. If joints (relationships) between members of the Body are weak, then members can easily get "out of joint" and out of place. Such a condition renders them undependable and useless to the purpose of God. It also causes pain and limitation to the entire Body. Weak, ill-defined and undernourished relationships have put many members out of joint. Psalm 22 speaks prophetically of Christ's crucifixion and agony. In verse 14 the Suffering Servant cries, "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; . . ." Though His resurrection body has ascended and is

seated at the Father's right hand, the Church, His earthly Body, is presently a Body much out of joint and certainly still in much pain.

Without joints, the Body would soon become as Ezekiel's vision of dry bones, the scattered memory of a once-great army. The first step in restoration is "bone must come to his bone" (Ezek. 37:7). To put it another way, the right people must get together in the right way to function in God's purpose under Jesus' headship. The enemy of the Church is not the *diversity* that is within it, but rather the lack of sufficiently strong joints to hold the members in place together as they supply out of their God-given uniqueness. Strong commitment, member to member, is required before there is the freedom to function in a free-flowing life of truth and love. Strong edification and correction can only come in an atmosphere preconditioned by covenant commitment. Members of Christ's Body whose insecurity or fear keep them from strong relationships doom themselves to shallow communication, irresponsibility and an uncorrected life.

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE HEAD AND EACH OTHER

The Head of the Body, Jesus Christ is also the Head of each member. 1 Corinthians 12:18 states that He sets each member in the Body as it pleases Him. In placing members in His Body, He establishes their position relative to others. Because each member recognizes His headship over the Body and themselves, they must ultimately accept their placement with others. When one does accept His placement, peace is the result.

Often it is much easier to help a new believer find his place in the Body than one who has known the Lord for years, but has never found his place. The latter person is often seeking a place for his particular ministry or gift. When his gift or ministry is not properly appreciated he floats on. The new Christian usually doesn't have that problem, but he will soon have it if he is rapidly promoted before he

learns to serve in humility.

Finding our place is usually not so difficult if we do not think in terms of gifts and ministries, but rather in terms of people. In helping Christians find their place, or joints, I often ask some of the following questions: Whom has God used in your life? Who led you to the Lord? Who has taught you? Who has stood by you as a faithful friend? Who has been a shepherd to you? Usually one of those questions holds the key. If so, finding our place in relationship will be a matter of recognizing where the Lord has *already* placed us. Often, people overlook God's placement for them because they are seeking a more glamorous place.

If there is no clearly defined place of personal commitment or relationship, then some local pastor or Christian leader can usually point out such a place. Some time ago a person called me from a large city of over a million people. "I need a shepherd," he said. "Will you shepherd me?"

"Isn't there a place there where you can find personal oversight and relationship?"

"No, there's no place in this city."

I thought it strange that out of one million people and hundreds of churches there was no place. I suspected that a thorough search had not been made. I could not accept the responsibility.

I personally believe that finding one's place in relationship should normally precede finding one's ministry, for the members of a Body must be properly joined before they can supply life to one another. In relationship with a Body of believers, under headship, we find our true identity and discover that which we have to give.

BE SURE THE RELATIONSHIP IS UNDERSTOOD

Our natural body has many different types of joints — elbows, knees, shoulders, hips, fingers, ankles and toes and they all work differently. So it is in Christ's Body. There is a variety of joints that perform different func-

tions. Husband/wife relationship is a joint specifically designed to produce mutual fulfillment, procreation and maturity. To accomplish these and other purposes there must be a strong joining between two healthy members.

Husbands and wives go through a period of courtship prior to marriage. During these weeks, months or years, they develop a certain understanding of one another. Finally, there is the wedding in which the two become one in covenant commitment. In the wedding, the boundaries and responsibilities are spelled out. If two persons have been led by the Lord, if they have truly come to know one another in courtship, and if they have honestly faced the solemnity of the vows, there is no reason that they should fear marriage or be surprised at its demands. Proper understanding is the required basis for successful relationships.

The relationship between a pastor, or undershepherd, and his flock is different from that of husband and wife, but this relationship is also designed by the Lord for His Body. This kind of joint is designed to protect and mature members who are related to leadership. Since leaders have to answer to God for those who follow, there needs to be a basic understanding between the individuals so engaged. Some "courtship" or "getting to know you" time is required. When one is ready to follow a given leader, being so directed by the Lord, there should be a clear-cut commitment to do so, if the leader is to have the freedom to correct, instruct and direct. Both leader and follower need to know what is required of the joint if it is to function properly. Some of God's people only need care and fellowship. Others have a calling in God that needs to be developed in a more disciplined training.

Parent/child relationship, and numerous other relationships are joints that need *definition, understanding and commitment if they are to function properly*. A commitment to the Lord Jesus is *a commitment to relate properly in every other relationship*.

JOINTS ARE STRENGTHENED IN FELLOWSHIP

In the three years that followed the disciples' commitment to Jesus, a great change took place in their relationship. In John 15:15 Jesus said, "I call you no longer servants, but friends." One of the goals of any relationship is to develop a real friendship. Friendship implies a certain equality. It is unthinkable that we should call ourselves God's friends. Rather we are His servants. But Jesus called us to friendship — a place where He can communicate what the Father is doing, as He did with Abraham and Moses.

We are called to His fellowship (1 John 1:1-7). That does not mean simply that we fellowship with Him. Rather, it means that as we fellowship with Him, we will also fellowship with one another in the light of His presence — in truth and love. Such fellowship is God's goal for us and should be the goal we keep in mind. Sharing in recreation, breaking bread, teaching and prayer forms the bonds of peace and love. Living joints are not mechanical or method oriented. They are natural and free flowing. They are strengthened in a natural setting while we share our real selves.

LEARN TO SERVE THE OTHER MEMBERS

While friendship is a goal, it cannot be forced or grasped. The people I am prone to avoid are those who want to aggressively force their presence on me. I suppose most of us are that way. I believe God is that way. The Scripture tells us to be careful of our manner and our words in the presence of God. God resists the proud, we are told, but He exalts the humble.

Here we get a clue as to how we can build fellowship with the other members where God has joined us. Jesus said, "I call you no longer servants. . . ." It is apparent that He had previously called them servants. Not only that, but He had served *them*. In fact, Jesus, their leader, had taught them how to serve in practical

ways by His example. He reminded them on several occasions that the servant was not above His Lord. If He could so literally serve, we who call Jesus Lord should so serve even the least members of the Body.

In a real sense, joints are made so that one member can serve another. In our natural body each member serves the others. Such service is transmitted through relationship or joints. In the Body of Christ by serving other members we prove that their best interest is our motive. Then, they will call us into a fellowship of trust and sharing. Such a Body, where members recognize their place, understand their mutual relationships and have a fellowship built around mutual service, will be healthy and happy. It is difficult to find fault with members that are giving themselves for the edification of the Body without regard to their own interest.

Once I knew of such a Body of believers. God had kindled the fires of renewal and the Body had stood the tests of Satan's attack. External attack

had only served to draw them closer together. Day after day they prayed and sought God. The fruit of their faithfulness to God and one another was constantly ripening on the vine. They didn't know much about covenant, but it was there. They didn't understand joints, but they had them. The life that flowed healed them, protected them and provoked them to share with the poor and one another. They were like happy children, experiencing the joy and freedom of genuine life together in God.

Then one day something began to happen. A misunderstanding was not honestly handled. One night the enemy sowed tares in the field. Brothers began to see faults they had never seen before. The smiles were still there, but they were not the smiles of innocent children. The joints got infected, the Body grew stiff and the laughter died away.

One can enjoy the unity of the Body and healthy joints without fully knowing or understanding how it works. Children do. Their little bodies

are so versatile, limber and wonderful. But as they get older keeping healthy bodies becomes an endeavor based on mature understanding and determination. Many people never appreciate health until they have lost it.

As the physical body can become painfully swollen in its joints, so can the Body of Christ. The remedy that Jesus prescribes for this condition is: "Go find your brother. . . ." "How often should we forgive?" Peter asked, "Seven times?"

"Seventy times seven, Peter," Jesus said. Jesus knew it was easier to forgive than to live in a society where the joints are swollen, immobile and painfully infected.

. . . but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love" (Eph. 4:15-16 NAS). ♣

MUTUAL CARE

(continued from page 6)

12:23, A.S. Way). "We cover with a special care some of our members, such as the sex organs and organs of secretion, and in so doing we bestow more honor on them than on other members which we do not cover."² Let us remember that "God has so composed the body" (1 Cor. 12:24 NAS). "The fact that the body is what it is, is due to God's disposal, and we human beings ought not to find fault with it."³ God not only made the human body, but also the Body of Christ, and we must honor His design and purpose for both.

To sum up: if every member of the Body is sensible of its need of every other member, then that member, no matter how prominent it may be in the Body, will see to it that every member receives equal care, for its own existence and usefulness depends on the health of the whole. The one who yields to downgrading himself must remember that God has placed him in the Body and that he is indis-

pensible to the function of the whole. This ought to give him both courage and a sense of spiritual dignity, knowing that since God has placed him where he is, he is as essential to the functioning of the Body as any other part. The one who would downgrade others must realize he is dependent upon the other members. Even though he plays a prominent role, and at times may feel that he needs no one else, he cannot adequately fulfill his prominent role without the support of the rest of the Body. God has so joined the Body together that no one can adopt either of these attitudes without endangering his own life and the total life of the Body. The Body must either function as a whole, or it will function inadequately. "God, in fact, has made a composite whole of the Body, assigning special honor to the part which naturally lacks it, so that there may be no divided interests in the Body, and that its various organs may be united in solicitous care for each other's welfare" (1 Cor. 12:24-25, A.S. Way).

NO COMPETITION

There is no place in the Body for competition. God made you what you are and has given you what you have. Don't compete, contribute! We need each other if we are going to fulfill His divine purpose in the earth. When we are failing to flow with every other member of the Body we are rebelling against God's purpose for His corporate people. We are defeating our own personal destiny. We are injuring other members of the Body of Christ, and are withholding from the world the beautiful corporate "Christ person" that God desires the world to see. "Here is the supreme glory of the Christian man - He is part of the Body of Christ upon earth."⁴ ♣

¹ Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians*, Vol. II.

² F. W. Grosherde, *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 296.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

⁴ William Barclay, *The Letter to the Corinthians*.

DISCIPLESHIP, SHEPHERDING & AUTHORITY

by Derek Prince

A systematic
scriptural examination of
controversial concepts.

INTRODUCTION

Recently an extensive controversy has arisen within the Body of Christ concerning a number of interrelated scriptural concepts, such as: Discipleship, Shepherding, Submission, Authority (both within and beyond a local church), the giving of Tithes, etc. Regrettably, this controversy has been permeated by confusion and misunderstanding, due in a large measure to exaggerated or incorrect reports, poor communication, and prejudice. In the following study I seek to set out, as objectively as I can, certain simple, basic principles, found in Scripture, concerning these matters of controversy. Once this basis can be established, there will be room for a series of more detailed and in-depth studies to be carried out in a calmer atmosphere.

A. MAKING DISCIPLES

1. In Mark 16:15–16 Jesus commissioned His disciples to preach the gospel to every creature; those who believed and were baptized would be saved. In Matt. 28:19–20 He commissioned them to make disciples of all nations; the act by which commitment to discipleship was to be made was

baptism. Thus, faith was to lead to baptism; baptism was to lead to discipleship. The end purpose of preaching the gospel was to produce disciples. Disciples were the only people recognized as “Christians” (Acts 11:26);

2. Baptism is identification with Christ in death, burial and resurrection (Rom. 6:3–4, Col. 2:12). A person who is buried takes nothing with him from his previous life. The basic requirement for a person to become a disciple is to “renounce all that he has” (Luke 14:33 RSV). Thus being baptized and becoming a disciple each involves the same thing: totally renouncing one way of life and entering into a completely new way of life.

B. THE PATTERN OF TEACHING

1. Jesus commissioned His disciples to make disciples by baptizing them and then to go on and teach those disciples all that they themselves had been taught by Him. This process was to go on, unchanged, until the end of the age (Matt. 28:19–20).

2. In His earthly ministry, Jesus showed His disciples not merely *what* to teach, but also *how* to teach. He never practiced formal classroom teaching. He preached and taught in synagogues and many other places, but His method was first to “do,” then to

“teach” (Acts 1:1). When He began to give special training to the twelve apostles, His first requirement was “that they should *be with him*” (Mark 3:14). While they were with Him in this relationship, He gave them directive commands, not requests or suggestions. Later, He sent them out, in pairs, to practice what they had learned. Like Jesus Himself, these men both “did” and “taught,” and returned to report on this to Him (Mark 6:7,30).

3. These men whom Jesus chose were, by worldly standards, “ignorant and unlearned.” Nevertheless, their ministry was powerful and successful, and their opponents attributed their success to the fact “that they *had been with Jesus*” (Acts 4:13).

4. When we speak of “teaching” in the context of New Testament Christianity, the pattern outlined above is what we should have primarily in mind. “Teaching” should not be separated from “doing.”

C. CHURCH LEADERSHIP

1. In New Testament congregations, all Christians (i.e. disciples) were expected to be under the rule of duly appointed leaders. The leaders of each local church were always referred to collectively, in the plural. They had

three distinct, but related, titles: elders; overseers (or bishops); shepherds (or pastors).

2. Three Greek verbs for "ruling" are used:

(1) "hegeomai" = to *lead*, as a shepherd leads his sheep or a general leads his army. In KJV, as a noun, this word is translated "governor" in Matt. 2:6, Acts 7:10.

(2) "poimaino" = to *shepherd* (from the noun "poimen" = "a shepherd"). In KJV this word is translated to "rule" in Matt. 2:6, Rev. 2:27; 12:5; 19:15, and to "feed" in John 21:16, Acts 20:28, 1 Cor. 9:7, 1 Pet. 5:2, Rev. 7:17. In other words, the concept of "shepherding" includes both "ruling" and "feeding." In Rev. 2:27; 12:5; 19:15 the phrase "to rule with a rod of iron" carries over the metaphor of the shepherd's "rod," but the fact that the "rod" here is one of iron (not wood) denotes wrath and judgment, in place of grace and mercy.

(3) "proistemi" = to *be set over* or *at the head of* (see Rom. 12:8, 1 Thess. 5:12, 1 Tim. 3:4,5,12; 5:17). In 1 Tim. 3:4,5,12 there is a direct parallel between a man ruling his family and a man ruling the church. Thus, the authority of a father in his family is a pattern for a leader in the church.

3. The following are some further scriptures indicating that in the New Testament Christians were expected to be ruled by leaders: ". . . know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you . . ." (1 Thess. 5:12). "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour . . ." (1 Tim. 5:17). "Remember them which have the rule over you . . . Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves . . . Salute all them that have the rule over you . . ." (Heb. 13:7,17,24).

4. All the scriptures quoted in C.3 above indicate plurality of leadership. Here are some other scriptures that indicate the same: "the elders" (Acts 11:30); "they had ordained them elders in every church" (Acts 14:23);

"the apostles and elders" (Acts 15:2,4,6,22,23); "the elders of the church" (Acts 20:17); "the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (Acts 20:28); "all the elders were present" (Acts 21:18); "the bishops (overseers) and deacons" (Phil. 1:1); "ordain elders in every city" (Titus 1:5); "let him call for the elders of the church" (James 5:14).

5. To understand the relationship between elders, overseers (bishops) and shepherds (pastors), we may set the following scriptures side by side: Acts 20:17,28; Titus 1:5,7; 1 Pet. 5:1-3. These scriptures show that "elders" were also "overseers" (bishops), responsible to "shepherd" the flock (i.e. the congregation).

6. In the light of the scriptures quoted in C.3, 4 and 5 above, any Christian who accepts the pattern of the New Testament church as still applicable today, would do well to ask himself the following questions: Who are the leaders who rule over me in the church? Do I know them? Do they know me? Is there a right relationship between them and me?

7. Once the basic plurality of leadership in the church has been established, the Holy Spirit will normally place upon one of the leaders special responsibility for executive administration and direction. This will take the form of a *charisma* — a special gift setting him aside for this function and enabling him to fulfil it. It will not necessarily be permanent. There may be a time when the Holy Spirit will transfer this *charisma* from one leader to another, but this will not affect the overall functioning of the group. It is the responsibility of all the leaders to recognize this *charisma* and to submit to it, irrespective of the person upon whom it rests.

8. So long as a man functions with this *charisma*, he is the mouthpiece and the agent of the whole group of leaders. However, the final responsibility for all major decisions still rests with the collective leadership. In the conference described in Acts 15:1-29, it appears that the *charisma* of leadership rested upon James — who was an apostle (see 1 Corinthians 9:5). How-

ever, the final decision was expressed in the words, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us . . ." In other words, it was a unanimous decision of the whole group, expressing the mind of Christ imparted by the Holy Spirit to His Body, the Church, as it functioned in divine order (see 1 Corinthians 2:16). Experience has shown that leadership functioning according to this pattern can achieve similar unanimity today.

D. AUTHORITY AND SUBMISSION

1. Among Christians, those who rule must not impose or enforce their authority, in the way that authority is frequently enforced in the world (see Matt. 20:25-28, Mark 10:42-45, Luke 22:25-27). Therefore, if Christians are to be ruled in the church, they must make this possible by *voluntarily submitting themselves* to their leaders. For this reason, in spiritual relationships, the New Testament always speaks first to the one who is responsible to submit to authority, and only after that to the one who is responsible to exercise authority. If the first party does not submit, there is no scriptural way by which the second party can exercise authority.

2. The New Testament requires all Christians to submit to each other (Eph. 5:21, 1 Pet. 5:5). In addition, it requires submission in the following specific relationships: (1) wives to husbands (Eph. 5:22); (2) children to parents (Eph. 6:1-3); (3) servants to masters (Eph. 6:5-8); (4) younger to older (1 Pet. 5:5); (5) all Christians to secular government on all levels (Rom. 13:1-5, Titus 3:1-2, 1 Pet. 2:13-14); (6) all Christians to those who rule over them in the church (see scriptures listed in C.3 above).

3. Submission (or submissiveness) is an inner attitude of spirit, not mere external obedience. It is possible to obey without being submissive (like the elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:25-30). It is likewise possible to be submissive, yet refuse in specific instances to obey (like Peter and the other apostles in Acts 4:19-20; 5:29).

4. However, submission is truly tested only when it requires us to do something we would not otherwise do. Also, as Christians, we do not obey those in authority because they are right; we obey them because they are in authority, and all authority ultimately stems from God Himself.

5. God has made Christ the supreme Ruler over every area of the universe, including the Church (Matt. 28:18, Eph. 1:20–22, 1 Pet. 3:22). However, Christ does not rule in every area directly, in His own Person. He rules through *delegated authority* — i.e. those whom He sets in authority under Himself. Wherever His delegated authority touches our lives, He requires us to acknowledge and submit to it, just as we would to Him in Person. Thus, when He sent His first apostles out, He said, “He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me” — i.e. God the Father (Matt. 10:40). Here was a descending chain of authority: the Father was represented by Christ; Christ was represented by His apostles. To receive the apostles was to receive Christ, and thus God the Father. Conversely, to reject the apostles was to reject both Christ and the Father.

6. This establishes a vital principle: Our attitude toward those whom God sets in delegated authority over us is the outward and visible expression of our attitude toward God Himself.

7. Obviously, there must be safeguards against the abuse of authority by leaders in the church. Here are four basic safeguards:

- (1) Every leader is required to acknowledge and submit to Scripture as the final authority (2 Tim. 3:16, 4:2).
- (2) A man should be tested in every area of his life before he is given a position of leadership (see E.3 and 4 below).
- (3) Every leader should be submitted to a group of his peers for adjustment, correction and discipline (see C.4 above).
- (4) In the last resort Christ is “the Head over all things to the Church” (Eph. 1:22); and both

promotion and demotion come from the Lord (Psa. 75:6–7). If abuse of authority reaches a certain point, Christ will intervene in judgment and establish new leadership (see Rev. chs. 2 & 3).

E. QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

1. In New Testament churches leadership was raised up from among the Christians in each congregation. This was done by the basic pattern of “teaching” practiced by Jesus with His disciples, as outlined in B.2 above. Potential leaders were not sent away for their education to some external institution, separate from the daily life of the church.

2. In Acts 6:1–6 men to “serve tables” (deacons) were chosen from among the congregation. In Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas ordained elders over new churches from Christians in each congregation. In his epistles Paul instructed both Timothy and Titus to follow the same procedure (see 1 Tim. 3:1–3; 5:17–22, Titus 1:5–9).

3. To qualify for leadership, a man had to demonstrate two basic qualities:

- (1) Willingness to be a servant (slave) (see Matt. 20:25–28, Mark 10:42–45, Luke 22:25–27). Being required to “serve” protects a man from pride. To impart knowledge to a man who is not serving is dangerous, because “knowledge — by itself — puffeth up” (1 Cor. 8:1).
- (2) Faithfulness. In Luke 16:10–12 Jesus specifies faithfulness in three areas: small things (before great); money (before spiritual riches); serving another (before working on one’s own).

4. A man had to prove himself faithful and efficient in his appointed area of service, before he qualified for a higher form of service. For example, success as a deacon qualified a man for a higher level of authority (1 Tim. 3:10,13).

5. Training for “trans-local” ministries (extending beyond a single local

congregation) was given in the same way. A young man was chosen to work with, and under, a more mature man. He was then gradually advanced to a place where he was competent to work on his own and eventually to train others in the same way that he had been trained himself. For example, in 2 Tim. 2:2 we have four spiritual “generations”: Paul (first generation) trained Timothy (second generation); Timothy was to train faithful men under him (third generation); these in turn were to train faithful men under them (fourth generation).

F. SHEPHERDS

1. Eph. 4:7–16 deals with the main “ministry gifts”: apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds (pastors) and teachers. These are “gifts” (Greek “domata”) from the ascended Christ to His Church. Each man, in his ministry, is a “gift” (“doma”). But each man’s ministry is “according to the measure of the gift (Greek “dorea”) of Christ.” In other words, Christ in His various ministries imparts Himself to His Church through these “ministry gifts.” It is Christ the Apostle in a man that makes him an apostle; Christ the Prophet in a man that makes him a prophet; Christ the Shepherd in a man that makes him a shepherd; and so on. However, all these ministry gifts express in one form or another the shepherd’s heart of the One who is “the chief Shepherd” (1 Pet. 5:4).

2. In 2 Cor. 5:16–17 Paul says, “Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature . . .” This can be applied in two directions — toward Christ Himself and toward our fellow Christians. In neither case are we now concerned with what they are “after the flesh.” We no longer look for the “historical” Christ who walked the roads of Galilee outwardly indistinguishable from the other men of his age and culture. Instead, we look for Him manifested in our fellow Christians. We no longer see Joe Smith

the plumber, but Christ the Apostle gifting Himself to us through Joe. Nor do we see Jack Jones the C.P.A., but rather Christ the Shepherd gifting Himself to us through Jack. It becomes vitally necessary for us to recognize and accept each man for what he is by virtue of His Christ-imparted ministry.

3. The Greek word *poimen* (translated "pastor" by KJV in Eph. 4:11) occurs altogether eighteen times in the New Testament. In every other place KJV translates it "shepherd."

4. In John 10:11 Jesus presents Himself as "the good Shepherd." He is the pattern of what every shepherd ought to be. Here are some main responsibilities indicated: (1) to know the sheep (2) to be known by the sheep (3) to call them by name (4) to lead them (5) to provide them proper pasture (6) to protect them against the thief and the robber (7) to lay down his life for the sheep. Two main responsibilities of the sheep are: (1) to hear (recognize) the shepherd's voice (2) to follow him.

5. In Psalm 23 a shepherd's responsibilities include the following: (1) to make full provision for his sheep (2) to lead them in paths of righteousness (3) to lead them to good pasture and water (4) to walk with them through "the valley of the shadow" (5) to provide discipline (the rod) and support (the staff).

6. In Ezekiel 34:1-10 God outlines the following responsibilities of shepherds: (1) to strengthen the diseased; (2) to heal the sick; (3) to bind up the broken; (4) to bring again that which is driven away; (5) to seek that which is lost. Because the shepherds of Israel had failed to fulfil these duties, the Lord declares that He will judge them and take His sheep away from them. It is also emphasized — both here and throughout the Scripture — that sheep without shepherds become scattered and a prey to sickness and to wild beasts.

7. The Father gave to Jesus the sheep for whom He was responsible (John 10:29). By laying His life down for the sheep, Jesus became the door to them; by being resurrected from the

dead by the Father, He became their Shepherd (Heb. 13:20). Anyone who attempts to approach these sheep by any way except through Jesus as the door transgresses divine principles and declares himself "a thief and a robber."

8. The same principles apply, by extension, to those whom Jesus in turn places over His sheep as shepherds. He is the One who, by the Holy Spirit, commits to them the sheep for which they must answer to Him (see Acts 20:28, Heb. 13:17). If these men lay down their lives for the sheep committed to them (see 1 John 3:16), they become the door to them. Thereafter, raised up by Jesus to leadership, they become shepherds to them. It then becomes unethical and unscriptural for other ministries to approach those sheep except through the shepherds who are the God-appointed door.

9. When we consider the responsibilities of a shepherd as outlined in F.4 through 8 above, it is clear that a man can only serve as a shepherd to a strictly limited number of people. This leads us to an important practical conclusion: following the pattern outlined in B.2 above, we need to train many more men capable of serving as shepherds. We shall thus help many Christians whose needs are at present not being met, and we shall strengthen the whole Body of Christ,

G. TRANS-LOCAL AUTHORITY

1. Within a local church the governing authority is provided by the plurality of elders who are resident in, and appointed over, that particular congregation (see scriptures listed in C.3 and 4 above). However, there are also three ministries set in the church with special authority: "first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers. . . ." (1 Cor. 12:28). When a man with one of these three ministries resides in a given area, he takes his place as a co-elder with the other elders (see 1 Pet. 5:1, Acts 13:1-4). In respect of government, he is on the same level with the other elders. But when functioning in his particular

ministry (apostle, prophet or teacher), he has a special authority which his co-elders need to recognize.

2. The ministry of the "evangelist," mentioned by Paul in Eph. 4:11, is not included in 1 Cor. 12:28. In this latter passage Paul is speaking of ministries set "in the church" (the assembly of believers). The ministry of the evangelist, by its very nature, functions *outside the church*, among those not yet converted. Also, in 1 Cor. 12:28 Paul does not specify "shepherds," because they are automatically included in the governing body of "elders" present in every local church (see C.5 above).

3. The authority of an elder is normally confined to the church in which he is appointed, but the other, "trans-local" ministries mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:28 (apostles, prophets, teachers) can exercise authority wherever the Holy Spirit directs them within the Body of Christ.

4. However, it has already been said that spiritual authority cannot be imposed, but only submitted to voluntarily (see D.1 above). Therefore, in any area where an established, collective eldership (presbytery) is functioning, a man with a trans-local ministry can operate scripturally only if the eldership opens the door to him and endorses his ministry (see F.8 above).

5. The main functions of these trans-local ministries are: to equip the believers for their tasks; to build up the Body of Christ; to bring all believers into the unity of the faith and into right relationship with one another (Eph. 4:11-16).

6. The New Testament abounds with examples of trans-local authority. Here are some:

- (1) Apostles from Jerusalem exercised authority in the newly formed church in Samaria (Acts 8:14-25).
- (2) Prophets from Jerusalem exercised authority in Antioch (Acts 11:27-30).
- (3) Prophets and teachers in Antioch ordained apostles to go out to other areas, and they in turn ordained elders in various cities (Acts 13:1-4; 14:23).
- (4) Apostles and elders in Jeru-

saalem, through the ministry of two prophets — Judas and Silas — exercised authority in Anti-och (Acts 15:23–33).

- (5) Apollos, as a teacher, was sent from Ephesus to edify the believers in Achaia (Acts 18:24–28).

7. Over and above all this, almost all the epistles of the New Testament represent authority being exercised by the writer, or writers, in areas in which they did not reside. Paul, through his epistles, exercised authority both in churches where he had ministered personally (e.g. Corinth, Philippi) and in churches where he had never ministered personally (e.g. Rome, Colosse). He also exercised authority, outside of his area of residence, over individuals who were personally related to him (e.g. Timothy, Titus). Furthermore, he endorsed the ministries of other men to operate in areas where he did not reside. Examples of this are: Timothy and Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:19–25); Tychicus, Onesimus and Mark (Col. 4:7–10). Likewise, John, by an epistle, both denounced Diotrephes and endorsed Demetrius (3 John 9–12).

8. Actually, the word “autonomous” did not apply in New Testament church structure. All Christians — both as individuals and as churches — were in some measure interdependent. They were required to recognize one another, receive one another, submit to one another. The concept of “the autonomous church” is an unscriptural carry-over, in the spiritual realm, from the rampant individualism manifest in so much of our contemporary society.

H. TITHING

1. Tithing, as an ordinance for God’s people, neither began nor ended with the law of Moses. The first instance of tithing is recorded in Gen. 14:18–20. Here Abraham gave tithes directly to Melchizedek, who was a priest. Later, Jacob vowed to give the Lord a tenth of all he received (Gen. 28:20–22). But no precise indication is given of how he carried out his vow.

2. Under the law of Moses, the

people gave their tithes to the Levites, and the Levites in turn gave a tithe of their tithes to the high priest (see Num. 18:30–32, Neh. 10:37–38). Under the law, tithes were used only for the support of the priestly ministry, not for the construction or equipping of places of worship. These were provided out of special offerings. For the tabernacle, see Ex. 35:4–29; 36:5–7. For Solomon’s temple, see 1 Chron. 29:1–9.

3. In Mal. 3:10 God charges His people to “bring all the tithes into the storehouse.” A “storehouse” normally serves two main functions: it provides the food that we need to eat and the seed that we need to sow in order to obtain the next harvest. In other words, tithes should go to the source from which we obtain our spiritual “food” and “seed.”

4. In the New Testament, the epistle to the Hebrews sets forth Jesus as our High Priest “after the order of Melchizedek” (see Heb. 7:1–24). Receiving His people’s tithes remains part of this “unchangeable priesthood,” as originally revealed in Gen. 14:18–20. However, no precise details are given in the New Testament as to how Christians gave their tithes.

5. In 1 Tim. 5:17–18 Paul says, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his hire.” In 1 Cor. 9:7 Paul states the principle that the one who shepherds a flock is entitled to drink from the milk of the flock. The clear implication of these passages is that a shepherd who cares for God’s people is entitled to the financial support of his sheep, to be assessed in proportion to the amount of time he devotes to his ministry.

6. In Acts 4:34–35 the Christians who sold their possessions laid down the proceeds at the feet of the apostles. In other words, the administration of the money was left to the leaders. The disposal of money carries with it so much power that leaders who do not exercise effective super-

vision of finances are not in a position to lead effectively.

7. We may sum up certain general principles concerning tithing indicated in Scripture:

(a) In the Old Testament:

- (1) Tithes were used for the support of the priestly ministry, not for the construction or equipping of places of worship.
- (2) Tithes should be directed to the source from which we obtain spiritual “food” and “seed.”

(b) In the New Testament:

- (1) A shepherd who devotes his time to caring for God’s flock is entitled to be supported out of the tithes of those for whom he cares.
- (2) Money and possessions were entrusted directly to the leaders, for them to dispose of as they saw needs among the congregation.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing study has outlined certain broad scriptural principles concerning leadership and ministry in the church. In seeking to make any kind of practical application, we need to observe carefully the distinction between *principles* and *methods*. Principles are universal in their application (although they may sometimes need to be qualified by exceptions). Methods should be flexible and may vary according to the dictates of each particular situation.

Also, we must recognize that in many respects the contemporary church is functioning — by New Testament standards — on a gravely subnormal plane. While we cannot forever tolerate such subnormality, it is foolish to suppose that we can immediately make all the changes that are needed. To raise the church from its current subnormality up to the New Testament standard will require — for all of us — much time, labor, faith and forbearance. ☞

This article was taken from the book, *Discipleship, Shepherding, Commitment*, copyright Derek Prince 1976. Used by permission.



In the Kingdom of God, which is exactly opposite to the kingdom of this world, things rank by the greatness of quality, and not by that of quantity. Our God proves His Divinity by the notice and emphasis He puts on small things. "Despise not the day of small things." "Because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities."

There is no better way in the world to test every trait in a soul than by little things. Every Christian duty, every grace of the Spirit, every privilege of life, is being proved and manifested to the eyes of God and angels in

things so small that we seldom take thought of them. It is the unpremeditated and instinctive actions and words that reveal the reality of what is in us, and not those large, conspicuous things for which we especially arm ourselves. The most essential grace for a human being is *humility*; God appreciates a soul in proportion to the depth of its humility more than all other things combined; but this very grace of lowliness of heart finds its appropriate home in small things. The sweetest things in the world — the best prayers, the poorest self-denial, the tenderest words of sympathy — by a delicate instinct of the Holy Spirit, hide themselves in little secret ways, as

the turtle-dove will build its nest in un-thought-of, lowly places on the ground. There are some great sorrows and sufferings that can be written out in history for the world to see; but the greater martyrs are those who have thousands of agonies in small and hid-away matters seen only by the Infinite eye. To suffer with a patient heart in things so common and small that people never think of noticing them is to glorify God in a high degree; for if we suffer in ways so concealed that no eyes but His can see it, then surely it is to please Him only. Fanatics and self-made martyrs like to show their sufferings to notice on a large scale, as a dog will make a loud howl over a small

hurt; but a real lowly soul will suffer a hundred-fold more in silence and little things without advertising it, as the lamb will endure a great wound in silence.

There are times and places for great events and things, but in matters pertaining to perfect Christ-likeness of Spirit, the very greatness and splendor of large things hide God, and the creature is manifested more than the Lord. But in little things God has an opportunity to show Himself; He is not smothered under so much magnitude and glitter, as electricity can show itself better at a small focus than by being spread over an immense cloud. There is no intrinsic harm in things being great, but we are so foolish we let the greatness of things detract us from God. Just in the same proportion that all human things grow in size, they lose the power of God. Great men, great learning, great churches, great sermons and fine music, great camp-meetings, even great holiness organizations — anything great in the creatures — soon absorbs so much attention that the sensitive Holy Ghost finds Himself slighted, and quietly hunts up little people and little opportunities, where God alone can get the glory. In every age of the world, the Holy Spirit has been traveling away from big things into the small, in order to find places where God alone shall be exalted. If we could always remain broken and contrite and little, God would always show Himself to us, and reveal His personal presence in the insignificant things of daily life, and the Holy Ghost would work marvelously through us in sweet and quiet ways, utterly incredible to the great and wise ones. God alone knows when we are really little. Many will proclaim that they feel their utter nothingness, but in one hour after cannot peacefully and lovingly endure to be contradicted, or reproved, or slighted, or slandered. What we are in the sight of God, that we are, no more and no less, regardless of what men or saints or angels think of us, and regardless of what we think of ourselves. The Holy Ghost knows when we are little, and His abiding and wondrous reveal-

ings will continue just so long as our infantile littleness continues.

In regard to our work, there is more real holy labor in the small than in great things; for just see, in any great work there is human sympathy, man's praises, a field for enthusiasm and renown, a sphere for the display of gifts and zeal, and motives to arouse the natural heart; but in a little work wrought in obscurity, all these high things are weeded out. I do not say that a great work may not be done purely for God alone, but it furnishes a field for so much of human; but in the hid-away and shut-in ways of life, our God gives us a walled-in garden to sow down with deeds and words and manners and looks, out of a loving, tender spirit, with no incentive but love, and no purpose but to please Him. A little work done only for God to know has in it a heavenly courage, a

purity of intention, a sweetness of love, which is very difficult to put in a notable act.

We can show more self-sacrifice in little things than we can in great; because the occasions are more multiplied and the temptations to self-indulgence are greater. On the other hand, we should not be in scrupulous bondage to little things, for if we over-magnify little things, we put our souls in slavery, and the devil turns our flower-garden into a prison. Little things should serve two purposes for us — to see how much of God's guidance and presence we can find in them, and to see how much of Jesus-like love and service we can put in them. Every religious thing on earth will take rank in heaven just according to how much Christ is in it. ☞

Reprinted from the book, *Soul Food*, by George D. Watson.

Essay of the Month

We again invite our readers to submit articles on the theme of the month. One essay per theme will be selected by our editorial staff for publication.

Listed below are the themes for the upcoming issues and the deadline by which they must be received in our *New Wine* office.

May — "Financial Responsibility" DUE: February 16

June — "Change" DUE: March 15

July/August — "Evangelism" DUE: April 19

Essays should be written from the writer's own experience and observation (preferably in the form of a testimony) and should be 1500 to 2000 words (or 4–6 typewritten, double-spaced pages). Please include a photograph and short biography of yourself.

Send all manuscripts to *New Wine* Essays, P.O. Box 22888, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33315. If you wish to have your manuscript returned, enclose a self-addressed and stamped envelope.

All published material becomes the property of *New Wine*.

* * *

Note to Readers: An essay of the month selection does not appear in this issue. Although many of the essays submitted were worthwhile, in the final analysis, none of them fit in with the tone of this month's articles. We hope that this particular deletion will not discourage our readers from submitting future essays.

ECHOES OF THE SPIRIT

Significant Events in the Body of Christ

On several occasions during the earthly teaching sessions of Jesus, He linked together two specific words — prayer and fasting. Continually in Jesus' own ministry, miraculous, restorative power was released by His personal implementation of these two disciplines. Many followers of Jesus today are convinced that this dual practice forms a contemporary tool which needs to be restored to its full potential in our lives.

Additionally, the Scriptures attest that prayer and fasting proved to be key factors in the spiritual life and development of the nation of Israel, especially when they were employed at times of crisis to bring the nation back to God.

Today, as our own nation faces crucial problems of national and international dimensions, our need to employ scriptural solutions has never been greater. With this particular need in mind, the following concerns have arisen as a part of the ongoing effort to unite Christians, as a people, into a force for shaping history in our day.

Intercessors for America issues the following challenge:

How will Christians respond in '76? The answer is crucial. Many Christian leaders are saying this bicentennial year will decide the future of America. Prayer can save America. Intercessors for America can help you do your part. A 4-page monthly newsletter brings you timely — sometimes urgent — prayer needs from around the nation. It reports on how God is answering prayer. It provides background on situations that are being missed or distorted by the news media. It brings feature articles by some of the nation's leading Christians. Send for this Newsletter for 1976, without cost or obligation: *Intercessors for America*, P.O. Box D, Elyria, Ohio, 44035.

Chicago Church Summit Conference

recommends monthly day of prayer & fasting: In September, 1975 a group of concerned Christian leaders met together to establish guidelines for waging spiritual warfare against satanic forces active in our nation. Prayer and fasting, as a concerted effort, was accepted as one avenue of approach. As a result of these significant meetings, *the first Friday of every month* has been established as a day of united prayer and fasting in America. All Christians are asked to join together on these Fridays to earnestly seek God's direction and help for our nation. Here are some remarks of leaders present at this conference:

John Conlan, U.S. Congressman: We are not praying for a revival of Americanism. Rather we are praying that God will touch the leaders of this nation, remove some, use others, change the rest.

Jimmy Owens, Composer, "If My People": If our salt had not lost its savor, corruption could never have gotten as far as it has. If our light had continued to shine as brightly as it should have, darkness could not have gotten this far in our society. . . . I believe God is calling the Church to repentance!

Bill Bright, Campus Crusade for Christ: We have fourteen months to turn our nation around or we will reach the point of no return and the ultimate loss of our freedom as a nation. We will be robbed of our rights and robbed of our powers as Christians unless the tide is turned. . . . If we fail to elect men and women of God to public office in the '76 elections, we will have forfeited our right to be a free nation.

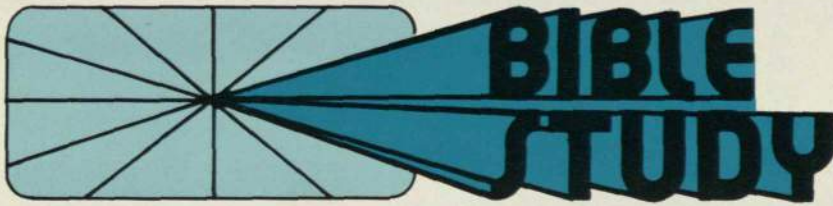
Good Government Kits available: The Christian Freedom Foundation (1522 K Street, N.W., Washington D.C., 20005), has a kit available which provides the know-how and guidance for electing candidates to public office and other guidelines for Christian political involvement. It contains three

books which give: answers to political and social issues now frustrating Christians, "how-to's" on political campaigns, organizing neighborhoods and campaigning by telephone, and information on government and politics in each individual state. For a donation of \$10 the Christian Freedom Foundation will send this kit, along with a 6-month subscription to *Third Century Report*, a newsletter which focuses on public affairs from a Christian perspective.

Southeastern Men's Shepherds Conference: At the Marriott Downtown Motor Inn, Atlanta, Georgia, during the days — March 1—4, 1976, interested men will be meeting for the following purposes: "To provide ministry to pastors and leaders; to hear what the Spirit is saying to churches and to the Church universal; to expose ourselves to the real problems facing the Church and seek solutions; to expose ourselves to a broad cross section of Church life and learn to fellowship in the Spirit of Christ." For information write *Southeastern Men's Shepherds Conference*, P.O. Box 80741, Atlanta, Georgia 30341.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ACT

As John Beckett, the National Coordinator of Intercessors for America has aptly summarized in a recent statement: "Our bicentennial should kindle in us a keen awareness of this essential fact: This nation, founded under God, can only be redeemed if Christians will respond to the challenge of God's Word. . . . God is giving Christians both the opportunity to act and the direction during our bicentennial year. How will each of us respond? The answer is crucial. Our obedience and His mercy can indeed change the course of our country's future. PRAYER CAN SAVE AMERICA."



THE BODY OF CHRIST

Scripturally, all followers of Jesus Christ are classified collectively as the Body of Christ. It is significant that the Word speaks of "Body" in the singular rather than "bodies" in the plural. The implication is clear: God's work on earth is not to be accomplished by separated units working independently and autonomously, but rather by one unified *body* of distinct, yet interdependent members in cooperative function. This is God's ultimate intention for all of us as believers, and the goal of our common calling in Christ.

(Bible Study answers are found on page 27.)

1. In 1 Corinthians 12:27, Paul makes a statement that applies to all Christians when he says, "Now ye are the _____"
2. Romans 12:5 makes two similar assertions:
 - a. "So we . . . are _____"
 - b. "And every one _____"
3. Although these things are true, Romans 12:4 reminds us that ". . . all members _____"
4. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 is probably the most comprehensive description of the unity and diversity of the Body of Christ. Complete the following statements from verses in this passage:
 - a. v. 12: ". . . the body is one, and _____"
And yet, ". . . all the members of that one body, being _____"
"So also is _____"
 - b. v. 13: ". . . by one Spirit are we all _____"
 - c. v. 14: "For the body is not one member, but _____"
 - d. v. 18: God has set all the members ". . . in the body, as _____"
 - e. v. 21: ". . . the eye cannot say to the hand, _____"
 - f. v. 22: ". . . those members . . . which seem to be more feeble are _____"
 - g. v. 24: ". . . God hath tempered the body together, having given more _____"

h. v. 25: ". . . there should be no _____"

But rather, ". . . the members should have the same _____"

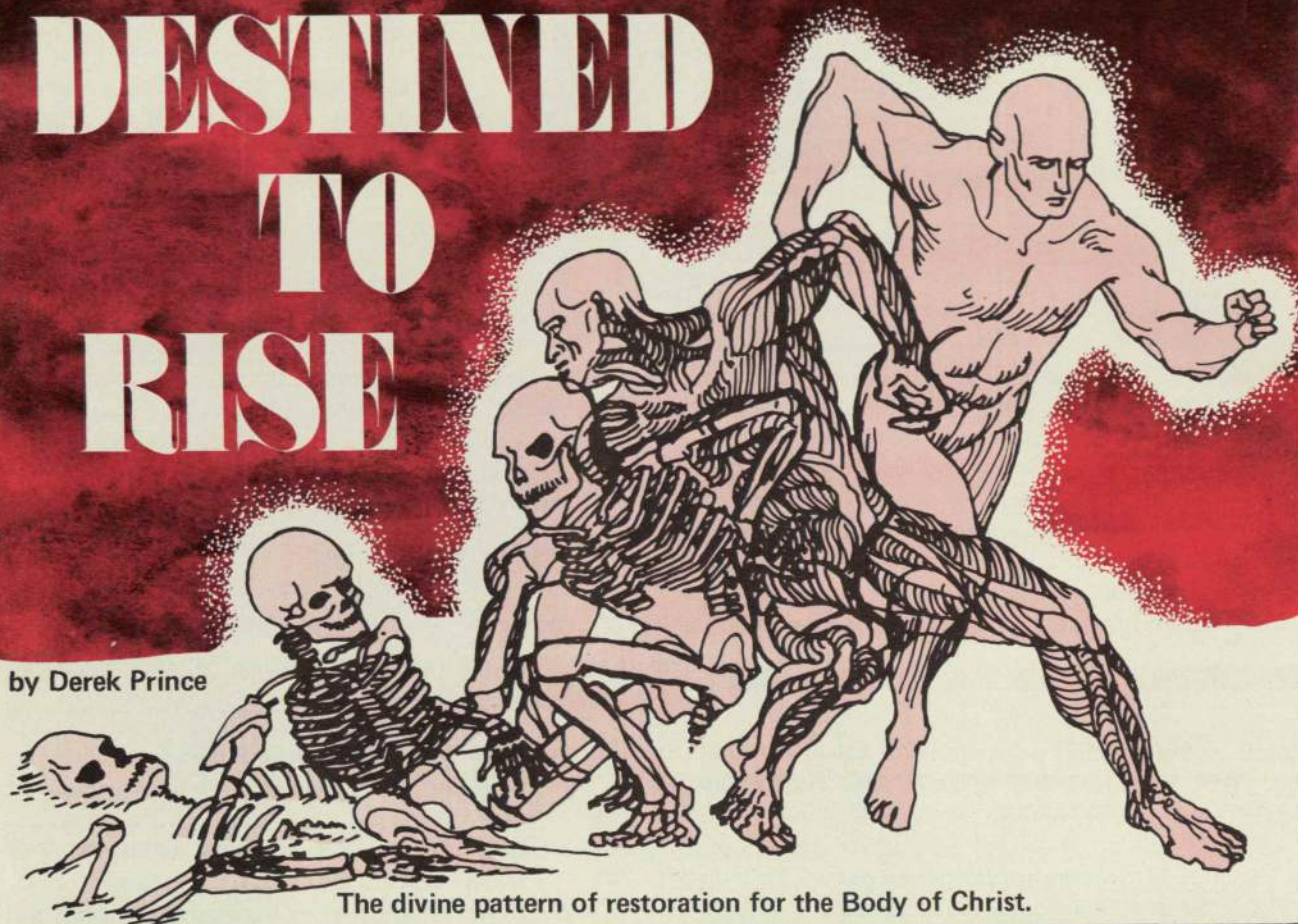
i. If ". . . one member suffer, _____"

And when ". . . one member be honoured, all the members _____"

5. To what exactly is Eph. 1:23 referring when it says, "Which is his [Jesus'] body, the fullness of him that filleth all"?
6. According to Col. 1:18, what position does Jesus hold in the Body? _____
7. Answer the following questions from Col. 2:19:
 - a. What particular error are we to beware of as part of the Body? _____
 - b. What is the *source* of supply to the Body of Christ? _____
 - c. What is ministered to the Body by "joints and bands"? _____
 - d. What happens when the Body is properly "knit together" by these joints and bands? _____
8. What element did Jesus use to symbolize His Body? (Matt. 26:26, 1 Cor. 11:24) _____
9. In keeping with this analogy used by Jesus, Paul says in 1 Cor. 10:17 that we as believers are ". . . _____"
Why is this true? ". . . for we are all _____"
10. Ephesians 4:16 is a description of the nature and function of the Body of Christ under His headship. Finish the following phrases from this verse: "From the whole body:
 - a. Fitly _____
 - b. And compacted by _____
 - c. According to the _____
 - d. Maketh increase of the body unto the _____"
11. Colossians 3:15 says that Christians are called as one body to one thing: _____

DESTINED TO RISE

by Derek Prince



The divine pattern of restoration for the Body of Christ.

Our present age is to come to its climax with "the period of restoration of all things," during which — at a moment never precisely revealed — Jesus Christ will return from heaven to earth (see Acts 3:19–21 NAS). There are many different elements in our contemporary situation, all of which point to the fact that we have already entered this "period of the restoration of all things."

"Restoration" suggests two main activities: putting things back into their right *place* and into their right *condition*. At this time the process of divine restoration centers mainly around God's two covenant peoples in the earth: Israel and the Church. For many long centuries Israel has wandered as exiles, far from their God-given *geographical* inheritance at the east end of the Mediterranean. For an almost equal period, the Church of Jesus Christ has lived in similar exile, far from its God-given *spiritual* inheritance — main elements of which are:

unity, authority, an ordered community life, the complete ministries of Ephesians 4:11, fulness of spiritual gifts and abundance of spiritual fruit.

The history of Israel is an open book. From their initial calling through their falling away to their final restoration, every main phase is unfolded in Scripture — partly in the records of the historical writers and partly in the predictions of the prophets. On the other hand, during the Old Testament period the Church was a "mystery" — a secret that was kept hid from ages and from generations and then revealed to the apostles and prophets of the New Testament (see Eph. 3:3–9; Col. 1:25–27). There is therefore little or no direct prophecy concerning the Church in the Old Testament.

Nevertheless, when rightly understood, the Old Testament prophecies have much to tell us about the period of the Church's restoration. For all the principles that are unfolded in the

natural realm of Israel's restoration are equally applicable to the Church's restoration in the *spiritual* realm. When we use this method of interpretation, we can see very clearly that the parallel restoration of Israel in the *natural* and of the Church in the *spiritual* has been proceeding — step by step and phase by phase — from the beginning of the present century until today.

THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

One prophecy that very vividly foretells the restoration of both Israel and the Church is found in Ezekiel 37:1–10 — the vision of the valley of dry bones:

(1) The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,

(2) And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold,

there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

(3) And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

(4) Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

(5) Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

(6) And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

(7) So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

(8) And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

(9) Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

(10) So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

At the beginning of this vision God's people are pictured as dry, disjointed, scattered bones. There follow two phases of restoration. In the first phase the bones are supernaturally moved upon, brought together and fitted to each other by joints. Then ligaments, muscles, flesh and skin cover them. At the end of this phase the bodies are all physically complete, but there is no breath in them. In the second phase, breath (or spirit) comes into the bodies and they stand up on their feet. At the end of this phase God's final objective has been achieved: "an exceeding great army."

In this vision of Israel's restoration, the initiative and the plan come from God, but He uses Ezekiel as His human instrument to bring it to pass. This applies equally to the Church. Restora-

tion is God's sovereign purpose, clearly foretold in Scripture. But God will use men whom He Himself chooses and raises up to bring it to pass.

In the vision of the bones Ezekiel's prophesying takes two different forms. In the first instance he prophesies directly to the bones. This we may compare to *preaching*. In the second instance he prophesies to the breath (spirit) on behalf of the bodies and the spirit in turn enters the bodies. This we may compare to *intercessory prayer*.

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

When the charismatic movement first got under way in the early 1960's, bones that had long been dead and dry had new life infused into them. They began to move and rattle against each other. Ezekiel says, "There was a noise, and behold a shaking . . ." The bones talked excitedly together. "Listen to me," one would say, "I can speak in tongues!" "Yes," another would reply, "and I had five demons cast out of me!" "In our prayer group last Friday," a third would join in, "Sister Bertha laid hands on me and prophesied that I was to have a ministry of healing."

All of this was at first exciting and enjoyable. Yet it was very, very far from God's final objective — "an exceeding great army." After a while the novelty began to wear off. Something more was obviously needed.

In the second half of the 1960's I found myself beginning to preach that the bones would have to be joined together — "bone to his bone." The basis of the joining would be functional, depending not on the particular graveyard that the bones might have come from, but rather on the function that they would be required to perform. United in this way, individual bones would no longer be free to "do their own thing." "Liberty" would thereafter have to be interpreted not as irresponsible independence, but rather as the ability to fulfil the will of the Head — Christ.

I used a simple illustration from my own body. The main skeletal structure

of my arm is composed of three bones — humerus, radius and ulna — fitted together at a joint called the elbow. No matter how strong each of these three individual bones may be, none of them on its own can even begin to accomplish what the three of them can effortlessly accomplish when joined together to form an arm. As long as the bones remain detached from one another, "liberty" for each of them consists in following its own impulses and moving at its own will. But once they are joined together into an arm, "liberty" has to be reinterpreted. It now becomes the ability to carry out — with the maximum of ease and efficiency — each movement dictated by the head.

At the beginning of the 1970's the truth I had been preaching to others was suddenly applied to my own life. God sovereignly "joined" me with three other men who had recognized Bible teaching ministries — Don Basham, Bob Mumford and Charles Simpson. All four of us would concur unanimously about one aspect of our new relationship: *the initiative was entirely with God*. On our side this "joining" was not expected, not prayed for, and at first not understood. In due course, however, we found ourselves confronted with responsibilities and subjected to pressures which none of us alone could have handled. This God-appointed joining spelled for all of us the difference between going under or going through; between frustration or fulfilment.

Later, I learned that about the same time, God had been working sovereignly in the lives of various other ministers to bring them together in a similar fashion. In due course the way was opened for further "joinings" to take place between the four of us and other ministers — some as individuals, and some who were already in committed relationships like our own.

THE IMPORTANCE OF JOINTS

The importance of correctly fitted joints, as applied to the Body of Christ, is emphasized in the New

Testament. In Ephesians 4:15–16 Paul says that God's purpose for us is that we may "grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Paul tells us here that joints serve two purposes. First, by them the body is "compacted" — made firm and strong. No matter how strong individual bones in a body may be, their ability to operate effectively is limited by the strength of the joints that unite them. If, under stress of pressure, the joints give way, the whole body is left weak and ineffective. Secondly, the joints are the channels of supply. If these channels are not kept clear and functional, the total needs of the body will not be met.

In the early church the joints were in good order and the result was, "Neither was there any among them that lacked . . ." (Acts 4:34). This is not true of the contemporary church. God's supply has never changed. He is still "able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. . . ." (2 Cor. 9:8). But because of defective or improper joints many Christians today are not receiving their share of God's supply. There are many among us that lack in various areas of their lives — spiritual, emotional, physical, financial, social.

In Colossians 2:18–19 Paul speaks of believers who are led away into spiritual error, and he explains that this happens because they are "not holding fast to the Head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God" (NAS).

Paul here indicates the two main requirements for being preserved from error: first, to be firmly united with the Head (Christ); second, to be firmly united — "by joints and ligaments" — with our fellow believers. Our personal

relationship to Christ is primary, but it is not sufficient by itself. There must be a rightly established relationship with the other believers to whom God has joined us in the Body.

THE LIGAMENTS OF COVENANT

In Colossians 2:19 Paul speaks not only of "joints," but also of "ligaments." In the natural body ligaments are the bands of tissue which hold bones together at the point where they are joined. Thus the strength of any joint is never greater than that of the ligament which holds it together. In the Body of Christ, "joints" are the interpersonal relationships between believers whom God joins together. But what is the "ligament" needed to keep each joint strong and secure? The answer, I believe, is: *covenant commitment*.

We need to bear in mind that the words "covenant" and "testament" are two different ways of translating the same original word, both in the Hebrew of the Old Testament and in the Greek of the New. Viewed in this light, the entire Bible is the record of two Covenants — the Old and the New. Obviously, therefore, the concept of covenant is basic to the whole revelation of Scripture.

In the Bible we find examples of covenants which are merely agreements, or contracts, on the plane of normal life between two or more human persons: for example, between Laban and Jacob (see Gen. 31:43–54); or between Solomon and Hiram (see 1 Ki. 5:8–12). However, there is a higher form of covenant in which God Himself is the first party. A covenant such as this is sovereignly initiated by God Himself, then accepted and entered into by the human party or parties. Both the "Old" and "New" Covenants belong to this category. In this higher sense we may define "covenant" as "a solemn, reciprocal commitment between God and a human person or persons, initiated by God Himself, accepted and ratified by the human party or parties."

In such a covenant each of the parties has his clearly defined obligations. In both the Old and New Covenants, God voluntarily obligated Himself to save, preserve, protect and provide for His covenant people. However, on the human side the obligations under the two Covenants differed. Under the Old Covenant man's obligation was to observe the law of Moses. Under the New Covenant man's obligation is to believe in and obey the Lord Jesus Christ.

Among the Semitic peoples portrayed in the Bible, a normal way for two parties to enter into a covenant was to share a solemn meal together, and in particular to break bread from one loaf and to drink from one cup. For this reason it was appropriate for Jesus to initiate the New Covenant at a solemn meal in which each person broke bread from the same loaf and drank wine from the same cup (see Matt. 26:20–28). By this one act all who participated in it were thereafter bound together in a sacred covenant. Ever since then, partaking of the Lord's Supper has been — in God's sight — a renewal of this covenant by which all who participate are bound to the Lord and to each other.

On the human plane, what are the mutual obligations of those who break bread and drink wine together in the Lord's Supper? Let me answer this question by applying it personally to my own life. If I share the Lord's Supper with you, by that act I acknowledge you to be my brother or my sister, a member of the same divine family. I obligate myself to love you, to care for you, to seek your highest well-being — if need be, to lay down my life for you. If you have any legitimate need that you cannot meet but I can, then my supply becomes your supply. If you suffer, I suffer with you. If you are honored, I rejoice with you.

Furthermore, my covenant obligations are not limited to you personally. They extend also to those with whom you are in covenant. If A is in covenant with B, and B with C, then by that fact A is also in covenant with C, and C with A. This explains how

covenant commitments, like ligaments, can bind all the bones in the Body of Christ together. Each bone is directly bound to the ones next to it, but those in turn are bound to others. Thus all the bones are bound together to form one body.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF BROKEN COVENANT

The obligations of covenant are so solemn that failure to observe them carries with it the most serious consequences. This was the crowning guilt of Judas Iscariot. He first partook of the sop with Jesus, then went out and betrayed Him. David graphically portrays this in Psalm 41:9: "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, *which did eat of my bread*, hath lifted up his heel against me." Judas was doubly guilty, in that he first ate bread with Jesus, then betrayed Him.

Likewise, Paul reminds the Christians at Corinth of the danger of partaking of the Lord's Supper without a sincere and solemn commitment to accept the obligations which it imposes, both to the Lord and to each other. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (1 Cor. 11:29-30). These believers "did not discern the Lord's body" in that they failed to see that, by celebrating the Lord's Supper together, they were acknowledging a covenant commitment to each other that bound them together like bones bound by ligaments in a single body.

One result of their failure to honor their covenant commitments was that many of them were weak and sickly and some had died prematurely. Here is one obvious explanation for similar conditions that exist among many Christians today. Christians who are not prepared to accept the covenant obligations implicit in celebrating the Lord's Supper would do better not to celebrate it at all.

The vast majority of Christians in our western civilization have scarcely

any understanding of what is entailed by covenant commitment. The most familiar example of a covenant among us today is marriage. This is a solemn commitment made by a man and a woman, before God, to share their lives totally together. It is "for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, 'till death us do part." In other words, once entered into, it is in no way dependent upon moods, emotions, or circumstances.

The covenant of marriage is so solemn that it determines the nature of the most intimate relationships. Sexual union without this covenant is "fornication," but sexual union when sanctified by this covenant becomes "marriage," concerning which Scripture declares, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled. . . ." (Heb. 13:4). In a society where marriage becomes dependent on anything less than a covenant — e.g. mutual compatibility, sexual attraction, personal preference or convenience — its sanctity is quickly violated and its stability is overthrown. Evidence of this can be seen all around us in America today.

The same principles apply to the Body of Christ. The only "ligament" strong enough to bind the whole Body together is solemn, covenant commitment, as attested by the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Where unity among Christians becomes dependent on anything less than covenant commitment — e.g. doctrinal agreement, denominational affiliation, compatibility of ministry or temperament, attachment to human personalities — it suffers the same fate as marriage in the natural realm. Its sanctity is quickly violated and its stability overthrown.

In the physical realm, union without covenant is "fornication." Does not the same apply in the spiritual realm? Fellowship between Christians based on anything less than covenant commitment is in reality mere "fornication" — unstable, insecure, unsatisfying, and usually short-lived. Does not this explain why in contemporary Christianity we are confronted by a situation exactly parallel to the break-

up of marriage and home life on the natural plane? In each case the reason is the same: *the initial commitment was not strong enough to stand the ensuing tests and pressures.* In marriage the result is divorce and the break-up of the home. In Christianity the result is jealousy, rivalry, division, broken fellowship: conditions that leave the Body of Christ too weak and disjointed to function effectively.

THE MUSCLES OF MINISTRY

In the building up of the natural body, ligaments are logically followed by muscles. Muscles vary in nature and function, but in most cases they operate on two basic principles: tension and opposition. For instance — to return to the example of my arm — one set of muscles on the inner side pulls my arm into a bent position; another set of muscles on the opposite side extends my arm into a straight position. This combination of tension and opposition keeps the arm healthy and enables it to operate effectively. When the opposing tensions cease, the arm is in fact paralysed.

In the Body of Christ the function of *muscles* is fulfilled by the many different kinds of *ministries* which God provides. These ministries, just like muscles, need tension and opposition to operate effectively. For many years I did not see this. I was inwardly afraid of tension or opposition within the Body of Christ. I pictured unity as a condition in which every part functioned exactly alike. I realize now that if such a condition were ever achieved, it would not be unity, but paralysis.

When we understand this need for tension and opposition between ministries, it becomes much easier to view the uniting of Christ's Body as a practical possibility that really can be achieved. Things that at first seemed inconsistent with unity are now seen to be necessary to the proper functioning of the Body as a whole.

What are some of the main tensions that confront us in the contemporary Christian scene? We may list them under two main headings: first, those

(Continued on page 29)



by Don Basham

Weathering the inevitable storms of the Christian life.

"... Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, *and that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God*" (Acts 14:22).

Years ago when I was in seminary in Oklahoma, my wife and I took a brief summer vacation in Colorado. The day of the long drive home we left quite early from our motel in Lake City, Colorado and shortly found ourselves at the top of a 14,000 ft. mountain pass in the middle of a blinding snow-storm. Once we cleared the pass, the snow stopped and the sun broke forth. But less than an hour later we plunged into more bad weather with cold sleet rattling down upon us.

Again the skies cleared. Then near Raton, New Mexico we encountered still another storm. This time, hail, the size of large marbles, bounced on the hood and smacked the windshield so fiercely we feared the glass would break. Fortunately, that onslaught likewise proved of brief duration, and as we headed eastward across the plains of Oklahoma we thought the time of storms was safely behind us.

But we were wrong. For in the remaining hours of our trip we encountered a violent wind storm,

followed by a dust storm which blackened the afternoon skies. We outdistanced those freakish conditions only to plunge into a rain storm so fierce that water briefly covered the highway to a depth of 3 to 4 inches. Much to our relief, we arrived home near midnight and unloaded the car under peaceful starry skies which left no hint of the vicious storms we had encountered during that long day.

In our memories, that day in early September of 1955 is labeled as "the day of the storms." Snow, sleet, hail, wind, dust, and rain . . . six storms in one day. We have never experienced another day like it.

Such an experience is convincing proof that storms are part of life, and just as this is true in the natural realm, so it is in the spiritual. Spiritual storms are part of every Christian's life. It is the firm conviction of many that a day of unprecedented spiritual storms is upon us. The spiritual warfare raging in and around us continues to intensify. Both the dealings of God and the harassment of Satan are becoming more pronounced.

In this article, we will examine the various kinds of storms which break in on us, and offer some advice for dealing with them.

First of all, let's define the term, "spiritual storm." By that I mean

those conditions, situations and experiences which we know to be abnormal or out of balance; which place us under such physical, emotional and spiritual pressure that we find it difficult to function normally.

The spiritual storms we encounter seem to fall into three major categories, and our awareness of these distinct categories is essential. If we fail to distinguish the kind of storm we are in, we may have great difficulty, for each of the three kinds of storms calls for a different response. First, there are storms to be rebuked or resisted. Secondly, there are storms to seek shelter from. Thirdly, there are storms to endure. Depending on the nature of the storm then, there is a time to fight, a time to hide and a time to stand.

Before we give scriptural examples of the various kinds of storms, we need to make this important point: *Every storm which sweeps into our lives is allowed by God.* No matter the source, be it Satan, circumstances or the dealings of God, *all* storms are allowed by God and are ultimately used to serve His purposes.

STORMS TO BE REBUKED OR RESISTED

From the ministry of Jesus we find

some examples of storms which were rebuked or resisted.

Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water and were in jeopardy.

And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him (Luke 8:22-25).

Clearly, this storm was of satanic origin. To what extent Satan can affect the elements, none of us can estimate . . . but affect them he does! Jesus would never have rebuked the storm if it had been from God. He rebuked the demonic force causing the elements to rage, and the wind and the sea grew calm under the authority of His word.

What's more, Jesus chided the disciples for their fear. His comment, "Where is your faith?" indicated *they* should have handled the emergency without His help. The Lord's spiritual impartation to us includes the ability to rebuke the demonic influences which rage around us.

Now let's examine another kind of storm that raged against Jesus, His temptation in the wilderness.

Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights he was afterward an hungered.

And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

But he answered and said, It is

written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceedingly high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him (Matt. 4:1-11).

The wilderness was a stormy 40-day period of intense spiritual struggle, in which Jesus stood His ground, resisting each of Satan's attempts to divert Him from God's holy purpose. Yet, the storm was *allowed* by God Himself. Scripture clearly states that after His baptism in the Jordan, Jesus was "led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Matt. 4:1).

The storm of temptation was from Satan, but it was the Holy Spirit who led Jesus into the path of the storm.

STORMS TO SEEK SHELTER FROM

There is a time to fight; there is a time to hide.

In Exodus chapter 12 we read how Moses relayed God's instructions to the elders of Israel on how to shelter their families from the death angel, God's final plague upon the Egyptians.

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover.

And ye shall take a bunch of

hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.

For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your house to smite you.

And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever (Ex. 12:21-24).

Notice that the promise of protection from that deadly storm was conditional. The Israelites would be spared only if they remained in the shelter of the house marked by the blood of the lamb.

"And none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning" (verse 22). Any first-born Israelite foolish enough to venture out of his house would die. Fortunately, every Israelite obeyed (see verse 28).

At times, storms of great magnitude arise which are to be left totally in God's hands. To rush out to rebuke these storms would prove futile and harmful, because only God in His power can handle such situations. Rather than fighting, we are to seek shelter in God, so that He may step forward to fight the battle for us.

There is a fascinating story of just such an incident in Israel's history in 2 Chronicles chapter 20. In this account, the Ammonites and Moabites were massed against the nation of Judah, threatening to drive them from their God-given land. When King Jehosaphat and all Judah gathered to pray and seek God's help, He provided this surprising answer:

"Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is *not yours*, but God's. . . .

"Ye shall not need to fight in this battle. . . ." (2 Chron. 20:15,17)

With dramatic faith, Jehosaphat appointed a regiment of singers to stand before his army praising God, and as they sang and praised the Lord,

their enemies fell to fighting among themselves and destroyed each other. Because Judah had sought shelter in God's protection from this storm of opposition, God fought and won the battle for them.

Additional scriptural encouragement to seek shelter from certain storms is found in the words of the psalmist.

Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast (Ps. 57:1).

The introduction to Psalm 57 indicates it was written while David was hiding at the cave Adullam, seeking shelter from the wrath of Saul (see 1 Sam. 22:1). Remember, David wasn't seeking shelter out of cowardice. He could easily have killed Saul. Rather he hid from Saul's wrath out of respect for God's authority, for Saul was a king whom God had anointed.

David's action is all the more significant when we realize he already knew he was Saul's successor. Yet in obedience to the purpose of God he sought neither to justify himself nor to further his own cause. During that strange and stormy interval it was right for David to hide. Some storms we must seek shelter from.

SOME STORMS WE MUST ENDURE

There is a time to fight, and a time to hide; There is also a time to stand.

The third type of storm which we wish to discuss is the storm we can neither rebuke nor seek to escape; it is the storm we must endure. It is my personal observation that in these days of intensified spiritual warfare, this kind of storm is appearing more and more frequently in the life of every Christian. Let's look at two scriptural examples of such storms; both from the life of Paul. The first is found in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abun-

dance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distress for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Scholars are not agreed as to the exact nature of Paul's thorn. Personally I do not believe it was a physical illness or weakness. It is my conviction that it was a savagely intense spiritual opposition to Paul's ministry. Paul calls it a "messenger of Satan" sent to "buffet" him. After accepting God's assurance that He would help him endure, Paul added that he was determined to take pleasure in the storm of opposition he describes as "infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecution and distress." The opposition to his ministry was both constant and intense. It represented a kind of storm that Paul could neither rebuke nor escape — he could only endure.

The second storm in Paul's ministry is graphically portrayed for us in Acts 27. We suggest you read the entire 27th chapter of Acts, the story of the misfortunes befalling Paul and his company as, under Roman guard, they unsuccessfully attempt a sea voyage to Rome.

Paul, apparently with insight concerning the impending misfortune, warns both the centurion guarding him and the captain of the ship that such a voyage would be dangerous. Nevertheless the voyage is attempted and the ship is overtaken by a terrible storm which persists for fourteen days and nights, driving their beleaguered craft 700 miles off course, westward across the Mediterranean.

Although the Bible is not given to dramatic language, the intensity of the storm is made graphically clear.

And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away (verse 20).

This literal storm raises a number of spiritual questions about God's purpose in allowing storms which must be endured. Can't you imagine during the days and nights that the ship was mercilessly driven before the storm, Paul, Luke and the rest of the small band of bewildered believers must have wondered why the storm persisted. Surely, they must have recalled how Jesus rebuked the storm and how "the winds and sea obeyed him." And hadn't He chided the disciples for their lack of faith?

Don't you suppose Paul, Luke, and the others tried to take authority over that storm? I'm sure they must have prayed, rebuked, reckoned, pleaded the blood of Christ, commanded, committed, relinquished, and practiced every other spiritual discipline. Yet nothing worked! No matter what they tried, the storm continued — it was "unrebukable."

At the peak of the storm's intensity, God sent an angel to Paul to assure him that not only would he survive the storm to preach in Rome, but that the other 275 people aboard would also be spared. Isn't it odd though, that God went to all the trouble of sending the angel, and yet did nothing to stop the storm. How strange are God's ways! He wouldn't calm the storm, yet sent miraculous encouragement to Paul in the midst of it. Thus the Scriptures make it clear: by God's intention, some storms must be endured.

HOW DO WE KNOW WHAT KIND OF STORM?

About a year ago, as I sat at my desk preparing the basic outline of this message, my daughter Laura came up to me. "What are you working on, Daddy?" she asked.

"A message about storms," I replied, and then I described the three kinds: storms to be rebuked, storms to

seek shelter from and storms to endure. Laura listened carefully. "Sounds like it will make a good message, Daddy," she nodded, "but can I ask you one question? *How do you know what kind of storm you are in?*"

I laughed. "Honey, if I had all the answers to that question I'd be the most popular Bible teacher around."

While complete understanding may be unattainable, there are some factors which can help us identify the storms.

First, it is a help just to know that all storms are not alike. Unfortunately, many Christians oversimplify spiritual matters, and there are some Christians who believe every storm should be rebuked, others who believe every storm should be avoided and still others who believe every storm must be endured.

The dangers of accepting such an over-simplified view are obvious. If we approach every storm as if it were to be rebuked (as some overly dogmatic "faith ministries" would recommend) then we never learn the wisdom of seeking God's protection or shelter. Neither would we learn important lessons that only endurance can teach us. Sometimes we would be right, but other times we would end up slugging it out in some battle God never intended us to fight. Or we may end up fighting the purposes of God Himself.

On the other hand if we adopt the position that every storm is to be avoided, we may be right occasionally, but we may never learn to stand and exercise the authority we have over Satan in the name of Jesus. Or other times we may end up trying to escape from the discipline of God.

But finally, if we treat all storms as if they are to be endured, we take needless punishment from the enemy in addition to never learning to assert the authority we have as Christians.

To apply the figure of speech we used earlier, there is a time to fight, a time to hide, and a time to stand. If all we can do is fight, we never learn to hide or to stand. If all we do is hide, we never learn to fight or stand. If all we do is stand we never learn to fight or hide. Yet, fighting, hiding and

standing may each be a proper response in a given circumstance.

So, how can we know what kind of storm we are in so as to exercise the appropriate response?

WHEN TO REBUKE OR RESIST

Some storms are clearly satanic; the most obvious of these are those sudden and overpowering temptations which turn us aside from what we know to be the will of God. Satan knows where you and I are "temptable," even as he knew the same about Jesus. Notice how in the wilderness Satan tempted Jesus in terms of His *unique* powers and abilities. Satan never tempts *me* to turn stones into bread or to jump off the pinnacle of the temple. I don't have that kind of power to be perverted. But Jesus did.

Although He was well-disciplined in His spirit, He was nevertheless vulnerable to temptation in terms of His own unique gifts and powers, and that is right where Satan hit Him. But Jesus resisted Satan's persuasions, refusing to use His power selfishly to create food where there was none or to defy the law of gravity. (Significantly though, in God's perfect will and time, He later did both, multiplying the loaves and fishes and walking on the water.)

We are vulnerable in terms of our own particular weaknesses, and when storms of temptation rage against us, that is the time God expects us to rebuke and resist the enemy.

Like many Christians, for years I sought shelter from storms I knew were satanic. Because I didn't know how to fight, i.e. to rebuke Satan in the name of Jesus, I often tried to hide. And failing that, I tried miserably and often unsuccessfully to endure.

Through the deliverance ministry I learned not only the authority we have in Jesus' name to cast out demons but also our right and authority in His name to stand and rebuke the satanic attacks which come to us from the outside. This is the encouragement offered in James. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. *Resist* [literally,

oppose] the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

Among the storms to be rebuked are those powerful assaults on the lusts of the flesh which include things like drugs, alcohol, nicotine and sex. Earnest Christians succumb repeatedly to Satan's attacks in these areas, not necessarily because they are bound by evil spirits (although this is often the case), but because they fail to utilize their authority in Jesus Christ to press an attack against the enemy. We are to *rebuke!* We are to *resist!* We are to *fight!* This is one kind of storm we *know* is from the enemy. It is always Satan who tempts us to indulge our carnal appetites, and the Scriptures clearly command us not to "fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16-17).

Two other satanic storms take the form of attack on our emotions. One is fear, that cruel weapon which in Satan's hand can turn something as simple as an unexpected ring of the telephone or the delayed arrival of a loved one into an occasion for panic. Fear, which Satan can slip like a dagger into some unguarded crevice of our thought life to goad minor apprehension into an unreasoning dread which saps our strength and weakens our will. Fear, which can exaggerate any one of a thousand minor aches and pains into a monstrous dread of fatal illness which will dog our steps in daytime and haunt our sleep at night.

The other storm is anger, by which

BIBLE STUDY ANSWERS

1. Body of Christ and members in particular. 2. a. One body in Christ; b. Members one of another. 3. Have not the same office. 4. a. Hath many members; many, are one body; Christ; b. Baptized into one body; c. Many; d. It hath pleased him; e. I have no need of thee; f. Necessary; g. Abundant honour to that part which lacked; h. Schism in the body; care one for another; i. All the members suffer with it; rejoice with it. 5. The Church. 6. Head of the body, the church; 7. a. Not holding the Head; b. The Head; c. Nourishment; d. Increaseth with the increase of God. 8. Bread. 9. One bread, and one body; partakers of that one bread. 10. a. Joined together; b. That which every joint supplieth; c. Effectual working in the measure of every part; d. Edifying of itself in love. 11. The peace of God.

Satan inflames a simple irritation into a murderous rage or a mild disagreement into the destruction of a lifelong friendship.

Both of these satanic storms are relentlessly sweeping across society today, taking almost as great a toll of Christians as unbelievers. It is more than coincidental that Jesus, in describing the signs which would accompany the close of the age, speaks of "men's hearts failing them through fear" (Luke 21:16) and of how "many shall betray one another and hate one another" (Matt. 24:10).

But once we recognize the satanic nature of these storms and begin to rebuke and resist them with the authority available to us in the name of Jesus, we can experience the deep joy of putting the enemy of our souls to flight.

WHEN TO SEEK SHELTER

"For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy" (Ps. 61:3).

Although some storms are to be fought or rebuked, at times we face storms which actually require nothing more than watchful waiting and trust under the shelter of the Holy Spirit. Then we see things take place which clearly indicate that God has fought our battle as surely as He did in the case of Jehoshaphat and Judah mentioned earlier.

We can suffer needless pain and buffeting by charging out to rebuke some storm that God intends to handle all on His own. I believe God sometimes allows storms of frightening proportions to loom large on our horizons simply to teach us how to "stand still" and trust in Him. Our place is merely to stay under cover, wait and pray.

It is my conviction that the social and economic storms which are rocking our society today are storms which Christians can be largely sheltered from. But sometimes we not only *find* shelter, we *build* it. Today most alert Christians are aware of the Holy Spirit's emphasis on bringing members

of the Body of Christ into responsible committed relationships with one another. Without going into detail as to how such relationships develop, we see how they provide a real shelter from the rising lawlessness, immorality and self-seeking materialism of our age.

Indeed, one does not have to be a prophet to see that the future holds exciting prospects for committed Christians to emerge as a counter culture, the embodiment of social and economic salvation, as well as spiritual, in a world falling apart.

I do not believe the storms of tribulation and judgment which God is allowing to come upon the world today are intended for the faithful Christian. Although we will be affected by them, we will not become casualties, for in the rising flood of distress, we shall find safety in the ark of God. In a time of great and terrible shaking we shall be found in the Kingdom which cannot be shaken.

WHEN TO ENDURE

The first two kinds of storms we have described, storms to be rebuked or resisted and storms to seek shelter from, can only accomplish so much in us. They can bring us to the authority we have in Jesus' name and to the necessity of trusting God and abiding in His protection. Yet there are essential qualities and divine goals to be achieved in us which neither of these two storms can produce. Neither of these storms is intended by God to touch us. Although they serve to shape our patterns of resistance and protection, they do no deep work within us. That painful task is reserved for the storms we must endure.

When I first became a charismatic Christian, I was so joyfully preoccupied with gifts and miracles that I mistakenly assumed that Christian maturity meant winning all the battles and experiencing nothing but a succession of triumphs. All it took was enough faith in God's power.

In later years, I have reached the point of thanking God that I didn't always win, or always "have enough

faith," and that some of my prayers were answered "no" instead of "yes." I have come to see that failure, disappointment, adversity and suffering all have their place in God's purpose. Many unpleasant but essential lessons in living are learned in that third kind of storm; the storm we must endure.

It may come as a surprise to some happy charismatics that God is more interested in producing character than He is in bestowing charisma. And what is the matrix out of which character is formed? Peter gives us a clue.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.

But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy (1 Pet. 4:12-13).

What is the nature of the fire which forges Christian character? Is it not trial, hardship, persecution and finally, crucifixion? When we learn to accept such adversity as an essential part of the Christian life, we have taken the first feeble steps in the direction of maturity.

We find confirmation of this principle in the life of our Lord Jesus who "learned obedience through the things which He suffered" (Heb. 5:8). In His lifetime He rebuked Satan and his storms, and continually ministered life to multitudes. Yet He also suffered rejection, persecution, condemnation and crucifixion — all storms He had to endure. And He warned His disciples,

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you (John 15:20).

Without intending to sound like a martyr, I believe we are entering a time which will specialize in the storms we must endure. The spiritual warfare swirling around us intensifies daily. That old serpent, the devil, the "accuser of the brethren" is fanning fires of accusation, slander and condemnation between believers. It will

likely get worse before it gets better, since Jesus Himself identified the closing of the age as one where men would hate and betray one another (Matt. 24:10).

In addition to the storm of persecution, God Himself is bringing sharp pressure to bear on us, exposing all those traits, habits, attitudes and indulgences still alive and healthy in most of us. In the past, it seemed that God ignored these "minor personality flaws" in our lives, but now He is relentlessly dealing with them and putting them to death. God is determined to bring forth a people who manifest both maturity and purity, both health and holiness.

According to my understanding of God's purpose in this hour, such storms of dealing we can neither rebuke nor escape. Both the persecution of the enemy and the chastening of God serve to purge out the dross, hammering us into the proper shape for God's effectual use. Both accomplish something in us which blessings and miracles can never produce.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed (Heb. 12:5-13).

So let us not lose heart. Those storms which we must endure, much more than the storms we rebuke or the storms we seek shelter from, serve to fit us more perfectly into the high and holy purposes of God.

In conclusion, whether we find ourselves rebuking, hiding from, or enduring the storms that inevitably come into our lives, we can be encouraged by the fact that God is standing with us in every difficult circumstance that we face. Just as He sent a ministering angel to Paul in the midst of the storm, we know that in every blustery situation, God stands ready to direct us, shelter us or strengthen us. If we place our complete trust in Him, He will use each storm to mature us and conform us more fully to the ways of His Kingdom. ♣

DESTINED TO RISE

(Continued from page 23)

that are found between denominations or other groups; second, those which are found between individual believers.

A. Between Denominations, etc:

1. Institutional vs. Charismatic
2. Fixed-form Worship vs. Spontaneous
3. Tradition vs. Immediate Truth
4. Plurality vs. Individual Leadership

B. Between Individuals:

1. Outgoing vs. Reflective
2. Impulsive vs. Cautious
3. Inspirational vs. Analytical
4. Mystical/Prophetic vs. Practical/Administrative
5. Evangelistic Outreach vs. Pastoral Care

What a relief it is to see that in all the opposing pairs listed above, we do not have to choose one at the expense of the other! In each case, the total Body needs both. The tension and opposition between them is the key to the Body's activity and flexibility. However, it is necessary to emphasize

that, logically, *the ligaments of covenant must be in place before the Body can be exposed to the opposing tensions of the muscles of ministry*. If the bones are not first secured by covenant commitment, then the tensions of different ministries will pull them apart, leaving the Body disjointed and ineffective. A great many of our problems in contemporary Christianity are due to the fact that ministries are operating among believers who have not first been related to each other by covenant.

THE FINAL PHASE

Once ligaments and muscles are in place, flesh and skin follow naturally, producing a complete body, fully rounded out. Without going into details, we may suggest that the filling out of the flesh represents the development of all the activities and relationships which make up the total life of a Christian community. Thereafter, the skin represents the various ways in which such a community makes direct

contact with the world around it.

In closing, we need to turn back to Ezekiel's vision for one final, important lesson. In the first phase, God moved supernaturally upon individual bones to bring them together into bodies. But in the second phase God was no longer concerned with individual bones, but moved only upon completed bodies.

In the present phase of the charismatic movement, God is still fitting individual believers together in bodies — that is local churches. But once this phase is complete, then, in the raising up of His "exceeding great army," God will no longer deal with isolated individual believers, but only with completed bodies — that is, completed local churches. Therefore it behooves every believer at this time to make sure that he finds his God-appointed place in a local Body. Otherwise, the final phase, when it comes, will pass him by. ♣

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

This month's answers by John Poole.



In the early church, were the children included in most of the activities? If so, how do you feel this should be handled in present day fellowships?



We have no record as to the activities of young people and children in the early Church, so that any argument that may be used claiming a scriptural base is an argument from silence. We do have the record of ministry going to households, but who was included in that, we are not told. Our experience has been the following: It does not seem profitable to include children in all of the activities of the fellowship. We exclude them especially from sharing groups and situations where people are endeavoring to open their lives to one another, and express with honesty and candor, specific problems, needs and burdens. For obvious reasons, children should be excluded from such situations, as they are not equipped spiritually or emotionally to handle some of the things that may be shared. We make every effort to include them, however, in other fellowship activities, such as sharing of meals and social events. Generally, we seek to create an attitude in the hearts of our people that causes them to see contact with

children as being important. I mean by that, going out of our way to talk with them, share with them and just pay attention to them, so that they don't feel as though they are overlooked in the mad rush to bring their parents to maturity.

she has no role or function. It is obvious from Scripture that women are free to move in spiritual gifts, lead in prayer, teach other women, exhort, serve and do anything that contributes to the edification and upbuilding of all the saints.



What specific spiritual and functional responsibilities may a woman rightfully assume in a local body?



It is my understanding that, since the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was upon both men and women, a woman has every right to function in whatever areas of spiritual responsibility are open to her, by virtue of the enabling of the Holy Spirit and the counsel of those who rule in the local assembly. My personal conviction is that there is a distinction between opportunities for ministry and the right to govern and rule. I believe that God has reserved the responsibility of government to men, and on this basis, I cannot see a woman functioning in a position of headship over men in a local body. Unfortunately this has been interpreted in many situations to mean that



John 4:2 states that Jesus did not baptize people. Why not?



I'm going to give a personal opinion here, as we don't have any direct statement as to why Jesus did not baptize people. First of all, Jesus found Himself in the middle of a transitionary period. John the Baptist was bringing to an end the period of law and was calling people to a repentance that was being signified by their obedience in baptism. Jesus was going to introduce something more to baptism, and that was its initiation as the act by which people were immersed into Himself. It would seem that He allowed the disciples to baptize on the same grounds as John the Baptist, that is, for repentance, but that He Himself refrained from such activity, because He knew that the day would soon come when baptism would mean incorporation into the Body of Christ, that spiritual Body of which He was the forerunner. ☞

INSIGHTS

"The Church is never a place, but always a people; never a fold but always a flock; never a sacred building but always a believing assembly."

— John Havlik

"As a people, the Church is itself the verification of the message it proclaims, or else the betrayal of that message."

— Howard A. Snyder

"The political novelty which God brings into the world is a community of those who serve instead of ruling, who suffer instead of inflicting suffering, whose fellowship crosses social lines instead of reinforcing them. This new Christian community . . . is not only a vehicle of the gospel or fruit of the gospel; it is the good news."

— John Howard Yoder

"To be right satisfies the ego. To be kind satisfies God."

— Anonymous

"The proclamation of the Gospel apart from the unity of the church is a theological absurdity."

— A Latin American theologian

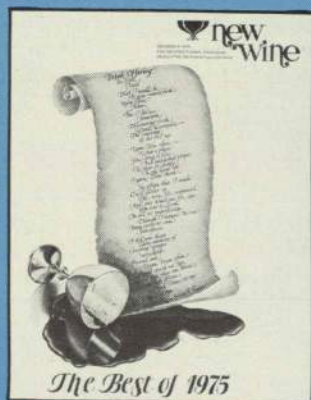
"The Kingdom [of God] is the vertebrae on which all things in the body hang."

— Rauschenbusch

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