

new wine

APRIL 1976

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE
DEDICATED TO CHRISTIAN GROWTH



AMERICA'S SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

The Salt of the Earth ● Prince ● 4
Let Freedom Ring ● Walton ● 8
Intercessors for America ● Beckett ● 17
From Generation to Generation ● Simpson ● 26

JUST WONDERFUL!

We want to express our deep and most sincere thanks to all those good workers in the service of the Lord who wrote February 1976 *New Wine*. It came at a most needed time for the Body. The article by Derek Prince was most impressive! It was so easy to read, understand and absorb. The entire edition was just wonderful!

Mary and Paul Pheaster
Amanda, Ohio

I had recently checked the box to have my name taken off your mailing list, but after reading "Storm Warning" by Don Basham [Feb.] please put my name back on your list. Would like to see more simple powerful articles such as this one.

Ruth Taylor
Sallisaw, Ok.

I wish to express my appreciation for John Poole's article, "Grace or Tradition?" in the January issue. Thanks be to God who is raising up more and more preachers and teachers who are tearing down the traditional cobwebs and sweeping out debris of "religion." Thank you, Lord, for the John Pooles who are helping restore the freedom of the Gospel!

Mrs. James Epley
Lewistown, Id.

I just finished reading "From Anxious to Trusting" in the January issue of *New Wine*. I just want to thank you for the wonderful service you are giving many people like me.

Right now there are many family problems and many deep hurts for me as well as my mother. Although I believe God is bringing all of us to a closer walk with Him through all these problems, it is like a balm to my heart to see how wonderfully He has worked with other families where there are a number who are unsaved. This article was a lift to me.

B.K.
Axtell, Neb.

NOT SO WONDERFUL

I have been receiving *New Wine Magazine* for the past three years and thoroughly enjoyed reading the articles each month. Lately, however, I have noticed a swing to the new charismatic movement and its teachings. I was shocked to read an article in the 1975 edition of the *Best of New Wine* which classified certain Christians as "charismatic" Christians. Why the new term "charismatic"? Are we not all Christians — "one God, one faith, one baptism" as the apostle Paul states?

Mrs. Allan Fergus
Garson, Ont.

Letters to Editor

I feel so much focus on the "charismatic dispute or debate" sets a poor example to "babes in Christ," or new Holy Spirit baptized believers. I hesitate to pass on my copies to them. Please stick to the usual format.

Mrs. Howard E. Mason
Harrisonburg, Va.

I really enjoyed Derek Prince's articles in the February issue of *New Wine*. There is one serious problem though: things do not match up to the quality of Derek's teaching, and there is a difference between what is being presented publicly and what is being practiced privately. For example, the scriptural principle of a "plurality of elders" is not operating. Instead there is an "authority chain": Bob Mumford — four "lead elders" — functioning shepherds — peons.

Also, the "covering" concept is off the wall!!! It is taught as if some mystical safety covering in the spirit realm occurs because someone is "under" a shepherd.

Brothers and sisters, in Christ's name the majority of Christianity cannot all be wrong! There is truth to what is being perverted. Please reconsider your stand.

A brother whose "conscience clause" escape made him resign.

And I want to be left alone.

A PLEA FOR "LOVE AND LOGIC"

The "Lutheran Statement" printed in the latest *New Wine* [Feb.] is a masterpiece of love and logic, most welcome to one who has long felt that an "ethic of disagreement" was vital to Christian unity in the sense and spirit of Romans 14. I'd like to share my own ethic of disagreement taken mainly from a secular source, *How to Read a Book* by Dr. Mortimer Adler.

(1) Before I can justifiably and logically say I agree or disagree with what you say, I must first be able to say that I understand what you mean.

(2) Before I can justifiably and logically say you are wrong, I must be able to point out, specifically and with sound scriptural basis, where you are uninformed, misinformed, inaccurate, illogical or incomplete in your treatment or analysis.

(3) Until both above points are possible, I must withhold both comment and judgment.

K.H.
Dugway, Utah

I appreciate the openness and willingness of your organization to allow controversial and contemporary subjects to be presented. Each joint supplies in the Body and each sheds a light — many small lights which contribute to the strength of the full light of revelation.

Jacqueline M. Salles
Orange, Ca.

I do not see anything new about discipleship and shepherding. Scripture tells us that we know in part. Then isn't it logical to get in a group and find some of the missing parts? Our entire society is interdependent, each contributing to the whole. No matter what the profession, vocation or athletic competition, usually the junior member is placed with an instructor or an experienced person until he is capable of functioning on his own. Isn't it amazing that the Church doesn't incorporate this principle too readily?

Bill and Jinx Hiney
Phoenix, Az.

BE ENCOURAGED

Be encouraged in your efforts to advance the Kingdom. Your ministry is reaching deep — if not wide — at present and is an important part of what God is forming. I consider your input as a key source in my life. Thank you.

Richard Raad
Irving, Texas

I praise God for this ministry because it is the only literature we know of (next to the Word) that provides us with meat to chew on!

Anonymous

Don't be discouraged by those who reject your ministry. "There are 7000 others . . ."

Dean H. Campbell
Langley, Wa.

Editorial

This bicentennial year, 1976, offers a crucial opportunity for our nation to seek spiritual renewal. Our national illness is grave, yet most political and social antidotes prescribed thus far have been dismally inadequate. Indeed, it seems that almost all human efforts to consistently "insure domestic tranquility" and "promote the general welfare" have ended in frustration.

This should not really surprise us. More than all others, we Christians should know that the basic crisis our nation faces is one of the spirit, and as such, demands not a political or social solution, but a spiritual one. How can a people possibly have peace without acknowledging the Prince of Peace? And how can men govern equitably without first submitting to the justice and the authority of the government of God?

In this pivotal year, we believe that the prayers and efforts of faithful Christians will be the determining factor for the future course of our nation. By the end of 1976, America will either have begun a significant spiritual recovery marked by repentance and a reassertion of the faith of her founding fathers, or she will have abandoned her future to the lawlessness and self-indulgence which increasingly infest every level of American life.

Therefore, let us be mindful that we serve a merciful God, who will yet be entreated; a God who hears and answers prayer, and who not only punishes wickedness but also rewards righteousness. (As bad as things became in Sodom, God told Abraham he would spare the whole city for the sake of ten righteous men.)

The theme of this issue of *New Wine* is "National Renewal." We trust that our combination of information and inspiration will serve to motivate many to "put on the whole armor of God" and close ranks with tens of thousands of other Christians in America who are committed in this bicentennial year to *work*, and to *fast*, and to fervently *pray* for a powerful spiritual awakening to stir our great nation.



new
wine

MAGAZINE

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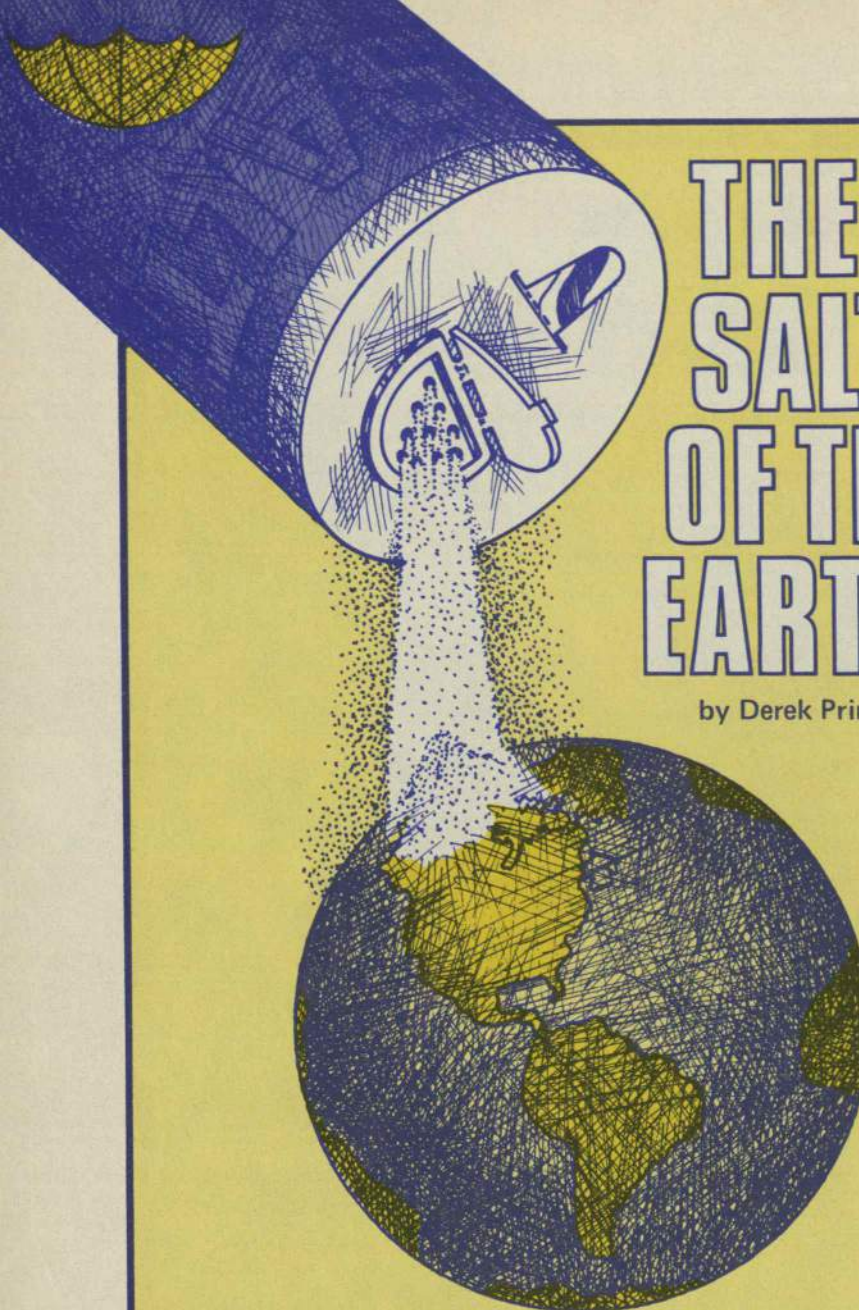
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A stylized illustration in blue and yellow. A salt shaker is shown from a top-down perspective, pouring a stream of salt granules onto a globe of the Earth. The globe shows the continents of North and South America. The background is a solid yellow color.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

by Derek Prince

A Christian's presence makes the difference.

Ye are the salt of the earth . . ." (Matt. 5:13).

Jesus is speaking to His disciples — to all of us, that is, who acknowledge the authority of His teaching. He compares our function on the earth to that of salt. His meaning becomes clear when we consider two familiar uses of salt in relation to food.

SALT GIVES FLAVOR

First of all, salt gives flavor. Food which in itself is unappetizing becomes tasty and acceptable when seasoned with salt. In Job 6:6 this is put in the form of a rhetorical question: "Can

that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt?" It is the presence of salt that makes the difference, causing us to enjoy food which we would otherwise have refused to eat.

As Christians, our function is to give flavor to the earth. The one who enjoys this flavor is God. Our presence makes the earth acceptable to God. Our presence commends the earth to God's mercy. Without us, there would be nothing to make the earth acceptable to God. But because we are here, God continues to deal with the earth in grace and mercy rather than in wrath and judgment. It is our presence that makes the difference.

This principle is vividly illustrated in the account of Abraham's intercession on behalf of Sodom, as recorded in Genesis 18:16–33. The Lord has told Abraham that He is on His way to Sodom to see if that city's wickedness has come to the point where judgment can no longer be withheld. Abraham then walks with the Lord on the way toward Sodom and reasons with Him about the principles of His judgment.

First, Abraham establishes one principle that is the basis for all that follows: *It is never the will of God that the judgment due to the wicked should come upon the righteous.* "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" (v. 23) Abraham asks. "That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (v. 25).

The Lord makes clear in the ensuing conversation that He accepts the principle stated by Abraham. How important it is that all believers understand this! If we have been made righteous by faith in Christ, and if we are leading lives that truly express our faith, then it is never God's will that we be included in the judgments which He brings upon the wicked.

Unfortunately, Christians often do not understand this because they fail to distinguish between two situations which outwardly may appear similar, but which in reality are completely different in nature and cause. On the one hand, there is persecution for the sake of righteousness. On the other hand, there is God's judgment upon the wicked. The difference between these two situations is brought out by the following contrasted statements: Persecution comes from the wicked upon the righteous; but judgment comes from God, who is righteous, upon the wicked. Thus, persecution for righteousness and judgment for wickedness are opposite to each other in their origin, their purpose and their result.

The Bible plainly warns that Christians must expect to suffer persecution. In the Sermon on the Mount

Jesus says to His disciples: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Matt. 5:10-11). Paul writes likewise to Timothy: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). Christians must therefore be prepared to endure persecution for their faith and their way of life, and even to count this as a privilege.

But by the same token Christians should never be included in God's judgments upon the wicked. This principle is stated many times in Scripture. In 1 Corinthians 11:32 Paul writes to his fellow believers, and he says, "But when we [Christians] are judged, we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world." This demonstrates that there is a difference between God's dealings with believers and His dealings with the world. As believers, we may expect to experience God's chastening. If we submit to the chastening and set our lives in order, then we are not subject to the judgments that come upon unbelievers, or the world in general. *The very purpose of God's chastening us as believers is to preserve us from undergoing His judgments upon unbelievers.*

In Psalm 91:7-8 the psalmist gives this promise to the believer: "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked." Here again the principle is seen. Whatever judgment comes as "the reward of the wicked" (that which the wicked justly deserve) should never fall upon the righteous. No matter if God strikes the wicked on every side, the righteous in the midst of it all will not be harmed.

In Exodus chapters 7 through 12, it is recorded that God brought ten judgments of ever-increasing severity upon the Egyptians because they refused to listen to His prophets Moses and Aaron. Throughout all this, God's people Israel dwelt in the midst of

Egypt, but not one of the ten judgments touched them. In Exodus 11:7 the reason is graphically stated: "But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." Judgment did not come upon Israel because the Lord "put a difference" between His own people and the people of Egypt. Even the dogs of Egypt had to acknowledge this difference! And the difference is valid to this day.

Continuing his conversation with the Lord concerning Sodom, Abraham attempts to ascertain the least number of righteous persons needed to preserve the whole city from judgment. He begins with fifty. Then with a remarkable combination of reverence and perseverance, he works his way down to ten. The Lord finally assures Abraham that if He finds only ten righteous persons in Sodom, He will spare the whole city for the sake of those ten.

What was the population of Sodom? It would be difficult to arrive at an exact estimate. However, there are figures available for certain other cities of ancient Palestine that provide a standard of comparison. In Abraham's day the walls of Jericho enclosed an area of about seven or eight acres. This would provide dwelling space for a minimum of five thousand persons or a maximum of ten thousand. But Jericho was not a large city by the standards of its day. The largest city of that period was Hazor, which covered about 175 acres and had a population estimated at between forty and fifty thousand. Later, in the period of Joshua, we are told that the total population of Ai was twelve thousand persons (Josh. 8:25). The Bible record seems to indicate that Sodom was a more important city in its day than Ai.

Taking these other cities into account, we could say that the population of Sodom in Abraham's day was probably not less than ten thousand. God assured Abraham that ten righteous persons could by their very presence preserve a city of at least ten

thousand. This gives a ratio of one to a thousand. The same ratio of "one among a thousand" is given in Job 33:23 and in Ecclesiastes 7:28, and both these passages suggest that the "one" is a person of outstanding righteousness, while all the remainder fall below God's standards.

It is easy to extend this ratio indefinitely. The presence of ten righteous persons can preserve a community of ten thousand. The presence of a hundred righteous persons can preserve a community of one hundred thousand. The presence of one thousand righteous persons can preserve a community of one million. How many righteous persons are needed to preserve a nation as large as the United States, with an estimated population of nearly 210,000,000? About 210,000 persons.

These figures are evocative. Does Scripture give us grounds to believe that, for example, a quarter of a million truly righteous persons, scattered as grains of salt across the United States, would suffice to preserve the entire nation from God's judgment and to ensure the continuance of His grace and mercy? It would be foolish to claim that such estimates are exact. Nevertheless, the Bible definitely establishes the general principle that the presence of righteous believers is the decisive factor in God's dealings with a community.

To illustrate this principle Jesus uses the metaphor of "salt." In 2 Corinthians 5:20 Paul uses a different metaphor to convey the same truth. He says, "We are ambassadors for Christ." What are ambassadors? They are persons sent forth in an official capacity by a nation's government to represent that government in the territory of another nation. Their authority is not measured by their own personal ability, but is in direct proportion to the authority of the government which they represent.

In Philippians 3:20 Paul specifies the government which, as Christians, we represent. He says, "Our conversation [literally, our citizenship] is in heaven." Both Phillips and the New English Bible render this, "We are

citizens of heaven." Thus our position on earth is that of ambassadors representing heaven's government. We have no authority to act on our own, but as long as we carefully obey the directions of our government, the entire might and authority of heaven are behind every word that we speak and every move that we make.

Before one government declares war on another, its usual action of final warning is to withdraw its ambassadors. While we are left on earth as heaven's ambassadors, our presence guarantees a continuance of God's forbearance and mercy toward the earth. But when heaven's ambassadors are finally withdrawn, there will then be nothing left to hold back the full outpouring of divine wrath and judgment upon the earth.

This leads us to a second effect of the presence of Christians as "the salt of the earth."

SALT RESTRAINS CORRUPTION

A second function of salt in relation to food is to restrain the process of corruption. In the days before artificial refrigeration, sailors who took meat on long voyages used salt as a preservative. The process of corruption was already at work before the meat was salted. Salting did not abolish the corruption, but it held it in check for the duration of the voyage, so that the sailors could continue to eat the meat long after it would otherwise have become inedible.

Our presence on the earth as Christ's disciples operates like the salt in the meat. The process of sin's corruption is already at work. This is manifested in every area of human activity — moral, religious, social, political. We cannot abolish the corruption which is already there, but we can hold it in check long enough for God's purposes of grace and mercy to be fully worked out. Then, when our influence is no longer felt, corruption will come to its climax, and the result will be total degradation.

This illustration from the power of salt to restrain corruption explains Paul's teaching in 2 Thessalonians

2:3–12. Paul warns that human wickedness will come to its climax in the person of a world ruler supernaturally empowered and directed by Satan himself. Paul calls this ruler "the man of sin" (more literally, "the man of lawlessness"), and "the son of perdition" (v. 3). In 1 John 2:18 he is called "antichrist," and in Revelation 13:4 he is called "the beast." This ruler will actually claim to be God and will demand universal worship.

Emergence of this satanic ruler is inevitable. Paul says with certainty, "Then shall that Wicked [lawless one] be revealed . . ." (2 Thess. 2:8). Paul also declares in the same verse that the true Christ Himself will be the one to administer final judgment upon this false Christ — "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit [or breath] of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

Unfortunately some preachers have used this teaching about antichrist to instill into Christians an attitude of passivity and fatalism. "Antichrist is coming," they have said. "Things are getting worse and worse. There is nothing we can do about it." As a result, Christians have all too often sat back with folded hands, in pious dismay, and watched the ravages of Satan proceed unchecked all around them.

This attitude of passivity and fatalism is as tragic as it is unscriptural. It is true that antichrist must eventually emerge. But it is far from true that there is nothing to be done about him in the meanwhile. To this present moment there is a force at work in the world that challenges, resists and restrains the spirit of antichrist. The work of this force is described by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:6–7. Freely rendered in modern English, these verses might read as follows: "And now you know what holds him in check until he is revealed in his time. For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work: only he who now holds him in check will continue to do so until he is withdrawn (taken out of the midst)."

This restraining power, which at present holds back the full and final

emergence of antichrist, is the personal presence of the Holy Spirit within the Church. This becomes clear as we follow the unfolding revelation of Scripture concerning the Person and the work of the Holy Spirit. At the very beginning of the Bible, in Genesis 1:2, we are told that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." From then on throughout the Old Testament there are frequent references to the activity of the Holy Spirit in the earth. However, at the close of His earthly ministry, Jesus promised His disciples that the Holy Spirit would shortly come to them in a new way, different from anything that had ever taken place on earth up to that time.

In John 14:16–17 Jesus gives this promise: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth [a title of the Holy Spirit] . . . for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." We may paraphrase this promise of Jesus as follows: "I have been with you in personal presence three-and-a-half years, and I am now about to leave you. After I have gone, another Person will come to take my place. This Person is the Holy Spirit. When He comes, He will remain with you for ever."

In John 16:6–7 Jesus repeats His promise: "But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." The picture is clear. There is to be an exchange of Persons. Jesus will depart. But in His place another Person will come. This other Person is the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

In John 16:12–13 Jesus returns to this theme for the third time: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth . . ." In the original Greek text, the pronoun "he" is in the masculine gender, but the noun "Spirit" is

neuter. This grammatical conflict of genders brings out the dual nature of the Holy Spirit — both personal and impersonal. This agrees with the language used by Paul in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 concerning the power which holds back the emergence of antichrist. In verse 6 Paul says, “What is restraining him . . .” (RSV), and in verse 7 he says, “He who now restrains him . . .” (RSV). This similarity of expression confirms the identification of this restraining power with the Holy Spirit.

The exchange of persons promised by Jesus was effected in two stages: first, the ascension of Jesus into heaven; then, ten days later, the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. At this point in history the Holy Spirit descended as a Person from heaven and took up His residence on earth. He is now the personal Representative of the Godhead resident on earth. His actual dwelling place is the Body of true believers, called collectively “the Church.” To this Body of believers Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3:16: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

The great ministry of the Holy Spirit within the Church is to prepare a completed Body for Christ. After completion, this Body will in turn be presented to Christ as a bride is presented to a bridegroom. As soon as this ministry of the Holy Spirit within the Church is finished, He will again be withdrawn from the earth, taking with Him the completed Body of Christ. Thus we may fill out Paul’s statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 as follows: “He (the Holy Spirit) who now holds him (the antichrist) in check will continue to do so until he be withdrawn.”

The opposition between the Holy Spirit and the spirit of antichrist is described also in 1 John 4:3–4: “And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you,

than he that is in the world.”

In the world is the spirit of antichrist, working toward the emergence of antichrist himself. In the disciples of Christ is the Holy Spirit, holding back the emergence of antichrist. Therefore the disciples who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit act as a barrier, holding back the climax of lawlessness and the final emergence of antichrist. Only when the Holy Spirit, together with the completed Body of Christ’s disciples, is withdrawn from the earth, will the forces of lawlessness be able to proceed without restraint to the culmination of their purposes in antichrist. Meanwhile, it is both the privilege and the responsibility of Christ’s disciples, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to “overcome” the forces of antichrist and to hold them in check.

THE CONSEQUENCE OF FAILURE

As the salt of the earth, then, we who are Christ’s disciples have two primary responsibilities. First, by our presence we commend the earth to God’s continuing grace and mercy. Second, by the power of the Holy Spirit within us we hold in check the forces of corruption and lawlessness until God’s appointed time.

In fulfilling these responsibilities, the Church stands as the barrier to the accomplishment of Satan’s supreme ambition, which is to gain dominion over the whole earth. This explains why Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 that there must be “a falling away first, before the man of sin [antichrist] can be revealed . . .” The word translated “falling away” is literally *apostasy* — that is, a departure from the faith. So long as the Church stands firm and uncompromising in its faith, it has the power to hold back the final manifestation of antichrist. Satan himself fully understands this, and therefore his primary objective is to undermine the faith and righteousness of the Church. Once he achieves this, the barrier to his purposes is removed, and the way is open for him to gain both spiritual and political control over the whole earth.

Suppose that Satan succeeds, because we, as Christians, fail to fulfill our responsibilities. What then? Jesus Himself gives us the answer. We become “salt that has lost its savour.” He warns us of the fate that awaits such savorless salt: “It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men” (Matt. 5:13).

“Good for nothing!” That is severe condemnation indeed. What follows? We are “cast out” — rejected by God. Then we are “trodden under foot of men.” Men become the instruments of God’s judgment upon a saltless, apostate Church. If we in the Church fail to hold back the forces of wickedness, our judgment is to be handed over to those very forces.

The alternatives that confront us are clearly presented by Paul in Romans 12:21: “Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.” There are only two choices: either to overcome, or to be overcome. There is no middle way, no third course open to us. We may use the good that God has put at our disposal to overcome the evil that confronts us. But if we fail to do this, then that very evil will in turn overcome us.

This message applies with special urgency to those of us who live in lands where we still enjoy liberty to proclaim and to practice our Christian faith. In many lands today Christians have lost this liberty. At the same time multiplying millions in those lands have been systematically indoctrinated to hate and to despise Christianity and all that it stands for. To people thus indoctrinated there could be no greater satisfaction than to trample under their feet those Christians who are not already under their yoke.

If we heed the warning of Jesus, and fulfill our function as salt in the earth, we have the power to prevent this. But if we default from our responsibilities and suffer the judgment that follows, the bitterest reflection of all will be this: *It need never have happened* ❖

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God's bed-rock laws for true liberty.



LET FREEDOM RING

by Rus Walton

SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL

There are those who see freedom as that state, or situation, in which the individual is released from all restraints; free of compunction or moral standard.

To them, freedom is a no-holds-barred opportunity for the big rip-off and the easy ride. No obligations, no discipline — just freedom to do their thing and let the other fellow take the hindmost.

Such persons are not libertarians; they are libertines, the product of their error is licentiousness.

The Apostle Peter makes it clear that we are not to use our freedom "as a pretext for wickedness but rather to be servants of God."¹

Paul tells us that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."² But Paul also cautions us that we are "not to use our freedom to satisfy the flesh but rather, through love, to serve one another."³

Freedom, as Christians know it, is one of our precious gifts from God. "The God who gave us life, gave us liberty."⁴ As with everything God bestows on us, we are to use His gift of freedom wisely and in harmony with His laws.

There are, essentially, two forms of freedom: spiritual freedom and physical freedom.

Spiritual freedom is that personal, inner state of being that comes through the Spirit of The Lord. It is that internal strength of peace that breaks the bonds of appetite and greed; *that makes us servants of God rather than slaves of self or other men.* It is the faith that sustains, even in the meanest bondage — as it did the imprisoned Apostle Paul and as it did so many of our fighting men who were held captive long months and years in enemy jails.

"The spirit of liberty remembers that not even a sparrow falls to earth unheeded. The spirit of liberty is the spirit of Him who, nearly 2,000 years ago, taught mankind that lesson it has never learned, but never has quite forgotten; that there is a kingdom

RUS WALTON is a journalist who has covered political and public affairs for more than thirty years. Editor, publisher, syndicated columnist, radio and TV commentator, author . . . a voice calling for Christian action . . . now!

where the least shall be heard and considered side by side with the greatest."⁵

Physical freedom is that outer state of the individual, that external condition that is "the absence of force, the absence of coercion, the absence of restraint and constraint."⁶ "Sociologically," freedom is "man not playing God, either individually or collectively."⁷

"To every man the right to live, to work, to be himself, and to become whatever thing his manhood and his vision can combine to make him . . ."⁸ *In other words, physical freedom is that situation in which individuals live in harmonious cooperation and do not seek dominion over each other.*

THE NATURE OF FREEDOM

The nature of freedom is personal, private — *individual*. It is the individual who is free; not the group, not society. The term "free society" is a misnomer, and a dangerous one; given full application, a free society can result in glorification of the State and diminution of the individual.

Freedom is also uniqueness — it means something different to each

individual. It means each individual is free to be different – to be himself, to be unique. If one is free simply to be like others, or to do as others, or to conform to a predetermined pattern, one is obviously not free.

And freedom must, by its very nature, be available to all – equally. There can be no true freedom where there is inequity, no freedom where there is special favor or false barrier. Thus it follows that freedom can make no distinction, can practice no discrimination, other than its adherence to God's laws and Christ's teachings.

"LIBERTY AND TYRANNY"

It is important to think long and deep on the nature and properties of freedom for, as Abraham Lincoln wrote:

The world has never had a good definition of the word liberty, and the American people, just now, are much in want of one.

We all declare for liberty, but in using the same word we do not all mean the same thing. With some the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself, and the product of his labor; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men, and the product of other men's labor. Here are two, not only different but incompatible things, called by the same name – liberty.

And it follows that each of the things is, by the respective parties, called by two different and incompatible names – *liberty and tyranny*.

FREEDOM AND ATHEISM

Maximum individual freedom is most generally found within those nations where the laws of men are most in harmony with the laws of God.

That is not to say that an atheist cannot subscribe to the concept of personal freedom or the practice of liberty; many do.

As Leonard Read has written:

"Yes, you can be an atheist and, at the same time, believe in freedom. But, a society of active militant

atheists will not be a free society."⁹

There are many atheists today who, while denying God, adhere to (the letter of) the laws God has set forth. But consider this: only those who truly comprehend the source of freedom can understand its parameters and recognize it for what it is – *in sum, an opportunity for man, through Christ, to regain that eternal life lost by Adam in Eden.*

THE MOST EXACTING FORM OF ALL

Freedom is the most exacting form of civil government – it is, in fact, the most demanding state of all for man.

That is because freedom demands – depends upon – self-discipline from both the governed and the governing. *The foundation of freedom is self-government and the foundation of self-government is self-control.*

The very essence of practical Christianity is self-discipline, as taught by Jesus Christ. Christ does not force faith, or obedience, or good works upon us; that must be a personal decision and an internal regimen. And, "those who can thus govern themselves have little need for managerial government."¹⁰

No other form of civil government demands so much from each individual because in no other form of government is the individual so important. In other forms of government, the State is the central force; in the nation where freedom prevails, the individual is the central figure.

As Christian historian Verna Hall has pointed out, "Each religion has a form of government, and Christianity astonished the world by establishing self-government. With the landing of the Pilgrims in 1620, Christian self-government became the foundation stone of the United States of America."¹¹

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We think of freedom and most often we think of "rights." But, freedom is not simply a matter of rights, it is also a matter of responsi-

bilities. In fact, true freedom is a dynamic balance (self-imposed) of rights and responsibilities; for each right there is generally a corresponding and co-equal responsibility. *When this is understood it becomes clear that under freedom each individual really counts – and is accountable!*

Other forms of government are often motivated by appetite (either the personal appetite of the despot or the centralized appetite of the State, or the collective appetite of the mob). A government of freemen, if it is to survive, must operate on the basis of *self-restraint*; it cannot permit appetite to rule conscience or greed to violate equity.

In other societies – those fashioned by monarchs, or tyrants, or despotic councils – the individual can duck responsibility for the errors and the evils and the excesses of government. *But not freemen!* In self-government the individual is responsible for the acts of the State – no matter who holds office or who exercises the authority. For the citizen to think otherwise is to abdicate his powers.

CIVIL LAWS

Freedom has certain laws.

Such laws are not simply – and sometimes not even – the statutes, codes, ordinances and regulations of "social control through law." Those are *civil laws*, extensions of the State carried down mainly from the Roman system. They are laws that now, as then attempt to "spell out every detail and cover every situation."¹² These laws are evident in our lengthy Civil Codes governing almost every area of our lives – the laws (and supplementary administrative regulations*) that give life to the thousands of regulatory bodies, such as the municipal codes dealing with construction, sanitation, traffic, recreation, etc.

Civil laws, in proper degree and application, are important in the maintenance of domestic tranquility. But, such laws are also dangerous;

* Many of these administrative regulations have the force and effect of law.

their danger is that they can be proliferated, misused, misinterpreted, distorted and perverted. These laws can get out of whack and out of bounds, requiring still more laws to set them straight and clear the air. Civil laws can be — and upon occasion have been — employed to restrict those freedoms they originally proposed to uphold. And in those instances, they magnify not liberty but license; they expand the sovereignty of the State rather than the primacy of the individual.

“THE LAWS OF NATURE”

There is another kind of law. It is called *Common Law*. It has its origins in the “Laws of Nature.” These are the laws our founding fathers called upon when, in 1776, they made their Declaration of Independence to assume “the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and Nature’s God entitled them.”

Webster’s 1828 Dictionary defines the Law of Nature as: “A rule of conduct arising out of the natural relations of human beings established by the Creator, and existing prior to any positive precept.”

Webster’s now defines natural law as: “Designating law discernible by reason as distinguished from law laid down in codes by state, church, etc.”

Thus is Nature’s God denied and man’s reason glorified! In essence, Common Law had its genesis in the internal, or Judaic-Christian, laws. Civil, or Roman, law is that external law or control that originated in the world’s great pagan nation.¹³

“ORGANIZED JUSTICE”

If we are to be free — truly free — the spirit of our laws must be in harmony with the Spirit of the Lord, and the letter of the law must be consistent with “the laws of nature and nature’s God.” If they are not, they will violate us, our lives, our liberty and the various extensions of our selves — our possessions, our pursuit of happiness, etc.

The laws of freemen are established

to preserve a system of “organized justice”; their proper purpose and function is to protect the individual against injustice.¹⁴ Most basic laws spell out what man must *not* do to his fellow men, and what government must *not* do to the governed. Thus, these laws are “negative” in that they are not aggressive or tyrannical. Consider, for example, the Constitution of the United States (and the constitutions of most of the states):

“Congress shall make *no* laws . . . The right of the people shall *not* be abridged . . . or denied . . . or disparaged . . .”

Toward the same end of freedom, most of our basic laws do not tell the individual what he or she must do — that is left to individual decision within the dictum that the exercise of such freedom must not interfere with the equal freedom of others.

FUNDAMENTAL LAWS OF FREEDOM

Consider these basic, bed-rock, laws of nature and nature’s God; the fundamental laws of freedom:

“Thou shalt love The Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy mind and with all thy soul.”¹⁵ That is the great commandment. God first, last and always.

“In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct thy paths.”¹⁶

“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” No graven images, no false idols, no golden calves, no strange shepherds.

“For the kingdom is The Lord’s and He is the governor among the nations.”¹⁷ Good government is necessary and is an extension of God’s laws but when you exchange God for Caesar, you’re bound to be short-changed, and long-chained.

Those are laws concerning the Fatherhood — and the sovereignty — of God.

And, these are the laws concerning the brotherhood of man, in Christ:

“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”¹⁸ There is no cop-out there; no rip-off, no easy ride.

“Do unto others as you would that

they would do unto you.”¹⁹ There it is, the balance of rights and responsibilities.

Those are the laws that make men free. The laws that put man and his laws in harmony with God and God’s laws. “The man who looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues therein, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”²⁰

If you love God, if you love others as yourself, you will not covet, you will not steal their possessions, you will not bear false witness, you will not injure their person. No murders, no assaults, no undue interference in the lives of others; no violations of their rights, no trespassing on their freedom.

Freedom is in the Spirit of the Lord — not just “is” but lives, and moves, and thrives. And, what are the fruits of the Spirit?

Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control.²¹

Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you. So it is with individuals. And so it is with nations. “Blessed is the nation whose God is The Lord!”²² ♡

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Pet. 2:16
- 2 Cor. 3:17.
- Gal. 5:13.
- Thomas Jefferson.
- Hand, Justice Learned.
- Hayek, F.A., *The Constitution of Liberty*, p. 17.
- Read, Leonard C., *Accent on the Right*.
- Wolfe, Thomas.
- Read, Leonard C., *Deeper Than You Think*, p. 16.
- Morley, Felix, *Christian History of the Constitution*, p.ix, Intro.
- Hall, Verna M., *ibid.*, p.iii, Preface.
- Slater, Rosalie J., *Rudiments of America’s Christian History and Government*, p. 61.
- ibid.*, p.61.
- Bastiat, Frederic, *The Law*, p. 24.
- Matt. 22:37.
- Prov. 3:6.
- Ps. 22:28.
- Matt. 19:19.
- Luke 6:31.
- James 1:25.
- Gal. 5:22,23.
- Ps. 33:12.

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ECHOES OF THE SPIRIT

Significant Events in the Body of Christ

TEACHERS MEET WITH REAGAN

On February 4, 1976, in Ft. Lauderdale, Bible teachers Don Basham, Ern Baxter, Bob Mumford and Derek Prince held a 45-minute private conference with presidential candidate Ronald Reagan in which the former California governor shared some personal spiritual convictions, in addition to his deep conviction that our nation must return to the Judeo-Christian faith and morality which was the source of her strength in the beginning.

"I believe God has a purpose and a destiny for our nation," Reagan told the ministers, "and that we are in grave danger of failing that purpose and destiny unless we act soon to change our present direction."

Reagan shortly thereafter issued the following written commitment to his position:

In this Bicentennial year, we are daily reminded that our strength and our greatness grew from a national commitment to God and country. Those institutions of freedom which became famous world-wide were forged in the fires of spiritual belief; yet today many of these institutions are in jeopardy.

The time has come to turn back to God and reassert our trust in Him for the healing of America. This means that all of us who acknowledge a belief in our Judeo-Christian heritage must reaffirm that belief and join forces to reclaim those great principles embodied in that Judeo-Christian tradition and in ancient scripture. Without such a joining of forces, the materialistic quantity of life in our country may increase for a time, but the quality of life will continue to decrease.

As a Christian I commit myself to do my share in this joint venture.

Our country is in need of and ready for a spiritual renewal. Such a renewal is based on spiritual reconciliation — man with God, and then man with man.

A Bicentennial celebration is only important if we can learn from its history. One lesson should be that as a nation it's "In God We Trust."

Concerning his own personal convictions, Reagan admitted that he "prays more than I used to." A professing Christian, Reagan added, "I've also noticed a kind of evolution in my praying in the last ten or twelve years. Concerning my public service, my prayer is to be willing to serve in whatever capacity He wants me to serve in, and that He will help me succeed in the job I'm given."

HOW WILL YOU CELEBRATE THIS BICENTENNIAL?

The entire world is watching, through multi-media, the way in which the U.S. celebrates her Bicentennial. Will God, who stood at the forefront of the nation's founding, stand there in 1976? Unique opportunities are afforded to us this year to present Christ and His principles and to be personally involved in national renewal.

INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA:

Organized on Thanksgiving Day 1973, Intercessors for America has throughout the past two years issued periodical newsletters to all who have expressed interest in praying and fasting for our nation. The newsletter focuses on issues of national significance, including background information that enables Christians to be more specific in their praying.

Current issues listed for prayer include: (1) *The November 1976*

Elections. Pray that God will raise up and enable righteous candidates to be elected.

(2) *U.S. Terrorist Activities.* Bind all powers, principalities and spirits of wickedness which would promote assassination, bombing, anarchy, destruction and confusion. Ask that God will stop any such activities and convert the leadership of terrorist movements.

(3) *The Supreme Court and America's Judicial System.* Pray that decisions facing the courts will restore biblical principles and morality to U.S. Law.

(4) *America's Families and Schools.* Pray against the strongholds promoting divorce and family discord in the U.S. Continue to pray for the schools, administrators and teachers in your area.

If you wish to receive the Intercessors for America newsletter, free of charge, write IFA, P.O. Box D, Elyria, Ohio 44035.

THE SPIRIT IN '76:

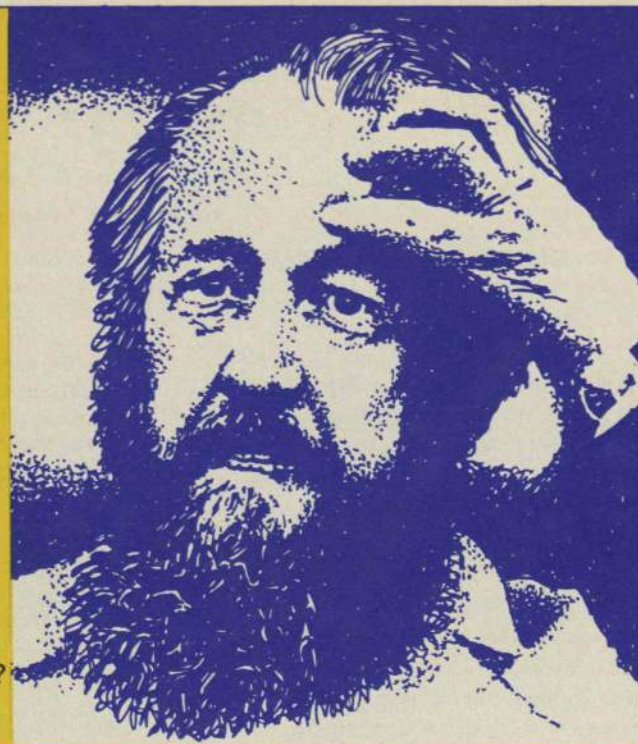
"The Spirit in '76" is an interdenominational, interorganizational project which will promote Christian activities in the Bicentennial celebration through various outreach ministries.

A Wagon Train traveling from California to Philadelphia, bicycle brigades, backpack hiking along the Appalachian Trail, sailing aboard a 105-ft. cruiser down the Missouri and Mississippi, around Florida and up the Eastern coast, and a horseback team following Paul Revere's route from Boston proclaiming, "The Lord is coming!" — all converging in Philadelphia the week of July 4th — are a few of the possibilities open to modern pioneers. For further details write "Spirit in '76" c/o Box 774, Lindale, Texas 75771.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE CHURCH

by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

Will the right of power or the power of right prevail?



EDITOR'S NOTE:

The following is a letter written by the recently-exiled Russian author, Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, to the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church concerning the diminishing spiritual vitality of the institutional church in his country. While it is a powerful indictment of complacency and moral indigence in much of traditional religion, the letter serves most of all as a solemn note of warning to Christians in "free" countries all over the world . . . and especially in the Western world.

In view of his challenging words concerning religious decline in Communist countries, our obligation as American Christians is to recognize the similar symptoms now emerging in the Church in our own society. Solzhenitsyn's letter — stark testimony of the Church in a nation losing its salt and forfeiting its influence for righteousness — speaks prophetically to the Church in America.

May we be moved to spiritual vigilance by the powerful word of warning sounded in Solzhenitsyn's plea to the Russian Patriarch.

Your Holiness!

What this letter is about is pressing

like a tombstone upon the head and shattering the breast of the not quite dead Orthodox Russian people. Everyone knows it, and there was a loud outcry, but they then remained forebodingly silent. And now another pebble must be placed on the tombstone, so that silence may no longer be possible. I was weighed down by just such a pebble when on Christmas night I listened to your Encyclical.

I felt a pang at that passage where you spoke, at last, about *children* — perhaps for the first time in half a century from such a height: that side by side with love for their country parents should instil in their children love for the Church (and, evidently, for faith itself?) and should strengthen it by their own good example. I listened to that — and my early child-

ALEKSANDR SOLZHENITSYN, Russian novelist and 1970 Nobel prize winner for literature, was exiled by the Soviet government in 1974 for his outspoken writings, especially *The Gulag Archipelago* which is a study of the Soviet prison camp system. Solzhenitsyn's works express the triumph of human dignity over tyranny and persecution.

hood, spent at many church services, rose up before me, together with that primitive impression, uncommon in its freshness and purity, which later no millstone and no intellectual theories could eradicate.

But — what is this? Why do you direct this honorable appeal only to Russian emigres? Why do you urge that only *those* children be brought up in the Christian faith, why do you warn only the distant flock to "discern calumny and falsehood" and to be strengthened in justice and truth? And we — should we be discerning? And what about *our* children — should we instil in them love for the Church or not? Indeed, Christ did command to go out and seek even the hundredth lost sheep, yet, only when the ninety-nine are in their place. But when even the ninety-nine near ones are missing — should not one's first concern be for them?

Why must I present my passport when I come to church to have my son baptized? What canonical requirements govern the Moscow Patriarchate in the registration of those being baptized? One ought still to be amazed at the strength of spirit shown by parents, at the dimly perceived spiritual opposition inherited from olden

times, with which they submit to that talebearing registration, exposing themselves to persecution at work or public ridicule on the part of nincompoops. Yet their persistence dries up with this, for the baptizing of infants is usually the totality of the children's connection with the Church, the succeeding paths of religious upbringing being tightly shut to them, access to participation in church services is likewise shut off, sometimes also to communion, and even to attendance at services. We are robbing our children when we deprive them of the never-to-be-repeated, purely angelic perception inspired by divine worship, something which cannot be made up in adulthood, so that they do not even know what it is that they have lost. The right of perpetuating the faith of their fathers has been riven, as well as the right of parents to raise their children according to their own understanding of the world, — and you, the church hierarchy, have come to accept it calmly and you promote it, finding an authentic characteristic of *freedom of belief* in this fact: in the fact that we must give up our defenseless children, not into neutral hands, but into the clutches of atheistic propaganda, of the crudest and most unscrupulous kind; in the fact that youth torn away from Christianity — so as not to become infected by it! — and its moral upbringing has been confined within the narrow defile between the agitator's notebook and the criminal code.

Already half a century has slipped by, I no longer speak of liberating the present, but of how we shall save the *future* of our country? — the future, which will be made up of today's children? In the end, the true and profound destiny of our country depends on whether the *right of power* will become firmly embedded in the national consciousness, or whether this will be cleared of that eclipse and the *power of right* will again shine forth? Will we succeed in preserving in ourselves at least some Christian traits, or will we lose them all completely, and give ourselves up to considerations of self-preservation and comfort?

The study of the last few centuries of Russian history leaves one with the conviction that it would have advanced in an incomparably more humane and harmonious manner if the Church had not renounced her independence, and the people would have listened to her voice as, for instance, they do in Poland. Alas, we are far from that. We have been losing and forfeiting the shining moral Christian atmosphere in which for a millennium our mores, our style of life, outlook, folklore, even the very name of the people — *Krest'iany* — have stood firm. We are losing the last characteristics and traits of a Christian nation — and can it be that this is not the *chief* concern of the Russian Patriarch? The Russian Church has its impassioned opinion, on any kind of evil whatsoever in far-off Asia or Africa but in domestic troubles she never has any. Why are the pastoral letters that come down to us from ecclesiastical summits so traditionally unruffled? Why are all Church documents so placid, as if they originated in the most Christian of nations? Harrying from one unruffled epistle to another, does not the need to write them vanish completely in one bad year? Outside the patriarchal chancery there will not be anyone to address them to.

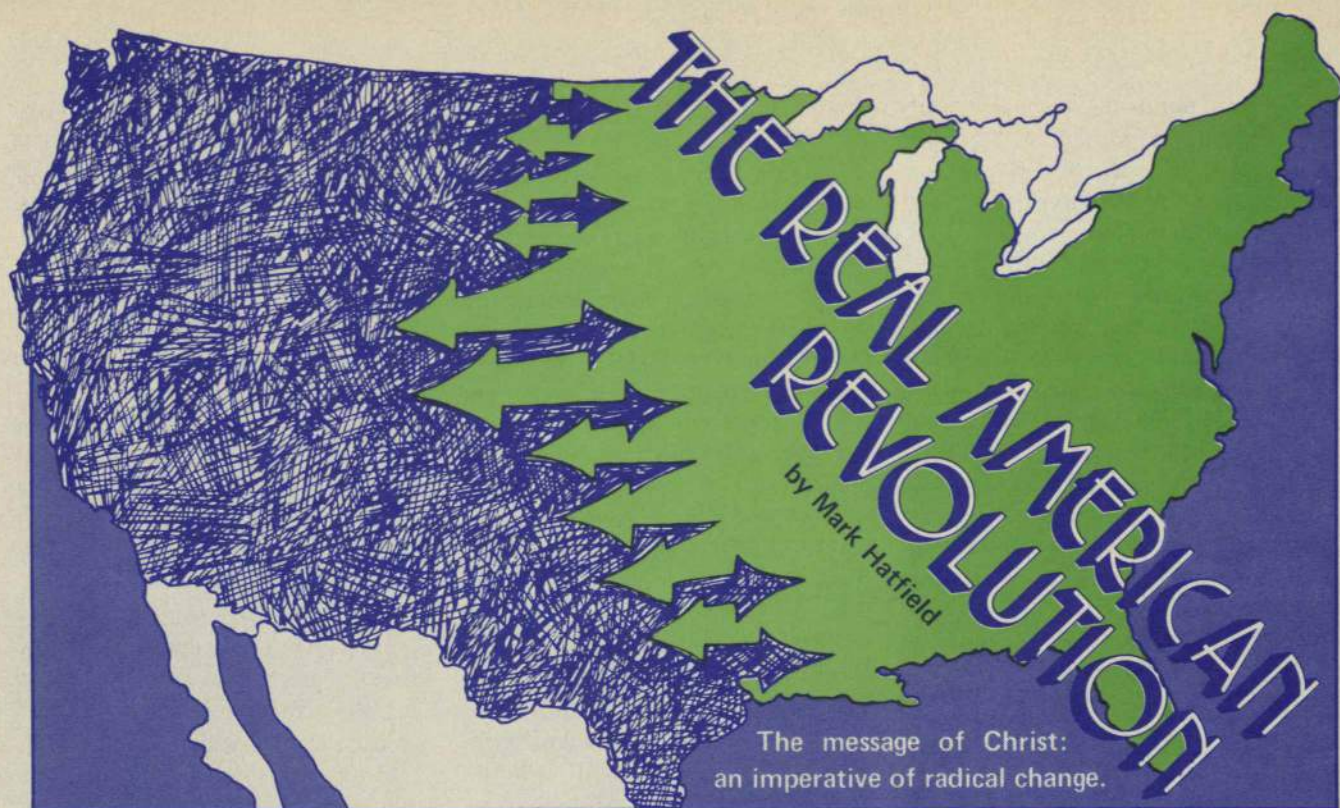
It is already seven years since the two upright priests, Yakunin and Eshliman,¹ whose self-sacrificing example confirmed the fact that the pure flame of the Christian faith has not died out in our land, wrote a well-known letter to your Predecessor. They confronted him with abundant evidence of that voluntary interior enslavement, to the point of self-destruction, to which the Russian Church has been reduced: they requested that any untruth in their letter might be pointed out. But every word of theirs was the *truth*, yet not one of the hierarchy sought to refute them. And what answer did they receive? The simplest and coarsest: they were punished, for speaking the truth they were deprived of church ministry. And *you* — up to this day you have not set it right. And the terrible letter of the twelve citizens of Viatka also remained

unanswered and only brought oppression upon them. And to this day the only fearless Archbishop, Ermogen of Kaluga,² who did not allow a belatedly enraged atheism, which achieved so much before 1964 in the other eparchies, to close his churches and to burn icons and service books, similarly remains imprisoned in monastic confinement.

It is seven years since that resounded loudly and plainly — and what has been changed? For every church in use there are twenty razed and irreparably damaged and twenty more in desolation and profanation — is there a more heartrending sight than these ruins, left to the birds and storehouse keepers? How many populated centers are there in the country without any church within 100 or even 200 kilometers? And our North is left without any churches whatsoever — that North which from ancient times has been the repository of the Russian spirit and, one can expect, will most faithfully show it forth again in the future. Workers, almsgivers, donors meet with obstacles at every attempt to *restore* even the smallest church, because of the one-sided laws of the so-called *separation* of church and state. We do not even dare to ask about the ringing of church bells — but why is Russia deprived of her ancient adornment, her finest voice? But why speak of the churches? — we cannot even get the Gospels anywhere, even the Gospels must be brought in from abroad, just as our missionaries at one time used to bring the Gospels to Indigirka.

Seven years — and does the Church make a stand for anything whatsoever? All ecclesiastical administration, the appointment of pastors and bishops (and even of unprincipled ones, to make it that much easier to deride and demolish the Church), everything is carried out secretly according to the directives of the *Council on Religious Affairs*. A Church-directed dictatorially by atheists — is a sight unseen for Two Millennia. All administration of church business, as well as the use of church monies — those coppers

(continued on page 16)



The following is a transcription of a message delivered by Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon at the recent National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. (Used by permission of Sen. Mark Hatfield, Washington, D.C. 20510.)

On November 1, 1751, a committee of the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly, in ordering a bell for the tower of the new State House, instructed that these words from the Old Testament be inscribed on it: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."

The Liberty Bell, tradition tells us, heralded the signing of the Declaration of Independence 25 years later.

From that passage, we may find insights of biblical truth which can illuminate our understanding during this important year of our nation's life. This scripture is taken from a section of Leviticus which announced to the people of Israel the "year of jubilee." We read, "You shall hallow the . . . year and proclaim liberation in the land for all its inhabitants. You shall make this your year of jubilee."

What was the biblical meaning of this year? It was to be celebrated not through pagentry, but through concrete acts that flowed from a deeper

commitment to God's justice.

The jubilee year proclaimed liberation for the poor and the oppressed. It provided for the disinherited to be restored to their land. It repaid and forgave debts, so those who were beholden with their lives in economic servitude to others would be free. In short, the jubilee year was a striking course of action and law which served the plight of the dispossessed, insured the just stewardship of wealth and resources, and expressed God's passion for justice.

It was not the imposition of self-righteous kingly power, but the corporate faithfulness of the people to their God which would infect the whole society with this prophetic vision. Yet, the history of this ancient people reveals how they continually turned to idols and gods of their own making, trusting in their own self-sufficiency, forsaking the "weightier demands of justice and mercy," and being confronted with God's judgment.

MARK HATFIELD is a United States Senator from Oregon, who also served as governor of that state from 1959-66. He is well-known for his Christian witness in the field of politics.

Into this setting Jesus Christ entered human history. His ministry was inaugurated with the same prophetic call for justice and liberation; He rose in the synagogue, Luke tells, and read from Isaiah, announcing His mission in words which rekindled the vision of the year of jubilee:

The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me; he has sent me to announce good news to the poor, to proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind; to let the broken victims go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

There He was — God's love incarnate, pouring His life out in sacrificial service for others, proclaiming the presence of God's own Kingdom breaking into our midst, and faithfully following this calling to death on a cross.

Through Christ's resurrection we see revealed power that is "far above all government and authority, all power and dominion, and any title of sovereignty that can be named."

And here is the power which can set each of us free from human bondage to self, sin, and futility.

The hope which is ours today as a people rests not in our great history or

traditions, nor in our accomplishments or our own power, but in this one — Sovereign over all — who even now is Judge of the nations, and offers to us His healing power.

The biblical message of liberation, etched into the side of the Liberty Bell, resonant through the Scriptures, confronts us this day as judgment, but offers renewing hope.

Its liberating power calls us away from placing our trust in the false values, gods and idols of our own making which characterize this present era.

Today, our abundance, which has brought material blessings to so many, threatens us spiritually as a peril. Never have we known such wealth, but never have we worshipped wealth more. Dazzled by material success, we have developed a new religion: the worship of progress itself. We have placed a faith in technology, and devote increasing billions to life-destroying arsenals.

Whereas people once looked toward God for salvation, our culture now propels their daily lives toward the domination of nature and fellow human beings in a ceaseless quest for material accumulation. The search for the transcendent, mystical, supernatural reality of life is being supplanted by religious devotion to what is visible, tangible, and synthetic.

From such bondage Jesus Christ yearns to set us free. "Where your treasure is," Christ said, "there your heart will be also." He proclaims unto us who are rich, and unto those who are poor, a jubilee which would liberate us all from spiritual and physical impoverishment.

Obedience to Christ can exercise a vital influence in our corporate life as a nation and people, but only on His own terms.

To believe that true faithfulness to Jesus Christ will bolster our structures of power, or protect society's status quo, is impious folly. We who are finite dare not attempt to use an infinite God for our own ends.

Jesus Christ lived, died, and rose again to give to us the gift of new life and to proclaim a new order. Therein lies the hope for all humanity. We have

been given the vision of how our personal and corporate life can be molded by values undergirded by an all-encompassing love.

But all this runs so counter to the realities of power and politics which often possess each of us. It requires a break, a discontinuity, a new starting point. This is repentance — personal and collective. It commands us to turn from selfishness, materialism, and prelacy and turn to selfless love, spiritual fullness, and servanthood.

Our hope as a people is found only in our response to Him who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Let there be no mistake; such a hope entails a profound new beginning. Christ's love liberates us, and breaks the parameters of the old order to institute a new creation — within us and among us.

What we require at this juncture in our history is a new revolution — a spiritual revolution transforming our values and reshaping our corporate life. This would be the natural manifestation of true repentance.

Lest we think that such words sound impractical, irrational, or outlandish, we should recognize that the core of our own American Revolution was not the waging of a successful war, but a dramatically new starting point which first transformed the hearts and minds of the colonists, nurturing a new vision.

John Adams clearly explained this truth when he wrote:

What do we mean by the Revolution? The American War? That was no part of the Revolution The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people. A change in their religious sentiments, or their duties and obligations This radical change in the principles, opinions, sentiments and affections," Adams declared, "was the real American Revolution."

Today, the message of Christ presents us with the imperative of a "radical change" in our values — a change spiritually rooted, whose effects would be revolutionary in our time.

Its first impact, would be evidenced in a new understanding of leadership.

"The rulers of the world lord it over you," Christ said, "but I am among you as one who serves." Christ was among us in the form of a servant, and he demonstrated His leadership by the washing of others' feet. Following Him calls us to lose our lives in order to find them.

Embracing the power of love, we are to forsake the love of power.

Therein we discover the power which truly is the most revolutionary force — the power of sacrificial love, shown to the whole world by Christ's redeeming death on a cross.

As St. Paul told early believers:

This doctrine of the cross is sheer folly to those on their way to ruin, but to us who are on the way to salvation it is the power of God Divine folly is wiser than the wisdom of man, and divine weakness stronger than man's strength. My brothers, think what sort of people you are, whom God has called. Few of you are men of wisdom, by any human standard; few are powerful or highly born. Yet, to shame the wise, God has chosen what the world counts folly, and to shame what is strong, God has chosen what the world counts weakness. He has chosen things low and contemptible, mere nothings, to overthrow the existing order. And so there is no place for human pride in the presence of God Christ Jesus is our righteousness; in him we are set free.

Therefore, we can discover authentic and creative power in servanthood. From such a posture of humility, our nation could affirm this true understanding of leadership. Abraham Lincoln exemplified this well when he wrote:

We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But . . . we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us. It behoves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our

national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

This new revolution would also bring a true understanding of our common humanity. When we encounter the Creator through repentance and love, our hearts are turned outward to all people. We discover a boundless love — the indiscriminate love of a Father who rushes to embrace the returning prodigal, and gives a feast. It is a love which knows no boundaries of class, race, ideology or nation.

We see it manifest in Jesus; His love knew no conditions. It extended to all. We are to love as He did, for to hate another, for whatever reason, is to hate one for whom Christ suffered and died.

We are called to an unlimited liability for our brothers and sisters throughout creation. There are no exclusions to make, no qualifications to impose. Their destiny, their livelihood, and their fulfillment becomes inseparable from our own.

Finally this spiritual revolution will

produce a just embodiment of stewardship. In our era, this is critical to the vision of liberation which God offers humanity, just as when the jubilee year was first proclaimed to the people of Israel.

Humanity is beset by a cleavage between the wealthy and the impoverished; further, the affluence of a few is dramatized by the realities of global scarcity.

We here are the guardians of enormous prosperity; as a people we utilize about 40% of the globe's resources amidst only 6% of all its people.

Our materialism holds us in bondage to what we consume and possess. But Christ's good news sets us free from the poverty of abundance. That freedom can be the means for liberating those who face death this day because of impoverishment that is beyond their control.

In the end this revolution will teach us that we own nothing. We are only stewards. The world's resources belong to its Creator; they are to be used not

for the luxury of a few, but for the livelihood of all.

"To whom much has been given," our Lord said, "much is required." He asks us for our love, our commitment, our possessions, our discipleship. In this we will find our truest freedom.

Let us begin this revolution now. Let us be known as a people who are committed to the primacy of spiritual community, and as just and compassionate stewards in service to the needs of humanity.

He calls each one of us to give ourselves to this liberating revolution.

Let us here today covenant one with another to mobilize our resources and commit our lives for the corporate spiritual transformation which this revolution will bring.

He awaits us now, with His love reaching out, even for the "healing of the nations."

Let us bow our heads for some moments of silence to listen for His word speaking to each of us.

"Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." ❖

THE SURVIVAL OF THE CHURCH

(continued from page 13)

dropped in by pious fingers — are given over to their control. In grand gestures 5 million rubles at a time are donated to outside causes, while the lowly are driven from the church entrances, and there is nothing with which to repair a leaking roof in a poor parish.³ Priests are without rights in their parishes, only the conducting of divine worship is still entrusted to them, and that only within the churches, while before stepping outside to visit the sick or to go to the cemetery it is first necessary to ask permission of the city council.

On what evidence can one convince himself that the systematic *demolition* of the Church body and soul at the hands of the atheists is her best way of *preservation*? Preservation — *for whom*? Certainly not for Christ. Preservation — *by what means*? By *lying*? But after lying what shall be the kind of hands offering the Eucharist?

Your Holiness! Do not totally ignore my unworthy outcry. It may be

that you will not have to hear things like this every seven years. Do not give us reason to suppose, do not make us think, that for the arch-pastors of the Russian Church earthly authority is higher than heavenly, earthly responsibility more terrible than accounting to God.

Neither before men, and all the more, not at prayer, shall we pretend that material forces are stronger than our spirit. Things were not easier at the inception of Christianity, yet it survived and flourished. And it showed us the way: *sacrifice*. If one is deprived of all material powers — in *sacrifice* he always achieves victory. Many of our priests and co-believers within living memory accepted just such a martyrdom, worthy of the first centuries. But then they were thrown to the lions, today all one can lose is his comfortable well-being.

In these days, falling on your knees before the Cross carried into the center of the church, ask the Lord: what other purpose does your ministry have in a nation which has almost lost

the spirit of Christianity and even its Christian image?

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

Lent, Week of the Veneration of the Holy Cross, 1972. ❖

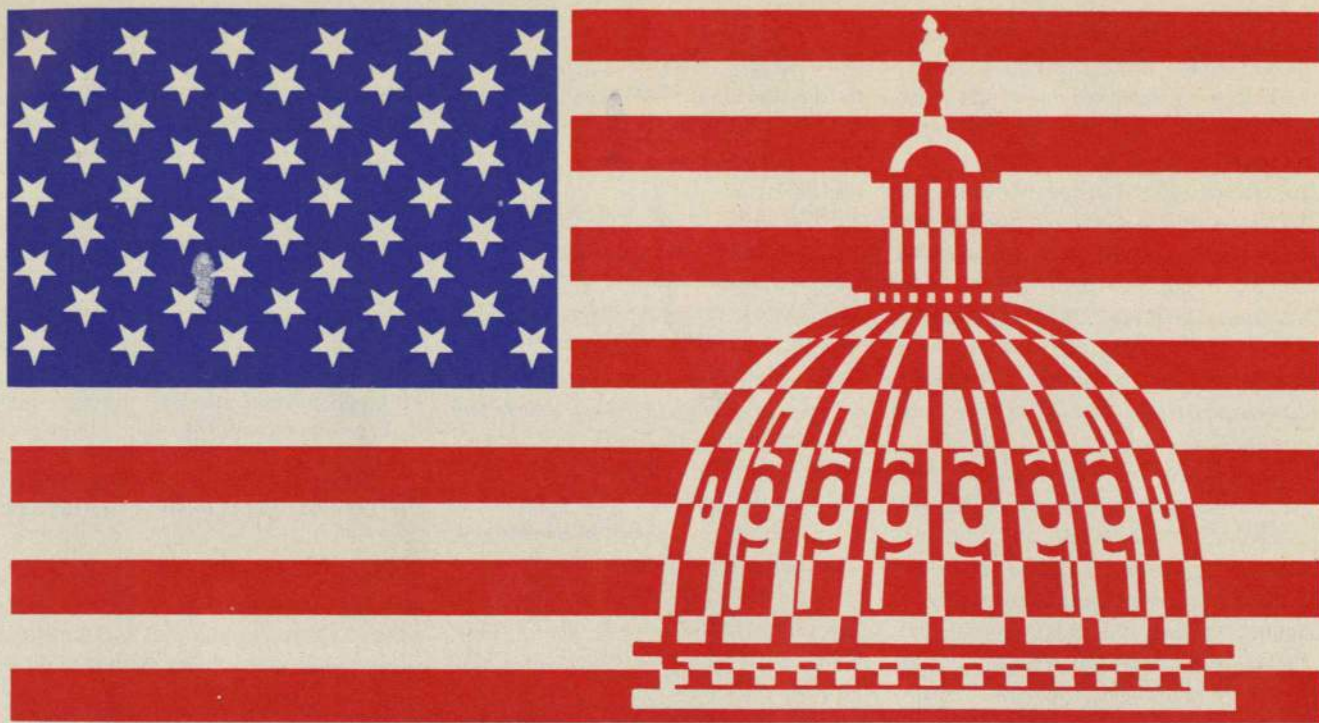
Translated from Russian by Basilian Nuns, Sacred Heart Monastery, Astoria, N.Y.

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¹ Cf. "Voice of Church Militant in Soviet Union" and "Two Moscow Clergymen Protest Against Soviet Harassment of Orthodox Church," RDCA, Vol. V (1966), Nos. 9-10, pp. 73-82, and "Two Orthodox Priests Complain to Patriarch Alexei About Church-State Relations in Soviet Union" and "An Open Letter to His Holiness Alexei, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia," *ibid.*, Vol. V, Nos. 11-12, pp. 89-105.

² Cf. "Church and State in Soviet Union" and "Decisions of the Holy Synod," *ibid.*, Vol. V, No. 7, p. 54; "Archbishop Ermogen of Kaluga, USSR," *ibid.*, Vol. V, Nos. 9-10, p. 77; and "An Open Letter to His Holiness Alexei, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia," *ibid.*, Vol. V, Nos. 11-12, p. 93.

³ Solzhenitsyn refers to large amounts of money which the Russian Orthodox Church contributes to various "peace" organizations and "causes" which promote Soviet policies.



INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA

by John D. Beckett

On December 31, the eve of our bicentennial year, Dr. Billy Graham warned every American: that our nation's survival as a free society is by no means certain, and that the outcome will depend upon what Christians do to remedy America's spiritual decline. The urgency of our situation as he portrayed it must challenge each of us:

I believe that every problem facing us tonight as Americans is basically a spiritual problem. *Crime* is a spiritual problem. *Inflation* is a spiritual problem. *Corruption* is a spiritual problem. *Social injustice* is a spiritual problem. The *lack of a "will"* even to defend our freedom is a spiritual problem.

The Lord, speaking through His servant, the prophet Isaiah said, "I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask me. I was ready to be found by those who did not seek

me. I said, here am I, to a nation that did not call on my name. I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people . . . who provoke me to my face continually . . . when I spoke, you did not listen, but you did that which was evil in my eyes . . ." And judgment came!

The great question before us tonight, on the eve of our 200th birthday and on the eve of 1976 — a crucial election year — is: *Will this nation survive this century as a free society, or even the next five years as a free society?*

JOHN D. BECKETT is currently serving as president of Intercessors for America. A businessman from Elyria, Ohio, he is also involved in the Northern Ohio Christian Conference, Crossroads Family Books and St. Andrews Episcopal Church. He and his wife, Wendy, have six children.

God is warning us tonight that judgment is going to fall upon us in a very short time *unless we as a nation repent and turn to God.*

Will America turn to God at this late hour, or will America continue on the broad road that leads to destruction? *It will soon be too late to decide* — already the storm clouds are gathering.*

A *New York Times* correspondent who recently returned from an extended assignment in Moscow observed that America is a nation adrift. We are like a ship that has lost its bearings, aimlessly tossing on a stormy sea. Our goals as individuals and as a nation are blurred. We lack purpose and direction.

*Used by permission from *Our Bicentennial* © 1976, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Scripture passage: Isaiah 65:1-3, 12 (RSV).

A young American girl, attending a recent world literature exposition in Frankfurt, Germany saw dramatic evidence of this. As exhibits were dismantled on the final day, Americans and Europeans staggered about from the nights of parties and drinking. In stark contrast, the well-mannered high officials from Communist China who attended the show calmly gathered in a circle in their exhibition booth to openly discuss their plans for world domination. The reality then struck her: these people, misguided as they are, have a specific goal and a plan for accomplishing it. While we flounder, the well-organized forces of Satan are on the move, implementing a counterfeit of the great commission Jesus gave His followers: "Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations . . ."

We can ill-afford to drift. Left unchecked, we can expect our situation to worsen in every sector of our national life — government, the family, education, our moral structure — on and on. The path that leads to destruction is indeed wide. Dr. Graham's question bears restating: "Will America repent and turn to God at this late hour?"

OUR OPTIONS

Faced with the alarming decay that surrounds us, many sincere believers have retreated into a glum despair, convinced that "this is the way it will be in the last days" and there's nothing we can do about it. Believing that things can only get worse, large numbers have given up on our imperiled society. Our images of government, the educational system, and other institutions are so tarnished that we have drawn back and abandoned them to an enemy who has been more than willing to fill the vacuum. Virtually unopposed, Satan has laid claim to the media, the legislature, and our universities.

W. J. Ern Baxter, who frequently speaks to large groups of Christians, notes that rarely will he find one out

of one hundred in his audiences who can say they regularly uphold our nation and its leaders in prayer. A still smaller percentage truly believe either our nation or its leaders can be redeemed.

This kind of neglect is not what Christ taught. In Luke's gospel, we find servants who are left in charge of the master's treasure while he goes to receive a kingdom. The master's clear instructions are "to occupy" until his return. Judgment came to those who neglected this command.

We are expected by God to hold fast to the treasure entrusted to us until the forces of Satan are broken, and the Lord is triumphant.

Certainly this nation, founded on the premise that God is our Supreme Ruler and the source of all true authority, is part of our treasure, and part of our stewardship responsibility. Since the Pilgrims landed in Plymouth in search of spiritual freedom, God has greatly blessed us. The question we face is whether a just God, who abhors the evil in our land, can continue to bless us.

THE ALTERNATIVE

Increasingly, the Church is discovering the fact that God in His mercy *does* want to bless America. We are grasping God's promise to ancient Israel: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

This is the challenge for God's people to take the offensive. This is the battle cry. This is getting armed and engaging the enemy with the most powerful weapon against evil that God has committed to His people.

Dr. Graham, in his New Year's eve message, crystallized the task before us: "I am calling Christians everywhere to a time of humiliation, prayer, and fasting during this 200th anniversary. There is no possible solution to the problems we face apart from a change in the spiritual atmosphere."

The "spiritual atmosphere" is

precisely where the real battles are being waged. Because we have developed near total reliance upon our intellects, technology and our human capabilities, we have neglected God and have become insensitive to the spiritual warfare in our midst.

Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, describes the true enemy:

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph. 6:12 NAS).

Daniel engaged in this cosmic struggle in behalf of his nation, and after three weeks of intercessory prayer was visited by an angel who came in answer to that prayer, stating that his delay was caused by a struggle with satanic strongholds in the heavenlies:

. . . from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this, and on humbling yourself before God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days: then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia (Dan. 10:12-13 NAS).

Daniel stood his ground until the opposition in the heavenlies was broken.

In a more current setting, we see the results of God's people engaging the enemy through intercessory prayer: In November 1975, a demonic rock group was scheduled to perform in Traverse City, Michigan. For weeks prior to the "concert" young believers not only prayed, but openly proclaimed in their schools that God was going to stop the performance. As the perverted program began, \$12,000 worth of electronic equipment blew out. Attempts at repair were in vain, and the concert was cancelled, and six thousand young people were turned away. A local church leader

commented: "The city is charged with this open demonstration of God's power." The Christians in Traverse City knew they were opposing spiritual forces, and they unleashed the mighty power of prayer. They were the "salt in the earth" and, through God, they held back corruption.

In December 1975, state level equal rights amendments were defeated in New York and New Jersey, to the complete amazement of ERA supporters. A woman in Rochester, New York, attributed the defeat of this legislation to prayer and fasting, saying, "This was a clear victory for the Lord. They (the supporters) had money, power, media control, everything. But we had the King; that is all we needed."

The essential truth that is beginning to reach the hearts of Christians in America is that God wants our land healed. He wants to restore righteousness to government. He wants for us the precious liberties that were forged into our Constitution and Bill of Rights, including the freedom of choice, of worship, of assembly, and of speech. He wants marriages healed, and children brought under the love and discipline of God-fearing parents. He wants us to be blessed with health and prosperity. He wants each of us to "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim. 2:2).

But for this to occur, the Church can no longer be passive or silent. Our foremost responsibility, if we are to see change, is to repent, come under the Lordship of Jesus, and take up the weapons of warfare He makes available.

For reasons we may not fully understand, He is giving us this opportunity. There's an urgency to it. There is an awareness that we must act *now*. We cannot delay.

INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA

It was out of this sense of urgency that "INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA" was established on Thanksgiving Day, 1973. Similar organizations had already been active

in Great Britain, Australia, Canada and other countries, with proven effectiveness in mobilizing Christians to intercessory prayer for their countries. A small group of men from various occupations, denominations, and different parts of the country agreed to provide leadership for "Intercessors for America" on a voluntary basis.

Mr. John Talcott of Plymouth, Massachusetts, agreed to serve as National Coordinator and with his wife, Rosalin, took primary responsibility for the publication and distribution of a bi-monthly newsletter to several thousand individuals and prayer groups. Mr. Gary Bergel of Kalamazoo, Michigan, began assisting the Talcotts in late 1974. The effectiveness of the newsletter soon became apparent. Subscribers were provided with clarity on issues of national concern that were being "missed" or distorted by the news media. They were encouraged and built up by reports of answered prayer. They were strengthened in knowing that a grassroots mobilization of "prayer warriors" was developing and that added numbers of believers were taking

seriously the challenge of 2 Chronicles 7:14. Many agreed to pray at specific times each week for a half hour or hour, and as 1975 drew to a close, a prayer chain neared completion for each of the 168 hours each week.

With the approach of the bicentennial year, 1976, the Lord seemed to instill an even greater urgency to IFA's mission — "To call Christians to unite in prayer and fasting for America." In late 1975, a plan emerged that would extend this call more broadly, permitting fuller communication with Christians who were interceding for America.

The IFA office was moved to Elyria, Ohio, and Mr. John Beckett took a partial leave of absence from his manufacturing business to become IFA president during 1976.

A series of colorful full-page advertisements were run in the January issues of several major Christian magazines with the challenging headline, "HOW WILL CHRISTIANS RESPOND IN '76?" A coupon enabled readers to request a no-charge subscription to the IFA newsletter.

A network of "field correspon-

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.

June — "Change" DUE: March 15

July/August — "Evangelism" DUE: April 19

September — "Evangelism" (Part two of this theme) DUE: June 14

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*.

dents" was established, enabling a regular flow of information and reports from key Christian leaders throughout the country, thus providing an expanded news base for the newsletter.

The newsletter itself was redesigned to enable it to go out quickly and easily to a greatly expanded readership, and it was decided to step up distribution to a monthly basis.

The response to the advertisements was immediate and exciting. Since the beginning of January, the ranks of intercessors has grown steadily by over one thousand per week. These notes which accompanied subscriptions, attest to the intensity of concern and interest.

I saw your news article in *Christian Life*. I was thrilled, as about 20-25 Christians from several churches have been meeting in our home each month for the past two years to pray for this country. We have written every Congressman to let them know we are praying for them.

Mrs. S. W.
Palm Springs, California

I would appreciate your placing my name on your mailing list for your newsletter, so that I can pray intelligently and specifically about matters in our country.

Dr. L. S.
Tucker, Georgia

We are grateful for your work in the Body of Christ. It is necessary for the complete healing and restoration of not only the church, but also our country for lines of communication to be opened, like yours, so that "the arms and legs will know what the Head is doing."

Mr. T. A.
Girard, Ohio

By mid-January, reports began to come in from IFA field correspondents, providing focus for intercession. A drought, the worst in seventy years, was reported from California, with detailed information on the impact to livestock and food supplies. An article from a central Florida newspaper reported that the prayers of citrus and fern growers had held back predicted cold waves on four occasions this winter.

A report from a Washington D.C. suburb alerted Christians to pray about treacherous education programs being used experimentally in the schools where our legislators and federal workers send their children. A report from Alaska advised that the governor has agreed to establishing for Alaska a "Year of Prayer," and will attend prayer breakfasts throughout the state this year.

We began to sense the pulse of spirit-directed intercessory prayer in America. . . . God's people praying in faith, expecting change, and seeing God's answers. Letters from subscribers tell of the newsletter's effectiveness:

I was overwhelmed by the need of prayer, when I received the first newsletter from Intercessors. God has made me know in my heart that He wants me to pray for these needs.

Mrs. E. E.
Okolona, Mississippi

A group that I am associated with has seen the urgent need for saints to exercise their priesthood as believers, and have entered into prayer and fasting as a normal pattern of our lives. We have been blessed to see much answered prayer in our own small community. Your newsletter offers practical insight into how and what to intercede for. We refer to these helps as we pray and during our night watches.

Mr. S. F.
Silverton, Oregon

This is just a note to express our gratitude for your newsletter. It's been a blessing to our own family, to our prayer group, to our Aglow chapter, and to many churches in this area.

Mrs. R. S.
Lisle, Illinois

The Lord really spoke to me through your newsletter. As prayer co-ordinator for the Campus Crusade Ministry at West Chester State College, I really need to be informed about the spiritual state of the nation so I can better minister to the believers here on campus.

Miss J. R.
West Chester, Pennsylvania

During the coming year, IFA will send a newsletter to anyone who expresses an interest in interceding for America. For many, intercession will be a new dimension in prayer, and newsletter articles will develop the scriptural basis and guidelines for such prayer. "Prayer priorities" will be updated each month, enabling specific focus on those issues that need greatest attention. And through the voices and pens of Christian leaders, IFA will endeavor to impress the urgency and potential for restoration that we have through intercessory prayer.

We cannot delay this prayer emphasis — 1976 will be one of the most crucial years in the history of our nation. Dr. Graham equates the urgency of our current situation with three other "crisis" periods in our nation's history: the Revolutionary War, the drafting of the Constitution, and the Civil War (*Decision Magazine*, Feb. 1976).

It is awesome to realize that the outcome of our present crisis will depend on what Christians do about it. We must decide whether we will stand back and continue to let Satan run roughshod through our country, or whether we will launch a mighty offensive of God-directed prayer and action against the enemy's strongholds. Author and Bible scholar, Derek Prince, has declared his position " . . . if I am to be a martyr, I would rather fall in some grand assault on the gates of hell than have my head cut off by antichrist, hiding with my hoarded groceries in some remote cave."

"Intercessors for America" is calling the Church to that kind of positive, aggressive response. Will we dare to believe that Christians will be elected to public office this fall, and that He will bring to salvation those in authority who do not know Him? Can we trust God and His mighty angels to drive out the demonic forces that are sabotaging our media, our schools, and our families? God says that if we will do our part, He will heal our land. Let us lay hold of that glorious promise. The course and destiny of America hangs in the balance. ☞

BIBLE STUDY

NATIONAL RENEWAL

The Bible reveals that the nations belong to our God and that He is the one who rules over all secular authority. It further reveals that His people have a definite responsibility with regard to their government and leaders. Failure to fulfill this responsibility enables sin to abound in a nation, culminating in divine judgment. In this bicentennial year, God's people must fully exercise their capability to determine the destiny of their nation.

(Bible Study answers are found on page 25.)

1. a. What specific characteristic exalts a nation? (*Prov. 14:34*) _____
 b. What brings reproach [disgrace – NAS] upon a nation? _____
2. According to *Psalm 32:12*, what nation is blessed? _____
3. The following scriptures reveal God's activity in the affairs of nations. Fill in the blanks in each case.
 - a. *Psalm 22:28* "For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the _____ among the nations."
 - b. *Daniel 2:21* "... he [God] _____ kings and _____ kings."
 - c. *Romans 13:1* "For there is no _____ but of God: the _____ that be are _____ of God."
4. The Bible teaches that Christians have specific responsibilities toward their government and leaders. The following scriptures show us what those are. Read each scripture and then answer the questions.
1 Peter 2:13–15 and Titus 3:1
 - a. How are Christians to behave toward secular rulers? _____
 - b. What will be the result of a Christian's obedience to secular authority? (*v. 15*) _____*1 Timothy 2:14*
 - c. What four things does Paul exhort Christians to offer on behalf of their rulers? (*v. 1*) _____
5. a. In *Deuteronomy 8:11–20* what warning is given to the nation of Israel as they enter the land the Lord had promised them? _____
 b. What would be the consequences if they failed to heed the warning? (*v. 19–20*) _____

6. Read the following scriptures, listing the judgments that come upon a nation that forgets God.
 - a. *Jeremiah 7:28* _____
 - b. *Psalms 9:17* _____
 - c. *Isaiah 3:1* _____
 - d. *Isaiah 3:2–4* _____
 - e. *Isaiah 3:5* _____
7. a. In verse 25 of *Genesis 18*, the account of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham states a divine principle of God's judgment: "That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the _____ with the _____."
 b. Abraham reasons with God and God finally agrees to spare the city if _____ people can be found in the city.
 c. What analogy is used in *Matthew 5:13* to describe the presence of righteous believers in the earth? _____
 d. In *Job 33:23* and *Ecclesiastes 7:28* there seems to be evidence for a divine ratio: one righteous person being the needed "salt" for preserving _____ wicked in a city or nation.
8. *Jeremiah 18:7–8* gives us another principle of divine judgment. If a nation facing God's judgment will turn from their evil, He will: _____
9. a. One situation where we see this principle applied is in the judgment of Nineveh, when God speaks through Jonah to warn of impending judgment. Read *Jonah 3:5–9* and list the three responses of the people.
 (1) _____
 (2) _____
 (3) _____
 b. What was God's response to their turning from their evil? (*v. 10*) _____
10. In *2 Chronicles 7:14* God again describes the way of national repentance leading to restoration.
 - a. To whom is this passage directed? _____
 - b. What 3 things are God's people required to do?
 (1) _____
 (2) _____
 (3) _____
 - c. What 3 things does God promise to do?
 (1) _____
 (2) _____
 (3) _____

As the
leadership goes,
so goes the nation.

A Crisis of the Spirit

by Robert Mears

The following essay was chosen for publication in the April Essay of the Month feature.

In this bicentennial year, Americans will participate in perhaps the most critical presidential election in our history. This election may represent America's last chance to change directions and to avert a national disaster.

Former President Richard Nixon rightly identified the American crisis as a crisis of the spirit. His own personal and political downfall came because he failed to confront that crisis. Ironically, the moral and spiritual disease he told the voters he could cure infected and destroyed his own administration.

President Gerald Ford is apparently an honest man and a believer in God, but whatever his private religious convictions may be, the critical moral and spiritual needs of our society have not been alleviated. The crisis of America remains a crisis of the spirit.

A TURNING AWAY

The single most important issue in the United States today — the one issue on which every other issue hinges, including national survival itself — is a spiritual one: Our nation has turned away from God and abandoned itself to its lusts. The results of this are evidenced on every side.

In April 1963 the United States Supreme Court ruled that Bible

reading and prayer in our public schools was unconstitutional. This was not the raving of some village atheist, but the decree of the highest court in the land. It was an official insult to Almighty God by the government of the United States of America.

In November 1963 President Kennedy was assassinated. In 1964 the Civil Rights movement marched out of the courts and congresses, and took to the streets, where in 1965 it erupted in violence in one city after another. In 1968 Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy were assassinated.

Viet Nam became the first war we have ever lost, injuring our line of defense in Southeast Asia, while in Europe, a weakening NATO alliance has allowed the perimeter of the cold war to close further in on us.

The crime rate in America has soared. The divorce rate has mounted. The American home has disintegrated. For the first time in our history, middle-class young people are using drugs on a broad scale, and are running away from home at an alarming rate.

The American dollar, once the envy of the world is shrinking in value and prestige. Unemployment keeps increasing, and a strange combination of inflation and recession is putting the squeeze on every wage earner in the country.

ROBERT MEARS is married and the father of three children. He has been in full-time ministry for twelve years and is presently an elder in New Christian Fellowship in Laconia, New Hampshire.

One of the mightiest institutions in the world — the U. S. Presidency — has suffered unbelievable reverses. John F. Kennedy was assassinated; Lyndon Johnson was forced into a premature retirement; Richard Nixon became the first president to resign in the middle of a term; and Gerald Ford inherited an emasculated office and has had to wrestle with a Congress whose only mandate is seemingly to hamstring an already crippled presidency.

Billy Graham was not overstating the situation when he said at the beginning of this year, "The American people are almost drugged and are oblivious to the events at home and abroad that cause the atomic clock to move closer to midnight." He added, "There is no possible solution to the problems we face apart from a change in the spiritual atmosphere."

This change in the spiritual atmosphere is already beginning to take place. A grass roots renewal movement that is growing phenomenally both in numbers and commitment has begun to spring up within the Christian Church. But this movement needs a national standard around which to gather its force and focus its efforts.

THE NEED FOR A LEADER

The desperate need in this critical election year is for a strong President with eyes to see the spiritual issues underlying our present crisis, and with the courage and integrity to lead the nation in a tough and thorough program of renewal and reform.

In the Old Testament we find an example of a nation being turned back to God through the leadership of a godly king. In 2 Chronicles we read of Josiah, who became king of Judah during a time when the judgment of God was hanging over that nation because of the corrupt reign of Manasseh, who had for fifty-five years led the nation in rebellion against God.

Josiah came to power at an early age, and under the instruction of godly men, experienced a spiritual conversion. During his reign he instituted various reforms, and in his eighteenth year in office he began to repair the temple after nearly a century of neglect.

During the repairs, Hilkiah the priest discovered the Book of the Law of God which he read aloud to the king. Hearing God's Law and realizing that disobedience to the Lord had brought divine retribution upon the nation, Josiah was deeply moved and humbled himself before the Lord.

King Josiah then sent messengers to Huldah, a prophetess in Jerusalem, to inquire of the Lord concerning the words of the Law of God. The word came back to Josiah that God would indeed punish the nation severely for its sins, but the Lord also gave a word of hope for the godly king:

Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place . . . Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same (2 Chron. 34:23-28).

Josiah intensified his campaign of reform, and during his reign Judah experienced peace and great spiritual renewal. While Josiah lived Judah was spared, but with the death of this godly king, evil came to the nation. Judah reverted quickly to her former sins under the leadership of evil kings and the Babylonians finally destroyed the temple and the city, carrying the people into captivity.

The lesson is clear: *As the leadership goes, so goes the nation.* Under a godly leader who led the people in repentance and renewal, the sentence against the nation was postponed and no doubt mitigated when it finally came. Had it not been for Josiah, the Jews probably would never have returned from captivity in Babylon. Josiah and the renewal movement of his time was the divinely-appointed means of preserving the nation through crisis and disaster.

This is the hope that remains for our own nation in its time of decline and threatening judgment. Let us plead with God to raise up an American Josiah as President to lead the nation in repentance and renewal. The wrath of God can be turned back, at least for a while. And a sincere repentance on the part of a multitude of Americans, and a thoroughgoing reform movement, even if only temporary, will lay the foundation for the eventual salvation and restoration of the nation.

POLITICS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

In the United States of America there is a separation of church and state. This means that the government does not interfere with the free exercise of religion or attempt to set up any sort of religious monopoly. The government does not establish a state church supported by public revenue and influenced or run by politicians, neither does the government tell a man what religion he must follow, but respects and upholds his freedom of conscience to worship as he believes.

This is the historic and constitutional meaning of the separation of church and state in America, and it needs to be upheld. But the separation of church and state cannot be absolute, for political leaders are still responsible to the living God for the way they govern.

Separation of church and state does not mean that politicians are exempt from God's scrutiny or that a political body can evade the judgment of God. Neither can Christians withdraw into a

religious sanctuary and maintain a cowardly silence when wickedness establishes itself in government. They may not surrender their civil responsibilities and leave the government to the godless. Though separation of church and state is a valid premise, it does not permit or excuse political indifference in the Church or spiritual negligence in the state.

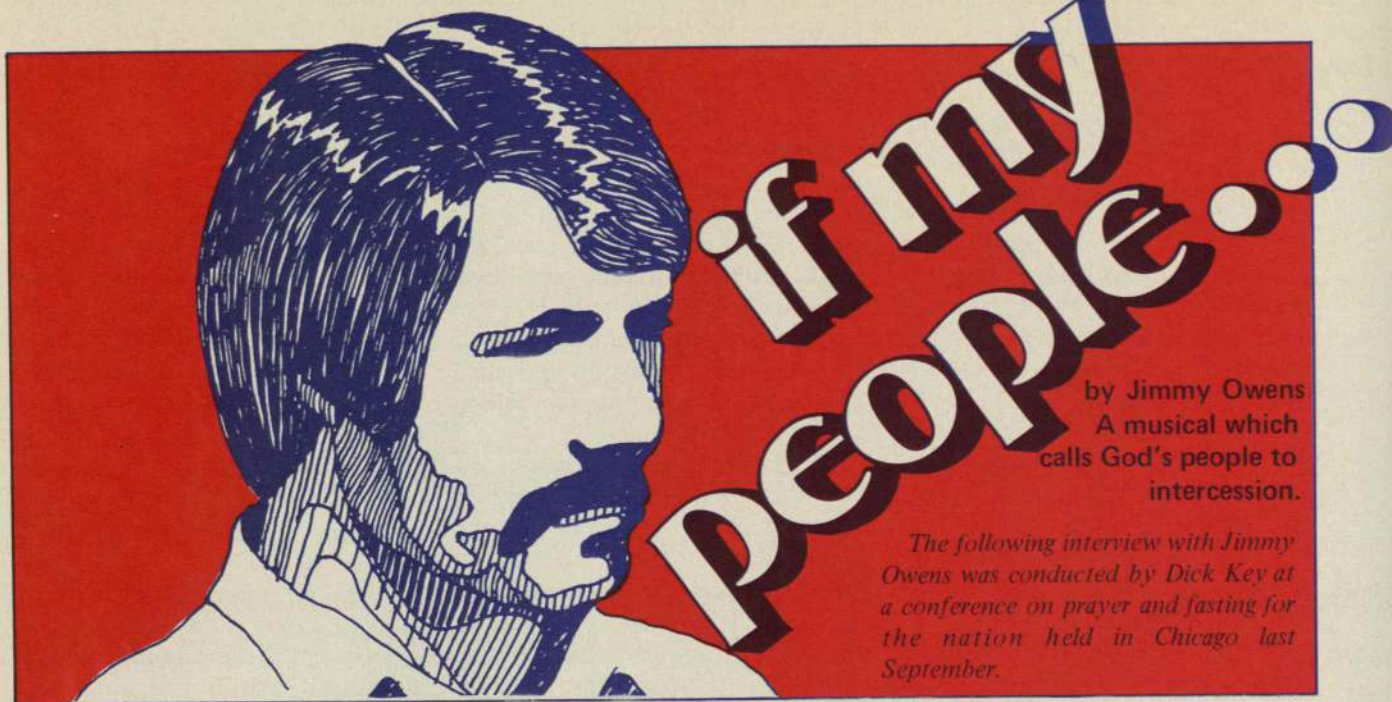
God deals with nations as well as individuals and churches. The solemn truth is, God is dealing with the United States today with a heavy hand, precisely because as a nation we have tried to practice an illicit separation of the state from God, His laws, His truth, His justice and mercy.

American politics have been securely under the control of secular intellectuals who favored government by the godless. A man might have his private opinion about the existence of God, but his religious convictions, they say, should not influence his public policy.

Regardless of the party in power the trend has continued with very little alteration. Whatever the private opinions of our chiefs of state and other politicians, they have, for the most part, spoken and acted as secular men who rely on human wisdom and human power, with no serious effort — expressed in concrete policies carried out boldly and decisively — to please God or ask His forgiveness for our monumental national sins or seek His grace for our desperate national condition. The result has been a steady deterioration of America: her faith, her integrity, her morals, her strength, her wealth, her unity, her culture.

In this; our hour of desperate national need, may God deliver us from unjust men in political office and instead give us men in our government whom He can bless — men of faith and courage, men of integrity and spiritual discernment.

May God permit our country to close the gap that now exists between politics and righteousness, between the American government and Christian faith, between our politicians and the One who is King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Christ. 🙏



How did you become involved with intercessory prayer for the nation and specifically with "If My People"?

I first became aware that the Spirit was calling the Church to prayer for the nation in December of 1973. At that time I was in Britain ministering. During a meeting of pastors and Bible teacher's from around the country the Holy Spirit revealed that hard times were about to come to Britain and that the Christians of Great Britain were to pray seriously for the nation.

When I returned to the United States I discovered that the Spirit had likewise been dealing in our local church, the Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California. In one of the Wednesday night prayer meetings, the Spirit of God, through prophesy and tongues and interpretation, had called the congregation specifically to a ministry of intercession for America.

A short time later, my wife Carol and I were listening to a message by our pastor, Jack Hayford, entitled, "After the Fact, Our Responsibility for America's Survival," when we felt the Spirit nudge us and say, "That's your next assignment. Study the principles of this message, learn them, and write them into a musical setting in a format similar to that of "Come Together."

The next significant step was the April 30th national day of prayer and fasting for the nation. On that day in our local church a prophetic utterance came forth which said in effect: "Because the Church has been one in Spirit and one in purpose for this one day, a great turning point has been reached in America's history. The unwritten history of doom and judgment is erased and a new history is being written by the prayers of God's people. There is confusion in the enemy's camp and you are to pursue him to the gates of his domain. The gates of hell will not prevail against the Church! There will be other days and other battles you will have to battle, so persevere."

As I listened to these words I was impressed with the thought that if the Church, for one day, had been one in purpose and spirit, and we had reached a turning point because of it, then it would be tragic to go back to our divided ways again. I felt strongly that the Holy Spirit was calling the Church to a monthly day of prayer and fast-

JIMMY AND CAROL OWENS are well-known for their musical compositions "Come Together" and "If My People." They are members of the Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California, where Jimmy serves as an elder.

ing. The question was, How was this to be accomplished?

We began to realize that there needed to be a move of God at three levels: (1) At the grass roots, which had already begun; (2) at the pastoral level, because the people need to be led and taught by the pastors; and (3) at the high level of denominational leaders and leaders of Christian organizations and publications that are the voice of the Church. In January, I had the opportunity to travel around the United States and speak with a number of different leaders in the Church. From this trip was birthed the idea of a National Conference on Prayer and Fasting. This conference took place in Chicago, on September 12 & 13. I believe it was a significant beginning! Out of it came the decision to set aside the first Friday of the month as a day of prayer and fasting for the nation.

What plans do you have for calling people's attention to intercessory prayer for this nation?

As far as my own involvement, it will center around the musical the Lord led us to write — "If My People." We have video taped this musical to use as a tool to introduce it to cities around the country. We plan to put together a broad-based touring group of about 40-60 singers, a band, and a

crew. This will include some Campus Crusade music team members, a Youth with a Mission music team and a number of the young people who sang in the Los Angeles nucleus of "If My People." This touring group will be the nucleus of a mass choir in each city where we are invited to perform. Before a tour, our manager, Lavern Campbell, will take the video tape to the pastors and Christian leaders of a city, show the film, present our seven-point program, and answer any questions they may have.

What is this seven-point program?

Number one, the musical, "If My People" will serve as a rallying point for Christians who are concerned about intercession for the nation. It will draw them together and introduce the principles and conditions for intercession based on 2 Chronicles 7:14: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

Second, after the musical, a pastor's symposium will be held at which time we will transfer to the hands of the pastors the responsibility to lead and assist the people who have pledged themselves to prayer and fasting. We will encourage the pastors to meet again and to set up continuing fellowships among themselves in order to get to know one another.

Third, we will present and encourage participation in a national day of prayer and fasting (the first Friday of the month) as unanimously decided upon by church leaders at the Chicago Conference on Prayer and Fasting.

Fourth, we will suggest that our presentation be followed by a Bible teaching seminar to teach in depth the principles and conditions of intercessory prayer. This could be led by several major Bible teaching ministries.

Fifth, we hope to see established in every city an emergency prayer chain which would have a national covering and which could be activated at any level from the national to the local and even to the local church level.

Sixth, we will encourage the local mass choirs to get their own bands together and continue to carry the message to the outskirts of their area using the same follow-up program.

The last major emphasis in which we will be involved will be a week sponsored by Youth with a Mission called the "Spirit of '76." Opening Sunday night, July 4th, in a 106-acre outdoor area across the river from Philadelphia, we will present "If My People" with the local mass choir and possibly with singers from all over the country who have sung with us in other cities. We hope to send that presentation via closed circuit television into halls all around the country. This would allow live mass choirs in many areas to join us — from the Philadelphia area — in praise and worship. I think that would be a marvelous boost to our faith — knowing that we all are a part of one united effort, meeting at the same time and for the same purpose — our nation!

Although this Fourth of July presentation will be the climax, what happens after this is what is really going to count. If there is a continuation of what has been generated by the Holy Spirit during this time through our ministry and through many others going out from the Chicago conference, and if the Church continues in a united stand, then I think we are going to see some profound changes in the history of our nation.

Is "If My People" strictly a charismatic presentation?

No, it is not. In fact, Carol's and my ministry is purposely a ministry to the whole Body. We attend a charismatic assembly and we are charismatic by belief and by experience, but we feel that our calling is to minister to the whole Body. Therefore, we avoid reference to charismatic matters in the larger setting of the whole Church together.

If a group is interested in bringing "If My People" to their city, or producing it themselves, how should they go about it?

For a stop on our tour we primarily

consider cities of 200,000 or more in order to make the maximum use of the time. We feel we should concentrate on the larger cities for the initial tour and then let it spread to the smaller ones from there. However, we are certainly open to the Spirit. He has already pointed us to a few smaller cities that are strategic. Generally, though, we encourage the smaller cities to put on the musical themselves.

For those who want to locally produce "If My People," we have available the musical score and a teaching handbook that goes with it. We feel it is very important that the people who perform the musical understand the spiritual principles that they are ministering. The handbook includes thirteen chapters on the scriptural background of each point we bring out in the musical. We also have a leader's guide and a student's manual which can be used in a 13-week Bible class curriculum if desired. This material can be purchased at any Bible book store.

If a group wants us to come and present "If My People" in their city, we ask that a local co-ordinator get together as broad a representation as possible of ministers and Christian leaders from his city. This group can then write to "If My People" 14344 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, California 91405. ☛

BIBLE STUDY ANSWERS

(From page 23.)

1. a. Righteousness; b. Sin. 2. One whose God is the Lord. 3. a. Governor; b. Removeth, setteth up; c. Power, powers, ordained. 4. a. Submit; be subject to them; b. Put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; c. Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks. 5. a. "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments and his statutes"; b. They would perish. 6. a. Truth is cut off; b. That nation shall be turned into hell; c. Bread and water are taken away; d. Good and wise rulers are taken away; e. People oppress one another. 7. a. Righteous, wicked; b. 10 righteous; c. They are the salt of the earth; d. 1000. 8. Repent of the evil he thought to do unto them. 9. a. They proclaimed a fast, they humbled themselves in sackcloth, they turned from their evil way; b. He repented of the evil he said he would do unto them. 10. a. To God's people, those called by His name; b. Humble themselves, seek His face, turn from their wicked ways; c. Hear from heaven, forgive their sin, heal their land.

What kind
of legacy are we
leaving for
the next
generation?

by
Charles Simpson



FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord" (Is. 54:17, NAS). God promises to deliver His obedient people from verbal and physical attack. He promises that their heritage includes a continual vindication of their integrity, a most desirable promise.

Many Americans are completely unaware of God's role in our national origin and heritage. Dr. Billy Graham, citing an article in *Life Magazine's* Bicentennial issue entitled, "One Hundred Events that Shaped America," was recently quoted as saying that of the one hundred great events that *Life* listed, only one or two "could be called religious in any meaningful use of that term." From the *Life Magazine* article one might therefore conclude that religion had an almost insignificant role in shaping America. To draw this conclusion

would be grossly misleading.

Further evidence of America's ignorance regarding our spiritual heritage was revealed in a Gallup Poll published October 1975 which revealed that thirty-two million Americans believe in astrology. That is, they believe their destiny is influenced by the position of the stars. More than 90% of all Americans under thirty know the astrological sign under which they were born. Most major newspapers in America carry astrology columns. It is safe to say that more Americans read the astro-guide daily than read the Bible. The poll also revealed that most of those who believe in astrology see no incompatibility between Christianity and astrology. They are ignorant of such scriptural warnings as Isaiah 47:11-13. "But evil will come on you which you will not know how to charm away; and disaster will fall on you for which you cannot atone, and destruction about which you do not know will come on you suddenly. Stand fast now

in your spells and in your many sorceries with which you have labored from your youth; perhaps you will be able to profit, perhaps you may cause trembling. You are wearied with your many counsels, let now the astrologers, those who prophesy by the stars, those who predict by the new moons, stand up and save you from what will come upon you" (NAS).

As Christian Americans we need to be reintroduced to our spiritual heritage. Anniversaries are opportunities to remember and be re-educated to one's past. They offer opportunities to gain perspective in the present. Our two-hundredth anniversary is an opportunity to reconsider the spiritual factors present in our national origin. How well we remember may determine how well we are remembered.

SALVATION IS A HERITAGE

Psalm 78 could well have been read to Israel during some national anniversary. The Psalm recalls how God deliv-

ered Israel in numerous critical situations and Israel was commanded to testify to those acts of God's salvation to their children for the salvation of future generations.

For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should teach them to their children; that the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, that they may arise and tell them to their children . . . (vv. 5-6 NAS).

There are some similarities between the heritage of Israel and the heritage of America. The free society that America enjoys today did not come without a degree of struggle. The very conception of this nation took place in a wilderness. Her birth was characterized by intermittent labor pains lasting for years. Immediately after birth there was war with mother followed by a profound identity crisis. She had love affairs with a variety of other nations, some of which ended in bloody conflict. Within the family, tensions became so great that a divorce was declared, South from the North, but the marriage was "saved" at gun point. Lately she had become so involved in attempting to solve problems around the world that divorce threatened once again.

But to many of us, America's survival is no coincidence. The first American charter of the first permanent American colony was a covenant commitment to God's purpose and mutual assistance. The "Mayflower Compact" of 1620 reads as follows:

In the name of God Amen. We, whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord, King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc. Having undertaken for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian Faith, and the honor of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the Northern parts of Virginia; do by these present solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a Civil Body Politick,

for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the eleventh of November, in the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. Anno Domini 1620.

In this document lay the seeds of the principles which would guide America's early development. From the cornerstone of faith in God was erected equal justice under law, social order, government for the common good, honor for authority, respect for human life and mutual submission. These and other building stones were held together by solemn covenant commitment. Forty-one men signed the covenant before setting foot on this land.

Nor does the Mayflower Compact stand alone in its spiritual emphasis among early American documents. Numerous other charters from Rhode Island to Pennsylvania reflect the same faith and attitudes. The first books printed were religious in nature, and the first schools promoted the study of such books. One hundred and fifty years after the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence expressed the same values. So did the Constitution in 1787, as well as President Lincoln's Proclamation of Prayer and Fasting for April 30, 1863.

Modern Americans are born indebted to thousands of nameless forebearers who have preserved these saving principles. We are born indebted to the covenant-keeping God who has kept the faith with the covenant-makers for over three hundred and fifty years since that day the Mayflower Compact was signed aboard a small ship off Cape Cod. He has kept faith in spite of the flaws and failures of men. We have inherited a salvation we did not purchase, but surely we

must pay the installments due during our generation.

An inheritance is what one generation gives another. Usually we think of it in terms of property or money. But a heritage consists of a quality or way of life accumulated over many generations. Our generation can become so involved in providing an inheritance for its children that it denies them their heritage. If this happens the accumulated wisdom and grace of many generations could be lost to our grandchildren. Our society itself would perish. This is the admonition of Psalm 78: "That they might know . . . that they might put their trust in God and not forget the works of God."

To be sure, our nation needs much deliverance yet from poverty and disease, from ignorance and from rebellion and anger. But the salvation of our future may be tied to covenants of our past, with a renewed dependence upon the God who has preserved us thus far.

SALVATION IS FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

The message of Psalm 78, Deuteronomy 11, and numerous other scripture passages, is that each generation must communicate its wisdom and knowledge of God to the next. It sounds so simple.

Three-year-old Eddie was home from the Sunday school and church services and his dad, who was the Sunday school superintendent, asked him:

"What did you learn in Sunday school today, Eddie?"

Little Eddie stood erect, and lifted his voice in the best angelic manner . . . "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

"Very good, Eddie, very good," his dad congratulated him. "Now don't forget that, always obey your parents."

Eddie was an energetic and adventuresome boy. Scarcely fifteen minutes had elapsed before Dad had to correct him. "Eddie! What did you learn in Sunday school today?" Eddie stood erect and intoned the lesson.

"Now don't forget that, Eddie. Obey your parents or Daddy will have to spank you." But only a few minutes later, the scene was repeated, and the regretful father had to chasten his wayward son. After the spanking, little Eddie looked up at Dad through tearful eyes.

"Daddy, can I ask you something?"

"Yes, Son."

"Daddy, what is a parent?"

The cold truth is, quoting platitudes is conversation without real communication. Real communication travels over the bridge of true relationship; and this was how the knowledge of God passed from generation to generation among the Israelites.

Israel did not have printing presses, textbooks and T.V. Those "handicaps" forced them to establish meaningful oral communication with their children. Oral teaching was transmitted from generation to generation. Great emphasis was put on family life and genealogies. Some may feel Israel over-emphasized the family, but their survival through long periods with no social institutions or geographic identity, testifies to their success in communication.

"Preacher, why doesn't somebody preach on the genealogies? You know, so-and-so begat so-and-so, and he begat so-and-so. I've never heard a sermon on that."

"I'll think about that," the preacher said. He did, and he preached a sermon entitled, "It Makes a Difference Who Your Pappy Is." Indeed, it does. It also makes a difference when the father communicates *what* he is.

Today, we tend to ignore the benefits of heritage. In emphasizing "equal opportunity" our society often neglects the importance of background and family. However, "equal opportunity" alone will not insure equal success. Young people must not merely be offered opportunity, they must also be prepared to make the most of that opportunity. Well-prepared offspring can find great opportunity in the midst of situations which ill-prepared youths might consider hopeless.

Unfortunately, there is an increasing

dependence upon institutions to do what the family once did. The church provides religion; the school provides education; T.V. provides entertainment; industry provides work and income; government provides welfare and retirement; and insurance provides help in case of trouble. God and family are ignored as unnecessary.

I have often wondered how parents would teach their children if they knew that they would have to rely on them in their old age, instead of relying on the government. Just for one panicky moment, let's imagine that there were no Social Security. That's the way it was not too long ago. How would a parent teach Junior if, at age sixty-five, he were going to be at Junior's mercy?

"Now, Junior, I want to tell you all about the grace of God, and His loyalty, and His truth. Junior, we have a lot to talk about!"

He would pray sincerely, "Lord, bless Junior. Oh Lord, *please* bless Junior! Prosper him, keep him safe, etc., for your Name's sake, Amen."

The Law of Sowing and Reaping says: Communicate with your child now, he will communicate with you later. Institutionalize him now, he will institutionalize you later. If we reject our children, they will reject our heritage, our God and their own salvation. "And you shall teach them [God's words] to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up . . . so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens remain above the earth" (Deut. 11:19,21 NAS).

SALVATION IS KNOWING THE LANDMARKS

I was privileged in the course of my education to study history in a number of settings. I attended both religious and public schools, and had a variety of professors. One professor was a Southern gentleman confined to a wheelchair. He built his life around

history, his chosen field. He was able to teach with a perspective beyond the ordinary. He was Dean of the History Department and loved by all the students. Another professor, a preacher, was an immigrant from the Middle East who became learned in American history. He continually saw the moral nature of the men and events that made our history. Still another history professor was a philosopher. Each had his own interpretation of historic events. From them I learned that your view of history is greatly influenced by the one who teaches you. I believe it is possible to know an impressive amount of facts, but completely misinterpret them. Significant events of God's deliverance should be properly marked, so that future generations can comprehend, appreciate and apply the lessons of history.

During the past summer, my family and I embarked on an eight-thousand-mile journey through the western part of the United States. All along our route we found historical markers identifying places where significant events had occurred. Some markers identified the birth place of someone important. Through the historical marker vague historical figures began to become real persons to us. Other markers identified battlegrounds where many people died for their convictions. Reading the accounts on the markers, we could almost hear the guns, and to some extent, we re-lived the struggles of those courageous men.

History leaves landmarks behind it. The history of American jurisprudence is punctuated with certain landmark decisions. Those court decisions gave an interpretation to law, or settled a legal issue that affected many subsequent cases. Such landmark decisions set limits on how far other lawyers and judges might press a point. A successful lawyer must know the precedents contained in landmark decisions. While future decisions may not be determined by landmark decisions alone, they are affected by them. The past is there for counsel. To ignore history is to ignore the boundaries of safety. To rewrite history is to obliterate those boundaries. When Joshua was leading

Israel across the Jordan into Canaan, God gave him a significant command.

Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe, and command them, saying, "Take up for yourselves twelve stones from here out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet are standing firm, and carry them over with you, and lay them down in the lodging place where you will lodge tonight." So Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the sons of Israel, one man from each tribe; and Joshua said to them, "Cross again to the ark of the Lord your God into the middle of the Jordan, and each of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel. Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' then you shall say to them, 'Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever" (Josh. 4:2-7 NAS).

God directs His servants to leave historical markers for the benefit of the generations who will follow them. When they ask, "What do these stones mean to you?" heritage can be communicated. Such a question is a wide open opportunity to meaningful communication. Family possessions, antiques, old photo albums or favorite places are among those things that can serve as markers.

I can recall one day when I was just a boy, looking at the old double-barreled shotgun that Dad kept in his room. "Dad, why is the wooden forearm under the barrels of this old gun split?"

"Well, Son, that's quite a story. Your grandpa was sheriff up in Chambers County during prohibition when the law said you couldn't make or sell whiskey. Of course, Grandpa tried to enforce the law. Your grandpa was a fine Christian man, a deacon in his church and a Sunday school teacher."

"One night he deputized your uncle

and they went out to a house where it was believed they were making and selling liquor. When Grandpa knocked on the door, a man stuck that double-barrel shotgun right out in his face." (It was the very gun I was holding!) "Grandpa had already drawn his pistol, and he fired right up at the shotgun, which was pointing at him through the door. Well, the bullet lodged between the barrels of the gun, right there," Dad placed his finger in the split in the wood. "It jarred the man holding the shotgun so severely he thought he'd been shot and he fell backward onto a couch. Then your granddad and your uncle burst into the house. There was another great big fellow in there who ran out the back door. Your uncle was small in size and he jumped on the big fellow's back and rode him out into the woods, all the while beating on him and hollering, 'Stop!' He finally made the arrest! Granddad's life was saved and the bootleggers were captured."

My dad, my granddad, my uncle were all real people. I identified with them. My family was a part of something good and courageous. I knew we were on the right side. It helps when a boy starts out on the right side. In holding the gun, I knew I was holding part of my heritage.

SALVATION IS PAYING ATTENTION

For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation; After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will (Heb. 2:1-4 NAS).

"We must pay much closer attention." Pay means cost. Attention costs. Bicentennial celebrations cost. Communication costs. Learning our

heritage costs. It costs time, energy, money and careful study. But in the long run, paying attention to the past doesn't cost nearly as much as neglecting it.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will (vv. 3-4, NAS).

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that God went out of His way to confirm His word by supernatural signs and gifts of the Holy Spirit. God meant to mark the way of salvation clearly. To ignore what others have learned at great cost is to drift, without compass and sextant, out on the tides of anarchy. A bicentennial offers us a great opportunity to get out our spiritual sextants and take a reading on where we have come from and where we are going. Hopefully, there will be a renewal of God's grace toward us and through us to each other. Perhaps we can even erect a new landmark: "Here America was reborn in 1976."

Another installment is due on our heritage. ☞


MONTHLY DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING


At the Chicago Church Summit Conference in September, 1975, national Christian leaders representing major streams of spiritual influence in the United States came to a momentous decision. They have established *the first Friday of every month* as a day of united prayer and fasting for America. *All Christians* are urged to join together in prayer and fasting on the following Fridays in 1976 to earnestly seek God's direction and help for our nation:

February 6	July 2
March 5	August 6
April 2	September 3
May 7	October 1
June 4	November 5
	December 3

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

This month's answers by Derek Prince.

 **Does the "spirit" of patriotism or nationalism at times dilute or conflict with the Holy Spirit's activity in a country?**

 We should distinguish between "patriotism" and "nationalism." "Nationalism" is expressed in the familiar slogan, "My country — right or wrong!" If this is interpreted as meaning that we must necessarily endorse and support everything our country does, it may well bring us into conflict with Scripture and with the Holy Spirit.

"Patriotism," on the other hand, may be interpreted as a commitment to honor and serve our country and to seek its highest good—even, if it may be, at the expense of our own personal interests. In this sense, patriotism is very definitely a Christian virtue. In Romans 13:1-5 Paul requires all Christians to submit to governmental authority on all levels. In 1 Peter 2:13-17 Peter requires the same. In 1 Timothy 2:1-4 Paul declares that the primary responsibility of Christians meeting in regular assembly is to pray "for kings and all that are in authority."


Yet, in Acts 5:29-42, Peter and his fellow apostles permitted themselves to be beaten rather than obey the order of the Jewish leaders to stop preaching about Jesus. Reliable tradition records that, for the same reason, Paul was beheaded at the order of the Emperor Nero. However, subsequent history vindicated Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 1:25 that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Within three centuries the Christian witness and preaching had


changed the whole character and course of the Roman Empire.

Certain principles thus emerge: (1) As Christians, we are required to honor and support our country and its government, except when this would entail direct disobedience toward God Himself. (2) If conscience and obedience to God require us to dissent from the actions of our country's government, we must be prepared — like Peter and Paul — to suffer the consequences in a submissive spirit that glorifies God. (3) By expressing our dissent in such a case, and refusing our obedience, we are actually serving the highest interests of our country better than we would by assenting to governmental requirements that are morally wrong or contrary to Scripture. (4) In any event, we are required to pray regularly for those in authority that God will guide, direct, overrule and — if need be — put down the wicked and raise up the righteous (see Ps. 75:6-7).

In 1 and 2 Kings both Elijah and Elisha were strong, uncompromising men of God who challenged and rebuked kings in the name of the Lord. Both were at times escorted by invisible spiritual hosts that protected them and those with them (2 Ki. 2:11-12; 6:17-18).

If the situation so requires, a man serves his country better as a true prophet, rebuking and challenging wrong government, but surrounded by heaven's armies, than as a compromising religionist, giving assent to actions of government that are wrong, unscriptural and detrimental to the best interests of his country.

 **Is there anything uniquely God-ordained about democracy as a system of government?**

 Before we turn to the Bible for a divine pattern, it is worth noting Plato's views on this subject. He recognized five main forms of government, in descending order of goodness: first (and best), *monarchy* — the rule of one good and capable man; second, *aristocracy* — the rule of a small company of good men; third, *democracy* — the rule of the whole people; fourth, *oligarchy* — the rule of a small company of bad men; fifth (and worst), *tyranny* — the rule of one evil man. Democracy Plato considered to be the weakest form of government, either for good or for evil.

In the Bible the ideal of government is *theocracy* — a system in which God Himself directly rules His people. From the exodus from Egypt to the time of the prophet Samuel, Israel was a theocracy, with human leaders — such as Moses or Joshua — responsible to make known God's governmental requirements and to see that they were carried out. In the days of Samuel, however, Israel rejected this system of theocracy and asked for a monarchy. By doing this, they actually rejected God Himself (1 Sam. 8:7).

Ultimately, when the kingdom of Christ has been fully established, theocracy and monarchy will be blended together. Christ will rule as the representative of God the Father, but He will also be King in His own right (see 1 Cor. 15:24-28). Monarchy in this form will be "absolute," with authority descending from Christ downward, not "constitutional" — i.e. regulated by democratic process (as in contemporary Britain).

Meanwhile, however, our responsibility as Christians is to build a community in which the kingdom of God, under the Lordship of Christ, is

INSIGHTS

"It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."

— George Washington

"The only safeguard for the true liberty is the freedom given by the gospel of Jesus Christ."

— Donald Grey Barnhouse

"He is most enslaved when he thinks he is comfortably settled in freedom."

— Jacques Ellul

already an effective reality, even before the visible setting up of Christ's kingdom over the whole earth. The principles of God's kingdom in the midst of His people in the present age are so ordered that they do not depend upon any particular form of human government. They can be, and have been, applied equally well in a monarchy or a democracy.

Whatever may be the form of government under which God's sovereignty and providence place us, Scripture requires us to honor and obey it (with the limitations already indicated in answer to question one above). In my own case, when I took U.S. citizenship, I pledged myself to uphold the constitution of the United States and this pledge I sincerely intend to observe. Nevertheless, God's "Kingdom" — as the very name indicates — is not a democracy, either as it is now being established in and through the Church, or as it will ultimately be manifested in the reign of Christ over the whole earth.



The Bible commands us in Psalm 122:6 to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." What specifically should we pray for in this regard?



There are two main reasons why, as Christians, we should pray for Jerusalem and for Israel: (1) As Paul states in Romans 15:27, all Gentile Christians are "debtors" to Jerusalem and to

Israel. It is from them that we have received our entire spiritual inheritance: the prophets, the apostles, the Bible and the Savior Himself. Jesus Himself summed this up by saying, "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). The wisdom and justice of God require that we acknowledge our debt by seeking the good of those to whom we are indebted. One main way to do this is by praying for them.

(2) The end purpose of God is that Jerusalem should become the center of truth, peace and righteous government for all nations (see, for example, Is. 2:1-5, Zech. 8:20-23; 14:8-11; 16-21). Only in the peace of Jerusalem can the whole earth find true and lasting peace. Therefore to pray for the peace of Jerusalem is an act of obedient and intelligent cooperation with the revealed purposes of God.

We may suggest three main ways to pray for the peace of Jerusalem: (1) we can pray that God will intervene in the various situations that arise in the Middle East in such a way as to work out His plan of redemption for Jerusalem and for Israel.

(2) We can exercise the authority made available to us in Matthew 18:18-20 and "bind" the satanic spiritual forces in the Middle East that oppose God's purposes there. The main such force is the "spirit of antichrist," which expresses itself primarily by denying that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah) who has come in the flesh (see 1 John 2:18-22; 4:3). Currently, three of the strongest antichristian forces on earth are centered in and

around Israel and Jerusalem. They are: Islam (the religion of Mohammed); atheistic communism; orthodox Judaism. However, speaking of this "spirit of antichrist," the apostle John says to us as Christians, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you [the Holy Spirit] than he that is in the world [the spirit of antichrist]" (1 John 4:4). The power of the Holy Spirit working through our prayers can overcome the power of the spirit of antichrist. There is no other power on earth that can do this. Therefore our prayers can be the decisive factor in this situation.

(3) Ultimately, peace cannot come to Jerusalem until Israel has repented and acknowledged Jesus as Savior and Messiah. Zechariah 12:10 reveals that repentance can only come to Israel as the Holy Spirit is poured out upon them in grace and in supplication. Therefore we need to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Jerusalem and upon Israel.

Once we have accepted these basic, scriptural ways of praying for the peace of Jerusalem, we can trust the Holy Spirit to show us just how to apply them in each specific situation (see Romans 8:26-27). ☞

Each month *New Wine* receives questions from our readers covering a variety of topics and issues. If you have questions for this feature, send them to Questions and Answers, c/o *New Wine Magazine*, P.O. Box 22888, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33315.

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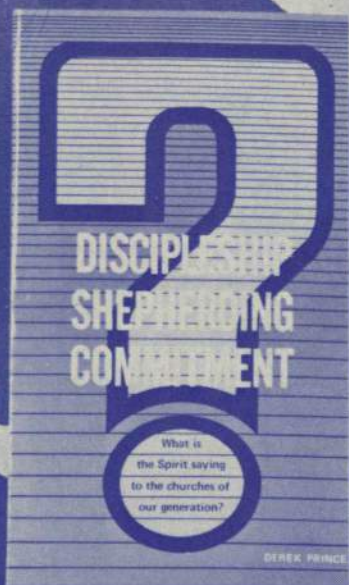
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