

JUNE 2004

UPLOOK

• ASSESS THE NEED • CATCH THE VISION • TAKE THE CHALLENGE •

ON TARGET

**TAKING AIM AT
THE FUTURE**

Part One

**LEARNING
to be a
WORSHIPPER**

Plus a Special Five-Page

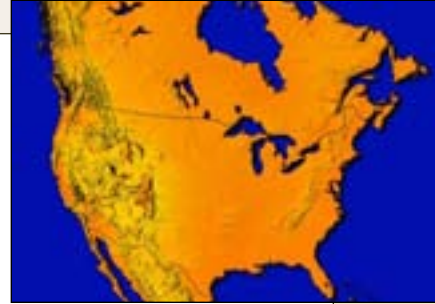
EDITOR'S EVALUATION

**HOW ARE WE
REALLY DOING?**



HOW ARE WE REALLY DOING?

It's the Number 1 question I'm asked wherever I travel in the North America.



The subject I am about to address in this editorial is, I believe, so vital that I have allowed myself the luxury of FIVE pages, something I've never done before. I trust that you will find it helpful.

The title of this editorial is a question I am often asked as I travel from place to place, visiting those seeking to meet—with varying degrees of success—as New Testament assemblies. How are New Testament assemblies doing? Are they dying out? What do you see happening in your travels? Let me remind us all of three important considerations:

1. *North America is not the whole world.* I beg the pardon of our readers in countries other than the U.S. and Canada. Perhaps it is true everywhere that we think in terms of our own country as our world. But it is important that we have a vision as big as the one in the Word. When people in North America or parts of the U.K. ask me, “Is this the Laodicean age?” I respond, “Not in China. Not in North India. Not in Korea. Not in Kenya.”

We must remember—if we take the churches in Revelation 2 and 3 not only as real churches but as periods in church history—that the last FOUR churches are promised the coming of the Lord. Thyatira is offered “*the morning star*” (2:28). Sardis is warned, “*If you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief...*” (3:3); it seems their theology has robbed them of the blessed hope of His imminent return. Philadelphia hears the Saviour’s promise: “*Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown*” (3:11). Laodicea’s overcomers are told that Christ is right at the door, and they are promised a place on the very throne of the Lord! One thing this means: there will not only be Laodicean-type churches at the time of His coming, but those like Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia as well.

2. *New Testament assemblies are not the whole church.* How I thank the Lord for the great privilege of being associated with those gatherings of believers who—though in much weakness—seek to obey the Lord in “*all things whatsoever*” He commanded; who believe that the example of the New Testament Church is not only descriptive but prescriptive. But the groups of believers you may know are only a small portion of “*the whole family in heaven and earth*” (Eph. 3:15). Multitudes of faithful believers—some perhaps with less light but more heat—live for Him beyond your horizon. We hold to the truth of the one Body, which Paul lays out for us in Ephesians 4. There is the organic “*unity of the Spirit,*” an established fact based on the historic baptism at Pentecost. There is also the “*unity of the faith*” to which, Paul writes, we are coming. It is a long process, but it shall happen. Lord, haste the day!

May God help those who follow this New Testament design to be known for humility rather than pride, for an appreciation of these truths rather than for mere traditionalism, and for a biblical vision for the future rather than walking backwards through life.

While we cherish “*the memory of the just*” who have gone before, I often sense a disconnect between our appreciation of those gospel pioneers and a willingness to follow their path. ***continued on p. 4***

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It was a path of uncompromising separation from the world. (I don't mean the hard legalists who mimicked their lifestyle but without their love for the Lord.) The pioneers, though they were well known in their communities (not confusing separation with isolation), would not have been caught dead in a movie theater or taking a social drink. Of course we feel we are more sophisticated now, having overcome such narrow-minded thinking. But those saints thought narrow-mindedness was a good thing—just the kind of thinking for those on the narrow road to glory. With so many of God's people careening into the ditch these days, we might want to reconsider a narrower focus for our road Home.

It was also a path of simple living. They chose to curtail their wants and pour their resources into the Lord's work. They thought the Lord meant it when He talked about not laying up treasures on earth. They took seriously the command not to buy expensive clothes. They found their satisfaction in the other world. And those of us who knew them saw that they did not miss anything worth having. They lived the verse: "*Godliness with contentment is great gain*" (1 Tim. 6:6).

It was a path of evangelistic fervor. They would be astounded at our paltry seed sowing. You expect a crop from that? they might ask. They gave out millions of tracts; started radio broadcasts; opened orphanages; thrust out hundreds of missionaries; had gospel efforts in school rooms, jails, portable halls, tents, and on street corners. They never stopped evangelizing. They pulled up roots and moved to other places to break ground for new "works" as they called them, because that's exactly what it took. They saw hundreds of assemblies started in only a few decades. It wasn't by accident. They laid down their lives for the Cause. To slip into a church pew where the others didn't care to remember the Lord each week wasn't an option. If there was no group in town that followed the principles and practices of the New Testament as they understood them, they, with God's help, started one! Who will follow in their train?

3. *None of us has the whole story.* That's why we must "*judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come...*" (1 Cor. 4:5). The Lord is going to pull off the biggest rescue mission in history. Have you read the end of Psalm 22 lately? "*All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's: and He is the governor among the nations*" (Ps. 22:27-28). Christ said the gates of hell would not prevail. I believe Him. Will many be lost? Sadly, yes. But will many millions more be saved than we know about? Absolutely. At present every Christian believes "*He is altogether lovely.*" In that Day they will also believe that "*He hath done all things well.*"

We often make the wrong—and discouraging—assumption that Elijah made. If I don't hear of something going on, nothing must be going on. You're the only one left, Elijah? Give or take 7,000! And that 7,000 didn't include Elisha, or Naboth, or Micaiah, or the school of the prophets, or the woman at Shunem, or.... We greatly under-estimate the job God is doing.

SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Having said all that, how would I answer the question posed at the beginning? How *are* those New Testament assemblies that we know about in North America doing?

This is only one man's opinion; I represent no faction or school of thought. Some areas of the country I have never visited. Any who have read *Uplook* for some time know that I take a more conservative position than some; others would find me less so. But in spite of these limitations, some might find help, especially for your prayer time, in the following observations.

1. Some good work is being done but it is often not known, even to local believers. I sometimes inform saints of good things happening under their noses. Why? Because I ask people everywhere I go for news of encouraging works they know about. Compared to fast-moving gossip, good news drags its feet for some reason. Help get the good word out.

2. Opportunities abound on every hand. I hear some people bemoan our shrinking liberties, but we still have tremendous freedom. We should hardly know where to begin: hospitals, home Bible studies, local cable TV, college campuses. God still opens doors which no man can shut. But are we prepared to go through them when He gives us the opportunity?

3. Many regions have a good crop of young people. The big challenge? Each generation has its assets and liabilities. This generation, seeing the uncertainty of life in general, seems unwilling to make long-term commitments. Help for a weekend? They're glad to throw themselves into it. Take a Sunday School class for life or commit to some mission field for the rest of their days? Just the thought makes many claustrophobic. They *must* get over it if they want to be used by the Lord in a significant way. "*We shall reap if we faint not.*" Endurance works experience and experience results in hope, the process that brings fruit (Rom. 5:3-5).

And if you think you're still young at 35, let me pop the balloon. Half of your threescore-and-ten is gone. By age 35, men like T. E. Wilson and David Long were returning to their field of labor from their *third* five-year furlough! They were already veterans. We need to pray this generation into commitment, to preach them the message given to Joshua: "*Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee*" (Josh. 1:9). When Bobby Wright, a missionary to Japan, would visit Ireland, he would sidle up to a young man and ask, "Where are you home on furlough from?" Good question.

4. Many are at odds about the way forward. There is still a strong movement to introduce major (some of us believe anti-biblical) changes into assembly life. There is an insistent call to the vulnerable to make arrangements with a capable brother to be their teaching elder. No one should dispute the importance, or the scripturalness, of men who follow gospel pioneers to shepherd the new lambs until they see elders raised up among them. This was the way Paul and Timothy worked. But that's very different to the idea of ensconcing a man in a position as "full-time worker" or "teaching elder" in a mature assembly. Hire one if you like (the word "*hire*" is not my word but the common misapplication of a two-fold *illustration* in 1 Timothy 5:18—the Lord's servant is to not to be a hireling any more than he is an ox!), but I will tell you what will happen if you do. Those in fellowship *before* the brother is installed will manage to keep a sliver of distinction between "clergyman" and "pastor-teacher." But the majority who begin attending *afterward* will gather to the man and his ministry. How do I know? Because we have Church history as our witness, and have seen it happen in our time as well.

But some are a lot farther down that road. A recent job posting in *Thinking Ahead* magazine, the organ of Vision Ministries, states that one responsibility of the desired "Pastor of Worship Arts and Administration" is to "develop and implement moving worship experiences which complement the teaching-preaching." Is it not the ministry of the Holy Spirit to stir our hearts to worship? Be careful, brethren! This sounds dangerously like "*strange fire*" to me.

Brothers and sisters, we are at a crossroads. Those who recommend such retooling of assemblies may have insightful questions to ask about our present condition. But I'm afraid I don't like the answers being proffered. What is it that we need today? Where is the path ahead?

This will require courage. It will not be easy. Much ground has been lost. And we will have to be honest about our responsibility. Some elders have been AWOL. Many assemblies have given up on the gospel. With few being saved, assemblies become ingrown clubs where blessing, then vision, then hope, is lost. Rather than having the comprehensive teaching of the “*whole counsel of God*,” we can settle for ill-prepared sermonettes, then in desperation send our youth to be institutionalized to learn the Bible. Though much good may be accomplished in attending these schools, malleable young people often learn things there that they should not have learned, and would not, if taught at home in biblical on-the-job training.

WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE? HOPE IN THE GOD OF HOPE

Those assemblies that are healthy, happy and effective seem to have common characteristics: a deep appreciation for spiritual worship; a sincere love for one another, spending quality time in each others’ homes; an appetite for the pure Word of God, and for living it out; a heart for the lost, expressed in regular outreach in the community and in good works; and godly elders who model the same Christianity they teach by their daily lives.

What about those who are not doing well? There is no reason to despair. Our God can turn dust into men, curses into blessing, and sinners into saints. He *likes* to work in hopeless cases; it’s His specialty. If your assembly is composed of “*foolish...weak...base...despised...and...nothing*” things, well, that’s just the kind He’s looking for (see 1 Cor. 1:27-29).

However, these foolish, weak, base, and despised people need the other side of the equation as well. So firmly convinced are we of our own foolishness that we must cling unreservedly to God’s all-wise plan in His Word. Who can imagine thinking that we could improve on it by changing anything He has revealed. And weak? We know the only way we can make it is to lean hard on the One who said that His strength is made perfect in our weakness.

Since we know we are base and despised, we seek no earthly glory, no improved corporate image for a “movement.” We would rather fill heaven than fill big buildings. We want people only to think well of Christ. “*That no flesh should glory in His presence*” (see v. 29).

Deeply discouraged assemblies need first a **rebirth of hope**. You believe the Lord *can* change things; do you also believe He *wants to* do it starting with you, and starting today? He is standing at your door and is on call at this moment, ready to do a God-sized thing for you.

Then there needs to be a **rebirth of vision**. Vision is not creative imagination; it is seeing things as God sees them. It is a heart willing to be part of the solution and asking to be instructed by the Spirit on the next thing to do. It’s not cleverness we need—it’s commitment.

So there also needs to be a **rebirth of consecration**—all that I am and have on the altar for this great work. If we are going to rise to the challenge of our day it will cost many of us our lives, careers and bank accounts (Acts 15:25; 1 Jn. 3:16). Jesus thought it was worth that.

Make no mistake, the project is pricey. Have you wondered how George Müller was able to give to the Lord’s work the equivalent of \$25 million in today’s money? I’ll tell you. Like the first century saints, the believers who rediscovered the imminent return of Christ proved they believed it. They sold off excess things. One assembly took three days to auction their tapestries, silver and paintings. Many downsized their homes. Doctors and dentists often gave up practices to serve overseas. Lawyers like J. N. Darby

became itinerant evangelists. Thousands were saved. Orphans were rescued by the hundreds. New publishing houses sprang up and books packed with truth were virtually given away. Assembly writers dominated Christian publishing for decades. None of this was cheap. Fortunes were put at the disposal of the despised Nazarene.

Of course there is no need to liquidate if we plan on maintaining the *status quo*. The few pioneer evangelists we have left in North America seem to be able to scrimp by on a pittance. Special missionary projects can be funded by proceeds from the sale of buildings no longer needed by defunct assemblies. But this is bleak, defeatist talk. That's enough of that!

A CALL TO ARMS (AND KNEES)

I would like to put a three-fold challenge to the people of God for prayerful consideration.

1. Young people (use any definition you like), take a good hard look at what this life can offer you. Then look at those dear Christians who have put it all on the line for the Master. Sing with reality, "Content to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss...my glory all the cross." See your assembly as the family business, though it may have fallen on hard times. God has put you there "*for such a time as this.*" Take a bigger challenge than Lee Iacocca's in turning around Chrysler Corp. By God's grace, determine to do what it takes, to give what it requires, to be content only with the smile of heaven. In order for that to happen, "*run, that you may obtain*" (1 Cor. 9:24), not shadow boxing, but making every blow count for God (v. 26). If older ones, Saul-like, sit under a tree when the enemy is on the prowl, find another young person to go with you, Jonathan-like, and show the Philistines "*a thing*" or two (see 1 Sam. 14:12). Every generation needs their own war stories. There's only one way to get them.

2. It's only anecdotal, but I would think one-quarter of the assemblies I know are doing well; another quarter are on life support; the other half are in the middle somewhere. What if, without interfering with their autonomy, each healthy assembly would "twin" with a nearby weak one. I mean by that for the elders to contact the brethren there, invite them for dinner and a time of prayer. Express your interest in helping where you can. Ask them to send an email each week before your midweek prayer time so your assembly can uphold theirs before the Lord regularly. Perhaps you could help with their expenses. Or fix up their building. Or have monthly fellowship times together, alternating locations. Or take your young folks there for door knocking or kid's clubs. If every healthy assembly was used by the Lord to help a struggling assembly back onto its feet, what a huge boost that would be for the work at large! This is not as radical as it may seem. Paul encouraged the Corinthians to think about the Jerusalem assembly in this way, considering this now struggling assembly as worthy of their sacrificial help (2 Cor. 8:14).

3. Finally, may those who not only care about their local assembly, but feel the "*care of the churches*" think about visiting together—not in an official way, nor to present some new model for church growth, but simply as concerned brethren—to seek the Lord's face for His counsel, to think in fresh but biblical ways, and to strengthen our hands for "*this good work*" (Neh. 2:18) that we may more effectively serve our generation, as faithful believers now in glory served theirs.

PS Surely a special reward awaits those who read it all!



J. B. NICHOLSON, JR.

TAKING AIM AT THE FUTURE

What we hope to do with the magazine in the months ahead.

from the Editor

We all have limited time and resources to accomplish the will of God for us. This is especially true of preparing young people in our assemblies. From their early teens, when they should become active participants in assembly life, until many of them move elsewhere for education or employment, it is a few short years. Do we have a plan to establish them in the faith?

I don't mean that it must be formally laid out as a college degree might be. But do we at least have an idea as to general areas where we should be preparing them for the future?

We intend over the next several months to introduce some topics to stimulate our thinking and provide suggestions about developing skills necessary for maturing young believers.

In a recent article in *Precious Seed* magazine, I wrote the following (excerpted):

"As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth" (Ps. 127:4). Every arrow, like every life, has a point. But the arrow must be prepared, then hidden for a time in the quiver. At the right moment it is selected, aimed, and released, speeding its way to the target.

We surely must think about the target. What are the spiritual skills we would like young disciples to acquire and how will we teach them these things? Here are a few suggestions.

1. *To be servants.* Most churches in Christendom have paid servants or ministers, and are designed for

people who want to be served. But the original design was that everyone was to be a minister. The Lord wants to maximize the sacrifice in order to maximize the blessing. Teaching our young people by example how to be servants is one of the greatest thing we do for them.


2. *To be stewards.* Every young believer must learn how to handle the Lord's possessions. Their bodies are not their own, but temples of God's Spirit. Their material possessions are borrowed and will have to be accounted for: *"As having nothing, and yet possessing all things"* (2 Cor. 6:10). Their time is also a sacred trust.

3. *To be witnesses.* The pictures of evangelism—farming, fishing, and fighting—are high risk endeavors. We need to teach young believers the essentials of the gospel, the critical role of prayer and the Spirit's guidance, and the skills necessary to win souls for Christ. The New Testament does not treat evangelism as a hobby, nor should we.

4. *To be students.* Diligence in studying the Word should be taught, not learned hit-or-miss. Teaching a young believer to rightly divide the Word is of lifelong benefit to himself and to others, protecting from error, preserving from sin, and equipping for service.

5. *To be warriors.* This is vital in a day when many believers are falling in battle. One must learn how to put on the armor, to wield the Spirit's sword, and do battle on our knees in prayer.

6. *To be fruit-bearers.* This will involve time alone with the Lord, being wholehearted in our obedience to Him, and allowing the heavenly Gardener to prune us all that we might bear *"much fruit"* and that our fruit *"might remain."*

This issue focuses on learning to be **worshippers**. Subsequent issues, Lord willing, will look at other important courses of study needed to equip young saints so they are *"thoroughly furnished unto all good works"* (2 Tim. 3:17). 

THAT FIRST REMEMBRANCE

What it means to be inside the veil.

Eva Rummell

This nonagenarian author writes (and surely you agree that nonagenarians deserve a careful hearing!):

“The Final Word article in the April-May UPLOOK entitled “Looking at the Lord’s Supper” has certainly taken hold of my attention. I was grieved to know there are some not regarding it as our highest privilege this side of heaven. Like brother Norbie, I was brought up in denominational groups, but saved when 14 at an assembly Sunday School. When I chanced to visit a very few Breaking of Bread meetings as a new believer, I thought, ‘This must be almost like heaven!’ It quickly won my heart.

“My unsaved family soon forbade me to go back to that Sunday School, taught by Dr. Walter Gill of the Westfield, NJ, assembly, nor could I see the Christians any more. However, Dr. Gill gave me a set of C. H. Macintosh’s Miscellaneous Writings, and I read them constantly until 18 years old, when I could make my own choices. These books shaped my whole life, and his article titled “The All Sufficiency of Christ,” taught me N.T. church truth. I knew that was what I wanted and for all the rest of my life. Now, aged 91, I am a resident of Pittsboro Christian Village, and praising the Lord for the beautiful, reverent and worshipful Lord’s Supper meetings we have here. They must be the nearest thing to heaven one can find on earth.” (signed) In Him...forever! Eva Rummell

The last evening our Lord Jesus spent with His disciples was one of deepest significance. They knew He must return to His Father; now He gave them a very earnest request to remember Him when He was gone. They must have wondered why He thought they could forget Him, but how well He knew.

The evening was full of remembering. It was the celebration of the Passover supper, that memorial



feast God commanded them to keep to all generations. God wanted to be *remembered* for His past blessings to the nation of Israel.

They ate of the Passover lamb, and thought about the blood sprinkled on the lintel and doorposts so the angel of death would spare the firstborn in every Israeli family. There were bitter herbs also, to remind them of all God had done for them in delivering them from the oppression of the Egyptians.

It was at this appropriate time of remembering that the Lord Jesus taught His disciples a new Remembrance Supper far more important than the Passover. He was about to die as the Lamb of God for the sin of the world, and He wanted to be *remembered*.

We know the story well. *“And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me”* (Lk. 22:19). What amazing love! He could *give thanks* for bread that spoke of His own body about to be given in death for sinful man.

“Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood which is shed for you” (Lk. 22:20). Again He *gave thanks*: this time for the wine which so vividly depicted His very life-blood being

poured out for us. He gave thanks even though He knew the cross lay just ahead of Him. His hour had come when He could fulfill His early promise to His Father, *“Lo, I come do Thy will, O God”* (Heb. 10:7). He fully knew the anguish soon to be endured on the cross, yet He counted His Father’s will to be the *“joy that was set before Him”* (Heb. 12:2) and He gave thanks. What immeasurable love He showed toward His Father, giving thanks for the bread and cup, fully knowing the reality of their significance. What immeasurable love He showed toward sinful man, that He was willing to give His body and blood to atone for man’s sin.

He then passed the bread and cup among His disciples for each one of them to partake of the emblems He had chosen, emblems to help them remember Him until He would come again.

He did not appoint any special disciple to take His place after He was gone. In the upper room discourse He had carefully taught them who should take His place among them. *“Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him”* (Jn. 14:17). *“He shall bring all things to your remembrance”* (Jn. 14:26).

That very evening their precious Lord was taken from among them. They saw Him arrested, tried, and condemned to die a criminal’s death. It must have torn their hearts to see Him hanging on the cross. He had taught them many things hard to understand; now the meaning was becoming clear. After being constantly with them for three years, He was gone from among them—but they had His wonderful promise, *“Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them”* (Mt. 18:20).

Scripture does not describe how the disciples conducted that first Supper in memory of their Lord. Surely their words spilled easily from overflowing hearts as they talked about the Son of God living intimately among them and how very much they loved Him. Then as they spoke of His love for them in dying on the cross, the words must have trembled from their lips. In their Lord they saw the fulfillment of God’s promise through His servant Moses: *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for the soul”* (Lev.

17:11). Their Lord was God’s chosen Passover Lamb laid upon the altar, now fashioned into a cross.

Each time they remembered Him in this way, they saw it all happen right before their eyes. How could they ever forget that scene? It was so very real, so very fresh, as if it happened yesterday. Now they understood why He asked them to remember Him by breaking bread and drinking that cup. It must have been a holy moment to them whenever they obeyed His request.

CAN IT BE LIKE THAT FOR US TODAY?


How wonderful to attend a Lord’s Supper meeting like that today! It is possible, for the Lord Jesus Christ is in our midst as He promised. The Holy Spirit is present to bring all things to our remembrance. If we are sensitive to His leading, our hearts will overflow with true praise and worship to our Lord and Saviour. It should be a holy moment to us also when we partake of the bread and the cup in His memory.

How privileged we are when brethren who have been spending time in His presence, preparing their hearts, are prompted by the Holy Spirit to lead in worship. The women also worship in their own silent heart language that our Lord understands so well. Much depends on our heart preparation as to the depth of remembrance and worship which we will have to offer Him.

The story is told of two women attending a Lord’s Supper. Later, one said to her friend, “Did you see what Mrs. So and So did during the meeting?”

“No, the friend answered quietly. “I was in the Holy of Holies.”

It can be like that at a Lord’s Supper meeting. It can seem very near the edge of heaven, as if catching an echo of the worship there that will continue through all eternity. It is that unique place where a believer can meet together with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in the secret closet of the heart—in company with other believers yet as being in private audience with Him.

How wonderful to keep this privileged appointment with our Saviour each new Lord’s Day. May our remembrance of Him always be so very real, as if it had all just happened yesterday. 

Q&A

THERE SEEMS TO BE a great deal of confusion in the evangelical world regarding the meaning of worship. Can you give me a biblical definition of it, and make some suggestions as to how I might encourage my own heart to worship the Father *“in spirit and in truth”*?

WORSHIP HAS BEEN WELL DEFINED as the overflowing of love resulting from the adoring contemplation of God as revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not merely thanksgiving for what He has done, though this has its place, but the ascription of praise to Him for what He is, both in Himself and in His ways. Consider, for example, the worship of Moses in Exodus 34:8. He had asked God to show him His glory. How suitable a petition for those seeking to worship! In reply God said, *“I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee”* (33:19). *“And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the Name of the Lord, and the Lord passed by him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.”* At such a display of grace and majesty *“Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth and worshipped”* (Ex. 34:5-8).

Look at the worship described in the Revelation. *“The four living creatures cease not day and night, saying, ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, which was, and which is, and which is to come’”* (Rev. 4:8, RV). The elders fall down before Him that sat upon the throne, and worship Him in these words as they cast their crowns before Him, *“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created”* (v. 11). See Revelation 5:12-13, *“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”* And every created being responds, *“Blessing unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and the honor, and the glory, and the power, and the dominion be unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”*

William Lincoln says of worship: *“To worship God we must be quite conscious of His love and grace. The more conscious we are of this, the easier and better is our worship. So we must sit at His feet and learn the story of His love. We must have the Spirit to show us the things of Christ. We must sit at His table and partake of the fatted calf. Then we can be merry before Him.”*

Worship is the overflowing of our hearts when under the Father’s eye we admire and adore His Son. For *“In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore”* (Ps. 16:11). Here is the true secret of worship. The Spirit brings before our hearts the glories of Christ so that, admiring and adoring, we overflow with love, gratitude, praise, and worship.

Two ladies were saying goodbye. Their fellowship had been happy, and they were parting with reluctance. As one bade farewell, she said, *“Thank you for being what you are.”* O to turn with gratitude to the Lover of our souls, saying, *“All blessing to Thee for what Thou art—Thou art worthy!”* We love the Lord for what He has done, but we adore Him for what He is, and pour out our hearts in worship.

“One thing,” said David, *“have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple”* (Ps. 27:4). So as the Spirit reveals to our faith the glories of Christ, we *“worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness”* (Ps. 29:2), exclaiming, *“Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the mighty ones? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?...Thou in Thy mercy hath led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed, Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation”* (Ex. 15:11-13). *“How great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty!”* (Zech. 9:17).
—GEORGE GOODMAN

FRONTLINES

PRAY AROUND THE WORLD • PRAISE AROUND THE CLOCK

LET'S GET SERIOUS ABOUT SOUTH DAKOTA!

In the will of the Lord, a gospel effort is planned for Aug 16-21—six days of evangelistic outreach in the Sioux Falls, South Dakota area. Sioux Falls (metro pop. 150,000; median age, 33) is the largest city in SD. In the southwest corner of the state, it is located near the borders of MN, IA, and NE. There are campuses of five universities and six colleges. Efforts will include:

1. *Door-to-door evangelism and literature distribution*: people who want to engage others in conversation can participate. Those who are less bold can help distribute literature.

2. *Park ministry*: daily youth ministry in a Sioux Falls area park. (If the number of participants allows it, we will be at more than one park.)

3. *Gospel meetings*: Thursday through Saturday nights, DV.

4. *Prayer*: for those who wish to labor via prayer either in Sioux Falls or where they live.

5. One park where we are planning youth outreach has an amphitheater where we could have a person(s) sing to draw in people followed by a gospel message. This would necessitate having some musically inclined individual(s) to commit their time. Please contact:

Larry Sax, 48186 265th Street, Brandon, SD 57005
605-582-8299 larssax@alliancecom.net



50 YEARS OF FAITH

Faith Bible Camp, an assembly-supported gospel work in Manitoba, is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year. A weekend of celebration is planned, Lord willing, for Jul 1-4, 2004 in Winnipeg, MB. Contact Faith Bible Camp:

P. O. Box 42059
Winnipeg, MB R3J 3X7
204-783-9564
info@faithbiblecamp.org

SUMMER CONFERENCE

The saints are invited to a conference to be held Jul 10-11 at Bethel Bible Chapel, New Richmond, Quebec. The speaker will be Joe Reese (ON). Also ministry meetings at 7 PM on Jul 12, 13, 14. Some meetings

will be bilingual. For more information:

Danny Dugas at 418-392-5723
Donn Harrison at 418-392-6802
d.harrison@globetrotter.net

PROJECT DIAKONOS

Project Diakonos (Jul 18-24) is a discipleship program for believers who desire to grow spiritually in an outdoor setting. There is an emphasis on doctrine, learning how to study the Bible, and practical Christian service. Activities also include overnight canoeing, rock climbing, ministry opportunities, and initiative games. For more information or a registration form, contact Dan Weaver (WV) at:
psalm1715@hotmail.com

UPWARD BOUND ONTARIO

Upward Bound Ontario will be held at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON, Aug 15-27. The first week consists of numerous Bible study seminars on various doctrinal and practical topics. A canoe trip in Algonquin Park is planned Aug 22-27. Speakers: Rex Trogdon (NC), Brian Russell (UK), Brian Cretney (ON), Craig Beattie (ON), Joe Mikhael (ON), Charlie Tempest (ON), Sandy McEachern (NS).

S. McEachern at 902-420-9489
sandymceachern@hotmail.com.

ROCKY MT. CONFERENCE

Fellowship Family Camp will be held again this year Aug 16-20. The location is in the high Rocky Moun-

tains below Longs Peak, adjacent to Rocky Mountain National Park. Besides the spectacular mountain scenery, there will be daily Bible teaching and opportunities for recreation. Contact the Registrar at:

240 48th Avenue
Greeley, CO 80634
970-356-0817 or 970-351-0570

YOUNG ADULT CONF.

The saints at Westside Bible Chapel in Wichita, KS invite young adults to a weekend conference, Aug 20-22. Dr. Joe Mikhael (ON) has agreed to bring ministry from the Word. Be refreshed after serving at summer camps and before going back to school. Conference begins on Friday evening and concludes on Sunday after lunch. Housing available if needed. Contact:

Darold Peters at 316-943-3334
darold.peters@juno.com
Lavern Skiles at 316-269-0517
UncleVern@sbcglobal.net

GALILEE DISCIPLESHIP

If you are 19 or older, plan to attend Galilee Bible Camp's Discipleship Camp Aug 23-27 for four and a half days of in-depth study in God's Word with Roy Hill (UK) and Paul Booker (ON). Held at Galilee Bible Camp in the upper Ottawa valley in Ontario. The cost is CDN \$155.00 and couples are welcome. Contact:

905-684-3748 or 613-432-5774
www.galileeibiblecamp.on.ca

TWIN CITIES CONF.

The assemblies of the Twin Cities Area of Minneapolis and St. Paul invite you to the 93rd Annual Labor Day Bible Conference, Sep 3-6. Location: Christ the King Lutheran Church, 1900 NW 7th St, New Brighton, MN. Speakers: Joe Reese

(ON) and Warren Henderson (WI). In addition to the Adult Conference, a Teen Conference and Children's Program are also provided. Conference begins Friday at 7 PM and concludes on Monday with lunch. Conference provides meals, housing, and nursery care. For information:

Glen Ellis at 763-572-1379
Housing:
Steve Schletty at 763-572-2589

AUTUMN ANNUAL

Alan Parks (SC) is the scheduled speaker at the annual Fall Foliage conference to be held Lord willing, Sep 20-24 at Camp-of-the-Woods, Speculator, NY. The conference will begin on Monday and conclude Friday morning. Cost of \$295 per person covers meals and deluxe accommodations. To register, make checks payable to "Know the Word Ministries" and send to:

Mark Kolchin
P. O. Box 305
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734
www.knowtheword.com
knowtheword@comcast.net

FATHER/SON WEEKEND

All fathers and sons are invited to the endless mountains of Pennsylvania for the weekend of Nov 12-14 at Camp Iroquoina's Father/Son retreat. The camp's new manager, Mark Thomas, will be the speaker. He brings many years of ministry experience with the assemblies and camp work. He and his wife, Edi, have three sons Elijah, Dillon and Seth and a daughter Mikaela. Look forward to hearing some of his interesting stories and perhaps even a chalk talk. Please contact

Mark at 570-967-2577
campiroquoina@epix.net
www.iroquoina.org

MORE RAHABS SAVED

Echoes Prayer Update writes: "Jano and Chrissie Mulindabigwi advise that 19 former prostitutes were baptized two weeks ago and continue to show a desire to grow in the things of the Lord. Please pray that they will be able to resist the temptation to return to their former way of life and that they will be able to find friends and accommodation away from the area, which is mainly inhabited by other prostitutes."

GENERAL MANAGER

Greenwood Hills Bible Conference and Camps is looking for a General Manager. He must be in happy fellowship in a local assembly, with at least five years of management experience. Must have good interpersonal skills. Knowledge of computers, maintenance, or food preparation helpful. Contact:

Steve Hulshizer at 717-764-5979

TANZANIA OPPORTUNITY

Stephen and Gill Davies (Echoes) advise of staffing needs at The Haven of Peace Academy from Sep onwards. Vacancies exist in the Secondary School for teachers for Physical Education, History and Chemistry. Pray that the Lord will meet this need. Contact:

echoes@echoes.org.uk

HOMECALLS

Jean McClelland

Jean McClelland went to be with her Saviour Dec 16, 2003 after a lengthy fight with cancer. Jean was born in 1919 and born again as a teenager in Cleveland, OH. In 1942, she married Clark McClelland. In April 1946, the West Street Gospel Hall in Orillia, ON, commended them to the work of the gospel.

In July 1946, they moved to Westbrook, ME. Jean was faithful to the little assembly and was known for her great gift of entertaining. She supported Clark in his itinerant ministry and together they raised a family of four, who along with their spouses and 10 grandchildren are seeking to live for the Lord.

In July 1996, they moved to Pittsboro, NC where Clark cared for Jean during her illness. She is greatly missed by Clark and her family.

On December 19, 2003, Jim Comte took the funeral, along with some of her family. Norman Wilkerson of Dover, Delaware took the interment.

Gladys Schlief

On May 14, 2004 Gladys Trog Schlief went to be with the Lord whom she had loved and served for the better part of her nearly 95 years.

Born in Inver Grove Heights, MN and born again in her youth, she met and married Vernon Schlief. They served the Lord together in children's meetings as well as printing and distributing literature. They uti-

lized throwaway wood and linoleum on which they carved their graphics.

The Lord transferred them to Milwaukee, WI where they fellow-shipped at Wawatosa Bible Chapel. Here they continued to serve until commended to the Lord's work.

In February 1942, the Schliefs went to work in New Orleans and the Deep South. In spite of a warning by their doctor that the climate would kill Gladys, they chose to "believe God" (their life verse from Acts 27:25). They operated a Servicemen's Center on the edge of the French Quarter, ministering to thousands of servicemen during the War.

In August 1946, they moved across the river to Belle Chasse where they opened a children's home, raising over 50 children. Gladys raised their own two children, housed strangers, and cared for widows. Together, they planted and built up numerous assemblies in the Deep South, operated the Good News Book Store and many other evangelistic outreaches until Vernon's homecall in 1996.

In her last years, even though

unable to travel, she remained active in the local assembly and took on a new ministry of writing and sending books of encouragement to the widows of workers and missionaries.

Her body was laid to rest on May 17, 2004 in New Orleans. Please remember her family in prayer.

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

Operate and manage a small organic farm just west of Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN. Great opportunity for fresh air, exercise, nutritious and tasty food. Also evangelize and disciple ready contacts for our Saviour. Live in brick ranch with a market place on highway plus a Farmer's Market. A large number of international students nearby!

David and Marilyn Harmon
4533 U.S. 52 West
West Lafayette, IN 47906
daharm@juno.com
765-583-2431

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

Clark McClelland sends his new email address:
clarkmcc@ruralfree.net 

AN UPDATE ON CANADIAN BILL C-250

A recent newsletter from law firm Miller Thompson gave an assessment by Peter Lauwers of the impact of Canadian Bill C-250. Lauwers explains: "The Bill amends two sections of the Criminal Code dealing with hate propaganda." He then quotes section 319 of the Criminal Code which includes: "Every one who, by communicating statements, other than in private conversation, wilfully promotes hatred against any identifiable group is guilty of (a) an indictable offense and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years...." The author comments on the highly subjective nature of the assessment of the word hatred, "not clearly defined in Canadian law..." As well, "any identifiable group" includes the category of "sexual orientation." Does that include pedophilia or bestiality, for example?

"This controversy suggests," he writes, "that the criticism of homosexual or bisexual behavior by religious groups, among others, could be characterized as the public incitement of hatred on the basis of sexual orientation. This possibility is likely what led Parliament to add a defense to s. 319(3). If a person, in good faith 'expressed or attempted to establish by argument an opinion on a religious subject or an opinion based on a belief in a religious text,' then the person cannot be convicted under the section." Even so, "Commentators have suggested that Bill C-250 will have a chilling effect on religious freedom." Lauwers concludes: "The future is unclear on many of these issues. It will be the job of the Courts to flesh out the interpretation of Bill C-250 in specific cases."

THE LORD'S SUPPER

A careful, thought-provoking, and comprehensive look at the Remembrance meeting.

Reprinted from an excellent book, The Church of God: a Symposium, available from Everyday Publications.

J. Boyd Nicholson, Sr.

There is something plaintively beautiful about the words from the old paraphrase of Matthew 26:

'Twas on that night when doomed to know
The eager rage of every foe;
That night on which He was betrayed,
The Saviour of the world took bread.

Yet no record could be more beautiful than the act itself. How very far away has Christendom travelled down the road of religious ingenuity in the celebration of this simple institution!

The Lord's Supper is surely the central function of a local church from which all service takes its character. It is the zenith of assembly fellowship, the one unique gathering of saints when all spiritual exercise is directed Godward. The Father is seeking worshipping children (Jn. 4:23). The heart of the Lord yearns for the expressions of the first love of His beloved: "*Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely*" (Song of Sol. 2:14). The Holy Spirit seeks to direct the hearts and minds of the redeemed to a more intelligent apprehension of the Lord.

God does not assess the spirituality of His people by the activity of their service alone, nor by the eloquence of their preaching, but by the quality of their worship. This is brought to our attention in the book of Ezekiel (chs. 8–11). The Lord brings the prophet to see the reluctant departure of His glory from the midst of His people because their worship had degenerated to the point where the Lord could no more identify with the center of their religious activity.

In the forty-fourth chapter of the same prophecy we see another principle. In different days, it is true that forms, ceremonies and order for the worship of God have differed somewhat, but the nature, principles, and priority governing that holy exercise never change. When Israel went astray after idols, many of the priestly family, the Levites, continued in that office, but to serve the people before their idols. Because of this behavior, the Lord forbade them to enter the most holy place when the proper order was to be re-established. However, God extended His mercy towards them and did not cut them off altogether, but said of these, "*I will make them keepers of the charge of the house.*" They were permitted to minister to the "house" but not to the Lord.



The sons of Zadok, of the priestly family, however, did not give themselves to idolatrous practices, and for that, the Lord said, "*They shall come near to Me, to minister unto Me, and they shall stand before Me to offer unto Me...*" Their ministry was not to the house but to the Lord Himself. Surely this shows the distinction we have in 1 Peter 2—the two aspects of priesthood: the *holy* priesthood entering in with spiritual sacrifices unto the Lord, and the *royal* priesthood going out to the people to display the virtues of a risen Christ. Of course it is only illustrative, not an exact parallel, since all believers have the privilege of engaging in both of these spiritual activities. The distinction must be kept clear, however, between that service which is directed to "*the house*" and that which has God Himself for its object.

If this was clear in the minds of the saints, it would be a preservative to keep the Lord's Supper from being reduced to "sharing" meetings, where subjective experiences take up the attention. These, while

good in themselves, are not the purpose of the gathering. Nor is the purpose of that meeting to gain some approval from the Lord; nor to obtain by the keeping of it some means of grace by which our standing before God is improved.

An apprehension of the truth concerning the institution and instructions given concerning the Lord's Supper will greatly aid the earnest believer as he or she engages in this high spiritual privilege.

INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. When it took place historically. Matthew 26:26-30 clearly shows that it was instituted just before the Passion of the Lord and just after the Passover supper. Being instituted before the Passion might well, at first, have reminded the disciples of the Old Testament usage of the bread and wine. Picture the scene. The Passover supper is ended. Bread and wine are still before them. Then the Lord reaches out again and takes the bread and the cup.

In Jeremiah 16:7, NKJV we read, "*Nor shall men tear themselves for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; Nor shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink.*" This custom had to do with the comfort of the bereaved. We have something like this with us today. After a funeral, friends of the bereaved usually meet and share refreshments. The atmosphere is different than that prior to the funeral. It is lighter, as comfort and encouragement are poured out on the mourners to face their new life. So here is the Lord Jesus, the One about to die, ministering comfort to those He would leave behind, giving them hope.

Occurring after the Passover, it signified that it had to do with a new covenant, as the Passover had to do with the old. Indeed the Lord so states it in verse 28, that His blood is of the New Covenant.

2. What it signified spiritually. What was the blood of the old covenant? In Exodus 24, Moses rehearses to the people, all the words of the Lord ... The people respond, An the words which the Lord hath said will we do. The next morning, Moses reads the book of the covenant to all the people. The people respond, All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient.

At this point, Moses took the blood that had been shed, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, "*Behold the blood of the covenant.*" That blood had already been sprinkled on the altar, so it bound the people figuratively to the altar of sacrifice. It bound them also to the word of their own promise. It was of course limited to the nation of Israel alone.

A great deal more could be considered with regards to the sprinkling of blood and the shedding of blood. The sprinkling of blood has to do with the imparting of the power of the life to the recipient for specific need. In Egypt it was for preservation. To the leper it was for purging. For the priestly family, it was preparation for service. In Exodus 24, it was with a view to obedience, as they had promised.

The blood of the New Covenant, the precious blood of Christ, links the believer to a completed work, "*for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*" (Heb. 10:14), a sacrifice that can never, and need never, be repeated. It binds the people with His promise, "*Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*" It has no national boundaries, but is for all men—for the sins of the whole world.

3. Why it was instituted. "*This do in remembrance of Me*" (Lk. 22:19). It is not to be a preoccupation with our benefits as a result of His death, although we will be appreciative of all that Christ's death has accomplished. But it is rather the stirring of the mind to recall the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus, in the light of who this was that died, and what was accomplished in that great work on Calvary. While the Holy Spirit may direct us to think about any aspect of the person and work of Christ, it will always be in the light of the cross, for the participants at the Lord's Supper are primarily remembrancers.

INSTRUCTIONS RE. THE LORD'S SUPPER

There would seem to be seven salient movements in the carrying out of the Supper.

1. In 1 Corinthians 11:28 there is **examination**. "*But let a man examine himself.*" When we do engage in honest heart examination, what do we find there? Most of us find to our sorrow that the heart is indeed desperately wicked. Our immediate reaction would

be to stay at home and not partake. But the Lord has made a way for forgiveness and renewal of fellowship if needed (1 Jn. 1:9).

2. In that frame of heart we then are to “eat.” That is **participation**. To discern the Lord’s body is not simply a matter of thinking that the portion of bread we break and eat speaks of the Lord’s body. It is to recognize the force of the words of the Lord when instituting the feast, “*This is My body, which is given for*

you.” That is, given for you as you have discovered yourself to be by examination—nothing but an unworthy sinner with no claim upon God at all. The heart made conscious of its true condition, and made aware by the Spirit, of the Person and work of Christ on our behalf, will respond in worship and in praise.

3. Thus the Supper becomes a **proclamation** of the value of that wondrous death for sinners (v. 26).

4) The feast is to have **continuation**. But how

WORSHIP

If we could approach the Supper with this desire to give to the Lord what will please His heart, we would make sure that we had something. It need not be much. A brother, not accustomed to public speaking, stood up at the Lord’s Supper one morning and simply said “O God, we just want to tell Thee how much we appreciate Thy Son.” He broke down in tears and sat down. The whole assembly responded to such an honest outpouring of the heart.

The word translated “worship” in the New Testament means literally “to kiss towards.” It bespeaks an attitude of love, of obedience, of allegiance, of adoration. Worship (from worth-ship) is the response of the spirit in appreciation of the worthiness of the object.

Worship is beautifully pictured for us in Leviticus 16. on the Day of Atonement, when the high priest was to enter the holiest of all, he was to take his hands full of the sweet incense beaten small into the Holy of Holies, place it upon the burning coals of the censer that the cloud might fill the place. Without that, no further service was to take place. The sweet incense speaks of the fragrance of the Person of Christ. This is to be presented to the Father as we enter in as holy priests.

We see the Lord Jesus do this in Luke 24. He joins the two on the way to Emmaus. He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself That is the sweet incense beaten small. He placed it on



the burning hearts of those two, and at the end of the chapter they worshiped. Nothing will produce a worshipful spirit like a sight of the Lord before the eyes of the heart, “loving, giving, bleeding, dying.” That is why some feel strongly that ministry at the Lord’s Supper should be in the character of that meeting and fulfill the purpose of it. It must direct the hearts of the people to Christ. It is not a case of legislating the kind of ministry, but having an intelligent view of why we are there.

The enemy of souls, the antagonist of Christ, seeks by any means to rob Him of worship. He does this, not by open opposition but by subtle diversion.

Peter, on the mount was thus diverted. He said, IT ... good for US, the experience was good for him. But the Father had to remind him that they were not on the mount to be occupied with any subjective experience, but to be occupied with the Lord and His Word. Let all believers be awake to the danger of diversion away from Christ and from that great sacrifice and all its glorious implications.

—J. B. N., Sr.

SEE *the* DIFFERENCE

DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THE LORD'S SUPPER & THE LORD'S TABLE

A clear distinction must be kept between the **Lord's Supper** and the **Lord's table**. These terms are often used interchangeably. It is not altogether wrong to do so, so long as we understand the biblical distinction. The Supper is contained within the table but it is not the same. There are, in fact, eight distinctions between the Lord's Supper and the Lord's table in 1 Corinthians 10 and 11. The Lord's table is not limited to New Testament usage only. The Lord's Supper is strictly a New Testament institution. Note:

1. The form of the language differs: In chapter 11 it is literal, in chapter 10 it is representative. The table is not a literal table, but is that which represents a fellowship. The Lord's table is that to which all His people are brought. It is the provision of the Lord for the need of His own, and from which resources may be drawn. David could speak of it in Psalm 23, He prepareth a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. The Supper is a literal "meal" to be actually partaken of.

2. The action of the participants differs: In 10:17 they are "partakers." In 11:24 they are remembrancers.

3. The order of the elements differs: In 10:16 the cup comes before the bread. This is the order of human experience. The believer enters into the oneness of the body through the value and efficacy of the shed blood. In 11:24 the bread comes before the cup. This is the order of divine expediency. The Lord's body was given before the precious blood was shed.

4. The figure of the bread differs: In chapter 10, it is a figure of the mystical body of Christ, "*for we being many are one bread and one body.*" In chapter 11, the bread is a figure primarily of the physical body of Christ, given for us.

5. The function differs: In chapter 10, the believer praises the value of the blood by a life of communion, enjoying the provisions of the Lord at the table. The word translated "bless" is really to "eulogize" or to speak well of. In chapter 11 the believer proclaims, or shows forth, the meaning of the death of Christ, by a regular remembrance at the Supper.

6. There is a danger that differs: In 10:21 the danger is an evil system, the table of demons, figurative of that which is in fellowship with what is opposed to fellowship with the Lord. The contrast is drawn between the table of demons and the Lord's table. In 11:28, the danger is an evil principle, "self," and the contrast is between the Lord's Supper and our own supper (v. 21).

7. The emphasis differs: In chapter 10, it is a continuous experience of fellowship, in chapter 11 it has to do with a weekly remembrance.

8. There are two impossibilities that differ: In 10:21 it is impossible to have fellowship with the Lord and with the system of evil at the same time. In chapter 11, we cannot discern the Lord's body without first discerning ourselves (vv. 29-30).

The solemnity of the judgments can be seen when we compare these two chapters. Why such severe judgments as "weakness," "sickness" and even death? Because of the oneness of the body as taught in chapter 10. Each one brings to the Lord's Supper a spirit that will either be an aid to the spiritual exercise of the body, as locally gathered, or one that will be a hindrance to the spirit of worship. If this hindrance continues and one is repeatedly the cause of the Lord being robbed of the worship due to Him, then He will intervene and deal with the hindrance, temporarily or in an extreme case, permanently. —J. B. N., Sr.

often? It seems clear that Paul's visit to Troas was extended over the first day of the week so that they could attend the Lord's Supper; then they were ready to depart the next day. Had it been the practice of the early church to hold the Supper on any and every day, there would have been no need to wait over to the first day of the week, "*when the disciples came together to break bread.*" The first day of the week is most eloquently the day of the new beginning and of the new covenant and of a new order of priority.

We must avoid legalism like the plague, where outward habit and form are exalted above inward condition. But another great danger of the day is a liberalism where anything goes and submission to the principles of Scripture can become very subjective and made a matter of convenience.

5. **Anticipation** is a hallmark of the Supper. "*Till He come*" are the words that remind us that the Supper is not only retrospective but prospective, when the emblems will no longer be required, for the Lord's people will be forever with the Lord Himself.

6. Of course it is primarily a Supper for **recollection** of the Lord in His suffering and death for our sins. Such continual remembrance ought to stir the heart in love to the One who died for us. As the letter to the church of Ephesus (Rev. 2) reminds us so forcibly, all our sacrificial service, steadfast patience, suppression of evil, spiritual discernment, and firm stand against error cannot make up for that great lack: "*thou hast left thy first love.*" It is at the Lord's Supper that the heart is warmed and love inflamed. Then things are seen in proper perspective.

7. A proper **preparation** of heart beforehand, and a right attitude at the Supper will lead to **adoration**. "*In remembrance of Me,*" said the Lord. The Supper is not for the exhibition of gift nor for the recounting of our subjective experiences during the previous week. It is for the satisfaction of the Lord Himself.

In Luke 24, the risen Christ has a hunger! "*Have ye here any meat?*" He asks. It was not a hunger of necessity but of desire. Doubtless He desired to show them that His body was real and capable of eating. But more, He desired a token of fellowship. What did they have for the risen Lord of the universe, into whose

hands all things had been given? A piece of cold fish and of an honeycomb! But, says the record, "*They gave it.*" Not very much, but it was what they had. Then we read, "*He took it...*"

PERSONAL PREPARATION

While it is true that worship is in the realm of the spirit and according to truth, that does not mean that the body and the soul are left behind. It only means that they are subservient to the spirit. Thus we can see the necessity of definite preparation of the whole person in view of engaging in this highest exercise of the human personality.

There should be physical preparation. We must be rested. Living in a society that is bent on pleasing self, it is little wonder that there is a constant call for self-indulgence. Late Saturday nights can rob the saint of freshness on the Lord's Day morning. Long Sunday lie-ins can add rush and pressure to getting to the meeting on time, putting the mind into a state of excitement not conducive to high and worshipful thoughts. There is in this day of total demand a great need to control our involvements. The Lord recognized this need in the lives of His own. Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile. Someone has truly said that there is sometimes a connection between busyness and barrenness.

There must be mental preparation. Today there is a concerted attack of the enemy on the minds of God's people, for as a man thinketh, so is he. The worldly mind is not likely to give much to the Lord at His Supper. It is worldly because of a pre-occupation with the playthings, pastimes and pleasures of the world and readily becomes defiled. The Holy Spirit is thus grieved and has no liberty to lead that soul into the holiest for worship.

The wandering mind will make it difficult to concentrate on holy things. Often the cause is lack of self-discipline. Brother Lawrence in his letters said, "One way to recollect the mind in time of prayer, and preserve it more in tranquility, is not to let it wander too far at other times."

The weary mind is often burdened with the cares

of this life and ready to faint. The blessed remedy for this is found in Hebrews 12:3, "*Consider Him,*" that is, think about Him. It is not only that such thoughts are good. By the act of bathing the mind with thoughts of Christ, He Himself becomes the balm for the weary mind, putting it into a frame more conducive to worshipful occupation at the Lord's Supper. This gives the capacity to be able to say to the cares and burdens of life, as did Abraham long ago to his servants, "*Abide ye here while I...go yonder and worship.*"

Of course there must be spiritual preparation, a distinct apprehension of what we are engaged in at the Lord's Supper. As holy priests we are expected to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. We need a clear understanding of the One to whom we gather: He is not now "Jesus only." A great deal has happened since that lonely Stranger walked the shores of Galilee. "*God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ.*" It is the *Lord Jesus Christ* whom we now worship, while we remember Him as the lowly Man of Sorrows.

Daily communion at the Lord's Table is assumed in the life of each believer. The measure in which we enjoy the Lord and His provisions all week long will largely affect our responses at the Lord's Supper.

A devoted attitude and reverent decorum is expected as we enter "*the holiest by the blood of Jesus.*" The sanctuary of the Old Testament was a holy place, and no irreverence was tolerated—at the risk of death! It was a fragrant place and it was a privileged place. Surely, under Grace we should not enter the heavenly sanctuary with flippant thoughts, careless attitudes, cheap slang, or scruffy decorum, when this holy privilege was purchased for us at such a cost.

If now, with eyes defiled and dim
We see the signs, but see not Him,
Oh, may His love the scales displace
And bid us see Him face to face!

Thou glorious Bridegroom of our hearts,
Thy present smile a heaven imparts;
Oh, lift the veil, if veil there be,
Let every saint Thy beauties see!

—C. H. SPURGEON

SOME FATHERLY ADVICE *from* H.A. IRONSIDE

(1876-1951)

A Call to Reverence at the Lord's Supper

Let me press upon the hearts of the worshippers at the Lord's Supper to remember that distractions during these times can greatly disturb spiritual worship. A little care as to this will often go a long way towards creating a climate for precious and happy times of worship. Sadly, individuals coming in late and distracting the attention of others may greatly hinder the worship of the heart. It is a pitiful commentary on the spiritual state of many believers that they can be sharply on time every weekday morning to their places of business or employment, and yet be among the stragglers on the first day of the week, when the hour set is much later than that which they frequently go to business. A heart for Christ is what is needed to put this right.

This paragraph was excerpted from an article entitled "The Lord's Supper" reprinted in pamphlet form and available from *Bible & Life Newsletter*:

c/o David Dunlap,
3116 Gulfwind Dr., Land O' Lakes, FL 34639-4660

TRUE STORY

“Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee” (Mk. 5:19).

KEN KEANE: GOD IS STILL RESCUING THE PERISHING

How wedding bells stirred a man to hear the gospel bell.

My name is Ken Keane. I was born in New York City, the eighth child of ten. Growing up in a religious family, I tried to live a life of good works to earn my place in heaven. But no matter how hard I tried, I failed to meet even my own standards of righteous living, let alone God’s. My father died when I was 12; he was only 53. I was angry and rebellious, becoming a liar and a deceiver. After I turned 18, alcohol became a regular companion. I drank to intoxication often, not able to recall the events of the night before. Thankfully drugs were not an attraction to me, though easily available at the time.

Generally I did whatever I could get away with. I gave my mother many sleepless nights, no doubt. Yet all this time I was active in the church in which I had been raised. I went on religious retreats but lived in guilt. I had a desire to please God, but my own sin and selfishness kept me from doing so.

A renewed desire to “live right” came as I sought for a wife. I didn’t want one that I met in a bar but one that went to church. So I began attending a midweek church meeting for young adults but continued my carousing. All during this time, I spoke openly to my friends about my religion.

But the morning in January 1975, after a night of drinking, one of my drinking partners pointed out to me of my hypocrisy. It stung me, but I knew it was true. God used this unbelieving friend to speak to me. I couldn’t kid myself any longer. I was in no way obeying God; I was a slave to sin. Later I would learn the words of Romans 6:16 NKJV, “*Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey,*

you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?” They fit me to a T. I concluded that had to get away from the influence of those that I drank with. I wasn’t ready to yield myself to God, though. I was still trying to do things in my own strength. I hadn’t yet learned the truth, “*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*” (John 3:3).

Two years after taking a job with Southwestern Bell in Emporia, Kansas, I had moved into a house with three men in the late spring of 1975. One of them was a Christian. In June, Ron asked me if I knew if I was going to heaven. “No one can know that for sure.” I told him.

He opened a Bible, the Word of God, and showed me these verses: “*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth*





confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:9-10). He said that “*saved*” meant to be freed from the penalty of sin, and that was through faith in Christ. Then he read to me Romans 6:23, “*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*”

I knew enough “religion” to know the facts about the death of Christ. I had never really read the Bible but had been taught these facts, yet they had never

sunk from my head to my heart. That day I understood for the first time that I could do nothing to save myself. I believed in my heart that the Lord died in my place for my sins. I now knew I was going to heaven because of His saving work on the cross of Calvary. I came to experience the truth of Ephesians 2:8, “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.*”

The Lord immediately took away my desire to drink alcohol. I learned that I had many areas in my life that the Holy Spirit was needing to change. Today I read my Bible daily to learn more about the Lord Jesus Christ and how I can live my life to His glory. I am not without sin, of course, but I desire not to. If I do sadly fail in some way, I know my sins are forgiven. The Bible says to those who have received the Lord, “*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” (1 John 1:9)

How about you? Do you know if your sins are forgiven? He is able to save anyone. Contact me if you have any questions.

Ken Keane

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Serious Prayer Warrior **ALERT!**

SUMMER GOSPEL OUTREACHES OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR:

- PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT
- PASSIONATE INTERCESSION
- PRACTICAL INVESTMENT

Here are some evangelistic efforts that need our prayers (some give details in Front Lines). There are many others, including Bible camps, open air work, Vacation Bible Schools, and short-term missionary trips.

ATHENS Olympics, an ideal venue to reach people from around the globe, including closed countries

SOUTH DAKOTA Scott DeGroff and others with Larry Sax to see a work done for God (Sioux Falls)

NORTHERN ALBERTA Steve Kember on the province’s northern border—real interest there!

THE GASPE A bilingual team with Don Cox and Gerald St. Laurent to evangelize and encourage

BRITISH COLUMBIA Rob Brennan and his family moving to Williams Lake to pioneer

IRELAND Ron Hampton and TnT teams in the south; the Northfield tent in the north; plus much more

WORLDVIEW

THE CHURCH • THE CULTURE • THE CONFLICT

DISMISSAL OF JEWS FOR JESUS DEFAMATION CASE

A West Palm Beach, FL, judge has dismissed a lawsuit filed against the nation's largest Messianic Jewish organization. The suit arose out of "a praise report" in a Jews for Jesus (JFJ) newsletter. Last week, Circuit Court Judge Catherine Brunson threw out the suit by Edith Rapp, who claimed that Jews for Jesus defamed her by claiming that she was a "Jewish believer."

The case started when JFJ sent out a newsletter in July 2002 to its supporters and friends. In the newsletter, JFJ employee Bruce Rapp included a praise report about a visit with his father and stepmother before his father died.

In it he said his stepmother had been willing to "ask God for forgiveness for her sins and receive Yeshua." The newsletter also contained a prayer request that urged prayer for "grace and strength for new Jewish believer Edie and salvation for her husband, Marty." But on Dec. 11, 2003, Edith Rapp sued JFJ, claiming that the conversion account was fictitious and that Jews for Jesus knew the account was false when it published the newsletter. Her suit stated that Jewish people harbor extreme animosity toward JFJ and that Jews for Jesus seeks the "end of the Jewish religion and the Jewish faith." Liberty Counsel, which represented JFJ, filed a motion to dismiss the case, arguing that it was not defamatory to call someone a Christian.

"This lawsuit was really an attack against Jews for Jesus as an organization because of its outreach to Jewish individuals," Liberty Counsel president Mat Staver said. "The lawsuit even sought an injunction against Jews for Jesus' witnessing activities.... We are pleased that the court agreed and dismissed this case."

—*Maranatha Christian News Service*



NIGERIAN CHRISTIANS MASSACRED

Hundreds of Nigerian Christians have reportedly died in Kano, Nigeria's second-largest city, since a Muslim protest turned into carnage in retaliation for Muslim deaths in Yelwe. The *Reuters* news service was told on Thursday, May 13 that reports from church leaders throughout the city state: "Almost 600 people have been killed and 12 churches burned." Even little children were killed. There are fears that the number of deaths may continue to grow since an order was circulated by Umar Ibrahim Kabo, the most senior Muslim cleric in Kano, for all Christians to leave the area by Friday, May 14. —*Assist News Service*

SURPRISE INDIAN ELECTION

The recent unexpected upset in the Indian national elections removing Prime Minister Vajpayee's BJP Hindu nationalist party was an answer to many prayers. The Congress party which now controls the government with its new Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, a Sikh, is committed to a secular state that will return religious rights to minorities including the Christians, among others.

The results of the election have already forced the state of Tamil Nadu to abandon its anti-Christian and anti-conversion laws and policies. Please pray that the same will happen in other states so "that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified..." (2 Thess. 3:1).

HOLLYWOOD AT IT AGAIN

Ted Baehr, founder of the Christian Film & Television Commission, says that the new Hollywood movie *SAVED!*, to be released May 28 by MGM, is a bigoted, anti-Christian movie that mocks the Christian faith. The movie stars Mandy Moore and Macaulay Culkin in a story about self-righteous Christian youths in an uptight Christian school.

"*SAVED!* is a hateful...movie," Dr. Baehr declared. "It is being heavily marketed to the community it mocks to lead Christian youth astray and make them resent their own faith." Even Baehr's sanitized description of the plot is too X-rated for *Uplook*. But what do we expect for an industry that "lies in the lap of the wicked one"?

WORSHIP

The missing jewel in the crown of Evangelicalism (A. W. Tozer)

“ **A. G. Clarke** gives a seven-fold significance to the Lord’s Supper in his article in *Church Doctrine and Practice*, pp. 133-135, published by the Precious Seed Committee:

1. A Gathering of His Church (1 Cor. 11:17-21)
2. A Memorial of His Person (1 Cor. 11:24-25, RV)
3. A Token of His Love (1 Cor. 11:23)
4. A Pledge of His Covenant (1 Cor. 11:25; Lk. 22:20)
5. A Partaking of His Feast (1 Cor. 11:26)
6. A Proclamation of His Death (1 Cor. 11:26, RV)
7. A Prophecy of His Coming (1 Cor. 11:26) ”

**Backward look we, drawn to Calvary,
Musing while we sing;
Forward haste we to Thy coming,
Lord and King!**

A dishonest employee was summoned to the office of the senior partner to hear his doom. The least that he could expect was dismissal; he might be prosecuted, and even go to prison for years. The old man looked straight at him and asked if he were guilty. The clerk stammered out that he had no defense. “I shall not prosecute you for the sake of those who love you,” said the old man. “If I let you stay, can I trust you?” When the surprised and broken clerk had given assurance and was about to leave, the senior partner continued: “You are the second man who has fallen and been pardoned in this business. I was the first.”

—Notes, Quotes and Anecdotes

“Twas on that night when doomed to know
The eager rage of every foe;
That night in which He was betrayed,
The Saviour of the world took bread.

And after thanks and glory given
To Him who rules in earth and heaven,
That symbol of His flesh He broke,
And thus to all His followers spoke:

“My broken body thus I give,
For you, for all, take, eat and live;
And oft the sacred rite renew,
Which brings My wondrous love to view.”

Then in His hands the cup He raised,
And God anew He thanked and praised,
While kindness in His bosom glow’d,
And from His lips salvation flow’d.

“My blood I thus pour forth,” He cries,
“To cleanse the soul in sin that lies;
In this the covenant is sealed,
And Heaven’s eternal love reveal’d.”

“With love to man this cup is fraught;
Let all partake the sacred draught;
Through latest ages let it pour
In memory of My dying hour.”

—the metrical version of 1 Corinthians 11

***“Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as
incense; and the lifting up of my hands as
the evening sacrifice” (Psalm 141:2).***

ALL BELIEVERS ARE PRIESTS

“Out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations” (Rev. 19:15).

David Dunlap

“On the 1st of March, 1546, a scaffold was erected before the Castle of Saint Andrew in Scotland and faggots of dried wood were piled around it...When all was ready two deathsmen brought George Wishart from his prison...He knelt down and prayed before the pile; then exhorted the people to love the Word of God and to suffer patiently...as he was tied to the stake he announced, ‘For the true gospel which was given to me by the grace of God, I suffer this day by men, not sorrowfully, but with a glad heart and mind.’”¹

Devout men of a bygone era were not characterized by the doctrinal indifference that often plagues the present generation. These men were willing to suffer greatly, even to die for the truths of the Word of God. The conviction and cry of their hearts concerning biblical truth was: “For this will I die.”

One of the great doctrines for which great men of God died was the doctrine of the priesthood of every believer. This doctrine set forth the truth that every believer, by virtue of the death of Christ, has access into the holy presence of God to offer up spiritual sacrifices of worship to Him.

This doctrine was a foundational truth of the Reformation, standing side by side with *solo fide* (salvation by faith alone), *solo scriptura* (scripture alone), and *solo gratis* (salvation through grace alone). These Reformers spoke loudly and boldly concerning this truth.

Martin Luther (1483-1543), that intrepid warrior, was one who outshone other Reformers in the proclamation and the defense of this important doctrine. In a time when the majority of Christendom opposed the priesthood of all believers, Martin Luther stood as an

impregnable fortress. When his very life and livelihood were threatened for the truth of God’s Word, he remained steadfast. When the scholars of the day argued that only a trained class of ordained clergy were permitted to serve God as priests, he stood unmoved upon the bedrock of Scripture. He declared that the Scriptures stated:

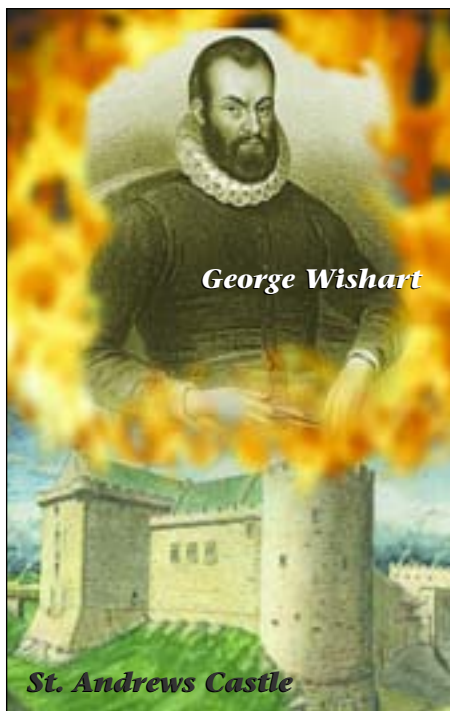
All Christians are altogether priests, and let it be anathema to assert there is any other priest than he who is Christian; for it will be asserted without the Word of God, on no authority but the sayings of men, or the antiquity of custom, or the multitude of those that think so.²

Ready weapons in their defense of truth were the words of the apostle Peter and other New Testament writers.

The Divine Plan of Priesthood

The apostle Peter was uniquely chosen by God to set forth the New Testament charter for the priesthood of the believer. He explained, “*You...as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*”; and later, “*You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood... that you [should] proclaim [show forth] the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*” (1 Pet. 2:5, 9).

In the New Testament, every believer, regardless of scriptural knowledge or area of service, stands as a priest, divinely appointed, to offer spiritual sacrifices to God. Every believer has the privilege of access into the presence of God by virtue of the death of Christ. However, to better understand the New Testament’s teaching on the believer’s priesthood, we must go back to the Old Testament where God’s plan for a spiritual priesthood began with Israel.



In the beginning, Israel was formed by God to be a priestly nation; the entire nation of Israel was called a “*kingdom of priests*” at Sinai (Ex. 19:6). But because of her spiritual failure, God set aside her national priesthood and raised up a special limited number of priests that would represent the nation before Him.

The Aaronic priesthood continued to fulfill priestly duties for generations until the death of Christ, who offered Himself as the fulfillment of all Levitical sacrifices. But during this present age the Aaronic priesthood has been set aside and the Church has been appointed to function as God’s priestly people.

However, in a future day, Israel will once again function as a priestly nation (Isa. 61:6; 66:21).

The Priesthood Defined

Despite the fact that the word “priest” is the most frequently used title today to refer to religious leaders, much confusion still remains concerning the role of the priest. What is a biblical “priest”?

The basic term for priest in the Old Testament is the Hebrew word *cohen*. The root meaning of this word is “to stand,” and therefore this word indicates that a priest is one who stands before God and serves.

The Greek word for priest in the New Testament is *hierous*. This word means “one who offers sacrifice.” So included in both the Old and New Testament words for priest is the idea that a priest is one who stands before God to offer sacrifices and to serve.

In the Old Testament, the sacrifices consisted of the ritual offering of animals to cover the guilt of sin; but in the New Testament, believers offer the spiritual sacrifices of praise, worship, and service.

W. E. Vine, the respected Greek language authority, writes,

Hierateuma denotes a priesthood, a body of priests, consisting of all believers, the whole church, called “a holy priesthood”; this term is associated with offering spiritual sacrifices. The “royal priesthood” speaks of the royal dignity of showing forth the Lord’s excellencies.”³

However, associated with a detailed and doctrinal understanding of this priesthood comes spiritual responsibility. Therefore, Christians have the holy charge to take up the duties and privileges of New Testament priesthood with great seriousness.

The Responsibilities of the Believer Priest

God’s high and holy plan—that every believer would be also a priest to God—was never fully realized in the Old Testament. It would have to wait until the days of the New Testament dispensation to be more fully set forth and enjoyed by believers. But within a very short period of time, ritualism and clerisy came to dominate the teaching of the New Testament Church so that the truth and practice of the believer’s priesthood all but disappeared.

Ignatius of Antioch (110 AD), and other early church leaders vigorously taught that the authority of a single bishop was paramount. The early leaders’ love for power was so great that even a baptism or agape meal could not be conducted without their presence and authority. Thus the joyous praise and contagious worship of the believer priests was soon quieted. This theological error cast a dark fog over true biblical worship. Sadly, this silence in collective worship continued for many hundreds of years, until the light of truth began to shine again, first in Germany, and then in greater Europe.

However, even then the truth of the believer’s priesthood was still not fully revealed. Yes, believers had learned that they did not need a priest as a mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). Yes, Reformation Christians were taught that every Christian was a priest to God. They were also taught that, contained in the “royal” priestly duties was service to the world in the proclamation of the gospel. But still, the truth of collective worship as believer priests was suppressed. Church leaders still maintained that only a special class of priests could publicly offer worship. The church was still silenced before God.

Unfortunately, this is not at all what God had originally intended. New Testament priestly worship is not only individual and personal, but also public and collective in the life of the gathered church.

William MacDonald writes:

This sacrifice of praise should be both individual and collective. The latter—collective worship—in which believers are at liberty to take part in public praise, has been practically eliminated by the stereotyped, controlled services of our day. The result is a generation of dumb (non-functioning) priests—a state of affairs nowhere contemplated in the Scriptures.⁴

Christians should never take lightly the preciousness of this doctrine to the heart of God, nor its great personal cost to Christians throughout history. Unfortunately,

there are many well-meaning churches which still suppress the liberty and heart-felt worship of multitudes of believer-priests. It is still a small special class that lead in worship and prayer while large numbers of believer-priests sit silently. Nevertheless the simple beauty of priestly worship is still practiced by some groups of Christians in far-flung corners of the world.

The Simplicity of the New Testament Believer-Priesthood


The priestly worship of ancient Israel was characterized by elaborate ritual, dress, and ceremony. The Jewish priests were obligated to wear designated headdress, outer garments, and distinctive undergarments. There were special days for worship, ritual laws for worship, and a designated place for worship.

How different and how simple is the worship of believer priests in the New Testament! There are no vestments, no holy days, no one central geographic place for worship, no ritual laws, and no special class of priests. However, this worship is no less beautiful and no less affecting to the heart of God.

From the earliest days of the first believers in the book of Acts up to the present day, Christians have enjoyed collective worship in utmost simplicity. T. E. Wilson (1902-1996), drawing from his experiences as a missionary in central Africa, describes the simple beauty of New Testament believer-priesthood. He labored eight years in the Chitutu region of Angola before he saw the firstfruits of his gospel labor—three Chokwe young men came to a saving knowledge of Christ and were baptized.

Immediately after the baptism of these young men, it

was the desire of those who were gathered for the baptism to remember the Lord in the breaking of the bread. The wine for the occasion was purchased from a Portuguese trader in a settlement about five miles away; the bread was baked in a hole in the earth lined with hot ashes. The meeting room was a simple open-air wooden shed with a grass roof and a bare dirt floor. At their first breaking of bread seven gathered together to remember the Lord, four white missionaries and three Africans. At this simple service, the newly saved and veteran believer-priests offered their hymns of praise and their prayers of worship in both the Chokwe and Songo languages. Despite these inconveniences, in those early times of remembering the Lord in the breaking of the bread, the Lord's presence was very real and most precious.⁵

May we resist the conventions of popular Christianity and stand for the truth of the believer-priesthood which was framed in the eternal counsels of God and purchased through our Lord's death upon the cross. May a new generation of Christians be raised up who might join with Martin Luther and the early Chokwe Christians in saying: Upon this truth will I stand as an immovable rock. 

Christian worship has its
source in an accomplished
redemption; its object is God
the Father and the Son;
its place, the presence of God;
its power, the Holy Spirit;
its material, the truths fully
revealed in the Word of God;
and its duration, eternity.

SAMUEL RIDOUT

Endnotes

1 Andrew Miller, *Miller's Church History*, (London: Pickering and Inglis, 1986), p. 998

2 William Hoste, *Bishops, Priests, and Deacons*, (Scotland: John Ritchie, 1988), p. 67

3 W. E. Vine, *Dictionary of New Testament Words*, (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1980), p. 212

4 William MacDonald, *Christ Loved the Church*, (Kansas City, KS: Walterick, 1956), p. 58

5 T. E. Wilson, *Angola Beloved*, (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1967), p. 157

GOOD BOOKS ON WORSHIP: *The Chief Meeting of the Church*, John Reid, Christian Missions Press; *The Lord's Supper and Worship: the Christian's Highest Occupation*, A. P. Gibbs, Walterick; *New Testament Church Principles*, Arthur Clarke, Precious Seed; *The Lord's Supper*, Donald Norbie, Walterick; *Worship and Remembrance*, Daniel Smith, Gospel Folio

ROUNDTABLE

FINDING HELP FROM THE GIFTS GIVEN TO THE CHURCH

LET'S DEAL WITH PRACTICAL ISSUES ABOUT WORSHIP

Actual answers from the writings of "panel members."

UPLOOK Let's begin with a basic question. Brother Vine, could you help us with the meaning of *worship* in the New Testament?

W. E. VINE The worship of God is nowhere defined in Scripture. A consideration of the verbs used shows that it is not confined to praise; broadly it may be regarded as the direct acknowledgement to God of His nature, attributes, ways and claims, whether by the outgoing of the heart in praise and thanksgiving or by deeds done in such acknowledgment.

U. Does anyone else have something to add?

WILLIAM HOSTE Worship is the overflow of the heart filled with Christ. It was in the spirit of worship that the Psalmist wrote: "*Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over*" (Ps. 23:5). It was the anointing that produced the result. Thus it is the Spirit of God who enables the Christian to worship, and He does so by revealing Christ.

A. P. GIBBS Broadly speaking, prayer is the occupation of the soul with its needs; praise is the occupation of the soul with its blessings; but worship is the occupation of the soul with God Himself.

U. Do we make a distinction between "worship"

and "remembrance"? Are some things worshipful but not suitable for the Lord's Supper?

BRIAN GUNNING While the Breaking of Bread is the most obvious public expression of the church's worship, we ought to be worshippers every day of the week.

JABE NICHOLSON We wouldn't want to put any man-made restrictions on the themes which the Holy Spirit places before the believers at the Supper. But it seems that remembrance is more focused than the general idea of worship. I may—and should—worship the Lord for getting me a job, for example, but that would be inappropriate for a time when we are invited to remember the Lord and declare His death.

U. How can I prepare for the Lord's Supper?

T. FITZGERALD Sincerity and truth should characterize the believer's manner of life (1 Cor. 5:6-13). There should be unity and harmony among the saints. It is sadly possible to come together for the worse and not for the better, and to fail in rightly eating the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:17-22). Self-examination should precede attendance at the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:28).

WILLIAM HOSTE What a world of difference there would be in many of the churches if

all spent a time of meditation and confession in the presence of God before coming together.

U. What should I consider when visiting an assembly while traveling in another area?

JABE NICHOLSON The believer, whether visiting or moving to another area, should seek beforehand to find an assembly in that locale. This may be done by asking responsible brothers who know of that area or by checking an assembly address list (some assemblies have web sites). Of course one would be naive to assume that every assembly is identical to the one to which you belong. Some research may be necessary, and is advisable if you do not want some unhappy surprises. Of course, a letter of introduction and commendation is a common courtesy. Perhaps brother Hoste could explain this.

WILLIAM HOSTE The use of letters of commendation is a most scriptural one. We have the cases of Apollos in Acts 18:27 and of Phoebe in Romans 16:1-2. As for the question whether one can be received without a letter of commendation, as no rule is laid down, it is not for us to make one. But there can be no doubt as to the advisability of always carrying a letter when going to a strange place. Otherwise you can only be received on a principle which Scripture does not recognize—self-commendation.

“Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.”

U. Is baptism necessary in every case before a believer may participate at the Lord’s Supper?

WILLIAM RODGERS After having to do with cases of reception into assemblies for forty years, I cannot remember a single individual who desired to come into the assembly but refused to be baptized. A few cases there were in which, for one cause or another [permission not granted by parents to a child at home, for example, *ed.*], the baptism was deferred; but it was not objected to, and did in fact take place later. I should certainly refuse to be bound by a “Medo-Persian” law that none may ever, in any circumstances, be received unless they first submit to baptism. [Baptism and reception] are both the commands of the Lord and meant to be obeyed; but neither is intended to be hung around the neck of the other.

U. What about the use of leavened vs. unleavened bread, and wine vs. grape juice?

H. A. IRONSIDE There can be no question that the bread used by the Lord when He instituted the Supper was unleavened; it would be one of the Passover loaves. And the cup, no doubt, would contain some of the Passover wine (Lk. 22:7-8). But, on the other hand, the age of

types and shadows has now passed away and there is nothing in the NT which implies that the bread used at the Lord’s Supper must be unleavened, or that the wine must be either fermented or unfermented. The wisdom of God is shown in this, for oftentimes it might be impossible to procure one or the other. All Scripture speaks of it as “*the bread*” and “*the fruit of the vine*.” See Col. 2:16-17.

U. We were going to ask a question on the use of hymns at the Lord’s Supper, but leave it to the article on page 31. So perhaps we could ask if the common way of partaking of the emblems near the end of the meeting is biblical.

JABE NICHOLSON The description and details of the Lord’s Supper are left to a minimum in Scripture, and are spiritual in nature. We expect the Spirit to direct the order and approach. However there are reasonable and practical reasons for this. Although there is no law, I have never seen a story where the climax is not near the end. The Lord’s Supper should not be a disjointed collage of personal “favorites.” This is corporate worship and we should allow the Spirit to move us together through this supreme Story in a growing stream of adoration.

Practically speaking, most of us need the full time to bring our hearts to this worshipful crescendo when we can discern the Lord’s body as we should. 🕒

BOOKSHELF

TREND SETTERS • LIFE CHANGERS • TIMELESS CLASSICS

THE RIGHT QUESTIONS: *Truth, Meaning, & Public Debate*

by Phillip E. Johnson; *Intervarsity Press, 2002; 192 Pages; ISBN 0830822941*

How does a thinking Christian reconcile science with faith? Instead of giving a direct answer, Johnson invites us to rephrase the question, or even to ask an entirely different one. Johnson, a Harvard-educated law school professor, came to faith in Christ later in life. Having spent many years in academia, his passion now is to see professors and students won to Christ and delivered from the politically-correct slavery of the academic world.

He is probably best known for his book, *Darwin on Trial*, published in 1991. As that title suggests, there he applied a legal methodology in assessing the claims of evolutionists and materialists. In *The Right Questions*, he focuses more on the faulty and unprovable assumptions that underlie their science—their blind commitment to a materialistic and naturalistic explanation for the universe and everything in it. As he puts it, the Christian begins with the assumption “In the beginning was the Word.” The Darwinist says, “In the beginning were the particles,” although they would not phrase it in those terms. Each statement is a foundational assumption upon which a worldview is based. Neither statement can be “proved” or disproved, at least not in the scientific sense; rather each statement is accepted by faith. Scientists tend to deny that charge, arguing that they only go where their science leads them. However Johnson quotes preeminent Harvard biologist Richard Lewontin who wrote, “[Science] has a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism.”

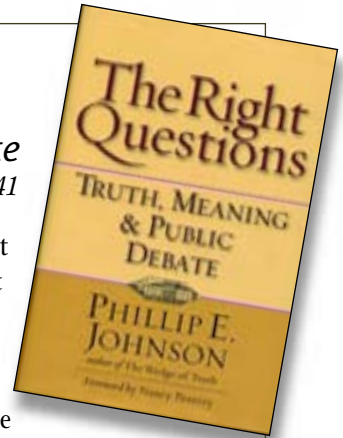
This work is much wider ranging than his previous works as well as being more personal. Topics include: The human genome project and the meaning of life, 9/11, Islam, the war on terrorism, Genesis and gender debate, religion and its role in education and public life. He shows how the materialistic philosophy of science impacts the way society thinks about these bigger issues. Johnson argues that the battle is often won or lost in the way the question is phrased. Until now, the evolutionists have been framing the questions, using their assumptions. He points out how if Christians can reframe the questions, they can often change the whole tenor of the debate.

In each section he tries to reach the root of the issue. For example, with respect to Genesis, he writes: “I did not want to become involved in the long-standing and deadlocked battle between the Bible and science. Rather I wanted to point out that the real battle is not between the Bible and science but between science as unbiased, empirical observation on the one hand, and science as applied naturalistic philosophy on the other....”

Of final note is Johnson’s autobiographical chapter in which he chronicles the Lord’s dealings with him through the stroke he suffered in 2001 and his subsequent recovery. He describes how the Lord used that experience to take him to a deeper trust in the Lord. As he puts it: “I knew myself to be not so much a believer in Christ as a skeptic about everything else, a recovering rationalist who had lost his faith in world’s definition of reason, but who knew only the world’s Jesus...What I needed was the only solid rock, the real Christ....”

While I find it difficult to get a handle on the book as a whole because the range of topics covered is so broad I found Johnson’s approach helpful in thinking about some of these issues. It certainly helps lay some groundwork for a more profitable line of approach in dealing with them. Yet the lack of answers is vaguely unsettling. While Johnson is confident that soon Darwinism will join Marxism and Freudism in the dustbin of discarded ideologies, I find little reason to be so optimistic.

KEVIN SHANTZ



HYMNS & SPIRITUAL SONGS

The debate is heating up over music in the assembly.



The first picture that comes to mind when we hear the word “singing” would usually be a happy one. But more and more, differing views about music in assembly life are turning friendly discussions into heated dissension—even unhappy divisions. This is especially disconcerting since “*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord*” (Eph. 5:19) is listed as the first evidence of being filled with the Spirit! What is happening?

For centuries, the musical heritage of a civilization was shared by all ages, passed down from father to son. The Hebrew songs, sung in a style that can still be heard in the streets of Israel today, were lisped by her little children, whispered by her mothers at their bedsides, and sung triumphantly by her armies as they marched into battle.

However, in the last century, culture has been turned on its head. Perhaps youth have always longed for the day when they could make significant changes to the way things were done, but now they no longer need wait. They have short-circuited the system and hijacked their cultures. Music styles of the young now drive society.

At the same time, Christian music, influenced by musicians like Keith Green, became a mixed marriage—the world’s hard-driving sounds linked with Christian lyrics. The argument went: music is composed of black notes; these notes are neither good nor evil; therefore any type of music may be harnessed to Christian words to be a legitimate form of the expression of faith. Sometimes they included Luther’s use of beer hall tunes for his hymns, an argument which has been disproved. But the “black dot” argument is just as suspect. Are pornographic photos also merely an arrangement of dots? We need better reasoning than that for the vehicles of our worship.

Only the uninformed would give blanket approval to all hymn lyrics. “The darkness shall turn to dawning” is a prime example of less-than-biblical lyrics, ideal for amillennialists. Likewise, we hope none would blindly reject, or accept, every contemporary chorus—like the one pleading that the Lord “*take not*” His Spirit from us; it seems only suitable for its Charismatic composers who do not believe in eternal security.

Most hymns and some choruses can be an appropriate and helpful part of corporate worship. But I would mention three areas of concern. First, since psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are for “*speaking to yourselves*” (Eph. 5:19), they are intended to warm our hearts so that we might express worship to the Lord *in our own words*. One could logically conclude, then, that the number of hymns would diminish as the meeting progressed, and more worship would be given in verbal expressions of thanksgiving, rather than borrowed from others.

Second, we should want appropriate words. Many choruses are “*spiritual songs*,” subjective rather than objective, and intended to minister to the singers rather than to bring worship to the Lord. If our worship is to be a sweet-savor burnt offering—all for Him—we will leave all such subjective lyrics for other times.

Third, there is a trend toward accompaniment at the Lord’s Supper. Some may feel this enhances the singing and cite Old Testament use of instruments, but note: OT worship was of a primitive form, largely external and designed to artificially stimulate multitudes of Israelites who were only associated by natural birth and, Saul-like, needed outside stimulation to move their inward beings. David needed no such help; he had the song within.

Also, there were no instruments *ever* in the sanctuary. You might make a case for instrumental use on other occasions, but at the Lord’s Supper we, unlike Israel, go inside the veil, where all distractions and additions must be left outside. I agree that some acapella attempts may barely qualify for making “*a joyful sound*” but the solution to poor singing is not to disguise it with instruments. We need to take some fellowship time to learn to sing the hymns properly so our objective, unadorned, biblically accurate, spiritual worship may ascend to Him. J B N

• OCCUPATION • SIMPLICITY • FERVENCY • UNITY • EXAMINATION •

WORSHIP • CONSIDERATION • JOY • SCRIPTURE • THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD

Jesus is “*in the midst*” (Mt. 18:20). No matter how grand is the function, honored by dignitaries and officials, performed with splendor and awe-inspiring ceremony, if He is not present there is no real remembrance. And despite the absence of such human trappings, if the hearts of the believers are set on Him, if their love is sincere and their devotion void of pretense, He will not deny to them a most hallowed realization of His nearness....

Moreover, it is an act of triumphant celebration. The keeping of the Lord’s Supper has been made possible, not only because our Lord died for us, but also because He brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel. It is not a memorial to the dead; such an act would put Him in the same category as

the heroes and martyrs of the past. No! He lives in glorious triumph. It is that fact that gives significance to His death. It was that fact that thrilled Cleopas and the other disciple as, with the alacrity of an overwhelming discovery, they hastened back from Emmaus to Jerusalem to inform the disciples that they had seen the risen Lord. It is because He is such a One, alive, omnipresent, ever-living, that He can now in spirit draw near, go with us ‘by the way’ as we remember Him, and make ‘Himself known in the breaking of bread’ (Luke 24:35). The Supper is His. He invites. He acts as Host. We are His honored guests as by faith we meet with Him at His trying-place.

—from *The Church, a Symposium*, edited by J. B. Watson, p. 75

JESUS IN THE MIDST

Andrew Borland

BREAD & WINE • AWE • HYMNS • PARTICIPATE • WORSHIP • PRIESTHOOD

• DELIGHT • THOUGHTFULNESS • PRAISE • SILENCE • FAITH • LOVE