

UPLOOK

DECEMBER 1995

Now the *God of peace*, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

HEBREWS 13:20-21

And the *God of peace* shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

ROMANS 16:20

Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the *God of peace* shall be with you.

PHILIPPIANS 4:9

And the very *God of peace* sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23

Now the *God of peace* be with you all. Amen.

ROMANS 15:33

Building Peace Castle





Building Peace Castle

The barbarians without are tough these days, and the enemy within no less daunting. We need a citadel for the mind and heart. But we need something more than that.

The letter was posted from the royal palace at Susa in the year 535. Traveling no doubt by horse, mule, and dromedary express, it was carried across the Tigris River, up the Euphrates Valley, skirting the Arabian Desert, along the Bekka Valley, past the towering Mount Hermon, down the Damascus Road, along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and, catching the northern end of the Patriarch's Highway in the Jezreel Valley, made its way into the hands of "Rehum the chancellor and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions" (Ezra 4:9) in Samaria.

The king's letter began: "Peace, and at such a time." Such a time indeed! The people of God had been scattered to the winds, far from the place where God had chosen to dwell among them. The City of Peace lay in ruins, victim of its inhabitants' pathetic slide into idolatry. The enemies of God were scheming to neutralize the efforts of a little remnant who were attempting to "strengthen the things which remain[ed]" (Rev. 3:2).

This letter from Ahasuerus, the sovereign of the world's ruling power, was in answer to one sent by "the people of the land," Gentile imports who had been refused a hand in building the temple. They called on the king to stop the fortifying of Jerusalem because it was a "rebellious and bad city" (Ezra 4:12). It looked like their plan would work. In fact, fifteen years went by as the hammer and chisel lay silent and the Lord's earthly capital remained a reproach before the nations.

Enter Haggai the encourager in 520 BC, and later Nehemiah the builder. There would be no peace, no blessing, they told them, as long as the people spent their days paneling their houses while the Lord's house lay in ruins, while the walls were rubble and the gates were ashes. How could they expect the favor of God if they had no desire for the fellowship of God? Haggai diagnosed their condition as follows: "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye

clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways" (Hag. 1:6-7).

It was time to invest serious effort in the work which would glorify and please the Lord (Hag. 1:8). Peace and at such a time? Certainly not by letting the enemy trample across their lives. Not by succumbing to the threats of evil men. Lines must be drawn. Walls must be built. Gates must be hung. Sentinels must be stationed. And God must have His rightful place—not only in the city, in the temple, but in the citadel of His people's hearts and minds. It was of little use to have their mezuzas on the gateposts and their phylacteries on their arms and foreheads if they did not love the Lord with all their hearts and minds. No wall would be high enough or thick enough to keep out the enemy if their souls harbored the foes within.

Five hundred years later, a Benjamite incarcerated for his belief that Jesus was the Messiah of Israel, wrote: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep (garrison) your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4:6-9).

Paul had learned the secret of peace from the enemies without and within. The peace of God was ready to garrison the minds and hearts of His own if they were prepared to build a wall of supplication and thanksgiving. And the God of peace was ready to reside in Peace Castle with them if they would furnish it with Christ-occupation and childlike obedience to Him. Peace, and at such a time!

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Re-marketing the Message

"I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. 9:22).

What did Paul mean when he talked about "by all means" reaching the lost? It would be hard to tell by the way the verse is abused today.

David Dunlap has recently moved to Tampa, Florida, where he serves the Lord in a preaching and written ministry.

Paul's heart desire was to win the lost for Christ. Unbelievers, whether Jew or Gentile, slave or free, were all to be reached for the Saviour. Eternal punishment and the Lake of Fire were living realities. By means of horseback journey, sea-going vessel, or sandaled foot, the apostle's conviction was that they all must have the good news preached to them.

Previously, he writes concerning this driving passion for the unsaved: "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16). Yet the message must not be compromised. Paul had renounced the hidden things of dishonesty and the handling the Scriptures in a misfeasant manner.

The message must be declared with integrity. Truth was not a commodity to be negotiated. Bible truth must be proclaimed! He set forth his position clearly in saying, "Am I seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). In another place he speaks of the persecution he bore for the "offense of the cross" (Gal. 5:11).

Yet, today some in the evangelical church are calling for a shaping of the gospel message to make it more palatable to the unsaved. They chide church leaders, asserting that the unsaved will remain unsaved unless we reshape the gospel to meet their personal needs.

This method is called *contextualization*. This technique for reaching the lost was rejected by Bible-based Christians 70 years ago when the modernist preacher Harry Emerson Fosdick urged its use in Christian churches. Writing in 1928, he scolded godly men of the Book, "Preachers who pick out texts from the Bible and then proceed to give their historic settings, their logical meaning in the context, their place in the theology of the writer, are grossly misusing the Bible. Let them not end

but start with thinking of the audience's vital needs, and then let the whole sermon be organized around their endeavor to meet those needs. This is all good sense and good psychology."¹

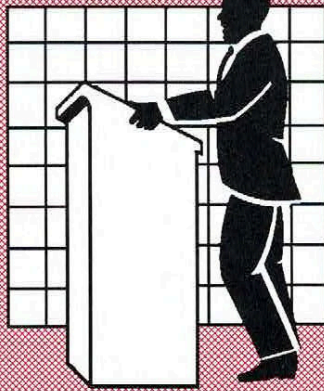
Today, a growing number of evangelical leaders are urging the use of this same technique, albeit redressed in evangelical terminology. George Barna, an evangelical marketing professional who is representative of this position, writes concerning the preaching and ministry of Paul, "Paul provided what I feel is perhaps the single most insightful perspective on marketing communications, the principle we call contextualization. Paul...was willing to shape his communication according to their needs in order to receive the response he sought."²

After all, Barna explains, using the Corinthian letter, did not the apostle Paul write, "...I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. 9:22)? Barna states further that this is the biblical mandate for re-marketing the message to meet the needs of the 1990's. Yet the question must be asked: Was that the thrust of Paul's message? Is he suggesting that we should accommodate the gospel to the personal needs of the unsaved?

Most serious Bible students would not entertain such a specious interpretation for even a moment. What then was Paul's aim? Succinctly stated, Paul's desire was to become a slave of all to win some for Christ. There was never the thought of reframing the gospel for the sake of making it more appealing. He was not advocating a better marketing plan. Not for a moment. He was setting forth the principle of self-denial and sacrifice befitting all the servants, the *doulos*, of Christ. Paul was willing rather to give up everything he owned and sacrifice the rights and status he possessed, if that would further the matchless and saving gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in a lost world.

William Kelly clarifies the text further,

The primary means of reaching the lost in our day as in every day is the unabashed, faithful setting forth of the truth of the gospel.



writing, "The apostle was ready to yield at every side where Christ was not concerned. He was free, but free to be a bondman of any and everyone, in order that he might gain, not ends of his own, but the most possible for Christ."³ In examining more closely 1 Corinthians 9:19-22, we notice how this truth is carefully unfolded.

Paul begins by touching on the truth of Christian liberty. He has been expounding this theme since chapter 8 and will continue until chapter 10. But now, in chapter 9 he states, "For though I am free from all men..." (v. 19). We are not under law but grace. We are not bound to Jewish religious ritual nor Gentile pagan tradition. Grace liberates us from all this and empowers us to live godly lives. Yet Paul points out to us a paradox: although we are free from all men, yet we are slaves to all. "Yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more" (v. 19). Grace empowers us in Christ to sacrifice all, to endure all, to set ourselves in subjection to all, to become bond-slaves to win the unsaved to Christ. Was Paul setting forth a marketing plan for the gospel? In no way! He was calling for self-denial and sacrifice for the sake of proclaiming the unsoiled truth to those who do not know Christ.

This principle is developed further in the ensuing verses. He says, "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew..." (v. 20). Paul describes the denial of his personal liberty in seeking to win those of the nation of Israel. Though he was not under the law, yet he adopted their customs, ceremonial law, and traditions so as not to give offense to the gospel, in order to win some from the commonwealth of Israel to Christ. Yet he would never stoop to compromising the truth of the gospel. Concerning the Gentiles he writes, "...to them that are without law, as without law..." (v. 21). Paul is not saying that he in any way engaged in an immoral lifestyle to win the godless Gentiles; of

course not. Rather, he set aside all his Jewish traditions, ceremonies, and culture in order to avoid producing a distraction and thereby a hindrance to the message of the gospel.

To the weak brother, Paul says, "I became as weak..." (v. 22). Regarding the weaker Christians, Paul adjusted his behavior so as not to offend. He chose rather to yield in love than to distract and stumble those weak in the faith. Why all the protracted effort in self-denial and sacrifice? Why, imprisonment, hunger, sleepless nights, fastings often, scourging, and stonings? So that through Christ-centered sacrificial devotion to be "all things to all men" he might win some! Compromise the truth? Market the gospel? Accommodate the Word of God? *Never!*

John Heading warns, "Verses 20-22 have often been interpreted in the sense of allowing evangelists to do almost anything they please in their zeal to reach souls. A careful reading of the Revised Version would, however, dispel such a notion. What Paul means is that he became a servant in every legitimate way to many folds, thereby by all means to save some"⁴.

How are the lost to be reached with the powerful gospel of salvation? The message of the apostle is this: to present ourselves unto God as servants, willing to sacrifice all and to humbly serve all, going forth armed with the all-sufficiency of Christ and His Word.

However, those who seek to reach the unsaved through the use of amusements and gimmicks will find that they have no effective means of reaching the lost with the truth of Christ. It must be emphasized yet again that the primary means of reaching the lost in our day as in every day is the unabashed, faithful setting forth of the truth of the gospel to a perishing world.

ENDNOTES

¹ Harry Emerson Fosdick, *What is the Matter with Preaching*, Harpers Magazine, July, 1928, p. 135

² George Barna, *Marketing the Church*, (Colorado Springs, Colo.: NavPress, 1988), p. 33

³ William Kelly, *Notes on 1 Corinthians*, G. Morrish, London, 1878, p. 149

⁴ John Heading, *The Epistle to the Corinthians*, John Ritchie, Kilmarnock, Scotland, p. 135



Front Lines

BRINGING IN THE NEW YEAR

Eddie Schwartz (NC) will be the speaker for a New Year's Conference held at Park of the Palms (Keystone Heights, FL) on December 28-31. Other conferences to be held throughout January and February include: David Glock (IA), Dan Smith (IA), Rob Linsted (KS), Donald Hubbard (FL) and William Raws (NJ). Contact:

Park of the Palms
706 Palms Circle
Keystone Heights, FL 32656
(904) 473-4926

SINGLE MINDED

January 5-7, 1996, are the dates you will want to keep open on your calendar if you are single, and 16 years of age or older. Greenwood Hills is sponsoring another Congress Retreat, Lord willing. Speakers expected are Steve and Bruce Hulshizer (PA). Space is limited, so register early.

Congress Retreat
2721 Oberlin Drive
York, PA 17404

WINTER CONFERENCE

The 9th Annual Winter Conference will be held at Galilean Bible Camp (ON) on February 23-25, 1996. J. B. Nicholson (MI) will be speaking. For more information, contact:

James Martin
1761 Rutherglen Cr.
Sudbury, ON P3A 2K4

DALLAS AREA CONFERENCE

The Annual Conference held by the Wheatland Bible Chapel (Duncanville, TX) is scheduled in

the will of the Lord for March 29-31, 1996. Steve Hulshizer (PA) and Randy Amos (NY) have been invited to minister from the Word of God. Contact:

Robert Smith
(214) 298-6293

COUPLES' RETREAT

Greenwood Hills will be hosting a Couples' Retreat April 19-21, 1996, for couples of all ages. Speaker expected is Alan Parks (MD). To register, contact:

Greenwood Hills
7062 Lincoln Way East
Fayetteville, PA 17222

WORKERS' & ELDERS' CONFERENCE

The 4th Annual Workers' & Elders' Conference will be held May 7-9, 1996, at the West Fifth assembly in Hamilton, ON. The theme for this year's conference is: *The Holy Spirit: His Person and Work*. Neil Dougal (MA) and Alan Parks (MD) will be the keynote speakers. For more information, contact:

Workers' and Elders'
Conference
P.O. Box 26044, RPO King St.
Oshawa, ON L1H 8R4

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Please pray for a new work which was begun in Whitby (next to Oshawa), Ontario. The Lord has blessed the work with good attendance. The saints from the Pine Ridge Bible Chapel (Oshawa, ON) are encouraged to see how the new work is progressing, but do miss their brothers and sisters in Christ who left to help start this ministry.

Brother Gerald Humbert, presently in fellowship in Valdosta, GA, lives in Thomasville, GA, and is interested in finding others in the Thomasville area for fellowship and breaking of bread. Contact:

Gerald Humbert
323 N. Spain Street
Thomasville, GA 31792
(912) 228-5620

Three families are meeting in Whitehouse Station, NJ to remember the Lord, fellowship, and study the Scriptures. On Wednesdays they have a Bible Reading meeting with Christians from various churches attending. Contact:

Newton Bible Chapel
c/o Dennis C. Scheifele
15 Bouwrey Place
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889

HOMECALL

James Hunter, 90, of Hollywood, FL, went to be with the Lord on September 11, 1995. Born in Scotland, he came to the US as a young man. Though fully employed, he was very active in the Lord's work in the Pennsylvania and Ohio areas. He helped establish the Mansfield Bible Chapel in Mansfield, OH, and kept busy teaching and preaching the Word in assemblies in that area.

After retirement from secular work, he moved to Florida, where he was in fellowship with the Christians at the Hollywood Bible Chapel. He was used by the Lord in discipleship all over South Florida until shortly before his homecall. He was highly respected and loved by all. He will

be especially missed by the many young men of South Florida who he encouraged regularly in the things of the Lord.

On October 6, 1995, Hilda Henrich (nee De Young) went home to be with her Lord whom she served faithfully, having been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.



After graduating from Moody Bible Institute, she worked with Harold Harper Sr., during the war years at Victory's Servicemen's Center (at Camp Kilmer, NJ). After the war, she married Stuart Henrich and served the Lord alongside her husband both at the South Side Bible Chapel, and with other groups as the Lord gave opportunity. Her family awaits the shout when they shall meet again at the Saviour's feet.

The journey ended and the Lord welcomed Mrs. Betty MacNeil home on October 18, 1995. Her journey began February 5, 1908, in Motherwell, Scotland, where she was raised in a Christian home. Being saved in her teens, coming to Chicago, IL, in 1925 with her family, and being married to Tom MacNeil on June 1, 1935, were some milestones along the way. Her marriage was blessed with two daughters, Marge and Jeanne, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Betty came to Rest Haven Homes in 1986 and helped in different ways at the Home while she was able. Her listening ear and fervent prayer life will be missed by her family and friends.

Gordon Thomson, of the West Fifth Assembly in Hamilton, Ontario, went to be with the Lord on October 3, 1995.

He met Christ as a boy and from that time on lived for the Lord he loved. He enjoyed his role as Sunday School teacher and Superintendent and the opportunities which God gave him to preach the gospel. His warm, compassionate love for the Lord's people was so often evident in his role as an elder and assembly correspondent.

Brother Thomson will be missed in the life of the assembly and especially at the Lord's Supper where his love for his Saviour was so evident when he rose to lead the people of God in worship. Please pray for his family during their bereavement.

TELLING THE TRUTH

Tim and Liz McNeal have informed *Uplook* that after 25 years at 54 Steeplechase Drive in St. Peters, MO, True Words, Inc. has outgrown their present facilities

Dear Friends,

I would like to take this time to thank so many of you who still keep praying for the Allyn family. We really do appreciate all your prayers.

We completed our 10th summer at Aush-Bik-Koong Bible Camp and it's hard to believe it has been that long. We all had a good summer and God once again blessed camp with all the volunteer workers needed to run it. He also gave camp another safe and fulfilling summer with children being saved and others challenged to love and serve Him. We are looking forward to another summer at Aush-Bik-Koong in 1996.

My children are growing up and all doing well in school. Kristy is in Grade Eight, Jonathan in Grade Seven, Alysha in Grade Two and even Amy is now in Junior Kindergarten.

As for me, I'm getting involved with the school by helping out in Amy's class once a week and coaching Kristy's volleyball team twice a week. Right now I'm looking into doing some singing and visiting at two area hospitals located in Elliot Lake and Espanola. I would really covet your prayers concerning this matter and the possibility of recording some of the music the Lord has given me over the years.

Earlier this fall, I was struggling with the idea of relocating, but after prayer and some counsel, God has given me real peace to just stay where I am for now. There are still days when my heart aches, but God is good!

*In Christian love,
Marlene Allyn*

(General Delivery, Walford Station, ON P0P 2E0)

and moved to 710 N. Bus. 61, Wentzville, MO 63385, (314) 332-6348. They plan to continue sending out *Palabras Fieles* from True Words, Inc. and gospel literature to India and Africa through *Impact the World*. They would appreciate your prayers as this move has been very dramatic for the whole family.

COMMENDATION INFO

The Christians gathered in the Name of the Lord at Bethel Chapel (London, ON) wish to add their commendation of Len and Madeleine Fex to the work of the gospel. Len and Madeleine were originally commended by the Egerton Street Chapel in 1957. Brother Fex came into fellowship at Egerton in the 1930's, and in the years following was exercised about taking the gospel to northern Ontario. Since the Egerton Street Chapel closed its doors in 1989, the saints wish to commend them to this work.

The saints at the Overland Park Bible Chapel (Overland Park, KS) have written: "Karen Engle has returned from her field in the Philippines for personal reasons. We are withdrawing her commendation without prejudice as of November 14, 1995."

Robert Spicer (Amherst, NY) has written to inform *Uplook*: that he is voluntarily withdrawing his commendation from the Blasdell Gospel Chapel (Blasdell, NY). He writes: "I remain in the Lord's work as a commended worker, having been commended from Albany Gospel Chapel (GA), and will continue an active ministry of preaching the Word wherever the Lord leads."

COUPLE NEEDED

Greenwood Hills is in need of a married couple to work year round managing housekeeping and helping with maintenance and some business functions. Any interested couples, contact: Steve Hulshizer at (717) 764-5979.

VANDALISM

In October, the Carriage Hills assembly in Kansas City, KS, was wrecked by vandals. All the pews were overturned. The grand piano's legs and top were ripped off. Wallboard was torn away, floors were chopped up, and light fixtures were pulled from the ceiling. Also, approximately 6 inches of water flooded the basement floor because the vandals left the faucets running. Preliminary estimates assess the damage to be over \$30,000. Please pray for the Lord's people during this troubling time.

ON THE EMMAUS ROAD

Emmaus Correspondence School director, Charles Fizer, recently wrote: "The Correspondence School will soon begin advertising on Internet. *What the Bible Teaches* will be included as a sample course. Internet users can do the course on their computer anywhere in the world.

"United States prisons now hold over one million prisoners. 293,000 courses were sold to North American Prison Coordinators in the last year (this total would reach 29% of the prison population). This is a tribute to the volume of work this group of

men and women are doing in the prisons." Keep praying!

I KNOW WHERE THE TABERNACLE IS...

This past summer Bill and Barbara Gustafson (GA) were given the tabernacle model which had been used by Mr. and Mrs. Lid-don Sheridan (AL) for nearly 30 years. The model was constructed in the early 1930's for Laurence Chambers, who also used the model in preaching and teaching for 30 years.

Bill and Barbara Gustafson
631 Cherokee Drive
Waynesboro, GA 30830
(706) 554-5854

CAN YOU DIG IT?

The Father/Son Retreat at Camp Iroquoia (NY) was held in November with Randy Amos as the guest speaker. On Lord's Day morning approximately 5 inches of snow greeted the campers. One of the themes for the messages was how children should re-dig the same spiritual wells that their fathers have dug, much like Isaac did after Abraham. Fathers and sons would break off into individual groups for father and son talks. The time was extremely profitable for all those who attended. Perhaps you



might think of attending next year? Keep watching for times and dates.



Assembly Work in Romania

Romania is populated by about 23 million people, 80% adhering nominally to the Romanian Orthodox Church. Like Rome, the Orthodox Church preaches that you come to Jesus Christ through the Church. The Word of God, however, clearly teaches that guilty sinners must come directly to the Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ (Jn. 14:6). Geographically Romania is bordered by Hungary (west), Serbia (southwest), Bulgaria (south) and the former Soviet Union (north and east).

CONDITIONS

Politically—after the Second World War, under the Communists, there was a measure of stability; although Romania deliberately did not align itself with the USSR and its satellites. Under the Communist leader, Nicolae Ceausescu, the nation witnessed the dawn of the so-called “golden age” (the reality of day-to-day living was far removed from this).

Economically—pre-1950 Romania was known as the “breadbasket of Europe.” During the Communist era there was always a favorable balance of payments; exports primarily to Eastern Bloc countries and very few imports. There was full employment and prices were stable, but little to buy in the shops.

Socially—tremendous fear and suspicion existed. During decades of severe rule by the Communists, 1 in 15 of the population was a member of the dreaded *Securitate*, the secret police. One in five of the nation were informers to the secret police.

Spiritually—during the old regime there was liberty to preach the gospel and teach the good Word of God, but only inside church buildings. It was usual for members of the secret police to be present. Officially the distribution of Bibles was banned, although at great risk of persecution and imprisonment, Bibles were secretly distributed. Christians were not able to engage in open-air gospel outreach, but, during 45 years of severe dictatorship, God in His supreme power and

sovereignty greatly prospered the work of the gospel among the assemblies. There were many conversions and

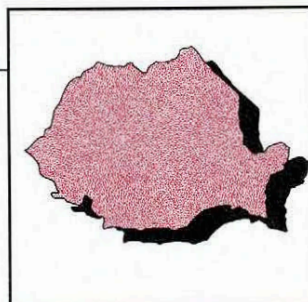
baptisms which resulted in assemblies growing numerically. Before 1990 difficulties were encountered in planting new assemblies in another part of a town or city, thus existing assemblies became very large. For example, in the city of Iasi there was one very large assembly in 1990. Now the assembly has upwards of 800 in fellowship and 3 other assemblies have been planted. During Communist times, if permission was granted to build a new hall, the saints were forced to build on the outskirts of the town or city, thus making it harder, more costly, and time consuming for believers to attend the assembly meetings. Many were not deterred from attending the gatherings both on Lord’s Day and midweek. Today, one can visit assemblies in villages where 50, 100, or 200 plus believers are in fellowship.

Under the old regime, all church groups were required by law to have some to speak on their behalf in official matters with the authorities, still a legal requirement with the present government. The autonomy of each local assembly, however, remains unaffected.

CHURCH PLANTING

Assemblies have existed in Romania since the end of last century. Early pioneer missionaries came from Switzerland and Germany. Under difficult conditions they labored in the gospel, “not where Christ was named” (Rom. 15:20). They saw Romanians turn to God from idols, new converts baptized, and assemblies gathered to the name of the Lord.

In 1947, Romania came under Communism. During the subsequent decades of darkness and difficulties—the glorious light of the



Paul Williams resides in Broxbourne, England, and was commended to the work of the Lord in October 1992 from the Cheshunt assembly near London. Since that time Paul and his wife have made numerous visits to Romania and in the will of the Lord, plan to relocate to Brasov, Romania, in May 1996.

gospel shone very brightly. Believers were faithful in their witness and stood firm for the Lord in very difficult circumstances.

CRISIS

Romania experienced a swift and dramatic "revolution" in December 1989. After an initial uprising in Timisoara a spirit of anticipatory freedom spread to the main cities. During a mass rally in Bucharest, the capital, the people defiantly turned against their leader. The army was powerless and supported the people. Ceausescu and his wife fled by helicopter but were later captured and killed. The rest is now history.

The dawn of 1990 saw significant political, economic, social and spiritual changes.

Politically—the overthrow of Ceausescu and Communism ensured that Romania moved slowly towards Western-style democracy. Though democracy was never God's idea or intention, it does give freedom in the gospel.

Economically—the nation faced the evils of high inflation and rapidly rising unemployment. The once near-empty shops are now packed with food and consumer products, but often the people do not have the money to purchase what they see.

Socially—despite the removal of fear and suspicion, there are many uncertainties and frustrations. Hard lessons have been learned with the shift from Communism to capitalism. Generally speaking, families are large, especially in northeast Romania.

Spiritually—since the revolution material and spiritual aid has flooded into the country. Let us pray that Christians will not become materialistic and lose their spiritual edge and devotion to Christ. Many Bibles, New Testaments, Gospels and tracts have been supplied to meet the increasing needs of the Lord's work in a changed social environment. But, the condition of man and his need of salvation, based on faith and repentance, remains unchanged.

In December of 1989, it is estimated that 20,000 believers in approximately 245 assemblies were in Romania. Six years later, reports from Romania estimate there to be upwards of 50,000 believers in over 550 assemblies (including 25 Hungarian speaking assemblies). Truly, a great spiritual awakening!

CULTS

The open door into Romania resulted in the major

cults and false religions widely sowing their soul-destroying error. For example, in 1991, one thousand Mormon missionaries arrived from the U.S. These cults are active in deceiving the nation and preaching "another gospel" (Gal. 1:9). As true believers "earnestly contending for the faith" (Jude 3), what is our response to the great spiritual needs in Romania? Are we like Moab: "at ease from our youth... and settled on our lees" (Jer. 48:11)?

CHALLENGES

My wife and I first visited Romania in 1990 with Martin and Margaret Baker. Since being commended we have made many trips, but there are many areas we have not yet visited, despite invitations.

The Lord's work in Romanian assemblies presents many demands and challenges. There are more autonomous assemblies in Romania than the whole of Eastern Europe. During the last 6 years there have been many people saved. The great challenge is to see them soundly and firmly established in the faith and "to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18).

Generally speaking, the assemblies are strong in gospel work, but weaker in Bible teaching. In the Suceava zone, for example, the number of assemblies has increased from 18 to 40 since 1990. But as the Romanian believers themselves have said, the greatest need is for consecutive, balanced Bible teaching.

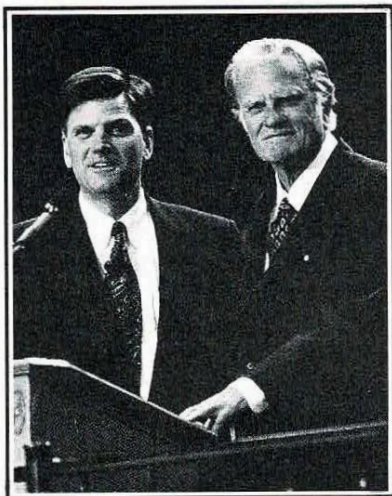
Another challenge facing Romanian believers is the 1921-1923 Romanian Cornilescu translation of the Bible. This translation has some fundamental errors with weak translations of some of the texts. Strong doctrine and practice is firmly based on a sound and accurate translation of God's Word. In the English-speaking world we have a tremendous spiritual heritage with a good translation of the Bible accompanied by a wealth of Bible study aids. In July 1995, permission was obtained from the Bible Society to reprint the 1931 Romanian Cornilescu Bible. This translation is a better translation than the 1921-1923 version, although some revisions will have to be made in the footnotes. The revision of the New Testament will take approximately one year to complete, while the Old Testament will take three years. Lord willing, 50,000 copies of the New Testament will be printed during 1996 and distributed among the assemblies. Fervent and faithful prayer is requested for this most important Bible project.

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What's Going On?

LIKE FATHER...

In November, Billy Graham, 77 and suffering from Parkinson's Disease, announced that he would continue as chairman and head preacher of his \$88 million-a-year crusade organization as long as he is able. Mr. Graham also named his son, Franklin



Graham, 43, as first vice chairman and eventual successor.

There are many even within the organization that question whether or not Billy's son has what it takes to fill his father's shoes. His flamboyance and rebellion in the past have left many feeling skeptical. We should point out that Franklin Graham has been involved for some time in a humanitarian campaign to aid those suffering in Third World countries (called *Samaritan Purse*). In a television interview he recently said of himself, "I'm not Billy Graham. I'm his son, Franklin."

WATER ON DEMAND

Peace is not the only thing at

stake in the current Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Approximately 30% of Israel's water supply flows through underground West Bank aquifers. Another 30% of Israel's needs comes from Galilee and will be affected by the Golan negotiations. Once the West Bank and Golan are turned over to Palestinian control, Israel will be hard pressed to meet its water demand.

—Spotlight on Israel

ESTONIAN UPDATE

Heino Promm was recently appointed as the coordinator of the translation work for the Baltic region by Emmaus Correspondence Courses.

In many of the countries which formerly were known as the "Eastern Bloc," there exist some very fundamental doctrinal differences. Without any respect for copyright laws, people have been reprinting publications while changing the doctrinal content to suit their own position.

As a result, the Emmaus translation work in this area came to a grinding halt, having no trustworthy translators to rely on. However, the Lord has graciously provided two translators recently—both believers.

Continue to pray for the translation work that His people may not be "carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Several brethren take regular tours to Israel, an opportunity

that can be very helpful for Christians. Woody Murphy (813) 935-2997; Rob Lindsted (316) 744-2450 and David Reid (708) 771-2766 are some that host trips. Or you might like to join Alan Parks, Rex Trogdon, and Mark Kolchin on a *Bible Lands Study Tour*, April 21-30, 1996. Jerusalem will be celebrating its 3,000th anniversary in 1996. Additional extension to visit Athens, Greece, available. For information, contact:

Mark Kolchin
P.O. Box 305
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734
(609) 693-9252

FREEDOM IN DANGER

Still spooked by the Aum cult, the Japanese government continues to think about cutting back on 50 years of religious freedom. Most Japanese continue practicing their animistic blend of Shintoism and Buddhism.

Kobe is still feeling spiritual and psychological aftershocks from the killer quake in January. Even as new buildings are going up, the psychological stability of many lies in ruins. Suicide rates are spiraling.

FROM BOMBS TO THE BALLOT BOX

Hamas, the Palestinian terrorist organization, plans to suspend its "military operations" against Israel and will field candidates in the first democratic vote in Palestinian history. The vote is scheduled for January 22, 1996.

ISLAMIC PRESSURE

Many Islamic nations are pouring money into Albania, at-

tempting to establish a Muslim foothold in Europe. Pressure is mounting for the government to give preference to Islam, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Catholicism. According to one press report, sects should be more strictly regulated to maintain a healthy religious atmosphere and to ensure social stability. —Pulse

PICKING UP THE PIECES

In an interview with *U.S. News and Special Report* correspondent David Makovsky, Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel candidly answered questions concerning the peace agreement, making peace with Syria, and the threat of increasing violence within Israel from Israelis in the wake of the assassination of former Prime Minister Rabin.

Prime Minister Peres is not jaded by the process in obtaining peace with Syria—he knows what they want. “With Syria, we need a warm peace as tangible as the Golan they want. To give

back everything and get back only promises isn’t worth it.” On the peace agreement with the Palestinians: “We’ll be out of six West Bank cities before Christmas. Arafat is able to show his people the fruits of negotiating with Israel and prove that *Hamas* has no realistic offer to give their people.” On his own mortality: “Since the assassination, there have been several threats. I see my life as a partnership with heaven. I will live so long as my Partner lets me and is with me.”

SPIES IN THE OINTMENT

The United Nations team monitoring Iraqi compliance with the resolutions that ended the Gulf War has known for some time that its members include spies who are working for Saddam Hussein. As a result extra precaution has been taking in meetings, and in one incident false information was fed to these spies who reported back to Baghdad. The team is currently

searching for evidence that the Iraqis have “weaponized” their biological research program.

CAN YOU TELL ME HOW TO GET TO SESAME STREET?

The Children’s Television Network announced the plans for a Hebrew-Arabic adaptation of the children’s television staple *Sesame Street*. The program is to include Israeli segments produced in Tel Aviv and Palestinian segments produced in eastern Jerusalem. “We’re thinking of having two Sesame Streets, an Israeli street and a Palestinian street, and the possibility of some in-between no-man’s land where the characters might meet.”

—Jerusalem Post

NEWSWORTHY?

We would appreciate short news items from our readers, including: commendations, obituaries, conferences, gospel outreaches, new assemblies, etc. Send to the Managing Editor. **U**

Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Schweitzer professor emeritus at City University of New York, in a recent article links all “fundamentalists” who claim that God talks to them. Here are some excerpts:

“Yigal Amir claims that God ordered him to kill Prime Minister Rabin. Nor are murderous presumptions of this sort confined to Jewish fundamentalists. So too Muslim fundamentalists... So too Hindu fundamentalists... So too Christian fundamentalists....”

“Fundamentalism in one form or another has been the scourge of the 20th century. Fundamentalists are absolutists—people who believe they are appointed carriers of a sacred gospel and feel so sure they are right that they have no compunction about killing heretics or doing anything else to advance their cause....”

“Religious zealots who attempt to play God to history are not enacting religion. They are betraying religion, or at least they are betraying Christianity. For the profoundest Christian tradition is to recognize the frailty and weakness of erring mortals and to emphasize the unfathomable distance between man and God. The pretense that human sinners can penetrate to the divine purpose is surely presumptuous when not egomaniacal. Religion calls rather for humility before the impenetrable mystery....”

—The Wall Street Journal, Nov. 22, 1995

Peace on Earth?

What is the big problem on the planet anyway? Actually it's out of this world. From birth we are enemies of God.

Throughout the course of human history man has striven for peace. Whether it was the great conferences among the Nineteenth century European superpowers, the pre-World War II League of Nations, or the modern United Nations, mankind has continually attempted to accomplish the end of contention on the earth. A problem which transcends mere human conflicts, however, is man's status as an enemy at war with God.

Is it too dramatic to say that people are at war with God? Not so. The Bible refers to people, who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, as "enemies" of God (Rom. 5:10). Sin, which can be defined as falling short of God's glory, is nothing more than an assertion of rebellion against the government of the universe. It is the presence of sin that has rendered man unfit for a relationship with God.

It is not God who has declared war on man, but exactly the reverse. The Scriptures are quite clear when they describe the unsaved masses in this manner: "Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good...Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ps. 53:1, 3).

Despite man's protestation of his innocence, God's Word teaches that humans are in complete rebellion against their Creator. In the face of this great dilemma, the petty conflicts between men pale as mere trivialities. Moreover, there can be no peace for the individual that strives with God. Contentment eludes those who resist the Lord's call of sal-

vation, and "peace of mind" is merely an unattainable object of ambition for the lost of this world.

How then is man to be reconciled to God?

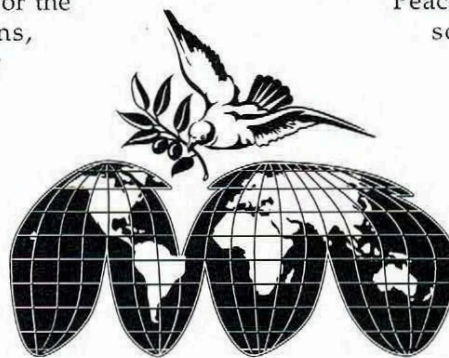
How can humans enjoy lasting peace?

Peace does not come with new scientific discoveries. Nor does it accompany the innovations of psychology and psychoanalysis. Peace is not acquired through drugs, alcohol, money, or possessions. The only approach to peace with God is through His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. As Romans 5:1 puts it: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Notice that

this eternal peace is dependent

on the Lord Jesus Himself. Being the only perfect sacrifice acceptable to God, He was willingly judged for the sins of mankind. Afterwards, He rose from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God the Father.

When sinners receive the Lord as their Saviour they are justified in the sight of God. This legal term means that every charge or accusation that is brought against the believer is refuted by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore, based on their faith in the Lord Jesus, believers have peace with God. Oh, what a thought—that we who were once enemies, far from our Maker, now have been "made nigh by the blood of Christ." Christians can approach God without fear, knowing that they have peace with God. No longer deemed enemies, but lovingly accepted as sons. How blessed it is to consider that "...When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son..." (Rom. 5:10).



Is it too dramatic to say that people are at war with God?

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Storm Watch

*Where is
your faith?
It is
interesting
to observe
the circum-
stances
under
which this
interrogation was
put to the
Lord's
disciples.*

The Lord Jesus had entered into a ship with "His own," and had said, "Let us go over unto the other side" (Lk. 8:22). As they sailed He fell asleep. It is important to compare the various records of the incident in the different Gospels if we are to have an adequate appreciation of the events which took place. Luke says He fell asleep. Mark tells us that He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow. "And there came down a storm of wind on the lake." Mark informs us that it was a violent storm. Matthew says that it was a great tempest (two different words).

Again, Matthew records that the ship was covered by the waves. Mark tells us that the waves beat into the ship. Luke records the graphic situation that they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

It was a trying experience for those disciples. They looked at the outward conditions, and could see nothing but a watery grave. But

Had they reasoned correctly, they would have said, "We are perfectly safe. The Master is with us, and we cannot sink so long as He is on board—if we go down, He will go down with us, and that is impossible."

However, in response to their cry of distress, He arose, and with one word—"Peace"—He rebuked the angry waves and the howling wind, and immediately there was a great calm. The Lord then turned to the disciples with the pertinent question, "Where is your faith?" Mark records the words, "How is it that ye have no faith?" but Matthew gives just a slim ray of sunshine by recording the words, "O ye of little faith!" Yes, they possessed a little faith, but so little as to be well nigh imperceptible.

Thus the Saviour proved Himself to be more than equal to the stormy elements, and more than equal to the timidity of His followers. He can be trusted in the storm.

Now let us apply the lesson to ourselves. We are on the way to the "other side," and we are bound to arrive there safely because the Master is with us every mile of the way. But occasionally we meet with "violent tempests." Our frail barque is "covered with the waves," and we are filled with fear. "Where is your faith?" Is it centered in ourselves, or in Him?

Why do we so frequently fail? How is it that we so often find ourselves defeated rather than victorious? Why do our heads hang down when they should be lifted up in praise and thanksgiving? The answer to all this is found in Matthew 17:20, "Because of your unbelief." Herein lies the reason why so many believers are burdened with undue anxiety, occupied with their trials and difficulties, continually worrying over the little things of life.

If our faith is centered in ourselves we shall inevitably fail, but if it is well-grounded in Him we shall rise triumphantly over the stormy seas of our trying circumstances.

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*From a
painting by
Gustave
Doré.*

where was the Master? In the hinder part of the vessel. What was He doing? Sleeping—yes, He was "asleep on a pillow," a perfect picture of peace in the midst of storm.

The disciples were filled with alarm, and in their undisguised terror they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, according to Luke, "Master, Master, we perish"; or, according to Mark, "Carest Thou not that we perish?" The first statement implies the attitude of fear; the second of unbelief.

Things which Make for Peace

The raw materials are common household items in the family of God.

T rue peace is a product of righteousness. "The fruit of righteousness shall be peace" (Isa. 32:17). God's discipline of His sons has in view a harvest in them of "the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Heb. 12:11). Our Lord Jesus Christ, illustrated by Melchizedek, is "King of righteousness, and after that...King of peace" (Heb. 7:2). James tells us that "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by them that make peace" (3:18).

Gospel peace is based on righteousness: the sinner enters into peace with God only when justified on the ground of Christ's redemption (Rom. 5:1). Thenceforward the believer is called unto peace (Col. 3:15), called to enjoy it, to pursue it, to be a "son of peace," marked more and more by it as a gracious disposition of the soul formed in Him by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22).

Peace is a relative state: that is, it is a matter of our relation to God in the first place; then to other persons, and finally to our circumstances. Once the fundamental question of peace with God is solved, by obedience to the gospel of Christ, there follows the duty to

radiate peace in our personal, domestic, business, social, church, and civic life among our fellows.

Prominent among peace problems is that of relations with our fellow-Christians. The variety of our measures of faith, differing apprehensions of truth, temperamental vagaries, the traditional deposit of our upbringing, our tendency to insist on particular and favorite points of view, provide plentiful occasion to endanger peace among believers. The proud, natural heart, the wily and unsleeping enemy without, the world full of clamor around us, make peace difficult practically to achieve, difficult to maintain, and, when broken, most difficult to restore. Hence the exhortation of our title phrase, found in Romans 14:19, "Let us therefore follow the things which make for peace."

The apostle is giving directions to Christians of diverse spiritual outlook on how to get on with one another, and in the course of his writing points out the importance of a right spirit.

A PACIFIC SPIRIT

"As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18). We are to love and seek peace (1 Pet. 3:11), earnestly to pursue it as a treasure to be won and kept. In some there is a natural quarrelsomeness which has never been tamed by Divine grace. They are always ready to strive; an occasion for tumult is to them as a spark to tinder. "Woe is me," cried the distracted Psalmist, "that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war" (Ps. 120:5-7). He was among Ishmaelites whose hand was against every man, and his soul was vexed by their truculent disposition.

The Ishmael nature is in us all—its every outbreak is a threat against peace. Want of control of it in one person may chase every vestige of peace from home, office, or church.



"One sinner destroyeth much good" (Eccl. 9:18). We are therefore sedulously to cultivate the quiet spirit so precious to God, following not the natural Ishmael, but the Isaac of promise in his gentle and peace-loving disposition.

A SENSE OF PROPORTION

Here is a second thing which makes for peace. 1 Timothy 6:4 speaks of "strifes of words." A strangely distorted spiritual perspective is sometimes a cause of disquiet among God's children. Folks take sides and wage war about matters so trivial that were the effects not so disastrous, the stupidity of it would be humorous to contemplate.

By a curious inverted kind of vision, tiny causes are magnified into matters of the first importance. The same inward eye can reverse the process and see a brother's grievance reduced to a mere speck.

The devil's telescope is pride, and we apply the small end to our mental eye in looking at our own cause, and the large end when regarding that of our brother. Let us see big matters in true proportion, trivial ones in their real littleness, and pray daily for the magnanimous temper which ignores the microscopic matters which some magnify into occasions of bitter quarrel.

Is it simply a stab at our personal dignity? Let it pass. Is it a jibe meanly intended to hurt? Let it glance off harmlessly. Is it a tiny misunderstanding due to some omission? Forget it. Of this sort are "strifes of words" (literally 'word-battles,' or as we speak, 'quibbles'), whereof cometh envy, strifes, railings, evil surmisings" (1 Tim. 6:4).

Let us ask God for a spiritual sense of proportion. Its absence accounts for the costly folly of many cranks whose hobby-horses ride down our peace, and whose trivial clatter chases the calm atmosphere of brotherly love from the assembly of God.

PATIENCE

"Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbor

hath put thee to shame" (Prov. 25:8). Where patience grows, there peace also takes root and flourishes. Patience is one of the fruit of the Spirit which is of slow growth.

Some of us feel that years come and go without any apparent advance in patience being discernible. Yet it is one of the graces which every one who would be an example to the believers must earnestly desire and pursue: "Thou, O man of God...follow...patience" (1 Tim. 6:11).

Patience refuses the two most tempting ways of gaining the desired end—violence and haste. It both avoids conflagrations and abhors shortcuts. It will win through to peace when all smart turns of policy have failed. Patience is full sister to longsuffering, and where they abide peace is sure to dwell also; if not today, then tomorrow; if not tomorrow, then next month, or perhaps not till next year. "Therefore be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry, for anger resteth in the bosom of fools." "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be...patient" (2 Tim. 2:24). "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16:32).

GRACIOUS SPEECH

"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Prov. 15:1). Perhaps nothing is comparable to an uncontrolled tongue as a provoking cause of strife. There is a dreadful potential for evil in a bitter, rancorous tongue. Wounds whose scars remain through life are made in a moment by the sharp stab of a too-ready tongue. Mischief which years of labor will not repair may be wrought in a moment's spiteful outburst. Friendships break, fellowships end, and sympathies wither before the words that pour in a passionate moment from unguarded lips. "There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health" (Prov. 12:18).

Rankling in memory, stinging and humiliating as the lash of a whip across the cheek, rekindling resentment at every persisting recollection, so are acid

*Friendships
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words and phrases not only a cause of strife's beginnings, but a hindrance to its cessation. Therefore, "let your speech be alway with grace"—alway, and watch most to this when most provoked, remembering Him who reviled not again, who endured contradiction, who left His cause to God, His Righteous Defender, and was gloriously vindicated after He had endured to the utmost. "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt" (not with pepper, nor with sugar, someone has remarked). Let there be no intentional sting; let there be no sickly sentimentality, but let there be the true savor of sincerity, truth, and faithfulness, mingled with the graciousness of our words when we feel ourselves wrongfully opposed.

SUBMISSION TO GODLY RULE

"Know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake. And be at peace among yourselves" (1 Thess. 5:12-13).

The age is full of the spirit of disregard of constituted authority. The one authority in the Church is that of the Lord Himself: all other is by His delegation, and those to whom underrule is committed by Him are directly responsible to Him (Heb. 13:17). They are readily recognizable by those over whom they are set by the following:

1. Their spiritual character and experience of God (1 Tim. 3:1-7).
2. Their unceasing labors among the flock, feeding (1 Pet. 5:2), guiding (Heb. 13:17, *marg.*), guarding (Acts 20:29-31), admonishing (1 Thess. 5:12), and teaching (Titus 1:9).
3. Their non-assumption of any lordship over the saints (1 Pet. 5:3).

Government in God's assembly depends for its true effectiveness on spirituality—spirituality in the overseer for the right exercise of his appointed work, spirituality in the flock for recognition of the authority given to the overseer by the Lord. So that carnality is a menace to government, and therefore to peace. In those ruled it will reveal itself in a challenging and unsubmissive spirit. The lawless spirit of the outside world will edge its way within the Church in proportion as its members are carnal and worldly-minded. The Church is the sphere on earth where Divine

authority is owned—its members call Jesus Lord. It follows that it should be the sphere pervaded by the peace of a happily regulated realm because the well-being of all is provided for by the sovereign Lord.

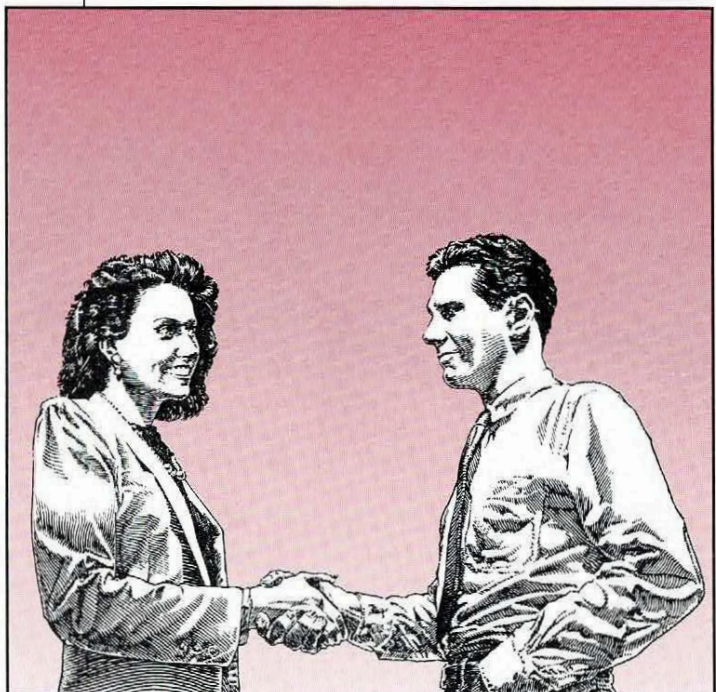
Let us beware of disturbing that peace, but seek a careful circumspection of behavior, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility" (1 Pet. 5:5).

A FORGIVING SPIRIT

"I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord" (Phil. 4:2).

One of our Lord's most terrible parables draws a vivid picture of a man, himself greatly forgiven, whose tongue hisses harsh demands and whose hands are at the throat of an unfortunate fellowman slightly in his debt. The Lord's application of that parable forces the conclusion that one who is a stranger to the spirit of forgiveness, may well doubt whether he be God's child. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses."

Yet how retentive memory can be concerning some trifling wrong done to us. How long the natu-



ral man in us can bide his time to strike back, and how long gleefully twist and turn the dagger of reproach in a wound that should long ago have been healed.

Even among Christians, how petty quarrels are perpetuated, till years come and go without peace, and till the undercurrent of a vendetta-spirit hinders all progress and reduces those among whom it flows to spiritual deadness and decline.

There is nothing more hateful to God than this implacable spirit of unforgiveness. Nothing worse in His sight than the pride which will not suffer us to make the first move toward reconciliation. Almost equally detestable is the spirit that tardily offers qualified forgiveness, ready at any moment to resurrect the old issue.

The failure to show a forgiving spirit is the negation of Christianity itself, the worst ingratitude to the forgiving God revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, a deep disgrace to every one who claims to have tasted of Divine grace, and, when persistent in any professed Christian, a ground for grave doubts of his title to that name.

With this before us, let us pay heed to the words which beseech us thus: "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. 3:13).

CHRISTIAN LOVE

"And above all these things put on charity (love) which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts" (Col. 3:14-15).

Love is the one chief and inclusive grace which above all else makes for peace. In a hundred places in the New Testament it is set before us in both precept and example. It is the distinguishing mark by which the soul that is born of God is known; he who manifests it towards his brethren is thereby known to be Christ's disciple. It is the soul's "more excellent way," the fulfillment of the whole law. By it we dwell in God, and He in us. It is the unifying quality

which makes a present verity of the mystic oneness of the Lord's people, and is the crowning glory of Christian character.

The most glorious inspired ode in all language is written in its praise. It is more to be desired than the good gifts of eloquence, prophecy, or faith, and is better than the noblest philanthropy.

As a beautiful face is the assemblage of noble features, and yet is more than their mere sum, so this grace combines in itself patience, kindness, forbearance, endurance, and hope, and yet is more than all of them together.

It is an expulsive power, casting out of the soul the dark passions of envy, vainglory, pride, selfishness, lewdness, and suspicion. It is of God, will abide when earth is gone, and will then be the glory of heaven itself. Where this grace abounds, it brings days of heaven upon earth. And when the fellowship of Christians is under its sway and suffused by its influence, then do beholders fall down and own that God is among them of a truth. "And now abideth faith, hope, love—these three; but the greatest of these is love."

When believers keep in touch with the Lord, and His love abides in them, there is little opportunity for the sower of discord. There the Lord commands the blessing, and when He gives quiet, who then can make trouble? "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Prov. 16:7).

As Dr. Maclaren says: "Men will weary of antagonism which is met only by the imperturbable calm of a heart at peace with God, and seeking peace with all men. The hot fires die down like burning coals scattered on a glacier, when laid against the crystal coolness of a patient, peaceful spirit."

Thus he who dwells in love dwells in peace, and is himself best qualified of all men to wield such influence for peace that the Lord's promise shall become his portion: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Mt. 5:9).

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Life-Lines

It is not the power of the written word that can explain the influence of these four lines. It is the power of the truth behind them.

Many years ago, Dr. Valpy, a well-known English scholar, wrote a little four-line verse as the longing of his heart and the confession of his faith. Some time afterward, he gave a copy of the words to his friend, Dr. Marsh, a Church of England clergyman, and the verse became a great blessing to him.

Dr. Marsh gave the lines to his friend, Lord Roden, who was so impressed with them that he asked Dr. Marsh to write them out, and then fastened the paper over the mantelpiece in his study; and there, yellow with age, they hung for many years, a memorial of the beloved hand.

Some time after this, an old friend, General Taylor, one of the heroes of Waterloo, came to visit him at Tollymore Park. Lord Roden noticed that the eyes of the old veteran were often fixed for a few moments on the motto over the mantelpiece. "Why, General," he said, "you will soon know the verse by heart."

"I know it now by heart," replied the general

with feeling, and those simple lines were the means of bringing him to know the way of salvation.

Some two years afterwards, the physician who had been with the old general while he lay dying, wrote to Lord Roden to say that his friend had departed in peace, and that the last words which fell from his lips were some words he had learned to love in his lifetime—

*In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy salvation see;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me.*

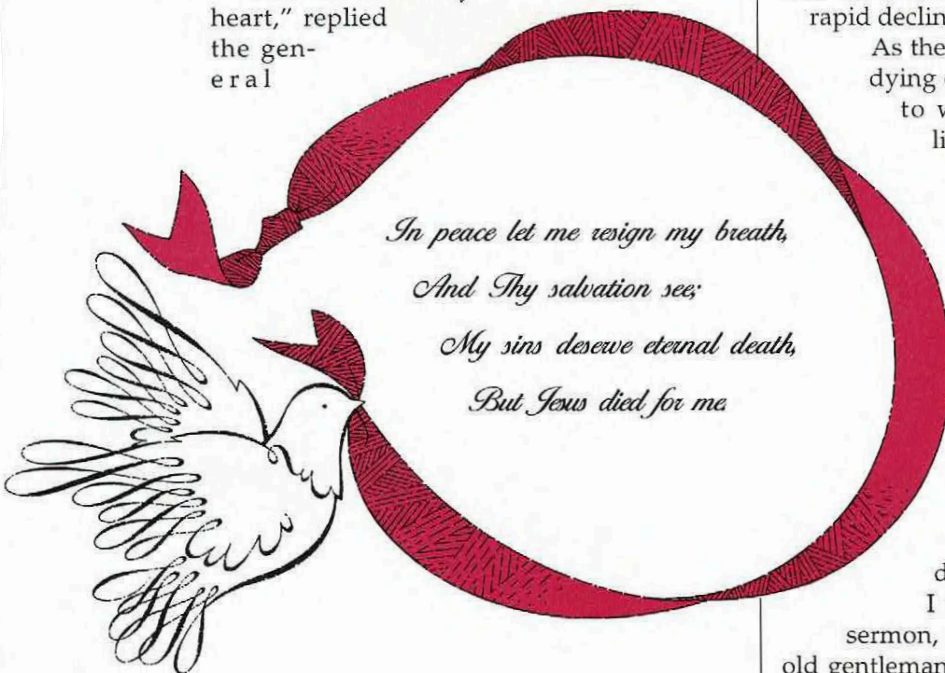
Years afterwards, at the house of a neighbor, Lord Roden happened to tell the story of the old general and these lines, and among those who heard it was a young officer in the British Army who had recently returned from the Crimea. He listened carelessly enough, and no impression seemed to be made at the time. A few months later, however, Lord Roden received a message from the officer that he wanted to see him, as he was in a rapid decline.

As the earl entered the sick-room, the dying officer extended both his hands to welcome him, repeating the lines—

*In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy salvation see;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me.*

And then he added, "These simple words have been God's message of peace and comfort to my heart in this illness, and they have been brought to my memory by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, after days of darkness and distress."

I was once telling this story in a sermon, and as I began I noticed that an old gentleman, who was sitting in a pew just



in front of me, was being overcome with extraordinary emotion. His whole frame seemed to quiver with some unwonted excitement, and his eyes looked bright with a strange light.

I thought for the moment that it was a passing attack of some kind. But as I went on telling the story there was no doubt that it had in some way seized on the very soul of the listener and touched his feeling with some strange and indescribable suggestion. When at last I came to the part about the Crimean officer, I thought that the old gentleman would have almost cried out, so deeply was he affected. The story ended the sermon.

After the singing of the hymn, I went into the vestry. I had scarcely got there when a knock was heard at the door, and the old gentleman, with emotion still evident, came and said, "Where did you get that story?"

I told him I had read it in the work of a modern author whose books are widely read.

He said, "I do not know whether you saw that I was very much touched by it, but it almost overcame me." And then, with tears streaming from his eyes, he told me this story.

Years ago, when he was a young man, careless and indifferent in matters of religion, he sauntered one day in his walk into an old churchyard at Starr's Point near Wolfville, Nova Scotia, in the land of Evangeline, and, seeing a fallen gravestone, he overturned it out of pure curiosity. And there he read at the foot, engraved in the stone, a verse of four lines that took such hold upon him, and so clearly explained to him the way of salvation, that they were the means of his conversion. And from that day, nearly fifty years before, he had, by God's grace, led a consecrated life for Christ. The lines were—

*In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy salvation see;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me.*

"You can imagine," said he, "my amazement, as well as my delight, when I heard you tell the story

about the lines. You brought back to me the wonderful story in which God was pleased to save my soul."

It was not long after that I was sent for, in order to visit this old gentleman whose sickness gradually grew more serious. One of the last things he did before he died was to take my hand affectionately and ask me to do him a favor: that at his funeral and over his coffin I would tell the story of the lines in the hope that the prayer of a dying man might be answered, and that they might be a blessing to many more souls. Soon afterwards he died.

At his funeral, which was attended by a large and representative body of prominent men, I told over his coffin, amidst the most profound and interested silence, the story of the stanza that had transformed so many lives. I ended by saying that it was the wish of the dear old man on his dying bed that the words, which would be distributed as his last memorial to all present, might become a blessing to their souls. And as each one passed from the house of mourning he received a card, printed with the name and age and burial date of that old saint of God, and on the other side the never-to-be-forgotten words—

*In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy salvation see;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me.*

The secret of the wonderful power that resides in these lines cannot be told. It may be that they were written in prayer, and watered by tears of love. I only know that when I told this story in a vacation service in one of the charming hotels in the White Mountains, New Hampshire, one summer, an American gentleman, a prominent New Yorker, was so deeply impressed that he said after hearing the words, "I have rarely heard anything that made such an impression upon me. Never before in my life have I so clearly grasped the way of salvation through faith in the Crucified."

U

Bouquet of Blessings: Not the absence of turmoil; the presence of God

Peace



etrarch wrote that five great enemies of peace inhabit with us—avarice, ambition, envy, anger, and pride. He said that until these were banished, we could not enjoy peace. But Solomon wrote: “When a man’s ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him” (Proverbs 16:7).

When the Lord came in resurrection to His disciples, His first word was “Peace.” In God’s will is our peace. —*Alighieri Dante*

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee. Isa. 26:3

Never pick a quarrel, even when it’s ripe.

—*Anonymous*

*Peace, still as the sea of glass,
Peace, knowing the judgment’s past,
Peace, that will forever last,
Calms a heart like mine.*

I could not live in peace if I put the shadow of a wilful sin between my soul and God.

—*George Eliot*

—*George Cutting*

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety.

—*George Mueller*

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. John 14:27

The “Pole-star” of the constellation of titles in Isaiah 9:6—Prince of Peace—speaks to the deepest needs of the human heart. In the first instance, it contained a particularly desirable promise to Israel. The nation was constantly harassed by war. Peace was promised in the reign of the Messiah. How appropriate also, in that respect, is this title of Christ to our own war-ridden generation! Through the reign of the Prince of Peace alone will real peace come to this troubled earth. But that is not the deepest note of the title. Hearts distressed through conviction concerning sin have ever realized that “there is no peace...to the wicked.” Peace with God, and consequently peace within, are possible through Christ alone. He is our Peace (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:14; Col. 1:20); Jehovah-shalom. To every trustful heart, He is the Prince of Peace; God our Saviour!

—*Herbert F. Stevenson*

*Is this indeed Thy peace? I have not tried
To analyze my faith, dissect my trust,
Or measure if belief be full and just,
And therefore claim Thy peace. But Thou hast died,
I know that this is true, and true for me,
And, knowing it, I come, and cast my all on Thee.*

*It is not that I feel less weak, but Thou
Wilt be my strength; it is not that I see
Less sin, but more of pardoning love with Thee,
And all-sufficient grace. Enough! and now
All fluttering thought is stilled; I only rest
And feel that Thou art near, and know that I am blest.*

—*Frances Ridley Havergal*

Receive courage from God for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones; and when you have laboriously accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. God is awake. —*Victor Hugo*



Richard Weaver

One former protagonist came out to hear Weaver. At the end of the meeting he said, "The last time I saw Richard he broke my jaw; but tonight, God, by Richard's preaching, has broken my heart. I came in unsaved; I go home washed in the blood of the Lamb."

Is there a place in the church of God for a man that loves a fight, and whose nickname is "Undaunted Dick"? If the struggle is the good fight of faith, then the answer is yes.

Richard Weaver (1827-1896) did not enjoy a light-hearted upbringing. His Christian mother was unequally yoked, and one of young Richard's most vivid memories was of him clutching his mother and howling to his inebriated father, "Don't kill my mother!"

"I remember my mother, with her arms around Thomas and myself, pleading in prayer, and my father standing over her with an axe uplifted, swearing he would cleave her in two if she did not give up praying. I can see her face now, tears rolling down her cheeks, as, looking at the axe, she tightened her grip on us and said, 'Ah! George, you cannot let it fall unless God permits.'"

At the age of seven he began work in the mines. Morning to night, six days a week, the only daylight he saw was on Sunday. In that environment he became quite a rascal, his favorite pastime being boxing. Fortunately his older brother, a primitive Methodist preacher, took him under his wing and through his witness Richard became a believer.

But within six months he had a sad reversal. Leaving prayer meeting one night, he saw three men drag off a young lady. She screamed: "O Richard, protect me!" He said, "Off with my coat and hat, and let fly right and left. Thus I, who had been praying only a few minutes before, was betrayed into behaving like a madman. I had two of them on the ground, and had hold of the ringleader by the hair...I believe I would have killed him had not some one stayed my hand.

"I looked on what I had done as a fall from grace. I rushed without coat or hat into the public-house and called for a pint of ale. The landlady said: 'No, something is the matter. Thee shalt have no ale by my drawing.'

"But my old cronies round the table offered me their glasses, saying: 'Drink, Dick.'

"The landlady said, 'I'm sure there's something up.' The father of my companion jumped up from his seat in the corner, and left. Shortly he returned with my hat and coat, told how his daughter had been insulted, and how I had defended her honor. I never saw men nearer using lynch law."

Richard felt too ashamed to remain in the area. He moved to Openshaw, and worked at Clayton coal mines. There he went from bad to worse. "Oh that someone had spoken to me! I became the associate of some of the worst characters in Manchester. Many a time on my bed I had fearful dreams." In the middle of nightmares of being cast into hell he would awaken, crying, "Lord, save me!"

One night he was sparring with a man when one of his blows went home, and the blood ran down his opponent's face. "As I stood there looking at his blood," recalled Weaver, "the Spirit of God brought that word to my mind, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.'

"Here, Charlie," he called, "pull off these; never again shall a pair of boxing gloves be put on my hands."

He went home to his bedroom and poured his soul out to the Lord, asking Him to heal his backsliding. Thereafter he associated himself with the believers. That association included a lady with auburn hair named Sarah Bradshaw. They married in January of 1853.

While living in New Mills and working for his brother George, he began to testify for the Lord publicly. "Those were blessed days when I worked in the coal-pit six days a week for daily bread, and six evenings and all Sabbath for the Lord. Looking back on these days, they stand out from all the others as the happiest of my life."

His brother's coal mine failed. George lost all his money, and Richard discovered that his last three weeks of work would receive no pay. "One Saturday night we sat in our little home wondering where the next meal was to come from. I thought of the good home from

**Farewell,
soldier of
Jesus, fallen
asleep!
Farewell,
Richard
Weaver!
Dear old
Greatheart
of the
evangel.**

Spoken at his
Memorial Service

which I had brought my wife; I thought of our empty cupboard; and I burst out weeping. She jumped up, threw her arms around my neck, and kissing me, said: 'The Lord has promised that our bread shall be given, and our water shall be sure; let us kneel down and pray.'

"We knelt down, but I was too much overcome to pray. She prayed. It was as though she was talking to some friend in the house. And there was such a Friend. Has He not said: 'Where two...are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst'? We rose from our knees and were about to retire to rest. A knock was heard at the door. I opened it. In walked our class-leader's wife with something bulky in her apron. She said, 'Mrs. Weaver, are you in need of anything?' My wife sat down unable to speak, and burst into tears. I spoke for her: 'Yes, we have not a bit of food in the house, nor money to buy any.'

"'Well, here is a loaf and some butter and sugar and tea; and our George has sent you a shilling, and you are to come to our house to dinner tomorrow. We were at prayer, and the master felt impressed that you needed help.'

"The kind sister left. My wife said, 'Now, Richard, you see that God will answer prayer; let us have faith in Him.' After thanksgiving we were again retiring. Another knock at the door. 'Who is there?'

"'Open the door,' was the reply.

"I opened it. A hand was put in, and a man's voice said, 'Take this from the Lord—He will provide,' and five shillings were placed in my hand. To this day I know not the bearer of those five shillings; but I know the Lord was the sender."

In 1856, Reginald Radcliffe, a Christian lawyer, met Weaver and arranged for him to get a month's leave of absence from work. Taking him along on evangelistic work, the blessing anticipated the sweeping harvest that would be coming in 1859-60.

It was during the 1859 revival that Lord Radstock, Reginald Radcliffe, and Richard Weaver preached in Manchester that one of Harry Moorhouse' friends was converted. He went and spoke to Harry, who, after weeks of abject misery, also came to the feet of the Saviour of the world. Harry later teamed up with the older John Hambleton, the converted actor. Hambleton became Harry's mentor, and soon Harry

became a co-worker. It was a season of reaping. Encircling London like the campfires from an army that was mounting a siege, there were meetings conducted by Frederick Bannister, John Hambleton, Henry Moorhouse, and, of course, Richard Weaver. A Cheshire farmer said if you "put a wagon into the corner of a field—it mattered not where—and let it be known that Weaver was to preach, at the hour the people were there in thousands." W. T. P. Wolston was one saved through Weaver's preaching.

In Dublin, Henry Bewley decided to erect a large building to accommodate the enormous interest in the gospel of Jesus Christ. How large was that interest? The auditorium built on Lower Merrion Street could seat 2,500. Merrion Hall was opened in 1863 and it was soon evident that it was none too large. There throngs came to hear Denham Smith, Harry Moorhouse, George Muller, F. C. Bland, and of course Richard Weaver. "Eternity alone will reveal the numbers of whom it may truly be said that 'this and that man was born there.' From this assembly many have gone forth to various parts of the world, serving God as evangelists and missionaries who owe their salvation to the Word they heard preached in Merrion Hall."

In the late 1870s, Henry Groves was laboring with a small assembly in Lancaster. David Beattie related how "the well-known evangelists, Weaver and Sylvester, paid a visit about this time. A wave of blessing attended their activities in the gospel, which brought much joy and gave a stimulus to the little assembly in seeing souls saved...."

One witness of that time said, "Yes, poor Weaver passed through the fire and the water; but God brought him out." You cannot chase down every rumor, but you can outlive them. And twenty-five years later, Weaver could still testify, "Every heart knows its own sorrow, and every back its own burden; but I have sometimes thought that no man has ever had the troubles that I have had to contend with. Afflictions sore have been my lot.

"I have had physical weakness to battle against. I have been obliged to walk with a stick to steady myself. For years I was troubled with epileptic fits. At times it required as many as five men to hold me. At

other times I have been unconscious for hours together. I have had poverty and want to endure. I have seen wife and children weeping for lack of the food that I, as bread-winner, had failed to procure.

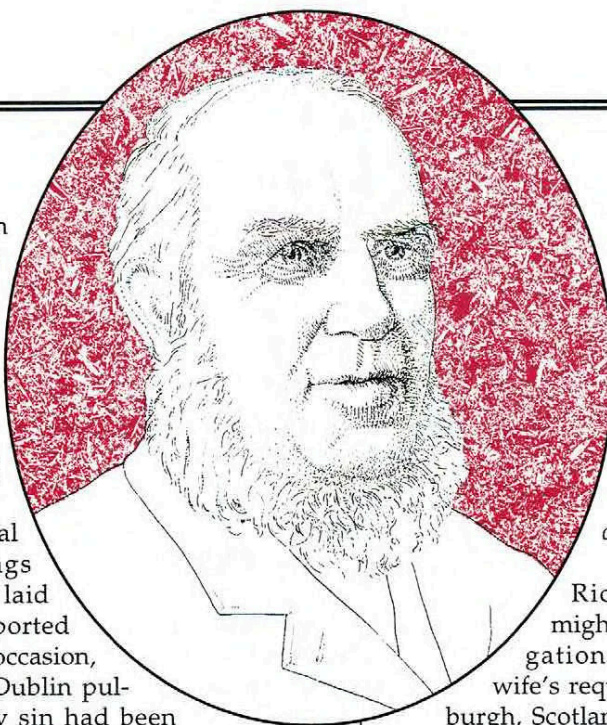
"But the greatest trial of all was when things that I knew not were laid to my charge. It is reported of Wesley that on one occasion, when preaching in a Dublin pulpit, he said that every sin had been laid to his charge save one; and he went on to say, 'When I am charged with that also my crown will be found.' In that respect I can shake hands with the venerable founder of the Wesleyan Church. I have never yet been counted a thief; but every other sin has been laid at my door.

"To add to the bitterness, I was forsaken by many of my earthly friends. Some of those who had been the most profuse in their professions of attachment to me were the readiest to drop me.

"Thus, I have had trials of various kinds, but not one trial too many; not one affliction too severe; not one temptation too strong. I was never allowed to lose my confidence in God. He who said to Peter, 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not,' must have been interceding for me."

His health gave out at this time and he became so ill that for seven days he lay unconscious. After recovering from the coma, John Street invited him to stay at his home in Oldham and to care for the veteran. This was in the year 1875. There a Christian businessman named Edwin Stansfield approached him about doing gospel work in the Workman's Hall on the Lord's day. Stansfield was a partner in the firm, Butterworth and Murgatroyd, of Glebe Mills. Soon Weaver became known as "Butterworth and Company's Bull-dog."

In 1881, his wife, Sarah, became dangerously ill. With her six children (all saved by God's grace) and Richard gathered around, she gave a lengthy farewell in which she exhorted each of her children and recited the poem,



*What is there here to court my stay
Or hold me back from home,
While angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come?*

Her final request of Richard was, "You will try after I am dead and gone to win more souls to Christ than you have done while I was living. *And, if I can, I will pray for you in heaven.*"

In the years that followed, Richard was convinced—by the mighty power of God on the congregations that he addressed—that his wife's request was being granted. In Edinburgh, Scotland, he spoke in the Drill Hall. It was supposed to hold about six thousand, and it was packed that night to the doors. They had even composed a rather lengthy, seven-stanza poem to honor the aging evangelist:

*In greeting thee, Richard, we think of the past,
When the thousands were moved by thy eloquence great;
When thy words reached the hearts of the multitudes vast,
And made the ungodly with terror to quake.*

Duncan Matheson said: "His appeals were overwhelming. I have seldom seen such an impression produced on a people. It seemed an hour of solemn decision. The hall was still as the grave and solemn as eternity itself. It is evident God gave the word to various cleanses of sinners with convincing power."

When Weaver faced the last enemy, his whispered words included: "Home. Home. Not far now. The chariot wheels are rattling. I will soon be here." At his request his simple gravestone read: "Richard Weaver. A great sinner saved by great grace."

MATERIAL IN THIS ARTICLE WAS GATHERED FROM:

James Patterson, *Richard Weaver's Life Story: The English Evangelist*, John Ritchie
R. C. Morgan, *Life of Richard Weaver*
Henry Pickering, *Chief Men Among the Brethren*, Loizeaux Brothers
David J. Beattie, *Brethren: The Story of a Great Recovery*, John Ritchie

U

Peace, Perfect Peace

While I was living in Israel I was greatly impressed with a word on everybody's lips. It is the word, "Shalom" which we know as "Peace." But there is much more to it than that.

Brother Rainey now makes his home in BC but for many years served the Lord in Africa, the Middle East, and Bermuda.

The first time I heard the word, "Shalom," was the day of arrival in the port city of Haifa. Before the ship docked and the passengers disembarked we heard the beautiful words, 'Shalom, Shalom,' coming from the lips of many of the people as they welcomed home loved ones to Israel. On that day it meant a lot to me, and still does until this hour. What does it mean?

It is a word that enshrines hidden depths of meaning, conveying the thoughts of rest, well-being, quiet, prosperity, not only in the realm of the physical, but also in the spiritual. Often a coin loses its luster and even its lettering becomes blurred by means of use, yet the value of the coin remains. So the word *peace* and its meaning may be blurred or vague to many, yet, thank God, it still sustains its intrinsic value. How good to turn to the Word of God and see what the Scriptures say.

In the Old Testament we observe the word in three remarkable places: the Law, the Writings and the Prophets. In the Law, the word peace is most often associated with a king. In the Psalms, it is linked with a city. In the Prophets, it is used in connection with a Saviour or Redeemer.

In the Law (the first five books written by Moses) we note the first mention of peace—Melchizedek, who is called the King of Peace (Gen. 14:18; cf. Heb. 7:2). The Psalmist refers to Jerusalem as the city of Peace (Ps. 122:6). The Prophet speaks of the Messiah as the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6).

THE KING OF PEACE

In the first book of the Bible, the word *peace* is found in the name of a mysterious personality—without recorded beginning or ending of days. About all we know from the study of Genesis 14, Psalm 110, and the Epistle to the Hebrews in the New Testament is that the King of Salem is a type or figure of One who was to come. We know nothing about his earlier history. All we know is that he appears on

the scene after the notable victory of Abraham and brings refreshment to the battle-weary patriarch. If it were not for the book of Hebrews, we would certainly be unable to explain the significance of this king of peace. In that Epistle we learn that, in a wise and masterful way, he proves that Jesus Christ is the fulfiller of the Old Testament prophecies—the One who is greater than the prophets, priests and kings of the past. Melchizedek, the King of Peace, was a figure of the One who alone was able to bring refreshment, rest, and redemption to the sons of men.

THE CITY OF PEACE

What city in the world is like Jerusalem? It is the city of prophet, priest, and king, scribe, scholar, and saint—the city of the Temple, of David's throne, of Solomon's glory, of the Saviour's death. While there are many wonderful cities in the world, for none are we specifically called on to pray except Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6). For three millennia, the Holy City has been revered in the hearts and minds of men. How well it has been stated by another: "From the time of King David, Jerusalem became not only the capital of the Judean Kingdom, but, through the building of the Temple, also the heart of the Jewish religion. Ultimately it also became the holy city for Judaism's daughter, Christianity, and illegitimate child, Islam."

During the Judean Kingdom, Jerusalem may never have had more than 30,000 inhabitants. And yet it proved strong enough to defy the hosts of Sennacherib, and internally important enough for the kings ultimately to aim at centralization in it of all sacrificial worship. It was in the streets of Jerusalem that the great prophets of Israel preached, delivering to the populace and its rulers those immortal messages which were to shape the destinies of mankind forever after. Even Amos, the Judean shepherd, preaching in the northern kingdom, spoke of the Lord's roaring from Zion and His voice being heard from

Jerusalem. Occupied by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC, Jerusalem was thoroughly destroyed. And yet, it was precisely then that it began looming as an ideal and a dream to the exiles in Babylon, and thus played an ideological role which went far beyond its actual role in earlier history.

How important to recall the words of the Psalmist as he expressed the hopes and longings of the exiles by the rivers of Babylon, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy" (Ps. 137:5-6).

Though the city is three thousand years old and downtrodden by Gentiles (Lk. 21:24), it is still a beautiful city. In the future, Jerusalem is seen as delivered. In Ezekiel we observe the glory of God departing from the Temple and the city. There was no glory in the temple of Zerubbabel nor that of Herod. When Pompey entered the Holy of Holies at the siege of Jerusalem, he exclaimed, "I find in it nothing!" Israel's house had been left desolate.

Later on in the same book, Ezekiel describes the return of the glory of God to the city of Jerusalem. In the day when the Messiah's feet stand on the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem will be cleansed, its people restored, and the glory of Jehovah shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea (Zech. 13:1; Isa. 62:1-12). In spite of the fact that at the present Jerusalem is a besieged city, we rest upon the Word of God and await the fulfillment of the promise, "He maketh peace in thy borders," and, "Thou shalt see peace upon Israel" (Ps. 147:14; 128:6).

THE GIVER OF PEACE

When we come to the book of Isaiah, peace is enshrined in the Prince of Peace, *Sar Shalom*. As a writer, Isaiah's language is beautiful and majestic as he presents the Messiah as a Sign to the nation (ch. 7); as the *Sar Shalom* (ch. 9); as a Shoot out of the Palestinian soil (ch. 11), as a Stone (ch. 28); as the Shadow of a great rock (ch. 32); as a Shepherd (ch. 40); as a

Servant commissioned to carry out the work of redemption (Isa. 42-50, esp. ch. 53); and in the closing chapters of the book as Sovereign of the Universe. How marvellous the title, "The Prince of Peace," in these days of wars and rumors of war. When the Messiah takes up the reigns of government, He will be the nation's peace. In His government there will be no limit as to its extent, historical or geographical.

His rule is based on the everlasting covenant made with David.

While the word *peace* is familiar in the land of the Bible, it is certainly not an enjoyed experience there. As a nation, Israel is beleaguered on every side, blocked, boycotted, and bitterly hated, yet the people struggle on for life and liberty. A stable peace for the peoples of the Middle East is not only a problem for Arabs and Jews—it is the policy of world governments to preserve peace in Israel—but the question is, How can this peace settlement be achieved?

The answer is not with conferences or committees but in Christ. As long as men's hearts are as they are and nations are alienated from the God of peace, we shall know little peace in the heart, home, or country. True peace is found in the Person of Christ,

the *Sar Shalom* of the Bible.

Peace is associated with a king, a city, and a Redeemer. It is the legacy of the Lord Jesus Christ, received by faith in His finished work (Rom. 5:1). Peace is a possession experienced and enjoyed by a mind and heart at rest in God (Isa. 26:3; cf. Phil. 4:6-7). Peace is the goal towards which all history moves under His controlling hand (Zech. 9:10). Peace will be the seal of God when Christ reigns in righteousness from Jerusalem, at last the city of peace in reality. Meantime, it is our solemn responsibility to pray for the peace of the city of Jerusalem and anticipate with undimmed hope the glorious destiny and design of the God of Peace. Oh, the blessedness of simply resting on the Word of God and proving:

*Stayed upon Jehovah hearts are fully blest;
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.*



Walk with Me



Twenty-seven hundred years ago, the prophet Isaiah predicted the coming of the Prince of Peace. The announcement of His birth was made by angels to the shepherds who watched their flocks by night. They said, "Peace on earth," and "Good will to men."

Sadly, Jerusalem, the "city of Peace," rejected Him and has never known peace since. The Psalmist has requested that we pray for the peace of Jerusalem. She will never have peace, however, until Israel confesses her sin and repents of rejecting the Prince of Peace. That day will not come until the Lord returns and His feet stand on the Mount of Olives.

In the meantime, the gospel of peace goes out to both Jew and Gentile. To those who believe it, there comes peace with God; and to those who walk in the way of peace there comes the joy of knowing the God of Peace.

To those who are peacemakers comes the blessings of peace. To those who refuse to worry comes the joy of knowing the peace of God. Paul exhorts the Christians to let the

peace of Christ rule in our hearts because we have been called to peace. He taught that the bond of peace would enable us to keep the unity of the Spirit. He also assured us that the result of submitting to the control of the Holy Spirit would bring peace.

The Prince of Peace was born in the City of David. He died in the city of Peace. He will one day occupy the throne of David in the city of Peace: "He shall bear the glory, and shall...be a priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech. 6:13).

The invitation to all of us is to walk the path of peace. In order for us to experience the peace of God, we must come not only to Bethlehem and gaze on the manger, we must also come to Jerusalem and kneel at the cross. Bethlehem is only five or six miles from Jerusalem. Yet that short trip is one of the longest in the world. It involves the exchange of our sins for the peace of God. Will you accept the good news of peace? Will you walk with me the path of peace?

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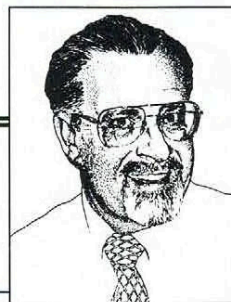
*Doug and
Jean Price
serve the
Lord
primarily in
northern
Ontario.
They make
their home in
Elliot Lake.*

Peace of Mind

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you...Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid...These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn. 14:27; 16:33).

When we read the account of the trial of the Lord, we see Him standing calm and serene in the midst of that raging rabble. He gives us the secret in John 16:32, "I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." And again, "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" (Jn. 18:11). He was perfectly submitted to His Father's will whatever the cost, and abiding in communion with His Father.

But now His race is run. All power is given into His hand. What peace for our hearts and minds! He has a perfect plan for each of His own. It may lie across the stormy seas or over the rugged lonely mountains or under the burning sun of affliction, but the heart that planned it has in love for our souls first met all the power of the enemy and won. Let us trust Him then. Why do we chafe under affliction or complain of our circumstances when His pierced hands are at the helm and His infinite love and wisdom has planned it all for us? "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength" (Isa. 26:3-4).



The Pursuit of Godliness

Lasting peace is a fruit of holiness, and holiness grows in the soul of a devoted heart.

We enter a season of the year when many will turn their eyes for a moment to look at a baby in a manger, and as babies often do, the look will soften the heart and warm the emotions. This in turn will open the purse strings, there will be a flurry of good will, and those who run charitable organizations as well as the retailers of the country will bask in this outpouring, lining their pockets or the pockets of their organizations with the proceeds. Then they will try to get along until next year. You may call that outlook pessimistic, but maybe realistic is more accurate.

Precious few will stand in awe of the fact stated so simply in Luke 1:35. "And the angel answered and said unto her, That holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Or as Paul said so eloquently in 1 Timothy 3:16, "God manifest in flesh."

But what really staggers my imagination—for I really can't even begin to get my mind around this first statement—is that I, along with all my brothers and sisters in Christ, will one day be presented to God Himself as "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27). In Colossians 1:13, Paul reminded the Colossian believers that they had been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son. This great work, accomplished by His Preeminent Son and His death, is able to present them holy and unblemished and unprovable in His sight (Col. 1:22).

But what is this thing called holiness? And why, if holiness is something that is bestowed upon us, does it say in Hebrews 12:10 that He (the Father of spirits) will chasten us so that we can be partaker of His holiness? Is holiness my responsibility or His?

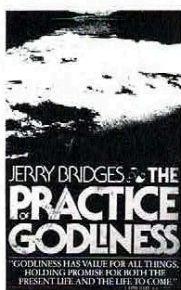
These are questions that rumble around in many of our minds and we never really take the time to explore the answers to them. But there is one brother who has taken the time

and then written not one but two books on the subject. His name is Jerry Bridges. The first book, written some years ago in 1978, is called *The Pursuit of Holiness* and it is just the above questions he was asking himself that caused him to begin his study. Is it possible for a believer to live a holy life? Many times we despair at this idea as we look at our own lives. But he answers this with a loud and clear "Yes—but." It is a pursuit—it takes discipline and the forming of habits of obedience. In the forward to the book, Mr. Herbert Lockyer says, "In the *Declaration of Independence*, Thomas Jefferson declared that one of the inherent and unalienable rights of men is 'the pursuit of happiness.' Professing Christians must be brought to realize that the pre-eminent desire and demand of God for us is that of the continual pursuit of holiness of life, and the reflection of His own holiness." While holiness is bestowed by God and is the work of God we are responsible to pursue that end. This is the great lesson taught very capably in this book.

A companion volume, *The Practice of Godliness*, was published in 1983. The foundation text of the book is 1 Timothy 4:8, "Godliness is profitable unto all things." In the books of Timothy and Titus the word godliness is prevalent, being used 9 of the 16 total times the English word godliness is found in our King James Bibles. Mr. Bridges defined godliness as "devotion to God which results in a life that is pleasing to Him." This has impressed me over the years as the proper perspective. First, we must be devoted to God. A person devoted to God will then seek to live a life that is pleasing to Him.

As we pause this season to look into the manger, may it cause us to renew our desire to live holy lives in 1996. Only as we bow our hearts in devotion to Him and live under the authority of His Word will we live lives that demonstrate the character of that Holy One—even Jesus The Christ our Lord. And this will bring lasting peace.

U



Peace After the Storm

*All his life,
William
Cowper, a
close friend
of John
Newton,
wrestled
with doubt
and despair.
In this
poem he
speaks of
the joy of
passing
through the
storm into
God's
sunshine.*

When darkness long has veiled my mind,
And smiling day once more appears,
Then, my Redeemer, then I find
The folly of my doubts and fears.

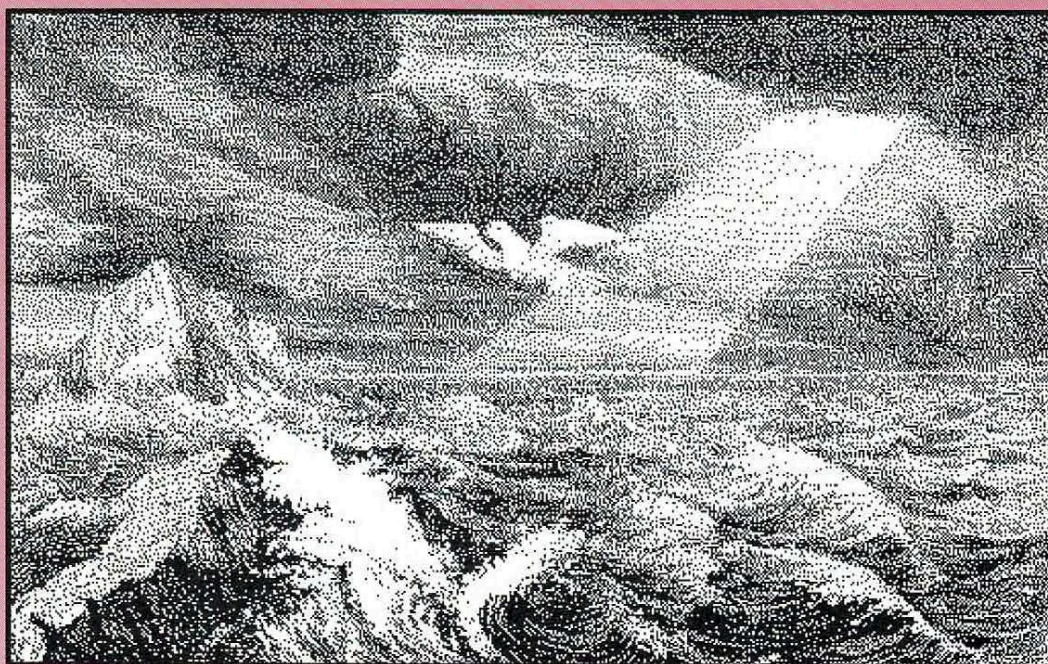
Straight I upbraid my wandering heart,
And blush that I should ever be
Thus prone to act so base a part,
Or harbor one hard thought of Thee!

Oh, let me then at length be taught
What I am still so slow to learn:
That God is love, and changes not,
Nor knows the shadow of a turn.

Sweet truth, and easy to repeat!
But when my faith is sharply tried
I find myself a learner yet,
Unskilful, weak, and apt to slide.

But, O my Lord, one look from Thee
Subdues my disobedient will;
Drives doubt and discontent away,
And Thy rebellious child is still.

Thou art as ready to forgive
As I am ready to repine:
Thou, therefore, all the praise receive;
May simple trust in Thee be mine.



"What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."

PSALM 56:3

"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid."

ISAIAH 12:2

And On Earth, Peace

Peace was offered to men at Bethlehem but only provided at Calvary.

Brother Bramhall, now in his mid nineties, ministers the Word regularly. He is the author of two books published by Gospel Folio Press: "I Am My Beloved's" and "My Beloved Is Mine."



THE PROMISE OF PEACE

This promise was given by the angels in their rejoicing over Bethlehem. Has it been fulfilled? Does the present universal chaos of hatred and strife suggest it? To the contrary; for the Prophet Isaiah's words are also true: "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isa. 57:21). Then has God failed to fulfill the promise of Bethlehem? No! "For *all* the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen."

THE PROCUREMENT OF PEACE

The peace God promised was not obtained for us by the birth of His Son, but rather by the death of His Son. It is a strange declaration, for the expectation of earth is thought by many that peace is received by the birth of Jesus. Not so; it is only procured by the death of Jesus. We read this in Ephesians 2:13-14, "Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace." Again, in Colossians 1:20 it is written: "Having made peace through the blood of His cross..." Then do not journey to Bethlehem to find peace, but wend your way to Calvary and there find the procurement of eternal peace for your soul through the blood of His cross.

*Oh! the peace forever flowing
From God's thoughts of His own Son.
Oh, the peace of simply knowing
On the cross that all was done.*

THE PROCLAMATION OF PEACE

Anticipatively the Lord said in John 14:27,

"I leave peace with you: I give My peace to you." Blessed legacy of peace for every soul that trusts Him as Saviour and Lord. The apostles heralded its truth—"Preaching peace by Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:36)—and there is no other source for peace.

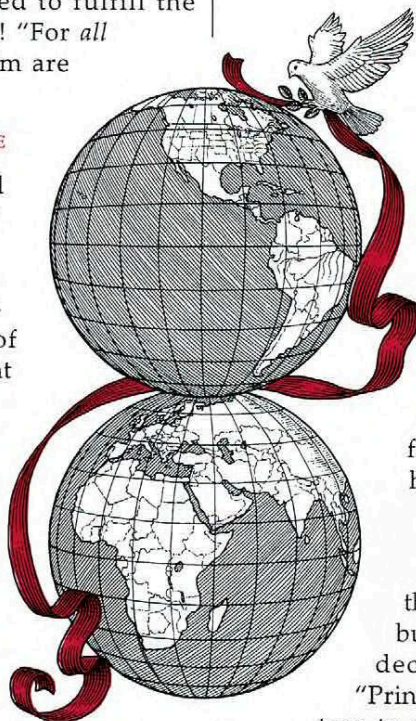
Blessed gift of peace, for He said, "I give My peace to you." This is something further, for His peace was that serenity of soul He experienced during the agonies of His betrayal, His judgment, and His crucifixion! Peace in the midst of such convulsions of trouble? Can it be for us? Yes it is, for it bears not the character of this world of failure, but the eternal character of heaven and God. Therefore He says, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it fear." This He wants us to have also.

PERPETUAL PEACE

Peace is still promised for the earth in a universal aspect, but God will fulfill the angels' decree, for the Saviour is the "Prince of Peace" and, on His return to earth, "Of the increase of His government and *peace* there shall be no end (Isa. 9:6-7).

The earth will yet have universal peace, but not until the Saviour comes again and reigns on and over the earth, which must soon be. May God hasten the blessed return of His Son, who alone can bring in everlasting peace on earth.

Our greetings of the season for you are expressed by God's Word in 2 Thessalonians 3:16— "Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all."



U

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THE *Season's* BEST

James Gordon Bennett, a Scottish school teacher, came to the United States in 1819. Attracted to the newspaper business, he worked as a writer and editor of several papers before founding the *New York Herald* in 1835 with \$500. He revolutionized the newspaper business by hiring reporters and introduced foreign correspondence with the aid of the newly invented telegraph. It was his son, James Jr., who sponsored Henry M. Stanley's search in Africa for the missing David Livingstone.

By the time Bennett Sr. retired in 1867, his newspaper's annual profits were approaching half a million dollars, a princely sum in those days. The successful businessman had a habit at the year-end holiday season which brought its share of surprises. He would fill his pockets with various denominations of dollar bills each morning. Then, as he met various employees in his daily rounds, he would reach into his pocket, remove a bill at random, and give it to the worker with the best wishes for the season.

One day, as he stepped into the elevator to ride up to his office, he reached into his coat, and gave a bill to the young elevator boy. To his amazement, the operator found in his hand a one hundred dollar bill! Not a small sum today, but heart-stopping in the 1800s!

"Mr. Bennett," stammered the young fellow, "this is too much for an elevator boy!"

"It may be too much for an elevator boy to receive," responded the newspaperman, "but it's not too much for James Gordon Bennett to give."

At this time of the year we remember The Gift, which makes every other gift a nonevent. We may think it far too great a price to pay for such sinners as we are, but, thank God, He did not consider it too much to give. "*Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift*" (2 Cor. 9:15).