

EXALTING CHRIST · EQUIPPING BELIEVERS · EVANGELIZING THE WORLD

CORNERSTONE

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2017

IN THIS ISSUE:

Introducing
Cornerstone

When The Bible
Quotes The Bible

Beauty for Ashes

Improving Worship
at the Lord's Supper

...and more

TO YOU WHO BELIEVE, THIS STONE IS PRECIOUS · 1 PETER 2:7

Cornerstone Editorial

*“To you who believe, this Stone is precious.”
1 Peter 2:7*

You hold in your hand the inaugural issue of *Cornerstone Magazine*. It is our desire that this issue will be the first of many which will follow. As the Cornerstone in the temple served to unite the whole building together, we pray that *Cornerstone Magazine* might unite believers of similar convictions to each other. We seek to be a link of information that brings believers and assemblies a little closer together. This year we plan to publish six issues of articles, ministry reports, and announcements of Bible conferences and outreaches throughout North America. May the Lord use this magazine to encourage, inform, and build you up in Him.

*A life that is
built upon
Christ is a life
built upon an
unshakeable
foundation.*

The American Dictionary of the English Language, commonly known as *Webster's Dictionary*, defines a cornerstone as: “a stone which lies at the corner of two walls, serving to unite them.” Concerning this truth, Paul instructs us, “In Him the whole structure is joined together harmoniously” (Eph. 2:21 Amplified Bible). Christ, as the cornerstone, imparts cohesiveness to the Christian assembly. He places us as “living stones” in His holy temple so that we are united to Him and, at the same time, joined to each other.

The cornerstone was indispensable in the construction of Herod's temple. The high plateau of Mount Moriah was not level enough for the total space required for that magnificent temple. Thus, the Israelites ingeniously constructed a “temple mount” that was essentially a large box. While others had built walls to terrace the mountain and expand the area, Herod's project was much more ambitious. It required the use of huge carved stones at the base, a part of which we now call the “Western Wall”. The stones are massive and bear the weight of the walls that hold up the Temple platform. The cornerstone is 45 feet long, 11 feet deep, and 10 feet high, weighing approximately 570 tons. To an observer, it would seem as if the cornerstone was holding up the entire temple. We are God's holy temple, quarried from a natural rock and supported by the upholding power and presence of the chief Cornerstone.

A life that is built upon Christ is a life built upon an unshakeable foundation. From an architectural and spiritual standpoint, a cornerstone would control the design of a building. From the location of the cornerstone, an architect would plan and balance the entire structure. Christ, as the cornerstone, will determine the direction and design of our lives. He will give symmetry to life. He will make all parts of the church contribute to the whole. He will give balance, strength, and foundation. He will hold together all facets of life in proper proportion and perspective.

The Cornerstone holds the most honored position. Peter wrote: “To you who believe, this Stone is precious” (1 Peter 2:7). The word *precious* equates with *honor*. In some buildings, the cornerstone is the ceremonial block that is placed in the outer wall bearing an inscription that memorializes the event. As the cornerstone, Christ holds the most honored and important position in the church. This truth should not just be a noble thought but a truth and reality. Our intent is that *Cornerstone Magazine*, like the cornerstone of old, may honor Christ, unite assemblies, and support believers in the coming days.

David Dunlap

by **David Dunlap**

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www.cornerstonemagazine.org

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TO YOU WHO BELIEVE, THIS STONE IS PRECIOUS · 1 PETER 2:7

News & Events



26 Below New York (CMML Winter Retreat)

Camp-Of-The-Woods, Speculator, NY
January 13-15, 2017

The cost is \$128 per person. The speaker is Micah Tuttle, a missionary to Peru. Attendees must be at least 14 years old and in 9th grade to attend 26 Below. For more information, please contact Craig Fritchey at ccfritchey@cmml.us

Jersey Shore Inter-Assembly Conference

Bethany Bible Chapel
2341 Church Road, Tom's River, NJ
Saturday, Jan 28, 2017 • 2:00-5:00 pm

The theme of the conference is "Israel in Prophecy: Making Sense of a World in Turmoil" with speaker Steve Herzig, from Friends of Israel. For more information please contact Mark Kolchin at 609-709-3220 or email him at knowtheword@gmail.com

66th Annual Southeastern Workers Conference

Believers Gospel Chapel, Augusta, GA
February 23-25, 2017

The theme of the conference will be "Draw Near to God." The scheduled speakers are Nate Bramsen (Niger), Keith Keyser (PA), and devotionals by Jonathan Peck (NC). For more info, please visit www.sewc.info or email Mark Shelly at sewcinfo@gmail.com.

Midwest 26 Below (CMML Winter Retreat)

Hidden Acres Christian Center
3827 Union Avenue, Dayton, Iowa, 50530
February 24-26, 2017

The cost is \$85 per person. The speaker is Micah Tuttle, a missionary to Peru. Attendees must be at least 14 years old and in 9th grade to attend 26 Below. For more information, please contact Craig Fritchey at ccfritchey@cmml.us

Bible Conference in Land O' Lakes, FL

Land O'Lakes Bible Chapel
1209 Livingston Road, Lutz, FL
March 11-12, 2017

On March 11-12 Dr. Steve Price will be speaking on the topic "Evangelistic Outreach to a World Hostile to Christ". The conference begins Saturday at 9:30am to 3:30pm, and Sunday 10:15 and 11:15. Lunch will be served Saturday. For more information email David Dunlap at daviddunlap@earthlink.net or visit www.landolakesbiblechapel.net

North American Week of Prayer

The Bible Chapel of Shawnee,
12230 W. 75th Street, Shawnee, KS
May 1-5, 2017

The third annual North American Week of Prayer will be held May 1-5, 2017, in Shawnee, KS. All believers are invited to gather together to pray to God and seek His blessings for North America. Area believers will seek to make housing accommodations available for attendees (register early, housing is limited). For further details please visit www.naweekofprayer.com.

Hartford City, IN: Seeking to Form an Assembly

Believers in the Hartford City, Indiana area are seeking other believers with which to form a New Testament assembly. For more information contact Gaylord Kramer at chaplainkramer1@yahoo.com or call 765.348.1837.

Brooksville Bible Chapel

Brooksville, FL
Are you planning to retire or relocate to Hernando County, Florida? The believers of Brooksville Bible Chapel extend a warm welcome to you to fellowship with them. The chapel is located on 21123 Yontz Road in Brooksville, FL. For more information, please contact Richard Whatley at rwhatley1@tampabay.rr.com.

Video Offer

Bethel Creations has produced a professional quality 2-minute video clip suitable for use on assembly websites free of charge. Using personal testimonies, this video presents biblical reasons for meeting as a New Testament church today. To view the video please visit www.bethelcreations.org. For more information, please contact Ashish Varghese at ashish@bethelcreations.org.



News & Events

Grace (Logan) Croudace Homecall

Grace passed into the presence of the Lord on Monday, September 19, 2016, at Chitokoloki Hospital, Zambia after suffering a stroke.

Grace was commended to the Lord's work in Africa in 1958 by Grace Chapel, Caldwell, NJ. Together with her husband, David, she served the Lord in Zambia as well as Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa for over 50 years. The funeral service was held Thursday morning, September 21 at Chavuma Mission in Zambia.

Gaston Jolin Homecall

Gaston Jolin (1931-2016) — On August 28, 2016, at 85 years old, Gaston Jolin passed into the presence of his Lord. Gaston was an evangelist and the founder of the television program *L'Heure de la Bonne Nouvelle* (The Hour of Good News) in Quebec. He was instrumental in the establishment of Camp Joli-B, a youth camp in Quebec. Gaston taught and proclaimed the Word of God for over sixty years in Quebec, Canada. Many Roman Catholics have come to salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ through his faithful testimony.

If you or your assembly has a news item or event to contribute, please email George Ferrier at gferrier@cornerstonemagazine.org

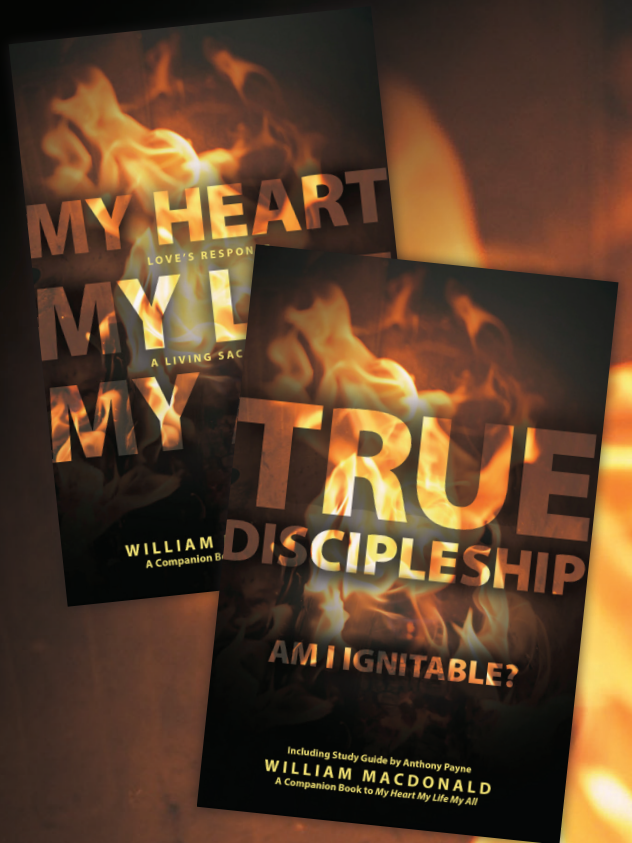
AM I IGNITABLE?

"True Christianity is an all-out commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Saviour is not looking for men and women who will give their spare evenings to Him—or their weekends—or their years of retirement. Rather He seeks those who give Him first place in their lives."

—True Discipleship

William MacDonald's classic books are now available with new covers! *True Discipleship: Am I Ignitable?* (with study guide) and *My Heart, My Life, My All: Love's Response, a Living Sacrifice*.

Also available from Gospel Folio Press
What the Bible Teaches: Ezekiel by D. Stevely
2017 Choice Gleanings Calendar
(Desk, Wall, Pocket Planner and Journal styles)
See our website for more products!



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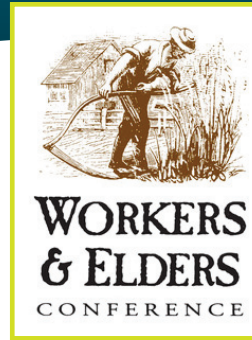
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Report: The 78th National Workers & Elders Conference

In 1938, at the suggestion of T. B. Gilbert, 25 full-time workers and elders gathered in St. Louis, MO, for a time of prayer, teaching from the Word of God, and discussion of doctrinal and practical issues concerning New Testament assemblies. Since then, year by year, workers and elders have continued to meet together for times of spiritual refreshment and encouragement. Since its inception, the purpose for the conference was to encourage and teach New Testament Church principles. Mr. Gilbert was very active in starting this conference and in its continuance until his death in 1972. Now in its seventy-eighth year, the National Workers and Elders Conference continues to draw workers, elders, missionaries, and serious believers of all ages from across North America.

Each year, the NWECC convenes from Tuesday morning until Thursday noon in the second week of October. The location of the conference moves alternately from a chapel facility in the Midwest to one on the East Coast. There is no charge to attend the conference; the expenses for conducting the conference are borne by area assemblies. Extensive book displays from Gospel Folio Press, ECS Ministries, and Everyday Publications are featured, along with numerous exhibits from assembly ministries across North America.

The conference begins each morning with a full hour of corporate prayer devoted to the needs of assemblies, workers, and believers. This is followed by a Bible study focused on the theme of the conference. Throughout the day, there are general sessions, seven seminar sessions, and various reports on the work of the Lord. Lunch and evening meals are provided by the host assembly. The area assemblies seek to provide overnight accommodations for as many full-time workers as possible. Each conference attendee is asked to register on the conference website (www.workerselders.org), where schedules, invited speakers, and seminars topics are posted.



This past October, over 250 full-time workers, missionaries, and elders gathered at Bethany Chapel in Cedar Falls, Iowa, for the 78th annual National Workers and Elders Conference. Each morning Dr. Daniel Smith, former president of Emmaus Bible College, led a three

devotional Bible studies on the conference theme “A Christ-Centered Church ... Facing A World in Crisis.” This year, some of the general session speakers were Brian Gunning, Mike Attwood, Bob Upton, Lee Sandifer, Rob Brennan, and Dr. Steve Price. Topics at these general sessions included “The Body of Christ: Modeling the Biblical Pattern”; “Fruitfulness and Victory by the Spirit of Christ”; “Power of Praise and Fellowship”; and “Biblical Headship: Practical Submission to Divine Authority.” Practical seminars were conducted during the afternoon on topics such as “Loving Muslims without Fear” by Ali Farhadi, “Profiting from Prayers of the Bible” by Ruth Schwertfeger, “Risk Management” by Bill Coyle, and “Tax Laws for Commended Workers” by Ed Anthony. Recordings of the messages of this 2016 conference will be available at the Bethany Chapel website – www.bethanychapel.com.

The 2017 Workers and Elders Conference will be held on October 10, 11, 12 at North Ridge Bible Chapel in Raleigh, N.C. (7100 Harps Road, Raleigh, NC, 27615) The theme of the conference will be “Do You Love Me?”, with a focus on practical lessons for the servant of God taken from the Epistle of 1 Peter. The NWECC committee encourages elders (and wives) and full-time workers on the East Coast to plan ahead and consider attending this conference. The committee would also ask that you keep this conference in prayer, so that it might continue to be a rich blessing to all who attend.



Report: Bethany Christian Fellowship

INDIANAPOLIS, IN

Our Lord commanded his disciples, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel.” Later the apostle Paul was given an equally important instruction—to establish New Testament assemblies wherever he would go (Eph. 3:9). Nearly one hundred years ago, a group of believers in Indianapolis, Indiana, took this instruction as their own commission. In 1915, in the northern suburbs of Indianapolis, four families began to meet for worship and the preaching of the Word. An immigrant from Switzerland, who had recently moved into area served in the teaching the Scriptures and shepherding this new group of believers.

This group of believers began to grow, and in the early 1920s, the assembly moved into a storefront building in northern Indianapolis. Over the years, Bethany Christian Fellowship has met together in rented facilities in a number of locations. After years of gospel preaching, faithful teaching of God’s Word, and personal gospel work, God formed a strong and vibrant assembly of His people.

In 2005, Bethany Christian Fellowship purchased four acres of land for \$95,000, in view of constructing a chapel. Over the next three years, the assembly was able to repay its property loan and save other funds in order to begin their chapel building project. An architect designed an attractive 3,375 square-foot metal building, (45’X75’) which seated 100 people. The structure also contained a kitchen, nursery, and Sunday School classroom. After securing a loan from Stewards Foundation for \$120,000, construction of the building was begun. There was much planning, sacrifice, and countless hours of working with local and county officials. The building project, with a total cost \$180,000 was completed in 2010. The assembly was soon granted a certificate of occupancy and has been meeting together in this building since 2010.



Godly elders have shepherded the ministries and the spiritual needs of the believers since the beginning of the assembly. Today Robert Rankin, Timothy Dunham, and Ryan Caldwell have all been recognized and serve as elders in Bethany Christian Fellowship. These elders lead in outreach activities, serve in discipleship, conduct evangelistic home Bible studies, direct Vacation Bible School, and oversee various other ministries.

Today Bethany Christian Fellowship continues to meet as a local church for worship, prayer and Bible study, as well as reaching out to its immediate community for Christ. This assembly is composed of believers from many nationalities and diverse cultural backgrounds, together sharing the love of Christ and the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The assembly is pleased to have commended three full-time workers to the mission field.

If you are traveling to the Hoosier state and have the opportunity to visit the believers at Bethany Christian Fellowship, you will receive a warm welcome. Bethany Christian Fellowship is located at 6455 Churchman Road, Indianapolis, IN. For information about the times of the meetings or contact information, please visit the website @ www.indybcf.com. The assembly contact representative is Robert Rankin, who can be reached at analyticalchem85@gmail.com. Remember these believers in prayer as they faithfully serve the Lord and reach out to the unsaved in Indianapolis, Indiana.



You might expect that when the New Testament quotes from the Old, it would always quote it in the same context and with the same meaning. That is far from true. The fact is that when the Holy Spirit quotes Old Testament passages, He is a law unto Himself. He refuses to be boxed in by man-made rules of interpretation.

We defend His right to do this. The One who wrote the Old Testament in the first place has a right to reinterpret it as He pleases. The ingenuity and variety that He employs in doing this are one of the fascinating studies of the wonderful Word. Critics of the Bible point to differences in quotations as proof of inconsistency and error. E. W. Bullinger replies, "Thus it seems man may take any liberty he chooses in quoting, adapting, or repeating in a varied form his own previously written

2. *Partial quotation*

Sometimes the Spirit changes a passage because He is using it in a different dispensational setting. The classic example of this is when the Lord Jesus read from Isaiah 61 in the synagogue at Nazareth. He concluded with the words that said He had come "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19). Then He closed the scroll, gave it to the attendant and sat down. If He had continued, He would have read "and the day of vengeance of our God" (Isaiah 61:2).

But that would have been out of place dispensationally. His first advent began the acceptable year of the Lord. The day of vengeance of our God will begin with His second coming.

**THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SOVEREIGN,
BOTH AS THE AUTHOR AND
INTERPRETER OF THE SCRIPTURES.
HE DOES AS HE PLEASES... WHAT HE
PLEASES IS ALWAYS MEANINGFUL,
PURPOSEFUL AND EXACTLY RIGHT.**

words, but he denies the Divine Author of Holy Scripture the right to deal in the same manner with His own words. This is the cause of all the so-called 'discrepancies' and 'difficulties' arising from man's ignorance."¹ As we study the quotation of Old Testament passages in the New, we find a number of fascinating categories:

1. *Exact quotation*

Very often the New Testament writers or speakers quote a passage word for word to convey the exact same meaning. Thus when nailed to the cross our Lord prayed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" (Matthew 27:46). This is an exact quotation of Psalm 22:1.

We see a similar adaptation of an Old Testament verse when the Savior drove the money changers out of the temple courts. Quoting Isaiah 56:7, He said, "My house shall be called the house of prayer" (Matt. 21:13). But the Isaiah passage says, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."

Why did Jesus leave out the words "for all people"? Because during His earthly ministry the Temple was not for all nations. It was a Temple for the Jews. Gentiles were forbidden to go beyond a court especially assigned to them. However, during the Millennium, the Temple will be for all nations, and that is what the Isaiah passage is looking forward to.

**WHEN
THE
BIBLE**



3. A new aspect of truth

Sometimes a change is made in a quotation to introduce a new truth, or a new aspect of the truth. In Isaiah 52:7 we read, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings. . .” Here Isaiah is speaking of the beautiful feet of the Messiah. But when Paul quoted that verse in Romans 10:15, he wrote, “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace. . .”

In other words, the “him” in Isaiah becomes “them” in Romans. The explanation is obvious. Isaiah was thinking of our Lord’s first coming to inaugurate the gospel era. But now He has gone back to heaven, and He has left us here to go forth with the gospel of peace. Annie Johnson Flint wrote, “He has no feet but our feet to lead men in His way.” So our feet should be beautiful today, just as His were 2000 years ago.

Another illustration of a change designed to introduce a new aspect of the truth is Paul’s quotation of Psalm 68:18 in Ephesians 4:8. In the Psalm we read that the ascended, victorious Messiah “received gifts for men.” In Ephesians we learn that He turned around and “gave gifts unto men,” passing on that which He had received.

4. A new meaning altogether

Sometimes a verse is quoted to mean something entirely different than its original meaning. For example, in Psalm 19:4, David described how the sun and stars bear universal witness to the Creator: “Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” Paul quotes this in Romans 10:18, but he is not thinking of the stellar heavens, but rather of the world wide proclamation of the gospel. By inspiration of the Spirit, the Apostle found these words to be appropriate, so he borrowed them for the occasion.

Another illustration of this is found in Paul’s use of Hosea 1:10: “. . . And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, You are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, You are the sons of the living God.” Here God is clearly talking about the restoration of Israel after their captivity. But when Paul quotes the verse in Romans 9:26, he is not talking about Israel at all. Rather he is speaking of the call of the Gentiles to a place of divine favor.

One of the Apostle’s most difficult quotations is taken from Deuteronomy 30:12-13. There we read: “It is in not heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?”

Here God us speaking about the law, and specifically the commandment to “turn unto the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul” (v. 10). He says that law is not hidden, distant or inaccessible. A man doesn’t have to go up to heaven or cross the sea to find it. It is near at hand and waiting to be obeyed (v. 14).

Yet when the Apostle Paul quotes these verses in Romans 10:6-7, he changes and expands them and applies them-of all things-to the gospel, the very antithesis of the law. He says, in effect, “The gospel doesn’t tell you to go to heaven to bring Christ down; He has already come down in incarnation. Neither does it tell you to descend into the grave to bring Christ up; He already came up in resurrection. It tells you to believe the truths of the incarnation and resurrection, with all that is involved in these truths, and thus be saved (vv.8.10).

When Habakkuk was waiting for an answer to his fretful questions, the Lord said, “The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie . . . And the just shall live by his faith” (Hab. 2:3-4). The writer to the Hebrews reworded the verse to read, “For yet a little



QUOTES THE BIBLE



while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith" (Heb 10:37-38). He found God's promise of the coming vision to be transferable to an even greater coming, the coming of the Lord Jesus Himself.

5. Giving the gist of the prophecy

Sometimes the New Testament writers give quotations that do not appear in the Old Testament. For instance, Matthew writes, "He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene" (2:23).

We cannot find any prophecy that Jesus would be called a Nazarene. However, the town of Nazareth was treated with scorn by the rest of the people, as expressed in the proverb, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). So the words "He shall be called a Nazarene" may mean that the Messiah would be treated with contempt and mockery. Thus Isaiah prophesied that He would be "despised and rejected of men" (53:3). In another place, the Messiah describes Himself as "a worm, and not a man, a reproach of men, and despised by people" (Psalm 22:6). So while the prophets did not use the exact words found in Matthew 2:23, this was undeniably the gist of several of their prophecies.

6. Quoting from the Septuagint

Oftentimes writers quote from the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Hebrew, and this accounts for some of the changes we find in the New Testament. Here is an example: The writer to the Hebrews quotes Psalm 40:6 in Hebrews 10:5. In the original language of the Old Testament (Hebrew), Psalm 40:6 reads, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened." In the Greek translation used in the first century it reads, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not; but a body hast thou prepared me! The writer to the Hebrews, writing in Greek, quoted directly from the Greek Bible instead of translating from the Hebrew Bible.

This, of course, does not affect the inspiration of the passage. It is just that the Holy Spirit made the change, using the Septuagint translation. And there is no contradiction between the two.

by **William MacDonald**

There is a close connection between the opened ear and the prepared body. God the Father opened the Messiah's ear to hear and do His will. That will involved the Messiah taking on a human body so that as man He could die for men.

7. A collage of passages

It often happens that a New Testament quotation is a collage of Old Testament verses. Romans 3:10-18 has at least six different sources. And 2 Corinthians 6:16-18 is a mosaic from several sources, some of them very obscure.

What it all boils down to is that the Holy Spirit is sovereign, both as the Author and Interpreter of the Scriptures. He does as He pleases, in utter disregard of men's ideas as to what is legitimate. But what He pleases is always meaningful, purposeful and exactly right. Instead of causing us to doubt, the changes impel us to search for reasons, knowing that each change hides some precious gem of divine revelation.

Endnotes

1. E. W. Bullinger, Companion Bible, Appendix 107, *The Principle Underlying the Quotations From the Old Testament Into The New*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1999), p. 152



Beauty for Ashes

Update on Camp Iroquoina's Chapel Barn

“To give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.” Isa. 61:3

It was on the night of January 11, 2013, that a single spark, finding the right conditions, erupted into a devastating fire on the grounds of Camp Iroquoina, a well-known camp and conference center nestled in the Endless Mountains of eastern Pennsylvania. The cause of the fire at first was not known, but it quickly consumed the main building known as the “Chapel Barn”, the meeting area where messages were given at this year-round facility. Within a brief span of time, the remains of this once basic, but functional, building lay smoldering in the snow of the cold, winter night.

At first, the question certainly had to be asked, “What do we do now?” Maybe stronger was the sentiment “What can we do now?” It must have seemed overwhelming to those who witnessed the fire firsthand, as well as those those who viewed the ash heap in the days and weeks that followed. But over time, through prayer and thoughtful discussion, a deliberate plan was launched and efforts set in motion to restore the place where God's Word had been so faithfully ministered and numerous commitments had been made for Christ.

As in the case of the fire in this facility, the cause of the fire was not fully known, but the destruction certainly was evident. This fire illustrates that a single spark under the right conditions can ignite a full-blown personal conflagration. In many ways, the events of that fateful night parallel the string of devastating and disastrous events that often occur in the lives of many people. The result is a feeling of despair with very little hope of even being slightly restored to any measure of usefulness. Regardless, the result is the same—a darkened, mangled, ugly mess witnessed by many who helplessly look on as the devastation unfolds before

their eyes. Like those who saw first-hand the inferno that night, people who are close to those suffering are tempted to throw up their hands in despair and also cry out, “What do we do now?” and “What can we do?”

But that is from the human perspective. Thankfully, there is a divine perspective. As someone has so aptly said, “Man's extremity is God's opportunity.” What is impossible with man is indeed possible with God (Mark 10:27). There is hope—hope in the Lord—for anyone, at any time, who suffers due to destructive influences. When Jacob wandered in his experience with the Lord, he reached a low spot in his life after making a long list of devastating choices. He was told by God, “Arise and go back to Bethel” (Gen. 35), the place of his spiritual roots (Gen. 28), to change his garments and to be clean. With God's help, he was able to do this and return to the Lord on the heels of a personal crisis.

So what can become of the remains of a ruined and shattered life? As with the “chapel barn” that was burned to the ground, out of the ashes can come beauty to the glory of God. The popular song by Bill Gaither declares, “...but He made something beautiful out of my life.” It may take time, much effort, a lot of prayer (and a lot of blood, sweat and tears, too), but the result can be a life that our Lord can use again for His honor and for the blessing of others.

After three years of hard work, planning, building permits, generous financial gifts, and much prayer a new Chapel Barn was completed. On Saturday, January

9, 2016, at the annual college and career retreat, the Chapel Barn was dedicated unto the service of the Lord. Please pray for the ongoing ministry of Camp Iroquoina, located at 2341 Camp Road, Hallstead, Pennsylvania, 18822. To learn more about the ministry of Camp Iroquoina, please visit their website at www.Iroquoina.org, or call 570-967-2577. The camp director is Jeff Hage and their contact email address is campiroquoina@epix.net.



by **Mark Kolchin**

We have all experienced remembrance meetings that we felt were very inspiring and uplifting and surely brought pleasure to the Lord. At the same time, we have all likely sat through worship meetings that seemed to us dull and lacking in joy, enthusiasm, and even spontaneity. Can our Lord's Supper services be improved? Certainly! Anything that human beings are involved with can be improved.

Something Is Lacking

So how can our remembrance meetings be enhanced? Truthfully, the Lord's Supper is no better than the priests who take part in it – or do not take part in it for that matter. If we want breaking of bread services that are consistently vibrant, it is imperative that we men spend regular time with the Lord and in His Word throughout the week. A. P. Gibbs correctly stated,

"The fire of worship needs the constant renewing of fuel if it is to rise like the smoke of the morning sacrifice to God. The fuel needed is

*the study of, meditation in, and obedience to the word of God, plus a life of prayer and devotion. If this fuel is not forthcoming, then the fire of worship on the altar of the soul will die, and God will be denied the worship He seeks."*¹

If we are not willing to do this, we will have to accept worship meetings that are dry and lifeless. Even spending as little as 15 to 20 minutes a day with the Lord can provide that needed fuel for meaningful worship.

Give Way to the Holy Spirit

Once in the meeting itself, it is vital that we give our full attention to the words of every hymn or chorus we sing, every prayer that is offered and every Scripture passage that is read and commented on. By doing so, we can better detect how the Holy Spirit is leading us in the meeting. If we are to enjoy a harmonious service with a clear direction, as opposed to a meeting that is disjointed, we must allow the Spirit to do the leading. After all, Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, "He will testify about Me" and "He will glorify Me" (Jn. 15:26; 16:14). Paul adds, "No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:3); and "We worship in the Spirit of God" (Phil 3:3). If we consciously permit God the Spirit to be in charge of the meeting, it will be spontaneous and refreshing, not predictable and boring.

Part of allowing the Holy Spirit to be in control of our Lord's Supper observance involves our waiting upon Him to indicate if and when we should participate vocally in the meeting. If every week the very same men share and share at length, the meeting does become quite predictable. In addition, little time is left for other men, especially the less assertive ones, to take part. It is highly questionable if a meeting of this nature is really being led by the Spirit. The

mindset of every man in the breaking of bread should be to give



way to others whom the Spirit may be moving to participate. This would seem to be the teaching of Paul in I Corinthians 14:27, where he instructs the Corinthian believers to contribute to their meetings “each in turn”. In verses 30-31, he adds, “But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, the first one must keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one”. Our goal should be to see more and more men participating audibly and briefly. That approach would increase spontaneity, make the meeting more interesting to those attending, and, I think, be more satisfying to the Lord.

Make a Joyful Noise

Another way to enhance our Lord’s Supper meetings would be to encourage the expression of a broader range of emotions. At times, a somber mood is completely justifiable when we contemplate that our wonderful, innocent Savior had to die because of OUR sins. But let’s not forget that His death made possible the forgiveness of all our sins and our eternal salvation and that He also rose from the dead and that He’s coming back for us. Praise God! We have much to rejoice in and get excited about. If we don’t at least on occasion get thrilled about our Lord and what He’s done for us, that’s our fault, not His, because GOD ... IS ... EXCITING! In Psalm 95:1-3, we are exhorted, “O come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God and a great King above all gods.” Am I proposing an emotional free-for-all? No, but I do believe that some heartfelt exuberance in our worship meetings would be most appropriate.

Speaking of music, I’ve grown over the years to absolutely love the hymns in the “black book”, *Hymns of Worship and Remembrance*. Nevertheless, as a young man, I felt that many of those hymns were draggy. In deference to our younger people, maybe we should consider making available, along with the black book, a collection of contemporary songs and choruses for use in the breaking of bread, as long as those songs are focused on the remembrance and worship of the Father and the Son. We might even consider having a skilled guitarist provide accompaniment for those choruses. I think we would find this to be a genuine aid to our making a joyful noise unto the Lord.

Remember: You’re in Public

Yet another practical suggestion for improving our corporate worship would be to make sure that we can be easily heard when we stand and lead out in worship. A few weeks ago at the Lord’s Supper in my own assembly, there were at least three men who spoke so softly that I could not hear much of what they were saying. We must use a public voice when speaking in public. It is also quite common to see men standing and speaking out with their backs to most of the congregation. Have you ever seen a preacher go up to the pulpit and then turn his back to his audience throughout his entire sermon? Well then, we should not do that in the Lord’s Supper either. No matter how spiritually rich our contributions may be, they will be of no value if people cannot hear them.

“The fire of worship needs the constant renewing of fuel if it is to rise like the smoke of the morning sacrifice to God...”

We Have Much to Lose

I am not assuming that the above suggestions for improvement in our remembrance meetings will be easy or even possible to implement in every case. Indeed, I have heard that a number of assemblies have opted for changes resulting in a shorter, more structured Lord’s Supper. My concern with this trend is that I am afraid it will eventually lead to the demise of the Lord’s Supper as we have practiced and enjoyed it for the past two centuries. I am concerned that we will ultimately lose this meeting that is focused entirely on remembering our Savior and worshiping our God, a meeting that at the same time promotes the exercise of the priesthood of all believers. In my estimation, that would be too high a price to pay. This concern should serve as a powerful incentive for us to work at both preserving and improving the way we remember our Lord Jesus Christ.

Endnotes

1. Alfred P Gibbs, *Worship: The Christian’s Highest Occupation*, (ECS Ministries/Walterick Publishers: Dubuque, IA, 2011), p. 224.

by **Michael Stephenson**



Heroes of the Faith: Brothers Beloved

“You are good boys for living, but not yet for dying!” This is the way Clementina Nottage reminded three of her boys that they needed to be saved. They were nominal church members, and attended Sunday services, but they had not yet received the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior. Clementina was the mother of nine boys and two girls. She prayed daily for the salvation of her children, and witnessed faithfully to them. Concerned about missions, she raised pigs to sell so that she would have money to give. She prayed that some of her children would become missionaries. Living in a place where evangelists from the United States sometimes came, she probably never dreamed that three of her sons would be missionaries to major cities of the United States of America.

God had been dealing with these three boys. In the year before their conversion, three of their brothers had died of disease. With their mother’s reminders that they themselves were not ready to die, these three future missionaries all came to Christ in a one-month period in 1904. The names of the three sons were Whitfield, age 21, T. B. (Talbot Burton), age 18, and B. M. (Berlin Martin), age 14. T. B. was saved first, in his room on February 28. Whitfield came to Christ the next day. And a month later, on March 28, Whitfield led B. M. to the Lord.

The boys began witnessing and street preaching almost immediately. They worked by day and preached at night. They had no Bible school to go to; but some noted Bible teachers, assembly missionaries, came to their area soon after their conversion. The boys became avid students of the Word of God. They learned from these men the truths of the personal return of Christ and the importance of the Lord’s Supper. And they learned much about evangelizing.

The Nottage home was on the island of Eleuthera in the Bahamas. The godly mother lived to see her sons saved and boldly witnessing for Christ. However, she did not live to see them become missionaries, for she died two years after their conversion.

In 1905, T. B., the first of the brothers to go to the United States, went in search of better employment opportunities. It was then a seven-day trip to Key West by boat. He found his way to New York City and settled in Harlem. In 1909, he was joined by B. M. and the following year by Whitfield.

By 1913, the boys were deeply involved in evangelism in the black districts of New York City. A tract band was formed that year, and three and a half million tracts were bought and distributed by the summer of 1914. Open air meetings were being held in Harlem, with hundreds being saved or restored to the Lord. Home meetings were begun in the winter of 1913, which led to the establishment of the first assembly in the black areas of New York City. Grace Gospel Chapel opened its doors on October 25, 1914, at 50 West 134th Street, right in the heart of Harlem. It continues today at 102 West 133rd Street.

Branching Out

In time, Whitfield moved to Richmond, Virginia, where he pioneered with tent work. In the mid-1930s, he settled in Philadelphia and he founded the Ebenezer Community Chapel, where he ministered for more than thirty years before retiring. In 1986, surviving both of his younger brothers, Whitfield went to be with the Lord at the age of 103. He was blind for the last twenty years of his life. Whitfield was survived by His daughter, C. Delores Tucker, a politician and civil rights activist.

T. B. Nottage took a job with the U. S. Bureau of Census and lived in Washington, D. C., for three years. In 1921, he gave up employment and spent the rest of his life in full-time service for the Lord. A letter of commendation, written by the Washington, D. C., Gospel Hall on September 1 of that year reads:

“Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Nottage... have been much exercised about the Lord’s work in the cities of the United States: and while our brother has diligently sought to give all his spare time to gospel work, they feel that the need demands, and that the Lord is calling them to give their whole time to His service. They hope, the Lord

“as brother-ministers of the gospel, and brothers in the Lord, we are delighted that God chose us to spark such a work ... We are especially glad that God is raising up godly young men to carry on. We feel that our labors have not been in vain.”

willing, to reinforce their brother, Mr. B. M. Nottage, who is laboring in New York City and vicinity.”

In addition to this commendation, all three brothers were eventually commended to the work of the Lord by Grace Gospel Chapel in New York City.

A Wider Ministry

For the next twenty years T. B. and B. M. Nottage traveled widely throughout the United States. Assemblies were established in St. Louis, MO; Muskegon, MI; Terre Haute, IN; and Birmingham, AL. Evangelistic work was done in Alabama, California, Ontario, and extensively in Michigan. They traveled by trailer, using a public address system when they preached, and distributed Bibles and New Testaments wherever then went.

In 1930, T. B. and B. M. Nottage established the first assembly in a black Chicago community, Grace Gospel Hall. For six years, T. B. Nottage commuted from New York City, coming

for four to six weeks at a time to help in the work in Chicago. A second assembly, Grace and Glory Gospel Chapel, branched out from the original Chicago assembly. In time Burleigh Edwards, aided by the Nottage brothers, began the Southside Gospel Assembly, and later, Westlawn Gospel Chapel branched out from that.

B. M. Nottage moved to Detroit and founded Bethany Tabernacle in 1932. Working with Gospel tents and storefront evangelism, five more assemblies were begun in the next eleven years in Detroit. He was instrumental in founding River Rouge Bible Chapel, Berean Bible Chapel, Grace Gospel Chapel, Gospel Chapel, and the Open Door Rescue Mission, all in Detroit. B. M. became a well-known speaker and authority on evangelism to the black community. He was invited to minister at Moody Founder’s Week and Radio Station WBMI. Although he never attended Bible School, he was frequently the commencement speaker at Detroit Bible College and the Community School of the Bible. He continued his ministry at Bethany Tabernacle until his death on May 3, 1966, at the age of 76.

The Big Four

New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Detroit—during the 1920s and 1930s these were the four largest cities in the United States. And in the heart of each of these cities, the three Nottage brothers had planted multiple testimonies for the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was pioneering gospel work in the truest sense of the word. They often evangelized in areas where there was a great dearth of gospel preaching and a lack of sound Bible teaching. It is probable that, before the Nottages came, there were, in the black communities of these cities, no assemblies of believers meeting along New Testament lines as we know them today.

One more major city in the United States has yet to be mentioned. In 1930, T. B. Nottage had begun a work in Cleveland, known as Elim Gospel Chapel. In 1936, he and his wife Josephine and their children moved to Cleveland. T. B. continued his itinerant evangelism until 1941, twenty years after it had begun. After World War II broke out and traveling was difficult, he concentrated his further efforts in Cleveland.

Born in 1885, T. B. Nottage was now well into his fifties. But there was still thirty years of service for him in the city of Cleveland. He concentrated on visitation and radio work, as well as preaching. There were buildings to be built, too, as many of these inner-city assemblies began building chapels, instead of meeting in store-fronts. And there was the usual branching out of the work, as Faith Gospel Chapel became an offshoot of Elim Gospel Chapel.

In the last years, heart problems began to bother T.B. Nottage. Nevertheless, death was unexpected when he succumbed to a heart attack on April 27, 1972, a few days after his 87th birthday. T. B.'s life verse was, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." A little less than ten years prior to his death, the three brothers came together at a conference in 1963, after almost sixty years of ministry for Christ. At that time, T. B. Nottage quoted this verse and remarked, "I am persuaded that whosoever trusts in Him shall not be disappointed." "As

brothers according to the flesh," he said on this occasion, "as brother-ministers of the gospel, and brothers in the Lord, we are delighted that God chose us to spark such a work as we have had represented at the Cleveland conference this year. We are especially glad that God is raising up godly young men to carry on. We feel that our labors have not been in vain."

- Taken from Berlin M. Nottage, *Facts of the Faith*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Gospel Folio Press, 1972), p. 121-125

by **Berlin M. Nottage**

Hymn Stories: Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed



Growing up in the late 1600s in Southampton, England, Isaac Watts was a prodigy who mastered Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French as a teenager and was already writing poems and hymns. In his twenties, Watts was a rebel.

His rebellion had to do with church music. For centuries, psalm singing was the accepted form, the only accepted form. Although occasionally churches would sing hymns with texts that directly quoted other Bible passages, any newly created lyrics were met with deep suspicion. But young Isaac Watts had a dangerous notion: "If we can pray to God in sentences we have made up ourselves, then surely we can sing to God in sentences that we have made up ourselves." And he was ready to make words for those songs.

Some of these involved paraphrases of psalms. "Jesus Shall Reign" is based on Psalm 72, and "Joy to the World!" on Psalm 98. Despite the psalm connection, Watts was roundly criticized for daring to alter the old-fashioned phrases of the psalter. He also wanted to focus on Jesus. Sometimes he applied Christian interpretation to the Psalms, but some of his best work resulted from his simple meditations on the sacrifice of Christ. Songs like "When I Survey the Wondrous

Cross" and "Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed" bring us to the foot of the cross in worship, wonder, and love.

"I have made no pretense to be a poet," Watts wrote. "But to the Lamb that was slain, and now lives, I have addressed many a song, to be sung by the penitent and believing heart."

Of course, believing hearts have been singing his songs ever since. He provided a lyrical vocabulary for Baptist and independent churches in England, influencing Charles Wesley and the Methodists and, later churches in America and around the world.

In 1851, this hymn was sung at a revival meeting in a Methodist church in New York. A blind woman there was struggling with her faith. When she heard the line "here, Lord, I give myself away," she later wrote, "My very soul was flooded with a celestial light. I sprang to my feet, shouting 'hallelujah.'" That woman was Fanny Crosby, who went on to write hundreds of hymn texts herself.

So, with his pen and his fervent heart, the rebellious prodigy from Southampton had sparked a musical revolution that is still going on.

- Randy Peterson, *Be Still My Soul*, (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2014), p. 9



UNBOUNDED Grace

Each year on March 14, a number of scientists celebrate Pi Day. π , the mathematical constant describing the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter, is commonly rounded to 3.14, though its random digits seemingly go on without end. Using dedicated computers, mathematicians have lately extended Pi's known digits to 13.3 trillion decimal places. This reminds us of our infinite God. Through the study of His Word, we know Him more, yet we will never fully comprehend Him, His character, or His attributes. Let us consider the matchless grace of the eternal God.

The Riches of Unbounded Grace

When He redeemed us, Christ freed us from slavery, His limitless grace binding us to His infinite worth. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7). Let us consider three different Greek words for redemption.

In Paul's time, a slave was redeemed or bought (*Agorazo*) at the slave market. Therefore, as Paul exhorted the Corinthians to glorify Christ in their bodies, he reminded them that Christ purchased them at His own expense—a costly grace. Indwelt by the Holy Spirit, they now belonged to Him (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

The second word, *Exagorazo*, declares that the believer has been taken off the market forever—an enduring grace. When Christ redeemed us from the law's curse (Gal. 3:13) forever, He removed our condemnation. Christ will never sell or disown us, having stamped "not for sale" on our very being. Bound to Him, our eternal security rests with Him.

The third word, *Apolutrosis*, decrees that He has set us free (Eph. 1:7)—an altruistic grace. Although He released us from the law's demands (Gal. 5:1) and sin's power (Rom. 6:7, 14), and He delivered us from the world's influence (Gal. 1:4) and the devil's authority (Col. 1:13-14), Christ does not compel us to serve Him. He desires loving bond-servants, disciples who follow Him with unshackled hearts. When believers unreservedly yield to Christ, they lead overcoming lives through His empowering grace (2 Corinthians 12:9).

When Christ forgives us, he unbinds us from our sins by His pardoning grace. Having paid our sin's debts at Calvary, Christ takes away our sins and remembers them no more when we believe on Him. In the Law on the Day of Atonement, it was only after the slain goat's blood was applied that the

High Priest came out and confessed the people's sins over the living scapegoat. Similarly, it was through Calvary that forgiveness could be offered to take away sins.

His forgiveness also removes our guilt—an accepting grace. It is often difficult for believers to forget past sins, but Christ wants us to know that we have received full and complete forgiveness. For Christ's sake the Father will not remember forgiven sins, and He receives us as He receives His Son (Philemon 17). We are accepted in the Beloved (Eph. 1:6).

The Eternal Demonstration of Unbounded Grace

Throughout the eternal ages, God will demonstrate His incalculable, multiplying, unbounded grace in captivating ways that are infinitely fascinating and compelling. We read, "That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7).

*We shall always
anticipate new, rewarding
expressions of His grace.*

Forever exploring the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8), we shall never exhaust them. We shall always anticipate new, rewarding expressions of His grace. As we discover what it means to be Christ's co-heirs, we will gain an expanding appreciation of the richness inherent in our glorification. The Lord will instruct us about Calvary's immense cost to both the Father and the Son, imparting a growing knowledge of the boundless chasm between our eternal riches and past poverty (2 Cor. 8:9). Forever we shall see the Lamb, freshly slain. With thankful hearts we will respond by praising the glory of His grace.

*Thy way, O God! Is in the sea; Thy paths I cannot trace,
Nor comprehend the mystery, Of Thine unbounded grace.*

*With rapture I shall then survey, Thy providence and grace,
And spend an everlasting day, In wonder, love, and praise.*

- John Fawcett (1782)

by **George Ferrier**

The Bible is God's life-transforming message for the church; therefore, we are exhorted to declare "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). We read early in the book of Acts that the believers, "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). Paul counsels Timothy, "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2). The Word of God taught in the power of the Holy Spirit is an indispensable discipline for the local church.

Preaching, the Church, and a High View of Scripture

Those who minister the word of God must have a high view of Scripture. There are some who preach the Word of God without authority and conviction. God reveals Himself through the pages of the Bible, and that written revelation must be held up as the believer's final authority.

Many Christians are vague about doctrine. Very few ministers of the Word of God explain great Bible truths about God, life, death, heaven, hell, man, sin, Christ, angels, the Holy Spirit, the position of the believer, the flesh, or the world. We need truths that will root us and ground us in the faith. A minister of the Word needs to read a text, find out what it means, draw out a divine truth, and then drive that truth home in the minds and hearts of his hearers by preaching it.

Providing a Balanced Spiritual Diet

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the elders of a local New Testament church to provide a balanced spiritual diet in the ministry of the Word. Unfortunately, in many New Testa-

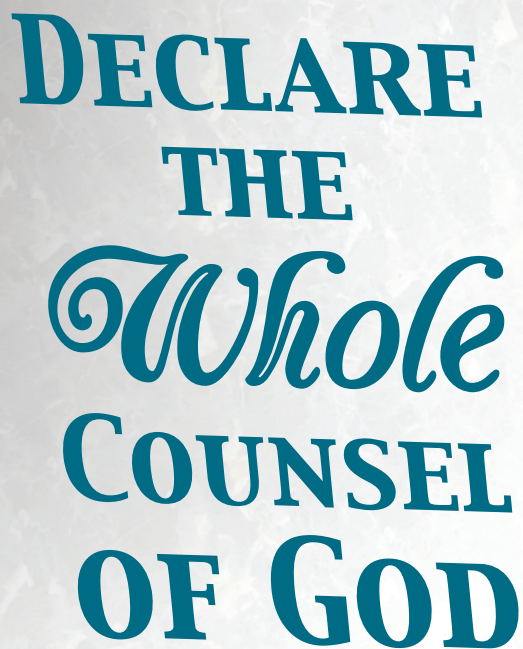
ment churches the spiritual diet is a barren, uninspired, and unorganized presentation of the Word of God. Believers are hungering for all the Scriptures to be taught with power, conviction, and with sound biblical understanding. Well-known missionary Jim Elliot (1927-1956) once wrote about his own preaching: "I was terribly depressed after preaching tonight. Felt as though I had no preparation, no liberty, no power. I felt compelled to stop during the sermon and tell the people I didn't have a message from God... I never want to preach that way again. How sadly and slowly I am learning that loud preaching and long preaching are no substitutes for inspired preaching."¹ His exhortation that "... loud preaching and long preaching are no substitutes for inspired preaching" needs a greater re-application today.

Improving Spiritual Diet in the Local Church

How can a local church improve the quality of the teaching and preaching of the Word of God?

1. Ministry Guidelines

Not infrequently, the ministry of the Word is handled by men who either are not gifted, or are gifted but very busy; or it is taken by a capable brother from the outside who may just be filling a date on his calendar. First of all, the goal should be that the majority (80-85%) of the teaching of the Word of God should come from within the local assembly. The elders should carry a greater load in teaching than the others in the assembly. Through their teaching, they deliver quality, focused ministry; gain spiritual authority among the believers; and provide a godly example of gifted ministry. We read about the New Testament assembly at Antioch: "Now there



**DECLARE
THE
Whole
COUNSEL
OF GOD**

were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas, and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen . . . and Saul” (Acts 13:1).

If there are only a few gifted men, they should faithfully carry the preaching load until the Lord brings in other gifted men. Elders should exercise a discerning eye on new ones and younger men who can minister the Word effectively. Men who are not gifted in the ministry of the Word should be gently directed to other areas of service in which they are gifted. Outside speakers should be used on an average of one Sunday per five or six weeks. An assembly that does not seek, train, and use gift within will become spiritually weak and eventually close its doors.

2. Content Guidelines

The subject matter of the ministry should build up, challenge, and exhort to godly living. It should be doctrinal, practical, and applicable to the lives of the believers. The teaching should not be aimed at the youngest believer or the most mature believer, but toward the believers in the middle who are growing and eager learners. Often the ministry of the Word is so basic and fundamental that it doesn’t challenge even the youngest believer. On the other hand, it can be so academic and technical that it doesn’t reach and edify the hearts of most believers. The ministry of the Word should be organized, spiritual, and doctrinally balanced. It should be superintended by godly leadership within the assembly. Sound, doctrinal preaching produces sound, mature Christians.

a. Doctrinal Content – Important topics should include messages on the doctrine of the Church, great words of salvation (ie. justification, etc.), the nation of Israel, basics of dispensational theology; end-times biblical prophecy, life of Christ (miracles, parables), and verse-by-verse exposition of books of the Bible such as Romans, Hebrews, and Ephesians. Messages on key passages of worship (Ps. 130, Isa. 53, Gen. 22), the doctrine of Satan, angels, and demons, doctrine of the Bible (inspiration, inerrancy, canon, etc.), and spiritual gifts are all needed in the church today.

b. Majesty and Reverence of God – Teaching on the person of Christ, attributes of God, and great works of God are desperately needed in our pulpits today. The Scriptures exhort us that “the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.” It is essential for believers young and old to be gripped by the holiness and majesty of God. Reverence for God anchors the servant in the holy privilege of preaching. Respected writer A. W. Tozer exhorts: “I believe there is scarcely an error in doctrine or a failure in applying Christian ethics that cannot be traced finally to imperfect and ignoble thoughts about God.”²

c. Practical Content – Messages on “How to Study the Bible”, improving Christian marriages, the Christian family, participation at the Lord Supper, “How to Lead a Child to Christ”, and practical methods in the preparation of Bible

messages (especially for young men) are all important in fostering growth in the Christian life.

d. Practical Disciplines – Messages on “spiritual vision”, humility, prayer, faith, holiness, discipleship, abiding in Christ (John 15), obedience, witnessing to the unsaved, and the exchanged life (Romans 6-8) should be included in a healthy diet of ministry.

THE ELDERS SHOULD CARRY A GREATER LOAD IN TEACHING THAN THE OTHERS IN THE ASSEMBLY. THROUGH THEIR TEACHING, THEY DELIVER QUALITY, FOCUSED MINISTRY; GAIN SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY AMONG THE BELIEVERS; AND PROVIDE A GODLY EXAMPLE OF GIFTED MINISTRY.

e. Missions Emphasis – Also important are messages on Paul’s missionary strategy in Acts, or topics such as “What of Those Who Never Hear the Gospel?” Use the mid-week service once a quarter for “Missions Night” to pray and learn about missions. Be aware of missionaries who are passing through your area and invite them to minister on a Sunday morning or Wednesday evening. In our mission emphasis, a special effort needs to be made to remember the persecuted church. “Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them...” (Hebrews 13:3). Resources from Open Doors Ministries and Voice of the Martyrs (www.persecution.com) are very helpful.

Conclusion

The preaching of a balanced doctrinal diet will raise up strong and effective believers in Christ. Spiritual leaders in the local church are commanded to feed the flock of God. In order to feed the flock, ministers of the Word must be students of the Word. When the Word of God is taught with passion and clarity, believers will know God more deeply, serve Christ more fervently, and worship Him more earnestly.

Endnotes

1. Elisabeth Elliot, edited, *The Journals of Jim Elliot*, (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1978), p. 353
2. A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, (Harper, New York, 1971), p. 8

by David Dunlap

CORNERSTONE

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SUPPOSE

Suppose that Christ had not been born
That far away Judean morn:

Suppose that God, whose mighty hand
Created worlds, had never planned

A way for man to be redeemed.
Suppose the wise men only dreamed
The Guiding star whose light still glows
Down through the centuries—

Suppose Christ never walked here in men's sight
Our blessed Way, the Truth, the Light.
Suppose He'd counted all the cost,
And never died for your and me,
Nor shed His blood on Calvary
Upon a shameful cross—

Suppose that having died, He never rose,
And there was none with power to save
Our souls from darkness and the grave.

As far as helpless heathen know,
These things that I've supposed are so!

- Martha Snell Nicholson

