



GOSPEL NEWS

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The Year 1971 In Retrospect

By: Paul Palmieri

The year 1971 started with Brother Gorie Ciaravino, the General Church President, recapitulating the year 1970 and encouraging our members to work untiringly for the furthering of God's Kingdom.

1971 brought about some changes which were received with mixed feelings. Our very competent editors, Brothers Carl J. Frammolin and Domenic Moraco concluded their tours of duty on the GOSPEL NEWS. Brothers Paul Palmieri and Thomas Ross were appointed to fill the vacancies. (We trust we have been able to do justice to the job entrusted to us.)

WONDERFUL WORK

The year was only a month old when reports were received that Brothers Harry Robinson and Frank Calabrese were doing a wonderful work in Omaha, Nebraska.

With all the anticipation for seeing the new General Church Auditorium dedicated, The Church was active elsewhere. On the West Coast the Phoenix, Arizona Branch had reported that they had groundbreaking services for their new building. The Imperial, Pennsylvania Branch, which had setbacks and delays in their building plans was finally rewarded as they dedicated their new building. Amid all the progress made with buildings and temporal things in 1971, we had a good year where people were being converted into The Church of Jesus Christ in places such as California, Windsor, Fort Pierce, Greensburg, Omaha, Youngstown, Glassport, Vanderbilt and other places.

One of our most enjoyable accomplishments of the year was the dedication of our General Church Auditorium. The many hours of work contributed by the Auditorium Committee finally climaxed on April 17, 1971. We have a beautiful place in which to meet and worship God.

FULFILLMENT OF DREAM

In May the G.M.B.A. convened in the new Auditorium. The completion of the Auditorium proved to be a fulfillment of a dream that started with the G.M.B.A. in 1959. The original project was called the "Land Purchasing Fund." A Sister from Rochester, New York was the first person to ask to be baptized at the new Auditorium.

The General Circle Conference was held in the Auditorium in June 1971. Our Sisters have done much to aid in the completion of the building.

The Warren, Ohio Branch dedicated their new and

beautiful building and The Lord called three more workers into His Kingdom at the services.

The G.M.B.A. held their annual Campout in Nauvoo, Illinois and 15 people were baptized. A joyous time was experienced at the outing.

Our brothers were laboring to bring the Good News to people in various places. Work was progressing well in White River, Arizona; Omaha, Nebraska; Mexico and other areas. Brother Rocco V. Biscotti visited our people in Italy and his presence and activity greatly cheered and uplifted them.

Finally, on October 21, Brothers Gorie Ciaravino and John Ross left to visit our Church in Nigeria. They had been trying to enter the war-torn country since 1965. (Our brothers have since returned and a more detailed report will appear in the next issue.)

The end of 1971 was near and the Church in Phoenix dedicated their new building.

MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The year 1971 was not always filled with notes of happiness. A number of our loved ones have gone to dwell with the Redeemer forever. We can all look back to 1971 as a year of many accomplishments. The Gospel is advancing and all we need to do is look over our shoulder, as it were, to see how far we have come. The year 1972 holds many opportunities for us as a people. People are writing and inquiring about The Church. Let us approach the New Year with faithful and hopeful hearts that God will bless us even more during the year 1972.

A New Year

By Fred Scott Shepard

A new year! May it be
A happy, glad new year;
May right prevail o'er
And love transcend all fear;
May hate be cast aside,
And "peace on earth" abide!

A new year! May it be
That men therein may learn
To seek the ways of truth,
And evils concepts spurn;
Enthroned the Prince of Peace,
And senseless warfare cease!

God would make all things new,
Establish righteousness;
The blight of sin remove,
The weary nations bless;
Wait patiently until
He works His sovereign will!

The Pauline Epistles

By Donald Ross

—Cont.

The SECOND EPISTLE to the CORINTHIANS was written within a year of the first letter to the same Church. Paul's spiritual burden was great; for, in addition to the problems with which the apostle had to deal in his first letter, a wave of distrust in relation to Paul himself had now swept through the Corinthian Church. Some said he was not sincere; others even questioned whether he had apostolic authority. Consequently, Paul here defends his authority by placing before the Church the overwhelming evidence of his sincerity in serving God. Thus this Epistle is very personal and autobiographical. It would be difficult to match the sufferings and achievements recorded in chapters 10-12.

The EPISTLE to the EPHESIANS was carried by Tychicus, concurrently with COLOSSIANS and PHILEMON. Ephesians is the most impersonal of Paul's letters. Indeed the words, "to the Ephesians," are not in the best manuscripts. COLOSSIANS 4:16 mentions an epistle to the Laodiceans. It has been conjectured that the letter known as Ephesians is really the Laodicean letter.

The EPISTLE to the COLOSSIANS, like the letters to the Ephesians and Philippians, was written in Rome during Paul's first imprisonment. Colosse, about 100 miles east of Ephesus, was never visited by the Apostle Paul (1:7; 2:1). The Church there may have been founded by Epaphras, who, with many others, had probably been converted during Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus. Someone had come to Colosse who taught an alluring but dangerous philosophy ultimately known as Gnosticism, the basis of much heretical teaching even today. No passage in the NEW TESTAMENT more fully sets forth the eternal glory of the omnipotent, exalted, and eternal Son of God than 1:15-23. It is quoted in the second article of our Faith and Doctrine.

LAW OF LOVE

The EPISTLE to PHILEMON, was probably carried to Philemon, a well-to-do citizen of Colosse, by the same messenger who bore the Ephesian and Colossian letters, Tychicus. The messenger had as his companion, Onesimus (Col. 4:9). Onesimus, whose name means profitable, had been unprofitable to his master Philemon (V. 11); for the servant had probably robbed the master (V. 18) and had fled to Rome. There he was converted through Paul's ministry, and now Paul was sending him back accompanied by Tychicus and the letter. It is of priceless value as instruction in practical righteousness; Sainly brotherhood; Sainly courtesy; and the law of love.

The EPISTLE to the PHILIPPIANS was written in Rome. It was at Philippi which the apostle visited on his second missionary journey, that Lydia and the Philippian jailor and his family were converted to Christ. Now, some few years later, the Church was well established, as may be inferred from its address which includes "bishops and deacons" (1:1). The occasion of the Epistle was to acknowledge a gift of money from the Church at Philippi, brought to the apostle by Epaphroditus, one of its members (4:10-18). This is a tender letter to a group of saints who were especially close to the heart of Paul and comparatively little is said about doctrinal error. Philippians reaches its pinnacle at 2:5-11 with the

glorious and profound declaration regarding the humiliation and exaltation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The FIRST EPISTLE to TIMOTHY was written during the last few years of Paul's life. Together with 2 TIMOTHY and TITUS it is known as a Pastoral Epistle. As the First Century Churches increased in number, questions of church order, soundness in the faith, and discipline arose. The apostles dealt with these questions, but the approaching end of the apostolic period and ever-nearing apostasy made necessary authoritative teaching about faith and order for the future guidance of the Churches. This teaching is revealed in the Pastoral Epistles. Timothy, to whom this Epistle and its companion letter was addressed, was intimately associated with Paul. Considerably younger than the apostle, he was the son of a Gentile father and a devout Jewish mother, Eunice by name (2 TIM. 1:5). He joined Paul on the second missionary journey. Of particular importance in this Epistle is the summary of qualifications for Church officers.

The EPISTLE to TITUS, addressed by Paul to one of his most reliable helpers, deals chiefly with conditions in the Churches located on the island of Crete. Titus is prominent in the Epistles. He was used by Paul for tasks requiring responsibility and discretion. Thus he was Paul's emissary to the Church at Corinth; he was in charge of the collection for the poor in Jerusalem; and he was placed over the Churches in Crete, the inhabitants of which were proverbially of low character (1:12). Later Paul sent Titus as far away as Dalmatia (Yugoslavia). The Epistle lists the qualifications of Elders; stresses sound doctrine; states the ethical obligations of elderly men and women, young men and women, and servants; and against false teaching.

SON IN THE FAITH

The SECOND EPISTLE to TIMOTHY, possibly the last letter by Paul, was written toward the end of Nero's reign. Quite different in atmosphere from the first letter to Timothy, Paul expresses as though he were a free man, his hope soon to be with his "son in the faith." Here in the second letter alone he speaks of the time of his departure being at hand (4:6). Paul was not only in prison, but he had been abandoned by most of his friends (1:15; 4:16). This Epistle contains the most detailed account from Paul of conditions that will prevail upon the earth during the last days.

The EPISTLE to the HEBREWS is supposedly an anonymous book. Its authorship has been debated since post-apostolic days. In certain places its language is like Paul's and, on account of the personal reference to Timothy in 13:23, some scholars attribute the letter to Paul. Regardless of its authorship, Hebrews, as a part of Scripture, speaks with divine authority. Hebrews contains a series of contrasts between the good things of Judaism and the better things of Christ.

Two significant periods in the life of Paul are passed over in comparative silence—the sojourn in Arabia (GAL. 1:17), and the two years in prison (ACTS 24:27) between his arrest in the Temple at Jerusalem and his journey under guard to Rome.

(Continue on Page 3)

"Now Is The Time"

By Paul D'Amico

Recorded in the Scriptures are events that took place many years ago; events that took place in the days of the prophets; and last but not least, events which were prophesied for our day and time.

The past, present, and future are all interesting and important for all of us. However, living in the present, I believe, is most important of all for we are well aware of the fact that this life is the preparatory state. While living here on earth we are building our home for eternity. Preparation is a very important step in all that we do, both temporal and spiritual.

Soldiers in the army or any branch of the service learn what it means to prepare. They are taught the various commands and how to respond to them. When a sergeant is drilling a platoon for instance, he gives out first the preparatory command. By giving out this command his men know that they have to prepare for the next command; known to them as the command of execution. Thus we have the preparatoin of the command and the actual execution of the command.

MUST BE PREPARED

So it is in the Army of Jesus Christ. We must be preapred to fulfill the preparatory commands as well as the commands of execution. Our lives should be governed and controlled not only by our conscience, but by the Spirit of Christ (Liahona) the ball or director which directs us in the proper course. The voice of the Lord is heard among us in various ways, ever since William Bickerton was commanded to preach the pure and unadulterated Gospel of Jesus Christ. He did not wait for a later time, but he did it then, and in obedience to God's Command, The Church of Jesus Christ became organized and incorporated more than 100 years ago. Our brothers, who have gone to their reward, were obedient to the preparatory Commands of God, and many of them executed His Commands to the best of their ability. They have laid down a foundation upon which we can build now—in our day and time. Now is the time to continue on from where they left off. Now is the time to move about at the Command of God or, as the Spirit of God may direct.

A farmer once went to a lawyer seeking advice. He had much work to do on his farm and did not know how to accomplish it all. After telling the lawyer his problem, the lawyer wrote a few words on paper, sealed it in an envelope instructing the farmer to read it when he arrived home. Upon returning home, the farmer and his wife decided to open the envelope and to read the advice of the lawyer. The little note read: "NEVER PUT OFF FOR TOMORROW WHAT YOU CAN DO TODAY."

HOPES AND EXPECTATIONS

As the Saints of The Most High God, I believe this should be our attitude toward the building and expanding of Christ's Kingdom here on earth. We have high hopes and expectations for the future; but at present (now) we are obeying the preparatory Commands of the Lord, so that we may one day, when He sees fit, execute His Commands among Gentiles and The House of Israel.

Moses and Aaron received many commands from the Lord, and eventually they achieved their goal in leading the children of Israel from bondage; and

from hence, Joshua led them to the Land of Canaan, known to them as the Land of Promise.

God has ordained His servants today to lead sinners from the world into the Gospel of Christ, and eventually lead them into the Kingdom of God. **NOW IS THE TIME TO LIVE RIGHTEOUSLY AND OBEDIENTLY—NOT TOMORROW; NOT TOMORROW; NOT NEXT YEAR; BUT NOW IS THE TIME.**

I trust the blessings of God will rest and abide with all who seek to love and serve Him.

Flashbacks

25 YEARS AGO

Brother Milton Barnhart reported the organizing of the Vanderbilt, Pennsylvania Mission. Brother Anthony DiBattista and Brother James Curry met with the Saints in Vanderbilt in their organization meeting.

Brother Paul D'Amico performed his first baptism since his calling into the Ministry. He baptized his brother John, thus the D'Amico family — all the children of Brother Ishmael and Sister Julia — are members of The Church.

20 YEARS AGO

The San Diego Branch started to build a church building. All the work was done by the brothers and sisters.

Brother Peter Capone and Brother Ralph Leet reported 3 converts in Ionia, Michigan.

15 YEARS AGO

Brother Domenic Thomas and Brother Joseph Calabrese visited the Monongahela, Pennsylvania Branch and gathered at the river to witness 5 baptisms. During January the Monongahela City Branch increased by 15 new converts.

10 YEARS AGO

Brother Ishmael D'Amico passed away. Brother Ishmael was one of the most aggressive and successful missionaries in The Church. He was instrumental in establishing The Church in various places.

Brother Moses E. Akpan of Nigeria was attending school at Allen University, Columbia, South Carolina.

5 YEARS AGO

Brother Robert Watson reported a baptism at the Yucaipa, California Mission.

Brother Amos D. Udo, a member of the Abak, Nigeria Branch was attending college at Emporia, Kansas. Note, Brother Amos and his wife returned home December, 1971.

THE PAULINE EPISTLES—

(Continued From Page 2)

It is inevitable for a man of Paul's intellect and training, a devoted Jew who had been such a bitter enemy of the Church, to seek the underlying principles of the Gospel. Immediately after his conversion he preached Jesus as the Messiah. The Gospel preached by Paul brings the believer into great relationships—to the Father, to the Son, to the Holy Ghost, and to the future purposes and promises of God. It brings not only salvation from sin and its consequences, but also salvation into a blessed place in the divine counsels. And the Church in its deepest aspect and function requires inspired explanation. Thank God for the Restored Gospel for we possess inspired explanation and more.

M.B.A. Highlights

M.B.A. HIGHLIGHTS November G.M.B.A. Report By: James Gibson G.M.B.A. Editor

On Saturday, November 13, 1971, the semi-annual G. M. B. A. Conference convened. The meeting was held at the General Church Auditorium in Greensburg, Pennsylvania.

An earlier starting time was called so that a prayer meeting could be held in the best interest of the Conference and the overall organization.

The weather was clear and mild. This allowed for more convenient means of travel for all who traveled any distance. We offer prayer constantly for safe journeys for our people who spend considerable time in travel for Church activities.

Experience Related

During the day's proceedings, Sister Alice Link of Bronx, New York related an experience. While traveling in a car she lost control on a curve and the car overturned. She related that through God's grace and mercy she was spared injury. Sister Alice attends college at California, Pa.

The morning meeting was started at 10:30 a.m. under the direction of G. M. B. A. President, Brother Augie D'Orazio of New Jersey. There was a fairly good turnout of M. B. A. members from the surrounding areas.

Attending officers gave their reports concerning the fulfilling of their particular office. All the reports were accepted by motion. Brother Joe Milantoni gave a report concerning a Lay Missionary Program for the Muncey Reservation in Canada. He stated that it would be not only an inspiration to the young that would participate, but also to the members of the Muncey Mission.

The issues concerning proposals submitted to the G. M. B. A. was discussed. There is a definite lack of participation by Locals in failing to react to the G. M. B. A. Conference. Proposals have been sent to Locals by the G. M. B. A. Secretary for their approval or disapproval. Many have failed to respond in any way at all, feeling that a clarification of the specific proposals was forthcoming. This could have been handled by the Local President allowing enough time to hold a vote in the Local before General Conference. Without a favorable response from sufficient Locals (2/3 majority) the G. M. B. A. Conference finds itself in a bind. Some proposals will drag on for an indefinite period of time. The G. M. B. A. feels this is not necessary. It is suggested that all Local Presidents take a firm hold of the situation and expedite these proposals as soon as possible. If the G. M. B. A. minutes are read in each Local upon receipt from the G. M. B. A. Secretary (usually within 4 - 5 weeks following the Conference) the proposals contained therein can be specified. It is suggested that the minutes be posted on a bulletin board of each Local for convenient reading by all members as they desire. Later on in the six-month period before each Local's business meeting is held, the proposal can be reviewed; and after due consideration, acted upon. Some of these suggestions are just that — suggestions. A better rapport between all concerned is welcomed and needed.

Proposals Accepted

Last but not least the proposals from the G. M. B. A. Conference will be published in **THE M. B. A. BULLETIN** within ample time before the Local's busi-

ness meetings are held and the forthcoming Conference.

The following proposals were accepted by the attending group:

1. Create a By-Law Committee of 9 members — 3 members to automatically consist of the G. M. B. A. President, Vice - President and Chaplain. The remaining 6 members be elected from the Organization.
2. M. B. A. Preamble makes note of this fact. (This proposal accepted as an existing fact.)
3. An Area M. B. A. has the authority to select such committees as it deems necessary. (Note to this effect also exists in the By-Laws of the M. B. A.)
4. Have all proposals printed in **THE M. B. A. BULLETIN** prior (at least one month) to the G. M. B. A. Conference
5. An amendment be added to the By-Laws stating that "amendments can be accepted or rejected at the May Conference as well as the November G. M. B. A." — or in other words, equal conferences. There would be no need to wait one year for action. This will be sent to Locals for their disposition.

The following proposals were rejected:

1. To have the Area M. B. A. function along the same channel as General Church Districts.
2. To have Areas select a slate of nominees for all G. M. B. A. Offices. The slate would be presented to the G. M. B. A. Conference for action at the November Conference.
3. To have all monies received by G. M. B. A. channeled primarily toward missionary work.

The following proposals were handled:

1. San Diego, California Local requested a review of their "M. B. A. Athletic sponsored" proposal. A motion was passed instructing the secretary to write to the San Diego Local and reaffirm our position on this matter.
2. Proposal to allow Local M. B. A. groups to make suggestions concerning campouts, such as schedule, set-up, etc. This was turned over to the G. M. B. A. Campout Committee and the G. M. B. A. Activity Committee for review.
3. The "popular vote system" proposal to again be sent to Locals for their acceptance or rejection. If not clear in its entirety, the Local President should contact the G. M. B. A. Secretary within sufficient time to allow a vote prior to G. M. B. A. Conference.

As stated earlier much time was consumed on the preceding matters. Some are yet to be resolved. We trust God will guide all decisions in all matters, no matter how minute they seem.

Program Presented

The day's activities were climaxed by a program presented by the Pennsylvania Area. Through word and song the word "Love" was expounded.

The location for the May 1972 Conference is not finalized. When a definite site is decided all will be informed of the time and place. Some in attendance felt to change the location of the G. M. B. A. from time to time. This will allow for more stimulated interest and involvement for all Areas.

Remember — plan to attend the G. M. B. A. Conference in May of 1972. Also, plan to attend the forthcoming G. M. B. A. Campout to be held in New Hope, Pennsylvania.

IMPORTANT

If you have a change of address please send a card giving both your old and new address. Each old or incorrect address costs the paper 10c.

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Editorial Viewpoint

TRUE KNOWLEDGE BY EXPERIENCE

"And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent," John 17:3; also I John 5:13, "That ye may know that ye have eternal life and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." These two Scripture references lead me to say that knowledge of God is eternal life. I believe there are three types of knowledge; knowledge by testimony or that knowledge we receive on the authority of others; knowledge by reason or that knowledge we receive by the process of reasoning; knowledge by experience or that which we come to know through experience. Knowledge by experience is the most effective of the three.

PROCESS OF REASONING

Let us suppose you neither have seen nor heard of fire, and you are given a burning candle and told the flame will burn you when you come in contact with it. Normally you would accept this testimony and conclude that the fire will burn you. However, if a bystander were to tell you this statement is not true, you would probably begin to doubt it. As a result, you are no longer certain that fire could burn you. If the first person were to take a piece of paper and place it in the flame, causing it to ignite, he reasons with you that if fire will burn the paper, it will also burn your flesh. You agree through the process of reasoning, and become a believer again. However, the bystander objects, claiming the reasoning on which you have based your knowledge is not sound: the fact that fire will burn paper does not prove it will burn human flesh. Both types of knowledge have seemingly broken down at this stage. But your arm, quite by accident, comes in contact with the flame. Instantly you feel pain because your flesh is burned. Through this experience the argument is settled. No one need ever tell you that fire will not burn flesh because you know better; you are a true believer. Yours is an experiential knowledge.

So it is with the knowledge of God. Knowledge of God by both testimony and reason are valuable as far as they go, but neither go far enough. It is the experiential knowledge of God that brings eternal life. Knowledge by experience is knowledge of or acquaintance with the subject. Many of us living in the United States can say we know much about our President. We see and hear him on television. We read in our newspapers his plans for the country. By these means we detect the nature of his character, and say we know him enough to vote for or against him in the next election. However, most of us are not personally acquainted with Him; they have never felt the impact of His life upon their life. In other words, they have no experiential knowledge of Him!

Some time ago I read that Helen Keller gave, or could give, an interesting lecture on the subject of light from the standpoint of wealth of knowledge. Since she was blind from birth, her knowledge of light was acquired through testimony and the process of reasoning alone. She was never personally acquainted with light. We who see are acquainted with light; we have perceived or seen light. Unfortunately, that experience has been denied Helen Keller.

To know about God and His Son, Jesus Christ, does not mean the light of the Son of Righteousness has shone into our hearts. But to be acquainted with Jesus does mean that this is true. It takes experiential knowledge of God before we feel that eternal life abides within us.

THEIR REDEEMER LIVETH

A great scientist was asked if immortality of the soul had been proven. He answered by saying two things would have to be established; namely, the soul of man never dies, and that the soul can exist separate from the body. This to me is a very distant approach to the certainty of immortality, and about as close as can be reached through the process of reasoning. The testimonies of righteous people in all ages, and even in our day, are in harmony with Job's testimony that they have a surety their Redeemer liveth, that they too shall live again and see God. It is indeed not strange or foreign for the people of God, through experiential knowledge, to know they shall stand in the latter day in an immortal body and behold their Redeemer, for themselves and not for another. This was also Job's testimony. When the Comforter, which Jesus promised He would send to us, enters in an individual's life, the feeling or knowledge is experienced that eternal life is abiding within that person.

By George A. Neill



The Children's Corner

Mabel Bickerton

THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS

Dear Girls and Boys,

I hope you enjoyed the Christmas season and remembered the real meaning of it. During the past month we have heard much about the birth of Jesus. I want to tell you more interesting things about Jesus, the boy.

After Jesus' birth, he was taken to the temple in Jerusalem by his parents to be blessed. In this city lived an old man named Simeon. He was a good man and the Scripture states, "the Holy Ghost was upon him." The Holy Ghost had revealed unto him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Christ, or Jesus. The Spirit directed Simeon to go to the temple and here he met Mary and Joseph. He took baby Jesus, who was eight days old, in his arms and blessed God. He spoke wonderful words and prophesied about Jesus, how he was a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of the people of Israel. Joseph and Mary marvelled at his words. Then Simeon blessed Jesus' parents.

After Jesus was blessed, his parents returned to Nazareth. He grew as other children do and Luke's writings tell us, "he waxed strong in spirit, was filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him."

Every year Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem to the feast of the passover. When Jesus was twelve years old, they took him with them. It was a very exciting time for a little boy. To be with relatives and friends on this journey made Jesus very happy. When it was time to return home Jesus stayed behind. His parents went a day's journey before they missed him. They thought he was with relatives, but he was nowhere to be found. They were very worried. They searched for three days before they found him.

Jesus was in the temple in the midst of the learned men, hearing and asking questions. All who heard him were astonished at his understanding. His parents were amazed too. Mary asked, "Son why have you thus dealt with us? Your father and I have sought you sorrowing." Jesus answered, "How is it that you sought me? Wist you not that I must be about my Father's business?" His parents did not understand the meaning of this but Mary kept all these sayings in her heart. Jesus returned home with his parents.

Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and found favour with God and man. We do not read anymore about Jesus as a child. His father, Joseph, was a carpenter and Jesus must have worked with him and learned the trade. Later when Jesus surprised the people with His wise sayings and miracles the question was asked, "Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary?"

No more is written about Jesus until he is a man and comes to John the Baptist to be baptized in the river Jordan. As he came up out of the water, the heavens opened and the Spirit like a dove came upon Him and a voice from heaven was heard saying, "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Aren't you glad our Church follows the two examples taught in this story, BLESSING CHILDREN and BAPTISM?

If you wish to read about the childhood of Jesus, find Luke Chapter 2, verses 25 to 52.

The Sower And The Seed

By Thurman S. Furnier

(Reprinted From The Radio BOOK OF SERMONS
The Church of Jesus Christ, 1963)

The foundation of my subject is upon "The Parable of The Sower and The Seed." Jesus said: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (St. John 5:39).

The Apostle John warned the followers of Christ: "Behold, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (I John 4:1). The Prophet Isaiah saw that evil spirits would enter into some, which would cause them to peep and mutter, and referred us to The Word of God to test their value. Hear the words of this Prophet:

And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. (Isaiah 8:19, 20)

In a few moments we shall read "The Parable of The Sower" as taught by Jesus and as recorded in St. Matthew, 13th Chapter. Remember that Jesus said that eternal life is to be found in The Scriptures; but in our efforts to obtain the prize, we shall encounter many difficulties and false spirits. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. The Apostle Paul said:

Fore we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rules of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Wherefore take upon you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Ephesians 6:12, 13)

In succeeding verses, Paul informed us to have our loins girt with truth, to have on the breastplate of righteousness, and our feet shod with preparation for The Gospel of Peace. He stated we should take the shield of faith, so that we may be able to quench the wicked's fiery darts, wear the helmet of salvation, and uphold The Spirit's Sword, consisting of The Word of God. Also, we should pray with watchfulness and with great perseverance.

Dear friends, by this time our minds should be made up to be honest with ourselves and allow The Words of Jesus to either justify or condemn us, as in the "Parable of The Sower." Let us read and seriously consider His Words:

And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold a sower went forth to sow;

And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up because they had no deepness of earth:

And when the sun was up, they were scorched: and because they had no root, they withered away.

And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

But others fell into good ground, and brought

forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixty-fold, and some thirtyfold.

Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. (St. Matthew 13:3-9)

Jesus then explained to His Disciples why He spoke to them in parables and continued by saying in Verses 18-23,

Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

There are four groups of people represented in this parable. None of us escaped the notice of The Saviour. To which of these groups do you belong?

If you belong to either of the first three, you are either without understanding, have hardened your heart against that which is good, or are very cold and indifferent. Being indeed weak, you have cause to believe, repent, and be baptized for the remission of your sins and receive The Holy Ghost. Just as sure as God is Eternal, you are not prepared for

. . . that great day when the earth shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, yea, in that great day when ye shall be brought to stand before The Lamb of God- . . .

. . . Do ye suppose that ye could be happy to dwell with that holy Being, when your souls are racked with a consciousness of guilt that ye have ever abused his laws? (The Book of Mormon; Mormon 9:2, 3)

Many are without understanding, because they do not ask for it. Jesus said:

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth: and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (St. Matthew 7:7, 8)

James, The Apostle, informs us in these words: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5)

Others become members of the church of their choice. So long as everything is going in their favor, they find joy in serving God; but they weaken when a little difficulty arises, or some of their old associates scoff at them, ridiculing them for what **They Term** to be foolish tradition. Some detractors say there is no God, there is no devil, there is no hell. Others say,

. . . Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; . . .

. . . lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; . . . (II Nephi 28:7, 8)

He who is enticed by these things soon forget

what God has done for him, and he becomes unfruitful. Others find pleasure in the sinful practices of this world, and they resort to secret works of darkness to obtain riches and to get gain. Many are ". . . puffed up in their hearts, and . . . seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark." (II Nephi 28:9)

Our day and age have much sin and transgression. Satan will

. . . rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good.

And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion . . . all is well and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell. (II Nephi 28:20, 21)

It is necessary that the servants of God acquaint mankind with the consequences of sin. The Lord

. . . commanded that men should not murder; that they should not lie; that they should not steal; that they should not take the name of the Lord their God in vain; that they should not envy; that they should not have malice; that they should not contend one with another; that they should not commit whoredoms; and that they should do none of these things; for whoso doeth them shall perish.

For none of these iniquities come of the Lord; for he doeth that which is good among the children of men; and he doeth nothing save it be plain unto the children of men; . . . (II Nephi 26:32, 33)

There is a natural law to punish the transgressor, and there is also A Spiritual Law for the same purpose.

Now, if there was no law given-if man murdered he should die-would he be afraid he would die if he should murder?

And also, if there was no law given against sin, men would not be afraid to sin. (Alma 42:19, 20)

Sin has caused the destruction of nations and people. "And whatsoever nation shall uphold . . . secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, . . . they shall be destroyed; . . ." (Ether 8:21,22)

This subject will not be complete unless we consider the fourth group. I like to talk about them; that is, ". . . he that received seed into the good ground . . ." This group is well spoken of by the words of the poet.

In ancient days men feared the Lord,
And by their faith received His Word;
Then God bestowed upon the meek
The priesthood of Melchizedek.

By help of this their faith increased,
Till they with God spoke face to face;
And Enoch, he would walk with God,
A Noah, ride safe o'er the flood.

Abraham obtained great promises,
And Isaac he was also blest;
A Jacob could prevail with God,
The sea divide at Moses' rod.

The lion's mouth a Daniel closed,
The fire ne'er scorch'd his brethren's clothes,
But time would fail to mention all,
A John, a Peter, or a Paul.

Who did to the third heavens arise,
And view the wonders of the skies;
He saw and heard mysterious things,
Yet all by faith and not by wings.

Such blessings to the human race
Once more are tendered by God's grace;
The priesthood is again restored,
For this let God be long adored.

Who cannot help but admire such noble followers of God? The true servants of God have always been the object of persecution. Hear what The Apostle Paul said they had to contend with in their day and age:

For I think that God hath set forth us, the apostles, last as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place;

And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. (I Corinthians 4:9-14)

They believed in God. Their minds were enlightened. They trusted him in tribulation and persecution. They trusted not in the riches of this world but in The Riches of God's Grace, The Unsearchable Riches of Christ. The Words of Christ dwelled in them richly in all wisdom. They did not practice deception or hypocrisy. Though persecuted, theirs was a happy lot.

Dear friends, you, too, can enjoy these many blessings. God invites all men

... to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile. (II Nephi 26:33)

Additionally, to anyone who will believe in His Name, doubting nothing, God will confirm all His Words to him. (The Book of Mormon; Mormon 9:15)

And now, behold, who can stand against the works of the Lord? Who can deny his sayings? Who will rise up against the almighty power of the Lord? Who will despise the works of the Lord? Who will despise the children of Christ? Behold, all ye who are despisers of the works of the Lord, for ye shall wonder and perish.

O then despise not, and wonder not, but hearken unto the words of the Lord, and ask the Father in the name of Jesus for what things soever ye shall stand in need. Doubt not, but be believing, and begin as in times of old, and come unto the Lord with all your heart, and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling before him.

Be wise in the days of your probation; strip yourselves of all uncleanness; ask not, that ye may consume it on your lusts, but ask with a firmness unshaken, that ye will yield to no temptation, but that he will serve the true and living God. (The Book of Mormon; Mormon 9:26-28)

David, the Psalmist, said: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." (Psalms 126:26)

Some of my radio audience may have discerned that I have quoted some passages of scripture which are not familiar to them. Permit me to call your attention to the words of the Prophet Isaiah. Speaking to Israel, he says:

And thou shalt be brought down, and shall speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust. (Isaiah 29:4)

How can any nation speak from the ground? The answer is by recording God's Dealings with them, burying them in the earth, and then having its record exhumed, or taken from the earth, later.

In conclusion, if further information is desired regarding this last statement, contact "The Church of Jesus Christ" at any of the addresses which will be furnished by our announcer.

A CHRONOLOGY OF PAPAGO AND PIMA HISTORY TAKEN FROM CALENDAR STICKS

Submitted by Richard Christman

Sometime during the early part of the nineteenth century Piman Indians began to keep a record of the outstanding events of each year by carving marks on elongated sticks. One such stick records events that took place as early as 1833.

The marks on the sticks are not writing, but are merely aids to the memory of the man recording events. One and sometimes two events are noted for each year, and the carver simply remembers what they are. In that sense, calendar sticks might be called "memory" sticks. Some of these remarkable records have spanned three generations, the keeper of the stick teaching a successor the previously recorded history.

One of the interesting features of Papago calendar sticks is that they tell us what Papagos regarded as important. They also tell us, by implication, what was not regarded as important. It may seem surprising to non-Indians, for example, to know that none of the Piman calendar sticks which have survived recorded the passing of the Kearny or Cooke expeditions down the Gila River through Pima villages in 1846. Neither have any of the sticks taken note of the flood of Anglo Americans which passed through Piman territory in 1849 enroute to the California gold fields.

A few events on the sticks relate to whites, but most relate to Indians. Battles, eclipses, accidents, famines, feasts, snowfalls, epidemics, earthquakes, races, moving of villages, violent deaths, and minor events of interest only to the keeper of the stick — these are the kinds of episodes notched in wood.

Many of these records have been committed to writing and have been published. At least one calendar stick account, however, was typed in manuscript form but never reached the printed page. Its ultimate source is unknown, but the stick was kept at Covered Wells where it was deciphered by Sevilla Juan in 1936. The manuscript original is in Bureau of Indian Affairs' Papago records in the federal records depository in Wilmington, California. It is published here for the first time as a representative example.

1841 — Three Papagos were killed by Mexicans. The cause is not shown, but the Papagos held the Mexicans responsible and at once began reprisals. Both Papagos and Mexicans living in northern Sonora raised bands of armed men and carried on hostilities of a guerrilla nature. Raids and counterraid followed each other throughout the year.

1842 — During this year the war with the Mexicans continued with increasing fury.

1843 — The war with the Mexicans having continued two years with no prospect of peace, the Federal

Government of Mexico was forced to take a hand. It sent regular troops into the territory and forced both sides to make peace. The peace was permanent.

1844 — In June of that year a Pima woman of Sacaton, with her daughter, was gathering saguaro fruit in the hills across the river when an Apache scout came suddenly upon them and wantonly killed the woman. The daughter escaped and ran back to Sacaton where she spread the news that the enemy was near. A band of Pima warriors armed themselves and started out to find the killer.

In the meantime, the scout had returned to his fellowscouts, three in number, and told them he had killed the woman. They returned with him to the scene of the crime to see the corpse. Well aware of the penalty for such an act, they fled toward the east, up the Gila River. The Pimas, being expert trackers, soon found their trail and followed it all that day. Toward the end of the day the Apaches tried to throw them off by camouflaging their tracks. Occasionally they would step in the sand and with their arrows make rat and rabbit tracks in their footprints to make it appear that the tracks were several days old. Some of the Pimas were duped and proposed the abandonment of the chase, but others insisted on further pursuit. When they had argued a little while one of the warriors said he would proceed a short distance to some brush to get a riding switch. He did so, and found a trail that was undoubtedly fresh. They again gave chase with renewed hope and vigor, and captured and killed the four Apaches.

1845 — In that year nothing happened worthy of mention.

1846 — In this year a band of Mexican Apaches attempted a raid on the Pimas. The Pimas were on the alert, however, and the Apaches fled. The Pimas hotly pursued them and slew three of their warriors at Cold Water, called Sweetwater by the Pimas.

1847 — Nothing of interest is indicated for the Papagos, but the Pimas lost two of their headmen by natural deaths.

1848 — In this year happened an almost unbelievable thing. Cold weather of unheard-of intensity swooped down on the Papagos and almost snuffed them out. Snow fell to a depth of three feet on the level and as deep as the tops of houses in drifts, and lay on the ground for many weeks. Cattle and horses could not find food under the snow and the People could not find firewood. There was great suffering because the people had always been accustomed to warm winters.

1849 — A large number of people from Santa Rosa went over into Mexico, probably to work in the fields, where they were surprised by a band of roving Apaches who sneaked up on them and stole their horses. The Papagos pursued them on foot and overtook them. A battle ensued, and, although the Apaches outnumbered the Papagos, the Papagos put them to flight and recovered their horses. Many were killed on both sides but the Apaches lost more men than the Papagos.

1850 — Many of the People went down into the lowlands of Mexico probably along the east coast. A malady, strange to the Papagos, broke out and the Mexicans died in such numbers that they had to be buried in trenches. The disease was called Black Vomit, that being the main symptom. The muscles of the victim cramped, causing great agony until death brought relief. The Papagos fled in panic to their desert hills, carrying those of their sick that could be moved. It is said that the sick speedily recovered and none other took the frightful disease. From the top of the first high hill, the People looked back and saw a dark mist, like miasma of death, hanging over the lowlands of Mexico.

(Continued in Next Issue)

California District Conference

The California District Conference convened on Saturday, September 11, 1971 in San Diego, California at 9:00 A.M.

The conference transacted both its business sessions in complete harmony. The Saturday evening meeting was highlighted with many beautiful and enlightening reports from various missions.

The Sunday morning service convened at 10:00 A.M. in the Wilson Junior High School auditorium with a good representation of Brothers and Sisters from all Branches and Missions of California, Arizona, Tijuana and visitors from the East.

After some congregational singing, the group from Tijuana sang several selections in Spanish which were enjoyed by all; the San Diego Choir sang two selections, and a solo was sung by Sister Diane Surdock.

Our service was opened by singing "Reach Out to Jesus" and introduced in prayer by Brother Otto Henderson. Brother James Campbell, visiting from Monongahela, Pennsylvania, was the initial speaker. He read from **I Corinthians, Chapter 15**. Paul writes of the hope of the Saints. He indicated how the Spirit of God influenced our lives and "turns people on." He claimed that people who do not have this Spirit have no hope, that we should all be thankful that God lifted us out of the mire of sin and set us on higher ground, for without God's spirit our lives would be empty. Our Brother related how the hope of Christ has affected his life and how God has answered his prayers through his hope in Christ. He beautifully told how his daughter Erma was baptized at the early age of thirteen. She sometimes thought while going to school if perhaps she should have waited for baptism until she graduated from high school. She testified later that the Lord restrained her from sin in school. When she graduated, she told her father it was all worth it and how God had blessed her many times. Our Brother also related how God worked on him in bringing him into The Church.

Brother Dick Christman of Phoenix, Arizona followed, relating when God created man and breathed into him the breath of life, a part of God was imparted to man. This spirit is the spirit that draws us to Christ and God. Brother Christman said we should not serve Christ for what He has promised us in the life to come, but we should also want Christ in our lives for the good we receive now.

Brother George Heaps of Anaheim, California followed in the theme of hope, emphasizing the custom of women today preparing a hope chest in anticipation of marriage, as compared with the hope of man in anticipation of meeting God someday. Many scriptural quotations were used to illustrate the hope in man since the beginning of time to our present day, concluding that hope must be put to work.

The young people who had participated in the Chinle Indian Reservation Project sang the theme song of that work, "Side-By-Side." Then Brother Vicente Arce of Tijuana, Mexico spoke for five minutes in the Spanish language to the congregation.

Brother Robert Watson, Jr., District President, closed with a few remarks regarding what our hope should be today. He invited any who would, to come and give their life to Christ.

The service was ended by singing "Whispering Hope" and Brother Isaac Smith closed in prayer. I pray that our hearts are whispering "hope" every day of our lives.

Your Brother In Christ,
Del Carneval, California District Editor