

INTEGRITY is published each month and seeks to encourage all believers in Christ to strive to be one, to be pure, and to be honest and sincere in word and in deed, among themselves and toward all men.

Integrity

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Integrity

More on Models

Concerning Brother Norman Parks' response ("The Two Models Again") to my remarks in the April *Integrity* about his communitarian church model, I see no need to restate my views. I do, however, have some observations.

(1) It seems to me that he has misunderstood my article and misread my intentions. How on earth he could perceive my article as an *apologia* for authoritarianism is beyond me. Nowhere in my article did I condone tyranny of any sort. I simply denied that his contentions about equality, the absence of hierarchy and power in the Church, and the exclusivity of his communitarian model were in Scripture. My intention was to suggest that authoritarian, legalistic, cruel behavior is rooted in essence in the rebellious, carnal heart and not necessarily in institutional forms. Institutions (church, state, family, and so on) are not the ultimate

cause of such behavior even though they may be abused and deformed so as to encourage it.

(2) Brother Parks contends that Scripture gives a clear and explicit "thus saith the Lord" for his populist, communitarian model of the Church. He argues that it is the only guarantee of Christian liberty, love, and holiness. And he maintains that it is imperative that we put it into practice. I do not think he has made his case. I believe that his particular model is, to borrow the traditional hermeneutic, but one "necessary inference," one *opinion* among a number of permissible, charitable alternatives from which men and women of goodwill have the freedom in Christ to choose.

(3) I apologize to those within the free church tradition whom I inadvertently may have insulted by my description of that particular model of Christianity.

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A NEW POPE

When it comes to viewing the workings of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, most of us are like the little old lady who, when asked if she had seen Halley's comet, replied, "Yes, but only from a distance." From such a distance we can only guess at what is signified by the extraordinarily rapid selection of Pope John Paul I, or what kind of pope he may turn out to be.

However, it seems safe to say that the direction his leadership will take will not be determined by him alone. Widespread demands for reform—among both the clergy and the laity—can hardly be ignored by the Vatican, and there is a keen desire among many of the faithful that the "modernizing" trend the church has followed in recent years will be continued under the new pope. Of course, one man's "necessary reform" is another's "heresy," but when a substantial percentage of the members—and especially the clergy—begin to reject the teaching of the hierarchy, then the hierarchy must either re-examine its dogma or brace itself for rebellion.

An obvious illustration of this problem among Catholics is the question of birth control. With so many members apparently practicing it, with the approval of so many priests, the alternative to papal endorsement of contraception is a growing grassroots defiance which spills over into other areas of faith and practice.

Except for particulars, this is not just a Catholic problem, but one to be faced by any people upholding an authoritarian church structure. It is very close to many readers of this journal. It is our conviction that any form of hierarchy is contrary to the New Testament concept of ministry, to which we all must pay close attention as we carry on our ministry of reconciliation, but we will continue to respect and share the concerns of our Catholic as well as our non-Catholic readers, with whom we have much in common despite the substantial dogmatic barriers. Who knows what the Lord will make out of us in the years to come? □

For a free copy of an interesting booklet, *A Journey Toward Jesus*, consisting of extended correspondence between Bruce Edwards and Edward Fudge (formerly staff writers for *Truth and Gospel Guardian*, but no longer tied to any party), send your personal request, along with a quarter to help pay mailing costs, to: Mark Whitt, Elkton & Elm Sts., Athens, AL 35611.

Repenting of Our Righteousness

JIM REYNOLDS

Dallas, Texas

Thirteen years ago Harvey Cox wrote the imaginative, highly debatable *Secular City*. Though Cox prematurely celebrated the city, the following comments on work came right to the point:

The twin tendencies, urbanization and secularization, have an enormous impact on work. . . . First, they separate the place of work from the place of residence; second, they transform work more and more into a bureaucratic organization; and third, they emancipate work from the religious character it has retained from the period when it was interpreted as a spiritual discipline.¹

In Cox's *Secular City*, work, divorced from the Creator God, has in fact become a means of fleeing God. Now I would be the last to suggest that work should be replaced by idleness. I believe that only in creative activity do we externalize the identity we have as men made in the image of God. Work as Christian vocation is a response to what God as Creator, Judge and Liberator has been doing in the world. "We were created in Christ Jesus for the purpose of good works."

Secular Righteousness

But I do not think we generally understand work biblically in the secular city. There is a new secular righteousness, and it is "my job." The job (some call it profession) has become the dominating destiny for many of us. It is everything: discipline, production, creation. The new pharisee of today would boast before God not so much of obedience to the law and

of his religious exercises as of his hard work and his disciplined successful life. And—he would find sinners with whom he could favorably compare himself.² "God, I thank you I'm not like the uneducated, undisciplined, unwhite failures all around me." Great is man's desire to prove his worth and to do it by "good" secular works. "Thou shalt be a success or thou art nobody." And so we run from the Cross worshipping the creation of the American educational and economic system—ourselves!

The Gospel of the bankruptcy of all human righteousness and the adequacy of Christ's righteousness no longer must do battle with the old pharisaism. I now refer to the religious don'ts (drink, dance, chew) and the three times a week church righteousness. Most folks are thrilled to hear that Jesus saves us, that the religious do's and don'ts are not a system of meriting salvation. The battle is not here!

The battle is with a righteousness system—Capitalism—and its power to inflate men and women with human pride, thus causing us to shove salvation by grace into a little water-tight compartment. The doctrine of grace seems to have little impact on the search for selfhood in the secular city. Yet to be set right with God, *justus et peccator*, means I possess an alien righteousness, not of my own creation. My righteousness is as filthy rags. In fact, the Lord asks me to repent not only of my sins, but of my righteousness.

2. Paul Tillich, "God's Pursuit of Man," *Twenty Centuries of Great Preaching*, Clyde Fant and William Pinson (ed.), p. 64.

1. Harvey Cox, *The Secular City*, p. 167.

The Motive for Christian Service

An Essay on Philippians 2:5-8

DAVID W. MUSICK

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Because it is a basic concept which cuts to the heart of Christian service, motivation is an issue which we as God's people ought to re-examine continually. Service, or obedience to God's commands, is something which cannot be separated from motivation, or the reason(s) we serve; when one's motivation is faulty, the resulting obedience will fall short of the desired ideal. In this essay, I shall attempt to examine this concept by looking at the well-known Christological passage written by Paul in Philippians 2:5-8. There are several vital principles found in this passage which must be established as the sole basis for Christian service, and against which we must compare our own reasons for serving God.

Motivation Defined

As is widely known, there is in existence a field of modern psychology which, in various cases, bears the name "motivation," "motivational research," and undoubtedly other titles as well. In order to prevent any confusion in the readers' minds, let me emphasize at the outset that this field of psychology is in no way related to what is referred to in this essay as motivation. Rather, I would define motivation simply as "incentive to action." More specifically, for individual Christians and the body of Christ, what I refer to here are our motives in serving God and our incentives in obeying the call of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Put in the form of a question, I suppose the best way for one to determine his own motivation in Christian service would be to ask himself, "Why are you

living a Christian life?" or "Why is it that you are serving God?" Hopefully, the importance of thinking about these things is even now apparent, and will become clearer as we press on. Unfortunately, we do not have to look far within the scope of the body of Christ to observe much "service" that is faulty and being carried on for the wrong reasons. Each person who wears the name of Christ must take seriously this call to self-examination if our service is to be all that He desires.

A Holy Calling

According to Scripture, each person who commits himself to Christ has inherited many precious things. Yet, the best example of all that God has done for us can be found in the concept of "a holy calling." The apostle Paul, writing to Timothy and to Christians everywhere, said that God "has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity" (2 Tim. 1:9, NASV). We as Christians are called with a holy calling in order that we might be "justified," "conformed to the image of His Son," and "glorified" (Rom. 8:29-30); not through any device of our own are we called, but through the purpose of God and according to his will.

Now, because we are called to be God's people according to his will, is it not evident that our reasons for serving him must ultimately and above all else be to conform our lives to that will alone? How else are we "to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him in all respects"

(Col. 1:9), if not through seeking his will for our lives? Further, Christ's service to the Father perfectly met God's requirements through the event of the Incarnation: Jesus fulfilled God's purposes through the service he rendered during his earthly ministry and death on the cross. What better place have we to look than to the life of Christ for the best example of the fulfillment of God's purposes? When we consider the motivation of Christ as our example, our service will undoubtedly take on new meaning.

The Motivation of Christ

It is difficult to find passages where Jesus speaks of his own motivation; his actions more often spoke louder than his words. However, he did refer to himself as "gentle and humble in heart," and invited us to learn from him the way to peace with God. The recorded gospels also show him to be a supremely compassionate and loving person who loved and cared for the multitudes who sought him out. What motivated Jesus Christ to do the things he did? Paul addresses this crucial question in Philippians 2:5-8, which serves as the main text for this essay. Now it is not my purpose to engage in any theological debate concerning the semantics of this passage; there are enough theologians around to suffice here. Rather, let us try to see and understand the motivation of Christ so vividly described.

It has often been said, presumably by those outside the church, that Christians are simply people who "need a crutch," or who cannot adequately cope with life and, consequently, have need of a belief in some type of "pie in the sky by and by" philosophy. Of course, we would be quiet loud in asserting that there is much more to Christianity than that! One has to wonder, however, if there is not much of this same feeling reflected in our attempts to convert the lost and our exhortations to them to live as Christians.

Usually we do our best to get the per-

son under consideration to make an initial confession and to submit to God-given ordinances, only to leave him wondering later about the experiences he has been through. Or we may rejoice to see him make a commitment to Christ and offer sincere congratulations on this giant step, only to fail in communicating to him the serious nature of Christian discipleship. Because they have "done all the right things," we often consider new converts as "saved from hell" once and for all, and do little to make clear to them the necessity of a life of Christian service.

Any person who claims to have made a commitment to Jesus Christ should not only have at the outset examined his own motivation in making such a commitment, fully aware of what he is doing, but must also *constantly*, day by day, re-examine his motives in living as a Christian.

It must be stated that if any person desires to become a Christian, he must be made aware of the *cost* of this decision as well as the reward; in fact, it is biblically sound to say that there is no future reward without this cost of discipleship. People who say that they are loving and serving God only because they want to "make it to heaven" are lacking in their understanding of Christian service, and are not true disciples in the true sense of the word! Nowhere is this more evident than in the passage under consideration here. Simply put, Paul says in this great Christological passage that Jesus *had* the greatest of all "rewards" in that he possessed the riches of dwelling in equality with God; yet he left this glory for something better—genuine service to God the Father! Out of love for God, and compassion for mankind, Jesus left the presence of God to become the Son of God—a disciple in every sense of the word.

It is interesting to note that the Latin root of the word "disciple" means "to learn." Hebrews 5:8 says in reference to Jesus that "although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered." Is it to be any different for

the Christian today, called according to the purpose of God to be conformed to the image of this same Jesus? When we do not see that our love of God and our gratitude to him for all that he has given us should be our reasons for serving him, rather than our own selfish desire for heaven, we do not serve God; we are using his grace to accomplish our reward. It is what one theologian has very aptly termed "cheap grace": a failure to realize the cost of the salvation of mankind, and the wrong response which stems from this failure.

To be sure, everyone desires heaven—to spend eternity with God, rather than apart from him. But can we not see that heaven is not to be our only goal? We are often guilty of putting the rewards before the real goal of discipleship, that of ful-

filling God's will for our personal lives. Discipleship is our foremost task; when we simply go through the motions, waiting for our own "train to glory," we are very short of the desired ideal for Christian service.

Had Jesus simply desired glory, there would have been no need for him to "empty himself" in the first place. He realized, however, that personal desire was not the right motivation in service to God. We would do well to learn this often-difficult lesson also. We must allow everything we do, every action we take, and every office we hold to come under the revealing light of God's Word, so that we may be sure our service to him is for the right reasons. Our motivation must first be that of love of God and desire to please him in all respects. Any reward he

THEOLOGICAL HAIRSPRAY

Now that's the way I picture freedom, joy and peace!

Just look at that barefoot girl dancing along the beach.

I think it is her hair blowing in the Wind that captures the spirit of it all.

—those long tresses responding to the urging of the Breeze,

—the lightness of a full head of hair as each Air puff twirls its special kind of curl,

—the gentle Current swirling around a laughing face,

—the unpredictable Gust alternating with the steady Stream,

—the miniature Gale which works seemingly unmanageable strands back into the overall Flowing pattern.

The Wind moves creating a beautiful symmetry which transcends the frozen tidyness of more earthbound systems.

But what is this?

She has ceased her joyous celebration of motion.

Standstill.

Dead Calm.

Doldrums.

The hair?

Disorder.

Disheveled.

Disarray.

Lifeless—it falls irritatingly over and into her eyes.

Slovenly.

Unkept.

Dull.

Let us go help her recapture that beautiful free look!

Quickly,

while I remember what it looked like!

Shampoo!

Conditioner!

Blow comb!

Brush!

That's as close as we can get it.

HAIRSPRAY!!

We have captured the Windblown Look! Now she doesn't need the Wind.

Yes, but what happened to the laughing face?

— — — — —
 "The Wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit." John 3:8

—WAYNE HARRIS

chooses to give us, either in this life or the next, must be kept in proper perspective. How else can we truthfully say, with Paul, that "to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21)?

The Challenge of Service

From these facts which are evident from the Incarnation, Paul goes on to give us some vital principles which form a basis for genuine, properly-motivated service in Christ. Using the example of Christ's service, he begins this exhortation with a most challenging command: "have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus." What does having this attitude involve?

First, we must realize that our service is for the express purpose of accomplishing the will of God only. One need not go into great detail as to how Christ accomplished this fulfillment in his own service; "emptying himself" and "becoming obedient to the point of death" is the highest example. Yet how easily we fail to do likewise. By seeking his will daily through prayer and study of his word, we too can know what God desires for us, what he would have us to do, and how to handle every situation with which we are faced. By substituting our own judgment and wisdom, by doing what we "think" is right before asking God to show us his way, we are not following Christ's example of dependence on God. This guiding principle of God's will alone must once again become foremost in the lives of all Christians before the church can grow in the power of God.

Second, our service must be out of love and compassion for those who are "in need of the Great Physician," so to speak. That is, even as Christ gave himself completely for us with no thought of reward or glory, so must we also devote our energies to seeking out and sharing the good news with the lost. Our primary responsibility is the ministry of reconciliation that God has given us;

secondary to this task are our other, less important duties.

Third, true service must never be for any kind of personal gain. Having touched upon this earlier, we elaborate only by saying, again, that the reward is not the goal of properly-motivated service. Any type of favor, prestige, or gain from a particular service of God is not to be actively sought, nor can it be used to justify a lack of true discipleship. Rather, we must in a healthy manner seek to give all the talent in our possession to the service of God, returning any glory bestowed upon us to him.

Fourth, we must actively serve God and him alone. Our labor is not for a personal sense of pride, nor is it to please other men or look good in their eyes; it is not even to further the status of a particular group or congregation. True discipleship is concerned and involved with learning obedience from the Master, serving him only and seeking to glorify him above all through accomplishing what he would have us to do. We do not serve a group, nor a given denomination, nor a certain fellowship. We must learn from Christ that, in everything, our service and loyalty is *to God*, and to no one else.

Conclusion

We see many different forms of Christian service in the church today, many of which may be suspect. When we read of evangelists taking in millions of dollars each year or congregations spending almost as much on lavish furnishings purely for themselves, while many worthy missions are hard put merely to survive, we might wonder if God's people have not traded in Biblical values for something else. What's more, all these questionable actions usually take place under the auspicious title of "true Christian service." Yet, as Paul would have us see, genuine Christian discipleship is still possible for all of us. The motivation of Christ, as shown in his service of God, must be our guide. To be sure, it is a goal that we can-

not fully reach except in a lifetime of dedicated service. When one determines to set himself to the task, all too soon the cost which was mentioned earlier becomes apparent, and may even seem overwhelming at times. Yet Christians have no other choice, and should desire no other way.

"Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I

do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12-13). May each Christian begin to press on, reaching ahead to the prize of true Christian service, and ever realizing that God works in us through our humble reliance on him. □

Freedom from Sectarianism

W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

Saint Louis, Missouri

Ever since God delivered me by His grace from the party spirit I have been under the conviction that His people have not all been gathered into any one group. I was not only set free from a sect, but from the spirit which creates and condones all sects. This means I did not swap sects or go to another party. I was driven to the Lord Jesus. I belong only to Him. In Him I can receive anyone whom Jesus has received.

It is no longer a question of what this group or that expects of me. The only thing is what Jesus requires, and He requires that I love my brethren, all of them, even those who disagree with me. In my case that represents quite a sizeable group. I happen to believe that every saved person on this earth is in the body of Christ. I do not believe they are all in what we call "The Church of Christ" any more than I believe they are all in "The Church of God" or in "The Church of God in Christ." The sheep of God are still scattered over the sectarian hills. They are not in our corral, or in anybody else's pen.

Sectarianism results from fear and fear breeds exclusivism. Sects are not built upon the foundation which God laid.

That foundation is a person. It is the Lord of glory. There is no such thing as a Christian sect any more than there is such a thing as Christian immorality, or Christian drunkenness, or Christian idolatry. But believers in Jesus become guilty of the sectarian spirit exactly as they may become guilty of immorality or excessive use of intoxicants. All of these are works of the flesh. All should be repented of when one becomes aware of them. And repentance means reformation of life.

Sectarianism is an attitude toward truth and other people. It has nothing to do with what one is in or where he is found. There are some who are in rigid sects who are non-sectarian, and others who are sectarian and belong to no group. Sectarianism is the party spirit. That spirit is antecedent to the party and creates it. Sectarianism always operates against love. It confines one within barriers constructed by men. It prescribes humanly-contrived limits beyond which he dare not associate.

The family of God is broken up into warring cliques and fighting factions. Hostility supplants gentility when the spirit of schism is seen. What is needed to offset this frightful state is men who

will recognize and encourage brotherhood across all of our silly and superficial lines. The family ties must be restored. This does not mean that I receive one as a Baptist, a Methodist, or a Presbyterian. I could not do that because to do so would be to sanction the spirit which divided them. Those are sectarian titles. What I am called to do is to recognize the sons of God who are among the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, or any other group, and to receive them as brethren beloved in the Lord.

I must acknowledge all truth which these have discovered and share with them the truth I have found in my research. Thus we will grow closer together and our hearts will become knit together, not by partisan bonds but by mutual respect for truth. This can only be accomplished by association. So long as I stay within our walls and they stay within theirs and we

lob occasional volleys at each other, we will continue to engender feelings of hatred for those whom we have never met.

Satan has tricked us all into creation of sects, and whether the name on our signboards is found in the sacred scriptures or outside them, makes little difference. The stealing of heaven's livery in which to clothe ourselves only adds to our dereliction. Jesus did not say that all men would know us by our signboards but by our love toward one another. All sectarianism is a work of the flesh. It separates and segregates those who ought to be one in Christ Jesus our Lord. Calling it by a scriptural title does not alter its nature. We can begin the long path back toward oneness by open acknowledgment that there are disciples of Jesus in all of the sects, and that which makes them such we hold in common with them. □

REACTION

BAPTISM AND THE LIBERAL MIND

JOHN SMITH

Kingman, Arizona

In Romans 10:1-4 Paul speaks about his fervent desire for the salvation of the Jews. In Romans 9:1 he speaks of his "great sorrow" and "unceasing anguish." He even goes so far as to suggest that if it would help he would sacrifice himself to the end that they, the Jews, would be saved. Please bear in mind Paul's anguish over lost brethren as you read this article, which is, in part, a response to one by F.L. Lemley in the May issue. It is also, in a larger sense, an attempt to impede the on-rushing, pell-mell surge of "new" thought based on a dangerously pure intellectual, historical, and theological (as opposed to spiritual) approach to scripture.

Lemley's article contains a basic and crucially dangerous error, an error which

has crept into the minds of many modern Christians, an error which I have been guilty of. The incredible insidiousness of this error is that it deceives most easily those who are the truly tenderhearted and compassionate, those who, like Paul, long for and labor for the salvation of others. It is this desire that leads us to seek a doctrinal position which will allow us the mental peace of believing that certain of the unbaptized, if not actually saved, are at least not lost. Using some of Paul's words in Romans 10:1-4, we too seek to "establish a righteousness," not for ourselves so much as for others whom we want so desperately to be saved, but who will not, or do not, or have not, submitted to baptism. I

believe that Lemley is guilty of this error.

Brother Lemley (and others) wishes by this new line of reasoning to get more people into the kingdom (probably he, like Paul, has some in particular whom he wishes to be there) and to save himself the dilemma brought about by the stumbling stone of baptism. It is the unbending rigidity, the finality, the very simplicity and obviousness of the command, the utter irrefutability of the act itself, that causes men to stumble over it. Faith is so personal, so subjective, that we may allow ourselves to believe whatever we wish to believe about the faith of others without any degree of conscience pain.

Brothers in Prospect?

If faith, even "vital faith," is the sole criterion for being "in grace," then we may salve our fears for the spiritual safety of others and save ourselves from the embarrassment of appearing narrow-minded, bigoted, and legalistic when we tell people they are lost, out of grace, until they are baptized. If I truly want them to have this "vital faith," then I can and will, by the process of selective perception, be able to ascertain it in them and therefore be more at ease regarding their spiritual condition. Baptism as a criterion is not so, and the hard fact of the observable reality that a person is unbaptized and therefore out of grace is especially hard to live with.

Brother Lemley states that "all of God's commands are within the domain of his grace." I know of no scriptural precedent for this conclusion, and perhaps he attaches a deeper significance to it than I am able to ascertain. I would suggest that God's grace is extended to mankind either conditionally or unconditionally. If unconditionally, then all are under grace, all have entered the kingdom, and no one need worry about faith, baptism, or right living. If grace is extended conditionally, then it is God's prerogative to name the conditions and our duty to comply. Baptism, as a condition of grace,

is received by Lemley much in the same light as by Carl Ketcherside in his brother-in-prospect proposal. Both men illustrate their argument by pointing out the distance between conception and birth and drawing the conclusion that the sinner comes under grace at conception (when the planted seed germinates) and not at birth. "Such obedient hearts, dead to sin and partakers of the circumcision not made with hands, are in the process of obeying the Lord and therefore are the subjects of God's grace." Wittingly or not, they become victims of the "prophecy no longer unto us hard things but smooth things" philosophy. Although we have wishfully judged many men into the kingdom, and feel much better about it, God's conditions judge them among those whom He has "never known."

At the end of his article Lemley exhorts the legalists to "stay out of God's judgment seat." Does he beseech us to stay out of it that he may occupy it? Why should those whom he terms "legalists" be upbraided for judging men to be lost any more than those who, like himself, take it upon themselves to judge them saved? Does Paul step out of bounds when he judges his brethren (according to the flesh) to be lost? Upon what criteria is this judgment made, in spite of their "zeal for God"? Why would he not have regarded them as "brothers in prospect"? Could he not have judged them at least "honestly mistaken"? I would argue that by this "new" thinking all men could be judged brothers in prospect and therefore under grace, and I can have no confidence in my ability to detect the saved from the lost, and in fact the words saved and lost are rendered useless as viable concepts.

I would also argue that to use the illustration referred to above as an argument against the necessity of baptism, counter to that of overwhelming scriptural evidence to the contrary, is apt evidence of a dangerous trend. The illustration would only have validity if there were specific scriptural evidence to support it. Because

there are similarities between the physical birth and the spiritual one is no reason to assume they are identical in every respect. It is amazing what innovations our intellectual fancies, coupled with our fleshly weaknesses, can conceive by this illustrative process. Actually, we are no better off for all of this argumentation in the practical area of judgment. Judgment has simply been removed from one area to another. Instead of having a substantive, objective criterion to utilize, along with the less objective, our entire scope of judgment is committed to the subjective area of determining who has "vital faith," distinguishing the "honestly mistaken" from the "willfully ignorant" and the "brothers in prospect" from the "brothers in retrospect."

No Other Way

Baptism is to grace on man's part what the cross is to grace on God's part. Jesus, in the garden, prayed that "the cup might pass." I hear Him saying that if there is some other way, some less painful way, some way that is less exacting, to extend grace—salvation to mankind—it is His desire that it be done. The Father's answer is, in effect, "There is no other way." If the Father were like these brethren, He would have so wanted to save the Son and Himself from the pain, grief, and shame of the cross that He would have been led to extend grace in a way that would not appear so "legalistic." He would have extended to us a cheap grace, a grace which cost Him nothing, a grace as meaningless and ineffectual as the salvation that men like Brothers Lemley, Ketcherside, and a host of others would, out of their weak benevolence, bestow on a greedy, unappreciative and gullible populace, all very willing to get a free lunch. If Christ had not gone to the cross, grace would have been dead. If we are not buried with Him in Baptism, we too are dead in our trespasses and sins.

Brother Lemley, like many, has become paranoid in his fear of being viewed

as legalistic or conservative, and consequently falls into a very human error. The tone of his article is one of condescension and pride. Legalists and conservatives are hardhearted, intolerant, unfeeling, despicable wretches, who without compunction or regard consign men to hell upon their own misguided judgment and glory in their exclusivism. Liberals, on the other hand, are generous, loving, kind, tolerant, farsighted, and have an enlightened insight into God's word which allows them to see far beyond the obvious meaning of the words of the Bible. "We enter the domain of grace at the point of vital faith, at the beginning of our obedience, not after we have successfully and perfectly completed our obedience." Now what Bible student would have guessed that without the help of an anti-legalist's enlightened mind?

Brother Lemley then refers to Romans 5:1-2 and adds, "It is significant that Paul did not say we have access to grace through perfect obedience." I don't know whether Paul would find that significant or not, but it is not significant to me. What Paul did not say is only significant to one who is trying to prove what he so desperately wants to believe and has already judged to be true. It does strike me as significant that Paul says nothing of "entering the domain of grace at the point of vital faith." It is significant that Paul says that through baptism we are raised "to walk a new life."

Finally, Lemley speaks of "our school of legalists" (whoever they may be, I suppose I am one) as not being able to "receive at face value" many open-end statements in the Bible because of our legalistic concept of water baptism without grace. Let me try this open-end statement on you: "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Legalist though I may be, I can accept that open-end statement at face value. □

LETTERS

Collective Freedom

Recently at prayer request time at church, Doris, a new convert from Catholicism, softly spoke: "We have felt the bondage of law in other parishes; please pray that this congregation may know freedom in Christ." Her halting and tearful words were not in our usual terminology, but she had recognized a central focus in the teaching of God. Her moving words were in my mind as I read "For Freedom Christ Has Set Us Free" by Robert Randolph in the July-August issue of *Integrity*, and I would like to add some thoughts to his.

Randolph has well noted the joy of freedom in Christ and has ably pin-pointed our dilemma: "We often incline toward those things which limit our freedom." It seems that our tendency to limit ourselves is a part of the human condition; Adam and Eve soon restricted themselves by accepting Satan's words and in so doing separated themselves from God and perfect freedom. It is God's graciousness which has given us freedom; when we accept Him, He does not absorb us into Himself but allows our individual free wills to remain. Yet, freedom is hard to take; as Randolph suggests, there is something "unsettling" about it which threatens our insecure natures. Only when we are secure in Perfect Love can we handle true freedom.

Randolph primarily discusses the freedom of the individual Christian; I should like to add a few words about the collective tendency of the church to limit itself. My reading of history has impressed me with the tendency of man to allow his thinking to solidify and to set up boundaries and authorities, all of which ends in constricting Christian work in this world. Repeatedly in historical Christianity, efforts have been made to break away from the tightened limitations which uncertain men have imposed upon God's people. Some of those movements only wanted freedom to do as they pleased, and their actions brought about a new kind of bondage; but many, many movements have called for a responsible freedom in Christ, yet they, too, after a time, became institutionalized and

hardened into an authoritarian mold. The battle against the temptation of Satan to set rigid limits is constant, and our church leaders should be questing for a responsible freedom in Christ, rather than falling prey to the convenience of deciding just where the limits of God's kingdom are. Being preoccupied with boundaries often serves to keep people out of God's presence, and Satan wins yet another victory.

It is, in one sense, perhaps easier to be for freedom when in the minority; what is needed is a commitment to freedom by the majority, by the "institutional church." Majorities all too often tend to be comfortable, and comfort may not always coincide with freedom.

Our own Restoration movement will have its life choked away unless we heed calls such as the one by Robert Randolph. Though we may not always agree with Randolph and other *Integrity* writers, we must thank God for the freedom which allows us all to state our views, and we must pray that all, as Doris pleaded, "may know freedom in Christ."

LAQUITA HIGGS
Dearborn, Michigan

When We Don't Understand

Re: Bradford Stevens' letter (*Integrity*, July/Aug. '78). It is seriously begging the question on the one hand to say "I believe that the question of evil no longer remains a cosmic mystery," and to offer as the only answer that "one must be honest and dig for it." The book of Job nowhere states or hints that Job experienced a "complete and full revelation," only that he is shown "marvels too great for me to know" (Job 42:3).

Certainly God can make any tragedy triumph in good but this is not to be equated with a perfect understanding of the problem of evil and suffering. In all kindness, it seems to me that this kind of attitude reeks of a theological smugness that offers nothing but frustration to those genuinely in need of comfort. On this side of the grave we will always "see through a glass darkly." It is only by surrendering my problems and disappointments in the things I don't understand to the Lord that I can obtain grace and find comfort. It seems to me this is what is promised in Rom. 8:28, not that I'll always be able to understand my personal tragedies.

BARRY W. GRAHAM
Terrell, Texas

Those "Simple" Words of the ERA

For almost forty years, I supported the Equal Rights Amendment as an active member of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women. I served three years as National Program Coordination Chairman. The amendment became the top priority.

As a member of the Arizona State Senate, I spoke in favor of the amendment the day after it passed the Congress. Within a few days, I read the Congressional Record, with all the debate and testimony during the hearings, regarding the effect of the amendment.

I was shocked. Never in all of my years of support did I realize that the amendment would have to apply in the *absolute*—that before the LAW we would be neither men nor women, boys or girls.

It was shocking also to find that the Senate overwhelmingly defeated all proposed amendments. They included exemption from military draft and service in combat on an equal basis as well as eliminating the requirement that a husband have a legal responsibility to support his family. There were others of great concern. The Courts would have to see those defeats as *legislative intent* in all future decisions.

I began to realize that the words had no clear meaning. Several years of legislative experience taught me that you never knowingly put imprecise words in any state statute.

I faced the fact that an amendment to the Constitution cannot be altered in any way except by a subsequent amendment. "Equality" and "Rights" cannot be defined. If the vague words were in the Constitution, the Courts would interpret the meaning. Demands for "rights" would be endless.

An example of the above point is the 14th Amendment, ratified July 28, 1868. It states in part that *ALL citizens* shall have "equal protection of the law." It also says that all *persons* born in the United States or naturalized are citizens. That includes *women*. We *are* in the Constitution!

The Supreme Court has rendered endless decisions based on those imprecise words for their authority. Examples are forced busing, prayer in public schools, abortion on demand and innumerable others never intended nor wanted by those who voted for the amendment. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Byron White, in a speech in Arizona in 1977, said there were twenty-three cases concerning

"equal protection" in that one term of court.

I do not support discrimination against women. I came to realize the amendment was not necessary to remove discriminations. In fact, Federal laws, with provisions for enforcement for everything I worked for, had already been passed. A major one, equal pay for equal work, with equal job opportunity, leading to affirmative action with suggested quotas is already enforced. Proponents cannot name one legitimate discrimination that needs a Constitutional amendment for removal. "Equalization" under Title IX of the Education Act almost becomes ridiculous.

Section 2 of the ERA grants all power to Congress to enforce by appropriate legislation. The transfer would be enormous because of the vast areas involved and covered by the amendment. The states would become almost a legal nullity. The identical language of Section 2 appears in seven of the sixteen amendments ratified since the Bill of Rights. Six are very clear and concise in their meaning. They did, indeed, transfer all power to the Federal level.

The 14th amendment, previously mentioned, contains the identical words of Section 2. It will keep us in litigation from now on, as more and more people demand some kind of "rights."

The power of a Constitutional amendment is awesome. It simply wipes out everything in the Constitution, every Federal and State law that conflicts with it—everything except a TREATY. The 1st Amendment is not sacred as some think. The "free exercise of religion" is threatened by those who demand women in every pulpit or no tax benefit.

Congress would be locked into the position of being forbidden to pass any law that would treat men and women differently. We would be *one sex* under law. Without ERA, women are already finding that "equality" in factories and other work areas is too much.

If any discrimination remains, it should be considered and voted on as a specific item. There should be no threats of reprisal, no boycotts, no extension of time. It should pass the tests of need and clarity within the seven-year time frame.

More than twenty states passed the ERA within six months after it passed the Congress. The great slowdown came when people began to understand that those deceptively simple words would really cause an upheaval in society.

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