

it has held. The general tells of how the rock of which the island consists was used for a firm foundation of all of the defense installations. Built in this way they could not be shaken by enemy bombs or by the discharge of their own guns. But the rock meant more than that; it was a shelter to the people, for they were able to tunnel into it and provide secure refuge, where they knew they were perfectly safe in the most severe raids. Truly we may say of our Lord, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me; let me hide myself in thee." We are secure in the atonement he provided for us on Calvary, and he has promised that he will for every temptation "make a way to escape."

No illustration can cover every phase of spiritual truths like this one, namely, that the Lord Jesus lives today. He is not only a sure foundation on which to build for eternity and a shelter from every onslaught of the enemy in the form of trial or temptation, but he makes it possible for us to be "always abounding in the work of the Lord." Security is not complete victory over the enemy. The Christian must also take the offensive. John 15 is a blessed passage in this respect. In the fifth verse we read, "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." He also said, "All power is given unto me. . . . Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28: 18-20.

Sandy had worked faithfully for many, many years in Scotland on the estate of a man he had long since learned to love. It was time for Sandy to retire, but his employer knew he would be unhappy unless he could have some out-of-doors work to do, so he offered to deed a small portion of the estate to Sandy, that he might use it to provide for himself for the rest of his life. Sandy was skeptical. He said he could not afford to buy the horse and cow he would need. He was told the place would be stocked for him. Then he wondered about tools with which to work. Again he was assured that they also would be provided. He then wondered what he would do if he should become sick and unable to take care of the place when it needed it. The reply to that was, "I will always have men around the estate who could help you out in an emergency." "Well," said Sandy, "if it's you and me for it, I guess I'll get along

all right." My Master very tenderly puts aside my every fear when he says, "I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Isaiah 41: 10. What a privilege to work for and with him.

So far we have been considering the needs of humanity that arise from within the life. We have seen that despair is replaced by victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have yet to consider the sorrows and circumstances that come from sources outside of ourselves and that are beyond our control. How great is the need of each soul for a comforter. 1 Thessalonians 4 and 5 point us to the unfailing supply for this need. "Wherefore comfort yourselves together." (5: 11.) "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (4: 18.) Where does the apostle go for these words of comfort? He goes back to the same great fact to which we were led in our search for victory over despair, namely, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. In chapter 4, verse 13 and following we read, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Then he goes on to tell about the great day when the Lord shall come in the clouds. What a wonderful assurance that we will be with our loved ones who have gone on and, of course, that we will know them. But the greatest comfort of all is found in the seventeenth verse, "so shall we ever be with the Lord." To have this comfort for ourselves and to share with others we should study these two chapters very carefully. It will be noted that the thought of victorious service is suggested here also, "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (5: 6.)

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Hebrews 13: 20, 21.

Ashaway, R. I.

# The Sabbath Recorder

Vol. 138

PLAINFIELD, N. J., APRIL 9, 1945

No. 15

## PRAYER

By Morgan P. Noyes

O God, who hast taught us how to live through One who went no easy way, but bore the burdens of the world even when they led him to a cross, we pray for a spirit like his, that we may confront our life undiscouraged, undismayed, and undefeated. Make us forgetful of ourselves, that in the face of the world's great need we may have the freedom of those who live for thee. Give us clearer understanding of the issues that confront us, that with decision and with faith we may take the way that leads toward thy kingdom. Grant us grace to hate wrong with malice toward none. Strengthen us to forgive those who wrong us, as we pray to be forgiven for wrongs that we do to others. Help thou our unbelief, that though wrong be powerful, we may dare to trust that thou art the Ruler yet. Set us in the train of all bold followers of Christ, that we may catch the spirit of his Cross, and gladly spend and be spent for the sake of those for whom Christ died. Amen.

—Presbyterian Tribune.

# The Sabbath Recorder

A Seventh Day Baptist Weekly Published by the American Sabbath Tract Society, Plainfield, N. J.

MRS. FRANK A. LANGWORTHY, Acting Editor L. H. NORTH, Manager of the Publishing House

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS  
William L. Burdick, D.D. Alva L. Davis, D.D. Mrs. Okey W. Davis  
Mrs. Walter L. Greene Harley Sutton

Per Year .....\$2.50 Terms of Subscription Six Months.....\$1.25

Postage to Canada and foreign countries 50 cents per year additional.

Subscriptions will be discontinued at date of expiration when so requested.

All subscriptions will be discontinued one year after date to which payment is made unless expressly renewed.

All communications, whether on business or for publication, should be addressed to the Sabbath Recorder, Plainfield, N. J.

Entered as second-class matter at Plainfield, N. J.

Vol. 138, No. 15

Established in 1844

Whole No. 5,132

## Editorials

Rev. Alva L. Davis, D.D., Salem, W. Va.

### OUR LIQUOR PROBLEM

There is no graver problem touching health and efficiency than that of narcotics. Of all the habit-forming, self-destroying drugs, opium, morphia, heroin, and cocaine stand supreme. So patent are the dangers of these drugs that enlightened public opinion expressed in law forbids their sale. They can be legally sold only on medical prescription.

The case is different with alcohol. The sale of liquor is approved by our national and state governments. Drinking has been made legal, if not endowed with a badge of respectability. The liquor interests are constantly advertising the great values of alcoholic drinks, such as food values, sociability, and the freedom of man from his burdens, cares, and regrets.

1. Food values and sociability. We might dismiss these as relatively unimportant, but liquor interests make exaggerated claims concerning them. Beer is the most nutritious of all these liquors, and its value is largely that of yeast. An equal amount of money spent for bread would give about thirty times the amount of nutrition. As has been said, "Alcoholic liquors as food are like gunpowder as fuel—very costly and very dangerous."

The plea for drinking as a social asset is much more common, but this is a matter of convention which can be altered. One

can but wonder why it is more sociable to drink liquor than it would be to drink grape juice, or punch, or coffee. Or why intelligent conversation or games and sports might not be more helpful than vulgar prattle stimulated by liquor.

2. Stimulation. Man has ever sought for some method of drowning his sorrows, something to free his mind from the burden of care, anxiety, and regret. William James says: "The reason for craving alcohol is that it is an anesthetic, even in moderate quantities. It obliterates a part of the field of consciousness and abolishes collateral trains of thought." The danger of this procedure is apparent. We cannot afford to submerge our better natures. A safer procedure is for a man to live by his reason and conscience rather than stupefy them.

### The Evils of Alcohol

1. Physical. It has been shown by experiment that alcohol, even in slight doses, decreases capacity for mental and physical work. A moderate use of alcohol increases liability to disease, and shortens the span of life. The total abstainer has the advantage over the light drinker. They tell us that the chances of losing children at birth or in infancy, of begetting feeble-minded or degenerate children are greater with drinkers than abstainers. Children of abstainers—on the average—have advantage in size, vigor, and intellectual power.

2. Moral. The moral harm of alcohol is even greater than the physical. A large proportion of crimes are committed by those under the influence of liquor. The demoralizing influence of the liquor business in our social life is tremendous—coarsening and brutalizing. It is back of much of the infidelity in home life, making a large contribution to our juvenile delinquency problem. It goes hand in hand with the houses of prostitution and vice. The place that liquor plays in the sex problem would seem sufficient cause for its banishment.

3. Economic. The Business Men's Research Foundation has recently released some startling facts. Among them are these: The arrests for drunkenness in 1932 (the last year of prohibition) were 831.1 per 100,000 population; in 1942 they were 2,562.5, an increase of over 300 per cent in ten years. The grain used in making distilled liquors and beer in 1943 would have fed 2,303,000 soldiers for an entire year, allowing each soldier five and one-half pounds per day.

The whisky "holiday" for distillers, in August of this year consumed 560,350,000 pounds of grain. This would have produced 50,000,000 gallons of whisky, or it would feed 5,000,000 of the world's starving people in the postwar period between crops. (Gleaned from B.M.R.F. release.)

Says the "Christian Century": "The City of Washington has but one reason for being. It is exclusively devoted to the business of governing the nation. It is shocking, therefore, to discover that the District of Columbia is almost twice as wet as the wettest state in the Union. According to the government's latest statistical report (1940) 4.26 gallons of liquor were consumed for every man, woman, and child in the federal district. Nevada which boasted it was 'wide open' consumed only 2.65 gallons per person. The three wettest states are: Nevada, 2.65 gallons per person; Illinois, 1.64 gallons; New York, 1.35 gallons; District of Columbia, 4.26 gallons." Since the per capita increase between 1939 and 1940 was 12 per cent, the District of Columbia's yearly consumption is probably not far from five gallons per person now.

The people of the United States spent more than \$7,000,000,000 for liquor last year (Dept. of Commerce Report), which is \$54 per capita, an all-time high.

J. Edgar Hoover has recently released

these figures on juvenile crime: Since 1941 there has been an increase of 134 per cent in the number of girls arrested under eighteen, and 21 per cent in the number of arrests of juvenile boys.

"Never in the memory of living men has the liquor traffic, and those who consort with it, been so brazen in defiance of the sentiment of the people. Newspaper reports, columnists, radio comedians, and the writers of fiction—to say nothing of the purveyors of amusements generally—laugh down the protests of sober folks as though they were enemies of the common good. Never in the history of the American government has any administration shown so much friendliness toward the liquor traffic as the one now in power. The protests of Christian parents who seek to protect their sons in the service have thus far failed completely."—Roy L. Smith, Editor of "Christian Advocate."

Now let us bring our records up-to-date. During World War I, under a Democratic administration, the Eighteenth Amendment became a part of our Constitution. The next eight years saw two Republican administrations. As the amendment had been adopted, the temperance forces relaxed their effort, feeling "it was in the Constitution to stay." The enforcement of prohibition was placed in the hands of the Treasury Department, the secretary of which was reported to hold brewery stock. The law was poorly enforced, and bootlegging became a problem.

Twelve years ago the present administration came into power, elected on a platform pledged for repeal and the legalizing of the sale of liquors. This we were told was in the interest of temperance, and that bootlegging would disappear.

We, the American people, of all political parties, at least the wet interests of all parties, voted into power the party pledged for repeal. We approved the program. What should we have expected? The issue was clear-cut and in the open. For twelve years the liberalized liquor business has gone forward, gaining in momentum and influence. Now we have bootlegging in booze, in gasoline, and even ration stamps. This editorial does not seek to place the blame for conditions, on any one party. We are all in it. Liquor is sold everywhere. This is temperance!

This editorial closes with a final word from the editor of the "Christian Advocate":

"The official board which does not encourage the pastor in making war on this Public Enemy No. 1 is betraying its responsibility. It is perfectly safe to say that no church which is tolerant of the liquor traffic can hope to be a redemptive force, no matter what its theology may be."

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CROSS

1. The centrality of the Cross. All the great historic creeds and systems of theology and the combined thought of the Christian world have enshrined the Cross of Christ as the central object of the Holy of Holies.

It is well at the outset that we free ourselves from any easy-going doctrine of Christ's death. "The Cross was not an accident; it was God ordained. The death of Christ was not merely a sacrifice to truth or an exhibition of perfect righteousness or an example of what men are always doing at their best, or the highest revelation of God's love for man and his hatred of sin. Each of these statements expresses a segment of the truth, but not the whole truth." (W. M. Clow.)

The death of Jesus Christ on the Cross was to make atonement for sin—that is the heart of Christianity. It is the distinctive, determining doctrine of the Christian religion. It differentiates the Christian religion from all other religions.

When thus we interpret Christianity it becomes more than a revelation, more than a code of ethics. Our religion is a religion of redemption. Man is a sinner, under condemnation of God's law, and he can do nothing to save himself. The Bible teaches that God's love for sinful man was so great that he sent his Son to die for man, in place of man, and as a substitute for man. By faith in Christ as Redeemer, man is forgiven; and the guilt of his sin is taken away. Thus he is restored to the family of God. With this thought of redemption in mind, we see that the death of Christ is the one central truth around which cluster the great truths of the Christian religion.

2. The New Testament witness. When we study the New Testament carefully we are struck with three facts: First. The prominence given the death of Christ in the four Gospels. This is unparalleled, without analogy, not only in the Scripture but in history. Furthermore, there is no precedent for it in the Old Testament. No particular value

is attached to the death of anyone in the Old Testament, nor is there any trace that the death of anyone had a regenerating effect. There were many martyrs and heroes in Hebrew history. They were stoned, sawn asunder, tortured, slain with the sword, but no writer attributes any regenerating effect to their death or to the shedding of their blood.

Second. According to the Gospels, the death of Christ was the main purpose of his coming. In all human biography death is accepted as the inevitable climax of life. But with Jesus, his death was the purpose for which he came. "For this cause came I unto this hour." John 12: 27. From the beginning of his ministry it was the overshadowing event, distinctly foreseen and voluntarily undergone.

Third. The object of Christ's death was the forgiveness of sins. Nowhere does Jesus say that his death was due to his opposition of the religious standards of his day. He had such opposition, of course. Nowhere does Jesus say that his was a choice between martyrdom and apostasy. The consistent testimony of the Gospels, Acts, and the epistles is that Christ died no accidental death; but that he voluntarily suffered according to the will of God in an act of sacrificial, atoning, reconciling, redeeming love.

3. The testimony of Paul. If we listen to Paul as he undertakes to tell us what the gospel is, we are almost amazed at his audacious declarations. From the beginning of his ministry to the close he preached but one gospel. Whether he spoke to kings or priests, to scholars or the populace, he preached Christ—and him crucified. Wherever he went he kept his message keyed to the same theme: "I am determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." 1 Corinthians 2: 2. Let me quote further from Paul's matchless teachings: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" Romans 5: 8. "Know ye not that . . . ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." 1 Corinthians 6: 19, 20.

No man ever worked to save men as did Paul. As teacher and preacher no man is comparable to him. His teaching and preaching have shaped the thought and conduct of the Church for nineteen hundred years. When Paul was among men he stood erect,

matching his wisdom with the best. When in the presence of Jesus Christ he esteemed himself as nothing. He bowed humbly at the feet of Jesus, as chief of sinners. Jesus had done so much for him that he wore chains for him—he was his slave.

We have not been redeemed by the corruptible things of this world, such as silver and gold, but by "the precious blood of Christ." 1 Peter 1: 19. The sinless One took our place, died in our stead, and by his death we live. To me, that is the abiding significance of the Cross, and that is the good news of the gospel.

#### FIRST THINGS FIRST

##### A Call to Prayer

As president of the General Conference I have been asked to join with the official heads of the other Protestant bodies in a call to prayer. Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, president of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and Dr. Robert M. Hopkins, chairman of the Committee of Reference and Counsel of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, are jointly proposing that a call shall be issued for united prayer and intercession in connection with the opening of the Conference of the United Nations in San Francisco on April 25. It is hoped that the same period for intercession may be designated in other lands and a world-wide concert of prayer secured.

The Conference of the United Nations on the charter of the general security organizations, which opens at San Francisco on April 25, may well be a turning point in the history of our time. The success of this conference can offer reasonable hope for the development of a just and durable peace. Its failure would mark a long step toward a third world war. Our churches are profoundly concerned in the outcome of these deliberations. Basic conditions of human welfare, basic conditions of Christian advance, are at stake.

As the Conference of the United Nations Convenes,

##### Let Us Give Thanks:

That the opportunity is now given to make a new beginning in the development of effective world community for the maintenance of peace with justice.

##### Let Us Confess:

That we have been concerned too much with our own affairs, indifferent to the needs of others, and unready to make sacrifice to prevent war and to insure peace.

##### Let Us Pray:

That out of the suffering and sacrifice of our war-torn world there may be born a new willingness among men to work together for the common good.

That the Holy Spirit may give to the conference delegates both the will and the wisdom to fashion an organization which shall bind the nations effectively together for mutual protection and benefit in one family of mankind.

That our government may be guided to accept its responsibilities to give the full support of the United States to all constructive agreements which the conference may achieve.

That the peoples may undergird their governments and the international organization now projected in the development of world order, freedom, and justice under law.

And that to the churches and nations God may give a deeper faith in the possibility of a better world order, based upon his holy and redeeming purpose as revealed in Christ, and a stronger will to persevere in its achievement.

Some Seventh Day Baptists are already in prayer for this conference, and from them comes the suggestion that Tuesday night, April 24, be a denomination-wide time of prayer.

Let us then spend much time in prayer Friday night, April 20, Sabbath day, April 21 and again Tuesday night, April 24. For April 25, I wish that the church might be open all day, so that individuals or groups may go and come at will or, if practicable, as nearly all of the company as possible spend the whole day at the church in continual prayer and meditation, different ones leading the periods of the day. Possibly small neighborhood prayer meetings will be your way.

It is my hope that the whole denomination may be in constant prayer even at their regular work on April 25. Let us pray.

P. B. Hurley, Conference President.

#### SABBATH RALLY DAY

##### Sabbath Supplement

Since May 19 is the date set for Sabbath Rally Day, the Recorder of April 30 will contain a special Sabbath supplement prepared by Dean A. J. C. Bond and the seminary seniors, Rex Zwiebel and Zack White.

No attempt is being made to provide a full program with a complete order of service for the Sabbath morning service of worship. It has been the purpose of the editors preparing this material to render assistance to pastors and others as they make preparations to observe Sabbath Rally Day. To date, prayers, responsive reading, sermon,

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON  
FOR APRIL 21, 1945

The Founding of the Nation

Scripture—Exodus (Especially Chapters 18 to 20);

Numbers; Acts 7: 17-44

Memory Selection—Proverbs 14: 34

Rev. William L. Burdick, D.D., Ashaway, R. I.

Correspondence should be addressed to Rev. William L. Burdick, Ashaway, R. I.  
Checks and money orders should be drawn to the order of Karl G. Stillman, Westerly, R. I.

### MISSIONARY DEVELOPMENT

By Rev. Verney A. Wilson

Missionary pastor at Nortonville, Kan.

#### Christ the Great Missionary

Christ was the great missionary of all times, and yet he was not very far from home at any time—as we consider distance these days. He lived almost his entire life in Palestine among his own people. However, he laid the foundation of world missions. In sending out his disciples he sent them first to his own people, the “lost sheep of the house of Israel.” His last great commission was to go to the entire world. These acts of the Master very clearly set before us the great missionary spirit for all men at all times. It was men in whom he was interested, rather than a class or race of men.

#### Home Missions the Base for Foreign Missions

The stronger the foundation of a building, the more secure will be the building itself. If the foundation is weak, the building will be in proportion to it. The same is true in respect to missions. If the home base is strong and well-founded, it will be the means for strong foreign missions. When one has a great interest in those about him he will also have much interest in those farther away, and the more he realizes the needs of those near him he is inspired to the realization of the needs of others. Therefore, one's interest in home missions is a steppingstone to foreign missions. Such interest in home and afar does not mean a divided interest but is a united unit, united for a common cause. Such a cause is a powerful force in the advancement of Christianity.

#### Missions a Vital Part of the Life of a Church

The missionary spirit is a very vital part of the life of any church. It does not mean,

however, that a church must have a missionary on some mission field; but it has the missionary enterprise at heart and has a part, in some measure at least, of such an enterprise. Christianity has been handed down from generation to generation through the medium of missions, and thus any church owes much in regard to its existence to the great missionary movement which was begun by the great missionary, Christ. If then it owes to such a movement its existence, it also has a great part in the continued advancement of such a cause, and in advancing such it is helping to carry the gospel to the world. This is a great responsibility. At the same time it is a great privilege, a privilege on which a church will thrive. It is something that the more it gives, the more it will have to give. The storehouse will never run dry of such interest. “Freely ye have received, freely give,” says the Master. Matthew 10: 8.

#### Seventh Day Baptists a Missionary Denomination

Seventh Day Baptists are a missionary people and believe that Christianity is for all men who are willing to accept it. We as such believe that we have a part in carrying the message of the Christ to those who know it not, wherever they may be found. We feel it a privilege granted to us by One who has the authority to grant such a privilege. We are proud of such a wonderful heritage as this, and we feel very grateful to the Giver. However, there have been many dark days in our missionary life as a denomination, and the present condition of things may seem to be somewhat discouraging. Is the “night” too dark for us to go on? Are we discouraged? Our answer is No! We are not discouraged. We have a great commission to be carried out, and the Captain of that commission will not fail us in the dark days, neither would we fail him now or later. We believe

we can still be used by him in this great work. When the present cloud has passed over, the opportunities for mission work will probably be much larger than before. As long as there is a need among men, there will be a need for missionary work. The greater that need is, the greater will be the opportunity for such work. Our privilege will increase with the growing needs of humanity. Yes, we believe in missions. May we be faithful to that belief and always be missionary in spirit and in deed, ever looking unto him who has called us to such a profitable work.

#### Our First Missionaries to China

It has been almost a century since our first Seventh Day Baptist missionaries went to China. In 1845 opportunity was given for subscription for the purpose of establishing a foreign mission field. The responsibility of securing someone to go on such a field was left in the hands of the Missionary Board (Missionary Society). As time went on and the interest in such an undertaking continued to grow, Rev. Solomon Carpenter and his wife were accepted as candidates to go; and later, Rev. Nathan Wardner and his wife were also accepted. This was in the following year, 1846. However, Mr. Wardner was not ordained until December 31 of that year. On that day appropriate services were held at Plainfield, N. J., for that purpose and for the setting aside of both Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Wardner as missionaries to China. On January 5, 1847, the four set sail from New York for China. Abyssinia had first been selected as the field of labor, but due to the impracticability of Abyssinia it was given up and China was decided upon as the place for the mission. After sailing for one hundred twelve days they reached Hong Kong; and from there they went to Shanghai, arriving in the summer of that year, 1847. After about two and one-half years of labor four Chinese accepted Christ and the Sabbath, and in July of 1850 the Shanghai Seventh Day Baptist Church was organized with seven members. Owing to the sickness of Mrs. Wardner and one of her boys, she and her sons returned to America in 1856, while Mr. Wardner remained in China until the following year, when he returned to the homeland. Also because of failing health Mr. and Mrs. Carpenter returned home the next year, 1858, bringing with them a native convert, Dzau Tsuny Lau. They with Dzau

Tsuny Lau returned to China in the early part of 1860, sailing from New York on February 25, but did not reach their destination until July 2. Failing health again caused them to leave China for the homeland after about four years. They returned, however, a third time to China in 1873. This was the last voyage of Mrs. Carpenter, as she died in China September 21, 1874. Mr. Carpenter returned to America in 1876.

These missionaries were pioneers in a great cause in a strange land, but they labored faithfully for that cause and opened a great field in which we have been laboring now for these many years. May God continue to bless this field and all others to his glory and honor.

### CALL TO PRAYER FOR SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America is sponsoring a Call to Prayer for the San Francisco Conference of the United Nations. The dates to be observed are the weekend of April 21, and Wednesday, April 25. As the conference will be in session several weeks, the prayer effort will naturally continue after those dates.

As an aid in the observance of this occasion, the Federal Council has published a folder which “contains the Call to Prayer issued by Protestant leaders, suggestions for prayer observance, appropriate Scripture passages and hymns, and about twenty-five prayers including special prayers for the occasion by G. Bromley Oxnam, Henry Sloane Coffin, and Mrs. Harper Sibley. The cost of the folder in quantities under five hundred will be 2 cents each; five hundred and more, 1½ cents each; single copies free on request.” They may be secured by addressing the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. H. E. W.

### A CORRECTION

My attention has been called to a contradiction in my sermon in the Recorder of March 12 where I twice used the word “vicarious” in describing the death of Christ. “Vicarious” means “substitutional,” a meaning which I did not intend to convey. Neither term is scriptural. I tried to show that Jesus was neither a substitute victim of the wrath of God nor a pawn traded by God to Satan

for the souls of men. Christ died for us, to reveal to us the suffering, forgiving, redeeming love of God. It was voluntary and gratuitous, not vicarious. We were indeed "bought with a price," paid not to God or to Satan but to us, a sobering thought.

Jesus described the attitude of God toward sinful men in the story of the forgiving father and the returning son. There we

find no thought of a substitute, no legal transaction, no requirement but a penitent heart. Our Father's heart is always open and waiting and our Saviour pleads not with him but with us to repent and accept his forgiveness. Let us thank God for the drawing power of his redeeming love, the greatest force in all the world.

Neal D. Mills.

## Woman's Work

Mrs. Ohoy W. Davis, Salom, W. Va.

### FIELD REPORT

#### Florida

Arrangements have been made with Rev. and Mrs. William Kimshel to come here. They arrived on this Palatka and Carraway field March 1, ready to take over the work for a few weeks. Before coming to Daytona Beach, I spent five days helping them make adjustments. A recent letter indicates they are getting along very well.

The people of Carraway are very glad to have Mr. Kimshel with them, and they expect much from him. He can stay only a comparatively short time, so we are corresponding with others to find someone to serve as permanent pastor. The Carraway people will not be satisfied until we have a man definitely stationed on the field.

One Sabbath eve, after church in Palatka, I took home all the children who could go in the first carload. When I came back I found Nelda and Nadine Tyre, Mary Lou Terry, and Eloise James writing out pledges which they thought would be well for all of them to sign. The following is a copy of one of these pledges:

I pledge to make myself worthy of belonging to Miss Randolph's church, and I hope that God will forgive me for all the wrongdoings I have done. Help me, O Lord, to be worthy. Help me to love everyone. Please, O Lord, help me. I know I have a bad temper, but help me to control it. I love everyone. Mary Lou Terry.

What a beautiful pledge, prayer, and confession! We are seeing the glory of God manifest in many ways as these girls and many others, eight to fourteen years of age, reach out to find God and get personally acquainted with him. Let us all pray that they may believe in Jesus and live for him every day, become members of his church, yes, and follow his example in keeping all

the commandments of God. Remember, Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, . . . but to fulfil. . . . Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Unless we Seventh Day Baptists put an energetic man on this field, other groups will. There are open doors for us now; but, if we are too slow, God will raise up other leaders.

E. F. R.

#### Franklin City, Va.

The latest word from Ella Mae Davis of Franklin City informs us that the new portable organ is practically paid for. Only \$6.50 was yet to be paid. Promoter Greene had said he wanted to give the last five dollars, and he sent this amount to complete the payment. Thus loving hearts and willing hands have a fine musical assistant to help proclaim the message of Jesus and his love.

#### Edinburg, Tex.

We had ordination of two deacons yesterday, March 24. Pastor Beebe was invited to be here. He and Ann came, and will return today. We are expecting to have baptism soon.

L. O. G.

### CONCERNING CHINA

#### China Prayer Covenant

Attention is again called to the "China Prayer Covenant," announced in this column on March 12. The Chinese Church leaders have called the Christian people of North America to intercession in their behalf. April 15 (April 14 for Seventh Day Baptists) is the day to be observed as a "Day of Prayer for China."

It is hoped this will be the beginning of daily prayer for the Christian movement in China, for the unity of China, for China's leaders, for missionaries and Chinese Christians.

#### China House

The official opening of China House occurred on December 1, 1944, in the presence of a distinguished company of specially invited guests and a larger group who came to the "open house" the following day.

China House is a memorial to Dr. Henry W. Luce, who devoted his life to Christian education in China and to the welfare of Chinese students in this land. The art and charm of its decoration furnish a fitting setting for the China Institute, and in the few months since its opening China House has become one of the chief centers of Chinese student activities in New York City.

The speaker on this occasion was the former ambassador to the United States and the renowned Chinese scholar, Dr. Hu Shih. He chose as his topic "The Unshakable Foundation of Friendship Between China and the United States." This foundation, he said, rests on four pillars: the friendly attitude of the United States government, the interest of America in Chinese art, the services of Christian missions, and the influence of Chinese students who have studied in America.

The strongest pillar of these four, in Dr. Hu Shih's judgment, is formed by the Chinese students. On their return to China they carry with them personal friendships, experiences of American home life, the very best of our culture.

The gratitude of the Chinese people, he said, at the return of the Boxer Indemnity is truly great; it has furnished the means for many Chinese students to come for study. He pleaded for the gift to these visiting students, not only of learning, but of friendship and a further sharing of home life.

#### Friendly Relations in the Press

The March issue of "Women and Missions," published by the Boards of Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., carries an article entitled, "Behold! They Stand at Our Doors."

The February 28 issue of the "Christian Century" has an article by Dr. Everett M. Stowe entitled, "The Students Are Coming."

In Dr. Luman J. Shafer's new book, "The

Christian Mission in Our Day," published by the Missionary Education Movement, page 131, there is a section on the foreign students.

On page 28 of "Christian World Facts," 1944-45, published by the Foreign Missions Conference, you will find an article by Dr. Herrick B. Young, personnel secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., entitled "The Foreign Student in America."

"World's Y.W.C.A. Monthly," February, 1945, has an article by Miss Talitha Gerlach entitled, "Envoys of International Understanding."

The September 20 issue of the "Far Eastern Survey" of the American Council, Institute of Pacific Relations, contains "China Reaches for a New Weapon." The weapon in question is the micrometer, and it is the technical and industrial trainees who are reaching for it.

"World Outlook," published by the Methodist Church, in the number for last November, has an article, "New Guests from China—The Industrial Trainees." The last two articles are by Doctor Stowe. — Release by Committee on Friendly Relations. Among Foreign Students.

(Possibly some women's societies will be interested in arranging at least one program on friendly relations as set forth above.)

### DENOMINATIONAL BUDGET

Statement of Treasurer, February 28, 1945

	Receipts	
	February	Total for 8 months
Adams Center .....		\$ 189.39
Albion .....	11.88	116.29
Alfred, First .....		1,117.25
Alfred, Second .....	72.17	294.61
Andover .....		5.00
Associations and groups .....		629.20
Battle Creek .....		893.95
Berlin .....	17.00	120.39
Boulder .....	25.00	200.40
Brookfield, First .....	36.00	158.50
Brookfield, Second .....	32.00	228.92
Chicago .....	77.36	238.69
Daytona Beach .....	15.00	121.25
Denver .....	34.00	162.00
De Ruyter .....	12.25	238.95
Des Moines .....		4.73
Dinuba .....		35.10
Dodge Center .....		16.75
Edinburg .....	9.50	60.80
Farina .....	167.25	272.25
Fouke .....		112.62
Friendship .....		22.00
Gentry .....	7.25	65.65

Hammond .....		30.00	Walworth .....		50.00
Healdsburg-Ukiah .....	4.00	4.00	Waterford .....	10.00	112.00
Hebron, First .....		22.50	White Cloud .....		108.71
Hopkinton, First .....	10.50	295.89			
Hopkinton, Second .....	1.00	34.00			
Independence .....		197.00			
Individuals .....	7.00	199.77			
Irvington .....	150.00	150.00			
Little Genesee .....	118.25	365.30			
Little Prairie .....		15.00			
Los Angeles .....	10.00	100.00			
Lost Creek .....	78.14	279.00			
Marlboro .....	165.00	592.00			
Middle Island .....	3.80	53.83			
Milton .....	178.12	1,871.39			
Milton Junction .....	102.90	584.93			
New Auburn .....		165.10			
New York .....	18.86	317.77			
North Loup .....		231.99			
Nortonville .....		96.00			
Pawcatuck .....	200.00	2,025.66			
Plainfield .....	120.53	1,301.65			
Piscataway .....	36.55	113.55			
Richburg .....	35.00	86.00			
Riverside .....	145.45	597.50			
Roanoke .....	6.00	12.00			
Rockville .....	3.17	107.73			
Salem .....	27.25	456.20			
Salemville .....		59.78			
Shanghai .....		26.00			
Shiloh .....	27.00	843.00			
Syracuse .....	5.00	5.00			
Verona .....		286.05			

## Christian Education

Rev. Harlow Sutton, Alfred Station, N. Y.

Sponsored by the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN ACTION

#### Good Work by Young People!

This is one of the headings in the March issue of the "Arkansas Seventh Day Baptist News Letter" which is prepared by the missionary pastor, Rev. Clifford Beebe, and is printed by the Bible Witness Press at Fouke, Ark.

"The Fouke Christian Endeavor society, as a special project, is sending out monthly letters to the pastorless churches of the association. These letters, prepared by different members of the society, contain a Bible message designed for use in Sabbath worship, and some news notes. They have been sent out regularly since September.

"These young folks have also started a fund for the proposed mission school in Jamaica."

#### Leadership Training School

Pastor Paul Burdick was dean of the community school held at Adams Center in Octo-

ber and November. The Baptist Church also co-operated. Classes in "Community Betterment," "Teaching Primary Children," and "Introduction to the Bible," were taught. A number of members of our church there attended the classes.

#### State Council of Churches

Pastor Marion C. Van Horn of Lost Creek, W. Va., has been appointed a member of the West Virginia State Council Social Action Clinic. He is also superintendent of the leadership department of the local district.

Four members of the Lost Creek Church attended a county leadership school held in Clarksburg, W. Va.

#### Community Class

Pastor Neal D. Mills of New Auburn, Wis., is teaching the "Life of Christ," in a community class in which the United Brethren Church is co-operating with the Seventh

Day Baptist Church. "Discovering Jesus," by Sidney A. Weston is the book being used. All in the class are deeply interested.

"Stand by China and China's Will to Live," is the subject of two reels of movie film which were shown at New Auburn recently. These films come from the Church Committee for Relief in Asia, and are very good. The only expense is cost of transportation from Chicago.

### VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL FOR 1945

#### Why Have a Vacation School?

First, to supplement the work of the Sabbath school in guiding growing, developing personalities into a full Christian experience; second, to reach out and bring in the "unreached" children of the community; and third, to help children make valuable use of leisure time. During the two-weeks' school there is as much time for Christian teaching as there would be in at least thirty weeks of Sabbath school, and there is value in these consecutive meetings of children. Such a school gives the church another opportunity to teach "Churchmanship," which is much needed by us all.

It is taken for granted that it is essential that children in vacation school be taught to know and appreciate the Bible as the major source of knowledge of God and Jesus, and to know how to use it as a guide for present day living. We must remember, too, that by the use of stories, pictures, and special projects, the children are to be taught the world mission of the Church. Children in Seventh Day Baptist vacation schools should know the missions and missionaries of our denomination.

The Vacation Church School is just what its name implies, a school of the church. Children need to know and to feel that the Church is the "body of Christ." Through this school children ought to be brought to accept Christ and join the church. For this reason it is better for each church to have its own school if at all possible. This would mean that the pleasant and helpful experiences of the vacation school are associated with the child's own church. It is well to plan for the school in co-operation with all churches in the community in order that teachers can get help from co-operative plans, but the school ought to be held by each church in its own building.

Now is the time to start plans for vacation school. The teachers should be appointed and texts selected so there can be thorough preparation. For any help you may need, please write to your secretary.

### STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT CONFERENCE

By Robert Burdick

(Robert is a student at Alfred University and was one of six delegates attending this conference held at the University of Rochester, March 9-11. His report is used this week as a youth representative of the Adams Center Church in the plan of the Young People's Committee of the board, to have every church represented on this page.)

"Can college be a religious experience?" was the theme, but we changed that so the emphasis is, "What Can We Do and Be to Make College a Religious Experience?"

Kenneth Irving Brown, president of Denison College, stressed the need for unity of purpose among different sects present on the campus. Actual union of these would be impossible, and perhaps not desirable. The problem of establishing courses in religion in state-supported schools was discussed. Examples were cited in which some colleges had solved this problem satisfactorily.

John Maxwell Adams discussed the thought of "Tension, but not Strain." By music, poetry, and Scripture interspersed with brief comments he showed that the two opposing forces—man's basic need for security versus his search for adventure, instead of straining at each other—could be united in a common purpose, worship and service for God. Tension of persistent effort is a necessity of life, but defeats its own purpose if it becomes the strain of two opposed forces. Security is expressed in our faith in God, and is illustrated in the Shepherd's Psalm. The call to Christian duty and allegiance to God summons our spirit of adventure to test our faith. We should be alert and eager, ready to hear the call.

Mr. Harry C. Meserve of Buffalo, N. Y., spoke on "Facts of a Marching History." When he showed how in the not-too-distant future the white race will be a minority group, he left us wondering how we will react to such a situation. The "sixty-hour world" has made isolationism impossible. What kind of a "one world" will we try to form—one based on domination of one country or one race, or one brotherhood?

How can we reconcile each other's religious views?

He said that the process of breaking down religious and racial barriers should be going on in American colleges, for from them will come the impetus of a new world movement. The courses offered by the Fellowship of Reconciliation in New York City including trips to slums, the bowery, to the roots of crime, were suggested as examples of how to encourage racial mixing in colleges. There should be more rubbing of elbows and less isolationism.

Peoples of the world were pictured as on the rim of a wheel whose center is God. As they reach by their various spokes nearer and nearer the center they must also come closer to each other.

Mr. Paul Harris of Putney, Vt., showed how the rush and complication of college life is unlike the forty- to fifty-year life which follows, and for which college is supposed to prepare us. Religious experiences—in contrast—take quietness, time, and thought. Religious experiences were defined as a realization of that "larger than you" relationship, or an awakening to the worthiness of self to community, by a mental reconnection to the power of the Infinite, after its being disconnected by circumstances of the world. The connections are mentally as tangible as ligaments; that power received is as real as the sun's rays or the air that we breathe. Creative thought in our minds is not instigated by us, but is rethinking the thoughts of God. We don't make the first move, but respond and react to the impulses given us in a very real relationship with him.

Does college encourage religious experiences of such a nature? It can if we make

it so. The religious person is most at home in an environment which requires improvement. College life can be conducive, although it hinders somewhat by stressing facts and applying an "intellectual yardstick" to all experiences. Not everything is "intellectually valid." Nor is it a disgrace to undertake something in which intellect is only a part of the reason. The phenomenon of falling in love is not a reasonable process. Religious experience is just as real without being particularly intellectually valid.

A discussion of the permanence of religious experiences followed, in which he pointed out that religious experiences need daily renourishing—not weekly, or once in a while, but daily.

The challenge was given for finding real religious experience. The first requirement is a sincere desire which would cause us to give our time, refraining from some other activity if necessary, but give time to let it work. Then receive unresistingly the Power, realizing its grandeur; and having received that, we must receive the difficulties to be faced in the same unresisting manner. Finally, expect great things!

As a specific opportunity for a real religious experience, he suggested that any students interested in Spanish should contact him regarding a ten-week trip to Mexico to be taken this coming summer. They will live with and even be Mexican peasants. "Peace is living with people that are different, until the foreigner becomes your friend," he stated.

I left the conference with a pocketful of notes and a headful of new ideas and ideals. It was a weekend well spent.

Mr. Walter L. Groono, Andover, N. Y.

### The Story of Isaac

In our last Bible story we learned about Abraham and his family: Isaac who was Abraham's heir; Ishmael, Isaac's half brother, who was sent away with his mother Hagar because he was a troublemaker, unkind to Isaac in many ways. Now all was peace and harmony in the home of Abraham, Isaac, and Sarah his mother, for true love reigned there.

The years passed swiftly and Isaac had grown to be a fine, large boy and the pride of his father and mother. One night God spoke to Abraham, saying, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Of course Abraham must have been very unhappy when he was thus commanded by God to sacrifice the life of the son whom he loved so much, but he loved God and had faith that he would in some way make everything right. Was not Isaac the promised son whose seed should equal in number the stars in the sky or the sand on the seashore?

Quietly he awakened Isaac and warned him not to wake his mother or tell her about the journey he was to take lest she become frightened. Then very early father and son started on the journey God had commanded them to take.

At the end of three days their journey was ended and the land of Moriah was before them, a mountain peak steep and high which they must climb. Abraham carried the sacred fire and the knife, and Isaac carried the wood for the sacrificial fire. As they climbed the steep path Isaac asked, "Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

Abraham answered, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

When they came to the place God had told him of, Abraham piled the stones and laid the wood on top. Then he took Isaac in his arms and told him that he was the lamb to be offered. Even though Isaac must have been very much frightened, he had been taught to obey his father and to have faith in him and in God: so he allowed his father to bind him on the wood to be offered as a sacrifice to God. When all was ready and Abraham raised the knife to sacrifice his son, suddenly God called to him, "Abraham, Abraham!"

"Here am I," answered Abraham.

Then came the command from heaven, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, . . . for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

Joyfully Abraham set Isaac free, knowing that Isaac as well as he had triumphed in the test of faith and that God's blessing

was resting upon them both. Then Abraham saw a ram caught in the bushes by his horns, and he sacrificed it instead of his son. And again God promised that because of his great faith he would multiply his seed as the stars of the heaven and as the sand upon the seashore. In his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed, because he had obeyed God's voice. Father and son were very happy, and hurried home to tell the mother of the great blessing God had brought to them.

All through his young manhood Isaac dwelt quietly and peacefully in his father's home. At last he married a lovely and God-fearing girl from the East, named Rebekah. After the death of his mother he and his bride came to Sarah's tent. They had two sons born to them, Jacob and Esau.

Isaac lived a very peaceful, happy life and continued to obey God in all things. In Jewish families, even today, the children are taught to obey both God and their parents even as Isaac did.

When Abraham died, of course Isaac became his heir and God repeated to Isaac the same promises he had made to Abraham: "I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, . . . and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of the heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."

Could you wait, could you wait if a brother were lost  
In the dark, stormy night, and a flood to be cross'd?  
If you knew how to guide him from danger and death,  
Would you sit idly singing sweet carols of faith?  
Oh, the faith born above is the faith full of love!  
—Could you wait? Could you wait? Could you wait?

In the flood, in the flood and the tempest-torn night,  
There are brothers now wand'ring who long for the right;  
There are sisters as gentle as ever were known,  
Whom the fires of perdition surround as their own:  
They are yielding their blood to the flame and the flood,  
—Can you wait? Can you wait? Can you wait?

—Selected.

## Children's Page

Dear Recorder Children:

For the first time in a number of weeks I have no letters to answer today; so I guess it is time for the story about Isaac that I promised you. I was hoping before I gave you another Bible story some of you would let me know whether or not you liked these stories; I do hope you do like them.

Sincerely yours,

Mizpah S. Greene.

## Our Pulpit

### THE PRIMACY OF THE ATONEMENT

(Condensed from "The Cross in Christian Experience" by Wm. M. Clow, Doran)

It is well to cut ourselves off from any vague and easygoing doctrine of Christ's death. That death was not merely a sacrifice to truth, an exhibition of perfect righteousness, a supreme historic representation of what good men are always doing, the application of a principle to life, or the highest revelation of God's love for men and his hatred of their sin. All of these statements express some aspect of the truth. The whole significance of this transcendent truth has not been explored; but every theory, or meaning, of the atonement which leaves out one vital thing must be set aside. By the atonement I mean that God has been reconciled to man in Christ, and specifically in his death, and that the first and indispensable experience of a Christian soul is the forgiveness of sins. All religious experience, in Christian teaching, leads up to that point; and all attainment or achievement issues out of it.

This alone is vital, that Christ, by his death, changed the relationship of God to man. The gospel is a declaration of that fact, and the appeal to man to change his relationship to God. Whether it be the case of the abandoned profligate who sees Christ on the cross turning away God's just anger; or the case of the gentle spirit who sees her stretch of pure and submissive years as scarlet against the virgin snow of Christ's holiness, and accepts God's mercy in Christ's healing blood—in every such case the atonement is that act by which God and man have been made one. It is the act of a certain place and hour, but in Christian teaching it is eternal in its essence and value. "The Lamb was slain from before the foundation of the world."

By the primacy of the atonement I mean that it is the distinctive and determining doctrine of the Christian religion. It differentiates that religion from all others. If it be accepted, all else which is essential will also be accepted. The Christian religion is not primarily a revelation. It is a redemption. It is not, in the first place, an ethic, although

what is not ethical in any presentation of it is not Christian at all. But it is fundamentally a dogmatic. It is not a theology, although it has a theology. The Christian religion is a religion of salvation. A man may be devoutly religious, of noble moral temper, a believer in God, and inspired by reverence and loyalty to Christ's ideals; but he is not a Christian if he denies the forgiveness of sins mediated by the Cross. (The symbol of the Christian Church is a cross. "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.")

There is a threefold proof of this primacy: history, reason, experience. The proof from history rests on the fact that the one unquestioned certainty of Christian history is the Cross. Who denies with a serious voice that Jesus lived and was crucified? The Cross is more historically verifiable than the origin of the Church itself. The one point at which the Christian creed touches human history is set forth in the words: "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried."

No other doctrine has such a stable and evident footing in reason. The suffering of the just for the unjust; the liberation and fruitfulness and nobility and power of vicarious sacrifice; the fact and the potency of the Cross in life; the inevitability of propitiation, even between man and man, for sin; and the master truth that love must and always will die to save its beloved—these are truths of our simplest reason, and these commend the death of Christ.

The proof from experience is strongest of all. No man can pretend that the incarnation, the personality of the Holy Spirit, the living presence of Christ, even the being of God verify themselves in human experience. They become certainties as we travel the way. But what must ever find proof in our experience is that God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us.

Let us now take the details of this threefold proof. Look, to begin with, at the primacy of the atonement in the New Testament Scriptures. I do not care to call in the Old Testament here, though I do not forget that the Old Testament is a witness

to the facts of sin and guilt, the craving of sincere men to make or find propitiation, and the urgent need for God's forgiveness. No man ever received a full and assured forgiveness anywhere except at the Cross. The atonement is the burden and the message of the New Testament. Its history, its reasoning, its experience, all center upon it. Some may go to the New Testament and miss that truth. We can see only what we have eyes to see. Men who go to the New Testament to find laws for common life find them there, and not much more. Ecclesiastics find precedents for their schemes. I say that the broad purpose of the New Testament is to tell us that Jesus died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.

The Gospels are as decisive in this witness as the epistles. Their very form declares it. They are not biographies of Jesus, nor records of his sayings. They are the selected words and incidents of his life as these bore on the purpose of it. In every one of them we see Christ passing onward to the Cross. In the space they give to the story of his death, in the way in which they mark the agony of his prevision of it, in the climax at the close, they declare that his mission was accomplished only in his death. The epistles not only declare how the apostles interpreted the facts, they go further. They reveal the experience of the believers. The supreme and glorious and soul-enlightening fact, the one thing that was unique and pre-eminent, was the death of Christ for the sins of men. Take that out of the New Testament, and it is incoherent. Make little of it, and you may be a dainty browser in a few green pastures, but not an evangelist of its message.

The proof is equally clear when we consider present-day experience. No one need object that a proof from experience is largely subjective. The only peril of subjective proof arises either from its being an individual and possibly capricious and hysterical experience, or from its being colored, if not created, by a phase of thought which belongs only to one time. When we recall the evidence of Christian experience, we recall the testimony of the long succession of saints. Men of all kindreds and peoples and tongues wear the white robes which have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. In one aspect the testimony of present-day experience is more cogent than that of the apostles. If men no longer received forgiveness through Christ's

death, if they were not now smitten with shame by his Cross, if they did not stand below it and see God reconciling the world unto himself, no impassioned word of Paul or of John would maintain the credibility of the atonement for an hour.

Even more striking is the witness of the Lord's Supper. No one will deny that what is focused there is Christ's death. No one will easily say we are called upon to remember his death only as a means of exciting ourselves to pathetic feelings, or of recalling his grace of character. No one can deny that the Lord's Supper is the most solid bit of history, the one irreducible fact in the story of Christ's closing days. No other origin has ever been seriously ascribed to it except that given in the Gospels. By universal consent the Lord's Supper is the central act of Christian worship, and it has kept its supreme place simply because it recalls and impresses and seals the atonement for sin by the death of Christ. "Ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come."

One more witness to its primacy I must speak of in a sentence or two, although the whole case could be rested here. That is its power to interpret every other article of the Christian faith. I have long been convinced that the reason why there is so much which seems incredible and irrational in Christian teaching is that it is incredible and irrational apart from the atonement. All the realities which the Christian faith asserts—sin, guilt, judgment here and hereafter, the love of God, the Virgin birth, the stainlessness of Jesus, the assurance of peace with God—are ghostly and fleeting shadows unless in the light of the atonement. Its passion, its power with God, its revelation of the Father, its "dead-heave" to the burden of men's souls, are credible only when we see that on the Cross the Son of God loved us and gave himself for us. In the day when men empty the death of Christ of its sacrificial meaning, the coherence, the unity, the credibility of the other great doctrines of the Christian faith are imperiled.

What other doctrine can compete with the atonement in this claim for primacy? Some have pleaded that the fatherhood of God is the unifying, controlling, and interpreting article of the faith. These teachers maintain that the parable of the Prodigal Son is the whole gospel, and quote its phrases, with emotion, as conclusive proof. No one who



has not sacrificed everything else to his dogmatic interest will base any great doctrine on a parable. No one who asks why Christ lived and died and rose again, will pay much heed to the doctrinal value of this tenderest of all parables. He will see that, like every other parable, it was meant to teach one thing, and only one thing. That one thing is God's joy in finding the lost. But a parable that leaves out Christ is surely not the place to look for evidence of him and his work. We have no wish to belittle this master truth of the fatherhood of God. In a real sense he is the Father of all men, but it does not follow that all men are his sons. There is a sonship and a sonship. The true place of the atonement is not only to reveal what kind of father God is—sovereign, holy, loving, a consuming fire to sin—and not only what kind of sons men should be—trustful, loyal, childlike—but it is to make that ideal relationship possible. The fatherhood of God in Christian teaching is and becomes a fact to men only through the Cross. The fatherhood without the atonement is the incredible doctrine. It speaks of a God who has done little to restore his lost.

Again, there are some who plead for the primacy of the kingdom of God. The man in the street and his advisers confidently affirm this pre-eminence. These tell us that Christianity is really a spirit and an ethic, "that the atonement is a life principle to be realized, not a formula to be assented to." Behind the cry, "Back to the Christ of the Gospels," there is lodged the sincere conviction that those who exalt the atonement have missed the supreme truth. It is enough for me to point out that the kingdom of God is the ideal of all religions. The distinctive truth in Christian doctrine is that the kingdom of God is brought into the world, and into men's hearts, through the sacrifice of Christ. That is its unshared and unsharable contribution. Its claim is that there can be no kingdom of God until God is reconciled to man, and man's guilt and rebellion and alienation have been removed by the Cross. Its declaration is that every attempt to bring in the rule and realm of God, except by the Cross, will fail, as it has always failed. The kingdom of God is the blossom and fruit of the atonement.

A third claim is urged for the primacy of the incarnation. The incarnation is not the primary doctrine. The Church could

not let the Cross go, and remain a home and a sanctuary, and the body of Christ.

May I be allowed a closing paragraph or two on the issues to which a belief in this primacy should lead us? For one thing, the atonement must have a primary place in every creed. A creed which omits the atonement may be adopted by a university which is eager to enlarge its theological classes, but it never ought to be and never shall be set down as the confession of any living and conquering church.

A second issue is that the atonement should have a primary place in our preaching. This is the secret of those large, enthusiastic congregations, eager in missionary enterprise, generous in gift, breeding the men who serve in the benevolences and philanthropies of the world. They have been founded and fostered by the preaching of the Cross. There are other ways of gathering an audience. Eloquence, taste, a quick appreciation of what men wish to hear about, an artistry in the service, all have their just reward. But no great congregation, which is both permanent and strong, can be built up except by giving the primacy to the atonement in Christ's blood.

One third issue I may put in a sentence or two. The two religious poverties of our day are the lost sense of God and the lost sense of sin. Do men inquire why we are so impoverished in these two senses? It is surely worth while to consider whether both losses are not due to one cause. Did men hear more often that God has been made manifest in Christ and has revealed his heart and mind in Christ's death, and did they see themselves in the light of the Cross, they might realize that God is, and that he has sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, and so recover these lost essentials of a religious experience. Christianity is the world-wide religion, not because it tells men of God and of duty and of immortality. It has the only full and clear message on them all. But other religions have their imperfect counsels. Christianity is, and shall be, the only religion when it gathers all nations round that throne which is a Cross.

I walked along a way of golden sunshine;  
The flowers nodded, and the trees were fair.  
He walked with me and told me of the beauty  
That was unseen—the beauty "over there."

—Pearle Halladay.

# The Sabbath Recorder

Vol. 138

PLAINFIELD, N. J., APRIL 16, 1945

No. 16



Copyright, 1935—Messenger Corporation, used by permission.