

with many recommendations made to a special church meeting that were adopted and put into effect.

Plans are being made to entertain the Eastern Association in Westerly in June.

The choir presented a cantata, "The Crucifixion," on Friday evening, April 15, as our church participated in traditional Holy Week joint services with the other churches in Westerly. The junior choir, under the direction of Mrs. Dwight Wilson, joined the senior choir on Easter Sabbath morning in one of the anthems appropriate to the season.

ALBION, WIS. — At the annual church business meeting Pastor Victor Skaggs received a unanimous call for 1960.

After the fellowship dinner, January 30, the first workshop in the Program for Advance was held. The beginning of the Seventh Day Baptist denomination in America was considered. The second workshop was February 13 with discussion of the church and emphasis on the work of the members. A pot-luck dinner followed the regular morning service to enable people to stay. These workshops were led by Pastor Skaggs.

After the fellowship dinner, February 27, a workshop on church organization was conducted by Mrs. Eleanor Walters. On March 12 Pastor Skaggs was in New Jersey on Conference business. The Sabbath morning service was conducted by the young people with Miss Donna Reiersen as leader. She was assisted by Miss Nina Skaggs who gave the junior message; also by Miss Margaret Slagg, Miss Barbara Green, Miss Barbara Kenyon, Rollin Williams, and Robert Kenyon, Jr. The senior and junior choirs both sang during the service.

The Lay Development Workshop, April 9, was the third session on the organization of a Seventh Day Baptist church. Plans had called for two sessions but due to interest and discussion a third session was held. This was conducted by Mrs. Eleanor Walters, and was of special importance to us as the church voted at the quarterly business meeting to revise and rewrite its constitution.

— Correspondent.

Accessions

Daytona Beach, Fla.

By Baptism:

Charles B. Brossier II
Louise E. Brossier
Joy Kenyon
John Leonard

By Letter:

Mrs. John (Geraldine Thorngate) Leonard

Shiloh, N. J.

By Baptism:

Betty Mae Davis
Jane Ellen Harris
Clara Regenia Richardson
Miriam Ann Richardson
Darleen Elaine Wendell
Philip Clifford Davis
Jeffrey Randolph Fogg

Births

Babcock. — A son, Charles William, Jr., to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Babcock of Battle Creek, Mich., April 11, 1960.

Fisher. — A son, Michael Ray, to Mr. and Mrs. James H. Fisher of Houston, Texas, on March 27, 1960.

Maxson. — A daughter Pamela Jo, to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Maxson of Lansing, Mich., January 27, 1960.

Parrott. — A son, Matthew Ross, to Mr. and Mrs. Charles (Bill) Parrott, Jr., of Williamston, Mich., February 1, 1960.

Spells. — A daughter, Pamela Jean, to Mr. and Mrs. Errol Spells of Battle Creek, Mich., April 15, 1960.

Obituaries

Hubert. — Jeanette, was born in Haarlem, The Netherlands, July 14, 1881, and died in Battle Creek, Michigan, February 4, 1960.

She was married in Amsterdam in 1907 to Henry J. Hubert. Upon coming to this country in 1913, they made their home in San Diego, California, where Mr. Hubert died in 1918. She came to Battle Creek that same year. A faithful member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church, she sang in the Battle Creek Church choir for twenty-six years. She was an enthusiastic home gardener.

Surviving are a daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Van-Schaardenburg, of Battle Creek; two grandsons; two sisters, Mrs. Nicholas (Marie) Ludwig of Glendale, Calif., and Mrs. Jacob (Elizabeth) Wilderom of The Netherlands.

Farewell services were conducted from the Royal Chapel in Battle Creek with her pastor, the Rev. Leland E. Davis, officiating. Final resting place, Memorial Park Cemetery, Battle Creek Township.

L. E. D.

THE SABBATH Recorder



The Sabbath Recorder

First Issue June 13, 1844
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Member of the Associated Church Press

THEONA RASMUSSEN, Editor
REV. LEON M. MALTBY, Managing Editor

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THIS ISSUE and ITS EDITOR

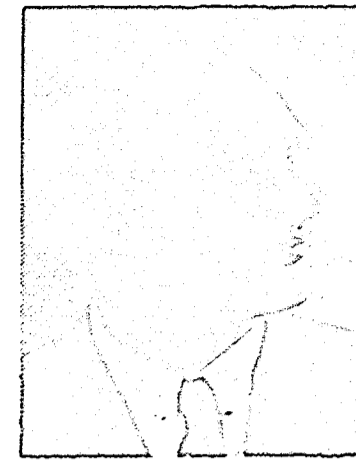
Theona Rasmussen

A glance at the table of contents and the format of this issue will indicate to the reader that Mrs. Rasmussen has presented here something uniquely helpful to those who search for encouragement in living the Christian life in these days of stress and insecurity. She and her contributors have well grasped the need of the hour and have brought the light of the Bible to bear on numerous problems.

Mrs. Rasmussen comes to this task with a background of wide experience and training and a consuming desire to serve the Lord with her many talents. She attended the University of Nebraska in her home state and then went on to Yale University for an advanced degree in the nursing profession. After her marriage to Stanley Rasmussen in 1948, they lived in Chicago and worked in the local church of their faith. They then went to Minneapolis where her husband was doing graduate work. Here they were instrumental in organizing a Seventh Day Baptist church with the assistance of nearby pastors.

When Dr. Rasmussen's work called them to California she found opportunity to serve the Pacific Coast Association as the first editor of *Pacific Tidings*, a paper designed to draw together the scattered people of like precious faith. Taking a year's leave of absence, she and her husband held faculty positions at Salem College, Salem, W. Va. A mother of three children ranging from 10 to 2, Mrs. Rasmussen has had opportunity to gain the family perspective. Her experience also includes working with youth in Pacific Pines Camp. She expresses hope that the young people who have contributed material for this issue and those who make wide use of it will receive a blessing.

Comments on this issue may be sent to the managing editor at Plainfield or to the editor at 1410 Buena Vista Ave., Livermore, Calif.



TopTopTop Priority

Choose you this day whom ye will serve. . . .
— Josh. 24: 15.

STANLEY W. RASMUSSEN

Association with unbelievers makes clear the reason why the commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," is first. This is not only the first of the ten, it is the one first step in beginning to believe.

Anyone who has spent much time in military defense work of any kind has been exposed to a lot of talk about "priority." Without "priority" a project will not be carried out, no matter how promising it looks or how interesting. But almost anything can be pushed through — if it can get a high enough "priority." Priority ratings are indicated in various ways, sometimes by rather silly methods such as "top" priority for the less needful work, "top-top" priority for important matters, and "toptoptop" priority for the essentials.

We meet the same situation in our private lives. We may want to buy a new car — but the money must go for food. Or we may want to see the fifty states and the rest of the world too — but we can't leave the job. Eating usually has a "toptoptop priority" over new cars or long trips.

The question now is this: What — or Who — has the highest priority in your life? There is a highest priority, whether we are conscious of it or not, and it affects all our decisions in one way or another. The first priority is just that which is most important to all of us. It may be merely to stay alive — for most of the world's people, that is most important of all. For others, it may be comfort, or power, or respectability, or love of family — any of an uncounted number of things for which people have given their lives.

Our Logical Choice

What is at the head of our own "priority list"? There is only one logical choice. We believe, as Christians, in God the Creator of all things. Since these created

things are at best only a product of God — an expression of Him, not Himself — no thing, not even the whole universe together, can claim priority over God!

God also created mankind, and each of us individually. It doesn't make sense, then, to give highest priority to any particular person or people. No loved one, no family, no nation, can compare in importance to God. Therefore, He must always come first. To put Him second — or last, as some do — is ridiculous as well as wicked.

Having put God in first place, we have to do what He wants. Otherwise we have in fact put our own desires first.

The story is told of a barber, chatting about the plans of a customer who had just left the shop. This customer was hoping to go to the jungles of South America, to serve as missionary to the Auca tribe. That tribe was then very much in the news, as they had just killed the first missionaries to reach them. Said the barber, almost prayerfully, "I hope I never get religion like that!"

Most of us, consciously or unconsciously, are like the barber. We really don't want to get religion quite like that. A life with God really in control is just too unpredictable — too frightening. We are, literally, afraid of what God might ask.

What Is Demanded

This is not surprising, because God's demands are not modest, not ever. Listen to Jesus' words again, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me"

(Luke 9: 23). Or, more specifically, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14: 26).

God has a habit of asking people to give up the one thing in their lives which they most want to keep. Consider the rich young ruler (Luke 18: 18-27). He was a good man. He would do a lot to help Christ's ministry, and he lived a life that none of us would call wrong. But God, through Christ, asked for the one thing he could not give — all of his money! It is easy for us who have never had money to see the trouble — but would we really do better, in his place? That's not so sure.

Nowadays we hear a lot about security — job security, provision for old age, things like that. Security is a fine thing, of course. But God may at any time ask us to give it up. Often He has required people to leave their steady job, their incomes, their property, to go somewhere they have never been — to live on whatever they may be able to get — to become insecure for the rest of their lives.

If Comfort Comes First

Some of us don't really worry about money, or security. As long as we eat regularly and sleep enough we are satisfied. Do we love comfort more than God? Then, surely as tomorrow's sunrise, we will be asked to give it up. God has every right to ask us to leave our good meals and our soft mattresses to do His work, and very often, He does ask.

We all know that God approves of families. But if we value our family above God, He will not have us. Jesus made that painfully clear in the verse quoted above.

Even Life Itself

If we love life itself too much, then life itself is the price of discipleship. From many people who were full of life and the love of life, He demanded nothing less than that. The point is, God leaves no

choice whatsoever — we must submit our wills to His in anything and everything.

Different Things Demanded

In brief, God demands different things from different people. But the phrase, "no other gods before me," includes everything. God leaves absolutely nothing we can call our own. Nothing at all.

From a human standpoint, this is intolerable. Granted that God has a right to such complete control over us, why should He ever exercise it? Why does God sometimes make demands on us that we would hardly expect to make on our own children?

Jesus gave a partial answer when He said that the fellowship of the church is a compensation. Here and now, for the things which we have put lower on the priority list. We may even keep many of our less important possessions — money, property, reputation — so long as God knows, and we know, that we are willing to give them up. But this is not sufficient compensation for loss of control of our lives. I don't believe Jesus thought it was, either.

Meaning and a Purpose

There are deeper benefits that come from putting God first. Besides the fellowship of others who are going that way, there comes a sense of meaning and a sense of purpose. We don't wonder, "What am I doing here?" or "What's the use of all this?" We don't find life empty, because God has taken over in person and His aims are our own. Our lives, aimless and temporary in themselves, have become part of a master plan which includes the whole universe. Through God, we have meaning in the total scheme of things.

It is precisely when we have given up everything that we have gained the most. This is a paradox; it makes no sense in purely human terms. Yet experience — the experience of thousands of years — shows it to be true. Kierkegaard said that faith becomes truly worth while at the exact point when it ceases to be reason-

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Stay Not Away

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price.

MALETA O. CURTIS

It may be possible merely to recognize the existence of God intellectually but God is love and to come to Him we must love Him. The reverse of this is also true: to love Him we must not fail to come to Him.

If you catch a glimpse into a nest filled with baby birds, the impression is of nothing but long, wide-open bills with cries for food. Watching a moment, you see the mother bird settle on the side of the nest and drop a nice juicy worm into one of the open bills. After several times all have received their supply of food for the present.

If you look across a meadow, you may see sheep and little lambs nibbling at the green grass growing in abundance. A hen scratches busily as fluffy yellow chicks peep loudly and then run to gather bugs and worms found by the mother hen. These lovely creatures which God has made were all hungry, seeking and asking for food, and were fed.

Baby will not eat unless he is hungry; when he begins to ask, food is waiting for him. When your little boy comes home from school "starving to death," he doesn't go and sit down but comes to the kitchen, begins looking in the bread box, the cookie jar, or the apple box and asks, "Mom, what's to eat?" Strangely enough, mothers always find something to fill the empty stomach.

Hunger after Righteousness

Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5: 6). So before we can be fed spiritually, feeling a need for a deeper experience with God we must be hungry. We must desire spiritual food. "For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matt. 7: 8). Kenneth Wuest translates it thus: "For everyone who keeps on asking for

righteousness, keeps on receiving, and he who keeps on seeking, keeps on finding. And to him who keeps on reverently knocking, it shall be opened."

God has an unlimited supply and is ready to feed us with plenty when we are hungry enough to seek for it. Albert E. Day in his book: An Autobiography of Prayer tells that after his death, "The great new hunger started working. I was hungry to know more of God. I heard God's ministers talk about His Word, the Book of God, to live in that relationship with the people of God."

Empty the Mind

Christ must be invited in. He said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3: 20).

Yet something else is needed here. Before Christ can enter in, before the Holy Spirit can fill us, our hearts and minds must be emptied. Too often even after we have accepted Christ as our Savior, we find ourselves full of resentments — resentments because of wrongs to us, to our friends, or to our loved ones; resentments and bitterness because of the "evil-doers"; because of hurts, whether fancied or real, that "eat" of bitterness springing up" within us. Unkind thoughts fill our minds. Selfishness is deep within us. We must be emptied of these things. Paul says as translated by J. B. Phillips, "Let there be no resentment, no more anger or temper, no more violent self-assertiveness, no more sinning and no more malicious remarks" (Eph. 4: 31).

Robert Boyd Munger in *What Jesus Says* speaks of a "home in the heart" which must be cleansed with the help of Jesus before He can come there to live. Sometimes, as in my own experience, it takes hours and days of prayer and the loving and wise counsel of an understanding pastor before the heart is swept clean and is empty. Then, and only then, can the Holy Spirit come in, if we invite Him, to abide with us.

The Holy Spirit needs to be invited in immediately, or we will experience what Jesus tells of in Matthew 12: 43-45, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

It is my firm belief that we should teach our young people early that God sent the Holy Spirit to dwell with them and to be in them (John 14).

Read Devotional Books

There are many books to which I could direct you which express my feelings better than anything I can write. Perhaps reading good devotional books is one of the first steps in developing a devotional life which will keep us in touch with God. This is an excellent way to fill the mind. Beginning with religious fiction may be a good way to "get the taste" for devotional reading. Go beyond this to Fulton Oursler's *The Greatest Book Ever Written* and you will find yourself alerted to certain incidents in the Bible which you never realized were there. For your reading get the book mentioned above, *What Jesus Says* by Robert Boyd Munger, and read the various chapters on what Jesus says about goodness, about "managing our unmanageables," about prayer, about the exchanged life, and about His home in the heart.

A book that thrilled me yet shamed

me, that inspired but humbled, is *Victorious Christian Living* by Alan Redpath with studies in Joshua. On page 248 Mr. Redpath quotes Dr. Graham Scroggie: "All Christians have eternal life; not all Christians have abundant life. We may serve but not succeed. We may try but never triumph; and the difference all along the line is the difference between possessing life and experiencing life more abundant. This abundant life is simply the fullness of life in Christ Jesus made possible by His death and resurrection, and made real by the incoming of His Spirit." God offers so much and we accept so little!!

You say, "I don't have time to read books." Few of us do, but nearly always there are a few extra minutes in the day or evening (TV time, perhaps?) when you can read a few paragraphs or a chapter. This reading will deepen the desire for study of, and instruction from, God's Holy Word.

Plan for Study

One writer has said, "As helpful as books may be, no book about the Bible or commentary on the Bible should ever take the place of the Bible itself." It is difficult to understand why it is hard at first to sit down and just read the Bible, which is God speaking to us. We have found ourselves turning from chapter to chapter wondering how or where to begin. Some plan or method should be used to keep us from wandering aimlessly or going in circles. Several methods are suggested by Howard Vos in *Effective Bible Study*. A good concordance, a Bible dictionary, Bible commentaries, and different translations are helpful. J. B. Phillips' *Letters to Young Churches*, and now his whole New Testament, make many passages more understandable. Kenneth Wuest's *Expanded Translation* giving the full English equivalent of the Greek text is considered by some as the best translation at present, the New Testament now being complete in three volumes.

The *Amplified New Testament* is also used by some students of the Bible.

Group Bible study classes will not only give us instruction but also the desire to go

to the Bible, and with the guidance of the Spirit to search out the truths there for us. Mr. Vos says, "The deeper things of the Word are not reserved for a few special individuals, but are available for all who will search for them."

Take Spiritual Food Daily

Now someone will say, "But I don't have long hours to spend in study." Daily food, a small amount, is better than an enormous meal only once a week. So daily devotions with a brief study of the Bible are better than no study except once a week on Sabbath. Have you ever been embarrassed before God when you realized two or three days after Sabbath that you had left your Bible at church and hadn't even missed it? You had broken your daily habit and had those days missed the spiritual food which is so important.

Someone has suggested that a large-print Bible can be placed on a shelf over the kitchen sink, on the breakfast table, or in a convenient place where one can "take a bite" as he passes by; a Scripture verse can be taped on the mirror to be memorized and pigeon-holed to be taken out in time of need, a daily devotions booklet with a few Scriptures on a special subject can be carried in a purse or in one's coat pocket. Jesus was able to subdue Satan by quoting Scripture saying, "It is written. . . ." If your mind is filled with God's Word you always have an answer, for Satan, for an inquiring friend, for yourself. Let God feed you daily.

Learn to Pray

The daily Bible reading habit, however, is ineffective unless we accompany it with earnest and humble prayer, yet many of us have felt we did not know how to pray. How many times have we asked with the disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray"?

We can read many books about prayer and prayer techniques, but we can learn to pray only by praying. Gradually the experience becomes more meaningful and we find ourselves really talking with God.

Often it is necessary to wait quietly until we are conscious of the presence of God. Dr. Day suggests a technique of meditation before prayer: "Take off your hat (figuratively)" as a sign of reverence, knowing you are in the presence of God; "shut the door," shutting out all memories and thoughts which disturb you; "open the windows" and allow God's fresh air to blow through your soul and the sunshine of His love to shine in; "fold your hands," a sign of rest, quiet, and peace. By this time you will sense that God your Father is beside you and you can speak with Him in perfect confidence.

There are longer periods of prayer, flash prayers wherever we may be, prayer groups where we unite our hearts and our petitions. Frank Laubach in *Prayer, the Mightiest Force in the World* says, "All during the day, in the chinks of time between the things we find ourselves obliged to do," there are moments when we can pray.

Abide and Believe

Dr. Day's book was a gift to me and on the flyleaf is written, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of" when we pray

Asking
Seeking
Knocking
Believing
Accepting &
Thanking."

One so often asks without believing; he seeks and knocks and still doesn't accept what is held out to him; and how many times do we forget, like the nine lepers, to thank Him!

We ask and expect to get everything we think we want rather than what God knows we need. We quote Jesus when He said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15: 7). But it is the abiding that counts. We scarcely know the meaning of abiding in Christ. If we abide in His will, then we will ask according to His will and "believing" will receive.

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The Day to Remember

a workshop on practical Sabbathkeeping

Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.
— Exodus 31: 13.

Workshop Members:
Beth Randolph Boyd
Katherine Davis
Della Fern Lippincott
Beverly Thorngate
Alton L. Wheeler
Leader: Guest Editor

Leaders: Many times we are asked how we manage to keep the seventh day as a day of worship. In a Sunday-oriented world, people are interested in knowing how we achieve this. We hope this workshop will reveal some pertinent answers to this question.

Our panel members include Mrs. Thorngate, whose family, like my own, are practically lone Sabbathkeepers; Mrs. Davis, who represents a closely united and consecrated group of church members; Beth and Della Fern, who are outstanding younger members of our denomination; and Pastor Wheeler, whom we will trust to keep us on the right path, although he will not actually participate in the discussion. We had hoped to have Justin Camenga take part, but the United States Army moved him at the wrong time.

This is a real group discussion in spite of the fact that we have not had the chance actually to sit down together.

Let us begin by mentioning that as Seventh Day Baptists we have no set rules to follow, even in such an important area as the way we keep the Sabbath.

Della Fern: Yes, indeed, Seventh Day Baptists are known for their freedom of thought.

Beth: In our statement of beliefs it says that we, as a denomination, cherish liberty of thought as essential for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Pastor Wheeler: That's right. Our denomination is not one in which everyone believes just as he pleases, nor is he necessarily guided by his conscience. Rather it is a fellowship which constrains everyone

to seek to learn the Lord's will, and to walk the Holy Spirit to guide.

Leader: What is the Sabbath for?

Beth: It is for rest and spiritual uplifting.

Beverly: The Sabbath gives us an opportunity for a spiritual re-charging for the week ahead, more vital than ever in our fast-moving society.

Della Fern: It is a day of relaxation for the mind, body, and soul; a day in which we can dwell more deeply with God.

Katherine: This is a special day that should be spent in worshipping our God through church, Sabbath School, physical rest, and family unity. Sabbath is a day we can put special emphasis on serving our Lord. . . .

Beth: A day for centering your mind specifically on God. . . . I said to our Youth Fellowship once in a discussion of our attitude toward the Sabbath, "You should enjoy thinking of God on Sabbath, not worrying about that football game — Are we ahead? Who's making the points? How's the band doing?"

Katherine: Each individual has to consider his attitude about the Sabbath.

Della Fern: For me, Sabbathkeeping is a privilege and a joy. I receive many blessings from it.

Beverly: As adults we also believe Sabbathkeeping to be a duty, to ourselves and to others — but with children we must emphasize our joy in the Sabbath.

Leader: How can you show others what your attitude is?

Katherine: Wasn't it Emerson who said,

"What you are speaks so loud that I can't hear what you say"?

Beverly: Attitudes are more effectively caught than taught whether in dealing with children or with other adults.

Katherine: The way we act towards the Sabbath will either influence people to decide we have something they want, or else make them feel it is a hardship that doesn't fit in our modern world.

Leader: What do you consider the ideal way to keep the Sabbath?

Beth: An ideal way would be to rest completely from self and center our thoughts on "God's will be done."

Della Fern: Each of us has his own ideal. Mine is that from the time I leave school Friday afternoon, the spirit of the Sabbath is with me, and remains with me till I go to bed Sabbath night.

Beverly: Beyond using the day as it was intended, as a rest from our work and activities of the other six days — and for worship — I believe our Sabbaths will be more meaningful if they are not spent in just the same way each week. One Sabbath we may spend most of the afternoon with someone who needs our friendly interest. Another, we may feel the family would benefit by getting off somewhere alone. We need to be creative in our Sabbathkeeping.

Leader: "Creative Sabbathkeeping" — that does sound like a worth-while goal. Pastor Wheeler, can you add anything before we go on?

Pastor Wheeler: One suggestion I would make is that we speak of "observing" the Sabbath at times, rather than merely "keeping" it. I suppose that the latter expression is an outgrowth of the fourth commandment statement: "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." I think it might be well to take note of the word, "Remember," which is "Zakar" in the Hebrew, meaning to "remember or to imprint." It seems to point toward the future rather than the past, to urge future observance rather than to reflect on past experience. Hence the observer is reminded that as long as he lives, he will do well to have Sabbath observance imprinted on his mind.

Problem Situations

Leader: Although we always hope to achieve and maintain our ideals, there are problem situations that can create confusion. Let me ask you about a few of these. Suppose you are prepared for a skilled profession, and the only job you can get requires you to work on Saturdays at first. What should you do?

Beverly: There might be justification for it, that special talents and training not be sacrificed. However, I wonder if we take enough initiative in seeking alternative solutions?

Beth: My opinion is that the best thing to do would be to pray earnestly, expecting an answer, and then abide by the answer received. If you don't receive an answer . . .

Katherine: I would try to have enough faith to believe that my prayer would be answered.

Beth: Yes, and if it isn't, you'd better look into your relationship with God. No amount of good Sabbathkeeping will save you if your heart isn't right with God.

Katherine: I think that we too often accept Sabbath day work if it turns up in a job first thing, instead of having a little faith and looking further, even in another field. I feel that this is sometimes a test for us from God that individuals fail to pass.

Leader: If you work nine to five, what do you do on winter Friday evenings with sunset at four-thirty?

Katherine: There are several ways this problem could be solved. Perhaps your boss already knows about your Sabbath, in which case you could ask to come in a

Beth Randolph Boyd was graduated from the Bristol, W. Va., High School, and spent two years at Salem College. Mr. and Mrs. Boyd live at Waterside, Pa., and are active in the Salemville Seventh Day Baptist Church. They have one small child.

half hour earlier and get off early. If your request is denied, you could quit and look for other work. Some individuals have found satisfaction in giving that half hour's wages as their Lord's Acre Project or as a special gift. On the other hand, I wonder if squabbling over that half hour would do more harm than good — or vice-versa? — in letting strangers know about our convictions. It would seem that each individual would have to answer to his own conscience about giving an account to God for his reasons for working on the Sabbath.

Leader: We all agree that a doctor must care for sick patients on the Sabbath. What about other professions that are concerned with the public health and safety? Should nurses, firemen, or telephone operators work on the Sabbath?

Beth: It seems to me you should trade with someone who wanted Sunday off unless you found it absolutely necessary to work once in a while. I believe if you got paid for work done on God's Holy Day it should be turned over to God in whatever way He would have you use it.

Katherine: It is necessary for us not to take advantage of our profession as an excuse to work on the Sabbath.

Della Fern: Since I was a telephone operator before I came to Salem College, I'll tell you how I handled the problem. The girls at the office knew I kept the Sabbath and were very nice about trading hours. It wasn't very long before on most of my Sabbaths, if I had to work, I worked from five to eleven at night. I felt satisfied, though, if only able to go to church. I could work the rest of the day with a spiritual attitude and a relaxed feeling within.

Leader: What about traveling on the Sabbath?

Katherine: In this day and age traveling may be more necessary than in the old days but I can't believe we should travel from state to state for our own pleasure on Sabbath.

Beth: I remember a cousin who was returning from his wedding trip on the Sabbath. The couple had one trouble after

another. It was getting dark and they still weren't home. The generator went bad, leaving them without lights. By then they were close enough to call for assistance from a brother. Since our house was near, they stopped; and while there the brother's car caught fire, completely ruining it. Right then my cousin and his wife said they'd never travel on Sabbath again!

Leader: Should farm families alter their pattern of doing chores on Sabbath day?

Beverly: Perhaps we could say that the farmer, like the housewife, should do only those chores which must be done each day. Obviously, he cannot feed the cows twice on Friday afternoon so as not to have to feed them on the Sabbath.

Beth: My husband works on a farm for his dad and really not too much of the regular work can be altered.

Katherine: Some farmers feel they have to go out into the fields but I think they are wrong not to trust their crops more to the Lord. Farmers do have a problem finding ways to make their Sabbaths restful and honorable to God.

Leader: Suppose your hot water heater has been broken for ten days and the repairman comes on Sabbath?

Katherine: I would consider this an opportunity to witness for my Sabbath and my Lord, and ask him to come back another day. Even if there was illness in the family or some other reason for needing it, we should stop to think — "I'm organized now so that heating the water on the stove is no longer such a burden."

Beth: Yes. The ox isn't in the ditch so bad that he has to get out that very afternoon, is he?

Leader: We think many types of recrea-



Katherine Davis and her husband, the Rev. Duane Davis, are now at Lost Creek, W. Va. They have one son, David, 3. She grew up in the fellowship of the Denver Seventh Day Baptist Church, and attended Salem College 1 year before her marriage.

tion are all right on this day, but may you sew or knit, if you like to?

Beth: I know a very sweet woman who loves to crochet on Sabbath afternoon. Knowing her, I am quite sure if she felt she was cheating God she wouldn't do it. In my case it wouldn't work. I'm not good at it so my mind would not be free to meditate on God.

Leader: Should children be encouraged to play suitable games on Sabbath?

Della Fern: Yes, and especially the type that includes participation by other family members.

Katherine: We can't expect them to sit around and "twiddle their thumbs" or they will grow to dread the day.

Leader: If you play the only French horn in a high school band so that they can hardly do without you, should you participate in band activities even if those are on Sabbath day?

Beverly: I would not neglect developing a child's musical abilities because of this possibility. If a child is really indispensable to the group, he might be allowed to participate if it can be done without compromising the spirit of the Sabbath.

Leader: Could this apply to any desirable group activity, if absence would detract from the success of the activity?

Beverly: One lone Sabbathkeeping family I know has just such a criterion for regulating Sabbath day activity and has done so without destroying the spirit of the Sabbath.

Leader: Has anyone had any actual experience with this sort of thing?

Katherine: When I was a junior in high school I played a clarinet in the band. We couldn't have more than two excused absences, so when my third excuse rolled around for missing because of not marching in a Sabbath day parade, I lost my letter and it really hurt at the time. Now, it's not nearly so important as the fact that I'm proud that I stood up for my convictions.

Beth: In most cases, if I played the only French horn and they really wanted me, they'd better plan their band activities for some time other than Sabbath.

Leader: We've had some interesting discussions on these problems. Before we go on, are there any other comments?

Beverly: Yes. I firmly believe that we Seventh Day Baptists should take an active part in community affairs. We have much to contribute, and, also, it is a good way to make ourselves better known. As Sabbathkeepers we must sometimes do some skillful juggling in order to contribute our part. An example would be the rummage sales which are invariably held on Sabbath day, at least in our community. The Seventh Day Baptist member can contribute her share by sorting on Friday rather than selling on the Sabbath.

The Day Itself

Leader: Now let's think about how we actually spend Sabbath day.

Della Fern: Every home has its own pattern.

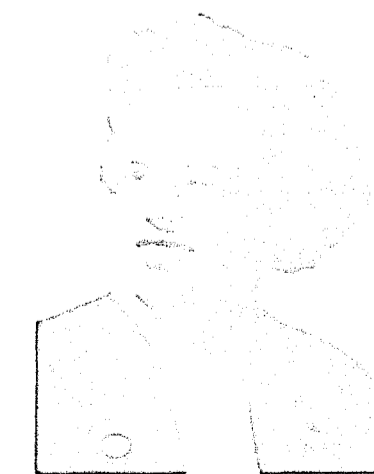
Katherine: Perhaps the first point to be made is our preparation. We should be ready for Sabbath by the time the sun goes down on Friday night.

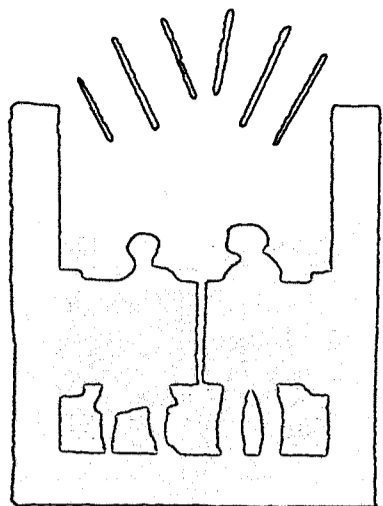
Beverly: As lone Sabbathkeepers we have made Friday night a family night. We have our best dinner of the week, sometimes with guests. Dinner is always followed by a hymn sing and sometimes games, showing of slides, or a marshmallow roast.

Katherine: Sabbath morning it would be nice to have the father prepare breakfast, followed by everyone going to church and Sabbath School. The afternoon would be spent with guests or in family relaxation. Part of the afternoon could be spent by the family calling on the sick and shut-in.

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Della Fern Lippincott is the youngest daughter of Mrs. Adalyn (Luen C.) Lippincott, of Milton, Wis. She is a member of the Milton Junction Seventh Day Baptist Church. She will be graduated from Salem College in July of this year with a B.A. degree in elementary education.





The Bright Face of Evil

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

— Psalm 1: 1.

If there is one thing children learn very early in life, it is the nature of things that are bad. We cannot know exactly how a child thinks about things but it might be something like this:

Things are bad when they hurt you or frighten you or make you sick. Dirty things are bad and you must not eat them or sometimes even touch them. The darkness at night is frightening so it must be bad. Some things that make you afraid are ugly, too, like the old witches in the fairy stories. Ugliness and darkness are evidently bad, then. Sin, whatever that is, is bad and so are sinners. Sin and sinners are probably ugly and dirty, then.

Because they think like this, or for some other reason, children may grow up believing that sin and evil are dark and ugly, and often this association is most fixed in the minds of children from Christian homes.

It is well to wonder how anyone with this background, especially anyone young, can contend with the world as it honestly is, wherein the evil people are frequently the most magnetic and attractive, and the sinful things are oftentimes the most fun.

Does this statement, that sinful things are fun, sound shocking? It is not being suggested that sins like murder and grand theft could really be a pleasure for many people, for they carry such severe legal penalties that they are too risky for that.

If we are completely honest with ourselves, though, there are a host of activities ranging from small to large which are truly sins; yet all of these must be fun, must give pleasure of some sort, or so

many people wouldn't do them. Getting revenge on someone who has done you wrong. Another is petty theft, like taking typing paper from the office for use at home, or failing to tell the clerk she gave you too much change. Excessive drinking is a prime example of this sort of thing. Likewise included in the list are all of the many sins of impurity, as they are called by the Catholic Church.

It doesn't do a bit of good to say these things are not enjoyable, for they evidently are. What is important, is not to deny that they are fun, but to teach our youth that they are wrong, even if they are pleasant.

When someone grows up in a fairly protected environment, taught by well-meaning elders that sin is dark and ugly; and then leaves home to go perhaps to a university or to work in a large city, what may happen? He may very easily become what in slang terms is eloquently called a "pushover"! One small push and he will be over the edge that separates good from evil.

If such a young person were to go to Las Vegas, Nevada, and spend just a few days, I would certainly hate to have the job of trying afterward to teach him that gambling is wrong. The gambling places there do everything they can to be colorful and enticing and pleasing.

Even in ordinary cities the bars and cocktail lounges are designed to have the handsomest interiors in town, and other

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What's Bad About It?

I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

— Psalm 82: 6.

HELEN THORNGATE

This brief article, here reprinted, gives us a simple formula for our own moral decisions. The truth and the distilled wisdom found herein make these truly "words to live by."

... she has a horrible... written on her... well."

I have come to feel that one of the most dangerous... people have... "I don't see anything bad... our business dealings, in our... in our Sabbath-keeping, our... or making decisions which may... moral and spiritual impor... our lives, too often is that "it isn't... bad" rather than "it is fine and... worthy of a child of God."...!

... displayed... "strictly fresh," and others... "we'd never find many takers... even at half price. Isn't it... that we are content in the moral... to settle down close to the border... of right and wrong rather than stretch... the plane of idealistic living?

I wish I had been more aware of this... years ago. I might have helped my... When I heard the familiar... "Mrs. Thorngate, what's bad about it?" Instead... of my reluctant, "Well, no, I guess there... wrong about it," I might have... by asking, "What is right and... about it? Is it the best and finest

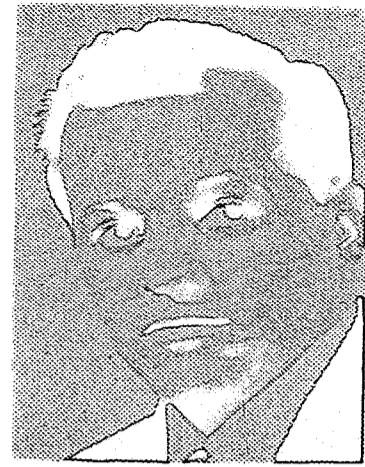
... course of action? ... of Christian living... good enough... I still catch myself say... there is nothing bad about... myself in doing something... than my best.

One of our... when I was... at North... used to be... by seeing how... he could turn... of the... without... flame... He always... bit suspicious... it inevitable... and went out... ally didn't... difference in... brightness of the... that time, however.

Why do we... much of the... in the... "not bad"... might be living... the sunshine... and freshness of... atmosphere... ness and love... the Throne.

"Because... at lukewarm... neither cold... hot, I will... them out of... mouth" (Re...

Helen Shaw Thorngate and her husband George Thorngate were former missionaries in China and are now with their family in Monterey, California.



One Step . . . Two Step . . .

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. — Matt. 5: 14.

MYNOR G. SOPER

In this article we are able to take a good look at a specific activity in the light of Mrs. Thorngate's question, "Is it the best and finest course of action?" We are grateful to Pastor Soper for having the courage to write on a subject about which he knows that many of us have differing shades of opinion.

While the term "co-existence" is a rather new one, the idea is not new. Long before the Russian Communist leaders demonstrated the idea of two ways of life — or two ideals which are diametrically opposed, existing together and letting each other live, so to speak — other forces of evil had already put the plan into effective action. Whenever and wherever evil cannot gain the upper hand or extinguish righteousness by sheer brute force, it reverts to other tactics. It tries to pose as righteousness. Jesus warned us of this when He said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. . . . Ye shall know them by their fruits."

The leaders of communism have been calling for co-existence for some time now. They have been mouthing phrases of peace and mutual concern one for the other so much, that we who really want peace sometimes almost believe them. But we all know that communism has no real intention of forever living side by side with democracy. We need only to do a little reading and research about the purposes and tactics of world communism to know this. There is real danger in our letting ourselves think that perhaps we should give in a little and try to live peacefully with this system. It is impossible, for as soon as we yield even a little they will demand more.

Now this is exactly the way evil works on all fronts. Let nothing fool you. Evil is still opposed to righteousness and seeks to destroy it. Many people in America have found themselves in the rather embarrassing position of supporting communism when they unwittingly joined

what seemed to them respectable peace drives, which turned out to be communist front organizations. In like fashion many Christians will someday be very embarrassed to find that by participating in many seemingly harmless activities, they have actually been helping along the cause of evil.

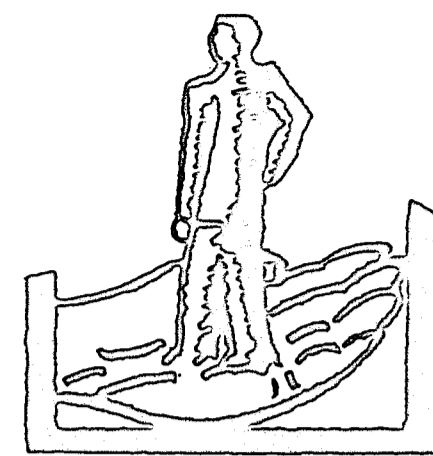
An Area to Examine

One of the areas, at which I feel Christians need to take a long, scrutinizing look, is dancing. Immediately many of you will say, "There's nothing wrong with dancing. . . . You're just trying to stir up trouble." No, I am not! I want you to do just as I suggested — back off a ways and take a good look at what it is, what its purpose is, and what the results may be.

As we think about this matter, keep in mind what has been said about evil's continuous program of warfare against righteousness and that evil uses instruments which, under some circumstances, are perfectly all right.

We would all agree that we are wonderfully and fearfully made. Our bodies are complex and intricate machines which perform their functions in amazing ways. We also know that our bodies are not the real "us." The real "us" is that spirit and spark of life which comes directly from God, and is housed within our bodies. But also we need to remember that our bodies are the "temples of the Holy Spirit." Whatever else this may mean, it means that the Holy God, our Father in heaven, somehow has a dwelling place in our bodies. Our bodies should be the temples where we

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The Keeping Power

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless. . . . — Jude 24.

When we hear the story of a Christian's life, all too often it seems to follow a familiar, three-part pattern.

Act I: the younger years, with opportunity to learn of God and His ways.

Act II: a rejection of religion, a departure from morality and the ways of God, and indulgence in some or many unwise or immoral activities.

Act III: a recognition of personal wrongdoing, repentance, and a return to God.

Every one of us realizes there is great need to hear about the experiences of converted wrongdoers, for the world is full of people who must find out that God can help them turn to better ways. Furthermore, no other story compels a listener's attention like the tale of one who has indulged in orgies of drunkenness, or dabbled in the depths of immorality, and who has then experienced conversion and the saving power of God.

Jesus Himself instructed us that there is more joy in Heaven over one sheep that had been lost than over the ninety-nine which stayed in the fold. Still, such stories do not always have a happy ending. Not every lost sheep is found. Many prodigal sons do not get back home.

We need to hear stories about God's saving power and find out how lives can be changed through Him. We need to know about the keeping power of God, also.

Not very often does anyone witness wholeheartedly to the keeping power. Once a lovely lady 94 years old told of going to a prayer meeting in a strange

church in a strange city, where testimonies were given. One man told of being a sinner, becoming ill, repenting, and finding healing; a woman gave a similar story; others spoke on the same theme.

Our lovely lady found all of this just too much, so she stood up and told them that she too had fallen short of being all God wanted but had been forgiven for her failings; but what she wanted to do was give thanks for the keeping power of God. From her earliest youth He had kept her from grievous sin, He had guided her steps, He had kept her close to Him.

She went on to tell of spiritual guidance she had received, as when she prayed to know of any additional thing God wanted from her, and felt compelled to study the Sabbath question and so changed her belief to the seventh-day Sabbath.

She spoke of the fact that she found it distressing to hear stories about "lost sheep," especially when young people were present, for they must never get the idea that it is interesting or pleasant or even safe to be away from God.

Perhaps the reason why this kind of witness is seldom heard is that everyone is reluctant to say, in effect, "I'm a pretty good person — I've never done much of anything wrong." All of us remember Isaiah's words, "All we like sheep have gone astray" — the familiar phrase has the sure ring of truth — "We have turned every one to his own way."

Yet humility must not keep us from witnessing to the protection and security we have from God. We owe Him much more than our silence.

We must tell others how to claim the keeping power. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26: 3).

We must never fail to acknowledge the magnitude of the spiritual protection we receive. "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore" (Ps. 121: 8). "And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom" (2 Tim. 4: 18).

T.L.R.

Wayfaring

But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot has held fast to his steps; I have kept his way and have not turned aside. I have not departed from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured in my bosom the words of his mouth.

— Job 23: 10-12.

When we ask a child, as we always do, "What are you going to do when you grow up?" or a student, "What are you going to do when you are in fact through life will be?"

Simple questions are asked so frequently because we love seeing people be happy and successful. We are really saying, "Have you made your goal? What is your goal? You must think so much depends on it, for each of us must somehow plan the way his life will go, or else carelessly abandon himself to his own whims and the chances of circumstance."

The One Great

Whatever the specific terms used in seeking a goal in life, it is well to say that behind every bit of planning is just one desire: to achieve happiness. Many young people possess a persistent vision of future happiness, and a fine certainty that they know what it is, and an absolute conviction that it can be achieved. They do have doubts and fears, of course, but at the same time they show a radiant assurance that everything will be wonderful.

Are they right?

Not quite a century ago, Matthew Arnold wrote chilling words at the end of his poem, "Dover Beach," and these words become an answer to this question:

For the world which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love,
nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain,
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms
Of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

... knowledge, that life can be joyful, that really explains the who question young people make about future plans. This is why all of us need to find out what our "way" should be.

God

The disciples, who were struggling perfectists who caused Jesus so much trouble, once said to Him as He was about to try to enter Tiberias, "Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth."

"Have a way is mentioned. Is it the way that leads to happiness?"

On the surface, it certainly is not. Jesus trained 12 men to go out and teach this Way, and one of them committed suicide. Ten were martyred in various horrible ways (according to tradition), and the remaining one who managed to live to be an old man died in exile.

A man named Paul also followed the Way, and once in a letter to a church at Corinth he wrote a sort of glory: "I have been beaten times without number, I have been in danger of death again and again, I have been in the regulation of discipline."

by the Jews five times, I have been beaten with rods three times, I have been stoned once, I have been shipwrecked three times. . . . I have known exhaustion, pain, long vigils, hunger, thirst, doing without meals, cold, and lack of clothing" (Phillips). Things like this happened not only to this man but to many and many another in that time.

Here, then, were thirteen men of whom twelve followed the Way of God as taught by Jesus until the end of their lives. Does it sound as if this way brought happiness to any of them?

The Answer of Twelve

If you think not, listen to their own words:

Paul: "I set no value on my own life as compared with the joy of finishing my course and fulfilling the commission I received" (Acts 20: 24, Moffatt).

John: "Yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write that our joy may be fulfilled" (1 John 1: 4, Moulton).

Peter wrote the one perfect phrase about the Way of Christ, "Joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1: 8, KJV).

These were gloriously happy men, who preached of the good news Christ brought. With life admittedly full of trouble, the Way of these men must be a good way to choose, then, for though they were well acquainted with pain and suffering, they knew a happiness so great they called it by the compelling name of joy.

Our Guide

When we choose this Way, we are able to follow a Guide who once traveled the same road we will go, and we know we can trust Him without reservation because not once during His lifetime did He ever falter or swerve by so much as a hairbreadth from the true Way. He is our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is a glory and a high honor to go in His steps.

There is more to it than just following after Him, though, for in addition we will always have Him beside us as we go. Although He died, He still lives, and we have His faithful promise that He will never leave us, for He said, "Lo, I am with you

all the days, even unto the end of the world."

The Book We Need

A well-known book, the Bible, was written specifically to tell us about our Guide and about following His Way. If we are inexperienced with the Bible it may at first be hard going, but many who are new to it tell that as they persist it suddenly "opens up" to them. Now there are other books that also open up with study, as we know, but the Bible is unusual and even mysterious because with it, this opening up process is one that never stops. There is always some new insight to be found.

Although this quality of the Bible keeps anyone from feeling certain he knows all there is to know about the Way, there are many things that are made wholly clear. Jesus wants His followers to be like Him, truly to follow Him in both belief and practice. Even new seekers in the Bible realize some of the things He wants.

What He Wants

We must be unflinching friendly, trying to find something to like in everyone. Dislike, hate, malice, envy, jealousy, anger, and other negative emotions are wrong, and lead, as Kipling once said, to the "darkening of the Way." It is wise to be wary of passing judgment on anyone, for justice is a specific attribute of Almighty God.

Morality is important. We who follow Him should take no part in activities we consider questionable even though we run the risk of being thought unfriendly or uncooperative when we fail to participate.

Self-denial is always found, though it may not show, for we may have families, friends, children, comfortable homes, good food, books, music, and other fine things. We need to give up anything, however (even any of those things), that might keep us from following the Way. The simple general rule is to refrain from doing anything wrong (whether wrong for us or wrong for everyone), and the final self-denial is to keep even from thinking about wrongdoing.

In addition to self-denial, you will find

humility in people like this. We have been well advised not to be "puffed-up," that is, not to try to show ourselves as better than we are. This means we should not see ourselves as better than we are, either. It is important to recognize clearly how far each of us falls short of the perfection of God.

Finally, the Way is a way of service, and we never follow the footsteps of Jesus more closely than when we are caring for those in need. The poor, the helpless, the sick, the old — all of these need us, and our feet are truly on the Way when we care for them.

"Guide thou my feet,
I do not ask to see
The distant scene,
One step enough for me."
T.L.R.

One Step — Two Step

(Continued from page 14)

continually bow down our spirit and worship God. We should be as careful of these temples of the Holy Spirit as we are of our churches, to keep them undefiled. We were created with the instincts to propagate life, but if that were all we would be nothing more than animals. We were created to propagate life by a plan which God Himself ordained — that as men and women come into adult life, they should be attracted to one another and that finally by the mutual love of two special people they should, with the blessings of God the Father, "become one flesh." And thus life continues. But the relationships which come from the intimate fellowship of a man and wife should be carefully reserved for that day. In other words, our bodies should be kept holy as God planned.

What has dancing to with this? Simply this! By dancing, we come into close bodily contact with the other sex and thereby stimulate the natural biological drives of our bodies. Such stimulation is not good either biologically, psychologically, or spiritually under these circumstances. What is a perfectly natural and

wholesome biological drive under legitimate circumstances is, under these circumstances, exploited and made a less wholesome thing, even sometimes a thing of the gutter.

So now some will say, "Because your mind is evil doesn't mean mine is." I think that is dodging the issue! I will admit that there are probably many who love to dance simply because of the rhythm. That still does not cause one to be immune to the biological and emotional excitement which comes with physical contact between the two sexes. The question we should ask ourselves is, "Does dancing and its implications help me to keep my body holy, as a temple of the living God should be kept?"

Other Results

But that is not the only result of dancing (in fact, it would be nigh to impossible to name or know all the results). When Christians go to a dance they are fulfilling the first purpose in the plan that evil has spawned, for they who are supposed to love righteousness put themselves in a position of mutually endorsing, with lovers of evil, a program where evil can have the greatest influence. Christians here cooperate or coexist with evil forces — only as long, of course, as evil finds it necessary or expedient.

When Christians either young or old attend dances they are putting themselves in an atmosphere which leaves them open to wrong influences. The public dance breeds such things as jealousy, fighting, drinking, and immorality. I have seen its influence in the armed forces, in cow towns, and in colleges. Never does it have a purifying effect upon its participants. Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Another thing which happens if we go to dances is that we encourage others to do the same, and this may be the very place that proves to be their downfall. Dancing under well-supervised conditions may eventually lead another person to seek the same type of entertainment under less favorable circumstances.

Perhaps what we need to do is to define the purposes of Christians and those of the enemies of righteousness.

Our Christian Purpose

Once a person becomes a Christian, his mission then is to glorify the Father in heaven, in such a way as will draw others to Him, that they too might be forgiven of all wrong and receive eternal life. We must ask ourselves this question, "Does dancing glorify my heavenly Father?" This should be our guide in all matters of conduct. If the answer is "no" then for Christ's sake, let's abandon it! The sacrifice will be well worth it.

Those who would oppose communism appeal to others on the basis of loyalty, love of freedom, and the democratic way of life. I would appeal to you on much the same basis: loyalty to Christ and love for the way of righteousness. If we take the time to define who our enemy is, what his aims and goals are, and the tactics he employs, we will see that dancing is just one of the "front organizations" he uses to promote the idea that righteousness and evil can coexist, and thus he will eventually destroy us. What steps will you take regarding this matter? Any step takes sacrifice and dedication.

Pastor Soper is at present serving the North Loup, Nebraska, Seventh Day Baptist Church. He was formerly assistant pastor at the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Los Angeles, California.

Stay Not Away

(Continued from page 7)

Worship with Others

We can hardly estimate the value of corporate worship in developing our devotional life, when we gather together with other Christians in love and united purpose for worship of God through praise, prayer, exhortation, and instruction. We enter the sanctuary with reverence laying aside all our daily cares and burdens, sitting quietly in the presence of God, directing our thoughts away from

ourselves to Him. We sing our praises, bow in humble prayer, and feel a oneness of fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ as we worship the Father.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Ps. 122: 1). "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple" (Isa. 6: 1). When we catch this vision, we see ourselves for what we are, for with Isaiah "we have seen the King." But by His grace we are cleansed and are stirred to present all of ourselves to Him ready to do His will. Let us never neglect this gathering together in God's house for worship!

Witness for Him

If our lives are emptied of wrong and filled with the Spirit, if we worship, pray, study, and have association and fellowship with God and with other believers, something is bound to happen to us. There will be performed in us that greatest of all miracles, the transformation of a life, and those about us will not only hear what we say, but they will see the fruit of the Spirit manifest in our lives — "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance." We can actually experience abundant life, victory through Christ.

When this happens and we are filled to overflowing then, and only then, can we give out to those about us of the bounty of which we have received and be true witnesses for Him. This is the purpose for which we were sent into this world, that we may witness to the sufficiency of Christ, not to a record of our own good deeds and faithfulness.

Mr. and Mrs. Gleason M. Curtis are members of the Riverside, Calif., Seventh Day Baptist Church. They are active in Lay Development and Pacific Pines Camp programs. Mr. Curtis is a deacon; and as trustee gives much time to the maintenance and improvement of church property. Mrs. Curtis is assistant to the pastor in editing *The Church Chimes*. She is church librarian, and also treasurer of the Pacific Coast Association.



Baptism . . . Words from Our Past

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.— John 3: 5.

OSCAR C. BURDICK

What is prerequisite to Baptism? How do Baptists view the salvation of young children who die before they have been baptized? These and other pertinent aspects of the subject are considered in this compilation.

1704

Joseph Stennett, Sr.

Baptism is an "outward sign of inward Grace." This is quoted from the Book of Common Prayer. Joseph Stennett, Senior, used this phrase in An Answer to Mr. David Russen's Book, Entitul'd fundamentals without a foundation, or a true picture of the Anabaptist &c. (London, 1704)

1772

Samuel Stennett

... positive institution. "Now it is certain that they lay an undue stress upon the sacred rite, who maintain that it is necessary to salvation, or place it in the same point of view with a moral precept. . . . Now, the making Baptism a saving ordinance is totally inconsistent with the grand principles upon which they exclude infants from a right to it; I mean the necessity of a profession of faith in Christ, and of a person's giving some credible proof that he is a New Creature." (p. xi)

He accepts Russen's idea that the Clinici, who were supposed to be bed-ridden, were sprinkled. (p. xiii)

"That ordinance is not regeneration, but a memorial of it." (p. 18)

"If Mr. A. (Dr. Addison, his opponent) means no more by this, than that Christ would not have baptism administered to any at the manifest hazard of their lives, . . .; the Baptists intirely agree with him, and for the reason he has mentioned, 'because God will have mercy and not sacrifice.'" (p. 33)

"Prejudiced as people were formerly against the practice of bathing, there were

sensible men, physicians and others, who intirely approved of it." (p. 34)

These quotations were from Samuel Stennett, Remarks on the Christian Minister's Reasons for Administering Baptism By Sprinkling or Pouring of Water (London: 1772)

1775

Samuel Stennett

About John 3: 5: "But can any one imagine, that an infinitely merciful God would suspend the final salvation of infants, upon a subject to their parents? Another interpretation of the phrase, 'born of water and of the spirit' must be sought for; and what is natural as that of the internal washing or regeneration, spoken of in the 3d? For the term 'water' being often used in Scripture to signify the sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit, it is extremely proper to understand 'water' here, in its connection with 'spirit,' of 'spiritual water.'" (p. 31)

"There is no foundation in Scripture or Reason for making Baptism a condition of salvation. . . . I say that Baptism is a means of acquiring faith and repentance." (p. 34)

Infant baptism "has a direct and natural tendency to beget in the minds both of parents and their children a false hope and an unwarranted dependence." (p. 171)

This group of quotations is found in Samuel Stennett, An Answer to the Christian Minister's Reasons for Baptizing Infants (London: 1775)

1811

Henry Clarke

"Water baptism confers no grace. . ." "Faith was ever a prerequisite for Baptism." (p. 110)

"A suitable candidate for baptism, must be an adult person; one capable of hearing and understanding the doctrine taught; and also of speaking to confess the Lord Jesus; and consequently, that has a firm belief in God, Christ, &c. or they are not candidates for baptism according to God's appointment. As to the degree of Faith, previously requisite to the ordinance of baptism: I conclude, the scriptures leave that to the conscience of the candidate." (p. 117, 118)

From Henry Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists in America (Utica, N. Y., 1811)

1846

James Bailey

About the early disciples and followers, "They were first taught the gospel of the kingdom and afterwards submitted to its ordinances. They were all capable of hearing and understanding and believing the doctrines that Jesus taught." (p. 2)

Concerning Matt. 28: 19f.: "Before men could be made to embrace it they must be taught." (p. 2)

Acts 2: 38: "Peter admitted none to baptism but penitent believers in Jesus Christ." (p. 2)

About Acts 18:8: "faith in the gospel is a pre-requisite to baptism." (p. 4)

"Baptism is the visible entrance into the church." (p. 12)

Taken from Rev. James Bailey, A Treatise on Baptism (about 1846 according to Miss Evalois St. John, librarian of the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society).

1896

A. H. Lewis

"Baptism is the sign of regeneration but not the means of it." (p. 27) A. H. Lewis, Seventh-day Baptist Handbook (Plainfield, N. J., 1896)

1904

George B. Shaw

"The proper subjects for baptism are all those who give credible evidence of having been regenerated by the Holy Spirit . . . in its logical order, as saith the text, 'Repent and be baptized.'" (p. 40)

"Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water as a token of his regeneration through union with Christ." (p. 43)

From George B. Shaw, Pulpit Gleanings (Plainfield, N. J., 1904)

The Rev. Oscar C. Burdick is Assistant Librarian at the Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, Calif., and leader of the Bay Area Seventh Day Baptist Fellowship.

(Continued from page 12)

establishments devoted to the so-called worldly pleasures try equally hard to be attractive. Our imaginary young person with the background we described would have a hard time deciding these places could be harmful.

He would find, moreover, that practically all of the intellectual and civic and social leaders in town patronized and enjoyed these "palaces of pleasure," and he would see or hear of them doing many of the things he thought were wrong. Instead of being the ugliest, he could hardly fail to note that the girls with bad reputations were often the prettiest and friendliest.

Our imaginary young friend, and all young people everywhere, must be warned that evil has a bright and attractive face. They must be shown the way life really is. Of course, every thinking person knows that evil does have a dark side, but often this does not show up until it is too late.

The young person must furthermore be completely armed against all kinds of wrongdoing. Sometimes people seem afraid to mention whole areas of human conduct to their children. Young people deserve better of us than to be left ignorant in matters that really count. They need to be fully warned of the attractiveness and the lure and the pull and the fun of many kinds of evil. Otherwise they may be lost.

T.L.R.

TopTopTop Priority

(Continued from page 4)

able, and he is backed by both experience and logic.

Likewise, in giving as well as believing, it simply will not do to be detached, controlled, reserved, or sensible. God cannot ever be reached that way. He holds people off to the extent that they hold themselves off from Him — no more and no less.

We May Choose

Perhaps we can see now why God makes this total demand upon us. God wants us to amount to something, to be more than blind existences in a meaningless array of events. He wants us to share in the divine nature — God really wants us to become like Himself. We don't have to do it, of course. If a man really wants to be put in jail, he can generally find some-

The Day to Remember

(Continued from page 11)

Leader: When should we do our bathing, shoe polishing, and similar preparations?

Beverly: Such preparations as shampooing and shoe polishing can teach a child to plan ahead for the Sabbath.

Beth: Should the shoes you wear through the week be the ones you wear on Sabbath, too, maybe they should be polished Friday night or Sabbath morning or they'll be dirty when you get to church. I would imagine you wear the same skin through the week as on the Sabbath, so possibly it could be bathed after the beginning of the Sabbath. Take for instance my farmer husband, wouldn't he smell nice for church if he made all preparations on Thursday night or even Friday morning? I do think since you don't wash your hair every day, it could be done before Friday sundown.

Della Fern: Most of the preparation should be done the day before, and always plan for more on Sabbath, for guests around the table add to Sabbath fellowship.

Leader: What about dishwashing?

thing to do that will get him there. In the same way, a man may refuse to accept the freedom and joy of God's presence — if he prefers to be confined by his own nature. We have indeed the freedom of choice — even the freedom to lock ourselves up and throw the key away.

These things that we worship instead of God, these little false gods that get so magnified and seem so important — they are wrong merely because they keep us away from our true freedom. It is love, not jealousy, that says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." We have gotten comfortable in our little round of private pleasures and duties, just as a prisoner gets to be comfortable in his chains. But it is no selfish tyrant who takes those chains off — it is Love in person.

Dr. Stanley W. Rasmussen is a Senior Physicist at the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory in Livermore, California.

Beverly: The Sabbath is more rewarding to me personally if dishes are done — and beds are made.

Katherine: In a workshop on the Sabbath at the Lost Creek Church, soon after we moved here, we discussed ways to make the Sabbath more enjoyable to each member of the family. One idea mentioned was that a woman's hands should never have to touch the dishwater on Sabbath. Of course, in most families we agreed this was impossible but, nevertheless, we agreed it would be nice.

Leader: What activities are essential?

Beth: Church, or, if a lone Sabbath-keeper, a devotional period, seems to be the one essential for everyone who truly wants to observe the Sabbath.

Katherine: Yes, and then even if we don't enjoy afternoon or evening meetings, I think it is our duty to God, our church, and ourselves to support any activity the church may try to carry out.

Beverly Burdick Thorngate and her surgeon husband, Stephen, now live in Monterey, Calif. She was graduated from Milton College in 1948. Before locating in California Dr. and Mrs. Thorngate lived in St. Paul, Minn., and were active in the Twin Cities Church. They have 4 children.

Della Fern: A church-going family is a happy family. Also read the Bible, and study nature and God-given things around you, and talk things over with one another.

Leader: After the essentials, how should we spend the rest of the day?

Beverly: I would say that recreational activities which are not pure entertainment and are pursued by the family or with a small group of friends would be acceptable.

Della Fern: Remember some of the wonderful hikes over the West Virginia hills we've taken together on Sabbath afternoons, Beth?

Beth: Yes! and just food for thought — a person works in an office or somewhere else where he gets little exercise, would it be more rest for him to sit and read, or play some strenuous sport?

Leader: Is there anything else to say about the way we act on this day?

Pastor Wheeler: Let me add that the way in which adults and parents now interpret and observe the Sabbath will make many indelible impressions on the children and other members of the younger generation for years to come.

Leader: Now it is time to see if we can come to any conclusions. Pastor Wheeler, will you draw from what we have said, and from your own experience, and lead us in this?

General Conclusions

Pastor Wheeler: Everything I have heard strengthens the conviction that I have always held, that planning is the key to successful Sabbathkeeping.

Della Fern: What a truthful statement that is! If you haven't made some plans, you lose part of the value of the Sabbath, although our planning should be flexible to meet unexpected needs. But this statement first made me think in terms of my future, because, as I graduate from college, unless I plan to some extent where to teach, I would probably not get in a location near a Seventh Day Baptist church.

Pastor Wheeler: We must plan for each Sabbath, then, but in addition, Sabbath planning should be done for our whole life. It seems to me that we have agreed, though, that no general set of rules can

ever be made that will cover every situation.

Beth: I believe that if there were any such set of rules that could be made, God would have made them, and shown them to us in such a way that it would be undeniable.

Della Fern: Wouldn't we find that the rules lone Sabbathkeepers make would be different from those of others? Yet we are all Sabbathkeepers.

Katherine: Each individual or family has to think his Sabbathkeeping through. Jesus' controversy with the Pharisees was over this point. They had formulated a list of "Do's and Don't's" which took away from the true Sabbath spirit.

Beth: What would our religious life be, anyway, if all we had to do was obey a set of given rules? When we do our own thinking, testing, and judging, then the results are ours. This makes for a growing religious experience.

Della Fern: Yes, through experience and the love of God we obtain strong faith.

Pastor Wheeler: We must think for ourselves, as you say, not only in Sabbathkeeping but in everything — but, should we think for others, too? At least, should we to the extent that we always avoid doing anything which might be misunderstood by others?

Katherine: Yes, unless it is a matter of life and death. We are told in Paul's writings to be careful not to make our brother stumble; however, Jesus did not hesitate to heal on Sabbath, knowing full well He would be understood.

Beth: If we want others to see what Sabbath can mean, we must do everything we can to help them, and avoid all that could cause them to fall.

Pastor Wheeler: Shouldn't we be excep-

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tionally careful in this respect when we become parents? What we do must be absolutely consistent with what we want our children to do on the Sabbath.

Beth: This is the same principle as "Don't send your children to church — take them."

Beverly: I personally tend to feel that it is easier for the parent to be completely consistent in himself than in making or helping to make these decisions for his children.

Pastor Wheeler: It is hard, isn't it? I've heard people say that in training children to become Sabbathkeepers, it is better in the long run to be too lenient than to be too strict. What do you think?

Katherine: An elderly deacon we know has often remarked that he now realizes he was too strict with his children and as a result they have all left the Sabbath. As I think about this, perhaps it was more that he failed to provide positive, wholesome activity instead of telling them "no" to everything they wished to do.

Della Fern: Being too lenient is as bad as being too strict. Parents should explain their ideas, and let the children explain to them, and together come to a conclusion. I think too often parents don't listen to the child's point of view . . . and they don't explain enough about what they believe to the child.

Beverly: Each family has to set up its own objective criteria for regulating Sabbath day activities and then appraise each situation which arises. In this way some questionable activities may occasionally be allowed, but if each situation is considered as it arises there isn't much danger of its being run away with.

Pastor Wheeler: We all seemed agreed that churchgoing is important. Could we say that only illness should interfere with attending church activities?

Katherine: I think, generally, that this should be true.

Della Fern: Once in a long while a good walk through the woods alone on a Sabbath morning might have more value than a church service, depending on the person's attitude and feelings.

Katherine: We might call this "preventive medicine."

Della Fern: We all do need some type of devotional activity daily, though, and on the Sabbath it should be greater. No matter where you are or what you are doing, the Sabbath should be kept with a different attitude of heart and mind.

Pastor Wheeler: As I think of what has been said during this workshop, it seems that we feel that what we do on the Sabbath should be uplifting, worth while, helpful to others, helpful in bringing us closer as a family, and in bringing us closer to God. Whatever we do, though, isn't it necessary that we don't let it become a burden? For example, we may write letters for the pleasure of visiting with friends, but not because we owe several and must get them done.

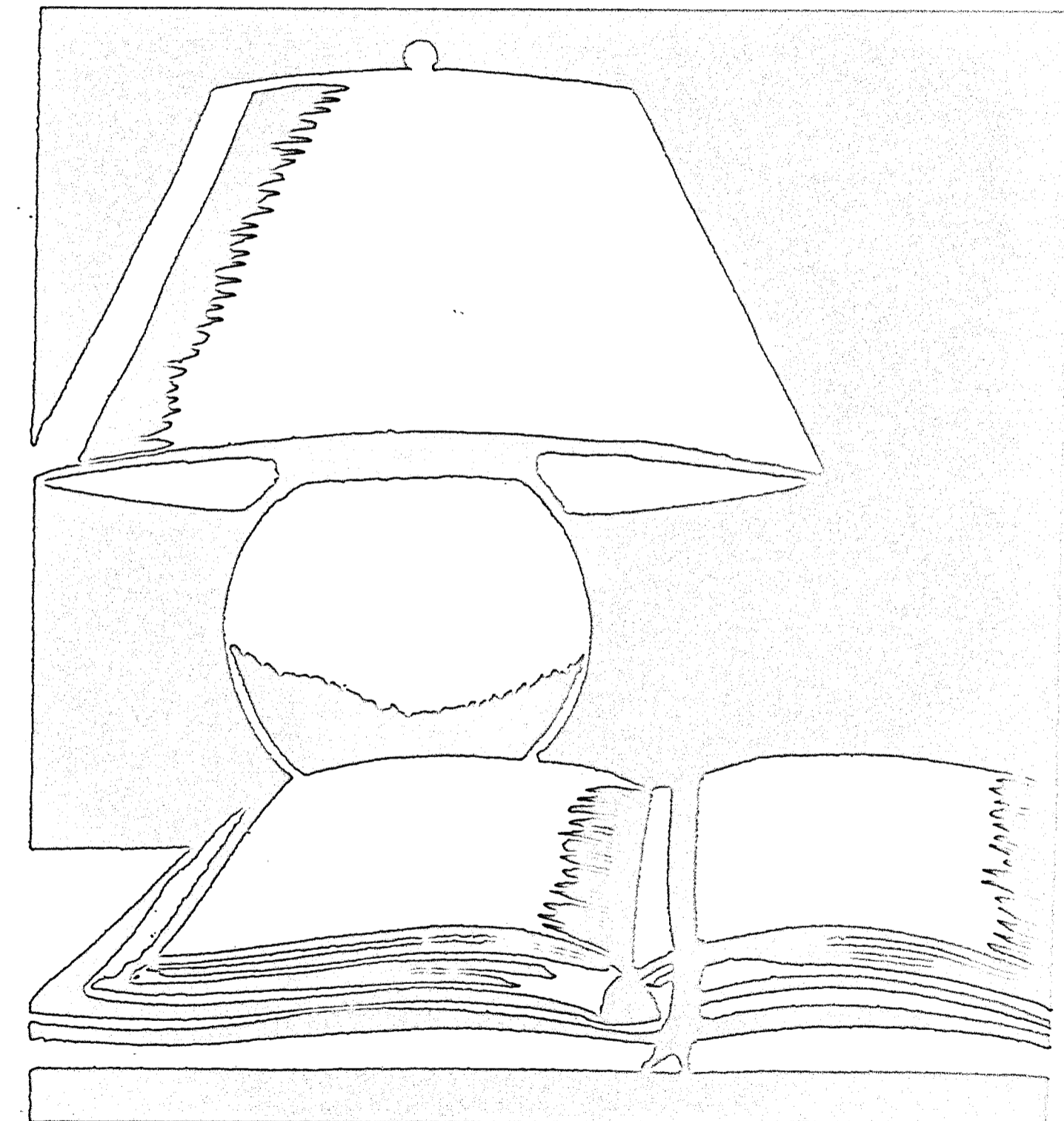
Beth: Most certainly this! Yes, the things we do on Sabbath — or don't do — lose all their meaning and usefulness if they become burdensome.

Della Fern: This is where many of us young people become weak. Often there are things that we could do to better God's Kingdom, but we find an excuse such as writing letters that we owe, or studying for tests, yet afterwards we wish that we hadn't.

Leader: Is there anything else?

Beth: I'd like to add one more thing. We have expressed ourselves throughout this workshop as to our opinions about Sabbath observance. These things are very close to our hearts. But let's not forget that however holy we try to keep God's Sabbath, it is not enough to give us entrance to the Kingdom of God.

Pastor Wheeler: Let us remember, also, that there are ten commandments rather than one, and each of them of necessity complements the other nine. Every single one of them is essential, significant, and practical. Let us remind ourselves also that there are seven days in a week rather than one, toward which we should have a Christian attitude. Only as one rightly interprets, "Six days shalt thou labor," can he wisely realize practical benefits, through "remembering the sabbath day to keep it holy." Finally, let us realize that even though Christ declared Himself to be "Lord of the sabbath," this will be but "sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal" to us unless Christ is also Lord of our lives.



An Open Bible

No book is so precious to so many people as the Bible, the Book that men have sought to lose sight of or discredit because it speaks to them of their sins. An open Bible does more than convince men of sin; it points them to the Savior and gives them present peace and a foretaste of future joy.