

Voice of Baptists

"The Voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." **Isaiah 40:3**

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W. T. Russell

(Address questions for this column to W.T. Russell, Nella Drive, Goodlettsville, Tennessee 37072)

The following questions have been received which we shall endeavor to answer in order.

Question No. 1: What is meant by "the sure mercies of David" in Isaiah 55:3?

Answer: In 2 Samuel 7:15 we find a promise made to David concerning God's spiritual Seed and His Kingdom, which shows us the contrast between Works and Grace or the Old Covenant and the New. "But my mercy shall not depart away from him, (Solomon) as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee." Verse 16, "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever."

God, in His wrath, took the kingdom of Israel from Saul and gave it to a neighbor of his that was better than he. This neighbor was none other than David. 1 Sam. 15:26-29.

The "sure mercies of David" was toward his son, Solomon. Solomon was a type of Christ. It was Solomon who built the temple. It was Christ who built the church. As Solomon was David's Son after the flesh, Christ is spoken of in many places as the Son of David, the antitype of Solomon or the spiritual Seed. Please read Psalms 89:20-37. We know that this throne and this kingdom of David (the Jewish Kingdom) was not established forever but was broken up and scattered to the four winds, so the kingdom and throne to which God referred in this promise to David and his seed was the spiritual seed and the throne had to do with the Spiritual or Divine Kingdom of Christ.

WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES?

by W. T. Russell

There is a great assurance here to all the children of God by faith, that God's mercy shall never be taken away from them, and that His grace will continue forever toward them and for them. It is also assured in this promise that the kingdom of Christ (the Seed of David) or (the Church) will never be given into the hands of others but that Christ shall be head and king over His church or kingdom forever. I wish that time and space would allow us to go into this subject at length, but this brief answer will have to suffice for the present.

Question No. 2: What is meant by the scripture in Matt. 8:22, "Let the dead bury their dead."

Answer: This statement was made by the Lord while he was here on earth preaching to the people. On one occasion when Jesus saw the multitudes about him he gave commandment to depart into another place, and a scribe told him that he would follow him whithersoever he went. Jesus informed him that the birds and foxes had homes but that he had none, not even a place to lay his head. At this, another of his disciples asked him to first let him go and bury his father. But Jesus said, "Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead."

The lesson in this is that our concern for the dead in sin (the unsaved) is far more important than for the ones who have passed by the last opportunity and cannot be helped. So Jesus said in simple language, Let the sinner bury the sinner, and come follow me.

Question 3 : Could you tell me what a church has to do or how far it can go before the Candlestick is removed?

Answer: The first thing we want to consider is: What is meant by the Candlestick? In the Old Testament we find the use of the word many times in a figurative sense. This is also true in the New Testament. In the Old Testament it means, 'place of light.' In the

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10 CHRISTMAS COMMANDMENTS

...when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts.

Matthew 2:11

The following item, printed in a church newsletter, points the way to a Christ-honoring Christmas:

I. Thou shalt prepare thy soul for Christmas. Spend not so much on gifts that thy soul is forgotten.

II. Thou shalt not burden the salesclerk, the mailman, and the store owner with complaints and demands.

III. Thou shalt give thyself with thy gift. He who receives it will treasure it always.

IV. Thou shalt not value gifts by their cost. The least expensive may express love, and that is more precious than silver and gold.

V. Thou shalt not leave "Christ" out of "Christmas," making it "Xmas." For many, "X" is an unknown.

VI. Thou shalt not let Santa Claus replace Christ. He can rob the day of its spiritual reality.

VII. Thou shalt remember the needy. Some people might go hungry and cold unless thou art generous and share thy blessing.

VIII. Thou shalt not neglect thy church. Its services highlight the true meaning of the season.

IX. Thou shalt be as a little child. Until thou hast become in spirit as a little one, thou art not ready to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

X. Thou shalt give thy heart to Christ. Let Him be at the top of thy Christmas list.

Anyone keeping these commandments is sure to have a blessed Christmas.

- D.J.D.

Selfishness makes Christmas a burden; love makes it a delight.

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WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES?

(Continued from Page 1)

New Testament it means 'lamp stand' and comes from the Greek word 'luchnia.'

Jesus said of the church in Matt. 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." An elevation is always chosen for the erection of a light, as a beacon for those who need direction. In Matt. 5:15 Jesus said, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, (lamp stand) and it giveth light unto all that are in her house. A lamp stand then is a place of light. This is not the light, but it is the place or location of the light. It follows then that the local church in this place is the candlestick. One can have light and hide it as one who lights a candle and puts it under a tub, but for one to give light or show forth light he is called upon to put it in a particular place designed for that purpose of letting it be seen.

In Rev. 1:12 John saw "seven golden candlesticks," and in verse 13, he saw, "one, like unto the Son of man in the midst of the candlesticks." In verse 20, the mystery is revealed, "The seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." I take this to mean the seven local churches, each having a particular location. In Rev. 2:1 Jesus said, "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; these things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." Each local church is a candlestick, or place of light, and Jesus declares that he walks in the midst of these local churches.

The church at Ephesus was told in Rev. 2:5, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, ex-

cept thou repent. Charles B. Williams translates this (Greek, aurns) *its* place instead of *his*. I prefer *her* (feminine).

Jesus Christ who walked in the midst of the seven churches of Asia was the judge of these churches as their head in their individual locality just as he is head over each local church and their judge today. How much space the Lord gave the church at Ephesus to repent and do their first works, I do not know, but we do know that the candlestick was eventually removed from Ephesus. That is, there ceased to be a place in Ephesus for the gospel light to shine forth, but it was the Lord who, in his own way, moved the candlestick from Ephesus. When this letter was written to them they had already left their first love, but the candlestick was still there. There are many localities today that once had the candlestick but it is not there anymore. In other words, there was a time when there was a church located there, but there is none at that location now.

It is a dangerous thing for churches to fail to heed the warnings of the Lord to repent of their wrongs and do the first works, but it is not mine to say when God will remove the candlestick. That judgment is strictly in the hands of Him who walks in the midst of the churches as their head and king. The church at Corinth went a long way in error but when Paul wrote them while they were still in this error, he addressed them, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth."



BULLETIN BOARD

ORDINATION SERVICE

Freedom Missionary Baptist Church of 350 N. Fuller Dr., Speedway, Indiana will meet Saturday, December 8, 1984 at 10:00 a.m. for the purpose of considering Bro. Bruce Adamson to the ordained ministry. Bro. Adamson has a mission in progress in Lebanon, Indiana. All sister Baptist churches are extended this special invitation.

NEW YEAR'S EVE SINGING

You are invited to Lyons Missionary Baptist Church of 904 Gagel Avenue in Louisville, Kentucky, Monday, Dec. 31, 1984 at 8 p.m. for the annual holiday singing.

LETTER

Dear Editor,

Sending this article to help forward your "Voice" paper. We enjoy receiving it each month. May the Lord bless each one that has part in this effort.

Jerry M. Crain
Lebanon, MO

BEST HELP FOR THE MISSIONARIES

Following is a letter written in reply to a brother who asked how his church could help the missionaries best.

Your interest in missions is certainly to be commended. There is no way of estimating the amount of mission work that could be done by the churches if they took the commission as seriously as they should.

I feel my weakness when I am called upon for help such as you request. I have developed quite a few opinions and convictions about mission work during the years I have served the churches. However, I realize more and more that we just don't have the information except that we find in the Bible. Some think this is a strange thing to say; however, II Timothy 3:16,17 is sufficient to assure us that all the information we need is in the Scriptures. I am sure you would not argue with me at this point.

Of course, just how to apply the wisdom God has given us is something we must consider, and we do have problems a little difficult for us to fathom. Probably we must just accept the fact that each field has something different, and about the best we can do is that each missionary be wise to deal with the problems in his field as the Word and his best judgment dictate.

Relative to finding PROSPECTS.

This may seem trite, but one of our missionaries, after several years of experience, concluded that: if there are any Baptists on the field who have been there for years and have no church affiliation, they are not worth finding. So, he decided the best way was just to survey the field by contacting people, all of them, and telling them his business and leaving it to the Holy Spirit to open the hearts and minds of the people. This may seem small and slow, but mass means might give results not as dependable.

Relative to the NEEDS of the missionary and his family, I am still narrow. The Word declares, "The laborer is worthy of his hire." We also read, "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content," and, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Also, Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you."

I have said, and I repeat, "We need missionaries on the fields who are willing to do without things they need, and churches that will not let them do it." Now, what they need is something that might bring considerable discussion. **THEY NEED TO BE FREE FROM MATERIAL STRESS SO THEY CAN GIVE THEMSELVES CONTINUALLY TO PRAYER AND THE MINISTRY**

OF THE WORD. Somebody will say they must have buildings on grounds next door to

White House, commodious and attractive enough to COMPEL THEM TO COME IN, but this does not work that way. Decent, commodious buildings are an asset, but the Lord said, "These things will be added," so, I am convinced we can put too much stress on things other than those essential to the health and well being (not luxury) of the missionary and his family. There are more people who will invest in the things they can see than will invest in things unseen. A freed missionary might just contact some of these spiritually blind people who will supply THESE THINGS. We must admit, that often the people most financially able to supply these things have the least spiritual vision, so our first, and greatest, obligation to the missionary is to supply HIS NEEDS - not his desires, unless he is an exceptional person.

Relative to your reference to CITY ORDINANCES, etc., that is a real problem, and I believe the Lord is able to open some of the doors we cannot open without Him. We have had some heart breaking experiences with closed doors. Let us remember that the Holy Spirit forbade Paul from going into at least one field. I think we should do what we are able to do honorably to remove obstacles but when we cannot remove them honorably, we must accept them as closed doors and leave the matter to the Lord.

We know that the world is not the friend of God. We know that friendship with the world is enmity with God, so we need not expect the world to roll out the "red carpet." We have men now who are having to spend too much time, money and effort MEETING REQUIREMENTS that, in some instances are BENT AGAINST THE LORD'S WORK. There is no doubt in my mind about this, so we must just do the best we can with what we have to do with and trust the Lord to supply the difference. He is able. Those who willfully fight against the Lord are His enemies, and He will deal with them in due time in His own way.

- A.L. Patterson

QUOTES FOR THE NEW YEAR

New Year's Day - a milepost on the way to eternity.

* * *

Have nothing to do with that which will not bear the test of time.

* * *

The New Year offers the old world a new chance.

* * *

Good resolutions carried out become good habits.

The Night Before Jesus Came

'Twas the night before Jesus came
and all through the house
No one had been praying,
not a soul in the house,
Their Bibles were all stuck
in the drawers without care,
In hopes that Jesus
would not come there.

The children were nestled
all sung in their beds,
Not once ever kneeling
or bowing their heads,
And mom in her kerchief
and I in my cap,
Had just settled down
for a long winter's nap.

When out of the East
there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed
to see what was the matter.
Away to the door I flew
like a flash,
Tore open the window
and threw up the sash.

When what to my wondering
eyes should appear
But angels proclaiming
that Jesus was here.
With a light like the
sun sending a ray,
I knew in a moment it
must be THE DAY.

The light of His face
made me turn my head,
It was JESUS OF NAZARETH,
alive, risen from the dead.
And though I had mountains
of this world's wealth,
I cried when I saw Him,
in spite of myself.

In the Book of Life that He held
tight in His hand,
Was written in Blood,
the name of each saved man.
He spoke not a word,
as He searched for my name,
When He said, "It's not written,"
my head hung in shame.

The people whose names
had been written in Blood,
He gathered to take to
His Father above.
With those that were saved,
He arose without sound,
While those who had rejected Him
were left standing around.

I fell to my knees
just minutes too late,
I had waited too long,
and had thus sealed my fate.
I stood and I cried, as they
rose out of sight;
Oh, if only I had been
ready tonight.

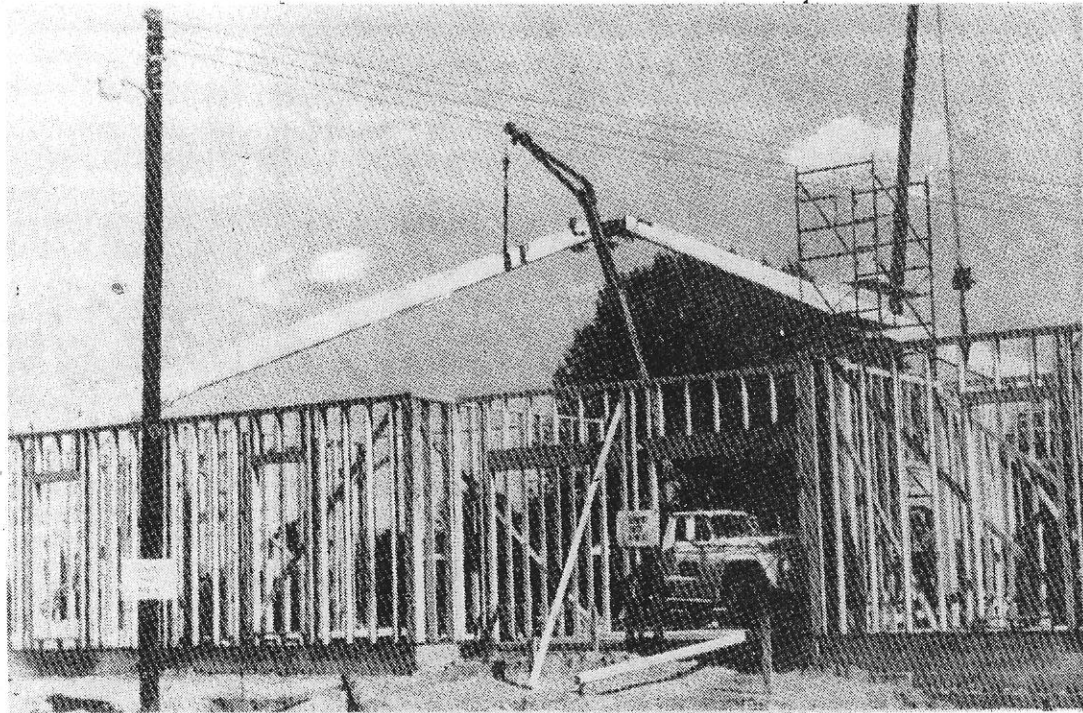
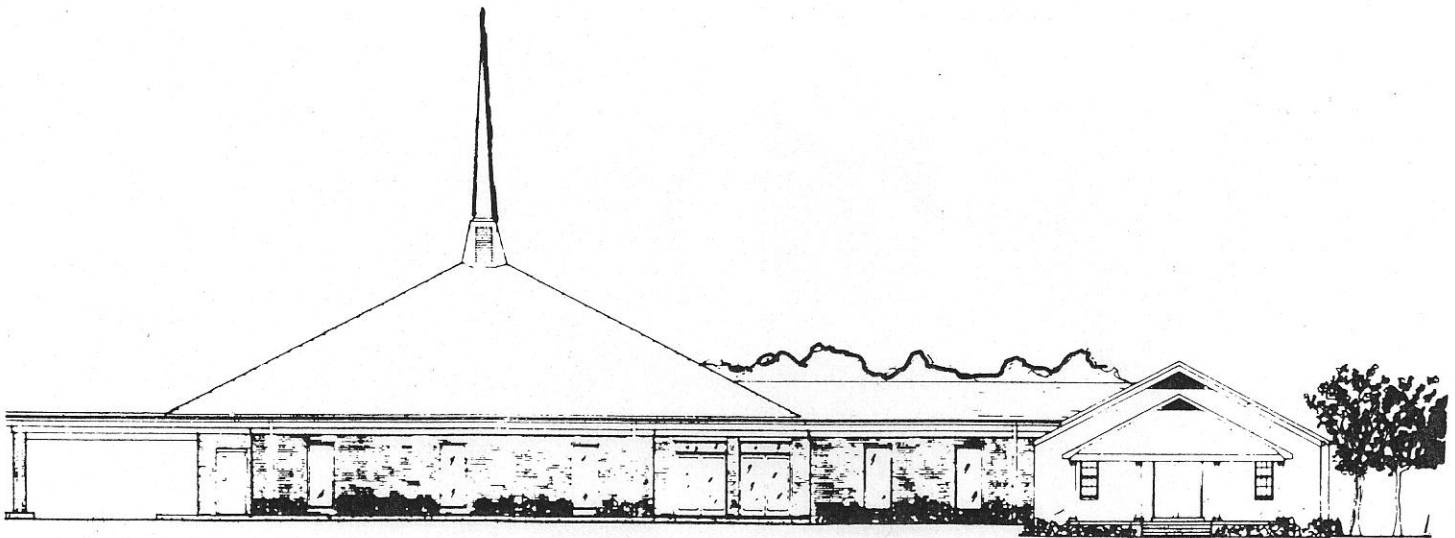
In reading this poem
the meaning is clear,
The returning of Jesus
is drawing quite near.
Our response to Him must
comply with His Way,
But it can be 'too late,'
so let's pray it's TODAY.

Teach Us To Pray!

I knelt to pray when work was done
And prayed, "O God, bless every one,
Lift from the burdened heart the pain,
And let the sick be well again."
And then I awoke another day,
And carelessly went on my way,
And all day long I did not try,
To wipe a tear from any eye.
I did not even go to see,
The sick man just next door to me.
And then again when the day was done,
I prayed, "O God, bless every one."
And as I prayed, into my ear,
There came a voice which whispered clear:
"Whom have you tried to bless today?
Pause, hypocrite, before you pray;
God's richest blessings always go,
By faithful hands that serve Him here
below."
And then I hid my face and cried,
"Forgive me, Lord, for I have lied,
Let me but see another day,
For I would live the way I pray."
Think not that prayer is only the fold of hands,
Forgetful of the Lord's commands,
From duty's claim, no life is free,
Behold, the Saviour hath need of thee.
A form of words will not suffice,
The heart must bring its sacrifice.

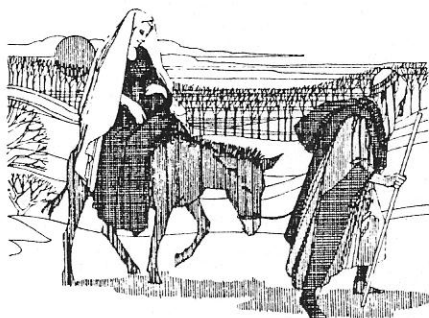
Opportunity

So long as men shall be on earth
There shall be tasks for them to do,
Some way for them to show their worth;
Each day shall bring its problems new.
And men shall dream of mightier deeds
That never have been done before:
There always shall be human needs
For men to work and struggle for.



Shaping Up

The walls are taking shape and the arch went up Monday at Independent Baptist Church in Huntingdon where construction has begun on their new addition. When finished there will be a new 350 seat sanctuary, pastor's study, secretary's office and educational rooms. The construction is under the supervision of Continental Church Builders of Nashville. Members of the building committee are Ray Smith, Leon Kirksey and Dorsey Damerson. Bro. Kenneth Massey is the pastor. The architect's drawing shows how it will look when finished.



Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year



FROM ALL THE STAFF OF "VOICE OF BAPTISTS"