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In this Guest Editorial, B. J. COMBRIDGE, Vic.-Tas. H.M. Secretary, has some challenging things to say on . . .

Essentials in Evangelism

To talk about evangelism is one of the least important things. How many of us fool ourselves into thinking that we have discharged our total responsibility when we have advised someone else to evangelise, or discouraged about the need for prayer, or paid lip service or pen service to total commitment to Christ. The important thing is to do the work of evangelism.

Although it may seem trite to discuss what evangelism is, or is not, it does seem that confused, superficial and erroneous thinking demand some attempt to clear the issue. A few years ago a comment was made concerning a report presented to Conference, to the effect that the only mention of evangelism was in the name of the Department. Yet the report told of work being established in new areas, of effective young people's work, Sunday School activities, of missions being held in which people were won, and of additions in the ordinary course of the churches' work. Apparently because the word evangelism was not used, it was thought that there was no evangelistic content in the report. By the same criterion, however, we should fall to see evangelism in the book of Acts. Evangelism involves much more than talking about evangelism.

More Than a Method

Evangelism is also much more than a method. According to the emphasis made by some people it almost appears that there can be no evan-

gelism without a tent, that tent and evangelism are synonymous terms, that the work of evangelism stops when no tent is readily available, and that if a person is not a tent enthusiast, he is lukewarm concerning evangelism. Are we not lacking in discernment? Are we not confusing a method with a spirit? And after all, are we interpreting the facts correctly?

Insofar as tent missions have been successful, to what degree has the tent been responsible? Forgetting for the time the unseen spiritual forces, to what extent has the church been responsible? And to what extent the missionary? Too often has it been forgotten that the most successful tent efforts amongst our people were conducted by a few outstanding specialists. Would the tent have been so successful without these men of particular, and in some cases spectacular, gifts? The number of really successful tent evangelists over the past fifty years can be counted on the fingers of one hand. If it were not for the outstanding gifts of the men who successfully used the tent, it would never have established such a legend amongst us.

Let us not think that the great spirit of evangelism is tied to a tent or bogged in a building, or limited by any other thing which can never be more than a mere incidental. The Word of God is not bound, nor is the spirit of evangelism. Need we comment that the book of Acts knows nothing of tent evangelism, although



B. J. Combridge.

Paul was a tent-maker, and Acts is the basic authority on evangelism. And what do we know of tent evangelism in this country prior to the beginning of the present century? And what part has a tent played in evangelism from the Day of Pentecost until the year of our Lord 1900?

Far be it from me to decry the use of the tent. I made my decision in a tent, have had tent missions in churches where I have ministered, and on one occasion was song-leader in such a mission. I know this method has been useful, and that it might still have a place. If it has, then we must use it. But for the sake of the Christ who saves, and for the sakes of our brethren who need his redemption, may the good Lord preserve us from placing in the centre of our evangelistic concern something which belongs to its circumference. My plea is that we keep this thing in correct perspective.

Evangelism by Experts

One of the sad things about the evangelism of the past has been our dependence upon a few outstanding men. It is said of Billy Graham that he has a serious weakness — there is only one of him. Because churches think he is the answer to their need they postpone their vigorous efforts in evangelism in the hope of securing him. This attitude underlines a grave danger, a danger to which our churches in Australia, in a similar context, have succumbed. Men like Harward, Hagger, Bagley, Chandler and Hinrichsen were experts — our champions in evangelism.

(continued on next page)

Let us wait on them and their tent, we said. They are the only men who can do it. If we can't get them, we'll go without. How far from the New Testament can we get!! We who think we are Christians and churches after the New Testament order!

I am pleading for a spirit, not a method. But if I am to plead for a method I would wish to get as close as possible to the New Testament.

As I see evangelism in the New Testament it is not an easy thing. Too often in these days we want our evangelism done by proxy. Church members are too busy to do it, so they pay the preacher to do it. It's his job, anyhow. And the preacher is sometimes too busy doing the scores of other things he is allegedly paid to do. So an evangelist must be called in. He is the specialist. The mission is held, there are additions and the church is pepped up. Then when the church is a bit down again, and enthusiasm is waning, call in the evangelist again, as I once heard it expressed, "to pull us out of the mud." This is a comparatively easy thing to do. It places a minimum of responsibility on church members. But where in the New Testament do we find that?

Evangelism by Every Christian

Evangelism cannot be done by proxy. The commission to preach, teach and witness has always been interpreted as belonging to the whole Church, in theory at least. The church which translates this theory into practice, using, as far as possible, the whole membership in the practice of evangelism, is nearest the New Testament. This principle can be used effectively in mass evangelistic activity, as in the recent Billy Graham Crusade, when Operation Andrew, counsellors, advisors, the evangelist and many others, united in a common evangelistic task. The same principle is used in the visitation method, which is, happily, being more widely adopted amongst our churches.

Some of our churches demonstrated during the Crusade how the spirit of evangelism can work. I spoke with the wife of one of our ministers. The church where they labor had a total of 94 decisions from the Crusade, of which 40 were first decisions, and I expressed congratulations. "But," she said, "we worked for this." Of course they did! They had their contacts, cultivated them, they took them to the Crusade meetings, and through the combined efforts of all concerned and the blessing of God's Spirit that fine harvest was reaped. Other churches could tell the same kind of story. This was the spirit of evangelism at work,

using methods appropriate to the occasion. Evangelism is a spirit, and where that spirit is, there evangelism happens. Where the spirit of evangelism really is, so little else is really essential. The evangelist, the directing Holy Spirit, the Word of God and a one-person congregation — these were the essentials of evangelism in the story of Acts 8. No tent, no cathedral, no choir, no P.A. system, no organising, no advertising, but effective evangelism. How few are the real essentials of evangelism! But how essential are the few requirements — the initiative of the Holy Spirit, the human agent, the Word and the congregation — whether one or thousands is immaterial.

We are bound to put all we know into evangelism. We are bound not to be bound by methods. We are needlessly limiting ourselves when we identify evangelism with a method. We are guilty of sad ineptitude when we insist on doing today's work with last generation's tools. We are far more evangelistic when we are evangelising all the time than when we are evangelistic by spurts and starts. Once we have the essentials of evangelism, the whole range of human effort is open to us, and it is wise to imitate the householder who brought forth from his treasure things both new and old.

Recently I asked a preacher if he would like a tent mission in his area. He said, "We are evangelising all the time. We have a large number of contacts and are regularly working with them. We like to do it this way."

Let it be perfectly clear that whatever is said here about methods is incidental. Every effective method in evangelism which is in harmony with the gospel is valid. This plea is for an evangelistic church. There is no alternative to the evangelistic church. A non-evangelistic church is a contradiction in terms. The New Testament knows nothing of it, except it be in terms of reproach.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Given the essentials, there is great liberty as to method in evangelism. But there is no liberty as to evangelism. THAT IS IMPERATIVE.



The Vic-Tas. Department of Home Missions and Evangelism appointed W. A. Thompson as chairman at its first meeting for the year. Mr. Thompson, who succeeds R. F. Geyer, is secretary of the church at Boronia, and a nephew of the late Mary Thompson, our first missionary to India. C. L. Ward was co-opted to the Department and appointed treasurer in succession to Mr. Thompson.

NOTES FROM THE READINGS

as Suggested for



Sunday, May 31

EXODUS 40: 18-38.

This closing section of Exodus describes the erection of the Tabernacle, and the coming of the cloud and the glory of the Lord as signs of God's presence.

"fastened his sockets" (v. 18). — "He laid its bases, and set up its frames, and put in its poles, and raised up its pillars" (R.S.V.).

"the candlestick" (v. 24). — The lamp-stand.

"set up the hanging" (v. 28). — "Hung the curtain at the entrance" (Moffatt).

"a cloud" (v. 34). — The same cloud as referred to in 13: 21, 19: 9 and 33: 9.

"glory of the Lord" (v. 34). — See also 16: 10, 24: 17.

ACTS 7: 54-8: 8.

Stephen's martyrdom is followed by Paul's persecution of the church, the consequent scattering of the disciples, and Philip's ministry in Samaria.

"cut to the heart" (v. 54). — "Enraged" (R.S.V.), "furious" (Moffatt).

"Jesus standing" (v. 55). — "This, instead of the usual 'seated,' seems to suggest that our Lord is about to welcome Stephen into the immediate presence" (Macgregor).

"the Son of man" (v. 56). — This is the only passage where this title is applied to Jesus by any other than himself.

"cast him out of the city" (v. 58). — "This is no judicial trial. This is a lynching, because the Sanhedrin had no right to put anyone to death" (Barclay).

"the witnesses" (v. 58). — These were the men chosen to cast the first stones.

"calling upon God" (v. 59). — "Like his Saviour, he died 'praying for his enemies' forgiveness."

"Saul was consenting" (v. 1). — It is doubtful whether Saul was a member of the Sanhedrin, but "Luke suggests that the moral consent he gave to the execution carried with it as much responsibility as the actual doing of the deed" (Macgregor).

"haling" (v. 3). — "Dragging out."

"Great joy in that city" (v. 8). — "It is a counterfeit Christianity which brings an atmosphere of gloom; the real thing radiates joy wherever it comes" (Barclay).



(Notes supplied by A. Anderson, Sec. F.M. Board).

Dramatic Entry Into New Villages

INVITATION.

At the end of April, Frank Beale, Superintendent of the New Guinea Mission, advised the Board that the Lului (Headman) of the Mbut village, practically the last village in the string of villages along the ridge, came up to Tung and asked that his boys be allowed to come to school. More recently he came and asked that a teacher be sent right into their village, and that we commence work there.

To test out the value of the invitation, Mr. Beale, accompanied by Jim Dow, went down to the village, and found a very warm welcome by the Headman and the majority of villagers. A village a little further away also was represented, and asked to be included.

These villages have a population of over 200 people, and though nominally touched by the R.C.'s little impression has been made. The people remain as they were fifty years ago. The main village is about three hours' walk from Tung, our main centre.

It appears that a break here will mean that the whole string of villages will need our help. Other villages will fall into line when they see what is being done for them, and will want the same.

Mr. Beale comments, "The people had everything ready for us to camp — water, wood, coconuts and bananas. They had looked out areas that they thought would be suitable for a Mission site. The atmosphere was very different from the time that Mr. Finger and I had met them before. We walked about and looked at the areas that they had showed us, and found an area near water that would be suitable."

ACCEPTANCE.

The invitation was so pressing that the men felt something would have to be done about it, and arrangements were made to commence preaching services forthwith.

Regarding the immediate plans, Mr. Beale writes: "I have arranged to go down next weekend (May 3) to hold our first service. I will take some of the Tung men who can

sing, and we will commence work among them. Mr. Chamberlain will take the Tung service. After a couple of Sundays there, we will alternate taking services in the new work. I have already fixed the site for the church building, and when I go down next weekend I will be able to get the posts up. After that I will go down for long weekends to put up the main church structure. When it comes to building the houses I will go down for the whole week, and will only be getting home on the alternate weekends when Mr. Chamberlain takes the service."

THE NEXT STEPS.

The Board, at a special meeting on May 7, with Harold Finger present to give the whole picture, sent immediate word to New Guinea to go ahead with plans. We have advised them that the brotherhood will be thrilled with the opportunities opening up.

IN THIS VENTURE OF FAITH WE LOOK TO THE PRAYERS AND THE SUPPORT OF THE WHOLE BROTHERHOOD.

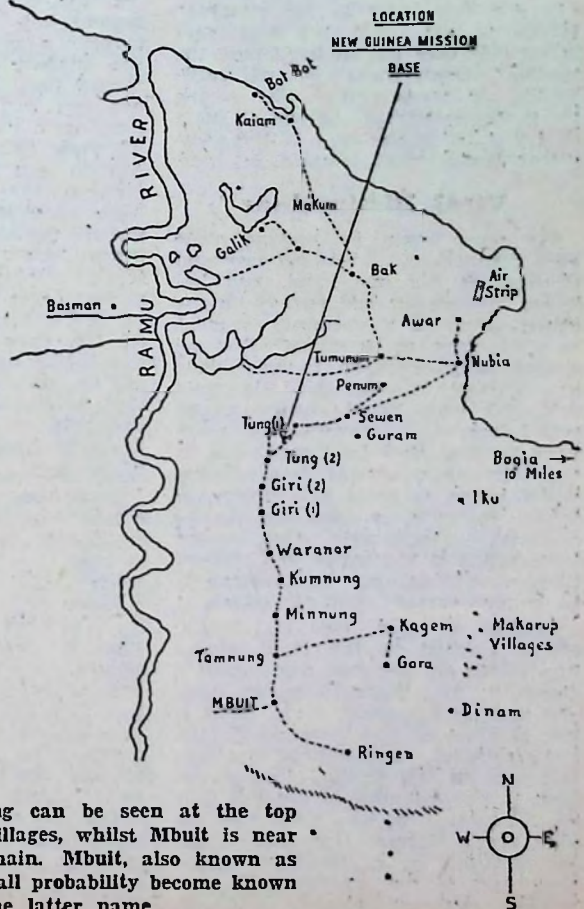
"Thrust Forth Laborers Into His Vineyard."

Apart from buildings, the probable sequence of events will be:

- (a) A teacher and a nurse will probably be sent to N.G. as early as July.
- (b) Mr. and Mrs. Rex Chamberlain (September next), will probably move in to the new villages if the building programme is complete. Meanwhile the new teacher will be getting used to the people, "Pidgin" English, and the teaching methods. Contacts with new workers for this task have already been made, and an announcement is expected to be made shortly.
- (c) There is strong probability of preparing an airstrip, so as to have ready access to the coast and transport goods. The strip will cost in the vicinity of £200.

Arthur Deane says, "It is easier to read the details of missionary needs than to pray effectively over those details; at least, I find it so."

Do you? Then stop reading right now, and pray — for all our missionary work.



In this map, Tung can be seen at the top of the group of villages, whilst Mbut is near the end of the chain. Mbut, also known as Pir (Pier), will in all probability become known by the latter name.

THE CONQUEST OF WORRY

Most of us know from personal experience that worry is a terrible enemy of peace and happiness, yet in spite of this we do not usually regard it as a great evil. Perhaps because it is so widespread and familiar, we are apt to condone it with some such words as: "Oh, I'm the worrying type, I can't help it, it's my nature." But it is folly either to excuse or make light of worry. Long experience and the modern psychologist alike confirm the teaching of Christ that anxiety is enemy No. 1 to a full life. Indeed, a doctor has described it as enemy No. 1½, since it is directly or indirectly responsible for many diseases, both of the mind and body.

Furthermore, it paralyses all constructive effort — "our doubts are traitors, and make us lose the good we oft might win by fearing to attempt" (Shakespeare). It incapacitates a man for adventurous living, and is all so wasteful of personal energy, so wearing, and so futile: "For which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his stature?" (Matt. 6: 27). Yet, the knowledge of all this does not in itself cure the trouble. "Don't worry" is itself futile advice, as it is rather like saying to a fever-stricken patient, "Don't be hot"! It is the cure of the complaint which must concern us here.

Vital Distinctions

We must begin by making some vital distinctions — between fear and anxiety on the one hand, and between forethought and anxiety on the other. Fear is a necessary element in all human, as in animal, life: we should be ill-equipped to meet danger without it. As Aristotle truly said, "A man would deserve to be called insane or insensible if there were nothing that he feared." It is fear that prevents us from falling under buses, or leads the surgeon to take elaborate precautions before commencing to operate. God created fear, which is a primary and natural human emotion; but he intended it to be our servant, not our master.

Anxiety is fear out of control. Christ pointed to the birds as an illustration of freedom from anxiety (Matt. 6: 26). Now, of course, birds can and do experience fear. That is the reaction of the blackbird to the boy's catapult. The natural creatures feel fear in the danger situation, as man is also intended to do; but they do not think fear, they do not anticipate fear. Natural fear is a quick, hot emotion in a dangerous situation, and is not harmful (if controlled), but biologically beneficial.

Anxiety is a persisting mental state, and this is unnatural and destructive.

Not all thoughtful anticipation, of course, is anxiety, as forethought is essential in human life. Christ never said, "Take no thought for the morrow" — that is a bad mis-translation. What he actually said was, "Do not be anxious about tomorrow." He himself frequently encouraged forethought, like the master in one of his own parables who "praised the dishonest factor for looking ahead" (Luke 16: 8, Moffatt). There can be much forethought without any anxiety. Forethought is mental preparation for the future; anxiety is an attempt to carry the burdens of the future in the present. These vital distinctions may help us to see clearly the true cure for worry.

One Day at a Time

Since anxiety or worry is an attempt to carry the burden of the future before ever it arrives, part of the cure is to practise living in the present, one day at a time. The only burdens a man need ever carry are the burdens of today, and no one should find that impossible. "Anyone can carry his burden, however hard, until nightfall. Anyone can do his work, however hard, for one day. Anyone can live sweetly, patiently, lovingly, purely, till the sun goes down. And this is all that life really means" (Robert L. Stevenson). Any person who will leave all the past in God's keeping by seeking his forgiveness, and will leave all the future in God's keeping in trust, will be set free from care to live today. In the Lord's Prayer we are taught to ask for our daily bread, relying upon God a day at a time. The stark simplicity of this philosophy is perhaps the reason why it is overlooked by so many.

To do one thing at a time is also a big secret of the carefree life. The attempt to do two or several things at once is a frequent cause of a distracted mind. We sit down to write a letter, and, having started it, realise with horror that it is two months since we last wrote home, and so resolve to do that at once. Now that we have two things in mind, the telephone bell rings and in the conversation we are reminded of a third urgent duty — and so on. In simple ways like this we become distracted and worried, and merit the rebuke: "Thou art anxious and troubled about many things" (Luke 10: 41). The result is inefficiency and frustration; having many things in mind, we are unable to do anything well. This

experience has been aptly expressed in the lines:

There was an old sailor my grand-
father knew,
Who had so many things that he
wanted to do,
That whenever he thought it was
time to begin
He couldn't, because of the state
he was in.

It is therefore a great help to one's peace of mind to make a practice of attending to, and carrying out, one thing at a time. If there are many things requiring attention, make a list of them in the order of urgency, and then the mind will be free to tackle them one by one. It is a help not to start doing a thing mentally until the moment comes when we are able to do it actually.

This leads on to another important truth about the cure of worry. Anxiety is often banished by action. As we have already pointed out, anxiety arises in our minds when we try to deal with a future situation before it has actually arrived. But the only time one can act is in the present. Being unable, therefore, to deal with that future situation by action, we deal with it by worry. Worry and action are the great opposites, and can rarely co-exist. For example, if a student is working really hard for his examinations, he is rarely worried about the result. He worries if he is not working hard; or if, having taken the papers, he awaits the results.

This is true of life as a whole. We worry mostly in periods of indecision and inaction. "Do something" is therefore excellent advice. What many people need to cure their anxiety is a creative task, some purpose large enough to take them out of themselves. Perhaps that is why the Lord Jesus Christ gave as the alternative to anxiety his great positive: "But seek ye first his Kingdom, and his righteousness, and all these things (about which you worry) shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6: 33).

Again, worries often evaporate when we talk them over fully with someone we really trust. The reader will have noticed how frequently we have had occasion to stress the value and importance of friendship and deep fellowship with others. It is quite remarkable how often immediate relief and sometimes release come when we unburden ourselves to a trusted friend or adviser.

Is not that very word "unburden" significant? That is just what happens when we bring things up and out: the load is lifted. Much of our

anxiety is like a cat chasing its tail; the mind goes round and round the same old problem in endless circles, and we get nowhere. The remedy is to share our burden, to bring our troubles out into the open of fellowship.

Healing Power of Prayer

This is, of course, the method of psycho-therapy; but only in very difficult and exceptional cases should this be needed. Greater than any human adviser or human friend is our Creator, Redeemer and Friend. To him we may go every day to unburden ourselves, and talk over in prayer all the intimate concerns of our life. Prayer is the great cure for anxiety, as the apostle Paul makes clear: "Have no anxiety about any-

thing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4: 6). The healing power of real prayer is beyond all exaggeration, especially if it is "with thanksgiving," for gratitude and anxiety simply cannot exist side by side.

Which brings us to the final truth about this problem. A man must not concentrate negatively upon overcoming worry, but positively upon the achievement of the opposite state. The positive opposite of anxiety, of uncontrolled fear, is faith. Worry is only another name for faithlessness, as our Lord makes clear in his ques-

tion, "Why are you anxious . . . O men of little faith?" The basic need of man is security, and unless he finds this he is bound to worry. True security he can never find in himself or in any aspect of this world which is passing away. It can be found only in the eternal God of love who has been made known to us in Jesus Christ, his Son.

To commit our lives to his rule and keeping is the final secret of security and peace. For anxiety is essentially self-centred, and the cure is to become God-centred. The future indeed is unknown to all of us, but it need no longer be a source of anxiety. For as a wise man once put it, "I do not know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future."—The Life of Faith.

OUT OF CHINA—Two Reports

Culled from the March issue of "World Call."

Two quite different, but not necessarily conflicting, reports have come out of China in recent months. Both have to do with Protestant churches of the mainland. One tells of increased government pressure on churches, with special emphasis on mergers, and often the closing of numbers of local churches. The other report tells of continuing growth in church membership in many parts of the country.

Wallace C. Merwin, executive secretary of the China Committee of the National Council of Churches, is responsible for the report of the growing pressure the government is putting on Chinese Protestants. His statement is based on such sources as the Protestant bi-weekly paper, *Tien-Feng*, personal letters received, and the new China News Agency. He credits Frank W. Price of the Missionary Research Library with having assembled the data.

Dr. Merwin says that sixteen denominations, with nearly a million members, are under pressure to merge into a single Church. The programme is being carried on, he says, by the "Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee" of Chinese church leaders. Through this movement, he believes, "the Chinese authorities are succeeding in maintaining closer controls over the churches and their members."

"Today," says Dr. Merwin, "Chinese Protestants are told that denominational names are 'vestiges of western colonialism aimed to divide and rule.'" To be truly independent and patriotic, they are advised, the churches

must unify their forms of worship, methods of support and doctrinal creeds. Dr. Merwin adds that this counsel is bringing together "incompatible factions," and that more and more church members are staying away from church.

Along with the efforts at forced merger, says Dr. Merwin, many local churches have been closed. These are said to include all but 12 of the 200 Protestant churches in Shanghai, and 61 of the 65 churches in Peking. As churches are closed, properties are being turned over to the government as "patriotic gifts."

We pause here to note that this attack on the churches has been made at their weakest point. That point is the tragic division which marks the Christian movement all over the world. This division is serious enough among the older churches of the West. Amongst the younger churches of what we call "mission lands," it is a calamity.

The burden of responsibility for this calamity rests squarely on the shoulders of the churches of the West. It is true that most of those responsible for the work of foreign missions have in recent years sought to move toward a united Church in mission lands, if not at home. But too often their efforts have come too late. And they have too seldom had the support of the people of the home churches. By and large, members of the older churches have failed to see what their own lack of unity has done to the younger churches.

The second report on the Protestant churches in China indicates that, despite all difficulties, they continue to carry on their work and, at least in some measure, to grow.

The chief source for this encouraging word is one from which some evidence of government pressure was drawn — the paper, *Tien-Feng*. This nationally distributed Protestant journal carries news of the churches in all parts of Communist China. Readers state that "almost every number" of this bi-weekly carries news of baptisms in local churches and that they "add up to a very impressive total."

In the Oct. 28, 1957, issue of *Tien-Feng*, news items covering half of a page record a total of 809 baptisms. Among these items was a report of 108 baptisms at the church of Disciples of Christ in Wuwei, Anhwei. This is a church to which Prof. Joseph Smith, of Christian Theological Seminary of Indianapolis, was assigned just prior to the evacuation of missionaries of The United Christian Missionary Society.

We note again that these reports are based on outdated information. Yet we believe it is authentic. It is at least as reliable as we can expect to have under existing limitations on the normal exchange of news. The one report shows the churches of China working under serious handicaps. The other reveals that, even in the face of great pressures which accompany an overturning of the country's accustomed way of life, the churches carry on.



Theme for the Week:
"VICTORY PROCLAIMED"

Sunday, May 31

John 4: 19-26.

Thought Text: "God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (v. 24, R.S.V.).

In a searching comment on this verse, R. H. Strachan says, "To worship in spirit means that we yield our wills to God's will, our thoughts and plans to God's for us and for the world. Spirit must meet with spirit . . . In truth means that we are not worshipping an 'image' of God, made out of our own ideas. Idols may be not only metal but mental."

Idols of our own making can crowd God out of our thoughts; even in the midst of a church service. By this test, how real is my worship?

O God, help me so to discipline my wandering thoughts and self's desires that I shall truly seek and find thee, when I worship thee. Amen.

Monday, June 1

Acts 3: 1-10.

Thought Text: "Such as I have give I thee" (v. 6).

This is a thrilling word from the Apostle Peter. Already he had learnt that lack of material riches doesn't necessarily brand a man as poor, any more than their possession makes a man rich. He had no silver or gold, but he knew where his true riches lay — and he was ready to share them! Paul had the same confident spirit when he wrote to the Corinthians of "having nothing, yet possessing all things" (1 Cor. 6: 10).

The Church today is richer by far in material things than the Early Church of Jerusalem. But has it the same confidence in the power of its Master's Name? It is concerned with vast relief projects — and so it should be. But is it even more concerned with setting transformed men "praising God"?

WHEN SOARS the SOUL

A Week of Daily Devotions, Based on Readings
Suggested by the "Book of Family Worship"

O Lord, may thy Church in every land seek and know that spiritual power, which alone gives it something real to offer needy men. Amen.

Tuesday, June 2

Acts 3: 11-19.

Thought Text: "You killed the very Source of life" (v. 15, Goodspeed).

Whatever the translation of this particular phrase (and there are some interesting variations — Prince of life, Author of life, Pioneer of life), it was a daring title for anyone to apply to a recently crucified man. Campbell Morgan points out that the word literally means "a file-leader, one who takes precedence, one who goes first," and sees in the use of the title a hint of the resurrection, whose truth Peter then asserts so strongly.

Truly, all our future hope lies in him who was "the first-fruits of them that slept," but here and now, also, he is "Christ our life," the source of that "life to the full" which is his gift to those who trust in him.

Lord, forgive us that we are sometimes so busy trying to live our own lives, in our own way, that we miss out on the secret of that more abundant life.

Wednesday, June 3

Acts 4: 13-21.

Thought Text: "A notable miracle . . . we cannot deny it" (v. 16).

They could not deny it, but they could — and did — still defy it. So it has always been; the church which gets results will always rouse opposition. Our Lord was a realist, and he told his disciples bluntly, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." If it is ever an easy thing to be a Christian, something has gone wrong somewhere; standards have slipped.

But when we can give them evidence, like that of the healed man, people will at least recognise that we have been with Jesus. Can my church — or I — produce the evidence of changed lives, the undeniable "fruit of the Spirit"?

Dear Master, make my life the kind of miracle in which thy love is truly seen. Amen.

Thursday, June 4

Acts 5: 12-20.

Thought Text: "Go, stand and speak . . . all the words of this life" (v. 20).

Release from prison meant a quick return to duty for the apostles rather than a reprieve. That word "Go!"

had the same ring about it that the Master's, "Go!" of the Great Commission had sounded, and they responded immediately. Nor did they choose a safe place for their witnessing; from "early in the morning" they were at their task in the Temple itself. Here was the living proof of Peter's earlier words to the persecutors: "We cannot but speak the things that we have seen and heard."

Are we helping to make sure that "the words of this life" are heard today?

O God, strengthen those who bear their witness in difficult places. Keep them — and us — from the sin of silence when we ought to speak. Amen.

Friday, June 5

Acts 5: 21-32.

Thought Text: "We must obey God rather than men" (v. 29, R.S.V.).

The Christian is no stranger to the conflict of loyalties. Choices tug at his mind every day, and only to his peril dare he forget that he owes his supreme loyalty to God. No matter what the cost, God must come first.

John Bunyan knew that — and paid the price with long years of imprisonment, even though it tore at his heart to be parted from his loved ones, and especially his blind girl, Mary. So did Martin Niemöller, of Hitler's Germany, and a host of others like him.

Lord, bless all those men in high positions for whom principle counts more than policy, and obedience to thee than safety of compromise. Amen.

Saturday, June 6

Acts 5: 33-42.

Thought Text: "If it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it" (v. 39).

Many since Gamaliel's day have thought they could overthrow the Church — and have failed. In our own generation, Soviet Russia has witnessed a most spectacular failure of the policy outlined in May, 1929, which rashly prophesied that "by May, 1937, no church is to be left in the Soviet Union. God will be expelled as a medieval relic." But instead it was the membership of the League of the Militant Godless which crashed from 7,000,000 in 1932 to less than two millions in 1937 — as against a census declaration by sixty millions that they were Christian.

As our Lord said long ago to his disciples, "Fear not, little flock. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Help us to live as those who know the victory is already won. Amen.



OUR FAMILY PAGE

Look Under the Surface!

James Mackay.

"Reading maketh a full man," says Francis Bacon; but it isn't always true. I knew a man of seventy in one of my early churches who had read, and read very carefully too, far more learned books and articles than any university professor, and yet knew nothing of their subject-mat-



ter. He was a proof-reader for a certain University Press, and for forty years he had read steadily, eight hours and often more a day, the books and articles that were to be published by it. His job was to correct spelling, punctuation and typographical errors, and I will guarantee that very few mistakes ever passed his carefully trained eye; but I have his own authority for saying that the meaning of the books he read escaped him altogether. He read for mistakes; he detected mistakes; but he neither saw nor understood anything else in what he read.

We are all in danger of doing with life, with our own immortal souls, what that man did with books. It is so easy to become adept at dealing with the surface of life, and yet to miss its deeper meaning; and the more useful to the community and ourselves the things we do, the more likely are they to get between us and reality.

Modern life with its intense activity makes it very difficult for us to get beneath the surface. There are so many exciting and attractive things on the surface, so many new gadgets being made, so many new patterns taking gleaming shape. Jesus asked a question we seldom ask now: **What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? What are all the glittering prizes on the surface, that will fade almost**

before you grasp them, in comparison with the abiding realities?

We usually think of that question in relation to the pursuit of money or power, but we can lose our souls in other ways than these. We can lose our souls, lose sight of them altogether, under a smoke-screen of things that are quite good in themselves. Even in our church work we can lose our souls and miss our true relationship to God.

Praying the Lord's Prayer

Thou canst not say the Lord's Prayer
And make one selfish plea;
Thou canst not say the Lord's Prayer
And even once say 'Me.'

For it's 'Our,' 'Our,' 'Our,'
And it's 'Us, Us, Us;
And the fourth time it is 'Our,'
And the fourth time it IS 'Us.'

Thou canst not say the Lord's Prayer
And even once say 'I';
Thou canst not say the Lord's Prayer
And even once say 'MY.'

Thou canst not say the Lord's Prayer
And pray not for another,
For, when thou askest Daily Bread,
Thou must include thy Brother.

And it's 'Us,' 'Us,' 'Us,'
And it's 'Our,' 'Our,' 'Our'—
As free from selfish motive
As the fragrance of a flower.

For others are included
In each and every plea,
Since, from the beginning through
the end,

It does not once say 'ME.'

God's Gift



God placed a baby's hand in mine
And said to me,
"For a brief while this life is
thine,

Ensure it leads to me."

God made a baby's love my own
And said to me,
"Although this heart is yours alone,
Yet guide its hope to me."

God set a bound to my mother care
And said to me,
"When thy child is grown we shall
share

The joy of a life given me."

—St. Clair Oldfield, Ivanhoe.

The Best Thing in Life

What is the best thing that ever came into your life?

John Wanamaker, famous Philadelphia merchant, whose name is inscribed in the merchants of America Hall of Fame, gave his answer to that question as follows:—

"The best thing that ever came into my life was when, at the close of a meeting . . . I caught the minister on his way down the aisle, putting his overcoat on to go home; and told him that I had given my heart to God that night . . .

"I can feel the pressure of his hand still, when he said, 'God bless you. You will never regret it.'

"What he said was, and is, the truest thing that I know."

He founded the Wanamaker Department Store in Philadelphia and served as Postmaster-General of the United States.

He organised a Sunday School which began with twenty-seven members.

He developed it into the largest Sunday School in the world, and two magnificent churches grew out of it.

John Wanamaker enjoyed with enthusiasm the best thing that ever came into his life.—Ione Hayes Keen, in "The Upper Room."

A Workman's Prayer

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man, that we may perform them with laughter and kind faces; let cheerfulness abound with industry. Give us to go blithely on our business all this day, bring us to our resting beds weary and content and undishonored, and grant us in the end the gift of sleep. Amen.—R. L. Stevenson.

A young man, who had just been unexpectedly "released" from his job, asked his employer if he would write him a recommendation. After much doubtful consideration, the boss came up with this:

"To whom it may concern: John Jones worked for us one week, and we are satisfied."

HERE

AND

THERE

David Mansell's first mission as Qld. Home Mission Organiser is planned to commence in the tent at Gatton on Friday, June 5. The church there is only four years' old, but with bright prospects in a town which is in the centre of the rich Lockyer agricultural area. The South Qld. Conference is sponsoring the effort, which is planned to run for three (possibly four) weeks. J. A. Rae is the local minister, and active preparation has been in hand for weeks. All concerned in the effort would appreciate prayer-support throughout our churches. Mr. Mansell has two other major missions planned for later in the year — Chinchilla's Jubilee mission in September, and Kingaroy's Jubilee campaign more than a month later.

The Christian Women's Fellowship in Victoria and Tasmania will hold its next Council meeting in the reception room of the Brotherhood Centre, at 11 a.m., on June 5. Leader of devotions will be Mrs. M. Morrison, and the speaker Harold Finger. —N. Newham, Sec.

Special prayer meetings, sessions on the local radio station and door-to-door visitation preceded the commencement of the three-week Crusade of Evangelism in Ballarat, Vic., on Sunday, May 3. Designed as a follow-up to the Billy Graham Crusade, the venture has as its missionary Frank Hunting, preacher at the Dawson-st. (Ballarat) church. First-class films, inspiring singing by combined adult and combined children's choirs, plus fine solo gospel messages in song by Geoff. Feary and Max Murray, of the York-st. church, are greatly assisting the meetings. After the first week some four souls had been added to the Kingdom.

During 1884 and 1885, Memoir of Stephen Cheek was written and serialised in *The Australian Christian Watchman* by G. B. Moyses. He had full access to letters and to Stephen Cheek's own diary. We wonder if this material, and especially the diary, still exists. If so, where? It may be amongst papers and books belonging to the Moyses family. As the diary was apparently a minutely written one, there may be some valuable data in it which would be of greater interest today than in the '80's. Please communicate about this or any other historical documents or material to the Vic.-Tas. Historian, W. J. Thomson, 725 Dandenong-rd., Malvern, Vic. Phone 50-7512.

At a farewell social evening on May 6, the church at Bendigo, Vic., farewelled Mr. and Mrs. R. V. Holmes and family with gifts from various auxiliaries, and a cheque from the church membership, in appreciation of 4½ years' valuable service. Members of the Ministers' Fraternal expressed praise and thanks for Mr. Holmes' support and contribution in Fraternal matters. There were good attendances at farewell services on May 10. G. J. Andrews commences a 3 years' term on May 31.

The next meeting of the N.S.W. Ministers' Fraternal will be held at the Marrickville church on Monday, May 25, at 10 a.m., when R. W. Beadle will lead a discussion on Jehovah's Witnesses. Those present will be the guests of the Marrickville Women's Fellowship for lunch, and will be invited to inspect the new church hall, recently opened by the N.S.W. Conf. Pres., D. J. A. Verco.—H. C. Bischoff, Sec.

Consistently high averages continue to mark the Sunday services of the church at Collins-st., Hobart—a.m., 173; p.m., 176; communion, 175; offering, £66. The fellowship with visitors from sister churches has been appreciated, as well as the presence of non-members at night meetings. The work amongst the Aborigines was highlighted by a recent visit from D. Nicholls, M.B.E., and S. F. Davey. The Boys' Dept. of the Y.M.C.A. (of which C. E. Watson, local minister, is chaplain) conducted a service, of dedication of officers on the evening of 26th, when a young married couple were baptised. A panel of speakers is being prepared to assist southern churches, and any new causes that are commenced. The panel met for tea on a recent Sunday, when representatives from Dover, Geeveston and Kelleve were present to state their requirements. It is anticipated that other churches will also respond, to make this a really worthwhile venture. The pressure on church seating capacity has resulted in a decision to carry out interior structural alterations immediately, to make room for additional seats. An architect is to be consulted re future developments.

The British and Foreign Bible Society has now published a modern colloquial Russian translation of the four Gospels, especially designed to appeal to the younger generation of Russians. It is the result of eight years' work by a group of Russian scholars working in Paris.

B. F. Goldsteen will commence a part-time ministry with the North Williamstown church, Vic., on June 7. Three young men of the church have received congratulations on attaining top awards in Apprenticeship gradings — Brian Nicholas, best apprentice at General Motors Holden; Bill Waddell and Gordon Sonsie, Footscray Technical and Victorian Railways awards.

The morning service at Berri-Winkie, S.A., on May 24, will be broadcast over station 5RM.

Forward Together At Canberra

1. For the past ten years, the Australian brotherhood has been planning and working together to establish a worthy cause at Canberra, our National Capital. In that time the city has grown enormously. The church, though only a few years old, has also grown rapidly, and, through the virile leadership of Mr. and Mrs. G. R. Stirling, opportunities for expansion of the work abound.

2. From the beginning, the church has had loyal and enterprising workers. Quite a few of these have been transferred to other centres, and soon the church is to lose, temporarily, the Fergie family, who will be going to Adelaide for three years. These fine folk, living in Yarralumla, about five miles from the church, twice every Sunday travel many miles gathering children and adults from their area and transporting them to Bible School and church services. Mr. Fergie has also been chairman of the Building Panel, and helped materially with building arrangements.

3. On May 9-10, B. F. Huntsman, L. J. Butler and K. A. Jones, members of the Federal Executive, journeyed to Canberra to confer with the brethren there concerning the completion of the church buildings so sorely needed. Details of the proposed structure, and tenders by building contractors, were considered. On the recommendation of the local Building Panel, the tender submitted by A. V. Collings, who had erected the first buildings, was accepted. We are grateful for the thought and preparation undertaken by Campbell Morris, honorary architect, and the Building Panel. Constructional work will commence immediately, and completion date is early March, 1960. We still need £2,000 to complete our financial obligations with the building, and we are sure that those who have not shared yet in this piece of co-operative evangelism in the Federal Capital will be eager to be in the partnership through a gift.—K. A. Jones, Sec. Fed. Exec.