

# Fulton County Gospel News

Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World

"...Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body." - Ephesians 5:23

Volume 26

Mammoth Spring, AR 72554

November, 1992

No. 11

## INVEST YOUR LIFE IN THINGS THAT ENDURE

by Marvin Rickett

When we buy a product such as an appliance, automobile or house, we want something that will last. We want it guaranteed to last. There is a category of consumer products called "durable goods" because they are supposed to last for some time. When we have some capital to invest, we are particular to invest it in something that will endure through the rises and slumps of the market.

We have something much more valuable to invest - a life, a soul. What will we invest it in? Many folks are so meticulous about investing their money in something sound, but are so careless about the investment of their souls. We need to latch onto something that will last. We need to fasten our affections onto, and invest our time and energy and fortune in, those things which will endure.

Many folks hold onto things that do not last. They latch onto material possessions and hang on for dear life. Jesus said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). Modern man says in effect, "Yes, a man's life **does** consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." If he would only reflect soberly on the truth that "You can't take it with you," he would realize the folly of this philosophy.

Others latch onto beauty and strength as the goal of life. Some young ladies depend on their beauty to succeed in life. They pamper and pet their beauty, only to find it fades in middle life in spite of their efforts. Young men often glory in their strength and physique only to find that it, too, fades in middle life. Physical beauty and strength do not endure.

Not a few hang their star of destiny on fun and games and a life of pleasure.

Multitudes practice this lifestyle. Paul said that one who lives in pleasure is "dead while she liveth" (I Timothy 5:6). Many begin to realize the truth of this as they grow older. Some never learn. A life lived for physical pleasures will end in regret.

Still others embrace eating and drinking as an exciting goal in life. Some spend their time trying to find some new gourmet food or eating place. Many think that the essence of life is bar-hopping, honky-tonking, and consuming alcoholic beverages with buddies of like-mind. This lifestyle soon fades into dissipation and disappointment.

None of the above choices produce anything that endures for eternity. Nothing brings this realization upon one better than the inevitable process of growing old. Older, and hopefully, wiser people desire something that endures for eternity. Unfortunately, many of them have reached a point of no return. They should have chosen the "durable goods" in the days of their youth.

There are some things that endure for eternity. (1) Jesus Christ is a person who endures for eternity. If we latch onto Him, we will not be disappointed. We will endure, too. He said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20). Growing old will not change our relationship with Him. No one can snatch us out of His hand. In Him our inner man is renewed day by day. For eternity, He will come and receive us unto Himself. But, we must latch onto Him by faith and obedience.

(2) The church is an enduring body. Jesus promised that the "gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). All other institutions will eventually fail. Religious denominations will be "rooted up" (Matthew 15:13). We wouldn't want to attach our star of for-

tune to one of them, but the church of Jesus Christ will endure forever (Ephesians 3:21). If we are members of His church, we, too, will endure.

(3) The Word of God will endure forever (I Peter 1:25). Not many of the works of men survive, even for a lifetime. A few do. But we can be reassured and comforted by the fact that God's Word will not cease from existence and will not fail to come to pass. If we read it, learn it, believe it and obey it, we are holding onto something that will carry us through all the failures and fadings away of other philosophies of life.

(4) He who does the will of God abides forever (I John 2:17). God's will is revealed in His Word. When we do what the Word says, we are doing His will. We can abide forever if we do the will of God. We will not abide forever on this earth. We will still grow old and die, yet we will abide with God forever in heaven. We will not fade away into eternal exile in a devil's hell.

(5) Treasures laid up in heaven endure for us. Jesus said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:19-21). Treasures on earth will invariably be lost. But treasures laid up in heaven will endure for eternity. You lay up treasures in heaven by sending them ahead. You must be justified by the blood of Jesus Christ by faith and obedience, then add to your life the Christian fruits and the Christian graces, practice the beatitudes and the golden rule, etc. These things deposit treasures for you in heaven.

Man by himself is mortal - a weak and needy creature. He fades away and does not last. The only way he can endure beyond the short span of life here is to latch onto something that does last. If he latches onto something

(Continued on page 2)

**FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS**

. . . is a monthly publication distributed free of charge to any who care to receive it. We will be happy to add any names to the regular mailing list. If you send in a name be SURE to include the ZIP CODE. It must be with each address according to the Postal regulations. This paper is supported by unsolicited contributions for which we are grateful. If you care to know the financial status and expenses, that information will be furnished upon request. Mail all address corrections to:

**FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS**

P. O. Box 251

Mammoth Spring, AR 72554

Ted J. Clarke . . . . . EDITOR

Publication No. 211780

(Continued from page 1)

that does not endure, he won't either. If he latches onto Jesus Christ, casts his lot with His church, embraces the Word of God and does his will, laying up his treasure in heaven, he will endure for eternity.

P.O. Box 159  
Bay, AR 72411

## THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

by Ted J. Clarke

Perhaps one of the most difficult balances to measure in life is how to live in the world, but not be of the world. There is so much in the world that God has created or given to us through the advancement of civilization that is good - in and of itself. There is also a great deal that man has done to corrupt God's gifts and to place evil and temptation in our paths. Even the things that are good can become evil if they are abused and perverted. How can the Christian and the church of our Lord strike a balance of being "salt" and "light" to the world without being overcome by the things that are in the world?

First of all, we know that it is possible because our Lord commanded it (Matthew 5:13-16; 28:18-20). Second, we have the example of the life of Christ. He is the epitome of living in the world and yet being everything that God wanted Him to be (1 Peter 2:21). One key is found in the two great commandments - loving the Father with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength, or, always putting God first (Mark 12:30;

Matthew 6:33). If we are always aware of the danger of compromising our faith and consciously seeking to put God first, thinking about what He would have us to do, it isn't likely that the world will have much success in distracting us. We cannot be what God wants us to be in the world by becoming like the world (John 15:18-25; 17:14-19). The second commandment of loving others as ourselves is likewise a guard against becoming a worldly person. Christians are to set the example, to be different and to draw others to see the love of God and happiness of being a Christian! Love for others always seeks what is best for them (Mark 12:31; Romans 13:8-10). That is best for all of mankind is a proper relationship with God! Man is sinful and lost, but the way of salvation is through Christ (Romans 3:9, 10, 23; 6:23; 8:1). Trying to save others will keep us from doing the things that cause the world to be lost.

Israel, also known in the Old Testament as Ephraim, did not learn how to be children of God in the world without joining in worldly things. The prophet Hosea said, "Ephraim has mixed himself among the peoples; Ephraim is a cake unturned. Aliens have devoured his strength, but he does not know it" (Hosea 7:8-9). Unless we stand fast in the Word of God, growing and maintaining our knowledge of His will for us, we are doomed to have our strength devoured by those in the world. However, if we keep God's word as our light and guide in all things pertaining to our lives, we will keep separate from the world and remain in God's grace (Acts 20:32; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Jude 3; 1 John 2:15-17; 1 Peter 2:1-2, 11-12). **We must be the ones who influence the world!**

## "Are You Sowing and Bearing?"

### Part Two

by Jeff Wealand

*Editor's Note: Part One of this article was run in October's issue of the Fulton County Gospel News. The church in Mammoth Spring helps to support Brother Wealand as a missionary in Skelmersdale, England.*

Many seeds are sown on thorny ground. The cares of the world choke to death what started to grow. How sad it is when people value the evening television news more than the gospel. Wrong priorities are often left in place even after becoming a Christian. Why do

people let riches and daily responsibilities get in the way of the truth of God's word? Wrong priorities! Why do we sometimes have wrong priorities? Misguided love! We often do not desire the right things. God says through Paul, "that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head, even Christ: from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:14-16). Do we speak truth in love? Is love our motive for speaking the truth? Do we show love when we speak truth? Are we sowing in love? Love is the strongest motivator and the greatest ingredient in Christianity; if we have not love, we are as "sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal" (1 Corinthians 13:1). I am persuaded, as Paul, that speaking the truth in love can help people to "grow up in all things into Him, who is the head, even Christ." We can help people to put priorities aright if we show them love in the way we speak the truth. If people understood that we spoke the truth because we loved them, I'm sure they might reconsider changing their priorities and therefore be pulling some weeds so as not to choke them to death.

Many seeds are sown on good ground! Jesus says, "This is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; who verily beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty" (Matthew 13:23). Well, isn't it nice to have a rich, black, thick topsoil, with no rocks or weeds? There aren't too many of these people around in my experience of life, but one thing is for sure, that when they hear the Word of God, they know it, believe it, and bear fruit; some more, some less, but they all bear fruit! If you ever meet someone who is able to readily understand what you are saying about the Bible, don't ever shut up, because the more you plant, the more fruit we can expect. What kind of fruit is Jesus talking about? God says, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23). Please let me urge you to speak the truth clearly, confidently and lovingly. There are three points in this parable and its

divine explanation that we cannot afford to miss.

Firstly, Jesus meant for ALL his disciples to be sowers, "There were gathered unto Him great multitudes, so that He entered into a boat, and sat; and ALL the multitude stood on the beach" (Matthew 13:2). Jesus spoke this parable of the sower to show all of them that if they wanted to be His disciples they will all be expected to become fishers of men, or sowers of the seed. Are you sowing the seed? Every single Christian must try to speak the truth to someone, in every opportunity, no matter what kind of ground you think you are speaking to, make sure you speak!

Secondly, when we speak, it is wise to speak clearly, confidently and lovingly, in order to help bury the seed, remove stones and weed out thorns. As a Christian, have you ever given any time to learning how to speak clearly, confidently and lovingly? Whether it be to your child, spouse, work-mate, colleague, friend, neighbor, relative or stranger, are we speaking as God would desire us to speak?

Thirdly, please do not expect everyone you speak to, to bear fruit. Jesus warns us in this parable that it's likely only twenty-five percent of the people you speak to will ever bear fruit. Depending upon how you speak the gospel, you could possibly weaken that percentage, if we do not speak as God would have us speak. Jesus ended this parable positively. Our goal is to be fruit-bearers. Please make your aim in talking about Jesus and the Bible to be this, that we "may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head, even Christ: from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:15-16).

138 Eskbank - Skelmersdale, England  
WN8 6EF

## Lessons Learned From A Garden

by Douglas Huff

Long ago Solomon related how he had received instruction by observing the field of the slothful man (Prov. 24:30-34). Certain spiritual principles are well illustrated by referring to the common

experiences of life. Jesus taught important lessons about the kingdom with His parable of the sower.

The New Testament teaches that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). This principle is true not only in the spiritual realm, but also in the physical.

Now that the growing season has drawn to a close, some lessons regarding evangelism can be pointed out by considering a garden. When a proud gardener surveys his vegetables, it is obvious that seed was sown in the spring and care was given to the plants throughout the summer. Imagine how ridiculous it would have been if someone had told this gardener the following things back in the spring time:

### 1.) "If you plant that seed you won't have any left."

Some brethren are unwilling to spend the Lord's money for evangelism. However, they will use funds for other purposes such as work on the building. Sometimes money is selfishly spent for the comfort of the members while others in the world are suffering a spiritual famine.

Suppose a farmer has only one sack of wheat. He can have the entire sack of wheat ground into flour. Certainly this is an unwise course of action since future needs will not be met.

The same sack of seed could be better utilized by planting some of it and using the rest for flour. Then the farmer's current and future needs will be met. By following the wiser course of action, he can also provide for the needs of others.

Some may feel there are not enough available funds to support a mission work. However, God has promised to bless those who faithfully use His money. The possible objection that "we won't have enough left for ourselves" is answered by the following quote: "Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness" (2 Cor. 9:10). Truly, when we put the kingdom of God first in our giving, all of our needs shall be supplied (Matt. 6:33).

### 2.) "That Seed may fail to germinate."

Occasionally, seed does fail to germinate. Usually, the seed is not to blame. The problem is in the soil. The same thing is true in the spiritual realm.

There is nothing wrong with God's word.

Jesus taught there would be varying results when a man sows the seed. When seed fell into good ground it "...brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold" (Matt. 13:8). When the seed fell upon the stony places or among the thorns there was germination. However, the crop failed in those cases because of a fault in the soil (Matt. 13:20-22).

If farmers have a bad year because of drought, they realize conditions probably will be better the next year and will try again. When we approach evangelism we should remind ourselves that "...in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). The gospel still is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Our responsibility is to sow the seed; the hearer's responsibility is to believe the message (Mark 16:15, 16).

### 3.) "Do not bother planting - a harvest will come anyway."

In fallow fields one may see a few stalks of corn growing from last year's ears. This corn is still the result of seed being planted. When it comes to making disciples of all the nations, there is no accidental harvest. Jesus instructs us through His word that each person has his own responsibility to teach others the gospel (Matt. 28:19, 20).

(Continued on page 4)

## CONTRIBUTIONS

### CHURCHES

Church of Christ, Moody, Mo. ....	\$25.00
McFadden Church of Christ .....	25.00
Hickory Ridge, Ar.	
Church of Christ, Elizabeth, Ar. ....	15.00
Clarkridge Church of Christ .....	50.00
Clarkridge, Ar.	
Church of Christ, Marionville, Mo. ....	10.00
Viola Church of Christ, Viola, Ar. ....	10.00
Church of Christ, Agnos, Ar. ....	40.00
Welcome Hill Church of Christ .....	10.00
Mammoth Spring, Ar.	
Church of Christ, Moko, Ar. ....	25.00
Pilot Church of Christ .....	40.00
Mammoth Spring, Ar.	
Jeff Church of Christ, Thayer, Mo. ....	25.00
Dellhalf Church of Christ, Thayer, Mo. ...	20.00
Church of Christ, Franklin, Ar. ....	10.00
Church of Christ, Garfield, Ar. ....	35.00

### INDIVIDUALS

Al Grow, Mt. Dora, Fl. ....	\$10.00
Jeff Montgomery, Morrilton, Ar. ....	5.00
Gordon & Jina Daniel, DeFidder, La. ....	30.00
James Newberry, West Plains, Mo. ....	25.00
Mrs. Vernon Hudson, Springfield, Mo. ....	20.00

(Continued from page 3)

There will probably always be a few that glory in other people's labors (2 Cor. 10:15, 16). Some try to justify their own inactivity by saying, "But I was part of a growing congregation!" Though they may be pleased with the current size of the church, God will not be pleased with the person who never even tried to teach one person.

How were you converted? Didn't someone teach you the gospel? When the day of judgment comes, will you be empty handed and ashamed before your Lord or will you be rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves (Ps. 126:6)?

The church needs foresight right now as if we were at the last harvest looking back in time (Matt. 13:36-43). "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6). We must learn this lesson now, for later will be too late! By weeding out improper attitudes towards evangelism we can save ourselves and many more who will hear the gospel.

Route 1, Box 91  
Scio, NY 14880

## What Alcohol Will Do For You

by Dennis Gulledge

Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. (Proverbs 23:29-32)

The news on "Good Morning America" today was about the rioting in Los Angeles of a few weeks ago. That isn't really news, as much as it has been talked about recently. But, when the reporter said that the riots in L.A. may bring a "mixed blessing" to that troubled community, I listened. It seems that the members of that gutted section of the city do not want the liquor stores that were burned out to be rebuilt. One lady was shown to say, "Don't bring that crud back into our city!" The unhappy marriage of alcohol and mob violence proved exactly what those who preach and teach the truth against alcohol have been saying for years. The issue is now removed from the realm of "preacher rhetoric" to that of practical

reality, and it isn't a pretty picture!

While the brewing industries and the advertising companies continue to present a picture of happy, healthy, beautiful people enjoying their product, the real picture is that of the death, destruction and melee of Los Angeles recently. If it is true that a thing may be known by its fruits, and it is, then this display of human degeneracy shows alcohol in all its resplendent glory! A tree is known by its fruit. This is true of men, and the practices of men. What will alcohol do for you?

1. It will destroy your health. It is a fact beyond dispute that alcohol will do irreparable damage to your body. About 28,000 deaths annually are related to alcohol. Women who are pregnant are strongly advised not to drink, because of what alcohol is known to do to the unborn child. Fetal alcohol syndrome is one of the most serious problems of our day.

2. It will destroy your home. There is no way to gauge the strife, unhappiness, hatred, broken marriages, spouse beatings, child abuse, etc. that comes in the wake of America's #1 drug problem. Even if the home is not tally wrecked by the presence of alcohol, think how much happier it would be without it.

3. It will make the world unsafe for you and your children. Remember Los Angeles and the faces of those who were gleefully robbing, burning, destroying, beating and killing. Drinking drivers make our nation's highways one of the most unsafe places for anyone to be. The statistics show that 64% of murders, 30% of suicides and 50% of traffic fatalities are alcohol related.

4. It will destroy a Christian's influence for good. It will ruin any influence you might ever have for the truth. No one can conscientiously hold a beer in one hand and a Bible in the other and claim that they love both! One might as well serve Baal and God. His influence will be worth just about as much.

5. It will send your soul to hell. Enough said.

10822 Mabelvale West Road  
Mabelvale, AR 72103

*It has been said that the job of the preacher is summed up in these words, "To comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."*

## GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

## THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2,3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

"YOU CAN HELP WITH POSTAGE"  
MOVING?  
Be sure to send us  
your change of address



POSTMASTER  
Mail all address changes to:  
CHURCH OF CHRIST  
P.O. BOX 251  
MAMMOTH SPRING, AR, 72554

Second Class Postage  
Paid At  
Mammoth Spring, AR  
72554  
Publication # 211790