

Articles by Jim McKendrick

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A Deliberate Choice

Evolution is a bankrupt theory. It is unscientific, unbiblical, and illogical. Yet as you pick up supposedly scientific journals, go to state or national parks, watch TV or listen to the teachers in public schools, this theory is presented as fact worthy of our embrace.

This theory was developed in the 1700's by men who made a deliberate choice to leave God out of the equation, so they invented a system of creation that did not acknowledge Him. Obviously it didn't work. Now many scientists are beginning to believe that some supernatural power must have been at work, but still these men will not acknowledge God.

A few months ago I wrote about a book called *In the Minds of Men*, which gave a historical survey of the theory of evolution, showing how men have constructed this evil message to destroy men's belief in God. This time I would like to suggest a couple of books that handle this same issue from two other perspectives.

A volume that has been on my shelves for a number of years--and I just got around to reading--is Dr. A. E. Wilder-Smith's *Man's Origin: Man's Destiny*. Dr. Wilder-Smith is a first-class scientist who has done a lot of research in biochemistry and from this perspective can address the subject of evolution very adequately. He presents some very sound arguments of the improbability of cells evolving from simple to complex, and states that this is not only improbable, but is against proven laws of science such as the laws of Thermodynamics. He was able to take some of these

scientific truths and make them understandable even for my unscientific mind.

Another theory he attacks is the need for all these million of years that evolution uses. In this discussion, he also addresses the popular Gap Theory that Dr. Scofield appealed to in his notes in the Scofield Bible. Dr. Wilder-Smith sees this as scientifically untenable. However, I would caution that I did not agree with all he said in the part about man's destiny. He makes some statements regarding Christ and where He was when He was in the grave, interpreting 1 Peter 3:18-20 in a way I'm not ready to accept. But that is just one section in one chapter that doesn't at all affect the general tone and character of the book.

While browsing in a bookstore recently, a book was recommended to me that was authored by Wilber Smith and had been reprinted called, *Therefore Stand*. While I haven't completely digested it (it's over 500 pages), I have been very much impressed with it. This book was written so that young men and women whose faith has been shaken by the teaching of colleges and universities would be able to consider once again the solid ground upon which the faith of Jesus Christ stands. As Paul would say, it was written for "the defense and confirmation" of the faith. This is broader than a defense of creation (which is given a large section), but also defends the Bible in light of the many ancient and modern philosophies of men. This book has an excellent overview of Greek philosophy and civilization upon which much of our current thinking is based. Also included is an historical overview of the declension of evangelical Christianity which is something that we need to hear again in our day. History does repeat itself

and we need to hear again from history if we would not repeat the same mistakes today.

In the sciences as well as the philosophies of man, God is being shut out. This is not by chance, but by the studied and deliberate choice of those who are in the education process of this world at all levels. We need to stand against this evil in our own lives as well as in the lives of our children. These two books will be a big help in, first of all, understanding God and His ways and confirming the truth of the Bible, as well as warning us of the evil that lurks in the halls of our educational systems.

Both books are available through Gospel Folio Press.

A Glorious Book

Paul would tell us in Philippians that the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord was supreme over all other knowledge. The letter to the Hebrews begins with the fact that in God's Son is the fullness of the message that He has given. The Lord Jesus is better than angels, better than the first Adam, than Moses, Joshua, and Aaron, for He is supreme in His position and in His person over all of these. He is the One to whom all the Old Testament points and all the New Testament reveals. It is imperative to know Him, for in the Son is eternal life (1 Jn. 5:11). On the road to Emmaus, the Lord said that He was not only the subject of all the Scriptures (Luke 24:27), but the key to understanding them (vv. 44-45).

The Lord is presented in the Scriptures as the Creator, the Sustainer, and the Object of creation and of the purposes of God in creation. He took upon Himself manhood and walked among us as man. This is the great mystery of godliness (1 Tim. 3:16). Whenever the humanity of the Lord Jesus is approached in books, I have been many times disappointed. It is not an easy subject and must be dealt with carefully and reverently.

I have just finished the best book I have ever read on the person of Christ. This is must reading. I recommend books each month and I don't remember a book that I have felt as strongly about as this one. Maybe it's because lately I have been appalled at the things I have read on this subject. Many evangelicals today have a low view of Christ. When His humanity is discussed their low

view creates a distortion of Christ that has the flaws of our humanity.

Listen to what Mr. H. C.

Hewlett says of Christ in *The Glories of Our Lord*. "To our Lord, then, belonged humanity in the absolute sense. He embraced its every dignity so that in Him, and in Him alone, we see in its completeness the divine ideal of manhood. No excellence of character could be added to Him. There were no virtues for Him to acquire, for all were His at all times. In the garden of His soul there were no exotics; every fragrant plant was native to its setting" (p. 60).

Here is a book whose style is beautiful to read, its exposition is clear and careful, and its devotional content will lift your heart in worship of the Lord whose glories far surpass human ability to comprehend.

Beginning with our Lord's

Sonship whose dignity is unique to Him, passing through Old Testament glimpses in the theophanies we stand in awe of His eternity, and deity. Mr. Hewlett then speaks of His incarnation, humanity, His holiness, transfiguration, and crucifixion. In each of these chapters the glory of our Lord shines forth. The chapter on His suffering and crucifixion is a masterpiece of devotional exposition which looks into the caverns of His suffering without ever losing sight of the majesty of His person. From the depths of His suffering we are then lifted into the heights of His exaltation, the value of His priestly ministry for us now at the right hand of God and finally we see the Lamb. Our Lord is revealed as the Lamb in the Revelation where He will be worshiped as the Lamb forever bearing the marks of Calvary and we

as Thomas did so many years ago bow before Him and exclaim, "My Lord and my God!"

When the Hebrew Christians were discouraged and ready to go back, the apostle picked up his pen and wrote a few words of exhortation. He spoke of the glories of Christ in His position, His person, and His work. He finished his work by exhorting us to be "Looking unto Jesus...lift up the hands which hang down...ye are come...to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." Today there are many saints of God discouraged and ready to give up. The message of the first century is the message for today: "We see Jesus crowned with glory and honor," and as we fix our gaze on Him we are encouraged to go on with Him until we see Him face to face.

A Good Study

In the summer of 1988, I was privileged to come under the ministry of Dr. David Gooding for the first time. I enjoyed it thoroughly and decided to make it my business to avail myself of the opportunity each summer to spend a week under the guidance of this able and humble servant of the Lord in a Bible Study Seminar at Greenwood Hills, PA. Not only has he enabled me to learn something of the passages of Scripture we were studying, but has taught me some valuable lessons in approaching Scripture that have enabled me to study more effectively on my own.

One of the great lessons that has been demonstrated both in the oral and written ministry of Dr. Gooding is the importance of adherence to context, not only the context of the immediate passage, but its place in the whole of the book. For instance, the great passage of Luke 15 has been used by many gospel preachers for great good. And the Spirit of God has blessed the message to the salvation of many souls. As most of us use it, there is no notice of the reason this particular story told by the Lord Jesus is in Luke as opposed to Matthew or Mark or John. But this incident is only recorded in Luke. Why? And, for that matter, why is it in Luke 15 as opposed to Luke 7 or 9?

These are questions I never really asked myself. Now I'm sure knowing the answers to such questions would not affect whether I would be in heaven. But at the same time, if we are going to be careful students of the Word of God, desiring to discover all the riches of His revelation to us, we ought to stretch our minds a little

and find out. At the first session I spent with Dr. Gooding, he started by quoting the commandment that we should "love the Lord our God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" (Mk 12:30).

The technique he uses to answer the above questions is an understanding of the literary structure of ancient Greek literature. He has been a student and professor of this discipline for many years and is highly respected by his peers in this field. He is the first to point out that this is a technique that, while valuable, must not stand preeminent in the understanding of the text. But by using this tool, we may better understand each of the parts of the text.

Two expositions that illustrate the use of this technique are his study called *According to Luke and True to the Faith*, his exposition of Acts. Please don't get the idea that these works will be hard to understand and unpleasant to read. They will stretch your mind and encourage your heart at the same time. They are delightful reading.

Another volume I must mention by him is his study on Hebrews. Called *The Unshakable Kingdom*, a full third of the book is a careful look at the seven quotations in chapter 1 from the Old Testament. In this he demonstrates his careful attention to context. He shows that the writer did not take the Old Testament passages out of their Old Testament context to prove the deity of Christ and the prophetic implications of the text. Since the first readers of this letter were Jewish believers, it was necessary to prove to them that Jesus Christ was indeed the Son of God and that a proper understanding

of the Old Testament demanded that He become Man. A proper understanding of the Old Testament is still necessary for us to grasp this most significant book. This will open up the so-called warning passages in a fresh way and ultimately open the whole epistle.

All of this is done with the express purpose of drawing the reader to a fresh and exalted view of the Lord Jesus Christ, not just to bring some intellectual exercise to the study of Scripture. As you read these, you will worship the Lord with a fresh and vibrant understanding of the character of the Lord Jesus and the great salvation of our God. And this, in the final analysis, is what all good exposition should do. May your mind be stretched, but more importantly may your heart be warmed as you study these Scriptures.

A Life's Work

Have you read a good book lately? I certainly hope you have. I generally have more than one going at any one time. There are a lot of good books and I read them all a little differently. For instance, the other evening I got involved in a good biography and ended up finishing it before I went to bed in the wee hours of the morning.

Now if I were reading a commentary, that wouldn't happen. For I normally use commentaries as reference tools and refer to a good one as I am studying a passage of Scripture. I don't know if I've ever read a commentary straight through. Then, of course, there are topical books--books that help you understand a topic or doctrine. They are not usually the kind that you "just can't put down" but as you read through them checking the scripture references, learning about the topic can be very helpful. And then there are a few books that you only read one chapter at a time because they repeatedly challenge you, causing you to examine some aspect of your life in the light of the Word.

I would like to introduce you to a set of books you probably will only read one chapter at a time. Not only is each chapter complete in itself, but I found I was so "full" that, when I was done, I needed to put it away so I could meditate on what was said. I am referring to the two new books published by Gospel Folio Press which contain articles that were originally published as correspondence of Mr. John Bramhall. These articles have been published in magazines over the years also. But it was felt that a collection of these gems--which are

so rich in devotion and instruction--should be published in book format so more of us can be enriched.

Mr.

Boyd Nicholson, Sr., states in the foreword to the first volume of this set, "We have reached that time which, for the Church, is characterized by love waxed cold, power diminished, and a creeping sloth that settles for carnal alternatives, soulish excitement, and worldly methods. If ever we need a renewed beholding of His countenance and glory, it is in this day, and every day until we behold our beloved Lord 'without a cloud between.' This is what John Bramhall's ministry is all about. It is directed to the turning of our hearts and our vision to renewed occupation with Christ."

The books are arranged topically. In Volume One, the articles are arranged under three basic topics: Faith at Work, The Blessed Hope, and Love's Sweet Secret. In Volume Two, the articles are under the headings of The Grandeur of God, The Son of God's Love, and The Lord The Spirit. As I read each chapter, I was compelled to lay the book down and begin to meditate on--no--to worship my Lord! Beautifully bound in full color, you will want to put these books by your favorite chair in the living room and be enriched as you read them little by little. The first volume is called I Am My Beloved's and the second one is My Beloved Is Mine. Get both of them--you won't be disappointed.

Another book that has come across my desk lately by a well-known and respected Bible teacher is Portraits From Paul's Pen by Ross Rainey. This book is in the study category. Complete with self-examination questions at the end of each chapter, this is a study of

the seven portraits that Paul gives to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2. The Son, Soldier, Athlete, Farmer, Student, Vessel, and Servant each have practical applications for our lives. A good study for young believers especially. A book for elders to give to that young person in the assembly you are trying to encourage along in the faith. This would also be good for a Bible study group to use and study these portraits together.

These two men are wonderful gifts that the Lord has given to His Church to build us up and equip us to come to the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." May each of us turn our eyes to Him who is able to cause us to be all that He asks us to be for Him.

John

Bramhall's books are available from GFP.

A Real Feast

It was the summer of 1989 while having some meetings in London, Ontario, that I picked a book out of the library of my host called Harvest Festivals by H. K. Downie. I had never read anything on the Feasts of Jehovah before and had never in adulthood heard them expounded from the platform. I was fascinated with what I read. Not having completed my reading before I left, I found an old copy in Grand Rapids and finished the book.

That Fall, a brother dropped off a chart he thought I might use. It was a large wall chart of the Feasts of Jehovah. Right then I knew this study I had promised myself had to commence.

During the following Spring,

I had the unusual opportunity of having six days to drive across the country from Nashville to San Diego by myself; so I took that opportunity to dig into a study of the Feasts. What a treasure of material I found! As a result, this has become one of my favorite passages of Scripture. Its rich truths scan the whole Book and is full of the doctrines of salvation, as well as dispensational and prophetic truth.

While Harvest Festivals is out of print, there are some good books available that would be useful additions to any library.

The standard work is The

Feasts of Jehovah by John Ritchie. Included in this book is a very helpful chart. Its straitforward exposition

makes this book one of the beginning books of your study. One word of caution I feel is in order. The Feast of Trumpets signifies the returning of Israel as a nation at the second coming of Christ (Mt. 24:31). Mr. Ritchie, while emphasizing this in his book, also points out that the church is looking for a trumpet as well. In recent years, that interpretation has spurred many outlandish "date-setting" schemes. Mr. Ritchie certainly believed in the imminent return of Christ and never had date-setting in mind. But in our day, we need to be clear on its true meaning. The trumpet sound that you and I are looking for, calls the Bride away from earth to heaven. The trumpet sound that Israel hears brings them back to Jerusalem and into the glorious kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament; this is the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets.

The second book that I found of great value is *The Outpouring* by Elwood McQuaid. He is the editor of the magazine, *Israel My Glory*, published by Friends of Israel. His book looks at the Lord's trips to Jerusalem during the feast days as emphasized in John's Gospel. He explains many Jewish traditions that had sprung up around the feasts; with that as a backdrop, he shows how the miracles He did, the actions He took, and the words He spoke at the feasts not only demonstrated His Messiahship but proved He was the fulfillment of the Old Testament types to which the feasts pointed. The Jewish people had missed the point of the feasts and their traditions had made them "the feasts of the Jews." Jesus drew their hearts back to the real intention of the feasts, Himself. It is well written, and a fresh look at the feasts.

Another book recently written is God's Prophetic Calendar by Lehman Strauss. In his exposition, Mr. Strauss lays particular emphasis on the prophetic overview of the plan of salvation from the death of the Lord Jesus to His second coming. He states in the introduction: "I have not located a single chapter in the Bible that, in my judgment, is more doctrinally and prophetically profound and fraught with more of the weight of God's plan for holy living, than the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus. Here is an orderly unfolding of the prophetic panorama, reserved in clarity for the student who will take the time to study it carefully." This book, while not complete in many details, does demonstrate the chronological order of God's program of salvation for Jew and Gentile.

With these books you will have some good help in the study of this very full chapter in God's Word. And in understanding this chapter you will have a better grasp of the whole of God's great plan of salvation, centered in the Lord Jesus, initiated by Christ in His first coming, and completed in His second coming.

A Shaft of Light

It's a gray day here in

Michigan... again. November brought just 27% of possible sunshine, which is about average for November. December and January are about the same kind of months. That means it will be gray for 73% of the time. Not good advertising for Michigan to you folks who live with a great deal more sunshine. But we here in Michigan get used to it. We don't really notice it much--until there is a day like one last week where the sun shone all day and the sky was so blue. Everyone wanted to get out and enjoy it. But then we settle back into the gray of Michigan winters and don't think about it much.

We live in a world of humanistic relativism as it is called. That's a fancy title for gray. No right or wrong; no black of evil or sunshine of right. A world where power is right and compromise is the order of the day. Where our political leaders buy votes and compromise principles. Mr. Reagan called Russia "the evil empire" and was harshly criticized because being politically correct those days was detente with Russia. Detente--that's an interesting word. It means, "live at peace with the enemy."

This thinking rubs off on us as Christians too. We begin to think power is right and detente with sin is politically correct. We begin to think that the compromise of principles is noble and ecumenism (unity) becomes enshrined as the goal. We begin to think that the thinking of this world is right when in reality it is the enemy.

Then a book comes along to shake us back into our senses. A ray of sunshine breaks through the gray and causes us to see the blue sky of right and wrong, black and white. It tells us that there are really just two kingdoms. One is controlled by Satan and he is the father of lies. He might appear as an angel of light, but he is the epitome of "the evil empire." His goal is clear. Do whatever it takes to bring dishonor to the person of Christ. Even if he has to use religion to do it. His kingdom is the enemy and there can be no detente. If we will win in this war we must be loyal to our King and He has already defeated the foe. That means all who are on the side of the Lord Jesus are assured of victory--so why compromise? That is the essence of stupidity. For an uncompromising view of these two kingdoms, Bill MacDonald's new book "Worlds Apart" is must reading. Be challenged and refreshed with some real sunshine in the midst of all the gray.

How do you live this kind of life Bill speaks about? Are there any real life examples of men who have stormed the gates of the enemy and rescued those in his clutches? Men who have hazarded their lives giving up all to follow the King? Yes, there are. Mr. Harold MacKay was one of them. As I read his autobiography the verse that kept coming to my mind was "whose faith follow." From Galt, Ontario, he followed his Lord to the back woods of West Virginia. There he pioneered new territory for the Lord and pushed back the strongholds of Satan. From there he went to North Carolina and labored for many years seeing many turn from darkness to light. In each place he worked, he didn't just leave them, but strove to see them gathered together according to New Testament principles. Do they work

today? Harold MacKay thought they did and he proved it. "Morning in My Heart," the title of the book and the theme song of his gospel radio program is a delightfully written book of a true gospel pioneer. The last chapter of his life is written by his daughter-in-law. This book is a fitting tribute to a great man of God. Read it; enjoy it; be challenged by it. But most of all, Mr. MacKay would want you to praise his God who still lives and works today and Who will fulfill all His promises to those who trust Him.

According to Rome

On October 31, 1517, Martin

Luther posted his 95 thesis on the door of the Wittenburg Church and officially the Reformation had begun. On March 29, 1994, a number of leading evangelicals signed a joint declaration titled, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the 3rd Millennium." This document had the approval of the Vatican and was the culmination of more than two years' work. It essentially says that Evangelicals and Catholics are on the same side; outside of some differences, they are in the same ballpark. If they were so wrong in 1517 and so right in 1994, the Catholic Church has come a long way and must have fundamentally changed, right?

This is the question David

Hunt asks in his book, *A Woman Rides the Beast*. The justification by faith alone that Martin Luther found, and that Billy Graham preaches, and has led millions to a saving faith in the Lord Jesus, are alike. Therefore it must be the Roman Church that has changed.

Of course, this same pope told the Moslems that Christians and Moslems "meet one another in faith in the one God." After taking off his shoes in a Buddhist monastery, he praised the "ancient and venerable wisdom" of the Asian religions. This pope gathered 130 leaders of the 12 major religions to pray for peace in Assisi, Italy, allowing the Dalai Lama to replace the cross with Buddha on the altar of St. Peter's Church in Assisi.

Dave Hunt, in his incisive way, demonstrates that the Church of Rome has not changed her essential thought, just her methods. She has put on a velvet glove to woo all religions to herself in order to become the one world empire, dominating not only the religious, but the political affairs of the world.

The woman on the beast (Rev.

17-18) is still dripping with the blood of millions. This book is not pretty reading; in fact I found it to be rather gruesome. But it is necessary for our times where love and unity are preached with no apparent regard for the truth. Love apart from the truth is no love at all.

Another book written on

Roman Catholicism is Jim McCarthy's *The Gospel According to Rome*. In this book, McCarthy doesn't touch the dark side of Rome as Hunt does. Instead he tackles the doctrinal aspect of the Church of Rome, asking the question, "Is what the Catholic Church teaches in agreement with the New Testament gospel?" His answer is a resounding "No." In a captivating way, he takes the reader inside the rituals of Catholicism and shows exactly what happens. Infant and adult baptism, the Mass, the Last Rites, etc., are all shown through the eyes of a devout Catholic family. Then, quoting from the Catechism, he shows the reader what these rituals mean doctrinally. Then he adeptly shows what the New Testament teaches in the areas of justification, sanctification, grace, eternal life, and the assurance of salvation. In each of these cardinal areas what the Catholic Church teaches is diametrically opposed to what the New Testament demonstrates.

He divides the book into four categories: Salvation, the Mass, Mary, and Authority, and shows that what the Catholic Church teaches and the gospel of the message of the Bible are two entirely different things. This book is written to be a help to any Catholic that is searching the doctrines of his church and is open to an honest examination of the Scriptures. There is no rancor or cynicism in this book. It comes from the heart to reach those enmeshed in this system. To one like me who had never been enlightened to Catholicism, it was fascinating and informative and would certainly help me witnessing.

I agree with Mr. Hunt that we need to "come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins," but more than that, we need to reach our Catholic neighbors with the true gospel--seeing them not as enemies, but as desperately lost people who need the Saviour. That is what Mr. McCarthy showed me.

Around the World in Prayer

On two occasions over the last few years, I have been privileged to travel to other cultures and see missionary work first-hand. Both trips have given real impetus to prayer for missionaries. First, I have seen the realities of working in a different culture and the sacrifice involved. Secondly, I have learned that missionaries are real people. They have the same kind of concerns with living as we have. The spiritual battles with prayer and Bible study we have are intensified, not lessened, for missionaries. They still struggle in prioritizing time and raising children and the normal daily stresses as we do. They still battle the interpersonal relationships and assembly problems that we encounter--and they do it in a culture and language different to theirs. They need and deserve our prayer support.

I would like to suggest three tools that, if used together, could greatly encourage you to pray and inform you so that you could pray more intelligently.

First, a book that I have just spent some time looking at. It is called *Operation World*, compiled by P. J. Johnstone. The book I have seen is an older edition but the latest edition is just off the press. It is a list of all or at least the vast majority of countries around the world. Mr. Johnstone lists for each territory or country: the size, the population, the kinds of people that make up the country, and its economic and political makeup. He then gives in percentages the kinds of religions that make up the country. He defines his terms at the beginning so that you can think along the same lines with him. He then lists a number of pointers for prayer for that

country. Obviously this book is broad in scope, but I found a great deal of information about the different countries that I didn't know before. This book is available from Gospel Folio Press for \$12.95 US funds.

You need to supplement that book with Missions magazine. This is a fine tool for prayer. Articles of interest concerning mission work pinpoint various fields of service and effort giving in-depth information. Also articles that introduce you to various missionaries give real insight to missions and missionaries that look to the Lord for their supply, and have been commended by assemblies to go forth apart from a "Mission board." Along with this are excerpts from letters from missionaries so that month by month you can keep fresh with things to pray for and things for which to praise the Lord.

The letters are arranged in a particular order. They are listed by the days of the month and these days concur with the Missionary Prayer Handbook. This handbook is arranged by the days of the month so that each month you pray around the world. Listed is each of the missionaries that have been commended by New Testament assemblies. The book gives the present address of the missionary, the specialized field of service if such, the commending assembly(s), along with the children under 18 and still living "at home." At the back, these children are listed with their birthdays and whether they are away from home for schooling. In this way cards and letters of encouragement can be sent, as well as intelligent prayer raised for these very special children. Both the magazine and the Handbook are available from CMML, PO Box 13, Spring Lake NJ

07762, or MSC, Inc., 27 Charles Street East, Toronto,
ON M4Y 1R9.

Used together, these three informative tools can go a long way toward consistent, intelligent, intercessory prayer. It is too easily true, "out of sight, out of mind" and with the decline of the "missionary study class" around the country many of these men and women who have given so much are not held up in prayer and not supported as they should be. With these tools may each of us individually begin to pray and may we see an upsurge of missionary interest again.

Ashamed!

A number of years ago I read a book now out of print called "Will Evangelicalism Survive Its Own Popularity?" The author reasoned the seeds for evangelical demise came from its popularity. He examined a number of values such as the pursuit of pleasure, fascination with fame, preoccupation with youthfulness, and the obsession with fads that were permeating the church while corrupting the nation.

About 2 years ago I was given a book called "Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome". It chronicles a young pastor of a denominational church who started out trying all the new ideas of the Church Growth Movement and failed. He began to ask some serious questions about the Church Growth Movement and came to some solid answers as to the meaning of success.

Now I've just read another book that hits harder than the others. John MacArthur writes books that need to be written-even if the ideas presented are seen as controversial. This is one of those books. "Ashamed of the Gospel" Defines the "user-friendly church" (a computer age term) and systematically demonstrates its unscripturalness. Mr. MacArthur says, "Ministry has married marketing philosophy, and this (the user-friendly church) is the monstrous offspring. The experts are now telling us that pastors and church leaders who want to be successful must concentrate their energies in this new direction. Provide non-Christians with an agreeable, inoffensive environment. Give them freedom, tolerance, and anonymity. Always be positive and

benevolent. If you must have a sermon, keep it brief and amusing. Churches following this pattern will see numerical growth, we're assured; those that ignore it are doomed to decline."

One of this crowd's favorite texts is "all things to all men". In a superb exposition of the text in 1 Corinthians 9 he shows that Paul is not talking about changing the gospel to please the crowd but that he will do nothing that will hinder the spread the gospel in its clarity.

All would be well in this book if the chapter titled "The Sovereignty of God in Salvation" was deleted. In this chapter he states "If God chose who would be saved, and if His choice was settled before the foundation of the world, then believers deserve no credit for any aspect of their salvation. But that is, after all, precisely what Scripture teaches. Even faith is God's gracious gift to the elect". He further states, "His purposes for choosing some and rejecting others are hidden in the secret counsels of His own will." "God controls all things, right down to choosing who will be saved." He goes on to state, "What does God's sovereignty have to do with the subject of this book? Everything."

Mr. Finney is seen as the one whose ministry "foreshadowed and laid the foundation of modern pragmatism". According to Mr. MacArthur, Mr. Finney's "fundamental theological error was his rejection of God's sovereignty, that led inevitably to other errors in his teaching. He concluded that people are sinners by choice, not by nature. He believed that the purpose of evangelism should therefore be to convince people to choose differently. The sinner's choice-not God's-

therefore became the determinative issue in conversion."

I don't endorse everything in Mr. Finney's theology, but I certainly do not endorse Mr. MacArthur's Calvinism.

God is a sovereign God and the issue of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility is not going to be settled in this column. Mr. MacArthur's stand is that unless the gospel of Calvinism is presented it is not the gospel of the Bible. With that I disagree.

The gospel must be presented in all its clarity. To water it down or to make it a circus as some evangelicals do today needs to be warned against. But 5-point Calvinism is not the Biblical answer to the "user-friendly" church. The gospel of the Bible goes to "whosoever will" and any who would come may come and receive from the Lord Jesus Christ the water of life freely.

Books to Help You Grow

A young believer, encouraged by some well-meaning older person, makes a trip to the local Christian bookstore. On a fine Saturday morning, he opens the door to what he expects to be a real adventure. He has in his pocket some hard-earned money and is ready to part with it for the learning he will find in the books he purchases. But upon entering, he is greeted with an array of gifts, videos, cards, music, and other assorted merchandise. He finally makes his way to the back of the store and finds the book department.

He then faces the next obstacle.

Who are these authors? What do they believe? The prices are such that he surely doesn't want to make a mistake. The store clerk gives vague and unhelpful answers to his questions and our young believer finally leaves the store with no books (fortunately) and many unanswered questions. If he is like most, he never returns. Over 90% of professing Christians in the United States do not go to a Christian Bookstore--ever! Yet we have the largest range of good books in any language on earth today and the United States has one of the highest standards of living, with more income to spend on non-essentials than almost any other country in the world.

Now the preceding is not an indictment of all bookstores. There are many fine Christian bookstores with knowledgeable salespeople. I know, for I worked in one of the finest in the country, and there are many like it. But there is too large a segment of Christian bookstores who fit the above description, and this is why this column is written. We want to help believers make

wise choices in the books they read. There is only one thing worse than a bad book on the market and that is if it gets read. It is important for all of us to read good books so that we can grow in our Christian lives.

I would like each of you to have in your hands a little booklet produced by Gospel Folio Press. It is called "Books to Help You Grow." It is a bibliography of 700 books that have been recommended by some very trusted people of a past and present generation. This list was first compiled in 1962 by brethren James Gunn, Peter J. Pell, F. W. Schwartz, and T. E. Wilson. A few years ago, this list was found in a drawer at Gospel Folio Press, mimeographed on some legal-sized papers. Jabe Nicholson showed it to men like Bill MacDonald, Boyd Nicholson, and Liddon Sheridan, who added some of the newer books that they have found helpful. Some books were subtracted which no longer addressed current concerns. A good portion of the books, while out of print, may eventually be found or reprinted.

It was done in a booklet form which is easy to put in your pocket and take with you to the bookstore. It also has space in which you can check off those books which are already on your bookshelf so you won't purchase duplicate titles.

Another feature of this booklet is a listing of a 100-volume basic library and a 250-volume "first choice" library, so the beginner can purchase the books that will be most helpful at the beginning of a life-long adventure into the world of books.

We are talking about a price that most elders, who are interested in helping young people in this way, can have

a few copies around to give away to those who are interested.

Many of the books that you will see in this column will be from this list and in the next months this book will be the basis of the books reviewed. In this way, anyone can walk confidently into any bookstore and purchase books that will do you good and will help you grow.

Character Witnesses

The Bible's content is primarily historical. God has chosen to reveal Himself in the histories of men and women, nations and peoples. As they move across the stage of human history, our Bible follows them and comments on them from God's perspective, thus giving us a revelation of God and His ways with men. As history progresses from the beginning of time, we see God's purposes unfolding until, in the end of time, He is all and in all, and all glory and honor is given to God and to His Son. Then we begin to understand that all history is the backdrop to the unfolding of the purposes of God. In history we are to read the story of God Himself as He deals with men and with mankind.

In the epochs of time there are major and minor players. Some of the major persons in history from God's perspective may not count much in man's assessment, so we need to read our Bibles to come to the true understanding of who really is important. There is, of course, Abraham--the father of the faithful. He is just a nomadic shepherd in this world's view, but a monument to the faithfulness of God and to trust in the promises of God.

Then there was Moses, the leader of a rebellious group of people journeying from Egypt to Canaan. But there was no greater prophet who spoke to God as a man speaks to his friend (see Deut. 34:10).

Of course there was David and Solomon, and Elijah, and Jeremiah, and many others. Not to mention the New Testament worthies like Paul, and Peter, and John, who laid down their lives for the sake of the gospel.

The questions are asked:

What were these men really like? What made them go on for God? What lessons can we learn from their lives to be applied to our lives? These were real men with like problems and passions, but through all the ups and downs of life they came to know God and to trust in Him. Their histories have been told to us so we may profit from them. One of the fascinating methods of Bible study is to look at the men and women who make up the history of the Bible.

One individual who has written on many of the characters of the Bible is F. B. Meyer (1847-1929). His practical ministry was sought after by many in his day, and besides his preaching ministry, he was a prolific writer. His chief contribution to literature is a series of Bible biographies, many of which remain in print to this day.

I have just finished his book on Moses. Mr. Meyer follows Moses from the cradle in Egypt, and the faith of his parents who hid him and taught him in his early years, until he climbed the heights of Nebo to die in the arms of God. Following each successive era of life, he demonstrates Moses' learning of God and his faithfulness to God. Each chapter is replete with lessons for our day and for the different periods of our lives. I found it to be delightful reading as well as instructive in practical lessons for Christian living.

Another book I perused lately in this same vein is Dr. Alexander Whyte's book of Bible Characters. It is now available in a one-volume tome of some 900 pages. It contains 126 chapters devoted to Bible men and women, and 34 chapters on the characters spoken about by the

Lord Jesus. In these subdivisions, he deals with the characters in the parables of the Lord and the seven angels to the churches to Asia. These chapters are more doctrinal in nature than the ones on Bible characters. Dr. Whyte was "the last of the Puritans" and as such these last chapters need to be read in the light of his doctrinal stance as reformed and non-dispensational. However, don't let this take away from the first large portion of the book which I found excellent in that which I read.

A quiet evening with one of these books will be well spent. Not only is there benefit in the lessons learned, but in tracing the wonderful way these men used the English language to great effect. It is a skill we need to cultivate.

Corban

Paul tells us that it is the responsibility of children and grandchildren (nephews in the KJV) to requite (to make a return or repayment for a benefit or service) our parents (1 Tim. 5). Not to fulfill this responsibility is to be worse than an infidel (unbeliever). We cannot plead "Corban," excusing ourselves by high-sounding commitments. In our day we need to hear more ministry on this subject.

Why? Because of the increasing number of "senior citizens." If the predictions are correct, one out of five Americans will be over 65 by the year 2010, just a brief 15 years away. The world wants to institute a program whereby the government would take care of them. That, of course, is unacceptable both biblically and from the standpoints of quality of care and cost-effectiveness. The Bible stills has the best idea. The family is to take the responsibility; if there is no family, the church family steps in.

There are problems involved in the care of the older person: finances, ability to give the proper care, the need and desire of the older person for independence, to name a few. Complicate that by the fact that many children do not live near their parents to notice the extent of their growing disability and we begin to scratch the surface of the problem. Fortunately there are helps to guide us here.

First, we need a book that will give general help in understanding the older person and his needs. I found *The Help, Hope, and Cope Book*, by Patricia Rushford interesting and informative. She is a registered nurse

and writes with real compassion for those who are growing older. The first chapter is titled, "Suddenly They're Older." Isn't that true! The rest of the world gets older, but suddenly it's your parents that are getting older and that's a different story.

The author takes you through the aging process, giving insights into the physical and emotional changes that take place. When should you step in? Living arrangements, and maintaining independence while being helped are all subjects discussed from a very practical point of view. Death and dying, nursing home care, Alzheimer's disease, and legal and financial needs are all discussed with a real sense of compassion and from a Christian perspective. The last chapter has a good bibliography, a resource guide for further information.

Another book I found very informative is *The 36-Hour Day*, by Nancy L. Mace and Peter V. Rabins, MD. This book addresses the informational needs of a person who is giving care at home to an Alzheimer's victim. There are chapters on the medical and behavioral changes which occur. The different forms of dementia and their progression are explained. It also addresses the medical and emotional needs of the caregiver, and when and how to seek outside help, ranging from visiting nurses to nursing homes. This is not written from a Christian perspective, but in no way denies the spiritual needs of the persons involved, nor is it offensive in any way.

I hesitate to mention the third book, because it is going out of print. You can get it now, but probably not for long. It is called *My Journey into Alzheimer's Disease*, by Robert Davis. Mr. Davis is a committed Christian and

was a pastor of a large church. He fell victim to Alzheimer's while in his early 50's, which is quite young, but not unheard of. He writes this book knowing he is failing, and tells you of his fears, his wrestlings with God, his spiritual struggles. His wife helped in some chapters as his abilities were decreasing. From the inside we get a glimpse of this horrible disease, but more than that we see the triumph of a person who is comforted and helped by his God in the most trying circumstances. This could be a depressing book, but instead it is one of triumph. If you can't get this book, check it out at a local library, I'm sure they would have a copy.

Someone has quipped, "Old age is not for sissies"; neither is the care of the elderly. But there is information available, and strength and wisdom from the God who loves them and us. May our Father give grace to help us provide proper care of our aging saints.

Dispensational!

A few years ago I was preaching a series on "Dispensationalism" when an elder's wife came and said that those things were too theological for her. A young man at the same meeting came and said he had never heard of the term "Dispensations" before, even though he had been raised in an assembly. The "Brethren Movement," through its well-known leader, J. N. Darby, has played a significant role in systematizing and spreading Dispensationalism; yet many today in the movement would not be able to defend it or even know how to define it. Perhaps as you read this, you are saying to yourself, "So what? Doctrine isn't so important--it's loving your brother and being tolerant that is the key to Christian living." In many assemblies the amount of time, or lack thereof, given to the systematic teaching of the Word of God bears this out.

The Bible says in 2 Timothy

2:15, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." To paraphrase, we need to be diligent in our Bible study so that when we stand before God to give an account, we may not be ashamed due to a careless handling of His precious Word. To this end, may I suggest three books for your study? These are study books. They could be used as a basis for a group study on the very foundation of the way we approach the Scriptures.

God revealed Himself in history. The events of history that are selected by God's Spirit are selected so we might understand the revelation of God and His

purposes for mankind and the universe in general, thus answering the eternal questions: "Why am I here?" and "Where am I going?" There are two systems of interpretation of the Bible's history that are most prevalent today. One is called "Covenant Theology" and the other is "Dispensational Theology." These two systems are dramatically different. They differ in the goal of history and the fundamental way in which Scripture is viewed. A very fine book has been written to compare these two systems. Renald Showers gives an overview of Covenant Theology and shows its strengths and weaknesses. He devotes a larger part of the book to an examination of Dispensational Theology and demonstrates its superiority over Covenant Theology. *There Really Is a Difference*, the book's title, is a good description of the book's contents. It does make a difference which of these two systems you follow, for it greatly affects your understanding of God's ultimate goal in history and the way in which you view its history.

If in fact you are convinced by Renald Showers' book that Dispensational Theology is for you, then there is another book you must study. It is called *Dispensationalism Today* by Charles Ryrie. It has been around a while, but is still available. This is an excellent book on the definition, the origins, the hermeneutics, and distinctive features of Dispensationalism. When you get through with this book, you will be able to defend its precepts and understand its principles.

There is an aspect of Dispensationalism which concerns the future events of the Bible. As Charles Ryrie says in his book, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*, "All dispensationalists are premillennialists, but not all premillennialists are dispensationalists." To understand

this statement and to see the outworking of prophecy from a dispensational standpoint, this book is "must reading."

Why are any of these books important? Because if I am to open my Bible to study it, I must have a consistent interpretive guideline. It is the lack of this which is bringing much error into the church and is causing so much discouragement among God's people. May we be delivered from error as we "rightly divide the Word of Truth."

Do It!

In November 1992, America voted for change. The change seems to be the removal of the last vestige of the Judeo-Christian values and standards upon which our country was built--thus leading America into a completely pagan system which blots out all remembrances of God as surely as Communism did in the old Soviet Union. In a well-written editorial in *Israel My Glory*, Elwood McQuaid writes:

"Our mandate at this moment is to proclaim and live out a clear contradiction to all of the spiritual and moral corruption that is plaguing the nation. Thank God, there is a Redeemer.

"Let's pursue, with every fiber of our beings, Paul's pattern for pagan Rome: So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Rom. 1:15-16)."

The gospel is the answer to the moral quagmire of our day, and we need to be revitalized in our sense of urgency as we see "the day approaching." But if you are like me, the question that immediately arises is "How?" Let me introduce you to a book that addresses that question in a fresh and vital way. It is called *Evangelism for the Faint-Hearted*. Does that sound like you? Well Floyd Schneider, missionary to Austria, has put some basic biblical principles to work in his life and efforts in Austria and shares them with us in this fine book. The jacket of the book says that it will show you how to: Make friends with non-Christians; Start conversations

with your unsaved friends; Turn these conversations around to spiritual topics; Convince your friend to read the Bible with you; and Lead the Bible study. This is not a theoretical book but an intensely practical one. The questions (or should I say challenges) at the end of each chapter expect you to "do it." A comment on the back cover reads, "We have just started using these principles, and the 18 believers in our small church have started 10 Bible studies with their unsaved friends."

Another book on the same topic is a new one by Mr. John Reid called *Eternal Dwellings*. This one will create a sense of urgency within you to preach the gospel. Do we really believe that there is a heaven to be gained and a hell to be shunned? Do we really believe that those left behind after the rapture of the church will enter the most awful time of suffering that this world has ever known? This book takes a long hard look at the destinies of all mankind, using many scriptures to prove the torment of hell and the bliss of heaven. He tackles many questions like "Can a God of love cast a soul into hell?" or "What is hell really like?" or "Is there really eternal punishment?" or "Who are the elders of Revelation?" or "Who is in the Millennium?" What I really liked about this book is that Mr. Reid does not speculate--he quotes scripture. And where the Scriptures are silent, so is he. There is hardly a sentence in the whole book that he does not have a scripture reference in it. This is a real study book.

May we all not only read, but, as Floyd Schneider says, "Do it."

Eagles and Crowns

Something about the eagle's size, power, and regal look stirs me. My favorite coffee mug has eagles painted on the side; I have a calendar (last year's) that has drawings of eagles for each month. The text of Isaiah 40:31 with a cross-stitched eagle hangs on the wall of my of my study, and a molded brass eagle paperweight sits on my desk. But I have never held a real eagle, and very seldom seen one up close--except once, in the San Diego Zoo. I stood in front of the display and gazed a long time, hardly wanting to leave.

The Gospel of John is the

Gospel of the eagle. The eternal God is introduced as the One who dwelt alone in awesome majesty before anything else existed. The eternal Son dwelt, co-equal and co-eternal with the eternal God, and shared perfect harmony with Him. The eternal Son is the Word and is revealed as the source of life and light. By Him all things were created.

But in John, the One who dwelt in such majesty clothed Himself in humanity and came to this planet so we could see Him up close, could hear Him and touch Him and get to know Him. The apostle John said, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth." And in his Gospel, he shows us the Son of God and how we can enter into a relationship with Him, issuing in life eternal. When was the last time you held this eagle?

Dr. Ed Harlow, missionary, instructor, publisher, and author, has written commentaries on many of the Old

and New Testament books. Each of them is written in the language of John--dealing with the infinite in simple language that we can all understand.

One of his latest books is a commentary on the Gospel of John. Verse by verse, he wends his way through this most exquisite Gospel, explaining the text in non-technical but accurate terms. Many charts which summarize teaching in John's Gospel help greatly in bringing the message of John home to each heart and mind. I also like the little barbs of practical lessons he puts along the way. These are italicized and placed in the middle of the page so you won't miss them. For Dr. Harlow knows that information is only part of education. Until it is applied, you really don't know it. The next time you want to look at the Gospel of the Eagle up-close, John, A Commentary, by R. E. Harlow will be a big help.

I was traveling up north a few months ago. Along the side of the road I noticed a group of crows devouring some "road-kill." Nothing out of the ordinary--except suddenly I saw in the middle of the pack a very large bird and it dawned on me it was an eagle! Now that was unusual. An eagle in the midst of crows. As I thought about it, I wondered how often we as Christians feed with the crows. Identification with the crucified Saviour demands separation in my life. Do we really know what the cross of the Lord Jesus means to us? Do we know the New Testament teaching of the cross and its significance? Do we know the distinction between the cross of Christ and the death of Christ?

Mr. David Long, in his book

The Cross--Its True Meaning, points out with deep feeling that the cross is a symbol of rejection, and the

acceptance of its real meaning by the believer is essential for true discipleship. The author takes up each New Testament passage that deals with the cross and with great clarity demonstrates that the cross has vital implications in every life. Slowly and surely Galatians 6:14 comes into focus: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world."

Crows and eagles are different birds; Christians and non-Christians are different also. The cross separates us forever. Only as I understand that truth will I be a true follower of the Lord Jesus. May you soar with the Eagle and identify with Him and His cross.

John (US \$9) and The Cross (US \$5) are available from GFP. See p. 29 for ordering info.

Encouraging Reading

The Jewish believers of the first century found themselves in the middle of a storm. To leave Judaism with all its rituals and sacrifices, its temple and feast days, to seemingly turn their backs on Moses and the law, was to their contemporaries unthinkable. But they had done all this to turn to the Lord Jesus--the fulfillment of all that the Old Testament anticipated. The struggle was long and hard and it cost them much: imprisonment, loss of property, public ridicule. This took its toll on the minds and hearts of these believers.

So he took up his pen and pointed them to Christ. This One is greater than angels, has more honor than Moses, will lead us into a rest better than Joshua, a high priest after a better order than Aaron--based upon a better sacrifice and on a better covenant and who has made the way into the holiest possible.

While we may not be Jewish and we don't live in the first century, it still costs to a) resist sin and b) to come to a maturity which yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness. And we still become weary and faint in our minds. So we still need those who will take pen in hand and point our hearts in the right direction--to the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have just finished reading a little book that does just that. It is called *A Word in Season* by Chet Plimpton. Chet and his wife Anita have spent several years helping men and women prepare for the challenges of the mission field. And when they return, battle weary, he and his wife have offered the support and encouragement they need. This encouragement is now

available to us who may be weary from the battles we also face daily. This book arms us for the battles that come through interpersonal relationships, discouragement, and our own sinful flesh. The author gives solid, scriptural help.

Each chapter is self-contained so the book can be read a little at a time. Its 24 chapters cover many aspects of Christian life. You will not only be instructed but encouraged.

Another way in which we can be encouraged is to read a good biography. In this we see how the Lord worked in others lives and thus we are helped to see the Lord's work in our own lives. One that I have read recently is the history of Oliver Smith. He lived in northeast Iowa, near Waterloo. During the middle part of the 20th century, up and down this rural part of the Midwest, God used this man mightly. Towns like Hitesville, Stout, Clayton, Aplington, none of them more than a few thousand in population, were visited by a unique man with his "gospel car" and an unusual style of personal witness. And in these towns groups of Christians (many of them led to the Lord by Oliver) met to remember the Lord, teach His Word, and preach the gospel. In his lifetime as many as 20 assemblies were formed in which he had some part. Many of them are still going on and growing today.

His style was unique. Painting rocks with gospel texts along the road, throwing tracts onto driveways wrapped around pieces of garden hose, door-to-door visitation and gospel tents were all a part of his spreading the good news of eternal life to all who believed.

The book is filled with pictures that, to all who knew him, will bring back memories. But to those who never met him, the book is an introduction to a life that will inspire and encourage gospel effort. Titled A Man Called Oliver, the volume was compiled by two young men from that area, Steve Walvatne and Dave Reiss. It is obviously a labor of love. It must be ordered from Mr. Val Brandt, PO Box 107, Garnavillo, IA 52049. Please enclose \$12 (US Funds) and he will mail the book to you.

"Lest you be wearied and faint in your mind"--we have a great cloud of witnesses to whom we can look, but most importantly we look to "Jesus the author and finisher of faith." May you be encouraged as you read these books to look to the One who is the "God of all comfort."

Eternally Secure

One of the ways my library has been built has been through gifts of various people. As older people begin to thin out their libraries, I have been the happy recipient of some very good books. At least I presume them to be good books, for in reality I have not read all of them. Some of these volumes "sleep" on my shelves for months or years until by some prompting I get them down and read them.

A few weeks ago, I received a note saying that a book had just been reprinted that had been a source of real encouragement to the note-writer. I found I had an old copy of this book on my shelves that I had never read--so with this prompting I took it down and began to peruse its contents. What a treat was mine and how vital a subject matter.

The book is entitled Shall

Never Perish by J.F. Strombeck. The subject is the eternal security of the believer. In every age, Satan attempts to undermine the doctrines of salvation. The pure, simple, gospel of the Lord Jesus is constantly under attack, and needs to be constantly proclaimed in all its glory by each of us. One of the more prevalent, and fatal doctrines to the grand salvation we preach is the doctrine that says we can lose our salvation. It is a doctrine that causes Christians to live in fear and depression robbing them of the joy of their salvation. This in turn stifles their growth and maturity as a believer and brings dishonor on the person and work of Christ. In this book Strombeck defines eternal security and then, in a thorough study, demonstrates how this

doctrine is necessary to a correct view of the person and work of Christ. By denying eternal security, one must deny the words of Christ, the efficacy of the death and blood of Christ, the office of the Holy Spirit, the present ministry of Christ, and the reality of the new birth. In the third section, he deals with a common objection to the doctrine of eternal security. Many feel that to teach eternal security you will encourage a recklessness toward godly living. Mr. Strombeck argues from Scripture that in fact the opposite is true. The great admonitions to holy living are preceded with assurances of our standing in the grace of God. Finally he deals with some misunderstood passages and commonly misinterpreted passages regarding this issue. Lewis Sperry Chafer wrote, "I know of nothing in print more exhaustive, direct, concise, simple, or conclusive on the subject of the eternal security of the believer than the book *Shall Never Perish* by J.F. Strombeck." I tend to agree with him.

A companion book to read along the same lines is *Disciplined by Grace* by the same author. This is essentially an exposition of Titus 2:11-13. The grace of God teaches us. I liked his definition of grace. He wrote, "Grace, then, is God's provision to bring into being, sustain, and perfect His new creation in Christ Jesus. It is the operation of His infinite love on behalf of such as are worthy of everlasting punishment. This outpouring of God's infinite love is possible only because Jesus Christ, by His death, fully satisfied all the demands of God's justice. As grace came by Jesus Christ, only those who receive Him are under grace." The rest of the book explains that definition. It is clearly demonstrated that since we can be assured of God's unending love and

mercy we will be properly motivated to service for Him and the earnest anticipation of His coming is the blessed hope of the believer and his prod to holy living. Because He loves us, He disciplines us. This causes fruit unto righteousness without which no one sees the Lord. This is a rich and practical treatment of a much neglected subject. It is a delightful book well worth reading.

Kregel has reprinted both of these and they can be purchased from them, from Gospel Folio, or from your favorite Christian bookstore.

Other books by J. F. Strombeck:

First the Rapture

Grace and Truth

So Great Salvation

Faith Works

A professor I had in college once said, "Knowledge is the amassing of facts, while wisdom is the ability to use those facts in a correct way." Not bad for a college professor. There is a group of Old Testament books known as "wisdom literature." Proverbs is one of those books and the word "wisdom" is used 59 times in the 31 chapters. There is one book in the New Testament that gives us some of the same "wisdom literature" flavor. It is the book of James. We do not see many commentaries on this particular book. But the book merits attention and the study of it will reward the diligent.

Be Mature is a commentary written by Warren Wiersbe, whom I have found to be a helpful expositor. This is one of the "Be" series on the New Testament. Each one I have read is of real value. Written originally for an adult Sunday School curriculum, the book has 13 short chapters, helpful in digesting small portions of the book. Also while expositionally sound, it is written in non-technical, easy to read, language.

There are two helpful commentators that use more verse by verse exposition. One is George Waugh in the What the Bible Teaches series, published by John Ritchie. Each of the writers in this series is an able and respected teacher in New Testament assemblies and thus the perspective is familiar. This is helpful in such passages as the one on praying with the sick, anointing them with oil. This problematic passage has many different interpretations. I am guilty of turning to such passages and using them as a "litmus test" for the rest of the book, which is not completely fair. But in a

controversial passage such as the one in Chapter 5, it's a good test of orthodoxy. This commentary is solid, does not dodge the issues, and the author has sound reasoning for his interpretation.

A kindred commentary is by D. Edmund Heibert. He has written in the Everyman's Bible Commentary series, published by Moody Press. One feature that struck me about this commentary was the range of resource materials quoted. Some of you will like that feature, some won't. It is well written, verse by verse, and he uses his knowledge of the Greek to practical effect. This is the heaviest book I read on this practical epistle. How does he handle the "litmus test" passage? He gives the exposition of the passage and makes no further comment. By doing this, he at least doesn't get into trouble with anyone.

Another book is a brief introduction to the epistle by Albert McShane. He calls his book *The Power of Faith*. In the introduction, McShane says, "Apart from commentators who have covered the entire Bible...very few writers have chosen the epistle of James...Perhaps the chief reason is that many have found difficulty in discovering any order in its composition...In the past as far as brethren in assemblies are concerned, it has virtually been left alone...Readers will notice that no attempt has been made to take them through all the process of study involved in this work, but rather to give them the results acquired." He then proceeds to a 60-page introduction to the book instead of the needed exposition that he seems to have promised in his introduction. Results of the work without the qualifying process tend to cause the readers to rely on the writer and not the text itself. That becomes a dangerous

precedent. Having said that, may I say that McShane's results are helpful in most areas.

For maturing in the Christian life, one does well to know and put the principles of James into practice. The above suggested books will help bring his epistle into focus for us.

Great Distinctions

"How do you build a library?" I've often been asked. Well, seldom is it built by a pre-arranged plan. I've been blessed by being around older people who have taken an interest in me and given me books that have been helpful to them. Also, while a bookstore manager, I was given a number of books for promotional purposes.

Another contributing factor to uneven growth is that everything I see on certain subjects is purchased. One of those subjects is the New Testament Church.

Consequently, I have a shelf full of books of differing value on this subject. But there is one book I very seldom loan out, for I prize it highly and it has been out of print for some time. So you can imagine my delight when Kevin Shantz came back from England with a number of copies of this book and announced that it was back in print. A gentleman there had it published again, and now through Gospel Folio Press it is available in North America. Its title is *The Church and the Churches* by W. E. Vine.

Let me explain why I value this book. First of all, it is compact. In his typical fashion, Mr. Vine is to the point, clear, and always backed by Scripture. Secondly, it has an excellent discussion of Peter and the distinction between the Kingdom and the Church. Included is a good discussion of the distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. While everyone may not agree completely with his conclusions, it is a compelling argument and worth considering. Also it discusses the clear distinction between the "Lord's table" in 1 Corinthians 10 and the "Lord's Supper" in 1

Corinthians 11--a distinction not often made. Last, but not least, is the excellent chapter on reception to the local assembly. In our day this must be reexamined by many. Mr. Vine offers a sane and scripturally sound approach to this topic. I cannot recommend this book too highly to every elder and to all others who seek to understand the proper functioning of the local church in this day of departure.

In conjunction with Mr. Vine's book, the Directory of New Testament Churches I have found interesting and informative. Mr. John Heading of Precious Seed Publications has arranged alphabetically all the churches mentioned in the New Testament. For each one he has given some pertinent background information as well as each scripture reference to that particular church. He then gives a brief synopsis of the church as we find it developed in the New Testament. This is an excellent tool for reference as you are studying the book of Acts or one of the epistles addressed to that church. It's one of those handy little tools I think you will turn to on more than one occasion.

Another

Precious Seed Publication that is now being handled by Gospel Folio Press is a book entitled The Minor Prophets, edited by Mr. Ivan Steeds. A different writer has taken up each of the 12 Minor Prophets and has written a paragraph-by-paragraph commentary. While not reading all of this book (as of yet), I found it delightful reading. In an easy to read style, the authors have gotten the heart of the message and communicated it in a manner that is both clear and practical. The Minor Prophets is one of those sections of our Bible that

seems to be neglected. Most of us have a hard time to find them in our Bibles, much less know what they say. But in these books are many good practical lessons we need to hear again today. They were written to a people that had drifted from their God and turned to pagan idols. In these last days we have drifted from our God and have turned to different idols to be sure, but just as pagan. We need to hear once again the voice of the prophets calling us to repentance and directing our hearts to the God who has redeemed us and set us apart for His glory.

Gospel

Folio Press is happy to bring these good United Kingdom publications to North America so that readers on this side of the Atlantic can enjoy some of the superb ministry that has been so readily available to those in the British Isles.

Growing on Vines

There is an interesting verse in Acts 13:36 which says, "David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep... " If you will allow me to apply that thought in a different context, I would say that many books and their writers serve their own generation by the will of God and then both books and writers pass away. There is nothing inherently wrong with that. In each generation, God raises up those to serve Him and His people. The members of the Church are never left as orphans.

But from time to time there are special men raised up by the Lord whose influence continues on to future generations. The Reformation period (circa 1500-1700 AD) is replete with this kind of men. And around the turn of the Twentieth Century there was also a number of men raised up that have given us invaluable help in the Word, especially with the original languages. They were prolific writers. These men have left their mark on their own generation as well as those that follow.

Mr. William E. Vine was one of those men. He was born of godly parents in 1873, and was educated in the classics. A schoolmaster for a number of years, he brought to his writings the habits of those disciplines. He is best known for the Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, which was reviewed in the September 1991 Uplook. However, the rest of his works have, over the years, gone out of print.

I am privileged to have three or four of his books in my library. These were picked up in used book stores over the years and have been of great help to me. I feel that

his book, "The Church and the Churches," is one of the finest I have ever read on that subject. His commentaries are not wordy expositions, but succinct--to the point--opening up the passage under consideration. In his New Testament commentaries, there is great stress laid on the Greek words, their meanings and syntax, so that the reader is brought to a fuller understanding of the text.

Over the years, Gospel Tract

Publications of Glasgow, Scotland, has done a great service to our generation by gathering together and reissuing these out-of- print books that have enduring value and need to be read by our generation. They published the "Assembly Writers Library," a 12-volume set containing many good articles and reprints of books of a past generation of assembly writers. And in 1985-86, they gathered together and printed many of the works of W. E. Vine--his commentaries as well as books and articles on many biblical subjects. It is a five-volume set, nicely bound, and with good print.

In this set you will find most of the commentaries on Paul's Epistles as well as John's Epistles and Gospel and the Book of Hebrews. You will find also many articles and books on "Church truth," including his book on "The Church and the Churches." In the same volume with these books is an excellent book on "The Divine Plan of Missions." It is well worth reading and learning from in these days when the Scriptures are being set aside for what is considered to be expedient.

Hymnbooks

In my bookshelf are two hymnbooks that are precious to me. One is inscribed with my name and the words, "From Grandma, baptism 9/30/56." The other has my wife's name and "From the P. A. (Port Arthur, ON) Gospel Hall, Jan. 1961." In those days, it was not unusual for an assembly or an older person to give a hymnbook to a young person on some important day of their lives. Hymnbooks were used in the home as well as in assembly gatherings. But I'm afraid that hymnbooks have fallen on hard times.

We used to get together in homes to sing the old hymns with zest and learn some new ones. Assemblies had times when the saints gathered together just to sing. Why do we speak of these times almost always in the past tense? Camp songs are too often the only songs sung by young people. I'm not against camp songs -- at least not some of them -- but if we don't pass on the heritage of hymns we have received, we do our young people an injustice, and the Church will suffer a great loss.

There are three characteristics,

I believe, of a good hymn -- the kind that should be passed on. The first is doctrine. This is fundamental. Hymns instruct us and we need to be sure they are teaching us proper doctrine. Paul reminds us in Colossians 3:16, "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." Some of the hymns and songs I hear on occasion should be abolished from our assemblies and camps.

The second aspect of a good hymn is what I will call tone. What is the direction of the hymn? Many of the newer songs are egocentric, subjective in nature. The writer seems to be engaged almost entirely with his own feelings and emotions. Many times that does not describe my feelings or the feelings of many and therefore the song rightfully dies. A good hymn is Christocentric. It speaks of the glories of Christ and of God, of His Word and work. All of the Lord's people can join in and sing of Christ and His glories.

The third element of a good hymn is the music. The melody needs to be something that all of us can sing easily. The harmony and rhythm of the hymn should be pleasing and fitting to the mood of the song. When all three of these aspects come together in one hymn, it will last and be used by the Church for many years. You will note the ones we sing that have been written years ago meet these three criteria. These are the kind of hymns that should be passed along to our children. They teach proper doctrine, they glorify the Lord, and they are good to sing.

We have some good hymnbooks at our elbow. "Hymns of Truth and Praise," with its wide selection of worship as well as gospel hymns, is well known and lives up to its title. "Hymns of Worship and Remembrance" is an excellent collection of worshipful hymns. Its only problem is its brevity. Another 150 hymns could have been added to our benefit. "Believers Hymnbook" and "Hymns for the Little Flock" have lost favor with many of late, but are probably the finest collections of worship and praise hymns that have ever been compiled. You can learn each hymn from cover to cover and not be

ashamed of the content. Can you say as much for the hymnbook you are presently using?

May this year be the year that a revival of hymn-singing is begun in your assembly and in your home. You will be enriched by it and God will enjoy it. "I will praise the name of God with a song... This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs" (Ps. 69:30-31).

Keeping the Knot Tied

A union embodying such an ideal (the ideal of Ephesians 5) is not to be entered into lightly or unadvisedly, but reverently, discreetly, soberly, and in the fear of God. Such is one statement in the marriage ceremony that I use as two much-in-love people stand in front of me on their wedding day. That ideal is very high, and one that is not being met very often these days--even among Christians. In general, marriage and the family have fallen on hard times, and in a majority of non-christian homes the whole concept of one mate for life is not even deemed possible any more.

Among Christians, however, the standard for marriage must still be the Bible, but with the pressures of life and the culture in which we live, that standard is being gradually lowered, until in some Christian's minds it is seen as unattainable. That is a real tragedy and one that needs to be reversed.

As the statement at the beginning reads, this union is not to be entered into unadvisedly. This I believe is one of the problems we need to face today. To have a good talk with older believers who not only have a solid biblical understanding of marriage, but have weathered the storms of life together and have a marriage to model, and will share their understanding and experience with the uninitiated--this is a must. Just because young people come from good Christian homes does not mean they will be able to automatically have a good marriage. Good marriages don't just happen!

There are three books I would like to suggest as must reading for any couple contemplating marriage, by any

couple contemplating helping young people in the marriage relationship, and by any couple whose marriage relationship is not all that it should be.

First is God's Blueprint

For Marriage by Dan Smith. Dan has has dealt with many young people contemplating marriage. This is written as an Emmaus Correspondence course and in that format has questions to answer which is very helpful for couples to work through. Biblically based, covering all aspects of marriage, such as has its foundation in creation, the roles of husband and wife, relationships outside of the home, parenting, and other aspects of home life are all handled well and biblically in this book. He handles the subject of divorce and reminds us that God hates divorce--a clarion call that needs to be sounded today.

The second book is by a marriage counselor, Gary Smalley. The book is Hidden Keys to a Loving, Lasting Marriage. Many marriage counselors come from the direction of psychology. But Gary's book is solidly biblical. While drawing some things from his background, these don't detract from what the Bible teaches about marriage. This book emphasises relationships and what builds good ones. Attitudes such as honor, appreciation, and understanding are the key elements of both husband and wife working together toward a good marriage. Well written and well worth reading.

The third book is one of the most honest, open books I have ever read. Bill Hybels, whose well-known church on the outskirts of Chicago has stirred much controversy, had a problem marriage. The book is

entitled *Fit to Be Tied*. This book is about his marriage, not his church.

The first two chapters are worth the price of the book. The first chapter explodes the myth that marriage will be the answer to all of life's problems. Being single is not the worst thing that can happen in life--a wrong marriage may be. In the second chapter, he advises that spiritual compatibility is necessary; that means more that both parties in the marriage are saved. His workaholic life-style (in the Lord's work), and many other factors openly and honestly shared, make this book well worth reading. Most marriages could be helped by putting the principles discussed in this book in practice.

Fifty percent of the marriages in the US end in divorce. The great tragedy is that statistics for "churched people" are almost the same as unchurched. Most families are touched by it. It is high time we began to expend some energy in reversing this trend wherever our influence can be felt.

Majoring on Minors

There is a section of our

Bibles tucked away at the end of the Old Testament. The majority of us know very little about it. When the preacher asks us to turn to one of these books, we start singing the books of the Bible to ourselves so we can find the place. They are known collectively as the Minor Prophets. The first of these books is Hosea and from there to Malachi is probably one of the least known sections of our Bibles.

They are called minor not because they are less important than Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, but because they are much shorter. In fact, they were in one volume in the Hebrew Bible.

Now if we believe that every word of God is important and is given for our instruction, why are we less knowledgeable about these books? I don't know the full answer to that question, but if I would use myself as a yardstick, I would say that they are so Jewish in outlook that I can easily miss the personal practical application to my daily life. Secondly, I miss the historical connection, thus losing narrative content that causes me to stay with the prophesy. Of course I could and do say that about Ezekiel also. It's so much easier to stick with the dynamic biography of Abraham or David, or the fast moving narrative of Joshua and Judges.

In other words, I need some help, someone to come alongside me and help me understand the narrative and the history and then goad me with some practical

applications that will cause me to continue my study as well as help me spiritually.

The very first book that

I would suggest you get is "The Twelve Prophets" by R. E. Harlow. Dr. Harlow is well known for his ministry through Everyday Publications. His vision was to publish good expository books in easy-to-read English so those peoples of the world whose second language was English could read them and learn. These books with a controlled vocabulary are sold at subsidized prices through missionaries around the world with great blessing. A side benefit is that those of us whose first language is English can read these same books and learn also. I like the way this one is laid out. In italics centered in the page are the practical goads for our personal application. Glancing through the book, I notice there is one on almost every page. It is verse-by-verse exposition with plenty of references to the places and events that form the basis of the prophecy. At the end of each chapter is an index of the scripture texts referred to in the chapter.

Another solid volume to have is H. A. Ironside's "Notes on the Minor Prophets." This work started out as twelve magazine articles in Help and Food, a ministry magazine of a past era. This encouraged him to continue to write on the rest of the minor prophets and put them in book form. As in all of Ironside's works, he is practical, devotional and easy to understand.

I would also like to tell you about a couple of out-of-print volumes. The first one is "The Minor Prophets" by Charles Feinberg. Dr. Feinberg grew up in an orthodox Jewish home and studied for fourteen years in

preparation for the rabbinate. He was saved and spent the rest of his life preaching and writing of Christ. Thus his works on the Old Testament reflect his vast knowledge of Jewish history and culture.

The other work is much less known and hard to come by. But if you ever see it, get it. This series of small paperbacks was printed in England and written by the late Fredk. A. Tatford. Only 7 of the 12 prophets are included, but they are well worth having.

As the concluding section of the Minor Prophets will be introduced this month in Uplook, let me encourage you to read through them with us, using one of these books as a help. I'm sure that you will find these volumes helpful for discovering practical lessons for your Christian life from the Minor Prophets.

Mysterious

Some folks like to sit down in an evening with a good "mystery" book. As the reader tries to follow the twists and turns of the plot, he is drawn on to the end of the book where finally the villain is captured. Right triumphs over wrong and all live happily ever after. That's what happens in fiction books, but the real stories of life don't always turn out quite that neatly.

We live in a world where many happy beginnings don't end that way. The tragic snuffing out of a young life, or the unexplained ending of a wonderful love affair in the divorce courts, or the drunken driver that leaves loved ones disfigured or crippled for the rest of their lives are mysteries that leave all of us asking "why?"

The answers to life's tragedies largely go unanswered. Is God a frivolous God who gets some sadistic enjoyment out of our suffering? To ask that question answers it: Of course not. If He isn't a frivolous God, then He must be able to use this suffering to bring glory to Himself and benefit to His people. But how?

I have just read a most touching book of triumph from tragedy. Jason, My Child chronicles the shock of listening to a doctor telling Wes and Martha Vitale of Saugus, MA, that their five-year-old son has leukemia. Their seemingly ordered life is plunged into a swirl of shots, chemotherapy, hospitals, and expenses that bring exhaustive disarray to all aspects of life. Life in fiction books have happy endings, but not in this real-life mystery. This is an honestly written book. It doesn't gloss over the trauma of the situation. But it does tell how friends prayed and cared. It does tell how God

stilled hearts in the midst of the storm. It does tell how the faith of a little child triumphed over the fear of facing mountainous difficulties and finally death itself.

The "whys" are not answered, but the immensity of God's sustaining grace and the practical love shown by the assembly and relatives and friends is demonstrated to be the ultimate triumph over the most extreme tragedies life can throw our way. The evening you spend with this "mystery book" will be much more rewarding than any fiction you may choose to read.

But there are "mysteries"

that God has chosen to reveal to us. These have been hidden in the past counsels of God and concern His eternal purposes with mankind. The Old Testament, God's "picture" book, is full of hidden clues and types of these mysteries; but it isn't until the New Testament revelation that they became known. God Himself reveals them to us, and what a joy it is to learn of the wonderful things God has planned for us from eternity past. How privileged we are to be the recipients of God's full revelation. Those things which the prophets looked into with little understanding have now been revealed to us in this age of full revelation in Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:12).

Gods' Sacred Secrets--a book written by Mr. T. Ernest Wilson (originally titled Mystery Doctrines of the New Testament)--is now available from Gospel Folio Press. Fourteen mysteries under four headings: Doctrinal, Dispensational, Devotional, and Diabolical, are elucidated by our esteemed brother. In his simple, straitforward, and concise style, Mr. Wilson brings home each of these New Testament mysteries with practical

value to our hearts as well as to our minds. These mysteries are not mysterious, but are truths of God that are undiscoverable by human reason. They are revealed to us so we may be obedient to the truth revealed, and live in its light.

If you don't have this book in its old format, you will be richly blessed as you meditate on these great truths. If you already have this book, you are now able to buy a copy for that young person in your assembly so he may study these great truths and profit from them too. So whether you delve into the unexplained mysteries of life or the mysteries hidden in the Old Testament and revealed in the New, these two books will be profitable to you.

On the Hunt

Former President Bush (Sr.) declared the Cold War to be over, that we were entering a new age of peace and co-operation in the world. President Clinton* is working hard at dismantling our military weapons. The "Star Wars" initiative, with its billions of dollars invested, is dropped as unnecessary. Peace just around the corner is the clarion cry of our political leaders.

Environmentalists and animal rights groups tell us we need to be at peace with our environment, for we all share one world and are equally entitled to enjoy its unalienable rights to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." People (except the unborn or old or unproductive), animals, and plants are all on the same level, so let's get along.

Then there are "evangelicals"

who preach that we are the kingdom of God and are to bring about the great Age of Peace through political involvement. If we can only elect enough Christians we can bring about Christ's peace and His kingdom to our world.

Do you notice the common denominator there? World peace. What a hope! A person would be a fool not to join in, wouldn't he? Many Christians are embracing this great push for world peace.

But before you join Green

Peace, or run for President, I would like you to read four books that will cause you to think about what we as Christians need to be doing, and the kind of peace these

people are pursuing. All four are written by Dave Hunt, who has been sounding the alarm about what is happening in this world, its politics and psychology, for the last fifteen years or so. He has written more than 20 books. The four I would like you to read, deal with prophecy.

The first one, written in

1983, is entitled, *Peace, Prosperity, and the Coming Holocaust*. Dealing with the New Age Network and its common interest in a one-world government/religion, it demonstrates that the Bible predicts Antichrist will ride a white horse of universal dominion and bring peace to Israel, causing it to be completely unprepared for invasion from the north. A compelling look at the signs of the times.

Looking at the church--its present involvement in the political arena and its message of prosperity and the kingdom on earth--*Whatever Happened to Heaven* is an eye-opening look at the new disguise of post-millennialism: Dominion Theology. This is not a new doctrine, but an old one re-inserted into today's thinking. This book contains an excellent overview of church history and its penchant for marriage to the world.

If Antichrist is to be given such great acclaim by the world, how will it be done? What incredible political, economic, and social upheavals will induce men to turn to such a leader? A scenario that reads like today's newspaper is given in *Global Peace*. The stage is being set for its unfolding under the direction of Antichrist.

On the heels of reading

Global Peace, read his latest book, *How Close Are We?* It is a powerful defense for the pre-tribulational rapture of the church. In a day when this is being strongly assailed, this book demonstrates from Scripture and scriptural implications that a pre-trib rapture position is the only defensible position one can take and still believe in a literal and dispensational interpretation of the Bible. He shows that the church in the first three centuries believed in the imminent return of the Lord. An excellent appendix gives a bibliography of these men and their belief in the coming of the Lord.

As in all books on prophecy, especially those that deal with current events, you may not agree with every scenario presented. I was uncomfortable with his interpretation of some scriptures. However, this does not take away from the thrust or intent of the books. They are a solid, logical, and scriptural view of prophetic events that are unfolding before our eyes. They made me newly aware of the any-moment coming of our Lord and clarified a central doctrine of the Church--that His return is imminent.

*Editor's note: this article was written in June 1993

Quiet Moments with Friends

My wife is away from the house for the day, and it is quiet--not even any phone calls (which is highly unusual). I have spent the time with two of God's choice servants who have stirred my mind and warmed my heart. Of course they were not here physically, but they have spoken to me just as if they had been. Who were they? Mr. Bill MacDonald and Mrs. Madge Beckon. What wonderful companions they have been! Both of them directed my mind and heart to the Lord Jesus Christ--and have made Him more real to me. So in reality there have been four of us here together. And that is the wonder of reading. In what other format could I have had this gathering today?

There is a real difference in the writing styles of the two books. Mr. MacDonald spoke to my mind and stirred me to action in following the Lord. Mrs. Beckon spoke to my heart and warmed me to go on to know the Lord. Both mind and heart need stirring in all of us, and to have both at one time is a great tonic.

Be Holy, The Forgotten

Command, is a powerful call to holiness in the believer's life. The author first defines holiness, shows its necessity and possibility in the Christian's life. Then he takes up many issues that certainly need to be dealt with once again in a public way. When I was growing up, issues were raised publicly and dealt with. Worldliness was defined and preached against. Separation was demanded and spelled out. In these days of tolerance and calls for unity and love at the expense of moral justice, we don't hear these things preached anymore.

The Christian and politics, moral purity, gambling, gossip, the conscience, TV, and the tongue are not subjects for the platform--they might step on some toes! But just as they needed to be dealt with in the past, they still need to be taught. The world is running rampant in the church, and the church is lowering itself to the world's standard. As a result, its effectiveness is almost nil. Mr. MacDonald calls us to a life that is distinct, separated, and effective as lights in the world of darkness that we live in (Phil. 2:14-16).

With my conscience still smitten by the first book, I picked up Madge Beckon's new book, *At His Feet*. This originally was written to women. It takes a woman to communicate at the level of feeling as Madge does. I felt as though she were sitting across the table from me, sharing from her heart the experiences she has had with God during her life. I laughed with her as she would tell of experiences that brought her joy. Don't tell anyone, but I cried with her as she shed tears of joy because of God's goodness and comfort and strength in the trying times of life. I felt the struggles she had with times of anger, or bad moods, and how the Lord dealt with her and she learned from God how to overcome those things. I learned how important a woman is in God's program--even if their roles are different from a man's. This is a powerful book. Men, you should buy one for your wife for Mother's Day. Then when she's out of town someday, get alone and read this book. It will do you good. It will warm your heart. It will make you worship your God for His care and goodness. It will cause you to know how important your wife is in God's program.

Reflections

Summertime is usually a time for reflection and relaxation. A time when decisions are made to begin afresh with some good solid Bible study in September. Maybe you've even decided the book or the topic you're going to dig into. So you are going to make that all too often neglected trip to the bookstore for some help. Some of you live too far from a book store and you begin to look through the retail book catalog that has a great number of offerings. But the same question arises in both cases. What books do I purchase that will be a real help? This column is a help, but maybe I don't review the books that address the subject or Bible book you have decided to study. So let me give you some advice of a more general sort.

Let me suggest two authors that will be beneficial to you. The first is H. A. Ironside. He has written commentaries on most of the New Testament books and a number of Old Testament books as well. All of them are devotional in nature and practical in application. Many of them have been transcribed from oral ministry and thus have the added benefit of good illustrations often lacking from other commentaries.

Another good author that has many good commentaries is John Phillips. His commentaries are more expositional in nature. One of the features of Mr. Phillips' writing is alliteration. If this feature helps you remember what has been written, then Mr. Phillips will be of special help to you. But even if you don't get excited about alliteration, he can help you immensely.

Why do I mention these two particular authors? Because they are both published by the same publisher. I find that I look at the spine of books to see who the publisher is. Most of the time, it is a good indication of the kind of books that might be helpful. Publishers have doctrinal stands and the books they publish will reflect those stands. Mr. Ironside and Mr. Phillips are both published by Loizeaux and they epitomize the kind of authors that you will find in their catalog--men who are interested in the faithful exposition of Scripture and in bringing glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Loizeaux Publishing was begun some 117 years ago in Vinton, Iowa, by two brothers, Paul and Timothy Loizeaux. Using crude machinery and producing literature as a personal outreach tool, this company was born with an emphasis on ministry, not business. However, the Lord blessed their efforts and soon this ministry became a business. But the philosophy has not changed over the years. Now the fourth generation is in charge. Peter Bartlett (who married into the Loizeaux family) is ably carrying on the tradition begun many years ago.

Along with Mr. Ironside and Mr. Phillips, you will find other men whose names have been synonymous with good Bible exposition. Men such as Lehman Strauss, Arno Gaebelien, C. H. MacIntosh, Samuel Ridout, F. W. Grant, as well as others whose writings have stood the test of time.

Another service that is offered by Loizeaux is the distribution in this country and Canada of books offered by John Ritchie Publications of Scotland. These books are not as well known in North America, but now that

they are more available, people are finding out about the good solid expositors whose names are not so familiar to us.

So the next time you are browsing through a bookstore or a retail catalog and you see the publisher as Loizeaux or John Ritchie, go ahead and pick it up. Good reading is just ahead. But remember this one thing--the Book of books, the B-I-B-L-E, is the only book you read that claims, rightfully, that it is divinely inspired. It is the Bible you are studying, not the books that men write. They are just helps. Mr. Ironside and Mr. Phillips would be the first to agree.

I'm sure that the publishers of good books would be encouraged if you would pray for them that they would have wisdom and insight into all their publishing decisions.

Revive Us Again

Much has been written in the last fifteen years or so on the subject of "renewal" and "church growth." This has resulted in much division and discouragement because it has tended to turn our attention away from biblical principles. Instead it has turned our eyes to Madison Avenue hype, business management techniques, and pop-psychology. No one can deny the necessity of real revival and a resurgence of good gospel preaching.

It should be noted that revival and gospel preaching are two different things. Revival is the bringing back to vitality that which once had life. Gospel preaching is the proclamation of the good news of salvation to sinners who are dead in trespasses and sins. We preach the gospel to those dead to God--separated from Him forever unless born again from above by the operation of the Spirit and Word of God. Revival is a necessity of the church, resulting from personal restoration.

Mr. David Long has written a book on the subject of revival, entitled *Revival--A Study in Biblical Patterns*. He argues that true revival must be based on principles which are stated in the Scriptures. These principles are demonstrated in each revival of Israel, thus providing a pattern for revival. The three basic principles found in these passages are 1) revival is the sovereign work of God; 2) it begins with the acknowledgement and confession of that sin; and 3) it will be furthered by complete obedience to the Scriptures. Tracing these principles through the Old Testament in the life of Israel, Mr. Long has done careful research and brings to bear on our hearts and minds the plain teaching of the

Scriptures. One of the things that impressed me about this book was the many Scripture references and Mr. Longs' assumption that you were reading the Scriptures along with him. To get the drift of his argument, you must read the Scriptures as you are reading the book. He seems to say, "To the law and to the testimony:" (Isa. 8:20). In this way he is not asking you to believe him but to follow the Scriptures. And that's the way it should be. This has been our problem of late--we are prone to follow a man or his ideas which can lead us astray from the Word of God. The Bereans were complimented on searching the Scriptures to see if the things spoken by Paul were right.

One of the marks of an assembly of Christians who are following the Word of God is a vigorous gospel outreach. If the Christians are happy and enjoying the Lord, they will want others to experience this same joy. Thus each one will be wanting to reach out to others, and bring others under the sound preaching of the gospel. In this day of "church growth," the gospel is being watered down and the sinner is made to feel comfortable in his sins. That may make for large crowds, but the broad way that leads to destruction is crowded, too.

If we will do the sinner good, we will bring to bear upon his mind the claims of Christ as presented in the gospel. It is the Word of God that the Spirit of God uses to bring conviction of sin and the enlightenment of the gospel. To present the gospel clearly, we need to have a good understanding of its message and doctrine. A book written a number of years ago is *The Gospel and Its Ministry* by Sir Robert Anderson. Originally written to answer the "Textual Criticism" of the late nineteenth century, this book is vital today when the cry for

tolerance and acceptance clouds the clear presentation of the gospel. The truth concerning faith, grace, the cross, election, reconciliation, justification and other doctrines surrounding the gospel are found in the Scriptures, not in some man-made system; this needs to be understood in order to present the gospel in its clarity. This is a passionate call to preach the gospel and to do so in accordance with the teachings of Scripture.

We need soul revival and we need a revival of the clear preaching of the gospel. May these two books stir us to a scriptural answer to both needs.

Both books available from Gospel Folio Press

Seed to the Sower

In 1945, a group of men met together in England to discuss the need for a publication that would endeavor to emphasize that aspect of truth known as "church truth." Out of this concern there arose a magazine called Precious Seed which was published bi-monthly. This magazine has continued to the present, with timely articles written by men recognized for their ability to teach the Word of God in a clear manner.

In 1970, their 25th anniversary, they published a book called "Church Doctrine and Practice." Its content was a compilation of reprints of articles from the first 25 years of the magazine and grouped together in a systematic fashion. This brought together in one book the essence of all the teaching. There is very little in print on this important body of truth today. I have a good number of books on my bookshelf but unfortunately they are all out of print. If you want a fine overview of church truth, this book should be in your hands.

The good response to this book encouraged the Precious Seed committee to venture into the field of book publishing. Over the years, they have added other books which have been a real help to many of God's people on both sides of the Atlantic. Their second book was a symposium on Bible doctrine in general. It is a storehouse of solid expository teaching which should be in the hands of all young believers. I have given both of these books to a number of young believers as a concise, accurate, and readable source of foundational truths to be learned and practiced.

Since then, they have brought out three devotional books. "Day by Day Through the Old Testament," "Day by Day Through the New Testament," and "Day by Day Through the Psalms." Each of these volumes, while a daily devotional book, is unlike many devotionals in that each has a solid exposition of the passage as well as a practical application to the daily life of the reader. Proper application and proper walk is a result of a proper understanding of the Scriptures. Fluff may give a nice emotional tug for the moment, but growth in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ comes from a solid understanding of the text. It is this solid exposition that makes these books outstanding.

The book on the Psalms is divided into twelve different themes and the Psalms are arranged in this manner. There are, of course, duplication of some of the Psalms under different themes and commented on by different authors. This only enhances the richness of the book. This was my first introduction to their devotional books. I was impressed by the solid exposition and practical application. It helped me study each psalm and meditate on it, thus helping me assimilate the truths into daily living.

Systematic Theology

I had the privilege of working a number of years with a fine Christian businessman by the name of Bob Kregel. He was in the business of publishing and retailing Christian books. That is not an easy business. There is such a fine line between necessary profit and greed, between advertising and Madison Avenue hype, between ministry and business, that each decision presents a real challenge. Each owner must make these decisions before the Lord and his own conscience, but in many of these businesses I am afraid that ministry is superseded by the "bigger is better" syndrome we have in America. But Bob was a man who, in my judgment, made good business decisions while at the same time never losing sight of his goals for the business.

His father started out selling used religious and theological books in the Dutch language. Since most of the people here in the Grand Rapids area were immigrants from the Netherlands, he found a ready market. But over the years the books in Dutch faded out, being replaced by English language works. After World War II, Bob (who had taken over the business from his dad) started reprinting books that had gone out of print but needed to be reintroduced to this present generation of readers.

These books, of course, had enduring value. They were not the "fad" books, or the books that were of the "predigested" variety that appealed only to those unwilling to dig into scripture themselves. Those books flood the market today and become the "best sellers" on the charts kept by various organizations in business to

"hype" the latest in Christian fadism. Those books come and go in a few years, their purpose being served--assuming they had a purpose in the first place.

But the books Bob Kregel chose to reprint were of substance. Books that elevated the person of Christ and had thoughtful presentations of solid Christian doctrine and exposition. Careful exposition of scripture and the solid declaration of the doctrines of the Bible are never out of date. The market share of these books is small, for out of the vast number of people who profess to be Christians, only a small percentage of them really have an interest in serious Bible study.

I for one, am glad Bob made that hard decision, because many of the works he has made available for us would have been lost to us if he had chosen to be popular and big instead of small and relatively unknown.

Kregel Publishers has just reprinted another classic that I am glad is available again. It is Lewis Sperry Chafer's "Systematic Theology." Dr. Chafer came into close association with D. L. Moody and Dr. C. I. Scofield early in life. In 1922, he moved to Dallas, Texas, to establish a theological seminary along with H. A. Ironside and others who wished to have a conservative alternative to many of the schools that had drifted from a high view of the Bible. In 1924, Dallas Theological Seminary was founded and Dr. Chafer was its president from then until his death in 1952. He taught systematic theology at Dallas for many years, and using his teaching experience and diligent study of the doctrines of scripture, he developed and wrote this extensive eight-volume work. It was then the foremost--and still remains--the standard of systematic theologies written

from a dispensational, premillennial viewpoint. Kregel's has reprinted it in four volumes, but it is unabridged and complete. The type size is good and easy to read. This is an extensive work and expensive-- \$150--but if you are serious about the study of the Word of God, it is a set that somewhere along the line you should own.

The Hope Within

I was raised in a Christian home. The Bible was held in high esteem as God's Word, historically true, inerrant in content, completely trustworthy for all matters of life and doctrine. The Book itself was held in high regard. If you carelessly dropped a school book on the ground you were reprimanded--but dropping your Bible carelessly was an offense of much greater magnitude. So it was at a young age I rested my soul's eternal welfare upon what it said. It seemed so simple. "God said it, I believed it, and that settled it."

When confronted with evolution,

I scoffed it off as foolishness and never even spent time thinking about the answers to such nonsense. When I said so in class, the teacher was unhappy, but the majority of the students didn't even comment. Thus I brushed it off and continued with life.

All that was 30 years ago.

Now we live in a completely different world--a world in which Christianity is being systematically undermined by the educational system and the media. The time we live in has been called a post-Christian era. Many people under 30 today have no real sense of the Bible or its contents. Why should anyone believe in the Bible? What makes it different from any other piece of classical literature? Is it not a relic from the past filled with myths, stories, and superstitions that have no relevance for today and should be housed in some museum? When confronting non-Christians today, a host of questions are

being asked that never even entered my mind. They do deserve an answer if we want to be credible witnesses.

Does this mean I need to take a crash course in humanistic philosophies, or logic, or archeology? No, by no means. But it does mean, I need to ask myself a variety of questions as I read and study the Scriptures. In that way, as I am confronted, I may be able "to give an answer to every man that asketh... a reason of the hope" that is in me (1 Pet. 3:15).

Three books that have helped me in this regard are Josh McDowell's *Evidence That Demands A Verdict*, C. S. Lewis' *Mere Christianity*, and Norman Geisler and Ron Brooks' *When Skeptics Ask*. These are complementary books but certainly not the same.

Mere Christianity is a compilation of radio broadcasts given in the mid 1940's. In this book, Lewis demonstrates the distinctiveness of Christianity from non-Christian philosophies. He makes a great case that Christianity is in fact intellectually as well as spiritually satisfying. It has been used of God for many years to point people to the Lord Jesus Christ as Someone whose claims are worth considering.

Evidence That Demands a Verdict deals with the historicity of the Bible. This book examines the arguments of those who say the Bible is not reliable or has historical errors in it. The Bible is shown to be a reliable book, as demonstrated in its unique compilation, the many prophecies that have been fulfilled, as well as extra-biblical evidences such as archeology and ancient documentation that agree with the biblical account.

When Skeptics Ask is set in a question/answer format. When a skeptic asks about God, evil, miracles, or the

afterlife, how do we answer him? This book goes a long way toward answering those questions.

These books are written in a non-technical style that is easily grasped. If you are bothered by these questions or are reaching someone who is, these books can be a great help. Remember that not all people have these philosophical questions and the answers to these problems do not lead a person to Christ. But sometimes nonbelievers have good questions that need answers before we may have a hearing for the greatest message in the world: that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to this world, lived, died for our sins, and rose again the third day for our justification, thus making a way for all to live forever in His presence.

The Proof of the Pudding

A few years ago I was introduced to an older gentleman whose demeanor and smile made me want to get to know him better. I had heard about this man, so when I was in his area for a few meetings, I made an appointment to meet with him in his home one afternoon. I came a little like the queen of Sheba--with some hard questions about how to see assemblies grow and how to overcome difficulties that crop up from time to time. And I left many hours later (almost late for the meeting I was to speak at) with the realization that I had been in the presence of not only a real man of God, but a passionate evangelist and patient shepherd.

His name was Mr. John Martin.

Since that time we have shared a number of happy hours together in fellowship, a highlight of which was the two weeks I spent in their home. Prayer, Bible study, and the things of God are the atmosphere in which this home is bathed. Both Melissa (his wife) and John are quick with smiles, can see the humorous side of life, but never trivialize those events. They see in all the circumstances of life that God is in them, working out His great purposes. Both are dedicated to God first and to the work to which God has called them.

In a self-effacing way,

John has penned his life story. He tells how God moved in saving souls in the Old Order Mennonite community where he lived. He recounts how he and Melissa were saved, how more than 1000 people attended when 15 believers were baptized by immersion in a nearby river.

He never turned back. But from those humble beginnings, assembly after assembly has sprung up and is going on today. How did he do it? That is the beauty of this book. There is no one method; no pre-planned marketing approach, no demographic charts and population assessments, no ethnic or cultural surveys. Let John himself tell you. "All of these assemblies referred to represent a great deal of hard work. Much visitation was done in all of these areas. The attendance at the Bible studies was sometimes discouraging, but perseverance and patient, persistent plodding brought its reward." He just did it! In the open air, in rented halls, home Bible studies, door-to-door visitation, tents and camps--whatever seemed to open at the time--John went through the opened doors. And the 15 to 20 or more assemblies that he was used by God to see planted are the testimony of one who, as the title of the book says, was Saved to Serve. Gospel Folio Press is happy to be the publisher of this small, but significant book.

One of the things John mentions in his book is that he never watered down the gospel. He never sought to be "politically correct." In this day and age when not to offend seems to be the watchword, and entertainment the means of preaching what Paul would call "another gospel," we need to be reminded of the cardinal truths of the gospel.

One of those cardinal truths that is missing in too much of the evangel today is the doctrine of repentance. Gospel Folio Press has just released a reprint of H. A. Ironside's classic book on repentance: Unless You Repent, one of the most definitive statements I have seen on this subject. For anyone who would preach the gospel, whether to a Sunday School class or to large

congregations, this is must reading. The objections to the preaching of repentance are systematically taken up and refuted. This book is written with the passion of an evangelist and the clarity of an expositor. The tough passages are not dodged but carefully explained. The result is, as William MacDonald says in his foreword to the book, "a breath of fresh air, dispelling the fog."

This is the gospel that

John Martin and many others have preached over the years and have seen real converts to Christ as a result. It is the only gospel that is true to the Word of God. May each of us be renewed in our dedication to both the passion and truth of the gospel. Our world needs men devoted to Christ and His Word, for God has promised to bless His Word, not our methods.

The Pursuit of Godliness

We enter a season of the year when many will turn their eyes for a moment to look at a baby in a manger, and as babies often do, the look will soften the heart and warm the emotions. This in turn will open the purse strings, there will be a flurry of good will, and those who run charitable organizations as well as the retailers of the country will bask in this outpouring, lining their pockets or the pockets of their organizations with the proceeds. Then they will try to get along until next year. You may call that outlook pessimistic, but maybe realistic is more accurate.

Precious few will stand in awe of the fact stated so simply in Luke 1:35. "And the angel answered and said unto her, That holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Or as Paul said so eloquently in 1 Timothy 3:16, "God manifest in flesh."

But what really staggers my imagination--for I really can't even begin to get my mind around this first statement--is that I, along with all my brothers and sisters in Christ, will one day be presented to God Himself as "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Eph 5:27). In Colossians 1:13, Paul reminded the Colossian believers that they had been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son. This great work, accomplished by His Preeminent Son and His death, is able to present them holy and unblamable and unprovable in His sight (Col. 1:22).

But what is this thing called holiness? And why, if holiness is something that is bestowed upon us, does it say in Hebrews 12:10 that He (the Father of spirits) will chasten us so that we can be partaker of His holiness? Is holiness my responsibility or His?

These are questions that rumble around in many of our minds and we never really take the time to explore the answers to them. But there is one brother who has taken the time and then written not one but two books on the subject. His name is Jerry Bridges. The first book, written some years ago in 1978, is called *The Pursuit of Holiness* and it is just the above questions he was asking himself that caused him to begin his study. Is it possible for a believer to live a holy life? Many times we despair at this idea as we look at our own lives. But he answers this with a loud and clear "Yes--but." It is a pursuit--it takes discipline and the forming of habits of obedience. In the forward to the book, Mr. Herbert Lockyer says, "In the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson declared that one of the inherent and unalienable rights of men is 'the pursuit of happiness.' Professing Christians must be brought to realize that the preeminent desire and demand of God for us is that of the continual pursuit of holiness of life, and the reflection of His own holiness." While holiness is bestowed by God and is the work of God we are responsible to pursue that end. This is the great lesson taught very capably in this book.

A companion volume, *The*

Practice of Godliness, was published in 1983. The foundation text of the book is 1 Timothy 4:8, "Godliness is profitable unto all things." In the books of Timothy

and Titus the word godliness is prevalent, being used 9 of the 16 total times the English word godliness is found in our King James Bibles. Mr. Bridges defined godliness as "devotion to God which results in a life that is pleasing to Him." This has impressed me over the years as the proper perspective. First, we must be devoted to God. A person devoted to God will then seek to live a life that is pleasing to Him.

As we pause this season to look into the manger, may it cause us to renew our desire to live holy lives in 1996. Only as we bow our hearts in devotion to Him and live under the authority of His Word will we live lives that demonstrate the character of that Holy One--even Jesus The Christ our Lord. And this will bring lasting peace.

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The World of a Jew

Turn on the TV on almost any night to watch the news and Israel, her people and land will be mentioned at some point. Why does this nation, few in number by comparison, and this land, tiny by any standard, command so much world attention? Israel, after all is a small arid land much of which is desert or mountains with few natural resources outside of the chemicals mined from the Dead Sea. The resorts along the Mediterranean Sea would attract some visitors naturally, but this country is teeming with visitors, making tourism one of its major sources of income. Why? Obviously we must look further than the terrain or industry to account for this fascination politically or personally. This is God's people and God's land.

Many centuries ago God chose one man from Mesopotamia and gave him far-reaching promises concerning descendants and land and blessing. From this beginning the Jewish people rose. Among Abraham's descendants was The Seed, through which all the nations were going to be blessed. From Abraham until the present, the Jewish people and the land of Israel have been a major force in world history. One day in the future it will be the center of government for the entire world and Abraham's Seed will rule in righteousness and peace from its capital, Jerusalem.

I would like to introduce you to three books that, read together, make this people and this land come alive in a unique fashion. The first one to read is John Phillips' book, *Exploring the World of the Jew*. This unique introduction to the people of Israel is well written in

Phillips' unique style. Tracing the Jewish people both historically and religiously, you get a great background to enhance your understanding of this people. But the author does not stop there. He gives a historical overview of anti-semitism (once again on the rise) as well as the great contributions to science and the arts of this brilliant race of people. He finishes with a fascinating look at the Zionist movement and the repatriation of Israel present. It reads like fiction, but it is full of the real facts of this great people.

Then zero in on the future of this people. With this most definitive look at the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 you will trace the nation through its 490 prophetic years from the rebuilding of the walls after its 70-year captivity to the Millennium reign. This benchmark prophecy is expounded by Sir Robert Anderson in his classic work, *The Coming Prince*. Any student of prophecy must have this book not only on his shelf for reference, but in his mind as well. A grasp of Daniel's prophecies is the beginning of a proper understanding of the rise and fall of the Gentile nations and the fall and rise of Israel. One of the accomplishments of this book is the great research into the exact timing of the coming of the Messiah. That chapter is worth the price of the book.

Then when you finish those books treat yourself to one that will make your blood run a little faster than normal. This is a secular book called *O Jerusalem* by two journalists, Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre. A virtual daily diary from the night the UN voted to allow Israel to exist in November 1947 until the tenuous cease-fire on June 12, 1948. Enter the undercover world of the Haganah, the politics of Golda Meier and David Ben Gurion, the secretive world of arms negotiations

and the great battles for the freedom of Jerusalem. But most of all see a small, outmanned army of people who, in love for their land, saw the nation of Israel formed.

But we knew that. God had ordained it. Even though in unbelief, the second great exodus had begun. Not just from Egypt as the first time but now from the four corners of the world (Isaiah 11:11-12).

The Jew, the land of Israel, the city of Jerusalem. They are His story and in that history we read not just of a fascinating people but the greater story of God's great and full redemption and the majesty of the government of God Himself.

What You Think, You Are

Many years ago I sat in tenth grade Biology class, arguing with my instructor about evolution. Charts were produced that seemed to point to the fact of evolution. After all, who could argue with known facts derived from fossil data? One day, the teacher showed me that even the Bible was open to the facts of evolution. The fourth day the "waters brought forth" the living creatures and then in the fifth day the land creatures arrived. That certainly agreed with the scientific evidence. Thus evolution and the Bible were compatible. With that the teacher dismissed me, my Bible, and my views of "biblical creationism."

Since I did not go into the natural sciences, my exposure to this kind of thinking was minimal until I had to take a course in life science for my university degree. The instructor thought God was a crutch of early thinking before we knew how things really came into being. Now that we know the laws of nature, we no longer need the crutch. Needless to say, we didn't have much in common.

While the scientific community may have refined its thinking, it has not changed its basic premise: "from goo to you by way of the zoo."

Some months ago, I was introduced to a book that would have helped me 30 years ago. I believe it is a vital book for those who are now going through the school systems, or desire to witness to those who believe in evolution. The book's basic message is this: the theory of evolution is scientifically inaccurate and the scientific community knows it. But they have a vested interest in

keeping the theory alive to save face for two hundred years of faulty observation, faulty interpretation, and at times just plain fraudulent reporting. This is an explosive book and needs to be read by serious Bible-believing Christians.

Its name is *In The Minds of Men* by Mr. Ian T. Taylor. This is a significant book of 400 plus pages with more than 50 pages of appendixes, footnotes, and source material. This is a thoroughly researched and well documented book. This researcher and writer from Toronto will arm you to enter the next museum of natural history or for your next encounter with the public school system. Here is the ammunition necessary to counter the fallacious arguments presented.

Let me give you an example.

One of the chapters is "The First Missing Link." That, of course, is the first spark of life from non-life. One of the theories advanced is that it came from the bottom of the sea. Mr. Ernst Haeckel from Germany was a professor of zoology at Jena University. Based on Darwin's work, he created a family tree, with simple organisms at the bottom and the complex ones at the top. "He imaginatively made up names of organisms that he thought should exist and was not beyond cheating just a little if the facts of nature did not fit his theories" (p. 187). He even named the first organism of life "monera" although he had no proof of its existence. A ship later "discovered" his "monera" and thus the first missing link was now a fact and this discovery was widely reported. However this "organism" was later proved to be a precipitate formed from seawater, lime and alcohol--the

alcohol being the substance the seawater was preserved in for future study.

Since the scientific community was governed by men who believed in evolution, they made sure that this error was not reported and the public continued to believe that the first life form had been discovered at the bottom of the sea. One scientific journal obscurely reported it. Mr. Taylor years later found the one and only article that commented on this hoax. And this is only one of many such hoaxes this book exposes.

If you want to be informed on the hoax of evolution and its accompanying cover-up, this book is must reading. I believe it is a reference book that should be on the shelf of every person in contact with public schools and is being fed lies. The scientific community knows many of these are concocted, but you need to be armed with the truth they already know and will not tell you.