I. Three young men were at our house. I suggested our devo as I would read from Jeremiah and they lead prayers.
A. Robert Rutherford said, "I seldom read from that book."
   1. I thought "what a pity."
   2. Why not read Jeremiah?
B. Who wants to read a 2600 year old work?
   1. TB cure unknown in 1930.
   2. Science would not know computer "one may weigh only a ton."
   3. Home conveniences amazing.
C. But I read Jeremiah!
   1. Tells of frequent political upheavals.
   2. States faith in God more important than "mere ritual observances."
   3. "I" used more than any other OT prophet.
   4. Spoke out even under threat of death.
   5. Tells of false prophets.
   6. Courage of a man forbidden to marry (16:1-4), thoughtful of the help of his secretary (45:22-25), deeply emotional man; choice names for God's people that he loved: chosen, holy, chosen vine, God's loved ones, the inheritance, flock, firstborn.
   7. Marvelous pictures of God who loves purity and punishes sin.
   23:5-6
   33:16 Lord our righteousness
   Jer. 7:11
10. Paul also about Potter
    18:1-11
11. 40 quotes from NT writers.
12. Compared to Jesus.
Matt. 16:14
II. I want to whet your appetite for OT
    writers using Jeremiah.
   A. I'll just pick from first 9 chapters
      special reading.
   B. You'll surely see these things afore-
      time are for our learning.
III. Journey with Jeremiah as we read:
   A. Jeremiah 1:4
   1. Word of the Lord
   2. 2000X in O.T.
   3. Where else found?
   4. Accurate and timeless.
   B. Anti-abortion & sovereign purpose
      Jer. 1:5
   1. Name means "God exalts" or
      "God casts down."
   2. Nations--gospel for all.
   C. Objections & inabilities.
      Jer. 1:6-7
   1. God has a purpose for you.
   2. Too young, without sufficient
      qualifications & experience.
   "All we need to achieve is a dream, & as we
   pursue it the better we are. " - C. S. Lewis
   ~
3. "Do not be afraid."
   a) Abraham, Gen. 15:1
   b) Moses, Deut. 3:2
   c) Mary, Lu. 1:30
   d) Paul, Acts 27:24
4. Prophets' words must be identical with God's.

D. Preaching Demands Courage and is Powerful.
   Jer. 1:8
   Jer. 1:10
1. Destroy
2. Overthrow (demolish NEB)
3. Rebuild
4. Plant

E. Great Heritage
   Jer. 2:1-3
1. Once Israel was great.
2. Let it slip away.

F. Opportunities Failed.
   Jer. 2:4-8
1. Polluted
2. Rely on worthless gods.
   Jer. 2:13
   Jer. 2:19
3. Theme--backsliding, turning away.
4. Always that danger.
5. Awe absent.
   Jer. 2:32

G. Not too late--Return!
   Jer. 3:21-25
1. Trust God--not Baal.
2. Total confession of sins.
3. Recognize sin as folly & wasted opportunity.
H. Signs of the Times
Jer. 4:22
1. Ignorance & stupidity cause it.
2. Had the law, should know better.
I. Evil Must Be Punished
Jer. 5:7-9
1. One righteous person could have helped.
Gen. 18:16-33
2. Can possibly excuse poor but not the leaders.
Jer. 5:11-14
3. Doubted God
Jer. 5:21-22
5. Man wrongfully exercises free will.
Jer. 5:28-29
6. Heart--seat of understanding.
J. Entrenched Rebellion
Jer. 6:13-15
1. False teachers proclaim false peace.
2. God grants real one.
K. Value of Old Way
Jer. 6:16
1. God's dwelling with his people the ancient path.
2. Seen in their heritage and religion.
L. Named Failure
Jer. 6:30
M. Call to Repentance
Jer. 7:3-7
1. Central temple held sacrosanct.
2. Trust in it becomes idolatry.
Jer. 7:23

N. Refusal to Turn

Jer. 8:5-7

1. Turn--6X in 4-7.
2. People answer is ignorance, alienation & covenant breaking.

Jer. 8:11-12

3. Leaders carry heavy responsibility.

Jer. 8:20-22

4. Opportunities pass not to be regained.

O. Give God His Glory.

Jer. 9:23-24
I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink, but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death.

-Thomas Paine

H. Jackson Brown, Jr.
Robyn Spizman
A Hero in Every Heart pg.67

One baseball umpire said to another, "The pay is immaterial. The real reward comes in saying 'Strike Three!' to a million-dollar a year man."

Kirk Kirkpatrick
Tested Humor and How to Use It

April 1997
Quote: The Spe
The height of great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight, but they, while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night.

-Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

H. Jackson Brown, Jr.
Robyn Spizman
A Hero in Every Heart pg. 15
"Disasters of the Titanic"

"LIFE Magazine" June 1997 edition contained a feature story about the luxury liner Titanic. The tragedy and sinking of the Titanic is history. More than 1,500 men, women and children died in the disaster. There seems to be a renewed interest in the story of the Titanic. Within the last year there has been a TV movie, a $10 million Broadway musical and a $200 million Hollywood production in the making. In Memphis, TN this summer there is a $6 million exhibition of Titanic artifacts. There is a new CD-ROM, Titanic: Adventure Out of Time. You can now purchase a small lump of Titanic coal for $30. And don't forget the cookbook for $24.95, "Last Dinner on the Titanic."

"Some thoughts to consider about the Titanic"

When the Titanic set sail from Southampton, England on April 10, 1912, the ship nearly crashed. She roiled so much water that another ship broke loose from her moorings and drifted within 4 feet of the Titanic. At the last second a collision was prevented. Had the two ships collided in the harbor the Titanic might have evaded the disaster awaiting her. Perhaps we all need to be more patient in life with the "bumps and bruises along the way"?

On Sunday April 14, warnings from other ships in the area of the Titanic were frequent: "beware of ice". The steamer Californian, just 20 miles away, called to say that she was "stopped and surrounded by ice." Two men were in the lookout tower and were told by the captain to "keep a sharp lookout for ice." But the two lookouts were never issued binoculars to aid them in their watch. How many of us ignore the commands of God: "watch and pray", "watch and stand fast in the faith", "watch with thanksgiving", "watch and remember", "watch and be sober".

When the Titanic hit the ice there was little panic among the passengers. Most refused to believe the Titanic could sink. However, the ship's top officers were anxious. They knew what the others did not: The Titanic's lifeboats would accommodate barely half of those on board. Let us praise God that you and I are on the great ship of Zion, the captain is Jesus, and our destiny is sure if we will stay on board. There is room for all who wish to travel this journey of faith.
Criticism in the body politic is like pain in the human body. It is not pleasant, but where would the body be without it? No health or sensibility would be possible without continued correctives and warnings of pain.

Free Trade Hall, Manchester, January 17, 1940

Churchill predicted that the Nazi practice of silencing all critics would lead to Germany's downfall.

.. Frederick Talbott
Churchill on Courage

Tyranny is our foe, whatever trappings or disguise it wears, whatever language it speaks, be it external or internal, we must forever be on our guard, ever mobilized, ever vigilant, always ready to spring at its throat.

Harvard University, Cambridge, September 6, 1943

Churchill encouraged the audience to reject and obliterate the evil of tyranny.

.. Frederick Talbott
Churchill on Courage
HISTORY’S LOUD LESSON
Jeremiah 2

I. The Past is Prologue
II. Ignore history’s mistakes—certain to repeat them.
III. Things written aforetime—learning, hope.
IV. Twin to Jeremiah 2—has in it the magic word—"change". What shall we see?
   A. Power of word, v-1.
   B. Glory of yesterday, v-2,3.
      1. Youth—infant state.
      2. Espousals—getting law of Moses.

Exo. 24:6-8
3. Israel was holy—consecrated.
4. God’s special property & he spanked Israel’s enemies.
6. Once Israel showed unfailing devotion to the Lord.

C. God sees a change, departure—v 5-7.
   1. Has he done anything to merit such treatment?
   2. What unjust or cruel thing has He done?
   3. Is God weaker today than yesterday?
   4. Have you forgotten your blessings? And His power?

D. Failure of Leadership—v.8.
   1. Handle = explain, draw out spiritual values. (Clark)
   2. Do we magnify God in our lessons and sermons?

E. Mercy still available (v-9).
   1. Compare with Chittim (Cyprus).
2. Kedar—Arabian tribe.
4. Heathen nations stayed even with false gods but you didn't with God.

F. Two evils call for change (v-13).
1. Forsook word.
2. Made their own cistern.

G. Who are you? (v-14)
1. A slave
2. Assyria came
3. Egypt also

H. Who's to blame? (v-17)
1. Turned to false allegiance and ally.
2. All failure due to forsaking God.
3. Willful disobedience.
4. You are like a man digging a well and an artesian one is on his place.
5. Know that Egypt made you bald & Assyria took Israel—any of you go there for help?
6. You have no reverence or fear of God.

I. Refuse To See Their "Sin" (v-20).
1. Spiritual fornication often the figure.
3. Can't wash off guilt with lye.
4. Nothing stops their departure.

J. No hope (v-25).
1. In our despair we "invent" ways to succeed.
2. Note the foolishness of saying wood is my father (v-27).
3. Time of trouble tests us all (v-27).

K. Irony--let your god help (v-28).
   1. Every city had a god-tutelary.
   2. Idolatry wide spread.

L. Lost Generation (v-30)
   1. Won't listen to me--no correction sets them aright.
   2. You never taught them.

M. Cause--Be our own Master (v-31).
   1. I am it!
   2. What I want is important.
   3. "I know more than God" spirit.
   4. You dissolved the partnership.
   5. This the reason we are unfruitful.
   6. How many days pass for us without thinking of God?

N. Open Sin & Certain Defeat--so Come Home (v. 33-37).
   1. Don't sell for mess of pottage.
   2. Don't break loose.
   3. Don't think you can hide sin (v-22) it's marked on you--like brand.
   4. Leave with hands on head--mourning
   5. Change again (v-36).

Crittenden Drive, Russellville, KY(BC)--4/24/94
HOME - THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE
Jer. 2:1-14

I. It's no secret the home is very precious to the mind of God. We know this by way of His using it in illustrations.
   A. Eph. 5 - Husbands love your wives.
   B. Rev. 22 - The Bride says come.
   C. John 14 - In my Father's house are
   D. Eph. 3:15 - Whole family in heaven
   E. Judges 5:7 - A mother in Israel.
   F. Bride - Hosea 2:19-20; Isa. 54:4-5; Ezek. 16:8.
   
II. So I turn to Jer. 2 and draw the allegory of the espousal & bride - even as God wanted his people to be steadfast, so do we want families so to be.
   A. Remember
      1. Jeremiah a young man has just been commissioned to a burdensome but necessary task - the truth he spoke hurt but must be said.
      2. This was his 1st cry - very personal & very direct.
      3. He was convinced via almond tree & pot vision he was right - and so we speak.
      4. It was the word of the Lord he was to cry in the ears of Jerusalem.
   B. May I be as personal and hopefully you will receive it better than they did - their result was Babylonian captivity.
      1. May we prevent a later catastrophe.
      2. "Contend" - state my case in a legal manner, yet I love you as I "cry".
         (Turn it down)
C. Remember we lift a national principle & apply a local personal family one.

III. Let me hear:

A. "I Remember You".
1. It's essential we recall the days of 1st love - the good, fervent, the silly, but truly the affection.
2. There are early blissful days for us all.
3. Forget for awhile the defects even if there were some. (God didn't bring up their murmuring just now!)
4. Say it, "I remember!"
5. Don't lose 1st love.

Rev. 2:4-5

B. What do you remember?
1. Kindness of thy youth.
2. Love of thine espousals.
   a) God delights in an expressed love.
   b) Enjoy a close relationship.
Hosea 11:1 "When I was a child I loved"
   c) No fear or selfishness in love.
   d) 1st love is full of promises & dreams.
3. Went with me in the wilderness - a land unsown.
   a) Bride courageously followed husband.
   b) How little we had - how foolish some of our actions - but we had each other!
c) Wilderness no threat!
d) The desert, the pits - rents & fissures no hinderance - we had courage & faith in one another.
e) No one else in the "wilderness" but us - (Not running home to momma).
f) No rival then - when we moved to Canaan we got one!
g) Spinster's lament: "Whenever I meet a man who would make a good husband, he is"

C. Israel was holiness unto the Lord.
1. This was their behavior pattern.
2. I believe 2 ways to dissolve a marriage = death or sin - and I can forgive the penitent if he or she stops their adultery (Eisenhower)
3. Are you having an affair - when did it start? Was there not a time of purity - return to it.

D. Israel was also 1st fruits unto the Lord & whatever violated this was punished.

Exo. 23:22"If thou shalt indeed obey "do" I will be enemy at your enemy
1. Great confederate in God.
2. Repulse whatever came against the unity of your home.

E. When you made an exchange what did you get? (State of Mo. Clip)

v.5"What iniquity have your fathers found"
1. Horrible judgement to swap off God.
2. Height of ingratitude.
3. God is all he claims to be.
4. Men take transient pleasures above God — pearl of Great price they throw away.
5. Some questions:
   a) What reason can you give for your departure?
   b) What greater pleasure or person do you expect to find?
   c) Have you ever received anything but good from me?
   d) What ground of infidelity in past action could you cite?
   e) What provocation did I give you? It was not God who broke the tryst.
6. See consequences:
   a) Gone — forget & defect.
   b) Walked after vanity — abused the sacred.
      (1) Cape Kennedy card.
   c) Became vain.
IV. There was a cardinal reason for failure — even as there are reasons for success.
   A. Nick Stinnett & John De Frain "Secrets of Strong Families — 3.50 — Good Housekeeping originally.
   1. 96% in answer "What's most important in life?" said "to have a good family life" — Harris poll.
   2. What is a good family?
      a) Know about trouble.
5. b) Pleasant, positive places where we treat one another.
c) Feel good about themselves.
d) Survive crisis.
e) Places of comfort, development, regeneration, renewal.

3. 6 major qualities.
a) Commitment
   1) Pledge, obligation.
   2) Family comes 1st -(Twain clip)
   3) Expect to endure.
   4) Sexual fidelity - 1/3 wives have affair - 1/2 work outside home.
   5) Traditions used - (Churchill cigar).
   6) Dr. C. Broderick, leading marriage counselor, says 3 R's of infidelity: resentment, rationalization, rendezvous.

b) Appreciation.
   1) Casual card.
   2) Give a compliment a day.
   3) I'm not calling my wife a nag but when she asked for shoes I sent her to the blacksmith shop.
   4) Clip on praise.

c) Communication - Honest, open.
   1) Average couple 17 minutes per week out of 10,080 minutes.
d) Time
1) 1500 school children "what makes for happy families?"
   "Doing things together".
2) Columbus was looking for pepper, found America! Great rewards for you.
3) Assassins - were lonely lovers.
4) Meals, chores, recreation, events.
5) Baby poem.
6) Children clip.
7) Sit on lap.

e) Spiritual wellness.
1) God.
2) Church - worship.
3) Fellowship.
4) Ethics.
5) Prayer.
6) Family tradition.

f) Coping abilities.
1) Individuals who help each other - (Wife & budget)
2) Adaptable, individual.
3) One holds picture & prays.
4) Thing in perspective - (not in prayers)
5) Stress
   (a) Exercise
   (b) Pets
   (c) Hobby
6) Marion Anderson

B. Failed - Forgot God
   1. God alone sustains - He only hath immortality.
   2. They renounced their allegiance.
   3. Do we palliate our conduct?
   4. Consequences are horrible.
C. I can have a garden (Carmel) or catastrophe.
D. Your heritage = a happiness or a hell?

West Snarta Church, Sparta, TN - 3/26/87

Savannah, TN (BC) - 5/22/94
Fellow down the block enjoys more than his share of daytime "catnaps" but claims that loud noises disturb his rest. Every time his wife lets the TV set get a little loud, he'll yell angrily, "Turn it down." The other Sunday at church, he had drifted off to dreamland when the preacher suddenly hit a high note. To the surprise and amusement of the congregation, an angry voice boomed: "Turn it down!" – Kelly Fordyce, Indianapolis Star Sunday Mag.

March 26, 1967

FORGETTING—32

If someone's been guilty of despicable actions, especially toward me, I try to forget him. I used to follow a practice — somewhat contrived, I admit — to write the man's name on a piece of scrap paper, drop it into the lowest drawer of my desk, and say to myself: "That finishes the incident, and so far as I'm concerned, that fellow." The drawer became over the years a sort of private wastebasket for crumbled-up spite and discarded personalities. Besides, it seemed to be effective and helped me avoid harboring useless black feelings. – Dwight D. Eisenhower, At Ease (Doubleday).

The state of Missouri has a new bureau called the Records Management Agency. While recently gathering old records and photographing them for compact storage, agency personnel came up with some old vital-statistics records which included these causes of death:

"Went to bed feeling well, but woke up dead."

"Died suddenly. Nothing serious."

"Don't know cause. Died without the aid of a physician."

"Blow on the head with an ax. Contributory cause: another man's wife."

"Had never been fatally ill before." – Arkansas Baptist.
Yet Cape Kennedy itself is a symbol of our paradoxical age, for the moonport area has the highest divorce rate and the second highest alcoholism rate in the entire United States! Consider also the plight of the brilliant South African surgeon, who could replace a man's heart but could not repair his own marriage.

"One Way to Change the World" — By Leighton Ford — Page 80.

Mark Twain, in his autobiography, told of his little daughter Susy, who, at seven, was breaking her heart over a broken toy and a picnic cancelled because of rain. Her mother told her not to cry over "little things." To this, Susy responded: "Mamma, what is "little things"?" We grownups forget that the loss of a little girl's doll has power to bring heartbreak which the glib promises of a new doll tomorrow cannot quickly heal. We see in Jesus that God never belittles the heartbreaks of children. He enters into our troubled lives with compassion.

DISCARDS — Value $17
A used cigar butt is just about the least valuable thing in the world. It all depends, however, on who smoked it. A butt discarded by Sir Winston Churchill during his 1951 election campaign recently garnered $28.70 at a political fund-raising auction in London. — ALLEN GARVIN, Family Weekly.

MARRIAGE — India—36
The Manbhao tribe of India considers it a marriage ceremony when a man offers all his money to the woman of his choice and she accepts. — Bob CONDON, Travel.
Pablo Casals shares some thoughts on what we teach our children:

Each second we live in a new and unique moment of the universe, a moment that never was before and never will be again. And what do we teach our children in school? We teach them that two and two make four, and that Paris is the capital of France. Will we teach them what they are?

We should say to each of them, "Do you know what you are? You are a marvel. You are unique. In all the world there is no other child exactly like you. In the millions of years that have passed there never has been another child like you. Look at your body—what a wonder it is! Your legs, your arms, your cunning fingers, the way you move! You may become a
Shakespere, a Michelangelo, a Beethoven. You have the capacity for anything."

Secrets of Strong Families — Nick Stinnett and John DeFranc.

P. 46–47

ought, every day at least, to hear a little song, read a good poem, fine picture, and, if it were possible, to speak a few reasonable

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

PRAISE

Praise is as vital to a Christian home as sunshine to a rose. Without it we lack hardness and vitality — as a hot-house plant does. Praise brings happiness and contentment. And praise is as catching as the measles. — Anna M. Nunemaker, "Praise or Grumbling," Moody Monthly.
Active listeners notice facial expression, body posture, and voice tone as well as words. They nod "OK" or "go on" or something to indicate their attention. And really good listeners sift, as the nineteenth-century English novelist Dinah Mulock Craik expressed it:

Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pouring them all right out, just as they are, chaff and grain together; certain that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and then with the breath of kindness, blow the rest away.

Secrets of Strong families - Nick Stinnett and John DeFrain

P.66
A recent study showed that in homes where the parents are older (fathers over 40 and mothers over 35) the children receive far more attention. In contrast, parents who attend church regularly were found less attentive to their children's needs than those who rarely participate in formal religious activities. Parents who were born outside of the U.S. were found to give their children more attention.

—Edward R. Pinckney & Catherine Pinckney, syndicated columnists.
'Sometimes God stills the storm
To calm His frightened child,
Sometimes he lets the storm rage
And calms His child instead.'

Secrets of Strong Families - Nick Stinnett and John DeFrain

P.109
Just a few years ago a newspaper reporter asked the great contralto singer Marian Anderson to name the greatest and most thrilling moment of her life. That great (and humble!) woman has had many glorious moments from which to make such a choice. One Easter Sunday she stood beneath the Lincoln Memorial in our nation's capital while more than 70,000 people lined the pool below and stood along the little knolls surrounding it; and there she sang for Supreme Court justices and cabinet members, for millionaires and five-and-ten-cent-store clerks, for members of Congress and street sweepers. What a thrilling moment that was!

One weekend she journeyed to Philadelphia and before the adoring eyes of thousands of her former neighbors she received the $10,000 Bok Award as the person who
had made the greatest contribution to the lasting fame of her hometown. What a thrilling moment that was!

And one day in the middle of winter the great Stanislavski came to her with a bouquet of white lilacs and begged her to play "Carmen" in the Moscow Theatre. What a thrilling moment that was!

One night, after she gave a heartrending performance in New York city, the great Toscanini took her hand and told her that hers was the greatest voice of the century.

Then there was that memorable day when, as the lone performer, she gave a private concert at the White House for President and Mrs. Roosevelt and the King and Queen of England.

Marian Anderson had many glorious memories from which to select her "Big Moment." Which did she choose! None of them! Without hesitation Miss Anderson told the reporter, "The greatest moment of my life was the day when I was able to go home and tell my mother that she would never have to take in washing any more!"

No wonder someone said of that great woman, "She did not simply grow great; she grew great simply!" She remembered her debt of gratitude to the past. "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." (Isa. 51:1)

--from "God's Word--And Man's!"
by George K. Bowers
pages 122-123
ARE TIMES WORSE THAN THEY USED TO BE?

Jer. 5:1-4

1. Betty asked me a question: "Are things worse than they were in Bible times?"
A. What precipitated it?
   1. Teenage next door neighbors murder 89 woman.
   2. Prison population explodes & murders inside wall
   3. Drug problem cited for our schools.
   4. Male strippers "will increase the pulse rate of ladies (?) who watch their performance."
   5. Banko schemes going statewide calling for wide alert, kidnaps, Red Brigade.
   6. Movies & TV that are an insult to modesty, virginity, marital faithfulness.
   7. Lack of zeal in Christians to fulfill their obligations.
B. It's enough to cause the question - feeling concern for our grandchildren.

II. What answer?
   A. Mankind about the same.
   B. Devil ever active.
   C. Vigilance a constant necessity.

III. What was the condition of man? Let's read.
   A. Genesis 18:32.
      2. God told Abraham.
      3. Abraham pleads for saving city via 10 righteous.
      4. Abraham believed 10 righteous men could change the course of a city! God never punishes w/o full knowledge.
5. God listened to Abraham.
   a.) Very respectful - 4X shows his humility in speaking to God. Jealous for name of the Lord
   b.) Says he's dust & ashes.
7. Could he not find 10?
9. Note power of persevering prayer 50 to 10.
B. Hosea 4:1.
   1. God does not act w/o cause.
   2. Summons whole people, prophets, priests, before judgement seat & pleads c them.
   3. Calls them children of Israel - thus special appeal.
   4. God leaves us w/o excuse.
   5. God gave them the land. (Ps. 105)
6. Yet saw:
   a.) No truth - all God has said.
   b.) No mercy - out of boundless love - (piety to parents, tenderness, goodness).
   c.) No knowledge.
Jn. 2:3-4 "And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus said to him, ..."
4:7-8 "There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water."
Rom. 1:21 "Because that, when they knew God, they ..."
:28 "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge."
:18 "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven to ...
   d.) Swearing - continually done, verbs show.
   e.) Lying (cursing).
   f.) Killing.
   g.) Stealing.
7. They break out.
   a.) Like river out of banks.
   b.) Blood poured out so continually stream met stream.

C. 2 more.

Isa. 64:7 "There is none that calleth upon thy name

Micah 7:2 "The good man is perished out of the earth
   1. Mercy perished untimely death,
   2. Good men killed off,
   3. Lie wait to kill.
   4. Want to excel in evil c both hands.
   5. They twist it all together.
   6. Gentlest man is a thorn.

D. Finally.

Jer. 5:1-4 "Run ye to and fro through the streets of J.
   1. They talk as tho God is living & real, yet what they say they believe has no connection with what they do.
   2. Leaders & people are guilty.
   3. God asks 3 qts.
   5:7 "How shall I pardon thee
   9 "Shall I not visit for these things?
22 "Fear ye not me?
4. Further.

V. 31 "My people love to have it so
   a.) A man persists in sin he develops a love for it.
   b.) Heart becomes diseased (17:9).
IV. So we've **been** before - ever a minority.

Lu. 18:8 "When the son of man cometh, shall he find
A. Let's answer Yes!

Gal. 5:22 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, pe
Let us not be weary.

Sheet End 2-19-84

Ferreira City, Arka. 2-19-84
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Cool As a Cucumber

READ JOHN 15:1-8

Bible Thought: "Take care to live in me, and let me live in you. For a branch can't produce fruit when severed from the vine" (John 15:4, LB).

A FRIEND said to me, "I was 'cool as a cucumber' until I received that telephone call." My Almanac says that the center of a cucumber is always much cooler than the outer rind and the atmosphere surrounding it. Even on the hottest days, a cucumber remains ten degrees cooler at the center than on the outside. But this holds true only if the cucumber is attached to the vine. While the sap flows into it, it remains cool, but when it becomes detached from the vine, it heats up.

We all live under some kind of pressure. We are living in days of confusion when the world is almost upside down, when life has tumbled in, when families are being torn apart. All of us need some sustaining force for strength and courage. Being cool under pressure is only possible by staying connected to the Vine—Christ, and drawing all our strength from Him.

When we do this, we will be able to live under tension and we can face difficulty with faith that does not fail.

Hymn: "Close to Thee"

_Blessed Jesus, you are the Vine and we are the branches and may we never be severed from you. Give us strength for every crisis that comes our way. In Jesus' name. Amen._

—MAUDE COGGIN, Montgomery, Alabama
Bible Thought: "They... began to speak with other tongues, as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4, KJV).

"YOU CRUCIFIED him but God raised him up"—that was the glorious and reassuring climax of this great and marvelous sermon by Peter on Pentecost. Who could have committed a greater crime than theirs? They had killed so disgracefully the Son of God who had come to save them. Aren't we glad that God recorded their salvation! The very ones who committed the terrible deed? If God could forgive them—and He readily did—God will forgive us of any sin. Never doubt that. Jesus, suffering and dying, did so with joy in His heart—anticipating our joy—because He knew this was the only way to take our sin, and theirs. And, because of Pentecost we see our own forgiveness possible today.

A hundred noble wishes fill my heart:
   I long to help each soul in need of aid;
   In all good works my zeal would have a part,
   Before no weight of toil it stands afraid.

But noble wishes are not noble deeds,
   And he does least who seeks to do the whole;
   Who works the best, his simplest duties heeds;
   Who moves the world, first moves a single soul.
   —Charles Francis Richardson

Hymn: “Whosoever Will May Come”

Father, help me to open my eyes to see who has need of Thee. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

—HULEN JACKSON, Duncanville, Texas
THE SEVERING SERVICE OF SIN
Jeremiah 5:25-31

I. Most everybody has an acquaintance with sin.
Rom. 8:1-2 "there is therefore now so condemned;"
Gal. 3:22 "But the Scripture hath concluded.....
Heb. 12:1 "Let us lay aside every weight and the
I John 1:8 "If we say we have no sin ............

A. Define:
Rom. 14:23 "For whatsoever is not of faith is
I John 3:4 "Sin is the transgression of......
1. "Every word is a piece of philosophy, nay, is a revelation." (Canon Girdlestone)
   Sin is a missing of the mark; iniquity, is a
distortion; transgression, is going beyond
the prescribed boundary; rebellion, is the
mailed fist of man's opposition; trespass,
is being unfaithful to a trust; wickedness, is
the turmoil of the tossing wave of man's un-
rest; and unrighteousness, is the crookedness
of man's action.--("The Structural Princi-
ples of the Bible or How to Study the Word
of God"--F. E. Marsh)

2. "Here is the horror of sin, for sin is the
deification of ourselves. Here is the ultimate blasphemy and here is why no man can
do anything about sin." ("An Archaeologist
Looks at the Gospels"--James L. Kelso)
3. Read Menninger clipping.

B. Remedy
I Cor. 15:3 "For I delivered unto you first...
II Cor. 5:21 "For he hath made him to be
Gal. 1:4 "Who gave himself for our sins that
Heb. 9:26-28 "But now once in the end of...
I John 1:7 "But if we walk in the light

II. Do We realize the severing service of sin?
Jeremiah 5:25 "Your iniquities have turned...
A. If I knew only one thing sin did I'd know to
avoid it. It separates us from God.
1. Can't have sin and God.
2. Can't have sin and good things.
3. Sin deprives of God's blessings
4. Sin does us mischief

B. What were they doing in Jeremiah's time so I
can avoid the same.
1. Wicked men
Jer. 5:26 "For among my people are found...
   (a) Lie in wait
   (b) Set snares, traps for men
      (1) Cage=basket from root to plait or bait.
      Thus, woven basket.
      (2) We "go for the throat" in our dealings
      as we move to the far out consequences.
   (c) Fond of deceit
   (d) Became great and waxed rich
(e) Shuffle - fat does that
(f) spiteful
(g) Malicious
(h) False
(i) Trecherous

2. The overpass of deeds of the wicked.
   (a) Sin's never satisfied
   (b) Mariajuna calls for heroin!
   (c) Whatever you did that was bad I have to do more.
   (d) They are consumed with inventions of further evil.
   (e) Sevuld frenzious

3. They judge (plead) not the cause of the fatherless
   (a) Claims of orphan they do not hear.

4. The right of the needy do they not judge.
   (a) Refuse to do justice to the poor.
5. The Conspiracy v-30 & 31 "A wonderful and horrible things is come:
(a) prophets prophesy falsely
(1) Attack religion under guise of revelation
(2) Do we under scholarship or tradition?
(b) Priests rule by their means
(1) Lit. rule at their beck, at their hand
(c) People love to have it so.
(1) 3 classes—prophet, priest & people
(2) People like what's happening—enjoy it.
(3) Governed so much to blame as the governor
(4) Each used his power falsely: prophet—mouth; priest—hands; people—willing of heart.
(5) People not obliged to accept anything but Thus saith the Lord.

III. There is a Day or Reckoning
v-29 "Shall I not visit for these things
A. Consider results of what you are now doing.
B. Consider what got them:
   1. Wealth—waxed rich
   2. Luxury—shine
   3. Ambition—overpass
   4. Non involvement—plead not
Bash End 7-21-74
'Whatever became of sin? noted psychiatrist inquires

By FRANK TAGGART
Religion Writer

FORT WORTH—Dr. Karl Menninger, noted psychiatrist and expert on prison reform, said people don't talk enough about sin these days.

"Whatever became of sin?" he asked a workshop group Tuesday at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"Almost no one talks about it any more," he said. "We don't talk about sin on week days and we hear about it only a few minutes on Sundays if at all."

But, while sin almost has disappeared from today's vocabulary, the 80-year-old psychiatrist said the sense of guilt remains in people's hearts and minds.

Menninger was the featured speaker at the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission's three-day workshop on "The Christian and the Criminal," which ends Wednesday.

"Prisoners punished in our jails are a small minority of all the offenders," said the author of "The Crime of Punishment," which is credited as one of the major spurs to recent penal reform. "Like sheep, we have all gone astray."

Menninger noted that while a few deplore their guilt, many remain blandly indifferent.

Most doctors call these mental ailments "sicknesses," said the founder of the world-famous Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kan., a psychiatric research center.

But, in reality, he said these things doctors call sickness or disease are most often simple sin.

Equating mental health to moral health, Menninger said, "The recognition of sin offers the suffering, struggling, anxious world a real hope, not of punishment, but of prevention."

"I say to the clergy have a wonderful opportunity to tell us what we're doing wrong in the world today," he challenged his audience, mostly Baptist theology students.

"The recognition of sin offers the suffering, struggling, anxious world a real hope, not of punishment, but of prevention."
I. Its scene was Jerusalem.
A. If all the blood still shown, the tawny colored
hills would now be red.
B. We study it because once the people of God were
here - then not one stone upon another.
C. Why did they lose their battles?
II. Jeremiah 6 tells a graphic story.
A. The call to flee.
V. 1 "O ye children of Benjamin, gather yourselves i
1. The city belonged to Benjamin.
   a.) Jeremiah of this tribe.
   b.) Judah's heritage started at valley of Hinnom.
   c.) By rights it was of Benjamin - the smallest of
   tribes.
2. Flee.
   a.) Strange prophet could see what they couldn't
       for 40 yrs.
   b.) City saw no cloud nor reason to flee.
3. Evidences of precaution for doubtful escape.
   a.) Blow trumpet in Tekoa.
      (1) Amos' town.
      (2) 12 miles S.
      (3) Play on words as Tekoa & Blow are associated.
      (4) Blast that trumpet.
      (5) Alarm loud & terrible.
   b.) Signal fire at Beth-hac'ce-rem lit. lift up a
       flare.
      (1) Don't know where it was.
      (2) High hill for a signal.
(3) Means house of vineyard.
(4) Mentioned only here & Neh. 3:14.
(5) Do we light signal fires?
   (a) Bible.
   (b) Preachers.
   (c) Conscience.
   (d) Judgement to come.
(6) Boldly set up for all to see? Faithful preaching,
    godly living, separation from evil, warn.

4. Evil from the North - great destruction.
   a.) Hostile army.
   b.) Chaldean.
   c.) Appear - lit. to bend forward as ready to fall.

B. City Identified (V. 2).
   1. Jerusalem like a delicate woman.
   2. Not suited for heavy war to come.

C. The Enemy Described.
   1. Called a shepherd.
      a.) Christ is the sheep today.
      b.) Nothing casts graver doubt than our absence
          from other disciples.
      c.) "Love of brethren" evidence of "passing from
          death to life." [J. 3:14]
   2. Come c flocks.
      a.) Many.
      b.) Obediently follow.
      c.) Live off land & denude it.
   3. Circle c tents.
   4. War Preparation.
      a.) Prepare.
(1) Spiritually ready via sacrifices.

b.) Arise & let us go up at noon.

(1) Foes urge each other on at various parts of campaign.
(2) Give mutual encouragement.
(3) Anxious to fight—wanted to. These are the soldiers that win.
(4) Did not mind noontday heat.
(5) Noon heat relaxes vigilance.
(6) Accept discomfort.

c.) Woe—the day goeth away.
1.) Used every moment wisely.
2.) Shadows of evening threaten c inactivity.
3.) Chaldean soldier never quit—what zeal!
4.) Does our day pass & evening come.
5.) Accept peril to win.

d.) Arise—go by night—destroy.
1.) Take city by storm after forced march.
2.) One thing in mind—victory.
3.) Press to destroy by night.
4.) Eager for attack at unfavorable time.

Matt. 11:12 "And from the days of John the Baptist unto

5.) They expected to be successful.

D. The Lord gives instruction (V. 6).
1. Note it's His power that gives even Babylon success—they have none w/o Him.
   a.) God is director of human affairs.
   b.) There is a divinity that shapes our end
Rough hew them how we will.
   c.) Joseph "It was not you that sent me hither but God".
2. Hew down trees.
3. Cast a mound.
   a.) Rams do work better.
4. City visited.
5. Wholly oppression in midst.
6. Fountain.
   a.) Cistern keeps water cool naturally.
   b.) Persistent wickedness comes from deep source.
   c.) Occasion slips are understandable.
   d.) But like a full, flowing ft. Jerusalem ever casts out its evil.
   e.) Sin's a continuous fountain, ever full & flowing
   f.) Never got tired of their wickedness.
   g.) Never repented.
   h.) Note "Before me" - lit. before my face - God personally involved.
   i.) Violence & spoil = lit. injustice & violence.
   j.) It was before God continually.
7. Be instructed.
   a.) Lit. receive instruction, be corrected.
   b.) Hear & heed warning.
   c.) Godlessness is condemned by its own impracticableness.
   d.) Worst thing that could happen is for God to depart a sinner's soul.
   e.) Is it too late? Any hope?
8. Glean the Remnant.
   a.) Jeremiah must be thorough.
   b.) Baskets - let gleaner go over every shoot.
   c.) Nothing escapes the fury.
Acts 14: "Continuing the parable ..."

d.) Either repent or be punished.

9. Felt no one would listen (V. 10)
   "To whom shall I speak?"

   a.) Would not listen.

   (1) Speak in vain - none heed.

   b.) Uncircumcised ear  Acts 7:51
   (1) Heart  Lev. 26:41
   Lips  Exo. 6:12

   (2) Yet they understood or at least could mentally.

   (3) Just disregarded word.

   (4) Church bldg. empty today.

   c.) Word's a Reproach - no delight.

   1.) Reception of truth depends on condition of receiver's mind.

   2.) Ass has plenty of ears.

   3.) Jer. a "mockery to Jews."

Ps. 119:16 "I will delight myself in thy statutes; I wi

   4.) Truth is good for mankind.

   5.) It's common property - don't hide it.

   6.) Man's error - hate instruction.

   d.) Full of fury.

   (1) Feels burden of utterance.

   (2) People obstinate.

   (3) Hopeless reformation.

   (4) Prophet is weary.

   (5) Children abroad is lit. in street.

   (6) Invades social gatherings of young men.

   (7) God's patient - wants reformation.

Jer. 20:9 "Then I said, I will not make mention of hi

Word 25 2 fire stand up
(8) Takes all ages of folk away - no class immune.
(9) God's Word a blessing somewhere to somebody.

E. Charges against them.
1. Covetousness.
   a.) From "to tear".
   b.) To get gain unrighteously.
   c.) Covet gives us another standard.
   d.) Because I'm rich I'm different.
   e.) Want world c fence around it?
   f.) Loved the world.

2. Leaders false - prophet & priest.
   a.) Corruption's great.
   b.) Leaders lead in sin.
   c.) God's voice despised.
   d.) Daddy out of Christ leads kids to hell.
   e.) Doesn't attack priests office but abuse of it.

3. Health hurt slightly.
   a.) Some make it real easy.
   b.) No real reformation of character demanded.
   c.) God hates hypocrisy.
   d.) Physician a criminal who gives poison for healing medicine. Paul Tournier
   e.) Past tense - shows they'd contemptuously treat
   f.) Shalom = no strife, to be whole, sound, safe, make secure, welfare.
   g.) Hurt = breach, rupture between God & man.
   h.) Alienate - pull out heart from body.
   i.) Sinful nation lightly doctored.

4. People couldn't blush.
   a.) Never ashamed so naturally didn't repent.
ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS
Jer. 6:16-21

I. Strangely, antiquity has an aura of superiority about it.
   A. Old fashion Home Cookin'
   B. Antique shops
   C. It's leather, not plastic
   D. Sulphur and molasses

II. The aged can be wrong
   A. Bled Washington
   B. That tomato was poison
   C. Believed the world was flat

III. But I know this
   A. To all, there is an original
   B. Right existed before wrong
   C. In most cases I can find the original
   D. There is a sense of security in knowing you are in the path—neither a new way nor a short cut.

IV. Jeremiah spoke of this
Jer. 6:16-21 "Thus sayeth the Lord"
   A. We garner four facts
      1. Return to ancient way is approved by the Lord.
      2. Keep an alertness as you stand in the ways and see
         a. Let station self at intersection of roads
         b. Be where many ways run together
         c. To be sure there are many courses of action open to man
(1) Materialism
(2) Licentiousness
(3) Idolatry
(4) Ceremonialism
(5) True faith
(6) Genuine worship

d. He bids you "see"
   (1) Inquire after—not to be presumptuous
   (2) Be knowledgeable
   (3) Think
   (4) Foolish to go with the multitude without individual conviction of what is right.
   (5) Also dangerous to follow one's own impulses.

3. Ask for the old paths
   a. There are ancient & basic principles.
   b. They are pictured as travelers trying to find old way they lost.
   c. Implied is the thought that these old paths are prescribed by God.
   d. Also implied is a respect we ought to have for our forebears.
   e. What God gave knows no improvement.
f. God calls it "the good way."

(1) Way of Jesus is that
(2) It was marked out by the
father.

Isa. 35:8 "And an highway shall be there."

4. Walk therein and find rest.

a. Walking
(1) Practice
(2) Proceed
(3) Persevere
(4) Let knowledge produce a
practical effect--walk!
(5) It's obedience

b. Rest:
(1) In peace, not inactivity
or stagnation--it's like a
heartbeat, it rests while
while it works.
(2) Rest of conscience for you
know you are in old path of
truth.

B. Now via summary
1. Evil is not coeval with good.
2. Right is older than wrong.
3. Man may always choose path they
walk and accept consequence of
this action.
4. Claims of religious systems con-
lict--stay with the ancient truth.

Test End 8-20-78
EMPTY SACRIFICES
Jere. 6:16-21

I. Here are some questions.
   A. Can you do the right thing in a wrong way?
      (Baptism is essential, but I'll sprinkle).
   B. Can you do all the right things and still be wrong?
   C. If all that outwardly is done is correct, is it not
      taken for granted that the inside is?

II. Jeremiah has called for back to the ancient paths,
    but they would not.

Jere. 6:16-21 "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the way
A. The call was certain & loud as it came from God
   (V. 16).
B. He supplemented His call with prophets (V. 17).
   1. I set watchmen.
      a.) Tense "I kept raising up."
      b.) Watchmen are militant prophets.
      c.) They didn't create the danger - only warned.
      d.) I warned via trumpets - meant for you to hear.
         (1) Expression "I'll blow the whistle on you."
         (2) Zech. 9:14 "And the Lord shall be seen over th
C. But the people would not.
V. 16 "We will not walk therein."
V. 17 "We will not hearken."
Deut. 32:17 "Remember the days of old, consider the;
   (Good counsel given in vain)

III. Israel pays the consequence.
    A. Therefore.
      1. Bridge between cause & effect.
      2. Law was good.
Ps. 19:7 "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting
B. All causes attributed to God.
C. Calls whole world as grand jury – earth summoned.
1. Consequences to come as they refused ancient
   paths & basic principles.
2. God tells them & nations Israel will reap fruit of
   its harvest of devices.
3. Others invited to witness the perversity of Israel.
4. They were making statements c their lives.
IV. They cannot rely on empty sacrifices.
V. 20 "To what purpose cometh there to me incense from
A. Incense & Cane.
   1. Sheba - SW Arabia.
   2. Cane = Calamus – from India – ingredient for holy
      anointing oil.
B. Not acceptable – not Sweet.
   1. Ceremonies had no heart in them – none w/o heart
      acceptable.
Deut. 32:7 "Remember the days of old, consider the year
Matt. 11:29 "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me;
Jn. 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth
Acts 9:2 "And desired of him letters to Damascus to the
2. Legalism a detour.
3. Externalism alone cannot win God’s favor.
4. Our sacrifices should point us to the Lord, not to
   the sacrifice itself.
5. Dangerous because they had the veneer of goodness:
   a.) Costly.
   b.) Regular.
   c.) Mechanically correct.
6. They caused the name of God to be hated.
7. They rendered true repentance more hopeless.
8. Why did they offer them?
   a.) Conscience won't allow stopping.
   b.) Custom.
   c.) Worldly interest served.
   d.) Secretly hope they will help us c God (All from Pul. Com.)

V. What's for me?
A. Proper earnestness?
B. Empty ceremonies of non-exciting attendance?
C. Legalism.
D. Stumbling.
E. Indiscriminate ruin.

Hand End 8-20-78
BIRD BRAINS!
Jer. 8:4-7

1. When you were referred to as "Bird Brain", how'd you feel?
2. It could be that you inadvertently are complimented Bible Birds have something to say - can we see their lessons for us?

A. We've a cheerful story to tell.

Songs of Sol. 2:8-12

1. Is this the forecast of the ministry of John the Baptist & the coming of Jesus?
2. Whether it is or not, we've a happy story to tell of salvation in Christ.
3. Note in the story:
   a.) Suddenness.
   b.) Vigor.
   c.) Overcome all obstacles V. 8 & 9.
4. Also he stands in lattice - half hidden, behind wall - but for us undenominational Chr. is full bloom.
5. If they rejoice in nearness - we do in fullness.
6. No love is lost on Christ - He responds - no cold fish.
7. Barren winter is over; so are winter rains - warm replaces cold; life the barren.
8. Flowers give promise - fruit is not there yet.

V. 12 "The flowers appear on the earth
Acts 9:31 "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and all the rest of the places where the excursion had been, throughout all the country of Judea and Samaria, the Lord worked miracles and wonders through the apostles.

10. Conversion is like springtime - a complete change
B. Contrastingly, birds know who's bad & need horrible punishment.

Prov. 30:17 "The eye that mocketh at his father & despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens
1. Story of turbulent son.
2. Eye used to express mockery & contempt.
3. Children are disobedient.
4. Either die unnaturally & remained unburied or both.
5. Henry said hung in chains & let birds pick out eye.

c) Unedited article
b) John McLeod letter

C. That naturally brings us to the need for leadership & birds know this.

Deut. 32:11 "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth, 1. Remember the days of old - V. 7.
a.) Reports (ancient) written ones.
b.) Wisdom of today's leaders as we currently consult.
2. God in wisdom reserved Pal. for Israel.
a.) God that of us before we were born.
b.) Small theatre, but whole world could see it.
c.) Out of it salvation carried everywhere.
Deut. 30:5 "And the Lord thy God will bring thee into
d.) God to lead & instruct, is c His people.
3. Found in desert land - (v. 10)
a.) So sin affects.
b.) Howls of wind & beast.
c.) Keeps as apple of eye.
a.) Protects.
b.) Provide.
c.) Educates.
d.) Stirs - overcome laziness.
e.) Flutter - show how to do it. use wings - rises on hers.
f.) Teach - don't indulge in idleness.
g.) Don't have to make a long flight 1st day.
h.) Settles in a good land c honey out of rock.
D. Birds know Loneliness Ps. 102:1-7
1. Affliction reduce him.
2. Days are a shadow - wither like grass (V. 11).
3. No appetite (V. 4).
4. Friends dessert & forsake.
5. Days vanish like smoke (3), Shadow (11).
6. The very figure of loneliness.
a.) Isolated from fellows.
b.) Feel none cares.
7. 3 Birds - pelican, owl, sparrow.
a.) 1st symbol of gloom & wretchedness.
b.) Loves not man - pelican sits motionless after
gorging food.
c.) Name in Heb. "cup bird".
d.) Doesn't love man.
e.) Magna Civitas, Magno solitude.
8. Sparrow.
a.) Usually sociable - now alone.
b.) Feels timid & insignificant.
c.) Watches alone when should rightfully sleep?
   1. Do we have any holy sorrow?
   2. Do we play proud peacock?
   3. Do we vulture like prey on dead church - or do we weep?
9. Bird knows there will be both kinds of day!
E. Finally, Birds know proper allocation of time.
Jer. 8:7 "Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her a
1. None said they were wrong (V. 6).
2. Continue in way they were.
4. Birds know migratory laws but people don't.
5. Will we listen to click of conscience & clock?
6. Will we resolutely go on in our ways?
7. Are we dumb & numb to both mercy & affliction?
8. What would become of you, so?
9. Eisenhower clip

West End 6-3-79
Stewart Creek Church, V.B.S., Smyrna 6-7-79
Hammars Chapel 8-26-79
Albemar Road Young People Bible Class, Memphis, 9-23-79
Congregational, in essence, says, "The Spirit of Garfield!"

F. RUSSELL

The near apostasy plagued the congregation for a time, but the bold stand of "the dedicated faithful" persisted and has won out in the past twenty years.

God's Word and Mr. Garfield's statement enabled the faithful to withstand. His eleven points are as follows:

1. We call ourselves Christians or Disciples.
2. We believe in God the Father.
3. We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and our Saviour. We regard the divinity of Christ as the fundamental truth of the Christian system.
4. We believe in the Holy Spirit, both as to His agency in conversion and as a dweller in the heart of the Christian.
5. We accept the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God.
6. We believe in the future punishment of the wicked and the future reward of the righteous.
7. We believe that Deity is a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God.
8. We observe the institution of the Lord's Supper on every Lord's Day. To this table we neither invite nor debar. We say it is the Lord's Table, for all the Lord's children.
9. We plead for the union of God's people.
10. The Bible is our only discipline.
11. We maintain that all ordinances should be observed as they were in the days of the apostles.
Concerned Father: "Suppose I should be taken away suddenly. What would become of you, son?"
Son: "I'd stay here. The question is, what would become of you, Dad?"
**THE UNCHURCHED AMERICAN**

Some 61 million American adults are not members of any church or religious institution. Moreover, many churches are experiencing continuing decline in membership.

What can we do to encourage the "unchurched" to become part of the community of active worshippers? A recent Gallup Poll revealed some information that ought to give us a sense of direction.

The results of this survey show nationwide acceptance of traditional values. While the 1960s and 1970s have sometimes been labeled decades of revolt and disillusionment, the 1980s may well come to be regarded as a "return to normalcy" period.

Results for the total sample (including both churched and unchurched) show the following:

* 9 in 10 (91%) would welcome more emphasis on traditional family ties;
* A similar proportion (89%) say they would welcome more respect for authority in the coming years;
* 7 in 10 (69%) say they would welcome more emphasis on working hard;
* 3 out of every 4 (74%) would not like to see more acceptance of marijuana usage; and
* 6 in 10 (62%) would be opposed to more acceptance of sexual freedom.

When churched and unchurched views are compared, the differences are dramatic: 80% of churched people express a "great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the Church, but only 38% of the unchurched do so.

Organized religion is widely criticized by the unchurched as having lost "the real spiritual part of religion" and for being "too concerned with organizational as opposed to theological or spiritual issues."

Large majorities of the unchurched agree (strongly or moderately) that "most churches are not effective in helping people find meaning in life." Significantly, these criticisms are shared by large proportions of the churched, as well.

6 in 10 among the unchurched, and as many as one-half of the churched, agree (strongly or moderately) with the statement, "most churches have lost the real spiritual part of religion."

56% of the unchurched say "most churches today are too concerned with organizational as opposed to theological or spiritual issues," and 47% of the church agree.

49% of the unchurched, and 39% of the churched, agree with the statement "most churches today are not effective in helping people find meaning in life."

Significant and comparable proportions of both unchurched (36%) and churched (28%) are critical of churches as "not warm and accepting of outsiders."

--George Gallup, Jr.
Dear Jim Bill,

I came here tonight to do some washing and my mother showed me your letter, and it gave me opportunity to write to you especially since I have your address now. I was wanting to write anyway.

It was good to be with you again. It seems that the last time I saw you was in Dodge City when we were living there, and a lot has happened since then, most of which I don't care to repeat. I've dropped in and out of some things, and I'm happy where I am now— not as happy as I'll be when the Lord comes back, but I like it, I think I'm where he wants me to be. I've run into some brick walls and prayed to God to put me in the job he wanted me to have, and I think I know what it means to say I am an heir of a kingdom which cannot be shaken, for sure. I am working at my office furniture-delivery job with a 16 yr. old young man who was raised Assembly of God— he is temporarily out of school because he was only taking a couple of classes and his dad, who is a chief of supply in a U.S. hospital, is moving the family to North Dakota this summer where he will have to repeat courses in their school system. He came to work on spring break and when my other helper quit and started talking about quitting school & working full time— I told him I thought it would be a good thing and got my friends praying and here he is. He says he was a Christian until 7th grade until he found he was "getting further without it"— today we get down to grits and I told him he missed the boat and it was time to take a
second link - be a Luke 2:3 case. His name is Mark Wood and I would definitely enlist your prayers for him. He will be a great man of God in these final days.

As for me, I am attending a charismactic-type fellowship right now, I lost my hesitations after a new friend I met in Austin last semester wrote and said his wife had a dream in which Christ informed her something about me that she had no way of knowing about. I have found their fellowship to be very rich and non-charismaniac and very biblical as well. It is a good atmosphere for growth and mutual upbuilding - I must admit I was feeling stifled in the Church of Christ although I definitely ran up to being a son of the Restoration movement - I still consider them my brothers & sisters and reserve the right to traffic with them. I don't think many are around today who really understand what the R. Movement was originally about. If they did they wouldn't be so uptight about it. I appreciated your remark at the table about being Christians only but not the only Christians, but that is still a tricky statement, which seems to hint that "if we were to talk I'm sure you'd see it the way I do, but of course this is a free country." Yea, verily, there are many in the Church of Christ who seem to be citizens of America before citizens of the Kingdom. I see more humanism in the founding documents than Biblical principle, and I also see a dark day ahead for America someday. Let us work while it is still daylight. And I would be delighted to keep in touch with you, too. Love and prayers in the name of Jesus. John
TEACHING AN EAGLET TO FLY

In the mountainous regions of our country there lives one of the most beautiful birds known to man. High on the cliffs of the Rocky Mountains lives the American Bald Eagle. One of the most miraculous lessons of instructions takes place when the mother eagle begins teaching her eaglets to fly. The ceremony begins with the destruction of the nest. The old eagle tears up the nest and throws the pieces over the cliff. Then she takes the little eaglet on her broad back and, circling carries him high into the sun. Then she tilts her wings and he slides off into space. Fluttering, screeching, screaming, he drifts down. The old eagle circles around him. Long before the eaglet reaches the sharp crags and rocks below, she glides under him and catches him on her strong wings. Two or three times she repeats this as if to say, "Son, you cannot fall, for underneath are the everlasting wings." There is a passage in Deuteronomy 33:27 which reads as follows, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them." Just as the eagle is the refuge for the eaglet, God is the refuge for the Christian. As the eaglet feels the security of her everlasting wings, Christians feel the presence of God's everlasting arms. The point of this lesson is not that we cannot fall; but that there is not a step that we take in life's journey, where we do not need the abiding presence of God. He is our refuge and security. David said it best when he referred to God as "The Good Shepherd". He was using the most endearing and intimate words to describe the nature of God toward his people. He knew God would do for us, what David had done for his sheep; fight the beasts of the forest and the birds of the air for his flock. If one of the flock was sick or wounded, he found underneath him the loving, tender, strong and everlasting arms of the Good Shepherd. We need God's help and guidance daily. Put your faith in Him and allow God to be your Shepherd. We need the strength and love of the everlasting arms. -Robin Moclery.
Birds Know:
1. Life can be full of happy.
2. Some things deserve punishment.
3. Leadership is essential.
4. Someone comes to our.
5. New is the appropriate season.
FLAG Day, June 14, 1979, marks the 25th anniversary of the Presidential signing of the bill passed by Congress inserting the words “under God” into the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States.

A short time after President Eisenhower signed the legislation, officials raised a new flag on the Capitol steps in Washington to mark Flag Day, and joined in the first official recitation of the revised Pledge.

A statement by President Eisenhower on that memorable day is still a noteworthy reminder that “spiritual weapons will forever be our country’s most powerful resource.”

The Presidential statement on that day—June 14, 1954—is worth a thoughtful reading now:

“From this day forward the millions of our school children will daily proclaim in city and town, every village and rural schoolhouse, the dedication of our nation and our people to the Almighty. To anyone who truly loves America, nothing could be more inspiring than to contemplate this rededication of our youth, on each school morning, to our country’s true meaning.

“Especially is this meaningful as we regard today’s world. Over the globe, mankind has been cruelly torn by violence and brutality and, by the millions, deadened in the mind and soul by a materialistic philosophy of life. Man everywhere is appalled by the prospect of atomic war.

“In this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America’s heritage and future; in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country’s most powerful resource in peace and in war.”

The publishers of SUNSHINE are glad to emphasize the importance of Flag Day, and the Pledge of Allegiance, by featuring it on the back cover of this issue, and with it, a “personal pledge” that each of us can proudly declare as American citizens.
THERE ABIDES A COMMON ENEMY
Jer. 9:23-24

I. If every man were to list common enemies, what would he put?
A. Being misunderstood.
B. Accident report.
C. Wm. H. Taft - 2nd shot.
D. $20,000 cat funeral.
E. Failing an opportunity.
1. Elephant ear sandwich.
2. Mental patient - I can do anything - walk lite beam.
3. U. S. Grant - 2 tunes - one is Yankee Doodle - other isn't.
4. Record - attempted robbery.

II. But Jeremiah named 3.
Jer. 9:23 "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom.
A. Glory in wisdom.
1. Keep plane between lights.
2. Lamb - made out of blankets.
3. Waterloo, Nebraska - Barber
   No onions 7 A.M. - 7 P.M.
B. Mighty man in Might.
2. Phoning from your house.
3. Weldon Drew N. Mex. State
   Outside shooters - indoors.
5. Life is like ice cream cone - got it licked - drips on you.
C. Rich man in riches.
1. Send back presents - billed 42 house calls.
2. Anything marked down - 2 dresses & escalator.
4. With all credit cards & mortgages - debt - not trying.
5. $18,000.00 - how big is dog?
6. Told her I was 90!

III. Do Glory in Knowing God.
A. Lovingkindness.
B. Judgement.
C. Righteousness.

Preacher stories
1. Funeral - mean - Bro. meaner.
2. Sav. free - Pay for pumping.
3. Reagan's 8 pages - read carbon copies as well.
   Preacher - already been & sorry he went.
5. Progress - harder to get into hell today than Heaven a century ago.
6. Cards on Ark - Noah sat on deck.
7. 3 dislikes: dumb jokes, listeners, M & M's.
8. Knows it already - roof gutter.

Franklin, TN Christian Club, Maywell 2-6-84
As most of us know from unfortunate experience, it is necessary to file an accident report with one's insurance company in case compensation claims should arise.

Being charged regularly with abuse and misuse of our language, I can sympathize with those who on their official reports wrote these things [sent to us by a reader] that don’t quite say what the writers meant to say:

"Coming home, I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I don’t have."

"The other car collided with mine without giving warning of its intentions."

"I thought my window was down, but I found out it was up when I put my head through it."

"I collided with a stationary truck coming the other way."

"A pedestrian hit me and went under my car."

"The guy was all over the road. I had to swerve a number of times before I hit him."

"I pulled away from the side of the road, glanced at my mother-in-law and headed over the embankment."

"The telephone pole was approaching, I was attempting to swerve out of its way when it struck the front end."

"In my attempt to kill a fly, I drove into a telephone pole."

"I had been driving for 40 years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had an accident."

"To avoid hitting the bumper on the car in front, I struck the pedestrian."

"My car was legally parked as it backed into the other vehicle."

"An invisible car came out of nowhere, struck my car and vanished."

"I told the police that I was not injured, but on removing my hat, found that I had a fractured skull."

"I was sure the old fellow would never make it to the other side of the road when I struck him."

"The pedestrian had no idea which direction to run, so I ran over him."

"I saw a slow-moving, sad-faced old gentleman as he bounced off the roof of my car."

"I was thrown from my car as it left the road. I was later found in a ditch by some stray cows."
SECOND SHOT
Because I was not yet born, I have no personal reflections on the candidacies of my grandfather, William Howard Taft . . .

In 1908, President Roosevelt's mantle was put around the shoulders of "Big Bill Taft." I still have a JUDGE MAGAZINE cartoon of him as Secretary of War with Teddy's hand on his shoulder. The caption below quotes T.R., "He's good enough for me. He should be good enough for you."

That campaign was a pleasant one for my grandfather . . . the report indicated that Taft's heart just wasn't in it, but in loyalty to his followers and his ideals, he thought he had to fight tooth and nail to get what votes he could . . .

The circumstances are reminiscent of the story told about my grandfather's enthusiastic, but limited, golfing prowess. Once his foursome was followed by one that included the golf club's officious president. As that gentleman came up to the tee, he observed my grandfather about to play from in front of the tee markers and protested, "Mr. Taft, you may have been president of the U.S. and you may now be Chief Justice, but you will have to tee up behind the markers just like everyone else. My grandfather turned, drew himself to his full dignity and commented coolly, "Sir, this is my second shot."

Robert Taft, Jr.

That Makes It OK
A rich woman was very fond of her pet cat. When it died, she went to her minister and told him she wanted the cat to have a church funeral service. He said he did not offer such a service for pets. She then added, "I was thinking of giving the church $20,000 after the service."

The minister replied, "Oh, I didn't realize your cat was a Christian."

Customer Bun-anza
The sign in the restaurant window read: "$500 reward to anybody who orders something we can't furnish."

One tourist decided to pick up some easy money for himself. He sat down at a table and said casually to the waitress, "Bring me an elephant-ear sandwich."

The woman's face fell. Rushing to the kitchen, she said to the chef, "Better get ready to fork over that $500. There's a guy out here who wants an elephant-ear sandwich."

"What?" bellowed the chef. "You mean to tell me we're out of elephant ears?"

"No," replied the waitress. "But we haven't got any more of those big buns."

Wishful Dreaming
"There is nothing in the world impossible to me," said a mental patient. "I have conquered space and time."
"I'll bet you can't walk up on a beam of light from my flashlight," said the other mental patient.
"I could do it, but I won't," replied the first patient. "When I got halfway up you'd turn off the light—then where would I be?"

A distraught wife, visiting her husband in a prison waiting room, turned on him and said: "I'm fed up with you. Look at your record: attempted robbery, attempted robbery, attempted burglary, attempted murder. What a failure you've turned out to be; you can't succeed in anything you try."

It's A Snap!
"You must have an awful time flying this plane in the dark," said the passenger to the pilot on the night flight.
"Oh, there's a light on the left wing, a light on the right wing, and a light on the tail. All I have to do is keep the plane between the lights!"

City Child
Little Gwen was visiting a farm for the first time in her life and was delighted with the baby lambs playing in the grass.
After much coaxing, she walked up and patted one. Delighted, she exclaimed, "Why, it's made out of blankets!"

PAUL HARVEY agrees that some laws are outdated and should be repealed. But here's one he likes. "In Waterloo, Nebraska, it is illegal for a barber, between the hours of seven AM and seven PM, to eat onions."
We’ve got a great bunch of outside shooters,” said basketball coach Weldon Drew of New Mexico State. “Unfortunately, we play all our games indoors.”

The Perfect Solution
Actress Tallulah Bankhead once visited a family with a particularly spoiled, obnoxious teen-age son. “We just don’t know what to make of him,” sighed his mother.

“Well,” suggested Miss Bankhead, “how about a nice rug?”

Tommy Lasorda, Dodger manager, asked what terms Mexican-born pitching sensation Fernando Valenzuela might settle for in his upcoming contract negotiations: “He wants Texas back.” —Sports Illustrated

With all the credit cards and mortgages these days, if you aren’t hopelessly in debt, you just aren’t trying.
A man married a 21-year-old blonde, much to the amazement of all his friends.

"How did you ever manage to get such a young woman to marry you?" he was asked?

"I told her I was 90," he replied.

YOU CAN USE

Stretching the Truth
A wealthy 72-year-old man married a beautiful 21-year-old blonde, much to the amazement of all his friends.

"How did you ever manage to get such a young woman to marry you?" he was asked?

"I told her I was 90," he replied.
Down to Basics
It was a long sermon on free salvation, and when the preacher finished, he asked the deacon to pass the collection plate.
"Just a minute, Reverend," a voice protested. "You said salvation is free... free as the water we drink."

The preacher thought a minute and replied, "It sure is... salvation is free and so is the water free... but somebody's got to pay for the plumbing!"

ALREADY BEEN
The reason young people of today would rather follow the Beatles or the Beach Boys is because they all look like they are going somewhere, where the average churchgoer or minister looks like he has already been and is sorry he went.

David Dines

QUIPS
Reagan complained to his speechwriter that the talk he gave him was rather long—eight pages.
"You read the carbon copies as well," replied the spook.
Rabbi Samuel M. Silver
The clergy have made considerable progress; it's almost as hard to get into hell these days as it was to get into heaven a century ago.

No Card Playing
Q. Why didn't they play cards on the Ark?
A. Noah was sitting on the deck.
Rochester, Minn. Mary

AROUND THE USA

A laid-off steel worker took a temporary job with a roofing company. On the first day, he knocked down a ladder that was against a house. He ran and told another worker, who told him he had better tell the straw boss. The steelworker said, "Oh, he already knows. He's hanging from the roof gutter."

Joe Browne,
Pittsburgh Post

THE STORY TELLER

Too Hard
(Killer winner)
Kevin: "I really hate three things: dumb jokes, people who listen to them and M&Ms."
Herman: "Why do you hate M&Ms?"
Kevin: "Too hard to peel."
St. Louis, Mo. Melba
THE RIGHT WAY TO BRAG (BOAST--NIV)
Jeremiah 9:23-24

I. Some things irritate.
   A. Most of us don't like a braggart--yet there is a glorying that is proper; home, spouse, community, school.
   B. But we dislike one extolling the wrong thing--so both personality and subject get involved.
      (Dan Brawner told Glenn Miller as he took him fried pies: not enough apples, not sweet enough, not enough cinnamon --he would do it better.)
      (Actor on Junk)

II. But I want you to know there is an adoration, praise, commendation, that is proper.
   Jer. 9:23-24 "Thus saith the Lord, Let not"
   A. Important to know it is God who outlines a proper course.
   B. He will name three things that are good, but not good enough for life's major adoration.
   C. He then will name three things that are.
      1. He will show you on how you are to base this.
      2. He will declare He is vitally interested in the things of the Earth.

III. As we begin our study, let's look at the KJV word "glory."
   A. What is the subject of our boasting? The way of the world or thus saith the Lord.
1. Glorying carries the idea of something in which man is not only intensely pleased but that pleasure is like heat bursting into flame—it's intense.
2. It vents itself in words & songs of exultation.
3. God cultivates the exultant heart.
4. To glory in a thing is to depend on it as means or cause of procuring happiness. (Clark)

B. Before going to our lists, let's note some things.
1. Just because our 1st list is inferior to our second list, it does not mean they are bad: wisdom, power, wealth.
2. But neither for Israel nor will they to us prove trustworthy.
3. Granted wisdom, power & riches are better than fraud & violence but don't settle for second best.
4. These things cannot save you.
5. Also be it known these things can be turned to unholy usage.

IV. Our Contrasting Lists
A. Wise men glory in wisdom.
1. Embraces political sagacity as though it could rescue from impending calamity.
2. Wisdom enables a man to conduct his own affairs.
3. It leads to valuable discoveries.
4. It profits individuals and communities.
5. It suppresses vice.
6. It encourages virtue—(all these from Simeon).
7. It promises to outwit the enemy or devise means to escape ruin. (P.C.)
8. Remember though:
   a) Wisdom can mislead.
   b) More we possess we are more fully convinced we know nothing in comparison.
   c) How little is our wisdom compared to what's out there! (Ever hear a sermon from this text?)
   d) He was like a cock who thought the sun had risen just to hear him crow. (Geo. Elliott)
   e) Floor clean—coffee spilled clip.

B. Mighty Men Glory in Might
1. This embraces military power.
2. But the battle is not always to the strong.
3. We still are fascinated by strength.
4. It's imposing but it fails.
5. Note pictures of fading athletes and movie stars. Gene Kelly at 80—Wins "I thought he'd dance."

C. Rich Men Glory in Riches.
1. We are inclined to overvalue our possessions—we look & see how few we have.
2. They buy much but can't health, can't avoid disappointment, nor avoid death.
3. Moth, rust, thieves take them.
4. Lose your wealth, you lose your attractiveness.
5. Riches make us covetous as we set our hearts on them.
6. They take wings & fly away.
7. Hour of death they immediately belong to someone else.
8. Granted they reward industry and they relieve necessities, but it's all temporary.
9. Rolls Royce--never in the front seat.

V. That Intermediate Step
A. Let him that glorieth glory in this--
   1. Measure things by the true standard.
   2. True boasting gives its power to confer the highest benefits on our fellowman.
   3. Be sure we have selected the proper list! the moral one.
B. Let him understand and know God.
   1. We will see where He places the values.
   2. Know is more than emotions and facts--it means to approve, be in sympathy with, delight in.
      (Rubinstein clip)
   3. Above rules--it has the vision of God.
   4. Thatcher clip.
   5. Knowledge of God not subject to any defects.
VI. By it we see the evil of sin, the beauty of holiness, vanity of time, and importance of eternity. (Simeon)

7. Jesus is called the "wisdom of God", the "power of God."

8. I then must learn to love what God loves and values.

9. We'll delight in 3 things because God delights in them.

VI. The Character of God Spells Out 3 Things

A. Loving Kindness.
   1. He loves all--especially his own.
   2. To them He has unfailing devotion.
   3. Its mercy.
   4. Voluntary help to those in need.
   5. Do I practice it?

B. Judgement
   1. He helps the poor & weak and punishes the wrongdoer.
   2. Judgement comes to the unholy.
   3. Do I fear Him?
   4. His justice demands honorable relations in every transaction.

C. Righteousness
   1. This leads us to adhere to a fixed rule of conduct, not situation ethics.
   2. There is perfect fairness in all cases.
   3. It is that inner disposition of integrity and uprightness that issues in right action.

D. Let's learn to love what God loves for in "these things I delight."

When the star in a London production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* became ill, no one was available to replace him except an American actor whose self-esteem far surpassed his acting ability. True to form, the actor was awful. But he plunged ahead, oblivious to the groans of the discriminating British audience.

Then came the famous soliloquy: "To be or not to be..." The audience, beside itself, started to heckle him. At this point, the egotistical actor stopped and bellowed: "Hey, don't blame me. I didn't write this junk!"

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*Partners in Crime*

Having spent hours on her hands and knees stripping several layers of old wax from our kitchen floor, my wife was exhausted and sat down for a cup of coffee. Just then the kids came charging into the kitchen, hungry and anxious to eat. Reminding them how hard Mom had worked on the floor and how nice it looked, I added, "Now if anyone spills anything on it, they first have to wipe it up and then spend an hour in their room."

Without hesitation, my wife deliberately poured some of her coffee on the floor, wiped it up, and headed straight upstairs. We didn't see her again for an hour.

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*Contributed by Peter J. Larson*
The celebrated pianist, Artur Rubinstein, often wondered if he gave a concert in disguise what kind of critical reception he would get. Eventually, he tried a concert under an assumed name and a beard. Critic's verdict: “The bearded wonder wasn't in a class with the great Rubinstein.”

-- John McCarthy

Margaret Thatcher, Former Prime Minister of Great Britain -- Commentators seem to regard one as something of a phenomenon because one set out in politics with conviction ... I say, if you're embarking on a great voyage across the ocean, you have to have some stars to steer by. And the stars have to be constant. It's no good steering by a shooting star.

Quote "The Spea
WHY DO THE WICKED PROSPER?
Jer. 12:1-4

I. Our question of inequities are not new.
   A. Why do the wicked prosper?
   B. Why does error flourish?
   C. How can he who never goes to church do so well and I do so poorly?
   D. Does God care?
   E. Am I wrong to notice?

II. Jeremiah Noticed & Wrote About It.
   A. It's God's book and he put it there for me to see.
   B. He wants me to see the whole picture--God does not settle all accounts in Sept. spirit.

III. If you have this question you must:
   A. 1st know God is righteous--He makes no mistakes--this is the major truth with which we begin.
      Jer. 12:1 "Righteous are thou, O Lord"
   B. Secondly, he lets me have that talk with Him--even as we sing we do with Jesus--and does not slap me for an impertinency.
      1. We question in the right spirit our earthly parents with a "why?"
      2. We can respectfully our Heavenly Father.
      Jer. 12:1"I plead with thee, yet let me talk"
      3. I'll admit he gets carried way & uses some pretty harsh language.
      4. We do have a merciful God!
   C. Jeremiah's Request to Speak.
      1. Perhaps already rejected by his own homefolk at Anathoth.
2. He is "painfully exercised by the mysteries of divine government."
   P.C.
3. In other words, "why do you do this, God?"
4. Starks Dinning, "Everyone knows how to handle the problem better than the man who has it."
5. It's "if-he-were-my-husband" attitude.

D. Some restraint used.
1. Can we convict God of injustices?
2. Can we harmonize the righteousness of God with some things that are tolerated?
3. Will God really let me debate the matter with Him?

E. Have you, Christian, lived your life without doubt?

IV. What's the Problem--The Wicked Prosper.
   Jer. 12:1 "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked; Wherefore are all they happy that deal."

A. Wicked & Prosperity
1. Does this seem inconsistent with God's holiness & his power to act?
2. Does it confuse about the principles of reward?
3. Am I shocked at His timing?
4. Is it true--they prosper?
5. Do I want God to act now, not later?

B. Am I Alone With This Problem?
1. Habakkuk dealt with it.
2. So did Job.

Job 21:7
C. Why Do They Prosper?
1. More shrewd?
2. Less scrupulous?
3. All energies consumed with prosperity—righteous think of other things.
4. More consecrated & undivided in goals?
5. Recall the Lord suffering of God—the ungodly are his creation—wants them to do better.
6. In the long run it will improve the faith of the godly. (P.C.)

D. He says God Aids It!!

v-1"Thou hast planted, yea they have taken"
1. They are "happy"—enjoying calm success with self complacency.
2. They taunt Jeremiah with the brag they will last longer than he will.
3. Plant—not uprooted yet—Providence helps them.
4. Progression—Plant, Root, Grow Fruit—that's success as they achieve prosperity.

E. At the same time they laugh at God.

v-2"Art near in their mouth & far from"
1. Hypocrisy practiced.
2. Words are right but heart isn't.
3. Reins—heart—seat of strong impulse.
4. Possible to have name of God on our lips but absent from our mind and true feelings.
5. Empty words are a mockery to God.
6. Must love God.
Deut. 10:12
7. We call his name but he still is of no account to us via our proper conduct--do as we please.
8. All the time the honest Joe is having trouble making ends meet.

Prov. 15:16
9. Lord surely you know me and tried my heart--Jeremiah is not hiding his feelings.

V. Then The Imprecatory Prayer.
v-3 "Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter"

Ps. 119
Ps. 137:9

VI. A. Overthrow Them Now
1. Natural to not want enemies to prosper.
2. Wants God to act now.

B. Word of caution
1. They did not have the light you now have.
2. But is it wrong to call on God to do what He said he was going to do?
3. Can you leave it with God's schedule?
4. Do we have any right to take God's judgement into our own hands?
5. He wants God to prepare these folk as you would a victim for sacrifice.

VI. Cry "How Long?" Solution.
A. Let doubt bring you to prayer.
B. Do not sit in judgement on God.
C. Maintain unwavering confidence in the righteousness of God.
D. Remember material prosperity is not real prosperity.
E. Be aware of future rectification.
F. Do not fret over judgements delayed—they will come.
G. Face the fact wrongdoings of others do inflict miseries on the innocent.
H. Wicked scoff "He shall not see our last end"—but He does.
   1. He does see & care about human conduct.
   2. He does have his rewards for both wicked & godly—yours have not fully come—neither has his!
I. God has not abdicated.
God and Human Governments

I. Does God really have anything to do with human government?
   A. Is he concerned with this matter?
   B. Is he powerful enough to engage in such?
   C. Let me read John Gibson's article and then study Jeremiah 18.

II. From Jeremiah 18:
   A. The Word came to Jeremiah from the Lord.
      1. How do you get more authoritative than that?
      2. If God speaks is there any other answer?
      3. Is Jeremiah supposed to believe and act?
   B. Go down to the potter's house.
      1. There I will cause thee to hear my words.
      2. Something will be explained to you.
   C. Then I went down - v.13.
      1. Obedience expected.
      2. Answer to be accepted.
      3. Valuable information will be yours.
   D. Potter wrought a work on the wheels.
1. Craft of the potter becomes a parable of religious truth.

Romans 9:20-22: "Shall the thing formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me?'"  

2. Potter makes a vessel as wheels spin.

3. Vessel becomes marred.
   a) Potter has a purpose.
   b) Obviously says God has a purpose.
   c) Work marred - not fault of wheel, nor workman, but the clay.
   d) First effort of Potter is formative.
   e) He wanted to accomplish something.
   f) If it fails, he'll reduce the clay to a lump and start again.
   g) Potter has power to leave the clay untouched or to make of it a vessel of honor or dishonor - a beautiful vase or ugly piece of crockery; a dainty cup for a prince's banquet or a coarse culinary utensil.
   h) One turn of the hand, one turn of the wheel quite alters the shape of clay - make a vessel, unmake it, remake it.
i) It shows the absolute state of
dependence on the potter - he
can shape destiny as he
pleases.

E. Israel, are you listening?
1. See the general method of God's
dealings with the human race?
2. God's absolute sovereign over the
being and life of every man - yet
troubling as it is, free will remains

Isa. 64:8 "Then I said: "Ah, Lord God, come, and set a wall around Jerusalem, and cleanse her from all her sin in all her ways."

III. Now comes the great question:

v.6 "Can I not do with you as this potter?

A. God has the sovereign right to do as
he wills with his own handiwork.
1. He has absolute power.
2. He is the Almighty.
3. He has the ultimate right of
supreme sovereignty to do as he
wills with his subjects.
4. "There lies the clay - a dead,
heavy, amorphous mass with no
possibility of spontaneously
generating forms of beauty. It
has no secret principle of
evolution to work it into some-	hing extraordinary." (PC)
5. See a presence of a greater power than human which conditions and determines an action.

6. The race, the nation, the church, represent relations and affinities which are not of mere human origin.

7. The hand of God is apparent in the formation and history of man.

B. Please note the I - cannot I!!

1. He has the incontestable authority and irresistible power to form and fashion kingdoms and nations as he pleases. (Scott)

2. It is very easy with God to make what changes he pleases - with one turn of the wheel - makes, unmakes, remakes.

3. He dispenses favor in the way of sovereignty, but never punishes by arbitrary power.

Psalms 89:13-14

4. Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

5. God has a purpose in every life as the potter has with the clay.

6. Every life is not for the same purpose.

7. The potter makes vessels of innumerable shapes.
8. Every life is successful as its own particular purpose is fulfilled.
9. The homely jug is perfect though it is very different from the graceful vase.
10. Life is no failure when it reaches the end intended.
11. God shapes our lives by the discipline of providence.
12. Man has free will, mysterious as it may be, connected with the almighty sovereignty of God.
13. To us it is an inexplicable problem - the harmony of divine sovereignty and human freedom.
    We can't tell how it will be done, only that it will be done.

C. God repeats: "As clay is in the potter's hand so are ye in my hands" - verse 6.

1. Though his mastery is complete, it is not lawless or purposeless.
2. Nothing walks with aimless feet.

2 Tim. 2:21

3. God uses both hands - one method fails he grasps another.

IV. God has power over the nation (v.7-10).
A. "God has both the incontestable authority and an irresistible ability to form in fashion of kingdoms and nations as he pleases to serve his own purpose." (Henry)

Job 12:23
Job 34:29
Psalms 107:23

B. Read verse 7-10.
1. Change in man's heart is met by a change in God's heart.
2. God's action is determined by man's conduct.
3. Firm declaration of God's intent and plan.

C. He specifically asked Judah to listen and he got their response.
Read verse 11-12.


E. Then he introduces the snow of Lebanon.
1. Snow never leaves the summit.
2. Water never dries up - yet the people forget.
3. He made the snow the emblem of spiritual life maintained in the midst of worldly scenes.
   a) Duty of servant of God to preserve this fresh, holy in midst of world and not flee from it.
b) Snow remains in midst of trying times.
c) Faithful always - true religion.
d) It may be tough, but do it.
e) Instant in and out of season.
f) Snow constantly renews supplies.

4. Old paths are forsaken - v.15.
a) God will punish - v.16.
b) Scatter them.
c) Show back and not face -
that's what Israel did in turning - God will do the same.
d) Jeremiah reviews his treatment - v.18.
e) Smite with tongue-slanderous accusations - rely on the human will not do anything commanded. Feel his words not the words of God.

F. What have we learned?
1. God is in control.
2. Man can rebel.
3. What God wants is always best.
   a) Blasphemy to think he deals cruelly with folk.
   b) He is not a heartless despot displaying arbitrary power by mere caprice.
   c) He is holy, just, true, and righteous.
4. We can't become what he wants by ourselves alone - we are clay - he gives it purpose.

5. God deals with us conditionally - don't think we are immune to punishment.

6. Truth is not affected by our rejection of it.

West Nashville Heights - 8/5/02
THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

On July 4, 1776, the delegates to the Continental Congress voted to accept the wording declaring America's independence from Great Britain.

This document recognizes the presence of God in human affairs in these words: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights... appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions... And for the support of this Declaration, with firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor."

Robert C. Byrd, U. S. Senator from West Virginia, delivered a message in Congress on June 27, 1962, in which he said, "Inasmuch as our greatest leaders have shown no doubt about God’s proper place in the American birthright, can we, in our day, dare to do less?" He continued, "In no other place in the United States are there so many, and such varied official evidences of deep and abiding faith in God on the part of Government as there are in Washington."

The phrase, "In God We Trust," appears opposite the President of the Senate. The same phrase, in large words inscribed in the marble behind the Speaker of the House of Representatives, is also clearly seen.

The crier who opens each session of the Supreme Court closes with the words, "God save the United States and the Honorable Court."

Visit the Lincoln Memorial and you will find carved in the wall these words: "...That this Nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

It seems so strange to me that a court in the United States should rule that the words, "under God" in our Pledge of Allegiance are unconstitutional for children to recite in school.

If our children have not learned that we are "under God," then they should be taught it. Read Jeremiah 18:7-10.

JOHN GIPSON
Sixth and Izard Church of Christ
Little Rock, Arkansas
THE SOVEREIGN GOD SWATS A SASSY CITY
Jer. 19:1-9

1. Did you ever use the expression, "It's not his to give."?
   A. Roommate loans another your clothes or car.
   B. Employee takes unfair advantage of time.
   C. Man deals with doctrine of God as tho his
      "think so's" makes it right.

1. We remind you, "It's not his to give."
2. God did & will since He's sovereign swats a
   sassy city.

II. Let me tell the Jeremiah story.
   A. Setting.
      1. Leaders had betrayed trust.
      2. Idolatry & slaughter of innocent had occurred.
      3. Took law into own hands.
      V. 5 "Which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither
      4. Made private, earthly counsel for deliverance.
      5. God calls for a reckoning.
   B. The people assembled.
      1. Ancient of the people (V. 1).
         (a) Calling civil & religious leaders.
         (b) This would be the elders.
      2. Ancient of the priests (V. 1).
         (a) Speech to Royalty.
         (b) Note scene: fearless prophet got royalty, chief
         priests, common people out in valley all to
         hear at one assembly.
      4. Inhabitants of Jerusalem (V. 3).
5. Lessons learned:
   (a) All shared – prince, priest, people – in departure, must share punishment.
   (b) Leaders first in crime must be 1st in responsibility
   (c) Makes special appeals to leaders because people look to them.
   (d) Guilty of vilest idolatry – would feel most severe punishment.

C. The Place Assembled.
1. Valley of son of Hinnom.
   (a) Holiness made this place a joy – sin made it a reproach.
   (b) In very place they looked for relief via idol’s help they’d be slaughtered.
2. By entry of East gate.
   (a) Hard to translate.
   (b) Gate of Potsherd.
   (c) Gate of Sun.

3. Lessons.
   (a) Word of God not restricted to any one place.
   (b) God wants all involved to hear. None exempt.

D. The Preaching.
1. It’s content: "the words that I shall tell thee" – V. 2.
2. He was to tell all the words – pleasant & unpleas.
3. God was their source.
4. Spoke at site of greatest wickedness.
5. Spoken c clarity - "ears tingle" – V. 3.
7. Spoken c illustration.
8. Language he used came from law c which they were familiar (Deut.). Nothing new to them.
9. Showed they were guilty of open defiance & since they were being confronted c if they could not plead innocent via ignorance.

E. The Illustrator.
1. "Go & get a potter's earthen bottle" (V. 1).
   (a) Get = buy.
   (1) Israel cost God something.
   (2) So did church - great outlay of mercy & cost.
   (b) Potter's earthen bottle.
   (1) Palestine famous for cheap & brittle pottery.
   (2) It was not on wheel - it was shaped & hardened - no change now possible - not on the wheel.
   (3) If unfit, nothing remains but to break it.

F. The Charge.
1. They have forsaken me (V. 4).
2. They've estranged this place (V. 4).
   (a) Counted it as if it were not mine.
   (b) Alienated it from true God.
   (c) Calvin, "It was monstrous perversity to tread the law under foot in so conspicuous a place, over which the sun daily rising reminded them of the light of God's law."
   (d) Treated this place as strangely as one that does not belong to their god.

3. Burned incense to other gods.
4. Filled place c blood of innocents.
5. Did things God commanded not - yea, he'd commanded the opposite - never even entered his mind.
G. The punishment.
1. Read verse 6-9.
   (a) Made void their counsel - comes from "pour out" - onomatopoeia word - gurgling sound like water coming from a jar.
   (b) Changed name of valley - Tophet from drum - used it to drown out cry of children offered in fire to Molech.
   (c) Complete destruction either by sword or starvation.
   (d) Exposed rottenness of false, self confidence.
2. Break the bottle.
   (a) Completely irreparable - no second chance.
   (b) Complete destruction shows what sin does to a life.
   (c) God can easily shatter any construction of man.
   (d) Only way to avoid justice of God is to flee to His mercy.

III. What Do I Learn?
A. Don't change anything of God.
B. Each carries a portion of responsibility - leaders first.
C. God will act on my life.
D. Delay of meeting some needs solidifies the departure & its irreparable consequence.

Last End 12-17-72
An article in the Firm Foundation of June 13 by Dub McLish was entitled "A New Attack on Human Reason!" It contained the following observations:

"Those who have lost their reverence for God's written word as an objective standard seem to end up either with the infidels, denying God altogether, or with the Pentecostals, honoring only their own personal, narrow, subjectivisms, called 'experiences.' Presently the trend among our brethren is in the latter direction. The inquiry, "Do you feel it?" the hollow "Hallelujahs" and "Praise the Lord", the darkened room, the sensitivity groups, the de-emphasis of the Word, are all a part of the scene of the super-emotional, mystical aura that some are seeking to super-impose on the Lord's church. James Bales is right as he says, "The distrust of the mind is an essential step into Pentecostalism, wherein emotions sweep aside reason and scripture."
I. Title of sermon--no way, only in Hollywood fiction.

II. Though theirs is tinsel and tape, the one I tell you is true and trustworthy--it's the way God deals with his people.
   A. I'll tell about Babylonia captivity.
   B. But principles apply to me--as I live three score and ten and know the captivity of a world gone crazy.
   C. In the end, they won.
   D. In the end, I will--so let's go to the story.

III. Time, Place, Person
   A. Time
      1. Earliest phase of Babylonia captivity, first wave there.
         a) Residue of elders, priests, prophets, carpenters, smiths.
         b) Best carried away.
      2. Some elders died--violent, natural, grief--residue.
      3. God punishes the wayward and brings to repentance and acknowledgment.
   B. Place - Babylon
      1. They are having a time adjusting.
2. False prophets and soothsayers are at work at home (to make the deportee jealous and try something risky), and telling them out in two years—not 70.
3. They are stirring up unrest.
4. "Don't harken to dreamers."
5. They say only smooth things (Isa. 30:10).

C. Person
1. Jeremiah who wrote letter from Jerusalem.
2. Sent letter by emissaries of the King Zedediah, named Elasah and Gemariah.
3. Purpose to encourage and instruct—do we write this kind?

IV. Tone of the Letter.
A. Adapt to current situation.
1. Build houses and dwell in them—not destroy his message.
2. Plant gardens and eat of them.
3. Marry and increase, not diminish. (Don't sit loose—you'll dwindle away.—Dumelow)
4. Seek of the city.
   a) Interest yourself in the peace and welfare of city when you are captive.
   b) Visit—take notice of, pay heed to.
c) Wholehearted cooperation with governmental power.

Rom. 13:1-12

d) Not slaves but deportees.
e) No call for compromise of faith but right relations within the family and community.
f) Submission, not sedition.
g) Make best of what you've got—don't brood over matters.

5. Pray to the Lord for it.
a) Pray for those who persecute you.

Matt. 5:44

b) Later pray for its fall.

Jer. 51:35
Ps. 137:8

c) Prayer necessary to achieve.

Ezek 36:37
Isa. 45:19

d) Keep on even in view of victory.

Dan. 9:2-4

B. Accept 70 years.

1. 70 not 2, but still have hope with victory.

2. We do well to know the time we have and use it wisely.

3. Patiently accept present state of things—you will not shorten it but can change it to the better.
4. Curb your impatience.
5. Be here for a lifetime--can I accept that some have it better than I do--temporarily.

C. Promise--I'll perform my good work.
1. Leave it to God to work out the deliverance.
2. You will return.
   a) God will triumph--not Neb.
   b) He'll give it--not your merit of it.
   c) Deliverance seemed improbable, but he'll bring them out at the appropriate time.

V. To live happy ever after.
   A. God knows the thoughts he thinks.
      1. He alone knows this.
      2. Don't think I've forgotten you.
      3. Thoughts higher than ours.

Isa. 55:9
4. God keeps in mind his purpose for us.
5. He has not lost sight of his plan--prosperity into misfortune.
6. While Jews were imbruing their hands in blood of his son, it was his fixed purpose to save us.

2 Tim. 1:9
Eph. 1:5 "Predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself."
B. Note he thinks.
   1. Thinking being—personal.
   2. Anthropomorphis view.
   3. Apply highest thinking to the simplets practical necessities.
   4. He can take care of the universe and still think about me.
   5. His thoughts a prelude to action.
   6. Directly connects himself with his children.

C. Thoughts of peace, not evil.
   1. Purpose is to grant peace and joy.
   2. Love and peace in due time accomplished.
   3. Perplexed way he deals with us yet always a gracious purpose.
   4. Like hammer stroke of sculptor removes imperfections and brings a new loveliness.
   5. Accept his discipline. Have unswerving confidence in him.
      Pray fervently.

D. He gives you an expected end.
   1. Promises a future and a hope.

2 Pet. 1:19

   2. Lit. a future and a hope.
   3. Future shows that as a people the history is not over.
   4. Wants us to have well-being, wholeness, harmony, peace.
5. He gives an end, an expectation.
6. Have faith in God's tomorrow; not inertness of despair nor suicide of folly (New).
7. Every captivity will have an end.
8. His purpose in due time will be accomplished.
SO YOU WANT TO BE KING!
Jer. 22:1-5

I. I don't want to be President;
   A. Mr. Mondale - don't ask me where's the beef.
   B. Mr. Hartpence - don't confuse me c a new idea.
   C. Mr. Jackson - I seldom see a rainbow.
   D. Mr. Reagan - I'll pray whether the Senate wants me to or not, & I'll not color my hair.

II. No, I want to be King!
   A. If men campaign & meet requirements to be president - are there Constitutional requirements for me to be King?
   B. Surely there was for Judah & there are today:
      Rev. 1:6 "And hath made us Kings & priests unto God
      1. It's from Jesus.
      2. Loved us.
      3. "Washed us from our sins in"

III. I want to go back to Jeremiah & see what a King had to do to keep his throne - am I under a lesser commitment today?
   A. 1st it came from God - "Thus saith the Lord."
      1. Authoritative voice.
      2. Repeats identify V. 3.
   B. Go down.
      1. Sent to palace c a message.
      2. House = palace.
      3. He's been in Valley of Hinnom, temple courts, streets, now go to King's palace.
      4. Preachers have to create their audiences - go where the people are. "Behold, I come to my own and mine own receive me not."
      5. Bring message to widest possible field.
C. Speak.
1. Tell what the Lord requires of thee.
2. Not time-serving or evasive utterances but plainness.
3. You may be called to difficult places.
4. Your message may be a sheer contradiction of what is being practiced.

D. Speak to King on throne, servants & people that enter by the gates.
1. From King on down.
2. Deliver directly to King as he stands before his people.
3. Kings are men & have human failings & sins.
4. God's above all & has message for everyone.

5. Do we get to men in high places?
   a.) Moses - Pharaoh.
   b.) Jeremiah - King.
   c.) John Bapt. - Herod.
   d.) Wise men - Herod.
   e.) Jesus - Pilate.

6. What that "throne" thought to get into your mind. All of us have influence!
   a.) They couldn't imagine David's family thrown out - but we don't get too big for God.
   b.) We need to confirm our covenant c God via our example.
   c.) You set pattern for your successors.
   d.) You are morally responsible for affairs of the day.

3.) Let's glory in the heritage handed down to us.
f.) We are all influenced by whom we stand & they are also us.

IV. These Must Be Your Platform.  
A. Execute Judgement & Righteousness.  
   1. Repeats Jer. 21:12.  
   2. Do right.  
       Do Justice!  
   3. Do all the good you can with all the power you've got.  
   4. Prosperity of land depends upon the morality of the gov.  
   5. Do we rely on physical resources, wealth, commerce, military power, political genius, schemes?  
   6. Not only give lip service, but carry out active policies.  
   7. Doesn't speak of armies & territorial increase - "after these things the Gentiles seek."  
   Matt. 6:25  
   Wherefore, if God so clothe the  
B. Righteousness.  
   1. Supreme request.  
   2. Be ye holy.  
   3. Love of being good & remorse at failing.  
   4. If unrighteousness bothers you - profanity, etc. - what must it do to God.  
   5. Do you as an earthly father love what ruins your children.  
   6. Every decision I make must be on basis of "Is it right?" and once made must be carried out.  
C. No wrong.
1. Lit., something twisted from a straight line.
2. Do we profess too much?
3. Are we unfeeling toward one who has done wrong?
4. Has everybody had my chance?
5. Do no wrong in intentions. (Weight motives – to glory of God or otherwise? Selfish?)
6. No wrong in practice.
7. Biblical Illustrator told of English farmer – Earle's dogs & horses ruined his wheat. Earle paid 50#. Harvest farmer came back c 50#. Why? Best wheat he'd had. Earle, "As it should be among men – tore up ck. – rewrote it for 100#. Cash & save for your son when 21 & tell him where it came from & how it came about.
8. Betty told me story of worker who got no promotion because Boss saw him hide. 2 - 8c butter pats. Thus couldn't trust him c bigger jobs.
9. Be honest – you tell your Dr. about pain – be honest c God.

D. No violence.
1. Heb, word order connects both verbs: wrong & violence to each substantive.
2. Stranger, fatherless, widow; shed innocent bloo
3. Refrain from harm to any defenseless part of society. (Stole purse when lady trapped by bus)
4. Selfishness so subtle it influences us.
5. Non-intervention may be cowardly.

V. End Result. "Deliver the oppressed out of the hand of the oppressor."
1. V. 2.
2. V. 5.
4. Rewards come to the just.
5. Obedience brings well-being.
6. Reception of word shows corresponding results.
B. If ye will not.
1. Disobey - house desolate.
2. Conditional element there.
3. Some absolutely refuse - "let him alone - join to idol."
4. "No man, however great his resources, can build up anything glorious and satisfactory on a foundation of disobedience to God."
Pul. Com.
5. God can't swear by anyone greater.
Heb. 6:13 "For when God made promise to Abraham
VI. Will I?:
A. Execute judgement Righteousness
C. Do no wrong
D. No violence - particularly remember stronger, father less, widow, innocent."
WHAT HAS THE STRAW TO DO WITH THE GRAIN?
Jer. 23:23-29

I. Never has man been subjected to tests quite like those God asks.
A. They are not to trick.
B. They are to enlighten and to redirect.
C. From one paragraph of Jeremiah we study some.

II. Am I a God at hand - or afar off? (V. 23)
A. Where are you in your estimate of God's nearness?
1. If I'm doing evil, I want him far away.
2. If I'm in despair, I feel He's so far He doesn't care.

Ps. 10:1 "Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in time of trouble?
Ps. 73:11 "How doth God know, is there knowledge in the God of Israel?"
Ps. 94:6-7 "They slay the widow & stranger, and murder the fatherless, Yet they say the Lord
Job 22:13 "How doth God know? Can he judge thru the dust?"
B. What does this question do for me?
1. Comforts - he's near to help - He knows & cares.
2. Conforms - He's there to see, praise or punish.

III. Can Any hide that I cannot see? (V. 24)
A. Are all things naked & open before the eyes of him with whom I have to do - my accountant?
1. False teachers taught God did not see the sins of earth.
2. Jeremiah taught you cannot conceal things from God.
B. Ans. "Do not I fill heaven & earth?"
1. Always God.
2. Always near.
3. He's omniscient.
4. Heathen that God confined to destroy.
I Kings 8:27 "The Heaven of heavens...much less how
Acts 17:27 "That they should seek the Lord, if haply
Eph. 1:22-23 "And hath put all things under his feet.
C. Effect on me:
1. Are we so ignorant as to think God does not see
or account?
2. It shoots attitude: "If we succeed before
what matters God - He's away & blindl
3. We never escape the notice of God.
Prov. 15:3 "The eyes of the Lord are in every place,
1 Cor. 4:5 "Will bring to light the hidden things of dark
2 Chron. 16:9 "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro,
4. No change of place brings us nearer God - He's
everywhere.
IV. How long shall we prophesy lies? (v. 26)
A. Modus Operandi.
1. The false teachers pretended they had a new
revelation "I have dreamed a dream."
   a.) Repeated for emphasis.
   b.) Used a suspect, yet legitimate medium.
Nu. 12:6 "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord
Deut. 13:1 "If there arise...a dreamer of dreams
Joel 2:28 "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and
c.) Approached c solemnity.
2. They went to call the shots.
   a.) "Pretentions to a new revelation may prove as
dangerous to religion as denying all revelation.
   (Henry & Scott)"
b.) They try to get people to forget God's name.
   (False prophets in God's name do more harm
   than in Baal's name).

B. What does this say to me?
1. Preachers are of immense value.
2. The word must be kept pure - do not corrupt.
2 Cor. 2:17 "For we are not as many which corrupt th
1 Cor. 9:16 "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel
3. I must never move one from God but to Him.
4. People may speak in God's name who are really
   His enemies.
5. Plato spoke of "a line in the soul" - where's
   mine.

V. What has the straw to do with the grain? (V. 23)
A. This is the crux of the matter.
1. Prophecies of false & true teachers are to be
   contrasted in value as chaff & wheat.
   a.) Contrast between real & counterfeit.
   b.) One worthless, one life sustaining.
   c.) Dreams - empty word - substance.
2. Speculation has no educating or ennobling influence
   a.) Fills mind w/o strength of character.
   b.) Dreams short lived - word is eternal.
   c.) Chaff easily blown away - so are all systems of
      men.
   d.) Beza's motto:
      Hammer away, ye hostile bands
      Your hammers break; God's anvil stands.
3. Can't mix wheat & straw & get nourishment;
   fancies of men are light & worthless.
4. Do dreams:
   a.) Make people forget or remember God?
   b.) Are they nourishing?
   c.) Are they fruitful?

5. Am I wheat or straw?
   a.) God never abdicated His right to judge.
   b.) We may grow together "until" --
   c.) There will be a separation.

B. For me:
   1. Stay a substance.
   2. Word is fire & hammer -- consumes evil, purifies
      the good.
   3. Only one way to hide our sins -- in Jesus.
   4. Prima facie evidence of the message itself is the
      final argument -- Blank.
   5. With word we must exalt God's name, nourish,
      be productive as its burns & breaks.

Harding Baptist Summer Commencement 8-14-81
West Full. 10-4-81
NOW,” said the professor cheerfully, “please pass all your test papers to the side of the room and kindly insert a carbon sheet under each paper so I can correct all the errors at once.”

GOOD STORIES

President Roosevelt got tired of smiling that big smile and saying the usual things at all those White House receptions. So, one evening he decided to find out if anybody was paying attention to what he was saying.

As each person came up to him with extended hand, he flashed that big smile and said, “I murdered my grandmother this morning.” People would respond automatically with comments such as “How lovely!” or “Just continue with your great work.”

Nobody listened to what he was saying — except one foreign diplomat. When the president said, “I murdered my grandmother this morning,” the diplomat responded softly, “I’m sure she had it coming to her.”

Following the Architect’s Design—Forrest Haggard tells about a church building in his city. Those who meet it like to say, “It is a Lloyd Wright original.” They enjoy the reputation meeting in a building designed by the world famous architect. But, he explains, the facts of history do not support their claim.

“It is true,” says Dr. Haggard, “that Frank Lloyd Wright was asked to draw up the master plans. He did so. But then members of the building committee began to change the structure to fit their own personal wants. The result was definitely not the result of the master architect. Wright disclaimed any relationship with the final product.”

The comparison to Christianity is all too clear. Jesus left His plan for the church. The blueprints are found in the New Testament. But over the centuries, men have modified and mutilated the architect’s design.

We must go back to the original pattern to see afresh the Scriptural portrait of the called out ones. Then we must seek to recreate that fellowship in the twentieth-century world.
TWO BASKETS OF FIGS
Jeremiah 24

I. A story of contrasts.
   A. About 597 BC.
   B. A lesson for all time--let's move to see it.

II. The Object Lesson of Figs.
   A. 2 baskets of figs set before Jeremiah.
      1. Baskets set down in readiness to be examined by the priest.
      2. He rejects all fruit unsound.

Deut. 26:2

3. Two baskets.
   a) Same advantage & disadvantage.
   b) Same seed.
   c) Same soil.
   d) Same training.
   e) Same climate & sunshine.

4. Even today.
   a) Same parents.
   b) Same religion.
   c) Same teachers.
   d) Same discipline.
   e) Same privileges.
   f) Same opportunities.

5. Before the temple of the Lord.

6. Occurred after captivity came.
   a) Took princes = leading men Ezekiel, Daniel.

2 Kings 24:10-17 (2 Kings 19)
   b) Cream of crop taken--hard to understand!
   c) Carpenters & smiths taken.
7. Those left!
   a) Barnes said not worth taking.
   b) They that remained scorned the captive folk.

Ezek. 11:14-21

8. Why good taken & evil left?
   a) Good--taken--exiled.
   b) Evil--left in homeland.

   (1) Wanted to walk after own devices.

   (2) Those remained were unfaithful in spite of having book of law, temple, faithful prophets.

   (3) Bad--Zedekiah (Bad apples even then!)

   (4) Rotten fig on steps of the temple!

   (5) They stayed in Jerusalem.

B. Jeremiah is asked what he saw.
   1. We are led to responsibility.
   2. We must not be blind or thoughtless.
   3. We have a private, individual responsibility.
   4. God wants us to learn.

III. God Makes an Explanation.

A. I acknowledge the Good Figs.
   1. I regard with favor.
   2. I have a purpose for them and nothing will alter this.
B. I sent them for their good.
   1. Captivity in Babylon would eradicate idolatry.
   2. It was for their good.
   3. Exile not a tragedy; it was God's discipline.
   4. Though captives had nothing they would learn faithfulness & trust in God.
   5. For their good--have we profited from our discipline?
   6. "Their captivity was to square the rough stones & make them fit for his building." (Henry)
   7. They'd learn more about God in Babylon than in Jerusalem.
   8. Hardest suffering may lead to happiest results.

Matt. "Rejoice & be exceedingly glad"

9. Some say, "God has blessed us" & this is open to question. He may just leave alone those he's given up on.

10. God favorably looks on those who submit to his chastisement.

C. I will Bring Them Again.
   1. These are the hope of the true religion of the future.
   2. His intentions are never frustrated.
   3. God owns those who are his in all circumstances.
   4. Build, plant, tear down, uproot, contrasts.
4. Purified by their suffering they'd return to the Lord with a pure heart (v-7).

D. The Evil's End.
   1. Read v-9, 10.

Deut. 28:25
28:37
   2. Removed--tossed to & fro.
   3. "I give them up to agitation"(Calvin).
   4. Trouble comes in various form:
      sword, famine, pestilence--you may not know every form.
   5. God has a variety of judgements--escape one, another comes.

IV. God Asks Me Jeremiah's Question: What Do I See?
   A. Morally men are divided into two distinct classes.
   B. Deep line of cleavage is moral.
   C. God gave this visual aid to encourage the burdened and warn the indifferent, idle.
   D. Proximity to the temple is no sign of the holiness of the people living in its vicinity.
      1. Jerusalem folks had everything exiles left behind yet failed.
      2. Geography doesn't matter; it's whether one stands with God. (Blackwood)
      3. Some folks never seem to see or learn anything from life's lessons.
F. Can't determine God's love or hatred by what is before us.
G. Best men may be greatest sufferers.
   1. High character can invoke trouble.
   2. Dealt with good more severely at first than evil folk.
H. Character & Destiny do not depend on circumstances.

Paragon Mills - 6/30/93
West Nashville Heights - 8/11/93
Jefferson Ave., Cookeville, TN - 9/22/93

Schooch, Ky - 10/13/93
Radclif, KY - 10/27/93
IT TAKES COURAGE TO SPEAK THE TRUTH

Jer. 26:8-16

I. In America, though not true elsewhere, we have little pressure against the preacher and the gospel truth.
   A. He may be ostracized.
   B. He can be harshly criticized.
   C. His family can be made to feel miserable.
   D. He can get fired and criticism follows him when he's gone—but he doesn't expect to be assaulted.

II. The need to pray for preachers as his neck financially can be on the block. (I was told "you've not had a raise in five years—you should be fired or else the elders should).
   A. Pray he'll preach the whole council.
   B. Pray that he'll be fair and without favoritism.
   C. Feel his financial peril.

III. It was different for Jeremiah.
   A. Prophesied during reign of wicked and blasphemous Jehoiakim.
B. He started when young.

Jer. 1:6

C. Continued until the fall of Jerusalem—more than 40 years, then taken to Egypt.

1. Jerusalem fell because of sin.
2. He advised them to submit to Babylon.
3. Sins hideous: rebelled against God and rejected His word.
4. Dishonest, oppressed the poor, coveted murder, adultery, falsehood, deceit, idolatry.
5. His plea to submit to Babylon greatly displeased the leaders.
6. Told to shut up, put in pit, martyr.
8. He taught by object lessons:
   b) Jars of wine (13:12-14).
   c) Pottery vessel (18:1-12).
   d) Good and bad figs (25:24).

IV. From our text:

A. Stood in court of God's house to teach publicly.
B. Was not to "diminish one word."
C. Say it even if unpleasant.
D. Warn them God would destroy temple like Shiloh.
E. Priest and others "Let's kill him."
Though arrested, told he'd not die,
appreciated his courage to continue.
G. He wanted to save the people--yet leaders wanted to kill him.

Jer. 5:30-31
Jer. 23:21-22
Jer. 23:10-11
Jer. 23:13-14
Jer. 7:8-11

H. He was tried for telling about Shiloh.
Josh. 18:1
1 Sam. 4:10-22
1. Said worthy of death.
2. Served as his own lawyer.
3. Said he said only what God said.
4. Wanted him to retract.

I. Said he was in God's hands.
J. Acquitted--for spoke only what God said.

(Notes from Elam's Notes--Page 134, on May 28, 1922).
SOME YOKES WE BREAK: SOME WE CAN'T

Jer. 27:1-2, 11

I. I do not believe the statements to be contradictory—
but rather reveal the full range of our reception.

Acts 8:4-8 "Therefore they that were scattered abroad
8 "There was great joy in the city."

A. This is preceded by persecution in Jerusalem;

Stephen stoned, Saul persecuting. "He made
havoc of the church."

B. Jesus told it too.

Matt. 10:22 "And ye shall be hated of all men for my

II. When light exposes dirty & truth unmask error, the

forces of darkness fight back.

A. I must have the courage to speak the truth.

B. I must not compromise a holy conviction to bow
to the will of men.

C. To capitulate is to compound the error.

III. I want to tell you a classic example of a man who
dared to be different — Jeremiah.

A. His task most unpleasant.

1. Suppose today I would say "Mr. Chernenko is a

minister of God — only as we submit to Russia
can we be saved.

2. You'd say:

   a.) He's not God's.

   b.) Surrender is not salvation.

   c.) If you love God & country, fight this evil.

3. Then have all the preachers arise & call me a

   traitor — do you think I'd sell my package?

B. This was Jeremiah's assignment.
IV. The Moving Event.
A. Chapter 27.
1. See the envoys of many co. assembled & tell them - 5 nations
   Neb. is it - don't revolt!
V. 6 "Now have I given all these lands into the hand
2. Compound c "my servant."
   Isa. 45:1 Cyrus "God's anointed."
3. Add punishment if you disobey.
V. 8 "And it shall come to pass, that the nation and l
   a.) Need to know they array themselves against
      Lord of Hosts.
   b.) None a match for God.
4. Lord dramatized it c a yoke put on Jeremiah.
V. 2 "Thus saith the Lord to me: Make me
   a.) It was strong symbolism.
I Kings 22:11 Zedekiah made horns of iron
Ezek. 7:23 Ezek. had a chain
Isa. 20:2 Isaiah walked naked & barefooted
   b.) K. C. Dony had a sack, remember. We dislike
      symbols.
   c.) Jer. had a yoke. Dehoff says made 7, 5 envoy:
      self & Zedekiah.
5. God told the folk who he was.
   Read verses 4-6.
B. Opposition.
1. Prophets & priest prophesy lies.
V. 14 "Therefore harken not unto the words of the pro
2. Vessels are not coming back. (V.-E.)
a.) When an emperor established his suzerainty over a small state, he usually helped himself to treasury.

b.) People vainly believed they were.

3. Choice serve & live; or laid waste (V. 17).

4. Pillars 27' tall - 15' thick (I Kings 7:15-50) (Jer. 52:21)

C. Chapter 28.
1. Enter Hananiah.
   a.) Took strong exception.
   b.) Break yoke.
   c.) Deliverance in 2 yrs. - Time setter!
   d.) Uses Jer.'s form "Thus saith the Lord."
   e.) 14 Hananiah's in Bible - 3 in Jeremiah.

V. 4 "I will break the yoke.
   a.) Jeremiah said Amen - (Irony?)
   b.) Read 28:5-9 - wish all good things, don't we?
   3. Hananiah reaches over & breaks Jeremiah's yoke

V. 10 & 11
4. "And the prophet Jeremiah went his way." (V.11
   a.) 2 stood in temple - drama!
   b.) 2 claimed to be prophets.
   c.) 1 unmasked in eyes of people.
   d.) Jeremiah withdrew - "nothing to say." If we don't know silence is the better part of action.
   Might have caused violence.

5. Jeremiah returns (V. 12) Patiently wait!
   a.) Has yoke of iron (V. 13).
   b.) Addressed Hananiah -
   1) Lord didn't send you.
2) Made people trust a lie.
3) Cast thee off.
4) This year thou shalt die because you taught rebellion. (Died in 2 months) {Laconic note}
c.) Rebellion would make it harder - wood to iron & you won't break tho!

V. Let me then see,
A. Some things I won't be able to change - accept.
B. Make the best of what you've got - Chapter 29 - build houses in Babylon - raise families. There will be 70 years of captivity.
C. Cry the message!
Jer. 27:13 "Why will ye die, thou & thy people
D. How little time, like Hananiah, any of us have.
E. How vital is your loyalty!

West End 4-8-84
I. Title of sermon--no way, only in Hollywood fiction.

II. Though theirs is tinsel and tape, the one I tell you is true and trustworthy--it's the way God deals with his people.
   A. I'll tell about Babylonia captivity.
   B. But principles apply to me--as I have lived three score and ten and know the captivity of a world gone crazy.
   C. In the end, they won.
   D. In the end, I will--so let's go to the story.

III. Time, Place, Person
   A. Time
      1. Earliest phase of Babylonia captivity, first wave there.
         a) Residue of elders, priests, prophets, carpenters, smiths.
         b) Best carried away.
      2. Some elders died--violent, natural, grief--residue.
      3. God punishes the wayward and brings to repentance and acknowledgement.
   B. Place - Babylon
1. They are having a time adjusting.
2. False prophets and soothsayers are at work at home (to make the deportee jealous and try something risky), and telling them out in two years - not 70.
3. They are stirring up unrest.
4. "Don't harken to dreamers."
5. They say only smooth things - Isaiah 30:10.

C. Person
1. Jeremiah who wrote letter from Jerusalem.
2. Sent letter by emissaries of the king Zedekiah, named Elasah and Gemariah.
3. Purpose to encourage and instruct - do we write this kind?

IV. Tone of the Letter
A. Adapt to current situation.
1. Build houses and dwell in them - not destroy his message.
2. Plant gardens and eat of them.
3. Marry and increase, not diminish. (Don't set loose -- you'll dwindle away -- Dummelow).
4. Seek of the city.
   a) Interest yourself in the peace and welfare of city when you are captive.
b) Visit—take notice of, pay heed to.
c) Whole-hearted cooperation with governmental powers.

Rom. 13:1-12

d) Not slaves, but deportees.
e) No call for compromise of faith, but right relations within the family and community.
f) Submission, not sedition.
g) Make best of what you've got—don't brood over matters.

5. Pray to the Lord for it.
a) Pray for those who persecute you.

Matt. 5:44

b) Later pray for its fall.

Jer. 51:35
Ps. 137:8

c) Prayer necessary to achieve.

Ezek. 36:37
Isa. 45:19

d) Keep on even in view of victory.

Dan. 9:2-4

B. Accept 70 years.

1. 70 not 2, but still have hope with victory.
2. We do well to know the time we have and use it wisely.
3. Patiently accept present state of things—you will not shorten it but can change it to the better.
4. Curb your impatience.
5. Be here for a lifetime—can I accept that tome have it better than I do—temporarily.

C. Promise—I'll perform my good work.
1. Leave it to God to work out the deliverance.
2. You will return.
   a) God will triumph—not Neb.
   b) He'll give it—not your merit of it.
   c) Deliverance seemed improbable, but he'll bring them out at the appointed time.

V. To Live Happy Ever After
A. God knows the thoughts he thinks.
   1. He alone knows this.
   2. Don't think I've forgotten you.
   3. Thoughts higher than ours.

Isa. 55:9

4. God keeps in mind his purpose for us.
5. He has not lost sight of his plan—prosperity, not misfortune.
6. While Jews were imbruing their hands in blood of his son, it was his fixed purpose to save us.

2 Tim. 1:9

Eph. 1:5 "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

B. Note he thinks.
1. Thinking being personal.
2. Anthropomorphic view.
3. Apply highest thinking to the simplest practical necessities.
4. He can take care of the universe and still think about me.
5. His thoughts a prelude to action.
6. Directly connects himself with his children.

C. Thoughts of peace, not evil.
1. Purpose is to grant peace and joy.
2. Love and peace in due time accomplishes.
3. Perplexed way he deals with us yet always a gracious purpose.
4. Like hammer stroke of sculptor removes imperfections and brings a new loveliness.
5. Accept his discipline. Have unswerving confidence in him.
   Pray fervently.

D. He gives you an expected end.
   1. Promises a future and a hope.

2 Pet. 1:19

2. Lit. a future and a hope.
3. Future shows that as a people the history is not over.
4. Wants us to have well-being, wholeness, harmony, peace.
5. He gives an end, an expectation.
6. Have faith in God's tomorrow; not inertness of despair nor suicide of folly (New).
7. Every captivity will have an end.
8. His purpose in due time will be accomplished.
THE MAGNET OF THE ALMIGHTY

I. Suppose now:
   A. You were in captivity--
   B. You wondered if you were forgotten--
   C. You questioned whether things could ever be any better--
   D. You faced one frightful calamity after another--
   E. You despaired of hope--

II. What would it take to move you? What would lift your spirits? What will give relief? (For after all, is not the above the condition of sinners - could we find help in reviewing God's dealing with captive Israel?)

III. Facts Beyond Question.

   A. "A+ that time saith the Lord"
      1. My God knows the precise moment of proper timing.
      2. By God speaks.
      B. I will be the God of all the Families of Israel.
         1. Israel should be Israel - He wants no division.
            (Ellicott)
      2. Assyria had captured Northern Israel BC 722.
      3. Southern Israel in Babylon.
      4. Note God sanctifies the family & has loving names for His people: house, family, body, people.
   B. "Inhabit my house forever"
   C. "And they shall be my People"
      1. Can the paltry power of either Babylon or Assyria cancel a promise of God?
2. Are not past experiences of God's love a pledge of the future?
3. Does He now deal w/ future events as tho not a dark cloud in the sky?
D. We move from bad to better - all things work together for good!
1. Left of the sword - found grace in the wilderness. Hosea 11:1 "When Israel was a child, then I loved him..."
2. God will do for them what He did for fathers in Egypt.
3. As I have loved you in the past, I'll continue to in future - I'll continue to be myself.
4. We escape slaughter of sword & move to rest.
a.) We rest in the consciousness of His favor.
Jer. 6:16 "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, b.) Present troubles are no proof of God rejecting us.
c.) Best of God's servants are severely tried.
d.) Love doesn't always look like love.
e.) Rest - a settling, an establishing a rest.
IV. The Magnet of the Almighty.
V. 3 "I have loved thee c an everlasting love: therefor...
A. The Lord appeared.
1. Verb has more to do c distance than time - "of old."
2. At a distance the deliverer heard a cry for deliverance, came to help.
3. From Jerusalem God heard the cry in Babylon.
B. I have loved you.
1. God loves you as tho there's no other person on earth.
2. His love not momentary but from everlasting.
3. His love's unvarying.
4. It's wonderful when you consider our:
   (a) Unworthiness.
   (b) Indifference - we neglect it.
   (c) Unfaithfulness.
5. God will do all possible for our highest good.
6. His loving kindness is continuously given.

C. With loving Kindness He draws.
1. Look at the drawing. *Webster\textsuperscript{5}*
   (a) Does it speak against free agency of man?
   (b) Do we still have liberty of action?
   (c) Does He draw us because we are such fine folks & He needs us.

2. What say the Scriptures on drawing?
Hosea 11:4 "I drew them with cords of a man, with b Stunning in day of his power"
Ps. 110:3 "willing in day of his power"
John 6:44 "No man can come to me, except the Father"
Eph. 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in C
   "By grace of God I am what I am"

3. Our salvation due to his love.
1 Jn. 4:19 "We love him, because he first loved us."
Jn. 15:16 "Ye have chosen me, but I have chosen you"
Deut. 7:7-8 (Read)
4. We glory not in man.
Rom. 3:27 "Where is boasting then? It is excluded.
Eph. 2:8-9 "For by grace are ye saved, through faith;
5. Will our proud hearts allow us to be dependent on God?

6. He calls us to:

Eph. 1:4 "According as he hath chosen us in him before

Eph. 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ

Rom. 8:29 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did pre

Deut. 10:15-16 "Only the Lord had a delight in thy fie

Week End 9-7-80  Week End 9-31-80

2nd Spiritual Intensive Care Workshop, Gateway

Sheek, Southgate, Mich. 9-1-80

Central Church, Minnville 10-22-80
On the spur of the moment, I asked 120 people in a Bible Class after reading from 1 Peter 4, "When you first hear the name God, what was your first reaction? they answered in this order:

1. Heavenly Father
2. Superior or Supreme Being
3. Creator
4. Love and Heaven (2 items tied)
5. All powerful
6. My Savior who loves me with tender care
7. The Almighty

The following things were presented in somewhat singular fashion:

- Eternal
- Powerful Master
- King
- Salvation
- Light
- Redeemer
- Only Diety
- Ever present, all knowing and caring
The nightmarish future which George Orwell and Aldous Huxley fantasied is closer than we think. No one is laughing now at the idea of babies hatched in state nurseries and electronic behavior modification practiced by a "Ministry of Love" as Orwell suggested in his book, *1984*, The Brave New World, which Huxley imagined in the 25th century is sounding more and more like the 20th century.

In this "brave new world" there are no absolute norms, no eternal foundations, no spiritual dimensions to human nature. God is only an emanation of physical and chemical processes in man's mind. Man is only the product of evolution, a creature of chance, alone in the universe, who, as psychologist Erich Fromm said, "must become his own source of comfort."
During World War II, Allied troops captured a German city. In cleaning out pockets of resistance, they found the following scrawled on the walls of a basement where frightened people had hidden from the Gestapo:

I believe in the sun even when it's not shining.
I believe in love even when I can't feel it.
I believe in God even when He's silent.

Another problem arises from the story of the
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COVENANT
Jer. 31:31-34

I. When Jer. spoke.
   A. Law of Moses was 900 yrs. old.
   B. It was 600 yrs. to Christ.
   C. Yet he made, as Hugo McCord points out, a 4-fold statement about the New Covenant.

   Jer. 31:31-34 "Behold, the days come, saith the Lor:
   1. Heart written.
   2. Personal relationship.
   3. Exclusive - those who know God.
   4. Proclaim remission of sins.

II. In seeing these 4 characteristics:
   A. It's written in the heart.
      1. Earlier on stone.
      Exo. 24:4-7 "And Moses wrote all the words of the Lor:
      12
      34:28 "And he was there with the Lord forty day
      2. It was written externally.
      3. It was outward.
      4. It was visible.
      5. New:
         (a) Heart.
         (b) Internal.
         (c) Within.
         (d) Invisible.
      6. When now came they:
         (a) Heard.
         Acts 2:37 "Now when they heard this, they were pri
         (b) Received.
         Acts 2:41 "Then they that gladly received his word w
(c) Jesus blood on them.
Heb. 10:22 "Let us draw near with a true heart in full
12:24 "And to Jesus the mediator of the new con
1 Pet. 1:2 "Elect according to the foreknowledge of C
7. Ea. person entered covenant c his God.
2 Cor. 3:3 "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared
8. You must read the message, accept & act on it
to effect the new covenant.
Heb. 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerf
Lu. 8:15 "But that on the good ground are they, whic
9. Note his teenage statement.
B. It has a personal relationship.
1. God's always wanted to be c man he made - did
   in Garden.
2. He’s God - we His people.
3. The Christian experiences God not sensorously
   but by faith.
Phil. 4:5 "The Lord is at hand"
1 Pet. 2:9 "A people of God's own possession
Heb. 2:11 "For both he that sanctifieth and they who
2 Cor. 6:16-18 "And what agreement hath the temple
Rev. 21:7 "He that overcometh shall inherit all thing
C. All will know who the Lord is.
1. Not a national or family pact but an individual
   one.
D. Remission of Sins.
Heb. 9:22 "W/o the shedding of blood is no remission
Heb. 10:4 "It is impossible that the blood of bulls & g
John 1:29 "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto
Mk. 1:4 "John did baptize in the wilderness, and pre
Heb. 10:3 "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance of sins,
Heb. 10:14 "For by one offering he hath perfected for all time those who are sanctified.
1. God deals with you as tho you'd never sinned.
I. Truly one of the strange stories of the Bible.
   A. Jeremiah tells it.
   B. Did it for a purpose—a tribe of people 300 years later loyal to suggestion of an ancestor's word more than Israel to God.
   C. Came at abnormal time to the people as they came to a city where they did want to be, yet chased there by an invader.
      1. Obviously we'll encounter challenges to our faith.
      2. We will encounter places and circumstances out of the ordinary that challenge our faith.
   D. Use this to gauge our own steadfastness to Word of God and also to distinguish the difference between faith and tradition.

II. Tell the story of the Rechabites.
   A. Jonadab followed Rechab:
      1. Drink no wine—you, sons, forever.
      2. Neither build houses.
      3. Nor sow seed.
      4. Nor plant vineyards.
      5. Nor have any
      6. In tents all your days.
7. Be strangers.
8. Obeyed and done all commanded us.
9. Fled for safety to city (V-6-11).
10. Any exist today of tribe?

B. Read
1 Chron. 2:55
1. Were they Kenites from Hobab, Moses' father-in-law.
2. Were they now fleeing?

2 Kings 10:15-27
Num. 6:1-4
Mal. 1:6

III. To Them Came a Time of Testing
Jer. 35:1-5

A. Jeremiah, servant of God, issued orders.
1. It's God's word he issued (V-1).
2. Sets wine before them via God's command—not word of Rechab.
3. In Jerusalem.
4. Chamber in temple of God, small group.
5. Obviously it's wine and plenty of it.
6. Available
7. Word of prophet commands them.

B. They reacted in family loyalty.
1. They are in a city—-not in the fields where they belong.
2. Could they pitch tents in town?
3. If forced to abandon prescribed ways with the emergency, is it not alright to drink in the house of God?
4. It's the same God that has been protecting you for 300 years—so now is a time of change!
5. Who is more important to obey God or Rechab?
7. Is it wrong under these circumstances?
8. But still they said No! (V-6-10), as we read it.

C. Resounding Refusal!
   1. Loyal to our heritage.
   2. Courteous refusal.
   3. Rightful reason to them given.
   4. Circumstances do not change our loyalty.

IV. Jeremiah's Point
   A. We can appreciate their loyalty to Rechab.
      1. But he was a man, not God.
   B. Are we loyal to Word of God?
      1. Is there a difference between custom and Scripture? Yes, No
2. Is a thing right or wrong due to antiquity, custom, popularity, Scripture?

3. Obey man in anything vs. God in everything—good or bad?

4. Does not our earthly father expect his children to obey him—what about heavenly? Yes, No

5. Is not God the author if a "reasonable service?" Yes, No

6. Can I see the difference in man's commands and God's? Yes, No

7. Just where do I go to learn God's commands? Conscience, customs, human judgment, antiquity (of 300 years)? Word? Yes, No

8. Am I willing to be a stranger? Yes, No

9. Do I venerate anything above Word of God? Yes, No

10. Can the Word be misused? Yes, No

11. Do I employ custom in dress? Language?

12. If they were loyal in all, am I loyal in part to God's Word? or all?

13. Once seeing truth will I accept it?

14. Can I repent? Turn?

15. What authority do I quote as my proof in the religious world?
16. Is my courage strong enough to always obey God?
17. Is there value in the teachings of our earthly father?
18. Paul speaks of the "obedience of faith." Do we?
19. Acid test: obey God or man?
20. What is the foundation of our faith? Sand? Rock?
21. Will our convictions be cited by our children? Others?
22. Strangers in a foreign land--are we?
23. Does "everyone does it" make it right?
24. Are their initiatives to be declined regardless of where and by whom extended?
25. Do circumstances and expediency alter obedience?
forced into by reason of the shortage of space to pitch tents within Jerusalem. The very fact that one of the ancestral tenets might have been being violated at this time would have also added to the temptation to drink wine. Once a rule of conduct is broken in a single particular, it is easier to break it in another.

Beyond this, there was the fact of their being in strange circumstances in a city not their own. Matthew Henry noted that the very situation suggested: "Go ahead and drink wine. It's free. You have broken one rule of your order by moving into Jerusalem, why may you not break this rule also?" Who has not heard exclamations such as, "Well, everyone is doing it!" or "When in Rome, do as Rome does!"

The keeper of the threshold . . . (v. 4). "There were three of these keepers in the Temple, answering to the outer and inner courts of the Temple, and to the entrance of the Temple itself. These were officers of high rank, having precedence next to the High Priest and his deputy."

Verses 6–11. But they said, We will drink no wine; for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons, for ever: 7 neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any; but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land wherein ye sojourn. 8 And we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters; 9 nor to build houses for us to dwell in; neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: 10 but we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. 11 But it came to pass, that when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for the fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians; so we dwell at Jerusalem.

"MH, p. 629.
B. p. 235."
We have obeyed... in all that he commanded us... (v. 8). The obedience of the Rechabites to their principles was indeed astounding. "All of their days, they had obeyed all of Jonadab's injunctions; all of them obeyed at all times and in all particulars." No greater contrast to the disobedience of Israel could possibly have been imagined.

It should be noted that, "What is praised here is not Jonadab's injunctions, but the faithful obedience of his sons." 

The superiority of the obedience of the Rechabites over that of Israel is inherent in a number of elements: (1) the person they obeyed was only a mortal man; Israel was disobeying God. (2) Jonadab had long been dead, some 250 years in fact; God lives for ever. (3) There was no one to repeat the commands of Jonadab and insist upon their obedience; but God had sent prophet after prophet to reaffirm God's commandments and to urge Israel to obey. (4) Jonadab gave no great blessings to his children; but God had endowed Israel with an entire kingdom. (5) Jonadab's orders were very difficult to obey and had caused much hardship upon the Rechabites, but God's commandments for Israel were not encumbered with such great difficulties. "And yet Jonadab's orders were obeyed; and God's were not!" 

Verse 11 is an explanation by the Rechabites that their dwelling in Jerusalem was of necessity and not because they were willing to violate the injunctions of their ancestor.

The following verses of this chapter stress the contrasts between the obedient Rechabites and the disobedient Israelites, which we have just enumerated.

Verses 12–17, Then came the word of Jehovah unto Jeremiah, saying, 13 Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Go, and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to

11JFB, p. 542.
12Ibid., p. 543.
13MH, p. 630.
IS THERE ANY WORD?
Jer. 37:16-17

1. It was the story of fast moving history.
A. Zedekiah's Actions (37:1-3).
   1. He was a puppet King appointed by Babylon.
      (a) Unstable.
      (b) Disloyalty easy as he shot of own neck.
      (c) Cowardice of a kept man.
   2. Neither he, servants, people "did hearken unto
      the words of the Lord."
      (a) Religion requires obedience.
      (b) God often uses spokesmen like Jeremiah - Men
          wrote the Bible; men preach His word.
      (c) Those who refuse to study history are bound to
          repeat its mistakes. Amazing stupid not to learn
          from history.
      (1) Men are more inclined to imitate crimes of
          wicked than to learn their fate.
      (2) High position does not mitigate guilt; it
          aggravates it.
      (3) Do we refuse to see mistakes of predecessors?
      (4) Ignorance is no excuse - Zed. wouldn't obey
          because he wouldn't hearken.
   3. Send men to Jeremiah to request he "pray now
      unto the Lord our God for us."
      (a) When in distress we ought to want prayers of the
          faithful.
      (b) Kings show wisdom & find strength in praying
          people & D
      (c) But note "pray for us!" - why not pray with us.
          How is God to hear us when we refuse to hear Him?
B. Jeremiah Exercised His Liberties.

1. Went in & out among the people.
2. Pharaoh's army marched against Chaldean to relieve Jerusalem & Chaldean retreated.
   (a) Israel caught between two contending powers.
   (b) Did Babylon retreat just to get Egypt on more favorable ground? (Babylon had Israel as a protectorate.)
   (c) Zedekiah saw this as a change of events.
      (1) Sinners often leap to any temporary relief.
      (2) Zed. that it was time for him to exert his independence.
3. Jeremiah sent word "Deceive not yourselves." Satan does this!
   (a) Pharaoh's army will go home.
   (b) Babylon will return.
   (c) They'll take Jerusalem & burn it.
   (d) Chaldeans will be victorious.
   (e) Please note:
      (1) God is ever at work even with cross purposes of Kings.
      (2) We must not base our hopes on human means alone.
      (3) Don't mistake events by seeing only the visible.
      (4) Bold statement on Jeremiah's part when King wanted to hear something else!
      (5) Jer. said if God had only wounded men (those literally pierced thru) they'd be enuf to defeat
(6) Whatever instrument God decides to use is sufficient — be it many or few.
(7) Wounded men — paucity of members — you can't thwart God.

4. With that Jeremiah left town by the gate of Benjamin.

(a) It came when Chaldean army was broken up for fear of Pharaoh (V. 11).
(b) Went to land of Benjamin to "separate himself thence in the midst of the people" (V. 12).

(1) Separate has margin "to slip away."
(2) Means to be smooth.
(c) Note he did it in midst of the people, thus hardly a secret.

(d) Why go?
(1) Afraid? Abandoning? Disgusted?
(2) Running? Escaping?
(3) Work finished? Retire when no longer profitable?
(4) No further usefulness?
(5) Claim his part of inheritance as land redivided?
(6) Inspect property purchased from Hanameel.
(7) Really doesn't say why the Jeremiah tells you more about himself than any other prophet.
(8) Preachers have any business rights?

5. But his "enemies" knew — even as they always do.

(a) Liriah said, "Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans."

(1) He did say they would win
(2) Was he a traitor?
(3) Man who seized him was the grandson of guy Jeremiah had earlier exposed — thus "bad blood". 

Spite case? Get even?
(b) Sad that Good Men are falsely accused.
   (1) Jeremiah accused of treason.
   (2) Best of men liable to vile accusations.
   (3) World holds no one above suspicion.
   (4) Tho Jeremiah said, "It is false" (V. 14), they did not believe him, tho a priest. His assertions not heard. Jeremiah, "It is a lie."
   (5) Christ was accused of great crimes.
   (6) Your motives will be challenged, as world doesn't grasp motives of the godly.

(c) Raises question why are good men accused?
   (1) Misunderstood - "none are good."
   (2) Evil folk think everyone thinks as they do - what would I do under a similar situation?
   (3) Hate religion & slam it on every occasion.
   (4) False comfort to think someone else is as bad as I am.

(d) Next question - how do you deal with it?
   (1) By silence.
   (2) By denial.
   (3) By rebuttal proof.
   (4) By examination of critic's life & reasoning.
   (5) By committing all things to God.
      1 Pet. 2:23 "Who, when he was reviled, reviled
   (6) By soliciting help of Christ & Spirit.

(e) Enem'ies action (V. 15).
   (1) Princes wroth - no trial.
   (2) Smote him.
   (3) Imprisoned.
      ((a)) Dungeon - cold & damp, underground, pit.
(b)) Cabin: cells in morgin, used only here.
"Vaults" "Curved posts" - was it stocks.
Pit with vaulted cells about it. Cells = to bend oneself.
((c)) Worst prison they had.
((d)) House of Jonathan - prisons often part of house where criminal judge lived.
(f) Not one thing was proven against Jeremiah, yet this action! This was his 1st imprisonment.
Stayed many days.
II. Zedekiah calls for Jeremiah.
A. It was a secret request.
   1. Ashamed to be in his presence c others?
   2. Ashamed of own deeds?
B. Is there any word from the Lord?
   1. Nothing replaces His counsel.
   2. Nothing outmasts His truth.
C. Jeremiah's bold ans. - "There is!"
   1. Spoke bold truth to a secret conference - quite a contrast! Let truth ever be.
      (a) Didn't say what King wanted to hear.
      (b) Openly told him of coming destruction.
      (c) Prince in palace & prophet in dungeon!!
   2. Where are your false prophets (V. 19).
   3. Then made plea for self.
      (a) Have I offended?
      (b) 1st spoke truth of more pressing matter. Lion in the Lord's cause; lamb in his own.
      (c) No complaint against his persecutors?
      (d) All right for self preservation.
(e) Naturally shrank from death but would die rather than swerve from duty.
(f) Don't die your own murderer by saying nothing.
(g) Lord can make your enemies serve you!
4. Given relief the still confined & had bread.

III. But the Cry Comes Today, "Is There any word from the Lord?" Say, "There Is."
A. You've something to say in times of this unrest.
B. What can you say?
1. God's word, the Bible, is here!
   (a) None are Christians w/o it.
   (b) Dickens, "The NT is the very best book that ever was or ever will be known to the world."
Heb. 6:19 "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul..."
Ps. 119:130 "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it is reliable.
   (c) It's reliable.
1 Pet. 1:24-25 "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of a garden.
   (1) Taylor, "This deathless book has survived 3 great dangers: the negligence of its friends; the false systems built on it & the warfare of those who hate it."
   (d) It meets man's needs.
Heb. 4:12
2 Cor. 7:10 "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation"...
2. The church is here.
3. Hope is here.
CHICAGO — It was easy-come, easy-go, Friday at the E-Z-Go service station, on Chicago's South Side.

First there were three gun-men who bound two attendants hand and foot and robbed the cut-rate gasoline station of $5,000 in cash and a supply of cigarettes.

Then there was a legion of customers who found the attendants lying helpless on the floor, began "laughing," and fueled up their cars without paying.

The station's two night attendants, Michael Fry and Kenneth Harris, both 20, told Investigator David Olsen of the police robbery unit that the gunmen accosted them at 3:35 a.m., ordered them to lie on the floor in the back room, and bound them with electrical cord.

The gunmen took the money from a safe and fled.

Fry and Harris told Olsen that, with no one to wait on them, angry customers began streaming into the office for service. On seeing the two attendants tied up on the floor they laughed and waited on themselves.

On several occasions, they said, customers stepped over them and helped themselves to cartons of cigarettes before going out and filling their tanks.

Olsen said McDowell estimated 100 customers helped themselves to about $1000 worth of gasoline during a two-hour period, before someone anonymously called police at 5:45 a.m.

u wonder if the United States can survive. Or should. Only lightness can nations bless themselves in God.

JQ
Little R
I. If ever those of us in America thought we live in a hostile world I suppose it's now.
   A. We are cited being ahead of Rome when it fell.
   B. There are disheartening statistics that confront us.
      1. Ignorance, drunkenness, vice, adultery, crime, violence, strikes.
   C. But we aren't the only ones who've faced the problem--Israel did in Jeremiah's time.
      1. Were in Babylonian captivity.
      2. Battle conqueror, heat, marshland, disease, away from home and the temple.
      3. Shall we hang harps on the willows--or shall we live?
      4. Can we be people God will hear?
   D. They found hope.
      1. A letter was sent.
      3. Shows:
          a) God is aware of their plight--even caused it.
          b) He will advise a course that is wise and should be taken.
          c) It will be a new era and will be distinguished by intense love of God.
          d) By receiving this letter it shows they had developed an organization.
e) Speaks to surviving elders--some have died from grief, violence, natural causes.

4. A Little History Lesson
   a) Jehoiakim paid Nebuchadnezzar tribute 3 years then unwisely rebelled.
   b) He died before Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jer.
   c) His son Jehoiakim reigned 3 months then taken to Babylon 597 BC along with principal citizens.
   d) Zedekiah then King.
   e) Jeremiah told folk to go into captivity and now tells them how to live there.
   f) Future is theirs but next 70 yrs. belongs to Babylon--so think in terms of succeeding generations.

II. The Authorative Letter
   A. It's from Lord of Hosts.
      1. "God's thoughts are prelude to action." (P.C.)
      2. God of Israel makes a promise about future and hope.
      3. Remember He can be hindered by our conduct.
      4. God caused the captivity--thus not all bad!
         a) Resistance is wrong--captivity ordained by God, chastisement needed.
         b) Receive without complaint the disciple that cleanses.
c) Definite terms are set for your captivity—(can you imagine Berlin Wall's fall?)
d) God is linking present and future.
e) He remembers His folk while in captivity.
f) He will not banish circumstances but He can make the best of them.
g) God's over the entire land, not just Judea.

B. What did he advise them to do?

1. Build houses & dwell in them.
   a) In adversity we can:
      (1) Revolt
      (2) Sit in sullen despondency
      (3) Rebel
      (4) Despair
      (5) Find a better way
      (6) Submit to what we can't change
      (7) Foolishly pretend it hasn't happened
      (8) Seek highest course under darkest circumstances
   b) They aren't going home anytime soon so don't treat land of exile as hopeless.
   c) To impose a line of conduct shows they are not cast off.
   d) You have some liberties, use them.
2. Plant gardens & eat the fruit.
   a) Our lot in life will be very much what we make of it.
   b) Industry is appropriate.
   c) Whatever comes in the honorable commerce of life do not shrink from it nor refuse it—but receive with thanksgiving.
   d) All things are ours.

1 Cor. 3:21-23
   e) This is Emmanuel's Land.
   f) It's God's wisdom that put them in Babylon, not Egypt or somewhere else.

3. Marry and raise a family.
   a) Shows sense of acceptance in midst of captivity.
   b) He will restore—tell that to the children.
   c) Let them know to whom they belong.
   d) Some could not hope in the 70 years to see their land again, but their children can, thus protect the family.
   e) Enjoy what the Father has placed in reach of you—this is my Father's world.

4. Increase
   a) Still care for family and do not forsake domestic needs.
   b) Live for the world's benefit.

1 Tim. 2:1-4
5. Seek Peace
   a) Exercise a public spirit.
   b) Seek the good of all men.
   c) Invest yourselves in a peace effort.
   d) We can discharge our duties to the state without approval of government.
   e) Among the heathen don't act like a heathen—Lawyer Rick thought his Harding partner unusual because he drank no beer—going to make him a partner!
   f) Be cheerful.
   g) Let enemies be at peace with you, don't bomb abortion clinics.

6. Pray
   a) Cherish hope for the future under most trying, present circumstances.
   b) Find happiness in welfare of others.
   c) We have a duty to the government under which we live.
   d) Pray all reap fruit of peace.
   e) Pentecost prefaced and penetrated by prayer.
   f) Seek by prayer to bring down blessings.
6. Seek the peace of the city.
   a) You are captive, God is not.
   b) He is Lord of whole earth.
   c) Ministering to others we will generally discover the secret of our own blessedness.
   d) It is not a time of despair but sharing.
   e) We will conquer the world or else be released to go to Heaven.
   f) We are not of this world so we are superior to its habits and maxims.

8. Don't be deceived by false instruction.
   a) Verses 8-9 (READ)
   b) Have ear for truth.

   a) Verses 10-14 (READ)
   b) 70 years
      (1) God sets a limit on evil.
      (2) There is a limit on the duration of trouble.
      (3) "Our times are in his hands."
      (4) Troublesome times are conspicuous while quiet times glide by unnoticed.
      (5) 70 years lifetime of some, but the cause of Christ is more important than our private prosperity.
      (6) No energy of theirs can make the deliverance one day sooner or the captors' ability to keep them 1 day longer.
c) God will visit them--take note, pay heed to.
d) Perform his good work--you are not forgotten.
e) You will return--He promises.
f) God has precious thoughts toward them.

g) Call--Go--Pray--Seek--Harken
   (1) Go where prayer is wont to be made at holy place.
   (2) Seek with whole heart.
   (3) You will find Him.
   (4) The right attitude of heart changes things.
Doctors doubt that hard work ever killed anybody, but they have known cases where it seemed to scare them half to death.

Norman Cousins made this observation: "No one knows enough to be a pessimist."

--Dr. M. Norvel Young
Living Lights, Shining Stars
pg. 32
Among the social symptoms we should recognize are a general increase in lawlessness throughout the culture; the loss of economic discipline and self-restraint; rising bureaucracy, government regulation, and taxes; and a decline in the quality and relevance of education. Among cultural factors, we see a weakening of the foundational principles that contributed to the greatness of the nation, a loss of respect for established religions, and an increase in materialism. Important spiritual indicators include a rise in immorality, the lure of alien gods, and a decline in the value of human life. These ten symptoms of cultural dysfunction are unmistakable signs of decay that may be discovered in great societies from antiquity to the present—symptoms that, in sufficient combination, indicate the impending demise of any culture.

"This season," said US News and World Report in late 1996, "it's sex, not violence, that obsesses the writers of prime-time shows." In what Time called an "alarming trend," sexual references on prime-time programs are growing more explicit, more frequent and more irresponsible. In only one year, from 1994 to 1995, the sex-related incidents on prime-time shows increased by 30 percent.

Once a haven for family-oriented programs, the early evening hours have become, in the words of the Wall Street Journal, "a hotbed of sexa and other spicy fare." Peter Jacobson, the producer of "The Nanny" on CBS, made this telling statement: I believe it's okay to run anything on television any time."
The damage being done to children and families is disastrous! For example, when researchers offered four and five-year-olds the choice between giving up television or their fathers, one third opted to give up Daddy. And, in one survey, teenagers themselves said that television is the single greatest source of pressure to become sexually involved.

The real crime of prime time goes beyond sex, though, to television's underlying message. Former Secretary of Education Bill Bennett says this: "The philosophy being so powerfully promulgated is basically this: The (greatest good) of life is self-indulgence and instant gratification; the good life is synonymous with

license and freedom from all inhibitions; other people are to be used as a means to an end; and self-fulfillment is achieved by breaking rules."

--Dr. M. Norvel Young
Living Lights, Shining Stars
pg. 160-161
I. Many audiences have been before me in 79 years of preaching.
   A. I have had an unquenchable thirst to know more about every member that sits there.
      1. Some are new Christians.
      2. Some are struggling.
      3. In every pew one broken heart.
      4. Some are searching, questioning, wrestling with various problems.
   B. I cannot read the minds nor know the immediate individual needs.
   C. But universally I know one definite desire:

   Jer. 29:11  "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

II. Now a little background on this verse:
   A. Jeremiah has gone with captives to Babylon.
      1. He tried to tell them not to resist and people punished him.
      2. Criticized, in pit of slime up to shoulders Josephus said.
3. Best of the land taken away.
4. Very dark moment.
B. Then the Lord sent a letter.
   1. Accept this fate.
   2. Live normally in your captivity.
   3. In 70 years I will end it and bring you home.
      a) Amazing prediction.
      b) Can any man do the same today?
   4. I will thus bring you a better tomorrow—for said the Lord, "to give you an expected end."

III. Is not this the dream of us all?
   A. Go to heaven when I die.
   B. It is a faith and obedience to be exercised.
   C. The Lord alone will decide whether we "make it."
   D. But do we not believe and hope this for our loved ones?

Bill Caudill Funeral -- 12/17/09
Josie Swack Funeral -- 12/18/09
I. How many of us know a love that is everlasting.
   A. We move, we die, or we falter.
   B. Yet I know one without end—it's God for man; all the more so when the man is God's man.
   C. It's told in Jeremiah 31.
      1. Addressed to the Northern tribes.
      2. Many years ago taken by Assyria 722 BC.
      3. Suffered greatly for their sins.
      4. We speak of them as "lost"—did they ever repent?
      5. So we turn to one of the most beloved chapters of O.T.
         a) Not literally fulfilled in Israel.
         b) Coffman says in Jesus it was fulfilled.

II. God Never Forgets His People.
   v-1 "Be the God of Israel & they shall be"  
   A. Left of the Sword found grace in the Wilderness.
      1. Sword—deliverance from Egypt, destruction from Babylon, or slaughter of Assyria—we see God's view of our afflictions.
      2. Grace in the wilderness.
         a) Read Exodus 33:12-17 and count "grace" five times.
         b) Tense perfect—so certain is restoration of the chosen people to favor he speaks of it as already past.
Isa. 54:8 "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord my redeemer."

B. Lord: "Yea I have loved thee"
1. Everlasting love--God promises to continue his faithfulness and love.
2. In dark hours see the love of God.
3. Love everlasting in spite of
   a) Our unworthiness.
   b) Our indifference--(we expect men to return ours with a thank you).
   c) Our unfaithfulness.
4. Do we wonder with the various experiences that are ours "Does God love me?"
   a) We get "no" to our prayers.
   b) Or else long delay.
   c) We even see the wicked prosper?
5. But no love compares to that of God--Israel had many lovers.

Jer. 30:14 "All thy lovers have forgotten" (His is everlasting)
6. God's love is:
   a) In prosperity.
   b) In adversity.
   c) Yet it may not always appear love--as your children say, "You don't love me."
7. Why does God so love?
   a) His nature--God is love. "We can close shutters but does not prevent sunshine from playing about the house."
3.
b) His relations with us—Father & Son as we ever receive our own.
c) Consequently God will do whatever is necessary for our highest good—we should return true love and come home to God.
d) This love is gracious and undeserved.
e) It is righteous in its purpose.

8. With lovingkindness have I drawn thee.
a) It's God's authorized plan.
b) It will achieve results.
   (1) Build.
   (2) Merriment—joy essential part of God's way.
   (3) Plant & eat (completion)
   (4) Unity—watchmen on Mt. Ephraim (John 17:21) mentioned 4X in #31.
   (5) Worship—Zion.

C. Result of all this.
   1. God accords choicest spiritual blessings—even to those who endure most severe trials.
   2. God wants our fellowship.
   3. For the true children, blessings here & hereafter.

III. Inspiration words in the methodology of God.
   A. Universal love—"North country and from the coasts of the earth."
      1. Distance & infirmities no hindrance.
B. Tenderness shown.
   1. Blind & lame (v-8)--woman with child.
      a) Bring the weakest of people.
      b) I will lead them.
C. Walk by Rivers in a straight way--not stumble.
   1. Straight--full of hindrances.
   2. Way marks set up.
D. "I am a father to Israel & Ephraim is my firstborn son."
   1. Fatherhood of God explains life's darkest hours.
   2. God not Jacob will render deliverance.
E. He that scatters, gathers as shepherd his flock (v-10).
   1. Redeem Jacob--to buy back.
   2. Ransom from a stronger hand.
      Salvation words. To loose, set free by paying a price.
   3. Scatter not a capricious act but a moral judgement.
   4. He who scatters will gather.
   5. Shepherd & flock shows skill and authority.
   6. Scatter--expecting a harvest.
F. "There is hope in thine end"--v-17.
   1. RV "There is hope for thy future".
   2. What greater thought!
   3. Set up way marks.
      a) Set up way marks to guide them in homeward journey.
4. A new thing—a woman shall compass a man (v-22).
   a) New thing in the earth.
   b) Incarnation.
   c) New covenant.
   d) "Surround" thus virgin birth.
   e) AJV court a man.
   f) Woman protect a man or virgin birth.

*Hillsboro - 7/6/94*
*Spiritual Growth Workshop, Orlando, FL - 8/5/94*
*Yellowstone Bible Encampment, Pray, MT - 8/16/94*
*Spiritual Growth Retreat, Gatlinburg, TN - 9/14/94*
HAVE WE SETTLED ON OUR LEES?
Jeremiah 48:11-13

1. Have you ever tried to make a point, wanted to use an illustration, yet felt clumsy & insecure in the handling of the analogy? That's where I am with this sermon—have we settled on our lees?
   A. I've had no experience with the illustration.
   B. I don't make wine.
   C. I don't drink it—thus like Will Rogers "All I know is what I read in the papers."
   D. But for months I've wanted to try this sermon—here goes.

II. Jere. 48:11-13—the story of Moab.
   A. Moab.
      1. Little county—ancient Kingdom.
      2. Western Israel.
      3. Long at peace & prosperity.
      4. Never unsettled or made uneasy.
   B. Moab's been in easy from youth.
      1. Had enjoyed great prosperity.
      2. Had lovely tranquility.
      3. Made no change during that time.
   C. He hath settled on his lees.
      1. When wine is made, there is always sediments via fermentation.
      2. The lees were the dregs or the sediments.
      3. Good wine stood on its lees and thus could get better.
   Isa. 25:6 "In the mt. shall the Lord of hosts make a fec
   4. Inferior wine does not improve.
      a.) Stay in the same bottle too long w/o stirring leaves crude bitterness.
b.) Thus draw wine from one vessel to another to clarify & improve its flavor.
c.) Keep in mind good wine grows stronger & retains its strength if not disturbed.
d.) Pouring from one vessel to another weakens.
e.) Leave wine unstirred & unmoved it settles on lees, retains its aroma & gathers fresh body.
f.) Pour it, else it becomes thick & unpalatable.

5. Figure shows:
   a.) Conceitedly secure.
   b.) Prosperity bred carnal security.
D. God said He'd break his vessels.
1. Moab proud of herself.
V. 29 "We have heard the pride of Moab (he is ex.
V. 27 "For was not Israel a derision unto thee
   a.) Self conceit.
   b.) Laughed at Israel.
Ps. 129:1-2 "Many times have they afflicted me from
2. Vessels were the villages of Moab.
3. Will empty & break vessels (usually a wine skin - here the word is for bottles).
D. Ashamed of Chemosh.
1. Moab trusted in her army & her false Gods - Jehovah removes both!
   a.) Their wealth, religion, & strength to go.
   b.) Chemosh = subdoer, conqueror.
   c.) He wanted child sacrifices.
1 Kings 11:7 "Then did Solomon build an high place fo
d.) God will make their God powerless.
2. They'll have same experiences of Israelites and Bethel (11 miles N. of Jerusalem).
a.) Josiah broke altar 1 Kings 13:1-3
b.) God brooks no rival.
c.) Golden calf destroyed.

III. What's the Lesson for Us?
A. God manufactures the wine of life.
   1. His scheme is a decanting process.
   2. Change will follow change.
B. Complacency is an enemy of God.
   Zeph. 1:12 "I will search Jer. c candles, and punish
   1. Too long prosperity not good for one.
   2. Some persist in unrepented iniquity & enjoy
      uninterrupted prosperity.
   4. We become careless & prayerless & think gain is
      the goal of life.
   5. Does the world see us asleep - does the church
      matter?
   6. God's purposes are defeated by being sat on.
   7. Complacency clogs - God doesn't allow it to
      always continue.
C. Change brings lessons.
   1. We learn discipline in defeat.
   2. While we've got time we best use it well - not
      preserve the status quo, else God will punish.
   3. Hot house plants won't survive.
      a.) Galileo, "It pleases God, it must please us
         also" - when change comes.
      b.) We falsely think we'll never fall.
   4. Jesus example.
   Heb. 5:8-9 "Tho he were a son yet learned he obedia
5. Get off your lees.

Great Lakes Christian College Lectureship
Beamsville, Ontario, Canada 1-25-78
SPIRITUdALITY: ITS MAINTENANCE AND EXTENSION

1. What are the crises of church needs today?
   A. Leadership.
   B. Growth.
   C. Spirituality.
      1. Swain Clip.
      2. Elwood – Turning Point.
      3. J. D. Bales.
   D. Whatever it is, it must be!
      2. H. Kissinger.

II. How Can I Maintain & Extend?
   A. Fd. must be right.
      Jer. 49:8 "Dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan."
      1. Like a bldg. - fd. secure.
      Prov. 3:6 "In all thy ways acknowledge him.
   B. Things must be practiced.
      1. Prayer.
         a.) From the heart - "Elijah prayed earnestly" or 
            "with prayer he prayed."
         b.) Sense the need to.
         James 5:14-16 'Is any sick among you? let him call 
            the shepherds, intercede for others.
      c.) Have confidence.
      Jn. 16:23 "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing."
      d.) Intercede for others.
      1 Tim. 2:1 "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, sup.
      4:5 "For it is sanctified by the word of God as 
            (1) Idea of falling in c another to talk over matters.
            (2) Each asks something of the other, fellowship.
2. Cleanliness.

Eph. 2:2 "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." 

James 1:27 "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their adversity, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." 

James 4:4 "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Fear God and be persuaded that he is mindful of your bodies." 

2 Pet. 1:4 "Corruption that is in the world." 

1 Cor. 7:31 "And they that use this world, as not abusing it."

1 Jn. 2:17 "And the world passeth away and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 

2 Tim. 2:22 "Call on the Lord out of a pure heart." 

3. Conviction based on Scripture.

2 Tim. 3:17 "That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

1 Jn. 3:24 "He that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him.

a.) All the plant will ever be is latent in the seed. 

b.) Possibility of endless propagation.

Heb. 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." 

4. Exalt the Lord.

1 Pet. 3:15 "Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts.

a.) His the place of authority, ownership & right.

b.) We are his property, slave.

Acts 27:23 "Whose I am & whom I serve.

c.) Read Ezek. 8:8-12. The Lord's servant -

d.) Don't come empty."

Exo. 3:21 "Ye shall not go empty.

Exo. 23:15 "Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread; seven days shalt thou keep it."

Deut. 16:16 "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord your God." 

Nahum 2:2 "For the Lord hath turned away the excellency of Jacob." 

Isa. 1:16 "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings, make you a new heart, and a new spirit: why will ye die, O house of Israel?"
Isa. 1:25 "And I will turn my hand upon thee, and put C. Things to be avoided.
1. Some folks.
Matt. 16:23 "Thou art a stumbling block
2. Impurity.
2 Cor. 7:1 "Let us cleanse ourselves from all unfruitful
3. Bitterness Heb. 12:15 (Rt. of bitter)
Lu. 19:8 "And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the L
a.)"Consequences are c God. At all costs you must
do the right thing."
b.) Forgive our debts as we forgive.
Eph. 4:32 "Forgiving one another, even as God for C
Lu. 8:14 "And that which fell among thorns are they,
Deut. 1:17 "Ye shall not be afraid of the face of man
5. Evil speaking.
Eph. 4:31 "Let all evil sp. be put away from you
a.) Contrast c prayer.
Acts 1:14 "These all continued c 1 accord
(1) Symphonize together.
(2) Musical harmony as seen in Matt. 18:19.
1 Pet. 3:7 "Prayers be not hindered.

*Hixwood Heights Church, Murfreesboro 2-27-82
Old Beacon Seminar
Julia Area Teacher Training Series 4-5-82*
Some good things are being said today about spirituality. Some feel that this is lacking in the church. They say that we need to have more of it in our worship and lives of individual Christians. But they tell us this spirituality must come through speaking in tongues, spiritual experiences, and emotionalism. Others say we would do well to leave this area alone. They say we are all right as we are, and there are dangers involved in pushing too far in this field.

But one wonders if either side understands the other, and if either understands what spirituality really is.

In the churches of Christ we have generally taught that one must hear and come to know the truth, obey it in becoming a Christian, meet each Sunday to worship according to the New Testament teaching, and be able to shop others they are wrong in their teachings of the scriptures. We have said, if not by teaching at least by our actions, that such a one is a spiritual person. Now, a person may smoke, be a racist, or pray out of context. Still, they may conform to Biblical doctrine, forms, and organization, but speaking in so-called tongues and generally practicing the emotionalism of “pentecostalism” does not make one a spiritual person.

It seems that most of this could be avoided if we could come to an understanding of true spirituality and what it is.

First, true spirituality is based on biblical truth. Spirituality is what we are as individuals, both inwardly and outwardly. In Galatians 5:22 Paul tells us we are spiritual when we “walk in the spirit.” In this chapter he describes the “fruits of the spirit” (vv. 22 and 23). These fruits are seen to be attitudes of mind and outward expressions of the inward attitudes. But how does one produce these fruits? Does the Holy Spirit himself produce them, or does the individual learn what these things are and do them? The latter must be true unless God interferes in man’s free will. Man produces the fruits as he learns God’s will through the Word, the product of the Holy Spirit, and as he incorporates them in his life. Thus, spirituality comes through Bible truths learned and applied.

Secondly, spirituality springs from what we are on the inside. It develops as we come to understand spiritual things. Paul told the Corinthians, “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ” (1 Cor. 3:1). From these words we find that spirituality is something that develops in the Christian. It is shown to be the opposite of carnality, or a material mind. This is why Paul told the Roman brethren to “be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind” (Rom. 12:2). So spirituality has more to do with the intellect than the emotions. It is understanding things in a spiritual way, not an over display of emotions.

Spirituality is what we are all of the time, not just what we are at certain emotional peaks. It is love for God and our fellow man, expressed in words and deeds. It is inward joy, that springs from knowing we are right with God and our fellow man. It is inner peace, that cannot be explained, because it is from God. It is patience, kindness, and goodness shown in the treatment of enemies, those different from us, and friends. It is faithfulness to God in worship, life, and attitudes. It is meekness shown in service and willingness to be used by others. It is self-control in circumstances where the unspiritual would “lose their cool” and allow temper to control them instead of controlling temper.

The spiritual person is the well balanced person. He knows God’s Word is spiritual food, and that a proper diet spiritually, as physically, must include all the proper needs for growth and health. Doctrines are important because they tell us God’s will. Forms and organization are important because they are God’s way through which we can express our love and obedience to Him. Feelings and emotions are important in the spiritual diet also, and in proper proportions help spiritual growth. But a diet of emotions alone will soon starve the individual, just as doctrine alone will. In the spiritual individual there is a proper balance of all the things needed for Christian growth, to help us become like Christ our Lord.

Spirituality, then, is:

1. What a Christian is on the inside, in the “inner man.”
3. A mind tuned to the things of the spirit and able to understand spiritual things.
4. Attitudes and actions motivated by this spiritual understanding, which are called the “fruits of the spirit.”
5. What we are all the time in our life, because of our walking by the Spirit continually.
6. A proper balance of doctrine, forms, organization, feelings, and emotions, which produces spiritual growth and a Christ-like personality.

This kind of spirituality is what is needed by all today. It respects the Bible as God’s divinely inspired will for man; yet realizes it is not enough to just know the word. It recognizes God’s doctrines, forms and organization of the church; yet realizes these things are a means to an end—the glorification of God in our lives. It seeks to obey God’s will; yet realizes obedience without love is nothing. It leads one to worship God only through scriptural means, but knows that worship must also be a joyful expression of true feelings springing from a heart of love. This type of spirituality comes from a heart full of love for God and man, and seeks to continually express itself in obedience to the commands of Christ.

If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk” (Gal. 5:25).

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Walter Swain
The Bible teaches that walking in the Spirit, that is, living daily in the power of the Holy Spirit, is the road we must all travel if we want to be truly spiritual. Mysterious as this sounds to some believers, it actually involves two simple steps: receiving the Word of God and living it out in obedience. In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul said to the Corinthian Christians: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal." Why were they carnal? "I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?" (1 Corinthians 3:1-3). In the Corinthian church the believers were not able to receive the Word or to obey it, and as a result, they continued to be carnal, not spiritual.
While it is true that Christianity enriches, disciplines, and refines our emotional life, and while chills may sometimes run up and down our spines as we sing the songs of Zion, it is not true that spirituality is an emotion. We have not become spiritual because we turn down the lights, hold hands, and get an emotional reaction. We are spiritual if we live by the word of Christ which includes that which at times may be emotionally distasteful duties.

Peter said that Christians “as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” “But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God, who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” (1 Pet. 2: 5, 9, 10.)

What are these spiritual sacrifices? They involve material things, although they must be offered from the heart. As the following passages show, our spirituality is measured not by our emotional mood at a given time, but by whether we are a royal priesthood offering up the sacrifices; sincerely and therefore from the heart. The church, of course, is the spiritual house or temple. (Eph. 2: 19-22.)

Our bodies are offered to God as a living sacrifice, and this means that our body members must be used as instruments of righteousness. (Rom. 12: 1-2; 6: 12-13.) The spiritual person may sometimes be on the heights of emotional delight, but his spirituality is measured by whether or not he goes about doing good and refrains from using his body members as instruments of unrighteousness. The doing of good is a sacrifice. “But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” (Heb. 13: 16.)

To communicate, I think, includes extending material aid when necessary. Therefore, Paul spoke of the contributions from Philippi as “an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.” (Phil. 4: 18.) While some view money as material and unrelated to spirituality, Paul shows that how we use our money is an index to our spirituality. Therefore, we are not amazed when he passes from a discussion of the resurrection of the dead in 1 Corinthians 15, to remarks concerning the collection for the saints. (1 Cor. 16: 1.) Among the numerous motivating appeals which he made to Corinth to stimulate them to give, he used what Christ gave up for us (which included, although he did not mention it, his death on the cross). (2 Cor. 8: 9.)

Another sacrifice which we offer through Christ is “a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to his name.” (Heb. 13: 15.)

The spiritual person is described in the beatitudes. He may be deeply moved, for he mourns concerning his sins, but unless this leads to repentance and the acceptance of God’s mercy the mourner will not be comforted. To put it another way, the spiritual person is the one who loves God with all of his being, and his neighbor as himself. Negatively speaking, love refrains from doing evil. (Rom. 13: 8-10.) Positively speaking, love does the good unto the other that one wants done unto himself. (Matt. 7: 12.)

We are not minimizing the enrichment and the control of the emotions. It feels good to feel good! Feelings can help motivate us. A good feeling, however, does not mean that one is spiritual. If the good feeling flows from doing good, it is connected with our spiritual sacrifice, but within itself it is not a proof of our spirituality.

Do you seek spirituality? Then from the heart offer unto God, as a spiritual priest, the sacrifices which God has ordained for the gospel age. When these are accompanied by emotional reactions you may enjoy these reactions, but do not base spirituality on the ebb and flow of emotionalism. In fact, our emotions are the most unstable part about us, and the least to be depended on as a guide to righteousness and worship in spirit and in truth.
Let Woodrow Wilson voice the idea in other terms. Under the heading "The Road Away from Revolution" he sent forth to the people of the United States his swan song. Almost five years after the end of World War I he wrote:

Our civilization cannot survive materially unless it is redeemed spiritually. It can be saved only by being permeated with the Spirit of Christ, and being made free and happy by the practices which spring out of that Spirit. Only thus can discontent be driven out and all the shadows lifted....Here is the final challenge to our churches, ... to everyone who fears God or loves his country. Shall we not all earnestly cooperate to bring in the new day?

("The Atlantic Monthly", August, 1923)

"Preaching from Samuel" - By Andrew W. Blackwood - Page 91
Senator Mark Hatfield has said that our nation's foremost need is the recovery of a relevant moral conscience. Ultimately that must come through individuals, not through the state. We must decry any civil religion that ignores man's individual responsibility to be right with his God.

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has said: "The modern bureaucratic state, for all its panoply of strength, often finds itself shaken to its foundations by seemingly trivial causes. Its brittleness, and the worldwide revolution of youth, especially in advanced countries and among the relatively affluent, suggest a spiritual void."

What can we do as a spiritual community to fill that spiritual vacuum that has opened up like a great yawning chasm within our society? I believe we must begin to build within our midst a true spirit of Christian community, of care, and compassion for a world that is lost unless it finds life in Christ. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

John B. Anderson
U.S. Representative
If there is one sin that hurts us more than all others, it is surely the sin of not praying. We are meant to live in the Spirit of the Lord—to live joyously, vibrantly, and lovingly in the world. But if we do not pray we cannot live in the Spirit. It is as simple as that. We lack the daily "connection" to God that would make such a wonderful life possible.

"Prayer—The Act of Being with God"—By John Killinger

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You might begin with as little as ten or fifteen minutes. That way you can tuck it into your present schedule without completely disrupting everything.

If you work at a business, you can even slip it into your lunch hour. Many Christian businesspersons make a practice of locking the office door at 12:00 o'clock, sitting quietly at their desks in prayer for a quarter of an hour, then going off for their luncheon engagements. It is amazing, they say, how this affects the tone and content of their table conversations.

If you keep house, you can guard the few minutes between the time when the kids leave for school, beds are made, and the dishes washed, and the time when you have to go to the market.

If you are a high school student, you can fence off fifteen minutes during a regular study period at school, or at lunchtime,
or when you first return home from school.

"Prayer--The Act of Being with God" - By John Killinger

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of safety, but in the position of power. To be specific, the following seven rules should be followed:

1. Go to no place where the Lord will not take you.

2. Be found in no company which is not helpful to your Christian life.

3. Have no pleasure except in the company of those who are the Lord's.

4. Be no party to any transaction upon which you cannot seek your Lord's approval.

5. Listen to no voice which would lead you away from the truth of God's Word.

6. Allow no pleasure to interfere with your attendance at the means of grace.

7. Whateovern you do, do all to the glory of God.