

of the males at Jerusalem. Leviticus 23:34.

There was a revival of this by Nehemiah 8:14.

It was intended as a memorial of the tabernacle state of Israel in the wilderness and also as one festival of the harvest. This feast which was instituted so many hundred years before was still religiously observed. And this was a divine institution with them. To go from year to year and was not forgotten. This is the last of the three great annual festivals at which every man of Israel was required to appear.

It took its name from the custom of dwelling in booths during its celebration. Leviticus 23:40-42 which after the establishment of the sanctuary at Jerusalem, these were erected in the open places of the city -- on the roofs and in the courts of the houses, and around the temple, as described in Nehemiah 8:16, and in the open country outside the walls. It was the grand climax of the festival of the year and it combined its historical association in respect to the pass over and to the close of the season for growing vegetables, and agriculture. When all the products of the year from the grain fields, the olive yards, and the vineyards were gathered and hence, they named the feast, the in-gathering under which it was instituted in Exodus 23:16 and Deuteronomy 16:13.

It began on the 15th day of October and was celebrated

"THE SIGNIFICANT FEAST"

John 7

INTRODUCTION:

As we consider the time that Jesus got into hot water, he reminds me of a story I read some time ago. The member of the church's board had watched the (pulpit committee) reject applicant after applicant for some fault alleged or otherwise, it was time for a bit of soul searching on the part of the committee. He stood up and read a letter reporting to be from another applicant.

Gentlemen:

Understanding your pulpit is vacant, I should like to apply for the position. I have many qualifications. I have been a preacher and evangelist with much success, and also had some success as a writer.

I have been a leader most places I've been.

I am over 50 years of age. I have never preached in one place for more than three years. In some places I have left town after my work, and it has caused riots and disturbances.

I must admit I have been in jail three or four times.

Not not because of my real wrong doing. My health is

not too good, though I still get a great deal done.

The churches I have preached in have been small, though located in several large cities. I have not been able to get along too well with religious leaders of the towns where I have preached. In fact, some have threatened me and have even attacked my physical body. I am not too good in keeping records. I have been known to forget whom I have baptized. However, if you can use me, I shall do my best for you.

The Board Member looked over the congregation. Well, what do you think? Should we hire him?

The "good church folk" were aghast. Would they hire an unhealthy trouble maker; an absent minded jail bird.

Who signed that application.

Who has such colossal nerve.

The Board Member eyed them all keenly saying, the Apostle Paul.

Now as Paul perhaps could not even get a chance at some of the modern churches, I dare say that Jesus would have a great struggle today in many places. Let us go therefore to the New Testament, the 7th Chapter of John and discover the situation in which Jesus had a great deal of troubles with a

a group of people. I would like to divide this chapter into three heads. First, the explanation of the feast of tabernacle - Verse 1-13. Second, an exposition of scripture at the feast. - Verse 14-39. Third, an explosion of opinion during the feast. - Verse 40-52.

I. First, we consider an explanation of the feast of tabernacles.

√¹ In Verse 1 we discover here that Jesus was now to spend more time in Galilee and because the Jews in Judea and Jerusalem sought to kill him. And that because he had cured a man in Chapter 5 - Verse 16. And he would not walk in Jewry. It was not through fear or that he was a coward but he thought it wise for his hour had not yet come.

We will notice that the gospel is taken away from those who endeavor to put it out. Christ will withdraw from those who drive Him or hide their faces from Him. And in a moment of eminent peril, he withdraws for his own safety and I do not believe that this is a sin. But in the providence of God, he went into a place of obscurity and he was willing not to walk in Galilee among the ordinary people, and to bury himself there in service.

√² Verse 2, now the Jews feast in the tabernacle was at hand. The approach of the feast of the tabernacle was one of the (three solemn) feasts, called for the personal attendance for all

truth about his miracles. That if he could do this in public

-- let them be questioned.

But many was at the bottom of this. They wanted to share

in this. And there are many carnal people today who go to a

public worship only to show themselves; to make good their appearance; to present themselves as handsome in the world.

But this was not the way of Jesus.

✓16 For Jesus said in Verse 6, "my time is not come." He shows

them the difference between himself -- his time, was not like their time. It was different from theirs. And every minute

of Christ's time was precious. He had allotted it for some certain special business. And his time was valuable. And

it was to be used in a certain way and he filled it up with beauty. Now this should speak to us about (wasting time) the

confinement of business. People today may have a thousand liberties but Christ knew that there was something for him to

do. Now he did not go with them to this feast.

✓17 In Verse 7, he said the world cannot hate you but it has

hated me. It was his life that they sought. And they showed themselves to the world, they did not expose themselves. But

the world was against him and he was in great danger. But why

did the world hate Christ. What evil had he done. The works of an evil world are evil works. Jesus testified against

evil. The ministers of Jesus testify evil. That's why they

during seven or eight days. There was a special burnt offering which amounted to about 70 bullock. There was also two rams and 14 lambs daily sacrificed. And a sin offering, a he goat was daily sacrificed. Numbers 19:12-34. Ezra 3:4.

Now the booths were made of the boughs of trees, which suggested the life of the crops. They were also made a reminder of the march from Egypt through the wilderness. Leviticus 23:43, Hosea 12:9.

Now every seven years the law of Moses was publicly read. The year of reading coincided with the year of release. The festival occurred almost immediately after the day of atonement. The people were cleansed from their sinfulness and they kept this feast with gladness, and with a sense of fitness. That they were now in condition to commune with God. The needy were remembered. Deuteronomy 16:14.

And 8th day of the solemn assembly was added to the festival. It was distinct from the festival and the requirements to dwell in the booths did not extend to it on the 8th day. Leviticus 23:36. Numbers 29:35.

It was not intended to conclude the feast of tabernacles but only to bring the annual cycle of the festival to a fitting close. Later, however, the festival was spoken of as continuing for 8 days.

For example on the 8th day as we will discover here in

the 37th Verse, the splendid ceremony that was added to those already prescribed by the law to this festival.

First at the time of the morning sacrifice the people took branches of palms, myrtle, and willow, and with fruit in their hands, and they went to the temple and marched around the altar, of the burnt offering once daily and 7 times on the 7th day after the manner of accomplishing Jericho. Mac. 10:6,7

Second another custom was that daily they blew trumpets and the Levites played on instruments and sang Psalms and water was poured out before the altar. This also was added.

And at the time of the morning and the evening sacrifice a priest would fill a golden vessel with water at the pool of Siloam and carry it to the temple, where it was received with the trumpet blast. And the words of Isaiah 12:3. "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." It was mixed with wine and the sacrifices and while the priest sounded the trumpet, the music -- the singing, the water was poured out beside the altar there near the kidron valley.

Third, it was customary in the evening following the first day of the festival and perhaps each evening thereafter, to illuminate, to light up the court of the women, from two lofty stands. These great lamps, they would light up the court and shine over the city. This was done also with music being rendered. The singing of Psalms. This was a great

celebration.

We take note in the study of this that the Jews who were unable to attend this celebration at Jerusalem would go through a similar procedure in keeping the festival at the synagogue of the town where they lived.

V.3 In Verse 3 his brethren desired that he should go up to Judea and there to present his works and they gave reasons for this, that it would encourage those around Jerusalem who had respect for him, for they were expecting a temporal kingdom -- a royal king to sit upon the throne. And they wanted that his works should advance his name and his honor. There is no man that can do these secrets which you are able to do. And they took it for granted that Christ sought to make himself known, that he was not wanting to conceal his miracles.

V.5 In Verse 5, one would not think that there was any harm in this advice. For it says neither did his brethren believe in him. It was an honor to belong to Christ, be close to him, it was a sign. And that they were a kin to him, maybe in the family. But the advice they did not know that Christ had a purpose and he knew that the Jews sought to kill him. Some think that they hope that if his miracles were wrought in Jerusalem, the Pharisees and the rulers would discover the truth and it would justify their belief. Now therefore they made this suggestion unto him. They seemed to question the

Why Moses was taught by the Egyptians but Christ was not taught so much as the learning of the Jews. And he appeared to know all of this. That Christ had letters though he had never learned them. He was mighty in the scriptures though he never had any doctor of the law to teach him. It is necessary that Christ ministers should have learning.

Some it is likely took notice of it to his honor. He had had no human learning. And others probably mentioned it in contempt of him. Some perhaps suggested that this was some kind of magic art, or something that was unlawful. But he certainly taught them the great truths.

16 We begin now with the great doctrines which he proclaimed. As listed in Verse 16. My doctrine is not mine but His that sent me. He declares that his doctrine is divine. It is not of human thought. But he is equal with God. It was not originally mine but it was God's. For God sent me and it is as the great prophets of old, God put the message in their hearts.

17 Verse 17, And he says if any man will do His will, if you want to test and know the doctrine of God, he said you can know it. If you are sincere and upright in heart and desire to know the will of God, you can know it if you will let your will be melted into the will of God.

What the question is concerning the Christ, whether it

many times run into problems.

V.8 In Verse 8, Jesus sent his disciples on ahead. He told them to go on to the feast. He denies them his company but he sent them on, to go up to pray and to be a part of this worship. Exodus 33:1-2. His presence did not go with them and how important it is to have his presence. His time had not fully come and Jesus sent his disciples on ahead.

V.9 In Verse 9, we find that he continued to work in Galilee until his full time had come. He would not be influenced by men, his going up to the feast when his time was come when he went when his brethren were gone up, he would not go up with them less they should make a noise and disturbance. And there would be a problem for him.

It is not who comes first but the question as to whether or not it is the proper time. We may do the work of God in private. And Jesus went on to do his work.

V.11 In Verse 11, we read the Jews sought him at the feast. They were looking for him. In fact, they were even putting out the question, where is he? Christ is not there. They wanted to see this fellow, who had been working these miracles. And when they should have welcomed him to the feast in serving God, they were glad of an opportunity to persecute him. In fact, they were seeking an opportunity at a solemn assembly for religion to make it profane. How tragic many times in the

churches we find that people gather not to worship their Lord but to bring about persecution and disturbance and distress in the House of God.

V.12 In Verse 12, and there was much murmuring among the people, concerning Him. For some said he is a good man and others said nay, he is a deceiver. And they had all kinds of opinions about him. There were the rulers who were against him and here was the opposition to the gospel made and he had great interest in Galilee but he had little

interest in Jerusalem. They began to debate about it. And

Or Ray - Church struck out - Anxious Ministry - Voted to some of them said, he is a good man. This was the truth. divide profits between members? 3rd void close membership. Court found - Council & Build New Court found - just a good man. 2. " out of material taken from old ch.

Others said why he deceived the people. Had this been true, then he would have been a very bad man. And the doctrine he preached would not have been sound and the miracles would not have been real. So they say he deceived them.

V.13 In Verse 13, there was fear among the Jews however to speak openly about it. They dare not speak in this fashion but they just merely stirred up difficulty for him. And so we have the picture the feast of the tabernacle is in progress. The disciples are already there. The enemies are looking for Jesus and trying to find him.

II. An exposition of scripture at the feast. Verse 14-39.

Now we come to a very vital part of this chapter. For in the 14th Verse we read that Jesus went up into the temple right in the middle of the feast. It was according to his business and his custom to go and preach the gospel and he went to the place and his sermon is not all recorded however. But he went there to preach a plain simple sermon. Why did he not go to the temple sooner to preach. Well, because the people would not have heard him but now they had more time and perhaps he hoped for a better hearing. When they had spent some days in the booths and would be willing now to listen and because he would chose to appear before both his friends and his enemies. And this certainly was a shocking situation. By showing that though they were very bitter against him, yet he did not fear them nor their power. By taking their work out of their hands.

We know that when the shepherds of Israel made a prey of the flock, it was time for the chief shepherd to appear, as was promised.

V.15 Verse 15, he begins a great discourse. The Jews marvel at the learning of this man, concerning his doctrines. They said how does this man know so much. Why he was not educated in the schools of the prophets. He has only traveled around this country of ours. He has not studied with the philosophers.

let this go on as unreasonable. You who are angry with me because I made a man whole on the Sabbath Day. You are angry at me, he says, and you are as spiteful as gaul. And you are condemning me and you are justifying yourself. He says, let me point out to you, you circumcise this child on the Sabbath Day and that is a bloody thing and he is made sore and then Christ turns it around and he says but when I healed this man on the Sabbath Day, I made him whole. He was well, he was cured. His body was healed completely.

24 In Verse 24, He says you are judging according to appearance, not righteousness. And the Hebrew phrase in Deuteronomy 1:17 -- it is contrary to the law of justice as well as to judge those who differ in opinion from us as transgressors in taking that liberty without the facts, without the knowledge. They took the things that appeared best according to outward appearance. At the first glance, it was this that these Pharisees were interested in. But Christ said, be not too confident that all are real saints who are seeming ones. The outward appearance may be far short from the genuine. Jesus expected the outward appearance -- the Jews expected the outward appearance of the Messiah to be one as of a king.

25 In Verse 25, he speaks of himself. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, is not this he whom they seek to kill,

be of God or not. Here is a question as to whether the gospel be a divine revelation. Jesus himself was willing to have his doctrine inquired into whether it were of God or not. And also preachers should preach the same kind of doctrine that can be tested by the divine will and word of God.

They are such as have an honest principle in regard to God, and are desirous to glorify him. Christ has promised to give knowledge to such. He said if you will know then you can find understanding. Those who want to improve their life and are careful to live by it.

If you are prepared to receive this knowledge, submit to its rule, then this understanding will be yours.

Therefore, the man who doubts there is a God is certainly not in the dark because truth is not available. For here it is, Jesus said if any man will know, if you will know. You who are listening tonight.

18 In Verse 18, he speaks of himself seeking not his own glory but he seeks the glory of the one that sent him. Here by it appears that Christ as a teacher did not speak of himself. He is seeking the glory of God. It is not a false prophet or a false Christ. But he is speaking from God and for his glory. And those who aim at their own preferment and interests make it to appear that they had no commission from God. Christ gives of himself and his doctrine.

He was sent of God to teach and to bring this message and he sought to the glory of God. This was a proof that he was true.

They looked at this and had layed crimes to him and charged him with crime because he had healed a man and hid him to walk that day.

19 In Verse 19 he says, did not Moses give you the law. And yet none of you keepeth the law. Why he comes to them and he says now you should be convicted of a greater sin. How could you censor me, for breaking the law, when you are breaking it constantly, there is no nation that has kept the law. And you have rebelled against it and you have lived contrary to it. You have not been keeping it. Now they boasted of the law, they pretended to have zeal for it but they had transgressed against the law. None of them had kept it.

That reminds me, like people today, who say they are for the church. And yet you hear them talk about the church and some of them never go to church, and they never have a good word for the church -- they certainly are not telling the truth.

There are those who are most critical of others who are always finding fault and yet their own hearts are full of faults. They are like hypocrites, they worry about a little splinter in somebody else's eye when they have a beam in their

own.

20 In Verse 20, the people interrupted Jesus and thou hast the Devil they said. Why this is a good opinion they had of him. What an opinion. You are crazy, there is something wrong with your brain. Now who in the world would say something to Christ like this.

21 In Verse 21, Jesus answered and said I have done one work and you have all marveled. In other words, you cannot chose but to marvel at the truth, the great things that I've done. On the Sabbath Day I healed this man, this was a religious thing and you religious people dared not to do such a thing on the Sabbath Day. Then he gets down to business.

22 In Verse 22, for he begins by telling them that Moses gave unto you circumcision and ye on the Sabbath Day circumcise a man.

23 In Verse 23, he lays their soul bare for he says this has been given to you, you have received this ordinance of God as a seal, as a covenant, and Moses gave it to you as such. And it was a promise to you 430 years before Galatians 3:17 was written. The church membership of believers and their sin. Now the respect paid to the law of circumcision was that above the Sabbath and was constantly practiced in that day. In other words, so that a child was born on the Sabbath Day without fail should be circumcised the next. And so, they

33 In Verse 33, we discover that there were three things Christ here comforts himself with. First that he had but a little time to continue here in this troublesome world. Second that when he should quit this troublesome world, he should go to him that sent him. That is, return to the one who sent him on his errand.

Third that they persecuted him here wherever he went. Yet none of these persecutions could follow him to Heaven. That is they could persecute him in this world according to their choice but they certainly could not follow him, to Heaven. And they would be vain to follow after him because they will not come after him, because their lives are not such.

In Verse 35, 36, they were somewhat mixed up as to where he was going. They could not figure out this strange doctrine.

37 In Verse 37, in the last day we suppose of that great feast, Jesus cried, he wanted them to hear him. And he comes with a great invitation as he gives them an exposition from the feast itself.

And he says if any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. Here is an invitation on the last day of the feast of the tabernacle. The people were gathered together. The people were now ready to return to their homes. They would go away but he would give them a parting word. And he would

We see their prejudice coming forth. It was coming forth from the very fountain of religion. Those who have plenty of means of knowledge have certainly turned it to an evil way. What a tragedy. The nearer they got to church the farther they got away from God. Now the great multitude of people who had come to the feast from the country side did not suspect that there was a move on foot to kill him. But we discover who goes about to kill thee. As the question was put. In Verse 20. That here was a plot among these rulers to put him to death. Is this not whom they seek to kill. Why do they not do it then. Who hinders them, if they have a mind to do it.

26 In Verse 26 but he spake boldly that he makes this claim preaching about his authority, who he is, and they trampled upon him. The worst kind of persecution many times comes really from the religious. Do they know that this is the Christ. How come they came to change their mind. What new discovery have they made, of him. When religion and the profession of Christ's name are out of fashion, then certainly there is a strong temptation to persecute. But God ties the

37 hands of men in Verse 27. We know this man whence he is. But when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. Here was an exception against being the Christ and we never can or will believe him to be so but we'll argue against it. And they speak

of his divine nature -- it is true. And when Christ comes, no man knows whence he is.

28 In Verse 28, then (cried Jesus) in the temple and taught them saying. He cried in a loud voice telling them that because of the hardness of their hearts the priests were prejudice against him and by way of confession he comes and says, you know I am of your own nature. One of yourselves.

You know me. You think you know me but you are mistaken.

You take me to be the carpenter's son born in Nazareth. And they were judging by the outward appearance, the place where he was born and he was (sent of his father). He twice mentions this fact that he was sent from above. The Father God sent him as the promised Messiah. And he was the promised seed to come. There is much ignorance of God even with many that have a formal knowledge. And the true reason why people reject Christ is because they do not know God.

30 In Verse 30 (the provocation) which this gave to his enemies who hated him. They sought him therefore to lay hands upon him. But they were restrained by an invisible power -- they were prevented, nobody touched him. Why? Because his hour had not yet come. The faithful preachers of God's truth, if they preach the gospel, must expect that there will be some who will hate them. There will be others who will try to persecute them. There would be those who would think

about tormenting them. But by their own testimony God has a chain for wicked men. And whatsoever mischief they would do, God will suffer to care for his very own.

God's servants are sometimes (wonderfully protected) from unaccountable means, their enemies do not do the mischief they design. And yet, either they themselves or anyone else can tell why they do not. Jesus' hour has not come. He had not finished his testimony.

31 In Verse 31, the good effects of Christ's discourse, many of the people believed on him. Those who they were had believed, not a few, but many. More than one would have expected that when the stream was running the other way, that few would have believed. What induced them to believe. It was the miracle. How weak their faith was we do not know. They take it for granted that Christ will come, and that he will do many more miracles.

32 In Verse 32, the Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerned Jesus. And they sent officers to take him. Well, we gather stories about these masters. And the people whispered about different things and there were secret mutterings among the common people. The Pharisees perhaps put out some of these stories. They wanted to cease Jesus and they sent officers to take him. They felt this was the best way to do it.

There were others who thought of him as just as ordinary person from Galilee. And they did not believe anything good could come from that way. But they knew about his birth in Bethlehem.

43 The explosion in Verse 43 reached great proportions as they were divided against him.

45 Now in Verse 45 some of the officers were asking questions as to why this man was not taken. You remember in an earlier verse, they sent a group of officers to go and take him in Verse 32. Now in verse 45 they receive the answer. Why have you not brought this man. Why did you not bring him in, they said, and in Verse 46 gave the answer. Why they had never heard of any man like this. And they were convinced.

47 In Verse 47, they answered. Are you deceived. You remember at all times Christianity is represented to the world -- it is deceiving men. Some will not see it but no matter how clear it is presented to them. And when these Pharisees would not stand for him.

51-2 Then we come to an explosive opinion in another direction. And from a noble ruler, Nicodemus -- Verse 51, Verse 52. And he came and he objected to these kind of proceedings. He said that they were going against all of the processes of the law. That it was unfair, that the trial was not proper, they were not hearing both sides. And this was not a matter to try a

preach to them on this last day. And he would give this invitation. Here was great earnestness and opportunity, his heart was upon it. His desire was that all may take note of this. And he says if any man, whosoever he be, high or low, rich or poor, young or old, bond or free, Jew or Gentile, if any man would be eternally happy, let him come and drink he says.

38 In Verse 38, he gives a gracious invitation, he that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, here is a gracious promise, that is annexed to the gracious call. He that believes on me, out of him shall flow. See here what it is to come to Christ. It is to believe on him as the Scripture said. That is Christ as the Saviour.

Thirsty souls that come to Christ shall be made to drink. Israel that believed Moses received water from the rock that followed them in the wilderness. It was continual.

This is living water running as the Hebrew language call living because it is still in motion. Compared to the living waters. Rivers of living waters denoting both (plenty) and (constantly) as a strong stream. These flowing out of the inward, out of the heart, out of the soul. What a gracious principle as planted within the soul. They are springs of grace, comfort to the soul, and they come forth from the individual. His whole heart will be seen in the holy life.

The tree is known by its fruits and the fountain by its stream.

These words as the scripture has said seem to refer something to the promise in the Old Testament. When God said he would pour out his spirit and it would be as the waters, in the dry land, it should become springs of water, rivers in a desert as Isaiah explains it. Springs of water. And the church is a well of living water.

In this truth Jesus is going back to what has just taken place in the feast of the tabernacle. The pouring out of the water they fetched in a golden vessel of water from the pool of Siloam and brought it to the temple, sounded the trumpet, and had singing as they poured it around the altar. And they possessed great joy. The holy spirit and it is thought that our saviour might well have meant this that believers would come and the vessels would be brought, and would be poured out upon them.

39 In Verse 39, this speaks of the spirit. Not of any outward advantage but wonderful gifts and graces and comforts which will come to all believers. Those who receive the spirit of God. The spirit dwelling and working in believers is like a fountain, of living water. The plentifulness of the spirit that Jesus was not yet glorified but here in this state he begins to talk about the Holy Spirit that was not yet given. The spirit of God was from eternity. For in the beginning

he moved upon the face of the water. In the Old Testament he spoke through the prophets. And he spoke to those in general. The Holy Spirit of course was to come, and was to become a river of living waters, that should bring forth truth and power, and enable these people to glorify God. And now the gift of the Holy Spirit was to be purchased by the blood of Christ. This valuable consideration, and there was not so much need of the spirit while Christ, himself, was here upon earth, as there was when he was gone. To supply the want of them. The giving of the Holy Spirit was both in answer to Christ intercession and to his glorious occasion through the cross.

III. An explosion of opinion during the feast. Verse 40-52.

The closing section of this book summarizes what had been going on all the way during this feast of eight days. For they were divided, some of them had explosive ideas and opinions about Jesus.

40 In Verse 40, many of the people who heard this first of all said why he is a prophet. They had compassion for him.

41 In Verse 41, others said he is the Christ. He is the Messiah. There were people saying, lo, here is Christ, lo, there is Christ, but here were some who had a good opinion.

man. These people were judging Christ without hearing him. And what has he done, what acts has he been convicted of. What are the facts of the case. We must know this before we can give judgment. We must use the scale of justice before we try to use the sword of justice. Let him come and give an account for himself. These men could not bear to hear this reason, they were accepting false grounds. And they were talking about this Galilean, there had never been any prophet from that area of the country. But we read that Jonah was from that area. And Nahum was from that area. They had not studied the facts in the case. And yet they were condemning this man of Galilee. And they were holding court, this was a trial without the criminal there.

53 The great result of it was that they adjourned the court in Verse 53. And they broke up the assembly and they, every man went to his own home.

Which would better represent your life?

*A stagnant pool
an artesian well*

*Are you the kind of Christian that needs to be pumped in order to get you to do something for God —?
or do you overflow with blessing to others.*

GOVERNOR'S SON

by William R. Pettigrew

Love

Once the Governor of the State invited my family and me to the mansion for dinner. I tried to accept that invitation as nonchalantly as if it had been my next door neighbor inviting us over to have pancakes and sausages. But inside of me things weren't so calm.

When we arrived at the mansion, we were greeted by the Governor, his lady and by their two beautiful little daughters. Eventually dinner was announced. The Governor excused himself and returned leading his only son. I saw in a flash the child was badly afflicted.

The Governor said, "Dr. and Mrs. Pettigrew, Mary and Ruth, this is Junior." The little boy gave an indication that he was aware of our presence.

The Governor had him seated at the table by his side and he patiently coaxed him to eat and often fed him with his own hands. The child would make unearthly sounds and the father soothed him with quiet words.

He thrust his hand into his food and the father patiently cleaned the little hand with a napkin the butler provided. Not one time did the Governor speak a word of apology or show any embarrassment.

As we drove out through the spacious grounds, I said, "You've heard me say many times that God loves the worst of us the best, because the worst of us needs His love the most." Softly, my wife said, "Now, it's easy to believe."



The QUIET PEOPLE

EACH Sunday the doors swing open from the cell block of the stockade at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and prisoners file into the chapel for an hour with Mrs. Anna Mabry Barr, 87. To thousands of hospitalized or imprisoned soldiers, she is *Stockade Annie*.

It is a title compounded of respect and admiration.

More than 20 years ago, raw with grief over the death of her minister-husband, and with no children, she "argued with God" about being alive. "Why did You leave me behind?" she cried.

The answer came in a crowded bus station on Mother's Day in 1943 when she saw a wounded soldier wearing a white carnation on his uniform. He seemed so forlorn. She thought of other wounded soldiers, still in the military hospital nearby. She hurried to a florist and soon was in a taxi, loaded with flowers, on her way to the hospital. She has been "on duty" ever since, relay-

ing messages to parents and wives, comforting the sick and fearful and telling the men of the Divine help awaiting their calls.

In 1944 she added the stockade to her rounds, though it took a year of perseverance before she received a pass—the only such pass ever given to a civilian.

At her own expense Mrs. Barr has had more than 55,000 copies of the 91st Psalm printed in a small white folder, entitled, "The Soldier's Psalm." Recently she was handing them out in a bus station and a serviceman pulled out its tattered duplicate saying, "You gave me this in 1943."

Another soldier she remembers is one she helped exonerate of an alleged crime. Now, free, he writes that he is building a chapel in his home community.

"I found him in solitary and always have remembered his first prayer. It was so direct that I often repeat it to those who ask how to contact God," she says.

The soldier had knelt by her on the floor of his cell and opened his heart. "God, if You are there like she says; if You can hear me; if You do hear me; if You can help me; if You will help me; please, help me. And if You let me know what You want me to do so I'll know You want me to do it, I'll try to do it."

Later, he confided to Mom, "You can't see the wind, but you sure know when it's blowing on you."

Mrs. Barr knows the sensation because she had felt it when, in her own grief she had been given the answer to, "Why did You leave me here?"

Written by Herndon Medlock of Nashville, Tennessee.



Another of God's Miracles

RECENTLY, I overheard a conversation of two women on a bus who were comparing notes on mealtime in their respective households.

"Our kitchen at breakfast is a Grand Central Station at rush hour," one woman exclaimed. The other gave a knowing nod, then said:

"At our house we take meals factory-style—in shifts!"

Though the hustle bustle these two women were talking about seems heightened today, it was no stranger to my home as a boy.

My father, a busy lumber mill foreman, had to eat his lunches in a hurry. He had only a few minutes for the table; he consumed most of his lunch hour walking home and back to the mill. Mother was constantly reminding Father to find more pleasure in the noon meals she prepared so faithfully.

"Food wasn't made to be bolted, but to be enjoyed!" she would scold.

She succeeded in creating a more serene atmosphere at the evening meal, however. Though we children often were guilty of gulping our food anticipating an early exit from the kitchen, Mother refused to excuse any of us until we had had our little talk. She said it was good for the digestion to "sit a spell." The

little talks often turned into lectures admonishing us for the day's transgressions, but they also produced some discussions which resulted in much lasting guidance. Some of my parent's best advice I remember receiving around the kitchen table.

I feel all our families could strengthen their relationships if we learned to savor both food and fellowship more fully.

Dr. Lyman Beecher, father of the remarkable Beecher family, would allow no haste, no idle conversation at the parsonage table.

Morning, noon and night, Dr. Beecher demanded that meals be unhurried and garnished with ennobling dialogue and lively topics. Table talk in the Beecher family was a liberal education and a Bible study hour. The mental food had to be as chaste, pure, colorful as the material. Do we wonder at the family he raised?

We could also ponder the famous New Testament scene when Jesus refused to serve dinner to a restless throng. Before He would reveal His glory and serve as Host for the meal, He issued an order of the day:

"Make the people sit down!"

The multitude was to cease its pushing and shoving and sit down

quietly. Only then would the people be ready for one of The Master's great miracles and participate in an ever-remembered meal!

It only occurred to me recently that God created food to make all the five senses sing for joy. Think about the splendid colors of food: radishes, carrots, the Hubbard squash, pumpkins like summer sunsets, orchid-topped turnips. Consider its fragrances: hot chestnuts on a street corner, a pot of coffee on a winter's night, a sizzling steak over a campfire. Meditate on the taste of maple syrup over steaming pancakes, a bright red apple with buttered popcorn by the fireplace. Recall the last time you selected a honey-dew melon, solid as the globe, or picked luscious red strawberries still covered with dew. Ponder the

sound of fresh peas as they are shelled from the pod, the crispness of celery, the crackle of fresh bacon in a hot skillet. Yes, food is pleasing to all the senses.

Sabbath after Sabbath we quote in our various shrines the words of our Lord: *Give us this day our daily bread.* It is constant witness to the wonder and glory of food.

Yet we so often fail to lift up our thoughts and hearts before we eat because we fail to lift up our minds to the level of what we eat.

Food is — always — God's bright, unfailing answer to man's constant prayer to live. Knowing this, Jesus told us — never to forget to thank the Father for it!

Philip Jerome Cleveland
Pastor, First Congregational Church
New Bedford, Massachusetts

Holidays of hospitalized or imprisoned soldiers, she is *Stockade Annie*.

It is a title compounded of respect and admiration.

More than 20 years ago, raw with grief over the death of her minister-husband, and with no children, she "argued with God" about being alive. "Why did You leave me behind?" she cried.

The answer came in a crowded bus station on Mother's Day in 1943 when she saw a wounded soldier wearing a white carnation on his uniform. He seemed so forlorn. She thought of other wounded soldiers, still in the military hospital nearby. She hurried to a florist and soon was in a taxi, loaded with flowers, on her way to the hospital. She has been "on duty" ever since, relay-

W. J. P. prayer. It was so direct that I often repeat it to those who ask how to contact God," she says.

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