

"THE GAS CRISIS SOLUTION"

Eph. 1:12-23

*Church Paper - front p.
(This filling station open Sundays)*

Summit

■ The prize for obscenity goes to the gambling houses of Las Vegas. Late in April when weekend traffic fell by 10 percent, they decided that President Jimmy Carter and the gasoline crisis were to blame. So, throwing propriety to the winds they formed a kitty of \$250,000 to plead with the people of California in a series of newspaper and television ads, not to pay any attention to conservation pleas. One gambler, when asked if he felt guilty for driving to Las Vegas in the midst of the crisis said, "Not at all." He was then asked about conservation and all he could think to say was, "That is a bunch of baloney."

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We are finding out now as Stu Aberdeen said, he was the coach of Marshall University, basketball. He died the other day at the age of 43. A newspaper gave some of his quotes. One was this -- we are all like tea bags. We discover our strength only in hot water!

I'm wondering if our nation and our world will somehow discover its strength as it is in hot water concerning gasoline. We first had the long lines in California. People had to make appointments to get gas. The governor even declared a state of emergency. And set out a plan, that gas could only be purchased on certain days of the week. Well, what happened in California is a prophesy of what has been happening in other states. We have seen this move across the land.

The President has asked Congress to approve all sorts of stand-by systems of rationing, allocations, etc.

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electricity - they have become targets. And people are now marching and demonstrating against the building of other plants. And even the operation of the ones that are now producing electricity. It may be that certain periods of the day we will have our electricity this summer. Or it may be that during this winter, the heating oil will be scarce. And people will have to get along without heat.

It could well be, that you will come to church wearing an over-coat and over-shoes! As the government may turn down the thermostats to save energy.

This sounds like despair.

But day by day it is multiplying. Airplane flights have been cancelled because of the shortage of gasoline. It is getting worse, and worse.

There are people who believe that we have plenty of energy. There are others who think that it is running out!

There are 6% of the population which lives in the (United States). And we use 36% of the natural resources of the world. We have been over-drawing on the bank of resources. And we have some hard days, maybe, ahead to answer whether or not we will change our lifestyle. Whether there will be something that will cause us to come back to reality. Whether there is something, like that tea bag, we may discover our strength because we are in hot water.

In Russia, they tell us, that when the First Baptist Church of Moscow, that people in the audience there travel sometimes two or three hours by public transportation. To get to the church, and when they get there - people are packed in, standing, and there is no heat. There may be 6" of snow and ice on the ground. But they come with their over-coats, their over-shoes, and their scarfs on their heads. And yet they come. Three services every Sunday to take care of the people. They pay a price to express their faith in God.

What will happen in this country when gasoline gets up to (\$1.00, 1.25, 1.50) and heating oil at the same ratio. And our church buildings may be cold! We are going to have to decide whether we will spend this gasoline, trips to the beach, or trips to the church, I'm afraid it is going to shake some of us up concerning our (superficial committment) to Jesus Christ.

u I read about a preacher in California who wrote a letter to his congregation. He wrote it like this -- I feel that I owe you an explanation concerning my absence from the pulpit, last Sunday morning. I didn't realize that it would cause such an up-roar. But I think, when you hear the circumstances, you will understand. I had really intended to be there. But Saturday morning, my wife's folks came in from Virginia. Pulled into the driveway. We hadn't seen them in two years. And they were only able to stay a day with us. And we wanted to entertain them Southern California style. We had a limited amount of gas, so we packed and went to the ocean, It was too late for sermon preparation when we got back, so that evening, we just thought we'd spend the time visiting. I telephoned the Deacons. Well, the Deacon wasn't at home but I left the message with one of his children. And told him that they would need to get a replacement. And I felt that all would be taken care of. We stayed home Sunday morning. Visited with the folks.

It wasn't until afternoon that a committee of the Deacons came by. And said they hadn't been able to find a replacement. I guess I took for granted that the man got my message, and would do something about it. Besides, how was I to know that on this particular Sunday our Organist had planned to be out of town. And the Minister of Music had gone off to visit and sing in another church. I regret that you have had to call off the service. I'll try not let it happen again. (Almost) Sincerely, Pastor Dalton.

Now that belongs to a "no comment" department. But the implication tells us that there is a weakness in our day. And it touches the very nerve center and life of the Christian.

I wonder whether or not we have the ability to take care of this shortage. Which may be really, a shortage of our stewardship.

Let me mention one or two things here - by way of introduction. The Scientists ^{New & hot wh} tell us about the nickel. There is enough energy locked in the atoms of the nickel, to burn an electric light bulb for 160 years. Enough energy to light a city like New York for several hours.

Now the Scientists who made that statement said this -- God has put it there. And man with his capacities that God has given him, has learned how to draw out of what God made, and use it. "There is no energy shortage, he said, it is just a shortage in our discipline. In our rising to the challenge and fulfilling God's purpose in this world.

Now this is exactly right. There is no energy shortage - really gasoline shortage. Because we know that God created this world. And when God created this world and inhabited this world, God gave it to man. And God told man to use this world. And this is what he said - you are going to be a steward of this world. And I have given you this for your abundance. You will have to work and use all of your physical and mental capacity - I have given you this to sustain you.

Now if we believe in the doctrine of creation - and believe that God still has an abundance in this world to sustain us, if we are willing to pay the price to get it out.

God also, in the purpose of his creation, taught us that here would be things that would be for man. For the glorification of God, and it would fulfill the destiny of his people.

Are we to believe that everything is going down the drain. Are we moving toward a purpose out yonder - a fulfillment in God's will.

Another resource, we have God himself. The greatest concept in this universe, is that God is a God of power. That God is energy. And Scientists of this universe will tell you that everything in this universe is full of energy. And it is exploding and expanding - and back of that energy is solar power or whatever it is, there is a great God that created this. That God is energy and God is power.

Now, the thing about this is, the shortage which we have come about because of man's stewardship - and man's inability to manage. And we need to be optimistic. Even about the future. And to know that there is no shortage of power and energy with God. The gasoline crisis is man's downfall. We have not been good stewards of it.

Now there are Scientists that tell us this - that of all the oil in Texas, they have only gotten 25% of it out of the ground. That 75% of it is still in the ground. But we have to develop the technology to get it.

We need to keep on exploring and doing things with water power, With chemicals. But the oil is still down there and it is still untapped. We have to pay the price.

*New Proverbs - 15th Verse - Pitcher of Water & Glass on Pulpit - As Preached - He Drank until Water
 Greater completely gone - after some someone ask woman How do you like New Pastor?
 She, she said, but he's The 15th windmill you saw that runs by water!*

Scientists tell us that out there there are resources of possible fuel deposits and peat all under or over the world. There is coal unmined and untapped. There is solar power. There is sea power. They say that even the tides of the ocean as it rises and falls, that great power has never been harnessed. There is nuclear power. That is just the beginning of things. And we have all of these enviromentalists in every direction.

God's solution to this problem is that we must be good stewards of this.

Now what is the real crisis, which we have. I will tell you what it is. And it is going to destroy us. It is the moral and the spiritual crisis.!

Now we lack the moral energy power, that we need. There is the lack of moral will power.

Take for example Iran, the revolution. Very few people expected it to happen. And some people still say, how did it happen and what has happened.

There was the Shah, whose government was mighty with Army, and power - and the backing of our country, and many experts. And inspite of that there was a revolution that he could not stop.

Somebody says, well, we failed and the Communists won. But it was not the Communists all to-gether. There are probably more Communists in the United States than there are in Iran.

It was a moral and a spiritual revolution. Bound up in the heritage of the Moslem. And their religion. They rejected the immorality of the Western world. The alcoholism, the prostitution, the entertainment. The adultery, disintergration of the family life. The corruption within the government. And these people had been influenced by our folks who had gone over to develop oil and to get oil for them. So it was the religious revolution - the hard chore that said, we will not stand for this gross immorality. There was a shortage of moral energy in the nation. And when they came in power - what did they do. They poured out 2 or 3 million dollars worth of liquor and they made other reforms.

Would you not say that in our own country, our own city, there is a shortage

the moral crisis, in the personal crisis, in the time of our sorrow, in the time of our defeats and failure, the time of our sins. There are two or three words that will help us.

Let us look at them.

13 I. THE BOOK

There is power in the word of God - right here in this simple Bible. It is more than just a story and history of the Hebrew nation. It is more than just a religious book of faith - it is a holy book. This we believe is the word of God. And in this book there is power - the power of God, that works through his word.

Jesus called the Word the seed. He said it was the power of the seed in the Parable. A sower went forth to sow and to cast seed. The seed grew and multiplied a hundred fold.

Now we can see that happening in the miracle of the Word. We get up and

preach the Word of God. When we sow that seed, maybe something does not happen

But the seed is there. And you see it later. It is springing up

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