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Servant

GUIDED TOGETHER INTO RENEWAL (part 3)
THE EVANGELICAL COMMUNITY
A LOOK AT THE INTERNATIONAL CHARISMATIC RENEWAL
REPORT FROM THE KANSAS CONFERENCE



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editorial

Much has been said about aspects of the charismatic renewal around the world. However, it is important that we come to understand this movement of God, not from the limits of our particular tradition but rather that we examine the impact of this renewal on the Christian Church throughout the world. It is not uncommon for us, as human beings, to formulate ways and means through which the Church might be renewed, however the choice in the final analysis belongs to the Lord. If He chooses to use the least of all the gifts then that is His choice, for His wisdom is far above our own. Sometimes He does choose what is foolish to our eyes, as St. Paul rightly points out in 1 Corinthians.

In this edition, 'Servant' takes a look at International aspects of the charismatic renewal. We are featuring a report from Doug Vogelsang and Doug Kuhl who attended the 1977 Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches held in Kansas, U.S.A. Also we reprint (a 'first' for 'Servant') an article by Gary Seromik which examines many areas in which the charismatic renewal is sweeping across the world. The article is reprinted from 'New Covenant', a magazine that serves the renewal throughout many nations. Jesus commands us to go into all the world and preach the gospel and Peter Müller examines some contemporary aspects of that call in an article which he entitles 'The Evangelical Community.' Doug Kuhl continues with the third part of his article 'Guided Together into Renewal'. In future issues we will feature the text of Larry Christenson's address to the Kansas Conference.

We hope that this small glimpse into what the Lord is doing around the world inspires each one of us to open ourselves more deeply to the Lord's endless love for His people and to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches in 1977. Our God is gracious. He is preparing His Bride for the, perhaps, difficult years that lie ahead. The charismatic renewal is one of the means He is using to equip the Body of Christ for service in His Kingdom.

KARL BRETTIG

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Part III "New wine and new wineskins"

GUIDED TOGETHER INTO RENEWAL

Some people came to Jesus concerned for the right preservation of their religious traditions and orders -

"The disciples of John fast frequently and offer prayers, and the disciples of the Pharisees do the same; but your disciples eat and drink." (Luke 5:33)

Jesus told them that the time of the marriage supper has arrived — it's a NEW TIME! Recognise this new time. Recognise who stands among you. Recognise what His presence means.

In order to meet this new time, this new relationship you need:

NEW CLOTH
NEW WINESKINS.

Your old coats, your old skins are useless. Old skins cannot be used to hold NEW WINE, they will burst and the new wine will be spilt out and lost.

New wine must be put into fresh wineskins. The old Judaism could not contain the new wine of the life of Jesus. The world was soon to discover that Christianity would burst the old skins of tradition round Judaism and the new wine of new life in Jesus would take new wineskins.

Jesus' reaction to man's attempt to hold his New Wine of the Gospel within their systems and orders, harmlessly filed away within the cabinets of their glorious pasts, always remains the same: Jesus bursts their wineskin traditions grown old and stiff and stretched. New skins, pliable, flexible, tolerant of the stresses of fermenting new wine, are called into use. This has been the history of the Christian Church since it began, and so it shall always be.



Harelle.

We are experiencing today the bursting of old wineskins which are stiff and stretched to bursting point by ever expanding systems, systems devised to protect old traditions. Unfortunately some new wine is being spilt and lost as a result.

The new wine is flowing on into the "now" gathering of God's elect - new lives are being born - visions of new possibilities of ministry and life are being received anew - new wineskin structures are being stitched together to hold this new wine.

We should not be alarmed at this.

The Scriptures constantly call us to recognise the fact that God will not be contained within the narrow space of our minds and our old way of thinking. God's person and activity always spill out beyond the shallow rims of our limited vision. It is sad to witness the frantic paranoia of Christians who are experiencing God's plan and purposes, having outgrown their old systems, and are now frantically either trying to poke the new wine back into old burst skins or, if that shouldn't succeed, to trim and prune the old skin so as to make it seem as if the new wine doesn't exist today. Old skins must have old wine!

The Gospel is new - always new. Therefore, faith is the only way the Gospel maybe appropriated. God always comes to us as a God of newness. He is never content to let us remain in our old skins.

"Put on the new man." (Eph. 4:22)
"If anyone is in Christ Jesus, he is a new creation." (2 Cor. 5:17)
"What really matters is for a person to become an altogether new creature." (Gal. 6:15).

The Old Testament constantly prophesied that new things were to be called into being. The "NEW" Testament is a witness

and testimony to the fact that these NEW things are 'actually' happening amongst us right now.

The old skin says, "No, this can never be! Whatever is going to become of all these old skins."

The New Wine says, "This must be! So go and get yourselves some new ones."

Isaiah foretold:

"Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." (Is. 43:19)

Ezekiel also declared:

"And I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and to observe my ordinances." (Ez. 36:26,27)

Jeremiah prophesies:

"Behold the days are coming says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah....I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people."

(Jer. 31:31,33)

Elsewhere in the Old Testament we read further of God promising to give us a new song, a new heart, a new spirit, a new name, a new covenant, a new creation, a new heaven and a new earth.

I have already referred to a few testimonies given by Paul in the NEW Testament, however other writers also testify that this new thing God is establishing amongst us. Hebrews 10:20 says: *"He has opened up for us a new and living way, through the curtain - that is through His own body."*

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper and He said: *"This is my blood of the*

new covenant." (Matt. 26:28) Peter writes: "For through the living and eternal Word of God you have been born anew as the children of a parent who is immortal, not mortal." (1 Peter 1:23)

John at the very end of the Bible concludes with this statement: "Behold, I make all things new." (Rev. 21:5)

In the very face of these spirit-filled testimonies of Scripture the church of the pew has slipped into slumber. Howard Snyder writes: "We try to contain the new wine of the Gospel in old wineskins outmoded traditions, obsolete philosophies, creaking institutions, old habits. But with time the old wineskins begin to bind the Gospel. Then they must burst, and the power of the Gospel pour forth once more... Human nature wants to conserve, but the divine nature is to renew." ("The Problem of Wineskins" I.V.P.)

In previous issues of "Servant" magazine I have written of how God shook us from our pious apathy enthroned there on church pews into a holy dissatisfaction and disenchantment with our former status quo. The effect that this had on our lives was basically four-fold. First we experienced a great desire for personal evangelism. So away we went to speak to the 'street people' about Jesus. To our surprise there were many on the street who were interested in "what" we had to say, although more people were curious as to "why" we were out there.

Conversions to life in Jesus became a quiet stream flowing in our midst. However, where were these new Christians to go for fellowship, and instruction toward maturity in Christ? More importantly where could they go for such enlivenment, so that they might avoid the deadening forces within Christian institutions, that we ourselves had only just broken away from? The question of suitable, relevant, effective Christian "nurture"

structure was therefore raised. Thus the second effect of God's new wine within our lives was to wrestle with the question of true Christian koinonia.

We tried to nurture these young converts in our private homes, and discovered that the basis of our home life was unable to cope with the pressures of nurturing. Our home, despite certain inbuilt Christian features, didn't have a wholly Christian basis. Adjustments were needed. Values altered dramatically. Priorities in life experienced a radical reshuffling of order. Our whole understanding of marriage principles, family order and community relationships was turned upside down.

The old half world - half Christian life-style was totally inadequate to meet the new situation. Our elder brothers in the church institutions were heavily critical of our attempts to wrestle with this new situation. The only place that we could go for help was the Bible.

Day by day the Lord led us through the Scriptures into new understandings of life-style, marriage, family, community, body ministry, of God's family gathered within the sphere of His Kingly rule.

Much of what Howard Snyder writes in his book "The Problem of Wineskins," by way of a hypothetical "what if?", is a fair enough description of the kind of changes we actually lived through. He writes: "For a radical Gospel (the Biblical kind) we need a radical Church (the Biblical kind). For the ever-new wine we must continually have new wineskins. In short, we need a cataclysm. Something could be done. The institutionalism could be shipped away.

What would a denomination do that really wanted to become a church with New Testament dynamic?

Let us suppose...

First, all church buildings are sold. The money is given (literally) to the poor. All congregations of more than two hundred members are divided in two. Store fronts, garages or small halls are rented as needed. Sunday School promotion and most publicity is dropped. Small group Bible studies meeting in private homes take the place of mid-week prayer services. Pastors take secular employment, and cease to be paid by the church; they become, in effect, trained "laymen" instead of paid professionals. "Laymen" take the lead in all affairs of the church. There is no attempt to attract unbelievers to church services; these are primarily for believers, and perhaps are held at some time other than Sunday morning.

Evangelism takes on new dimensions. The church begins to take seriously its charge to preach the Gospel to the poor and be an agent of the Kingdom of God. It ceases to take economic potential into consideration in planning new churches. It begins to lose its enchantment with suburban materialism. Et cetera."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer - a disenchanted, German, Lutheran theologian, wrote during World War II: "The Church is the Church only when it exists for others. To make a start, it should give away all its property to those in need. The clergy must live, solely on free-will offerings of their congregations, or possibly engage in some secular calling. The Church must share in the secular problems of ordinary life, not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell men of every calling what it means to live in Christ, to exist for others." (Letters and Papers from Prison)

We do not agree with all of the above - but it was for us much food for thought.

However, out of the change which swept through our lives - something more close to New Testament koinonia than we had ever known before, was born in our midst.

Vanishing were our old securities of position, status, materials, human structures, programs, institutions, systems - and slowly forming were new structures built on -

- mutual acceptance of each other
- open honesty to one another
- supportive relationships with each other
- submission to a servant role toward others
- caring for others in all circumstances of life
- love (agape - giving for love's sake)
- sharing all our goods and gifts for the well-being of each other
- commitment to one another in love so that our relationships might have a basis for action in love.
- the very Word of God.

The third effect in our lives was the discovery of the immediacy and the reality of God's actual presence and power, of God's acting and caring for us in our lives together. God acting in the Holy Spirit poured instance upon instance into our daily experience that He was actually working in us, through us and for us.

We witnessed drug addicts, smashed to smithereens inside, converted, healed, transformed and brought to maturity in Christ. Such gigantic miracles made the acceptance of "lesser" (?) miracles such as speaking in tongues and prophecy etc., etc., easy to grasp and incorporate into our daily life-style.

For us now, these strange, threatening new features of God's spiritual dimensions for our lives (spiritual gifts and manifestations) have become part and parcel of our daily experience. What else can we say to that then, but

"Praise the Lord, He lives, He works,
He moves among us, His people."

Finally, or fourthly we have discovered that a deep intense compulsion is forming within us to work in the midst of society - a society that is pagan - so that this society may feel the pressure of the Gospel announcement: *"The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe the Gospel."*

New wine is pouring forth out of the new wineskins. This isn't only happening in Adelaide amongst us - thousands of communities have been raised up around the world all of a similar nature to ourselves - led in the same direction, fired by the same convictions, making the same sacrifices, experiencing the same overwhelming joy of Christ's abundant new life.

God is renewing His Church. Christ is preparing and adorning the Holy Bride.

This interlocking system of Christian communities and renewal groups all around the globe have seen the forces of a pagan society eat away at their denominations; church structures mimicking secular big business; a materialistic, naturalistic approach to life which disallows certain Christians from being able to accept supernatural phenomena for today; an erosion of faith in the sure Word of God as being the authoritative word for us today regarding all areas of our lives together; an easy acceptance of various psychological theories of this pagan world into the very fibre of our home life, (e.g. clinical psychological counselling principles and procedures and theories of parent training of their children); a loss of an adequate understanding concerning family and Christian community life so that the Christian communities turn their world upside down instead

of as one person put it - *"Humanism is presently evangelising the churches."*

In other words, God is forming around the world thousands of groups of Christians who are prepared to be converted into new wineskins - so that with the new wine flowing freely from Christ to them and from them into the midst of society - we might be the witnessing visible people of God in the face of the world.

Something a little more "God-sized" than that to which we are usually accustomed is happening all over the world. This "new thing" is challenging our entrenched positions on a host of fronts. Take the following examples -

- * Personal walk with God in Christ, through a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit - a call to radical discipleship.
- * Committed relationships amongst ALL Christian brothers and sisters to the point that love is visible and practised among us. (John 13: 33,34)
- * The person of Christ being incarnate in the ministry of the Body of believers.
- * The challenge to accept all the spiritual power that God may desire to release in each of us for our selves, and through us for others.
- * To detach ourselves from the world's system and materialistic idolatry.
- * To recognise and actually flesh out the conviction that there does exist one Christian and apostolic Church on earth.

The list could extend on and on!

This article must end here for this issue. We must write the story - flowing on from this point. This is merely the outline of the basis.

There is so much more to tell - so much more is happening. The story must be told - for we are servants and therefore witnesses to Christ.

REV. DOUG KUHLE

The evangelical community

(or God's people have no secrets)

It is no secret that much of our attempt to evangelize the world has been a half-hearted shoddy assortment of flops and success stories. Amid the confusion much has been said about the spectacular work of the so called early Church, and all we need do is recapture the zealousness and apply the good old time-worn principles and we've got it made - hey presto! Instant Evangelism. Like instant pudding, there isn't much goodness in it.

Too often we Christians fall into the trap of criticizing the 'Church' (ourselves) without encouraging the 'Church' (each other) and diligently teaching the 'Church' (each other) the way of the Lord.

But first it would do well for us to look at our mistakes.

1. The major error we make in evangelism is adopting the world's methods of sales and marketing techniques. Spreading the gospel is confined to sales pitches like "Have you accepted the Lord Jesus into your heart?" or "Do you know the Lord Jesus as your personal Lord and Saviour?" or mass advertising propaganda stunts for which we could criticize most crusades. The same mentality applies largely to bumper-bar theology, badges, stickers, one way signs and Jesus' marches. Somewhere in the midst of cliches and sock-it-to-ya, bash-thump-like-or-lump-it approaches Isaiah 61 demands to be heard - "He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken to proclaim a day of God's favour" and so on.

2. Secondly, in our fears of failing in our attempts to evangelize or win souls for the Lord, we often opt out and choose the path of least resistance. We make being a Christian as easy as possible so as not to turn everyone off before we finish what we have to say. This sort of evangelism says nothing about the necessary life of discipleship. It degrades conversion to a change in attitude and beliefs, adding a number of don'ts without the do's.

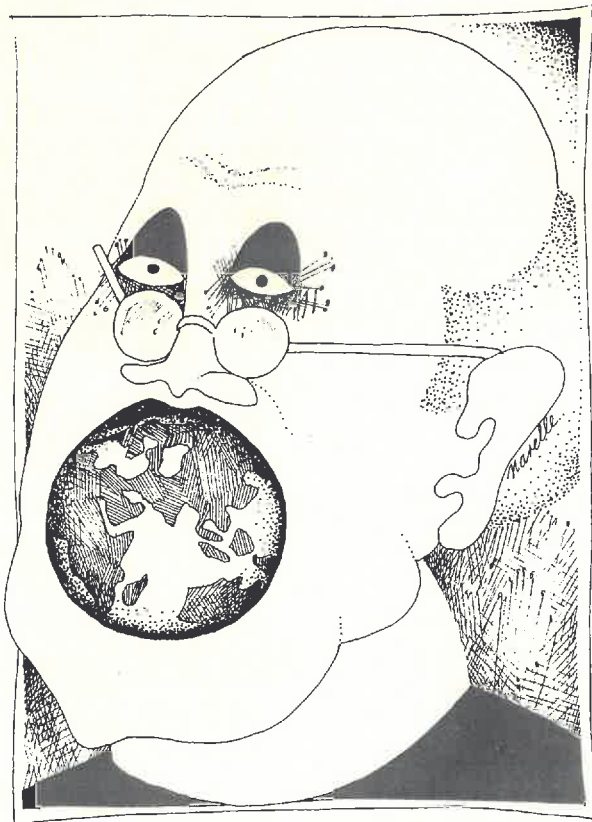
Often the evangelist has his ego tied up so closely with his work that he demands results, and gets them, but only at the sacrifice of the true nature of the calling; that is where Jesus says, "Come follow me". Converts to this form of evangelism are easily made and just as easily ripped off by Satan. They have no depth of sail. It would be better if they had never heard the gospel, until someone came along who was willing to lead them into the full life, for often they fall and then become even harder against God.



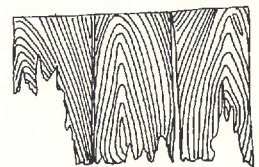
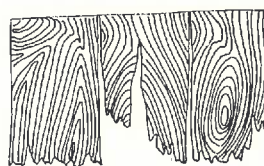
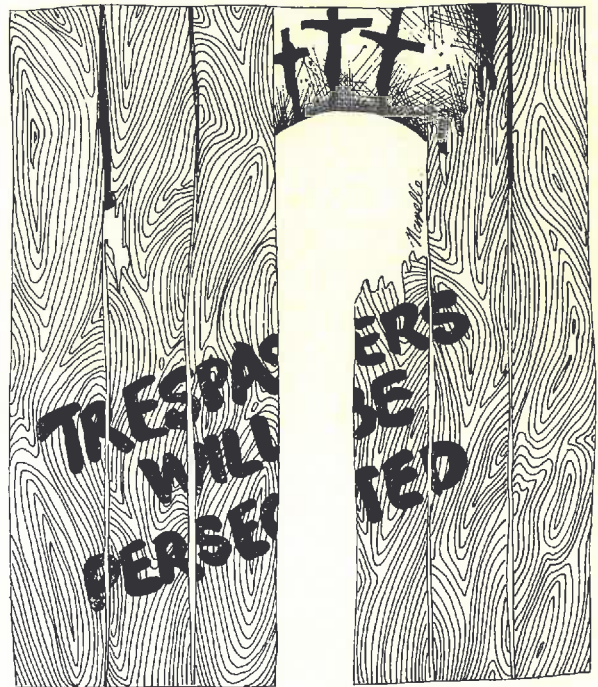
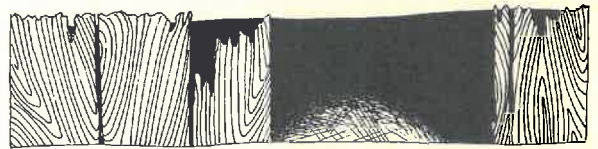
3. Thirdly, a false distinction is set-up as to the nature of secular occupations and sacred occupations. The task we are performing wherever we are is holy only in so far as the Kingdom of God is breaking into that area of human activity. We may be a humble janitor yet everything we do may be sanctified beyond measure because we "do it unto the Lord." Yet a bishop may be packing himself off to hell twice as fast as a harlot because he is performing his duties like a worldly business executive.

And if we add to this an insensitivity and lack of ability to communicate with the ordinary person at their level we have a witness which comes across ugly at worst and ludicrous at best.

A Christian street-worker and a Uni student were talking one day. The student asked the Christian who he worked for. "Jesus!" said the street-worker proudly. "Oh!" said the student, "Kraft or Coon?"

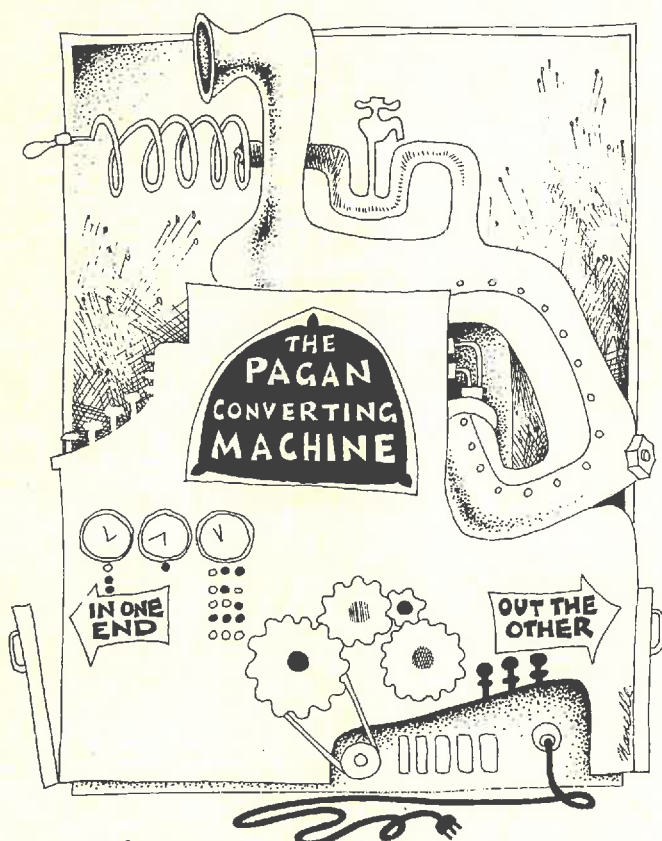


4. Fourthly, we have inherited from our western culture an individualism that permeates every facet of our being. We tolerate a private faith or private religion as being an acceptable part of Christianity. The demand for unity in John 17 is ignored. And Jesus' disciples today forget that His death on the cross wasn't private religion; certainly it wasn't up there on a hill for all to see! God's people have no secrets yet we tolerate a private individual faith that allows the scandal of disunity and as one writer put it, a "belief without obedience." (Matt. 28:20) Our crusades, door-knocks and evangelism clinics call many to belief but few to obedience.



5. The fifth major area of our failing is, in my view, the worst and in part explains the rest. So often the message is reduced to a formula. Conversion is seen as being restricted to a certain number of well-defined steps, like the four spiritual laws.

We have only to take a casual look at the book of Acts to realise that we just can't put the Holy Spirit into a box. The conversion experiences of many believers outlined throughout the book vary drastically. Some were baptised unto repentance with water under John's baptism and then baptised in the name of Jesus and still later baptised in the Holy Spirit. Others were baptised in the Holy Spirit then were baptised with water. Still others were baptised in the name of Jesus with water but did not have the laying on of hands till much later. Paul was converted without the gospel being preached to him and without coming to repentance and in the midst of his rebellion on the way to persecute Christians.



Like the wind the Spirit of the Lord moves where He wills. We cannot put God and His methods into the straight jacket of a mathematical formula. The result is that Jesus and His message of grace becomes impersonalized. I am convinced that a personal Jesus can never be shared impersonally. I could give away a million tracts and spin out the right one liners every time and yet communicate nothing of the present personal reality of Jesus resident in my life. The fact that tracts etc., are used is more evidence of the sovereign movement of the Spirit Himself than of our sensitivity to peoples' needs. Jesus always met the people at the level of their need. How often did He say, "What is it you want me to do for you?"

Our western concept of belief aggravates the problem. Belief equals intellectual assent to, or conformity to, an 'ism', but the Biblical concept of belief is entirely different. Belief automatically must imply obedience - a change of life-style and attitude. Belief means knowing in the Hebrew sense, to have intimate communion. We can be sure that the Father believes in the Son and the Son in the Father and so on. Belief implies a unity of purpose, mind and spirit and a total surrender of will to the will of God in the fulfillment of our belief.

However, we have set-up a difference between a belief and practice and it is a matter of "What do we believe about Christ?" rather than, "Are we willing to forsake all and follow Him?" Finally it produces a low standard of Christianity. A doctrine develops where Jesus as Saviour is different to Jesus as Lord. We see in such statements as "Jesus has done it all" - therefore, implying that we need do nothing and in fact implying that our attempts are in contradiction to Jesus' acts of grace. By allowing Jesus to do it all we are allowing grace full

reign and giving Jesus all the glory. This piece of twisted logic is completed by misquoting Paul *"God's strength is made perfect in your weakness."*

This argument may be quite valid if Jesus is still hanging on the cross. All of our human efforts certainly do end up at the foot of the cross where they should be. But the thinking outlined above in fact denies Jesus as Lord. It ignores the victory in Lordship over the empty grave and the victory of the fullness of the resurrection and pentecost.

The difference between the Christian who just believes and the Christian who also is obedient is exactly the same as the difference between the one who lives out his baptism into the death of Jesus all the time and the one who also lives out the victory of Jesus' resurrection and ascension into glory. It is the difference between the theology of defeat and the true theology of glory. We are partakers of the glory of Christ. (John 17:22)

Christ's act of redemption, to be completed, must come to completion in us. And we have been given the work of handing on this reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:18) Therefore it is quite impossible for a true disciple to say *"Jesus has done it all."* And there is a big difference between our fleshly efforts and the fruit of the Spirit at work in us.

Evangelism based on belief finally produces an abstract faith restricted merely to personal morality and private salvation. Biblical conversion does not recognise such as being valid. The products of Jesus' commission in Mark 16:19 & 20 were the immediate works of obedient and faithful servants.

The individualism of Ananias and Sapphira and Simon Magus was dealt with immediately. Individualism of

this sort strikes at the very heart of the true nature of Jesus' calling and cannot be tolerated.

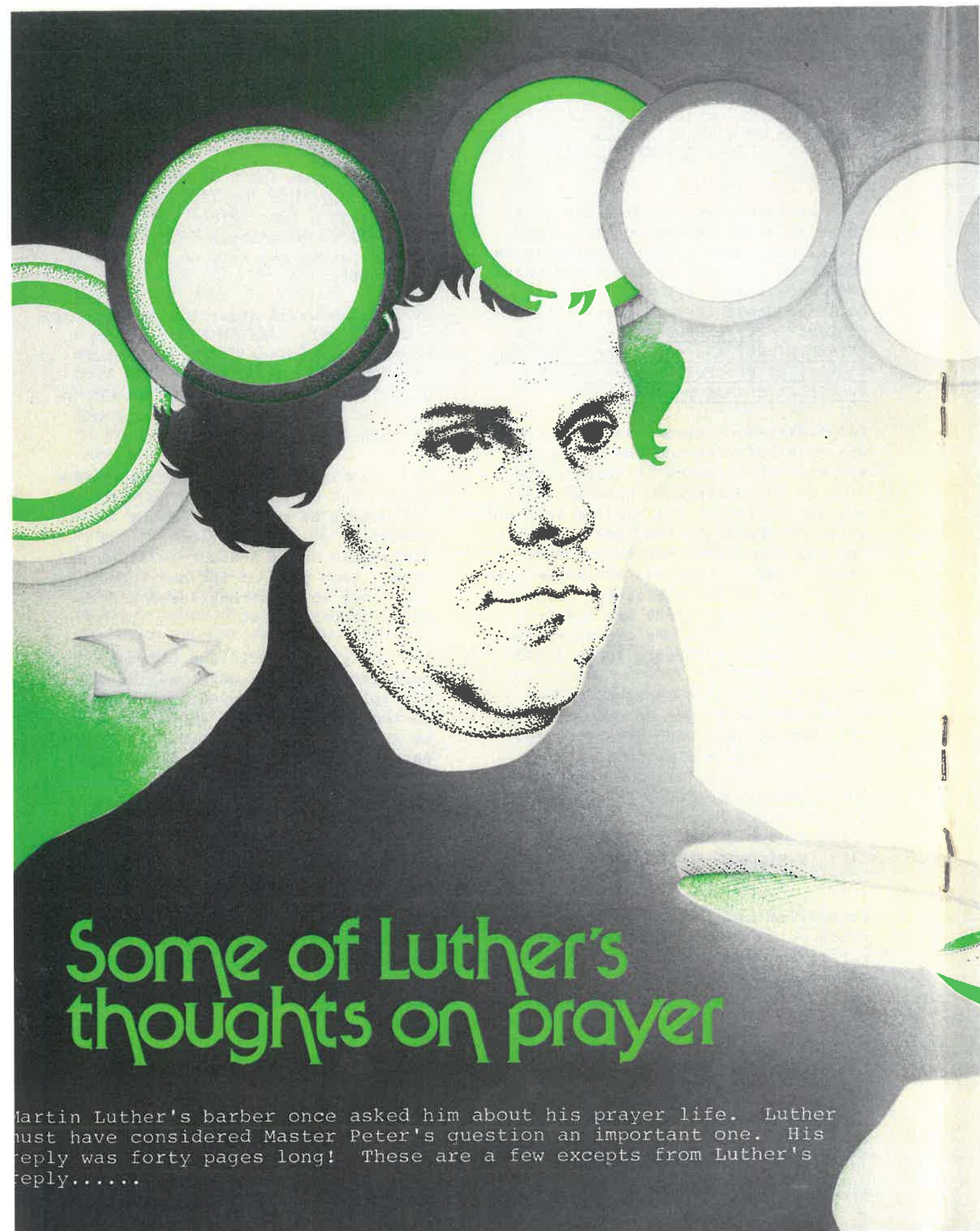
But evangelism which draws the convert immediately into the life of discipleship immediately indicates the need to constantly follow Jesus and His words and rely on Him personally.

Evangelism which draws the convert into a belief only, denies him the very source and essence of his strength and condemns him to inevitable disillusionment and despair as all he has really done is exchange one set of references for another.

True discipleship automatically draws people out of themselves and into the fellowship of believers or the community or congregation. It is impossible to be a disciple alone and grow. Each part of the body needs the other to be strengthened and to grow. (Ephesians 4)

The unity of a Christian community corporately living out the life of discipleship surrounded by the world is the fulfillment of John 17. As we are willing to individually disciple each other and our converts we will see the Church once again multiply. There are no easy methods. We can't con the world into the faith. It is only the hard one to one, personal discipling process, that will bear lasting fruits. And it is impossible to have this one to one type basis for our ministry outside a community of believers, living and sharing together the everyday experience of faith. Part of the choice to be a Christian implies the carrying out of the mission.

Jesus said to Simon, *"Do not be afraid, from now on it is men you will catch."* Then bringing their boats to land they left everything and followed him. (Luke 5:10, 11) PETER MULLER



Some of Luther's thoughts on prayer

Martin Luther's barber once asked him about his prayer life. Luther must have considered Master Peter's question an important one. His reply was forty pages long! These are a few excerpts from Luther's reply.....

Dear Master Peter,

I give you the best I have. I tell you how I pray myself. May our Lord God grant you and everyone to do it better.

A good clever barber must have his thoughts, mind and eyes concentrated upon the razor and the beard and not forget where he is in his stroke and shave. If he keeps talking or looking around or thinking of something else, he is likely to cut a man's mouth or nose - or even his throat. So anything that is to be done well ought to occupy the whole man with all his faculties and members. As the saying goes: he who thinks of many things thinks of nothing and accomplishes no good. How much more must prayer possess the heart exclusively and completely if it is to be good prayer!

It is a good thing to let prayer be the first business in the morning and the last in the evening. Guard yourself against such false and deceitful thoughts that keep whispering: "Wait awhile. In an hour or so I will pray. I must first finish this or that." Thinking such thoughts, we get away from prayer into other things that will hold us and involve us till the prayer of the day comes to nought.

We have to watch out so that we may not get weaned from prayer by fooling ourselves that a certain job is more urgent, which it really isn't - and finally we get sluggish, lazy, cold and weary. But the devil is neither sluggish nor lazy around us.....

It often happens that I lose myself in such rich thoughts. When such rich good thoughts come, one should let the other prayers go and give room to these thoughts, listen to them in silence and by no means suppress them. For here the Holy Spirit Himself is preaching and one word of His sermon is better than thousands of our own prayers. Therefore, I have often learned more in one prayer than I could have obtained from much reading and thinking.

I repeat again: If the Holy Spirit should come when these thoughts are in your mind and begin to preach to your heart, giving you rich and enlightened thoughts, then give Him the honour, let your preconceived ideas go, be quiet and listen to Him who can talk better than you; and note what He proclaims and write it down, so will you experience miracles as David says: "Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." (Psalm 119:18)

The Spirit will and must grant us this, if your heart is conformed to God's Word.

Martin Luther

Marella

A LOOK AT THE INTERNATIONAL CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

Rapid growth and integration into the churches are signs of the strength of the charismatic renewal.

In Rome, we saw the fruits of a new epoch in the Catholic Church, "David du Plessis said following the 1975 International Conference on the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church which met in Rome, Italy. "From now on I look forward to a sweeping revival movement," the well known Pentecostal evangelist said.

Many other leaders, Protestant and Catholic alike, acknowledged the importance of the Rome Conference for the life of the church. For example, Dr. Vinson Synan, a historian and the general secretary of the Pentecostal Holiness Church (U.S.A.), said that it was *"the single most important event in the history of world Pentecostalism."* And Dr. Herbert Mühlen, the German Catholic theologian who has written many works on the Holy Spirit, declared that *"the church has entered a new era of spiritual renewal."*

Although it would be rather premature at this point to claim that the words of these men have been fulfilled, it is worthwhile to keep their reflections in mind while looking over some of the latest developments in the worldwide charismatic renewal. The Rome conference was undoubtedly a turning point in the international charismatic renewal; it brought about greater cohesiveness in the renewal and imparted a common vision of what God is doing through it.

One of the most notable developments in the international charismatic renewal since the Rome gathering has been its rapid numerical growth. A quick glance at the numbers of people who have attended some of the major Catholic and ecumenical charismatic meetings during the past year and a half gives some indication of the dimensions of the renewal.

For example, in August 1975, more than 2,000 people attended the Nairobi International Conference for Renewal in Kenya. In January 1976, nationwide conferences for the charismatic renewal attracted 25,000 people in Venezuela, 7,000 people in Costa Rica, 5,000 people in Mexico, 5,000 people in Trinidad and Tobago, and 3,500 people in Australia. Last summer, 30,000 people attended the 1976 Continental Conference on the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church held in the United States.

In the fall of 1976, over 5,000 people were present at the Third National Conference for the Charismatic Renewal in Ireland, and more than 3,500 people attended public sessions during India's Second National Convention for the Charismatic Renewal in Bombay.

These figures represent only a sampling of the many meetings that have brought participants in the charismatic renewal together. It would be difficult to find gatherings that have been held,

not to mention precise figures for all the Christians who meet together each week in charismatic prayer groups.

The integration of the renewal into the life of the Catholic Church is another noteworthy development in the worldwide charismatic renewal. Prior to the Rome Conference, a stalemate existed in many countries. Many bishops, who had not received any clear word from the Pope, did not know how to relate to the charismatic renewal. And many Catholics who were active in the renewal were frustrated when they did not receive encouragement and direction from their bishops.

But in an address to the 10,000 men and women who attended the Rome Conference, Pope Paul VI called the charismatic renewal *"a chance for the church and the world."* His words were an indication of the Catholic Church's appreciation for what God is doing through the charismatic renewal.

Once the green light was given, many members of the hierarchy enthusiastically encouraged the renewal. *"I never doubted that this renewal movement was inspired by God for the good of His church,"* Cardinal Miguel Dario Miranda of Mexico City said, *"but I waited until the Holy Father had his say."*

"The charismatic movement is within the church and part of the church," Bishop Robert L. Hodapp of Belize City declared. *"Moreover, it serves as a new witness that Pentecost continues."*

Cardinal Reginald Delargey of Wellington, New Zealand, said, *"I want to give witness to the members of this movement of my gratitude that they are prepared to plumb the depths of the Spirit as He speaks His word in the gospel."*

Cardinal Basil Hume of Westminster, England, asserted that *"charismatic*

renewal is important I see charismatic renewal entirely in terms of the traditional theology of the church concerning the Holy Spirit." Last year, the German Bishops' Conference, led by Cardinal Julius Dopfner, initiated their annual working session with a charismatic prayer meeting.

Another sign of the integration of the charismatic renewal into the heart of the church is the close collaboration between Cardinal Leo Joseph Suenens of Belgium and leaders in the renewal. During the Rome Conference, Pope Paul VI personally thanked Cardinal Suenens of Belgium for his work in the charismatic renewal and asked him to assume pastoral care and responsibility for it on a worldwide level. The cardinal, in turn, invited Ralph Martin and Steve Clark, leaders in the international renewal, to join him in Belgium to work more closely on behalf of the charismatic renewal in the church and the world. At the same time, the International Communication Office for the charismatic renewal, which was based in the United States,

Catholic Priests and Bishops gathering for Friday Mass during the Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches, 1977, at Bartel Hall, north Kansas City.



moved to Belgium to assist in this work.

The charismatic renewal is also being integrated into many Protestant denominations. When the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches was held in Nairobi in November 1975, six leaders in the charismatic renewal in the Protestant, Catholic and Pentecostal denominations were invited to attend. During the assembly they presented an information meeting on the charismatic renewal and conducted several workshops which considered the specific implications of the renewal for the work of the World Council of Churches. Many of the 2,000 delegates and observers at the assembly attended evening prayer meetings that were organised at the request of council officials.

Since the charismatic renewal has affected almost every denomination, ecumenists have been watching the growth of the renewal with special interest. Ecumenical contacts now happen at almost every level of the charismatic renewal. For example, in

Arrowhead Stadium, Kansas City, site of the ecumenical gatherings during the Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches, 1977.



May 1976, the fifth and final session of the Vatican-Pentecostal Dialogue took place. The Dialogue, which brought together representatives of the Roman Catholic Church, denominational Pentecostal churches, and leaders of the charismatic renewal in Protestant churches, was sponsored by the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. In a private audience, Pope Paul VI told members of the Dialogue, *"You have been dealing with spiritual resources of which the whole human family has urgent need."*

Another development in the worldwide charismatic renewal which merits special attention is a growing sense of purpose. Many prophecies that were given during the Rome Conference spoke about a time of darkness coming upon the earth. Since then, people have heard similar prophecies in their own prayer groups and at other conferences. The effect has been to create a deeper commitment to what the Lord is doing in the world today.

Most often this commitment is communal as well as personal. In several countries, this warning about difficult times has prompted many people to join their lives together in Christian communities. Such communities already exist in the United States, Australia, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Ireland, France and Lebanon. In one instance, an actual time of crisis has proved this step to have been a wise one. Last year, when civil war was raging in Lebanon, 16 members of the charismatic community in Beirut took refuge in their sister community, The Word of God, in Ann Arbor, Michigan, for six months, until it was clear that the Lord wanted them to return to their country. They are in Lebanon now and doing well.

Elsewhere, there are examples of the far-reaching effects that the charismatic renewal can have in a particular locality.

El Mochito, a small mining town in Honduras, used to be famous for prostitution, alcoholism, and crime. Three years ago the charismatic renewal began to take root there. Now a large percentage of the people are living committed Christian lives. The vices which formerly characterized the town have virtually disappeared (See New Covenant, August 1976, Page 20).

In Mexico, the charismatic renewal has brought radical changes to Juarez, where hundreds of people live in cramped, makeshift homes, and to Ciudad del Lago, adjacent to Mexico City's international airport, where thousands of destitute people have settled on vacant land. Today, both situations are promising models of effective social action (See New Covenant, August 1976, Page 4, and September 1976, Page 12.)

Five years ago Nagua, Dominican Republic, used to be called the "city of prostitution" because it has the highest rate of prostitution in the

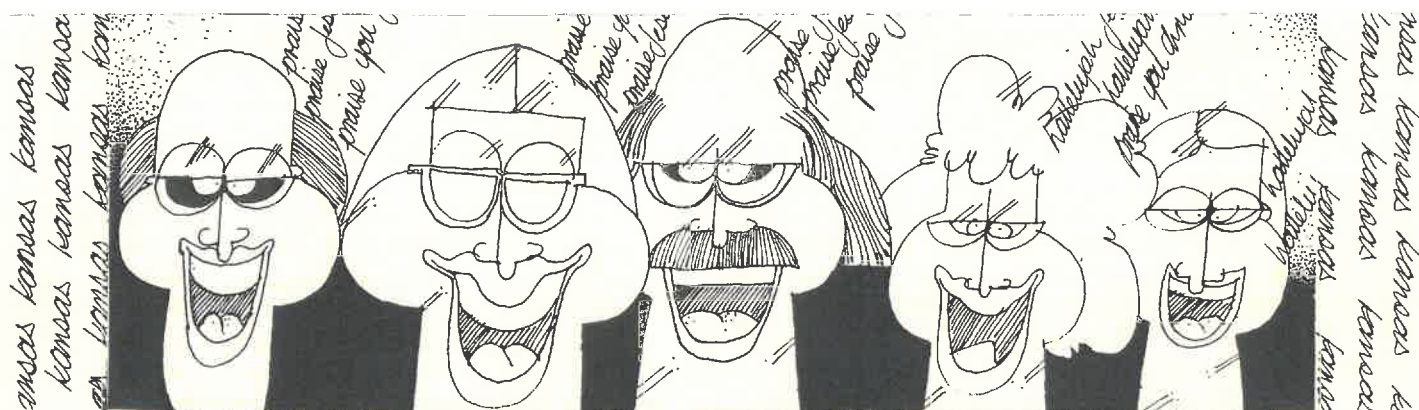
country. But through the ministry of a French-Canadian priest who is involved in the charismatic renewal, the gospel has spread quickly in Nagua, and has changed many people's lives. Even their ways. As one observer remarked, "*Nagua is being transformed into a city of prayer.*" (See New Covenant, May 1976, Page 32.)

Similar changes have occurred among impoverished people in Poblacion Manuel Rodriguez, a section of Santiago, Chile; San Juan Baptista parish in Cali, Colombia; Cristo Rey parish in Negritos, Peru; and many other places in Latin America. (See New Covenant, May 1976, Page 15.)

Facts and figures aside, however, the worldwide charismatic renewal is merely a means to an end. Its members are loyal, not to a movement or a slogan, but to a person: Jesus Christ. Its purpose is to spend itself for the renewal of the whole Church. It is, as one journalist put it, "*a movement wishing to die.*" GARY SEROMIK

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REPORT FROM THE KANSAS CONFERENCE

MORE THAN 50,000 ATTEND

Special Report from Doug Vogelsang and Doug Kuhl who attended the Conference together with Neil Lehman from Victoria.

The sight of more than 50,000 people from many parts of the globe, including representatives from all the major denominations, praising and worshipping the Lord, as the giant electronic scoreboard of Kansas City's Arrowhead Stadium flashed *JESUS IS LORD* across the arena, was an historic event for the Christian Church. Reminiscent of the great festivals of praise and worship described in the book of Chronicles - ("And the people of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the festival of unleavened bread with great gladness; and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day, singing with all their might to the Lord." 2 Chron. 30:21) the Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian churches was a time of great joy and excitement for the people who gathered there.

There were 50,000 registered delegates (many more attended the sessions) who travelled to and from the stadium in about 1,000 yellow buses to their lodgings in Kansas City for the five day Conference. They gathered for a purpose. The message came loud and clear that God is calling together His people from all corners of the world, encouraging us to hear His voice or as Larry Christenson put it His 'Today Word.' His Church is one and His people are one and He is preparing us to be a witness to the world as we stand as God's people.

All churches are being called of the Lord to repentance, obedience, and to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches in these days of Western decadence. There is an urgency. All Christians must be about their Father's business and live under His Lordship. There was an atmosphere of friendliness as young South Americans embraced local policemen, handing them Bibles as they shouted, "Hallelujah, Jesus is Lord!" while Conference participants shared openly with brothers and sisters from many countries. The Catholic Charismatic group, some 10,000 attending, were noticeably alive and vocal in their worship services. At their closing Sunday morning service some 300 priests



were involved in celebrating the Eucharist. Another group whose presence was strongly felt were the Messianic Jews. These are Spirit-filled Jews who have come to know the Lord Jesus as their Messiah. They told of how the Lord has been leading

prophecy given through Ralph Martin, director of the International Communications Office of the Catholic Renewal, in which the Lord spoke of a people who speak of unity without practising unity. Almost all of the 50,000 fell down on their knees in the concrete stadium weeping in an act of repentance for about fifteen minutes. It was a moving time of reconciliation with their Lord.

On the final Saturday evening the meeting was addressed by the Rev. James Forbes, Associate Professor of Homiletics, Union Theological Seminary, New York. His message was simple, "See me," says the Lord. By the time he had finished speaking each person there truly had seen the Lord, and that was the message Conference participants took away with them back to many parts of the earth, "See Me," says the Lord. Like the report of the writer in the second book of Chronicles, Chapter 30 says, "So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David, King of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem" - (there had been nothing like this in Kansas City. Praise the Lord!

DONIG VOGELSANG

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GOOD NEWS

A family finds life
in a new country



I am the father of three happy children, happily married to Adelheid. I'm working at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woodville, as a Surgical Instrument Technician.

The jumping off point for our Christian experience was our decision to migrate to Australia, Sydney, in August 1970. The Lord asked us to make a clear cut and have a new start in our young life. I had not thought that the start could be so hard. I had difficulties in finding a job, learning the language, getting used to Australian customs and even learning to celebrate Christmas in shorts and with a cool drink in my hand!

A lay-preacher contacted us in the hostel. He brought some leaflets in German and English. He helped us along in many ways. During the next years I learnt the English language by reading the "Good News for Modern Man" daily. I learnt to hang on to God's Word. I received the Word with an empty heart.

After six months in Sydney, the Lord led us to Adelaide. And there it was again - a new area, new situations, new difficulties. We settled in Tea Tree Gully together with many people, but only a few realised our needs. One family took us in their hands and showed us the new way in Christ. It was a very hard and stony time here in Adelaide, but through Christ and our Christian friends our life, changed. Praise the Lord!

We realised that we could not stand still when Christ is calling us, that is once we have accepted His call to follow Him as our personal Saviour. We have to move when we follow His call! The desire to read and hear more about God's Word grew. I had, through my work, plenty of time to study the Bible, in Australia you are invited to do this. But my wife stayed a bit behind. My earnest prayers have been, that we grow in the same proportions.

And the Lord heard my prayers. Hallelujah! Our thanks to Him is never ending. What we found was that we had to empty ourselves before the Lord and that there is nothing, not the smallest thing, that you can think of in your life and in your past between you and the Lord. We learnt to get on our knees and pray earnestly for forgiveness, repentance, help and mercy.

The Lord heard our prayers. He opened all the gates of Heaven to fill our hearts, minds and souls with His Holy Spirit and His precious gifts. Praise the Lord!

This infilling of the Spirit took place 18 months ago. Since then everything has changed!

The Scriptures became real and alive for our daily life: 2 Cor. 3:17
"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." We found that freedom.

Luke 11:13 *"If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him."* We asked and came to the Lord with everything and He heard our prayers. Our relationship as husband and wife became new, our children grew with Christ's love and our whole lifestyle took another form and shape. We felt Christ's love in us and now we can smile and be happy. The Lord led us to start a 'Body Life Group' in which we pass on Christ's love and share what Christ has done in our lives.

St. Paul says in Eph. 4:22-24, *"Put off your old nature which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the Spirit of your minds, and put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."* And what a life that is! Hallelujah to God our Father and our Lord!

GUNTER STARK

'SPIRIT IN LIFE' SEMINARS

On Tuesday evenings for the remaining months of 1977 Servants of Christ Community will be sponsoring a series of 'Spirit in Life' Seminars. These Seminars consist of a seven week course which deals with various aspects of initiation into the Christian life. Topics covered include, God's Love, Salvation, the New Life in Christ, Receiving New Life, Growth in the Spirit and commitment to the Body of Christ. The Seminars are a valuable source of practical instruction on living the Christian life and participants are given the opportunity of having other brothers and sisters pray for them and of receiving counsel in relation to any obstacles that may hinder growth in the Lord.

A COMMUNITY OF 'SHALOM'

About 150 people gathered at the Y.W.C.A., in Adelaide to hear Jim Punton (a Presbyterian minister who has worked in the slums of Brooklyn and is currently training young people with Scripture Union's Frontier Youth Trust). Jim spoke about God's call to us to be a prophetic people, a community of "Shalom", a representative people on behalf of those who are not in Christ. (Jer. 10:7) He called us to be obedient to the commands of the New Testament, and to share a common life in order to be a people who can participate with God for the sake of others. The conference was attended by many representatives of small communities scattered throughout the State as well as several ministers and other interested persons. Others attended a series of seminars for clergy and full-time Christian workers and a training workshop for those interested in working with young people today.



CONFERENCES

By now many people are looking forward to the planned visit of Larry Christenson to Australia in January. Larry is being brought out to Australia by Temple Trust in Sydney and will be a speaker at the National Charismatic Conference in Melbourne from 23rd-28th of January. Plan your holidays now. For those who won't be able to hear him at that Conference, a series of 'mini-conferences' are in the process of being arranged for people in Horsham, Naracoorte and Adelaide areas. Larry is internationally known for his writing and speaking on many aspects of the Christian life especially family relationships. He is also a leader in the Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in the U.S.A.

HORSHAM Wednesday, 1st February, 1978
NARACOORTE Thursday, 2nd February, 1978
ADELAIDE Saturday & Sunday, 4th & 5th February, 1978
PERTH Monday, 6th January, 1978

National Charismatic Conferences arranged by the Temple Trust.

PERTH 9th-13th January, 1978
TOWNSVILLE 9th-13th January, 1978
CANBERRA 16th-20th January, 1978
HOBART 30th January - 3rd February, 1978
MELBOURNE 23rd-27th January, 1978

President Carter sent a telegram to the Kansas Conference asking for prayer in his efforts to promote world peace.

Has your offering on Sunday morning ever reached \$116,000? That was the amount given one evening at the Kansas Conference.

Someone has pointed out of the 'Word of God Community' gatherings that all are normally present five minutes before starting time. Wake up Australia!

The Harbour Christian Centre in Los Angeles is in the process of installing a telephone cassette tape ministry service which is to be world-wide. The idea is that you dial a particular number and receive teaching on a topic of your choice. Even telephones can be a blessing!

In war-torn Northern Ireland recently Christians met for the first Northern Ireland Conference on Charismatic Renewal in Belfast. Despite the threat of attack by snipers as Conference participants

notes & news

gathered to worship, 1,000 came together and filled the auditorium with joyful praise. Presbyterian Pastor David McKee compared the people of Northern Ireland to the Israelites as he described the account of Jehoshaphat's leadership of the Israelites in 2 Chronicles 20. When Jehoshaphat led the Israelites into battle he placed the Levites who praised the Lord with loud shouts at the head of the army. The result was utter confusion on the part of the enemy ranks as they turned on each other and annihilated themselves. During the Conference the Lord called the gathering to lay aside prejudices and hatred and give themselves in obedience to Him. He promised that if they obeyed He would lead them out of bondage and cause them to be a light in that city.

PRAY FOR YOUR NEIGHBOUR

Doug Vogelsang reports that he met with some representatives of two Catholic communities that have sprung up in the Philippines - 'The Joy of the Lord Community' and the 'Spirit of the Word Community'. They pointed out that the political situation was becoming such that it was getting more and more difficult for them to get out of the country. Please pray for these northern neighbours of ours who need the support of their brothers and sisters in Australia.

SOLSOUND GIVES YOU

Barry McGuire

Prince Alfred College Theatre,
12th November, 1977.

SOLSOUND GIVES YOU

Honey tree

in Adelaide,
during 1978.

SOLSOUND GIVES YOU

2nd Chapter of Acts

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during 1978.

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There is no other god
like you, Lord,
not one who can do
what you can do.



All the nations
you have created
will come and
bow down to you.

They will praise your greatness,
because only you, God,
are mighty;
only you do
wonderful things.



Teach me, Lord,
what you want me to do,
and I will obey you
faithfully,
Teach me to serve you
with complete devotion.

Psalms 86:8-11

