

REDEEMING THE TIME

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16).

VOLUME 15, NUMBER 4

FALL 2023

DECLARE HIS GLORY Among the Nations

BY BRAD K. GSELL

This message was delivered on June 21, 2023, at the 21st World Congress of the International Council of Christian Churches, in Collingswood, NJ, USA.

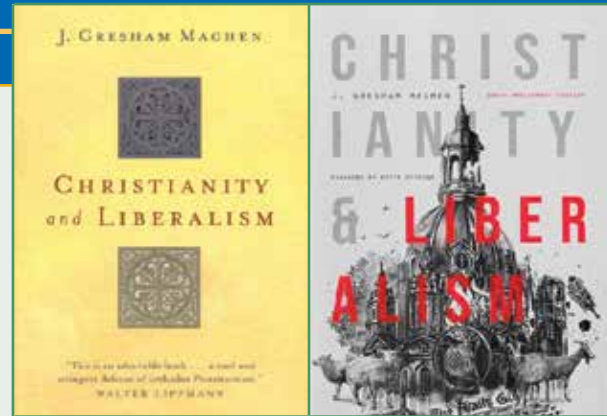
Let us turn to the Word of God, to Psalm 96. This has often been referred to as one of the greatest missionary passages in the entire Old Testament: "Shew forth his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people."

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was not just some mere "tribal deity," as some in academia would scoffingly have us believe. He was not just a superstitious invention of this large extended family, comprised of the descendants of Abraham. He indeed WAS the God of the Children of Israel, but He was not JUST the God of the Jews. As the Apostle Paul describes Him, He is and always has been the "King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God" (1 Timothy 1:17).

And God Himself spoke concerning this: "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh" (Jeremiah 32:27).

Moses asks in Exodus 15:11,13: "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? ... Thou

Continued on page 11



100 YEARS:

J. GRESHAM MACHEN'S *Christianity and Liberalism*

BY BRAD K. GSELL

2023 marks the one hundredth anniversary of the publication of a book which was to have immediate — as well as longlasting — influence. The Rev. Dr. J. Gresham Machen, Princeton Theological Seminary assistant professor of New Testament, was increasingly alarmed at the Modernism which was creeping into the Presbyterian Church in the USA, as well as other mainline denominations. After all, on May 21, 1922, the Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick had thrown down the gauntlet in a sermon he preached from the pulpit of New York's First Presbyterian Church. It was entitled "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" It was a call to battle against Bible Christianity.

Machen was a Bible scholar with few peers. Theologian Caspar Wister Hodge, of the famous Hodge lineage of Princeton professors, called Machen, at his death, "the greatest theologian in the English-speaking world." Even his enemies recognized his spiritual and intellectual genius.

Continued on page 4



International Christian Youth Choir, directed by Mrs. Irene Moyer



The Second Scottish Reformation

PART 3

BY MARK W. EVANS

In 1578, at the age of 12, James VI ascended the throne of Scotland. The pope and his advisers had plans for the young king. Church historian Thomas M'Crie wrote: "[T]he crafty politicians of Rome, ever watching to regain their ascendancy in that kingdom, saw the advantage of winning over the Scottish monarch. The pope himself sent him flattering letters; Jesuits and seminary priests were introduced into the country in disguise; and letters from Rome were intercepted, granting a dispensation to Roman Catholics to profess the Protestant faith for a time, provided they preserved a secret attachment to their own religion, and embraced every opportunity of advancing the papal interests."¹

The young king readily yielded to the Roman influence and disguised his true beliefs before the Protestants. He suggested the writing of a National Covenant in which he affirmed the acceptance of Protestantism and the rejection of Romanism, knowing that he could change his direction at the appropriate time.

This National Covenant was composed in the year 1580 and subscribed by the king and his family in January 1581. It became a continuing source of unity for the Lord's people in the face of treachery and persecution.

The National Covenant contained this statement: "[W]e abhor and detest all contrary religion and doctrine; but

chiefly all kind of Papistry in general and particular heads, even as they are now damned and confuted by the word of God and Kirk [Church] of Scotland. But, in special, we detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Roman Antichrist upon the scriptures of God, upon the kirk, and civil magistrate, and consciences of men...."

For more than a century, many sworn covenants were written by various segments of the Scottish population. Chief among all the covenants were the National Covenants of 1580 and 1638, which affected the entire country.

Robert Pollok Kerr wrote in the preface to his book *The Blue Flag of the Covenant*: "The world would be very different from what it is today if, in the years long gone, there had not been men and women willing to die for the purity of Christ's church and its freedom from the control of national rulers. The Covenanters of Scotland believed that the church had but one King — Christ Jesus — and they contended, suffered and died for His crown. Christ won His crown by the cross, and the Covenanters defended it by suffering for His sake."²

In 1603, James VI was crowned James I of England, thereby uniting the two kingdoms. His guiding principle was the "Divine right of Kings." He believed that since God placed him upon the throne, he possessed all authority in the realm. There must exist no competing authorities.

Since the Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland recognized only one Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, the king viewed that form of government as a threat to his sovereignty. His goal was to change Presbyterian church government into an episcopal government, ruled by bishops obedient to the king.

The monarch's attempts to subdue the Kirk's scriptural rights began a conflict between tyranny and liberty that ended in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Civil tyranny and religious freedom cannot peacefully exist together. King James I went to his grave in 1625, unable to subdue Scottish Protestants and their determination to defend the "Crown Rights of Jesus Christ."

Also in 1625, the Lord began a work by His Spirit that brought spiritual renewal to the land. Church historian J.A.

Religious freedom cannot exist where civil tyranny reigns. The Reformation that came to Scotland succeeded through the undaunted faith of individual believers. Truly, they overcame "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Revelation 12:11).

Wylie described this gracious revival: "Preachers had found no new gospel, nor had they become suddenly clothed with a new eloquence; yet their words had a power they had formerly lacked; they went deeper into the hearts of their hearers, who were impressed by them in a way they had never been before. Truths they had heard a hundred times over, of which they had grown weary, acquired a freshness, novelty, and a power that made them feel as if they heard them now for the first time. They felt inexpressible delight in that which aforetime had caused them no

joy, and trembled under what till that moment had awakened no fear. Notorious profligates, men who had braved the brand of public opinion, or defied the penalties of the law, were under this influence bowed down, and melted into penitential tears. Thieves, drunkards, loose livers, and profane swearers suddenly awoke to a sense of the sin and shame of the course they had been leading, condemned themselves as the chief of transgressors, trembled under the apprehension of a judgment to come, and uttered loud cries for forgiveness. Some who had lived years of miserable and helpless bondage to evil habits and flagrant vices, as if inspired by a sudden and supernatural force, rent their fetters, and rose at once to purity and virtue.”³

There were two areas in Scotland in which the Spirit of God especially poured out His showers of blessing, which spread throughout the land and continued for years. The first revival began in 1625; the second began in 1630. In God’s providence, both revivals involved ministers who had suffered persecution under James I.

The first outpouring occurred in a valley called Stewarton. The Lord’s instrument was not the excellent pastor of that area, but Mr. David Dickson, a man of God who resisted the king’s attempt to open the nation’s doors to Rome. The king and bishops exiled Mr. Dickson to northern Scotland. In time, he was able to return to his ministry. Burdened by the crowds gathering for the weekly market day, he determined to proclaim to them the Gospel of Christ. Church historian Thomas M’Crie wrote: “In a large hall within the manse there would often be assembled upwards of a hundred persons, under deep impressions of religion, waiting to converse with the minister, whose public discourses had led them to discover the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and to cry, ‘What shall we do to be saved?’ And it was by means of these week-day discourses and meetings that the famous Stewarton revival, or ‘the Stewarton sickness,’ as it was derisive-

ly called, began and spread afterwards from house to house for many miles....”⁴

The second revival also affected Scotland for numerous years. The Marchioness of Hamilton and some other ladies were traveling between Glasgow and Edinburgh when their carriage broke down near the manse of the Kirk

“The world would be very different from what it is today if, in the years long gone, there had not been men and women willing to die for the purity of Christ’s church and its freedom from the control of national rulers. The Covenanters of Scotland believed that the church had but one King – Christ Jesus – and they contended, suffered and died for His crown. Christ won His crown by the cross, and the Covenanters defended it by suffering for His sake.”²

Robert Pollok Kerr

of Shotts. The minister, Mr. Hance, assisted the ladies and invited them to wait in the manse while their carriage was being repaired.

The visitors saw the dilapidated condition of the manse and its need of repair. Later, the Marchioness arranged to have a new manse built for the pastor without cost. Mr. Hance expressed his deep gratitude and asked if there were any way he could show his appreciation. He was requested to invite persecuted preachers to assist him at the next communion service. He gladly agreed. Among the preachers were the “venerable” Mr. Robert Bruce of Kinnaird, Mr. David Dickson, and an almost unknown young minister, John Livingstone.

The Sunday communion service and messages so deeply moved the

large crowd that they determined to stay overnight, sing psalms, and engage in prayer. The next morning there was a call for another sermon. The chosen preacher became ill, and the young Mr. Livingstone was called upon to preach. He had thoughts of sneaking away because of his lack of preparation and his fear of such a large crowd and their high expectations. Yet, his conscience brought him to attempt a message from Ezekiel 36:26, “the heart of stone” replaced by a “fleshly heart.” He preached for an hour and a half and was about to stop when fresh thoughts flooded his mind. He continued for another hour. Some 500 souls professed salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. From there the revival spread to other areas of Scotland.

J.A. Wylie wrote: “Thus the Scottish Vine, smitten by the tyranny of the monarch who had now gone to the grave, was visited and revived by a second dew. From the high places of the State came edicts to blight it; from the chambers of the sky came a ‘plenteous rain’ to water it. It struck its roots deeper, and spread its branches yet more widely over a land which it did not as yet wholly cover. Other and fiercer tempests were soon to pass over that goodly tree, and this strengthening from above was given beforehand, that when the great winds should blow, the tree, though shaken, might not be overturned.”⁵

¹Thomas M’Crie, *The Story of the Scottish Church* (Glasgow: Bell and Bain Ltd, n.d.), p. 71.

²Robert Pollok Kerr, *The Blue Flag of the Covenant* (Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1905), p. 7.

³J.A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism* (London: Cassell and Company, n.d. [originally published, 1878], Vol. III, p. 533.

⁴M’Crie, pp. 131,132.

⁵Wylie, p. 536.



The Rev. Mark Evans is the pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC, and the Vice President of the American Council of Christian Churches.

Present With the Lord

THE REV. DR. RAYMOND CARLSON, Bible Presbyterian missionary and pastor, entered the presence of his Lord on July 25, 2023, surrounded by his wife Ruth and children Kristine, Eugene and Becky, as well as many of his seven grandchildren.

Raymond was the sixth of nine children — five boys and four girls. It was a family of three pastors, one ruling elder, and one pastor's wife. Many ancestors had been gospel ministers, but neither parent attended church nor gave much guidance while the children were growing up. There was no family support for education, so Raymond worked to pay for all his studies, even through his doctor's degree.

He went to Kenya under The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions in 1969, after pastorates in California and Missouri. In 2002, he joined his brothers in their newly formed GO! International mission to Kenya.

Raymond's Africa ministry was so broad that it is hard to define. He founded five Bible institutes, co-founded Faith College of the Bible, was principal (president) of the Mwingi Bible Institute as well as of the Bible College of East Africa in Nairobi. He was a committed educator, seeing solid training as necessary to the future of Christ's churches.

Certainly, Raymond's main love was that of founding congregations in the remotest regions. He was a bush evangelist at heart. In his early years, his movie projector, with solid biblical films, proved most effective. Movies had never before been seen there. Hundreds were saved, many of whom still speak of how God used Raymond in leading them to Christ. His secret in

all of his ministry was not in his bold style, but rather in the humble strength gathered in secret pleadings with God. He genuinely loved the people he served and trusted God, who had sent him. All through these years, Ruth, his wife and fellow missionary, labored beside him and supported him in this vital ministry.

Raymond held his life and goods loosely. He was endangered and robbed many, many times. Two legacies that had been left to him were diverted to others. The little money that he had, after his basic necessities were met, he gave away to

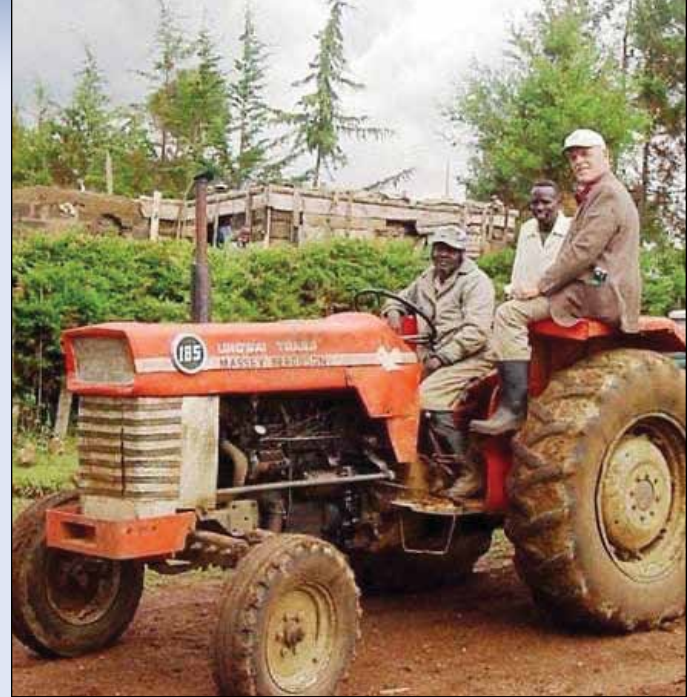
wherever he saw need. His bank account was truly in heaven, where neither moth nor rust degrades.

In January 2023 he was diagnosed with pancreatic and liver cancer. Many times he had pushed through malaria, typhoid fever, hepatitis and even lung cancer. But, not this time.

Words by William Blake might well capture Raymond's life: "The pure soul shall mount on native wings, disdain little sport, and cut a path into the heaven of glory, leaving a track of light for men to wonder at."

Details of most of Raymond's work in Kenya have been recorded in a 337-page illustrated book, *Willing Fools For Christ*, compiled by his sister. •

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Revelation 14:13).

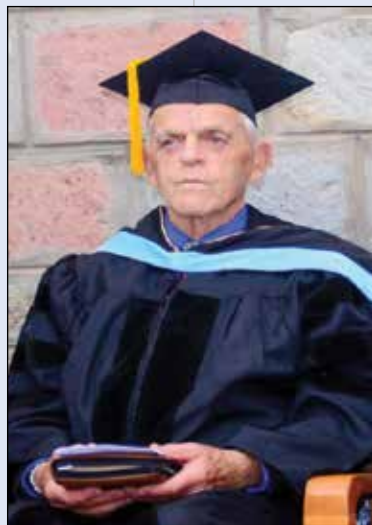


100 YEARS: CHRISTIANITY AND LIBERALISM

Continued from page 1

In 1923, Machen spoke at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. His message was entitled "Christianity and Modern Liberalism." It had a great impact on all who were in the audience that day. Two weeks later, Macmillan and Company published Machen's now-famous book, *Christianity and Liberalism*. Since that time, it has been republished in multiple editions. A one hundredth anniversary edition has recently been produced. We would recommend that you obtain a new or used copy of this work, readily available online.

Many have been led to stand in defense of the Word of God and the historic Christian faith through this work. However, Machen suffered at the hands of the increasing number of liberals within the PCUSA. In 1926, his nomination to a full professorship in apologetics at Princeton was denied by the PCUSA General Assembly. The next year, the Assembly rejected the biblical position that the Word of God is "the only infallible rule of faith and practice." The year 1929 saw the "reorganization of Princeton Seminary." Machen and other Bible scholars left their beloved Princeton to form Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.



In 1933, Machen and others formed The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (IBPFM), to oppose the Modernism and Communism in the official PCUSA mission board, and to promote “truly Biblical missions.” The PCUSA put Machen and others on trial, and suspended them from the ministry.

Those of us who serve as Board members and missionaries of the IBPFM are humbled, and consider it an immense honor to seek to faithfully maintain the stand taken by Dr. Machen and the other heroes of the faith who stood with him. This year marks the ninetieth anniversary of the IBPFM.

Other ministries, publications and media outlets are also recognizing this anniversary of *Christianity and Liberalism*. *Christianity Today* has deigned it one of the “100 Most Influential Books of the 20th Century.”

World magazine has named it to be its “Book of the Year” for 2023. In the past, most of *World*’s choices have been

May we always display the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) in our demeanor, and be accurate and measured in what we say. But, let us stand strong, as did Dr. Machen, in clearly declaring that the religion of Modernism, together with the many evil philosophies which have sprung up in its aftermath, are not Christianity at all. Further, those Evangelicals who compromise with this false religion must be rebuked for their sin. To do less, is disobedience to God and His Word.

published during the year in which the award is given. However, *World* states that this year’s book is just as important as when it was first published.

But presenting the issue sharply and clearly is by no means a popular business at present.... Presenting the issue sharply is regarded by [many in the church] as an impious proceeding.... But for my part I am glad to tell you my sympathies are with those men ... who have a passion for light.”

J. Gresham Machen

A plethora of other Christian groups recognize the importance of this work — even those who have failed to stand against the Modernism which Machen so strongly opposed, and those deeply involved in the sad compromise of much of modern day Evangelicalism.

Many in our day have retreated from the battle. They prefer to keep any objections to themselves, and work closely with men who are willing to compromise on these matters. To “stir up trouble” or “cause dissention” is their enemy — even when the voices who “cry aloud and spare not” (Isaiah 58:1) are calling for a return to Biblical Christianity, and are rebuking and warning against unbiblical compromise.

We are glad that many are recognizing the great importance of this monumental work by Dr. Machen, but we wish they would likewise have his prophetic voice and his clear and bold denunciation of evil.

In his message at Moody Bible Institute in 1924, Machen rejected the weak, accommodating approach of many of his associates. He stated:

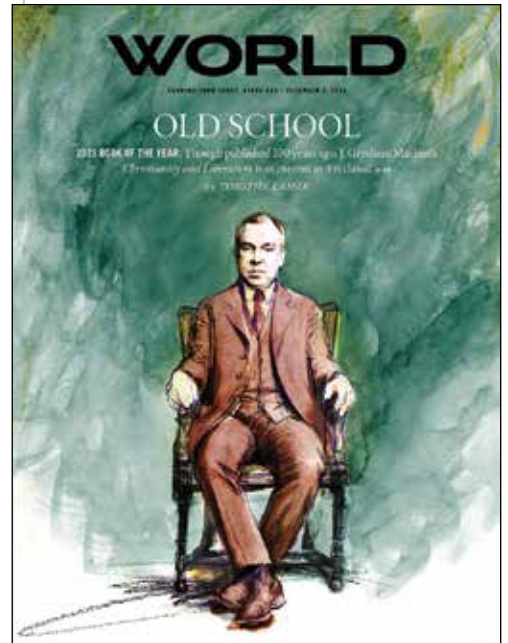
“In the time allotted me this afternoon I will not try to settle all the religious issues of the day, but try to be bold enough to present that issue as briefly and clearly as I can, that you may be aided in settling it for yourself.

“But presenting the issue sharply and clearly is by no means a popular business at present. There are many

people at the present time who, as Dr. Francis L. Patton has aptly put it, prefer to fight intellectual battles in what may be called a condition of “low visibility.”

“Presenting the issue sharply is regarded by them as an impious proceeding. May it not discourage contributions to mission boards? May it not prevent church consolidation and cause a poor showing in church statistics?

“But for my part I am glad to tell you my sympathies are with those men, whether conservatives or radicals, who have a passion for light. The type of religion which delights in the pious sound traditional phrases regardless of their meaning and shrinks from controversial matters, will never stand amid the shocks of life.”



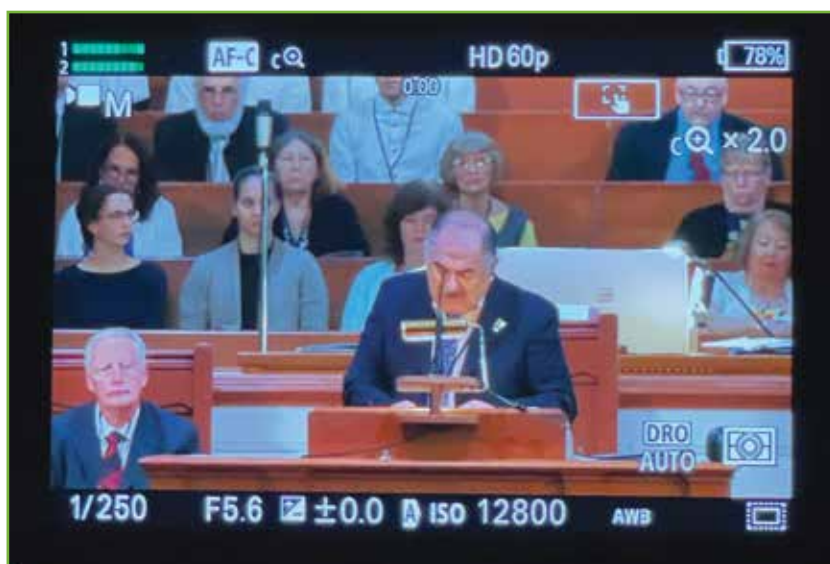
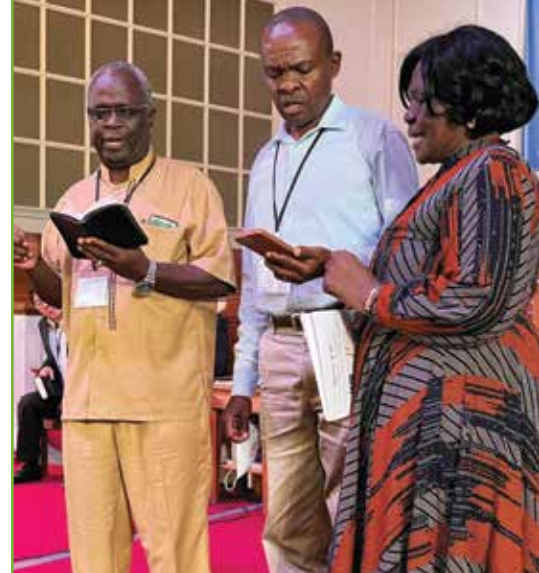
May we always display the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) in our demeanor, and be accurate and measured in what we say. But, let us stand strong, as did Dr. Machen, in clearly declaring that the religion of Modernism, together with the many evil philosophies which have sprung up in its aftermath, are not Christianity at all, but rather are a different religion. Further, those Evangelicals who compromise with this false religion must be rebuked for their sin. To do less, is disobedience to God and His Word. •

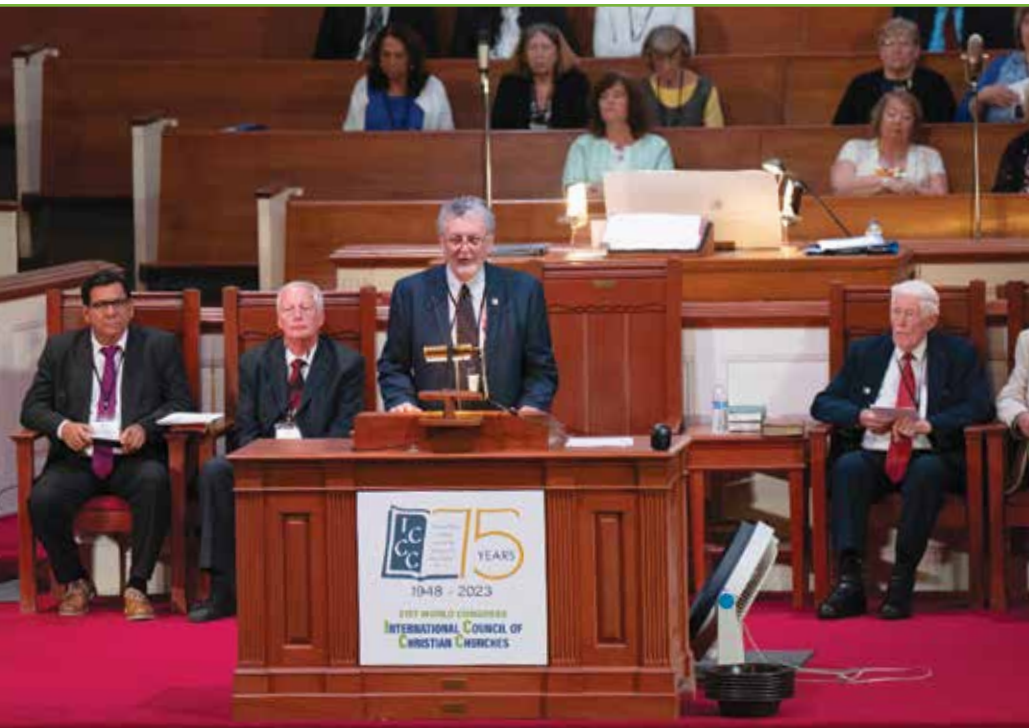
Photo Gallery

THE 21ST WORLD CONGRESS

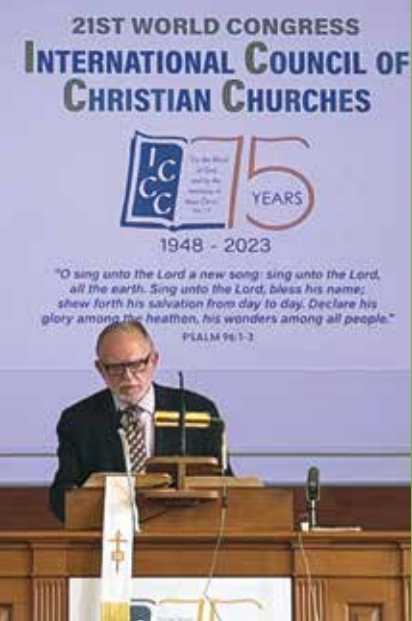
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES











"For the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ"

Revelation 1:9



DECLARE HIS GLORY AMONG THE NATIONS

Continued from page 1

in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.”

Our passage, Psalm 96, is not just a passive recital of God’s attributes and perfections, for us to gloss over with little consideration.

No! This Psalm is a call to action. We are told to “sing,” to “bless,” to “show forth,” to “declare,” to “fear,” to “give,” to “bring,” to “come,” to “worship,” to “be holy,” to “say,” to “be glad,” to “rejoice.” These are all action verbs — things which God expects from His children. This Psalm, from beginning to end, tells us our duty — one that is to be enthusiastically and gladly undertaken — to praise our God forever and ever.

It should be noted that this Psalm is quoted nearly verbatim in 1 Chronicles 16, when King David brought the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem. You can read about its storied history in the chapters immediately preceding this one.

In 1 Chronicles 16, these same words as found in Psalm 96 are identified as being authored by David. However, this passage contains additional verses, along the same theme. These additional verses contain even more action verbs. We are told to “give thanks,” to “call upon Him,” to “sing,” to “talk,” to “glory,” to “rejoice,” to “seek,” to “remember.”

The very first instruction in Psalm 96 is that we are to “sing unto the Lord a new song.” It is to be a song from our hearts that praises God in a way just as fresh and living as the day we first began to praise Him. It was not to be just a stale, dead ritual. Anything insincere or disingenuous would not be acceptable to God.

God hates such idle and meaningless praise. He warns of this in Isaiah 29:13: “Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have re-

moved their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.” The Lord Jesus Christ quotes this passage from Isaiah, when chastizing the Pharisees in Matthew 15:8.

God calls on ALL creation to sing His praise: “all the earth.” The song is to be directed to God, and specifically to His praise.

Our passage, Psalm 96, is not just a passive recital of God’s attributes and perfections, for us to gloss over with little consideration. No! This Psalm is a call to action. We are told to “sing,” to “bless,” to “show forth,” to “declare,” to “fear,” to “give,” to “bring,” to “come,” to “worship,” to “be holy,” to “say,” to “be glad,” to “rejoice.” These are all action verbs — things which God expects from His children. This Psalm, from beginning to end, tells us our duty — one that is to be enthusiastically and gladly undertaken — to praise our God forever and ever.

And then we are told to “shew forth His salvation from day to day” — as we are likewise told in the New Testament to be Christ’s witnesses, to “preach the gospel to every creature.”

But we should note that verse 3 of Psalm 96 is tightly joined with verse 2. This “salvation” is tied to the command to “Declare His glory among the heathen, His wonders among all people.” This is not just some cheap promise of a nice afterlife. No, this salvation is seen as a manifestation of God’s glory and His wonders. Only He can provide salvation. And, only He is to be worshipped.

Although God worked through the nation of Israel in the Old Testament,

that in no means indicates that the Gospel did not go forth, although the full revelation of it was made manifest in the First Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. All these events took place in God’s perfect timetable. Galatians 4:4-5 tells us: “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

In both Testaments we are told that “The just shall live by faith.” We see instances of those GENTILES who had faith. Even sinful Rahab, who was not a Jew, is mentioned in Hebrews 11 as one who had faith and was saved from God’s wrath. Look at such accounts as those of Ruth, the Moabitess, the preaching of Jonah in heathen Nineveh, and so forth. We must never imagine that God had no interest or compassion on the Gentiles in the Old Testament. Indeed He it was who declared in Isaiah 45:21-22: “and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”

I remember when I was a teenager, visiting this church (the Collingswood, NJ, Bible Presbyterian Church). Dr. Carl McIntire preached from the book of Galatians, chapter 3:6, from this very pulpit: “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” It was like a cover had been removed from my eyes.

We are told that God “preached the gospel unto Abraham.” Jesus tells us in John 8:56: “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.” We have several messages in this Congress that point to the fact that the Gospel was presented, and the Messiah was longed for in the Old Testament. The Old Testament saints looked forward to the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, just as we look back to Him who “offered one sacrifice for sins for ever” (Hebrews 10:12).

Continued on page 12

DECLARE HIS GLORY AMONG THE NATIONS

Continued from page 11

And at the very beginning of the Bible, in Genesis 22:18, God tells Abraham: “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.” We may lose the significance of this verse. But Paul further reveals its meaning in Galatians 3:16: “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, AND TO THY SEED, WHICH IS CHRIST.” Praise the Lord that the Gospel is found throughout the entire Bible — from beginning to end.

When we get down to verse 5 of Psalm 96, we read: “For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.”

Our God has no peers. All others beside Him are false, deceiving and devilish. We are told in Psalm 86:10: “For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone.” Yet it is always the way of sinful man to seek to diminish the glory and greatness of God, to seek to pervert His perfect Word, to insert faulty human reasoning into the decrees of the Almighty.

Man, divorced from the Scriptures, and in rebellion to it, will always follow idols — that which is false. They will always stubbornly turn away from the God of the Bible to a god of their own making. We might just mention a few prominent ones existing today, even in supposedly Christian churches. But none of these is new. They are all ancient heresies.

We think of **Syncretism** — the attempted amalgamation of different religions into one. Rev. E.C. Eicher, from Beirut, Lebanon, an early ICCC leader in the Middle East Bible Council, wrote a pamphlet warning of the dangers of syncretism. Some supposedly Christian church groups today include Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Jainists, and so forth, on the platforms of their assemblies. Glowing letters of greeting

and support are sent to the leaders of these groups on their holy days. Dialogue and joint statements are produced in vague, but glowing, terms.

Even within Christian churches there have been attempts at blending various churches into one megachurch. Churches Uniting in Christ is a long standing organization seeking to merge disparate denominations into one by the dilution of Bible doctrine into almost meaningless generalizations. With

In both Testaments we are told that “The just shall live by faith.” We see instances of those GENTILES who had faith. Even sinful Rahab, who was not a Jew, is mentioned in Hebrews 11 as one who had faith and was saved from God’s wrath. Look at such accounts as those of Ruth, the Moabitess, the preaching of Jonah in heathen Nineveh, and so forth. We must never imagine that God had no interest or compassion on the Gentiles in the Old Testament. Indeed He it was who declared in Isaiah 45:21-22: “and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”

Biblical doctrine no longer of prime importance, this group now almost exclusively focuses on fighting supposed racism, and advocating for a “social justice,” that is really a secular, and unbiblical socialism.

Another human error we see is **Universalism** — a philosophy that defines

God’s love to mean that every person will ultimately be saved, no matter what. It denies that the wicked — those who have not trusted in Christ alone, by faith — will “be turned into hell.”

Pantheism is another ancient error — that the universe is God, with all of its substance, forces, and laws. This may be associated with some of the Eastern religions, yet it is becoming increasingly prevalent, as many have abandoned the church in favor of “worshipping God in nature,” and involvement in certain environmental causes which have all the marks of a false religion.

There are still others who believe that the Gospel of Christ, as taught in the Bible, is what they derisively describe as “pie in the sky” — giving suffering men a mere unsatisfactory and incomplete promise of eternal life and bliss. This “gospel” presented by the World Council of Churches and other such bodies is a gospel which cannot save. It is a completely flawed and misplaced attempt to produce a utopia on this earth, through socialism, a new world economic order, climate change initiatives, and so forth.

The WCC, meeting in its 11th World Assembly last September, had one resolution, one statement, one speech after another centering on these secular goals. Who among them was challenged, at least using legitimate methods of Biblical interpretation, to embrace the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die” (John 11:25-26).

The Gospel of the Word of God tells us in Mark 8:36,37: “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

So many of these ecumenical organizations have embraced some principles of the anti-Christian movement we see in various countries which is sometimes called being “woke.”

They have often in reality rejected that “all have sinned and come short of



the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), and instead have led in replacing this with the pernicious teaching that each of us is either oppressed, or is an oppressor. The “oppressed” are saints, who are seemingly faultless, and are to be shielded from any hint that they are sinners.

The so-called oppressors, on the other hand, are always considered evil, no matter how closely they walk with the Lord, and seek to obey Him. Further, the oppressors are irredeemable. In practice, the Biblical teachings of forgiveness, regeneration, and restoration are given no place.

Sadly, even the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) works closely with this iniquity found within the WCC. The WEA contains many churches and organizations with which most of us are familiar. These include well-known mission boards, charities, medical works, schools, etc., whose purposes we may consider to be commendable. Yet, they remain in this deadly compromise.

The Secretary General of the World Evangelical Alliance, Archbishop Thomas Schirmacher, stood on the platform and gave glowing praise to the WCC at its Assembly last September. The two organizations continue to work ever more closely together. This top WEA leader gladly accepted that the World Evangelical Alliance was one of the self-appointed “Four Pillars” of Christendom — that’s what they call themselves — together with the WCC, the Roman Catholic Church, and the World Pentecostal Fellowship.

In bold contrast to this, the International Council of Christian Churches is a multi-denominational organization of Bible-believing churches, with absolutely no desire or purpose to build a one world church. We pray that all of us would increasingly, and diligently, study the Word of God, to become

I am a Presbyterian. Others of you are Methodists, Baptists, and so forth. We must NEVER become indifferent to doctrine, but at the same time we can have precious fellowship and cooperation with those in the body of Christ who may genuinely see some things differently on certain matters. But, we are all united in our belief in the great cardinal doctrines of the Word of God, held without reserve by historic Christianity, and presented in the ICCC doctrinal statement.

ever-better “approved workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

I am a Presbyterian. Others of you are Methodists, Baptists, and so forth. We must NEVER become indifferent

to doctrine, but at the same time we can have precious fellowship and cooperation with those in the body of Christ who may genuinely see some things differently on certain matters. But, we are all united in our belief in the great cardinal doctrines of historic Christianity, as presented in the ICCC doctrinal statement.

I can still remember Dr. Nadir Carreño’s message at our last Congress, in Puerto Montt, Chile. He pointed out that the Apostle John in his Second and Third epistles addressed Gaius, and the Elect Lady and her children, as those “whom I love in the truth.” The love that Christ commands us to have is never divorced from the truth.

I have pointed to some of these modern-day, but really ancient, perversions, because I think it is important to apply the Scriptures to situations we face in our times. Some seek to teach Scriptural principles in the abstract. However, the Scriptures do not contain just some ethereal teachings. They are always wedded to real every day occurrences — Daniel and the lion’s den, David and Goliath, Paul on the Road to Damascus, and so forth.

When considering the “gods of the nations,” the “idols,” it must be noted that this word “idols” is really the term for “NOTHING.” “The gods of the nations are NOTHING.” Many of us are familiar with the Hebrew word *Elohim*, used frequently when referring to God in the Bible. It is also sometimes used in a different sense for false gods. It is interesting that the “gods of the nations,” — the *elohim*, are referred to with a very similar sounding Hebrew word — *elilim* — NOTHING.

Paul confirms this in the New Testament in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, where he writes: “We know that an idol is NOTHING in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom

Continued on page 14

DECLARE HIS GLORY AMONG THE NATIONS

Continued from page 13

are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”

We take all of the false gods and philosophies of the world — and there are many — and must come to the realization that when you put all of them together, they are NOTHING!

But in grand and glorious contrast to all these devilish NOTHINGS, Psalm 96:5-6 declares that our great God “made the heavens. Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.”

In great distinction to these manmade idols — these NOTHINGS — which are only capable of deceit and destruction, we see that the Lord Jesus Christ is declared to be “all, and in all” (Colossians 3:11).

Colossians 1:16-17 says: “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”

God is not in need of the praise and adulation of those whom He created. But we are in need of praising Him. We

are told that we are to bring to Him “the glory DUE unto His name.” It is owed to Him, and we as His creatures have an obligation.

Hebrews 13:15 confirms this: “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice

**We take all of the false gods
and philosophies of the
world – and there are many
– and must come to the
realization that when you
put all of them together,
they are NOTHING!**

**But in grand and glorious
contrast to all these devilish
NOTHINGS, Psalm 96:5-6
declares that our great God,
who is to be feared above
all gods, “made the heavens.
Honour and majesty are
before him: strength and
beauty are in his sanctuary.”**

**In great distinction to these
manmade idols, who can do
nothing but deceive, we see
that the Lord Jesus Christ is
declared to be “all, and in
all” (Colossians 3:11).**

of [we are to give] praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”

Returning to Psalm 96, we are told to give both from a heart rejoicing in our Saviour, as well as to give of the substance that He has entrusted to us.

And then, verse 9 tells us to “worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.” This refers specifically to holy attire, but it is much more than that. Holiness is the “cutting off or separating from” sin. A holy people worshipping a holy God is declared to be “beautiful.”

We see something not so beautiful in Isaiah chapter 1. Israel had become a “sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity” — who nonetheless still car-



ried on their sacrifices and feasts and religious worship. God does not call their praise and worship beautiful. Instead, He says in verses 13-14: “Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.”

God tells us in Joel 2:12-13: “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God.” God commands us: “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15-16). True worship must be given to our infinitely holy God, but it can only come from the hearts of sanctified believers who are subservient and obedient to God and His Word.

May we in the International Council of Christian Churches around the world be a mighty army of those who love the Lord, love His Word, and seek to give all out of a pure heart in His service. May each of us “lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Out of holy hearts, with great gladness and rejoicing, let us “Show forth His salvation from day to day,” and “Declare His glory among the heathen, His wonders among all people.” •



The Rev. Brad Gsell is a minister of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC, and President of the International Council of Christian Churches and of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.

REDEEMING THE TIME

Editor: Brad K. Gsell

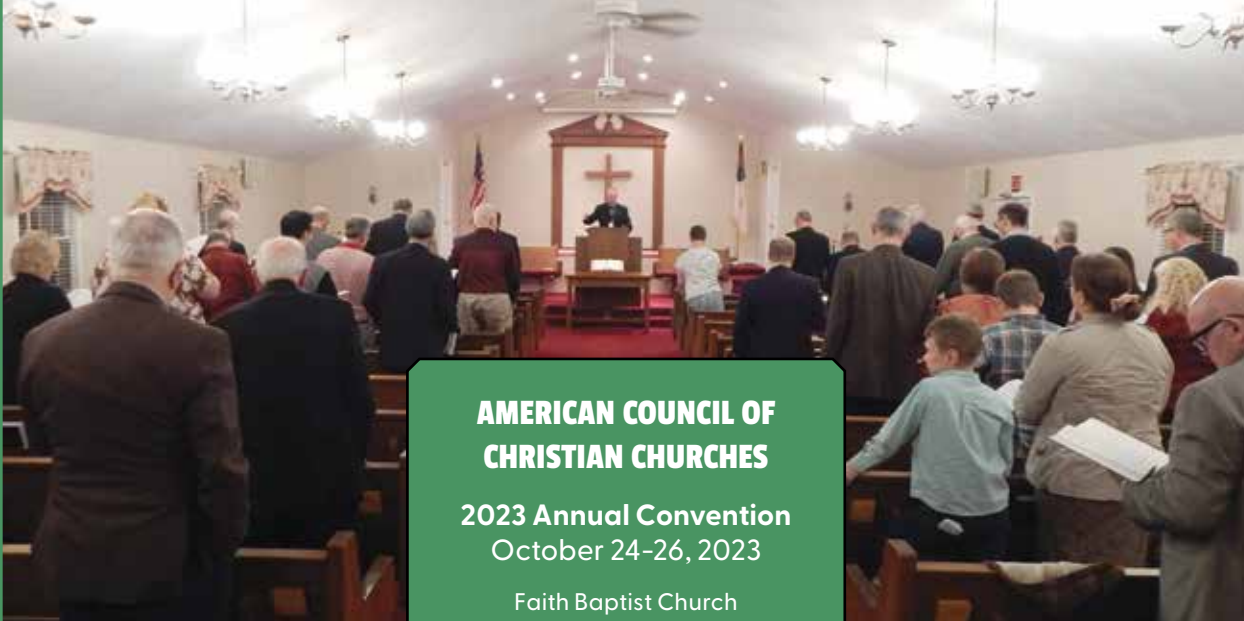
Associate Editor: Mark W. Evans

Redeeming the Time is a quarterly publication with the purpose of encouraging God's people and applying God's Word to the issues of our day.

Individual copies are distributed free of charge, but the generous donations of God's people are necessary for this ministry to continue. Checks may be made payable to “Redeeming the Time,” and mailed to: P.O. Box 26281, Charlotte, NC 28221-6281. All donations are tax deductible.

e-mail: redemptingthetime@bellsouth.net

Sponsored by Publication Fund - Bible Presbyterian Church - Charlotte, NC



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

2023 Annual Convention
October 24-26, 2023

Faith Baptist Church
Kittery, Maine



Rev. Dan Greenfield,
Orwell, OH



Rev. Kevin Hobi,
New Boston, NH



ACCC officers (left to right): Rev. Kevin Hobi, Treasurer;
Rev. Matthew Reider, Secretary; Rev. Jonathan Smith,
President; Rev. Mark Evans, Vice President; and Rev. Dan
Greenfield, Executive Secretary



ACCC Vice President and Mrs. Mark Evans
sharing a time of fellowship with Rev. John
Mark Turner



A few of the ACCC Executive Committee members



The Registration table



Rev. Peter Youmans,
Hazard, KY



Pictured (left to right) are IBPFM Board members Mark Evans and Brad Gsell, and
missionaries Gary Johnson, and Jim, Melody and Debbie Bjur.

www.rttpublications.org

On September 18-19, 2023, a number of missionaries and Board members went to Bob Jones University, in Greenville, SC, at different times, to man the display for **The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (IBPFM)**. Others, not pictured, included Board member Carl Abrams and the Paul and Cheryl Durand missionary family.



Rev. Larry Saunders,
Toronto, Ontario, Canada



FAITH PRESBYTERY, BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Fall 2023 Meeting
September 29, 2023

Bible Presbyterian Church
Charlotte, NC



The Closing of Church Doors

BY BRAD K. GSELL

In our travels, it is always sad to see church buildings either being torn down, or "repurposed" as bars, night-clubs, restaurants, museums, apartments, and so forth. Some never were sound Bible-believing churches, but many were built with the sacrificial love of faithful saints who desired to see the work of the Lord flourish in their communities.

Recently, while traveling in Canada and New England, we saw quite a few of these "repurposed" buildings. Where we live, the local Methodist Church recently closed its doors. Dating from the 1800s, no trace remains. The land is now the site of newly-constructed apartments.

Hymnwriter Isaac Watts once penned the sentiment of all true Christians: "We long to see Thy churches full /

That all the chosen race / May, with one voice and heart and soul / Sing Thy redeeming grace."

It would be nice to think that only "churches" which have abandoned Bible Christianity are closing down. But, in truth, even many solid churches in the United States are facing great challenges.

When we see the closure of church buildings, it is only a symptom of some troubling trends:

1. Our society is plummeting headlong into wickedness, and away from God.
2. The mainline churches have largely fallen into apostasy and decay. People leave because they are being served rocks for bread.
3. Many evangelical churches have adopted a surface, feel-good religion of self

help and entertainment, which lacks solid Biblical nourishment.

4. Members of Bible-honoring churches have far too often become lukewarm and complacent. Young people have left the church in droves.

May we "Rise up, O men of God! / Have done with lesser things. / Give heart and mind and soul and strength / to serve the King of kings."

The church is NOT the building. It is we, as "living stones," that make up Christ's church.

Let us never forget, that no matter what, Christ promises us: "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"! (Matthew 16:18). •

