

Vol. 4 No3
December, 1991

Only Believe

A THOUGHT-PROVOKING LOOK AT
HUMANITY'S MOST INFLUENTIAL
FORM OF EXPRESSION

MUSIC

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SOUND
AND THE
UNSOUND

Thanks for writing

Witness

□ Do you publish another magazine called Witness? I receive it about once a year from the Voice of God Recordings in Jeffersonville, and someone told me that you are the editor of that magazine, plus Only Believe and a newsletter called Postscripts? How do I receive Postscripts? I don't want to miss out on any little bit of information about this End Time Message and Brother Branham.

A Brother from Tennessee

I was the writer/editor of the Voice of God's magazine, Witness, during the first two years of its development (1985 - 1987). The last issue which I edited was April, 1987 (pictured below). However, the magazine continues and you may receive it by writing Voice Of God Recordings, P0 Box 950, Jeffersonville, IN 47131, and asking to be placed on their mailing list.



Since April, 1988 I have edited Only Believe magazine for Believers International, a corporation formed by my husband as a vehicle for missionary outreach. Postscripts is the name given to the Believers International newsletter. Thus far, it has only been used to report what we consider to be 'special edition' events (e.g. the finding of Brother Branham's cave, and the New Generation tour of Europe). If you are receiving Only Believe

magazine, you will automatically receive any future issues of Postscripts as well - however sporadically they may be published. - Ed.

Whose Book is It?

□ Every magazine has been such a blessing to us, but I must confess that the last one got me too excited to sleep. That article about The Seven Church Ages book was so needed. When we first came into the Message, that was my 'handbook.' It seemed to cover about everything a member of the Bride should know. As time went by, I felt saddened by the remarks I heard being made about it.

May God richly bless you for taking your stand and telling the whole story so courageously. You really did your homework!

Isabel Weems Tucson, Arizona

□ I wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed the article on the Church Age Book. Through the years I have encountered various criticisms but yet I have found the book to be most Scriptural and also very much in line with both the recorded sermons and the unabridged books.

I had found the statements that Brother Branham made about this book, especially the one in Vol. 7 No 2 about "My Book," but all the additional information you gave was certainly a blessing to read. I have personally baptized many people who have accepted true salvation and seen the Message through studying the Church Age Book with the Scriptures. While reading your article, I couldn't help thinking of what Brother Branham said about finding the best fruit where you see the most scarecrows. Satan doesn't put scarecrows at a useless tree.

There was a pastor in our area by the name of Pastor Thomas, and he told us of a man who had contacted him one day by telephone from a

town a fair distance away from Capetown.

The Lord had dealt with him through a dream and in the dream he had seen the face of a man, and below the face there was a number which he felt was a telephone number. When this man called, Pastor Thomas told him about the ministry of Brother Branham and what God was doing still today through His Message. The man came to meet Pastor Thomas and was given a Church Age book. When he opened the book he saw the picture of the prophet in the front. "Why," he said, "that is the face I saw in my dream!" He was led to Christ, baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and went on his way rejoicing. Praise God!

Theo Erasmus

Somerset West, South Africa

Justin Steiner

□ An interesting article appeared in our local paper, The Alton Telegraph. I thought you might enjoy seeing it as a side light to your article in the Only Believe magazine, "The Miracle of Justin Steiner."

I seriously doubt that anyone (of the world) would believe that the miracle was the result of a prophet's word, "God will work miracles among you." But, we believe it, and that is what counts.

Note that there is much praise in the newspaper for doctors and medics but none for God.

John Kessler Wood River, Illinois

Believers from all across the US sent us newspaper articles clipped from their local papers concerning Justin. And the Howards wrote to say that they had received many phone calls from people everywhere who had been blessed through the article.

Justin is still an active nine year old boy. The only evidence of his fall is the scar from his surgery. - Ed.

Only Believe

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In case you're wondering why we selected such a ragged hymn book to feature on the back cover of this issue, I think you should know that it is not just an ordinary hymnal. That little green book and I started out together at a tall player piano more than thirty-five years ago. Sister Gertie Gibbs, who was the pianist at the Branham Tabernacle in those days, bought it new and gave it to me not long after I started piano lessons. "Learn to play 'Only Believe' first," she told me.

Many of the pages are dog-eared, and a few have been scribbled on. That's because there were always favorites that we wanted to be able to turn to quickly whenever Dad would say "Who has a favorite song for us to sing tonight." Actually, I always had the last say, because whether or not we sang it depended on whether or not I could play it, and then (as now) my repertoire was fairly limited.

Mother always liked the slow songs; Sarah liked the fast ones. Joseph preferred any loud song, and Dad's favorites were the "work" songs. "Work for the night is coming, Work through the morning hours," he'd sing.

Writing the article "Music, Sound and Unsound" for this issue of Only Believe has made me realize just how much I miss those old hymns. The difference between the old songs and some of the new ones that are being sung in our churches today is like comparing the King James Version of the Bible with the New International Version. Somehow, the poetry is just not there.

I believe the subject of music must receive the serious consideration of every Message Believer today. For too long we have underestimated our adversary's skill in that field. But ask yourself this question: If you were Satan, where would you launch your attack against the young people of this Message?

Let's make sure our music is in harmony with the Word.

Rebekah Branham Smith, editor

I was in Colorado not long ago, hunting with several brethren I'm a guide in Colorado, and I've hunted in there for years. Usually, I'm up there on my wedding anniversary. When the wife and I got married, I'd saved up all my nickels and dimes from my work and had them in a baking powder can, but I didn't have enough to take a honeymoon and go hunting both, so I just blended them together. I took her on a hunting trip for a honeymoon! And since then, to my shame, I have never been home with her on our anniversary. I've been hunting.

It had been awfully dry in Colorado, as it had been across the country. Game was scarce. They'd had to prolong the hunting season a few days extra on account of the dryness. There was, I suppose, a hundred men or more ahead of us up above our camp, and they had been shooting up there for four or five days. Brother Wheeler, the Lord blessed him and gave him a fine trophy, and we were so happy about that. It was the first time he'd ever been in the woods hunting.

And then on Tuesday, October 22, I shot a big trophy that I had been hunting for twenty years. But I had sighted my rifle in down in the hot country, and bringing it up into the cold had caused the stock to swell, even though it was glass bedded. It shot several inches off, and hit the animal, that was standing between trees, lower than that which would have humanely killed it in a second. But it hit him high, and he jumped and it looked like he fell.

Billy was with me, and he said, "That got him." And I thought it did, too; but when we went over there, the deer wasn't there. I went to searching for it, and I searched for him all that day.

The next day, a warning came on the radio that there was a blizzard coming. And, as everyone knows, in that country when a blizzard is forecast, you'd better get away right now. It could dump twenty feet of snow overnight, and you might stay there for weeks. That's why Brother Palmer and the Martin boys (who had been camped a little ways from us) left early. They only had a three-speed transmission in their car, and they had to get out of there. Carload after carload, practically everyone from up around in there left out that day.

But the brethren in my camp still had two deer license, and they didn't want to go. I called them in and I said, "Brethren, you heard what the news said. If you want to get out, we'd better go right now, because soon it's going to be too late. We might stay here for a week. And I should go, because next Monday I've got a Full Gospel Business Men's meeting at the chapter in Tucson. However, you make your choice. If you want to stay, I'm your guide and I'll stay here with you."

All seven of them voted to stay.

It didn't snow that day, the day the other camp went out. I said, "I'm going to go and call the wife and tell her Happy Anniversary! I'll also get some groceries, because we might have to stay in here a while." We were already out of bread and were eating flapjacks. Those

pancakes! I'd already had to eat them in Canada for about twenty-one days, and I had sure had my fill of those things. I wanted to get some bread.

Brother Mann and I went into Kremmling and I called the wife. No one answered, so I waited about an hour, till we got the grocery shopping done, went back, called, and still she didn't answer. I had to call Sister Evans for Brother Evans, so told her that I couldn't get my wife, she had gone to the store. She said, "I'll call Sister Branham and tell her a 'Happy Anniversary,'" I said, "Tell her to tell Brother Tony Stromei, who is the president of the chapter, that if I'm not in there Sunday, get another speaker ready, because I may not be able to get out of here at all. I'm with these men." Then, we went back to camp.

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk as he walked."

I JOHN 2:6

*Walk
With
Me*

Taken from: "HE THAT IS IN YOU" November 10, 1963.

That night it still didn't snow, but the next morning the clouds were real low and angry. I said to the brethren, brethren, "Now, the first drop of rain starts to fall, the first snow, the first sleet, anything, take for the camp just as hard as you can, because within fifteen minutes you can't see your hand before you. And it'll just twist and blow and I don't care how well you know the country, you stay right there and you'll perish. Cause sometimes you can't even breathe, the sleet blowing so,



Corral Peaks

you die right there.” And I said, “As soon as it starts with that sleet, you take for the camp just as hard as you can, I don’t care where you are.”

They said they would do it. “Well,” I said, “Go up here and set in these gulches, and I’ll climb way high and roll rocks over the hill and so forth to scare the deer off the top and run them down. You pick out what you want.”

So I started climbing high, to where we call ‘The Saddle,’ a little place there that I always cross over to go to a place called ‘Quaker Knob,’ right on the Continental Divide, about 9,000 feet above sea level. I had almost got to this little saddle, when I noticed that the clouds were getting blacker and blacker. There wasn’t anybody left back there, just us and the cowboy that would be staying at Cow Camp to keep an eye on the herd. I used to stay in that camp myself, back when I herded cattle many years ago.

Then all at once, a big blast of wind came, and the sleet began to fall. I said, “I guess everybody is headed back to camp now.” I stood and looked around and I thought, “I wish I could find that deer before I go back,

because the snow will cover him up and he won’t be found until spring.”

I thought, “I’ve hunted so hard for that deer, and it was the first deer I ever let get by like that, since I’ve owned this little rifle. I just hate to see it get away like that.”

In a few minutes, it started raining. Well, I took my gun and put it under my coat, to keep the scope from smoking up and the stock from getting wet. I might run into a bear or something going back, so I held my scope like that and set down under a tree for a little bit. I sat there and prayed. I said, “Lord, God, You’re the Great Jehovah, and I love You. How many great experiences have I had right here in this place!”

I had pointed out to the brethren the places where I’d seen the eagle rise up that day and the places where it all took place in there. I’ve had so many great experiences with my Lord, up in those mountains. You just can’t go there without seeing Him; He’s just everywhere.

So then, as I set there, great big snow drops, looking like quarters, started falling everywhere and the wind started blowing. I thought, “Well, I know the way down, but I’d better get off here right now.” I looked down the mountain and I couldn’t even see the bottoms any more

through the clouds, just whirling and twisting. It was the blizzard that had been forecast for several days.

Well, I put my gun back under my shirt, like this (I had on my red shirt and cap), and started walking down the mountain.

I got down about, oh, I guess, three hundred or four hundred yards from where I was. I could see about twenty feet in front of me, but I knew to come right down this little, what we called a hog back, a little ridge, and I'd come off to the creek and then I knew to follow the creek to where the tent was. I was almost in a run, trying to get off the mountain when I heard Something say to me, just as plain as you hear me, "Stop and go back!"

Now, this sounds strange, but I've got a Bible laying here before me, and a heavenly Father that bears record. I thought, "What was I thinking about? Maybe it's just my mind." But I just couldn't make another step forward.

David had fixed me a sandwich that morning, and I think he was trying to get even with me for one I had fixed for his daddy a while back, of onion and honey (that's all we had!). So he fixed me a sandwich of baloney and I don't know what else was wrapped in there with it. I had stuck it down in my shirt, and it had got wet and now it was just a big wad of dough. But I was kind of hungry, so I ate it anyhow. When I finished, I buried the little piece of paper it had been wrapped in, then I stood there a little bit and I thought, "Well, I'll go on. Now I'll be all right." And as I started to move, Something said, "Go back where you came from!"

Go back through that storm? A half a mile or more back up the mountain, into that dark timber? How could that be God telling me to walk into that death trap?

I stood there a minute, and I thought, "That's the same One that told me about those squirrels, the same One that told me about my wife's healing. Just a voice, just a human voice. The same One told me, when I was a little boy to never drink or smoke, and of these things that would be in the last days."

I'm getting to be an old man, and I've been a Christian now for thirty-three years. I know that no matter what, or how ridiculous it seems, mind the Lord! Do what the Lord says! I thought, "I know enough to obey that Voice. He's got some reason for me to go up there."

And I turned and went back to the saddle, feeling my way back. Oh, the sleet was getting harder and harder; it was getting darker and darker. And I sit down there under a tree, and just put my coat up like this, over the scope again. I thought, "What am I doing here? Why would I come back up here?"

I just waited a few minutes, and as I started to get up again, just as plain as I'd ever want to hear, a Voice said, "I am the Creator of heavens and earth! I make the wind and the rain." That wasn't the wind. I took off my hat.

I said, "Great Jehovah, is that You?"

And I heard it again. He said, "I was the One who made the winds to cease upon the sea. I was the One who made the waves to go down. I created heavens and earth. Was not I the One that told you to speak for squirrels, and they came into existence? I am God."

Now, when a voice speaks to you, watch the Scripture. If it's not Scriptural, you leave it alone; I don't care how plain it is, you stay away from it.

I said, "Yes, Lord."

He said, "Stand on your feet."

I stood up. He said, "Speak to those winds in that storm, and it'll go away."

Now, this Bible lays before me, which, my life is in that. I said, "I do not doubt Your Voice, Lord." I said, "Clouds, snow, rain, sleet, I resent your coming. In the Name of Jesus Christ, go to your places! I say that the sun must come out immediately and shine for four days, till our hunting trip is over and I leave with my brethren."

The wind was just rushing, just "Whooooossh," like that. And it started going, "Whoosh," and then went "Whew, Whew, Whew, Whe..." It stopped!

I stood real still. The sleet and rain stopped. And there came a wind whirling down through the mountain, lifted up the clouds, and scattered them in each direction: east, north, west, and south. And, within a few minutes, the sun was shining nice and warm.

That's the truth! God knows that's the truth! I just stood there with my hat off, looking. I felt numb all over.

I thought, "The very God of Creation, it's all in His hand. What's He telling me?" I picked up my gun, wiped off the scope, and started to walk back down the hill. I knew my brethren would be wondering what had happened.

And again Something said to me, "Why don't you stroll with Me through this wilderness? Walk with Me."

I said, "Yes Lord, with all my heart; it would be one of the greatest things I could do, to walk with You."

So I put my gun over my shoulder, and I started walking down through that virgin timber (never had an ax been laid to it). Walking through there, I was saying, "Father I know You are walking with me and what a privilege it is! There's nobody greater I could be walking with, the very God!" I was walking and rejoicing, and the sunshine was warm on my back.

A GREENHORN ON THE TROUBLESOME



Colorado hunting companions: Banks Woods, Billy Paul Branham, Ronnie Evans, William Branham, Welch Evans, Carl Wheeler, & (kneeling) Vernon Mann

Story begins on next page...

It was Monday, October 14, 1963 - a still, cool evening on the banks of the Ohio River. As I walked down the lane towards the home of my good friend and neighbor, Carl Wheeler, I felt totally immersed in one of the earth's most impressive displays - fall of the year. The trees had already taken on the brilliant yellow and red colors of the season, but the grass underfoot was still green, adding a touch of coolness to nature's fiery pallet. Southern Indiana is the most beautiful place in the world in October. But seeing as how I was born there, maybe I'm just a bit prejudiced.

Carl's business was sand and gravel. He operated a good-sized pit that was located on the same property that we both lived on. We've known one another for many years, and in fact, our wives are kin. I worked part-time at the gravel pit with Carl, and the rest of the time I worked for myself, as a mechanic. We both attended the Branham Tabernacle in Jeffersonville, and Carl had been a deacon there for a couple of years. I felt so thankful that the Lord had allowed me to be taught the Word under the ministry of His prophet, Brother Branham.

I arrived at the Wheeler's house just as Carl was getting home - a good bit later than usual. He's the quiet type, but I could see right off that he was excited about something. I sat on the steps that led from his garage up to the kitchen and listened as he told me how that Brother Banks Wood, who lived next door to Brother Branham in Jeffersonville, had come out to the gravel pit earlier in the afternoon to sight in his rifle. Brother Banks and his son, David, and a couple other brothers were getting ready to leave for Colorado where they were to meet Brother Branham for ten days of deer and elk hunting. "He invited me to go along," Carl told me, "but I just don't know if I should go or not. I've never hunted big game before," he said, "and I just don't know how I'd feel with these experienced hunters."

I thought maybe he was still in a state of shock even at the prospect of going. I'd never hunted much either, but I figured that I knew exactly what I would say to such an invitation. I'd say "Yes," quick as a wink - not that I ever expected to be offered such an opportunity. "Carl, you'd better get ready and go. I just know you'll have a great time." I said. Then I reminded him, "You just bought that new pair of Redwing boots, and I'll grease them up real good for you." To show how excited I was for him, I went and got the boots and started rubbing the Neetsfoot oil in them right then.

"Well, I guess you're right," he said. "I'll go."

The next day he bought a few things that he thought he'd need. I told him that I would drive him to Brother Wood's house on Wednesday morning, which was the pre-arranged departure place for the five hunters.

We arrived at about 9 a.m., and Brother Banks was putting gear into the back of his nearly-new Chevy pickup. He was quite an ingenious carpenter, and he had built a camper on his truck with a top that you could crank up and down. I remember that he had used bicycle chains on the cranking device. Also there, packed and ready to go, were Brother Welch Evans and his son, Ronnie, from Tifton, Georgia. I got out of my truck and began to help Carl unload his things. Brother Banks came over to help us and we talked a bit. I saw that he was eyeing my little truck, a black, 1950 Chevy. "Brother Mann," he said, "we need another truck. Why don't you come and go with us, too?"

My head was spinning. “Naw,” I said, “you don’t need an old greenhorn to be in your way.”

He said, “Yeah, come on and go.”

I said, “Naw, I don’t have anything ready to go. I’ll just delay you all.” But I thought to myself, “If he asks me one more time, I’m going!”

He said, “We’re not ready anyway. Go home and get your things and come with us.”

That did it. I headed for home as fast as I could go. On the River Road, I passed my wife and her daddy who were coming to town, and I waved them down. “I’m going hunting with Brother Branham in Colorado!” I called out. And they turned around and followed me home to help me get ready.

The only gun I had was a little .22, so I decided to take my fishing pole and tackle box instead. I wasn’t much of a hunter, but I did like to fish. I found my sleeping bag (it wasn’t a very good one, but it would just have to do), and added it to my fishing gear in the back of the truck. Then I found an empty five gallon lard can and stuffed a couple changes of clothes in it, tied a rope across the top, and I was ready. It was about 12 miles from my house to Jeffersonville, and part of that was through the town of New Albany. That made it about a 20 minute trip, one way. Still, I was back at Brother Bank’s house in less than an hour.

By 10:30 a.m., the six of us were on our way to Kremmling, Colorado, where we were to meet Brother Branham and Billy Paul on Friday, October 18th.

Brother Vernon Mann still drives the 1950 Chevy pick-up that secured him an invitation to Colorado in 1963



Back in 1936 or thereabout, there was a mission on East Market Street in New Albany, just a few blocks from my dad’s gas station. My older brother and some of his friends would attend there pretty regularly. The preacher was a man named Roy Davis, and I can remember him and his son real well, even though I wasn’t too interested in what was going on up there at his place. In 1947, my brother told me about going to hear someone named Billy Branham, and of the things he was doing, telling people what was wrong with them and praying for them. I said, “How does he do it?”

“I don’t know,” he answered, so I just let it pass over me.

I didn’t really become interested in going to church at all until 1950 when my wife, Georgia, and I attended a revival that was held in Louisville by Evangelist Jack Schuller. He was a well-known preacher in those days and thousands of people crowded into the Jefferson County Armory to hear him. My wife and I both were saved in those services. We had been married for five years.

Also that year, Georgia's aunt, who was also related to Carl Wheeler, had somehow come across a book titled *A Man Sent From God*, and she passed it around for us to read. Carl and I talked about what we had read, quite a bit, and shortly afterwards we visited the Branham Tabernacle in Jeffersonville for the first time. Brother Branham wasn't there very much in those days, but when we knew he was going to be there, we would go.

Georgia and I were regularly attending the Main Street Methodist church in New Albany, and our pastor's name was Brother Lim Johnson (Brother Branham sometimes called him 'Brother Lum'). Over the next few years, Brother Lim invited Brother Branham to have two services at Main Street Methodist, and each time people packed the building to the rafters. One night, there was such a crowd that it reminded me of when Paul preached in the New Testament. There was so many people that Brother Branham couldn't get into the church building by the door and he had to crawl in through a basement window!

In May of 1954 Brother Branham was preaching at the Tabernacle one night and he extended an invitation to those who wanted to be baptized. I'd never been baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and I just couldn't sit in that seat any longer, so I got up and was baptized. At that time, I was still teaching Sunday school at Main Street Methodist, and there were several other people from that church who were at the Tabernacle with us on the night I was baptized. And, sure enough, soon after I was baptized I found myself being eased out of teaching Sunday school and other church activities. It became obvious that we were not welcome any more, and shortly afterwards, we left that church and started a little mission on Oak Street in New Albany.

We called ourselves Evangelical Methodist, and we baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was about 30 people who attended, but whenever Brother Branham was in town, we'd dismiss services and all of us would go to hear him.

Obviously, the Methodist didn't have too much control over us, but we kept the mission open for just over seven years.

In December of 1962 we were at the Tabernacle when Brother Branham preached "Sirs, Is This The Time?" What a momentous message that was, and it marked a turning point in our lives. We soon closed the doors at Oak Street so that we could attend the Tabernacle regularly. We didn't want to miss out on a single thing that God was doing for His people through the life and ministry of our precious Brother Branham.

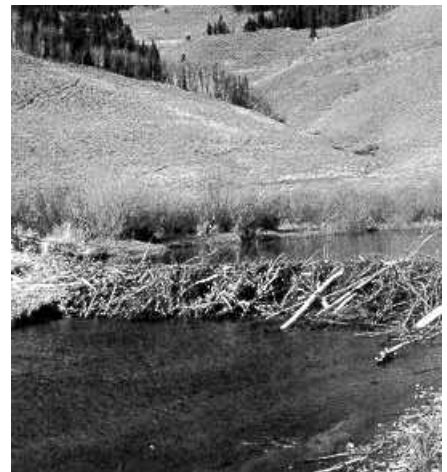
We arrived in Denver on Thursday night, about sunset. The last leg of the trip was from Denver to Kremmling - which meant crossing the Continental Divide at Loveland Pass, 12,000 feet above sea level. Brother Banks teased me, "You'll have to make a run at that mountain, or you'll never get up it with that old truck." Carl drove my truck, following behind the newer vehicle, and all the way up the mountain he kept saying, "What's the matter with him? Why doesn't he speed up?" We almost ran over him getting to the top!

We started down the other side of the mountain and about midnight Brother Banks pulled off to the side of the road and said, "We'd better spend the night here." Carl and I slept on the ground. Or rather, we twisted and turned like pretzels for the rest of the night. We just couldn't get comfortable for all the rocks. The next morning we found out that we were sleeping in a dry bed that was a part of the Colorado River

We arrived in Kremmling about eight-thirty in the morning and went directly to the big general store and bought a few groceries -mostly canned goods and potatoes. As we finished our shopping and were leaving the store, we saw Brother Branham and Billy Paul walking down the street towards us. It was perfect timing. They had just arrived in town, driving Brother Fred Sothman's white pickup truck. They wanted to buy a few more groceries, which they did, and then we drove to a place where everybody could shoot in their guns. It was nearly noon when we started up into the mountains.

You won't find the Troublesome River on most maps. It meanders through the broad valleys and well-rounded hills surrounding Kremmling for 30 miles or so, like a crooked pumpkin vine, and is fed by spring branches of various size along the way. Finally, it empties into the Colorado River, but, on its own, I don't believe it ever reaches more than 20-feet wide at any point. Even the deep pools that are created by the well-constructed beaver dams don't get much larger than what we'd call a little pond back home. We crossed the Troublesome more than once to reach our camp site, which was not far from one of the spring branches they called Squaw Creek. It was a pretty spot in a clearing that offered a panoramic view of distant peaks to the West, and a dense forest of fir and pine trees at our back. Down the hill a ways from us, about a mile or so, was the camp of Brother Jack Palmer, Brother John and Brother Earl Martin, and Brother Bob Lambert. There were several other groups of hunters in the area, but these brothers were the only ones we knew.

As soon as we had our camp fairly well established, we all sat down and Brother Branham talked to us about sportsmanship and safety. I remember that he told the hunters how they should never keep their guns loaded in camp. That sounded real good to me!



A beaver dam across
the Troublesome

Early Saturday morning, everybody went out hunting except me. I scouted around some, looking for a good place to fish and trying to stay out of the way of all the deer hunters. I don't recall having much success that first day in my attempt to bring food into the camp, but someone in our camp got a deer on their first day of hunting, and that provided us with meat for quite a while.

In the evenings, the brothers from the other camp would come over to fellowship and sometimes to eat with us. One evening I believe that we must have eaten nearly 30 pounds of roasted venison! Brother Branham seemed to enjoy sitting around the fire and talking about nature and hunting, and we sure did enjoy listening to him.

On Monday it turned cooler. I hadn't caught any fish to speak of and Brother Branham suggested that I try a spot over by the Wheatley camp, a log cabin nearby where he sometimes took his family for a few days of vacation in the summertime. "All you need is a little bitsy gold hook, the littlest one you can get," he told me. "Put a salmon egg on it and throw it out there."



A tarp provided meager shelter during the day

That's what I did, and I caught eight good-sized trout. I brought them back to camp that evening, cleaned them, and laid them on a board. That night, they froze solid.

The temperature must have dropped to nearly zero and I was afraid that I was going to freeze to death. Carl wasn't any better off than me. We were sleeping in one of the tents, and Billy Paul, Brother Evans, and Ronnie were sleeping in the other tent. Brother Banks and David slept in their camper, and Brother Branham slept in Brother Sothman's camper. I woke up in the night and found Carl sitting with his sleeping bag wrapped around him and over his head. He looked like a big piece of upholstered furniture in our little tent. I said, "Are you cold?"

Between chattering teeth he answered, "Oh my, I'm so cold."

We both learned a real lesson that night. Never buy a cheap sleeping bag. The next morning I went down to the spring to get a bucket of water and found it completely frozen over. I had to break through the ice, and that water was so cold that it started freezing over in my bucket before I got back to camp.

Brother Branham had suggested to Carl that he hunt over near Corral Peaks, and he came back with a real nice deer. Some of the others brought in good trophies, too. Brother Branham shot a deer that he had been hunting for many years, the one he had named Big Jim. He was pretty upset because his gun stock was swollen and he didn't make a clean shot. He had to hunt for several days to find where the deer had fallen.

Tuesday it started to spit rain and we built a lean-to out of an old tarp. It was pretty rough looking, and anybody who saw our camp probably thought we were a bunch of tramps. I went out fishing again, but couldn't repeat my success of the day before, and when I arrived back at camp that afternoon, I looked for the previously-caught trout. They were gone. I found out later that Brother Evans had fried them and he and Brother Branham had enjoyed a trout lunch!

On Wednesday the ranger passed through our camp. The boys had anticipated his visit. David had killed a fairly small deer, which earned him a couple days worth of banter from the rest of the guys. Even then, unwilling to let the matter rest, they tied a large set of moose antlers which they had found in the back of Brother Sothman's truck (left there from an earlier hunting trip in British Columbia,) to the head of the under-sized deer and laid out there with the rest of the game. They could hardly wait for the ranger to come along so they could show him the 'non-typical' rack David had bagged.



A very non-typical rack to show the ranger.



He had a smile on his face, and
he looked more relaxed than I
had ever seen him before.

“Something happened just now
that I’ve wondered about all my
life,” he told us.

Then, on the radio, and again from the ranger, we heard that a storm was coming. The date was October 23rd, and it was Brother and Sister Branham's twenty-second wedding anniversary.

From the many years that he had spent as a cowboy herding cattle in and around the Kremmling area, and from numerous hunting expeditions, Brother Branham knew the territory like the back of his hand. He also knew what it was like to be trapped in the mountains by a swift-moving storm. At an elevation of 7,000 feet, weather could become a serious problem in a hurry; snow drifts could cover your tent overnight. The brothers who were camped nearby decided to leave right away. They were driving a little Chevrolet carryall and were worried that they would not be able to get out, once it snowed.

Brother Branham called the members of our camp together and asked what we wanted to do. I considered myself to be too much of a greenhorn to decide one way or the other, but some of the men still had game tags to fill and they wanted to stay. They pointed out that the Wheatley cabin always kept a supply of food and wood, and was left unlocked in case of emergencies. Brother Branham said that if they voted to stay, he would stay with them, so they said, "Let's stay." I wasn't worried in the least, as long as he was staying with us. I knew that Brother Branham knew what he was doing, even if the rest of us didn't have sense enough to know what was going on.

Since we were facing the possibility of being snowed in for a while, we decided that we'd better go into town and pick up a few more groceries. Plus, Brother Branham wanted to call Sister Meda and wish her a happy anniversary. I was selected for the job of grocery shopping, so I collected \$20 from each man in camp and then the two of us took off for Kremmling, about 20 miles away. As we were pulling away, Billy Paul called out that he wanted us to bring back some Pepsi. "Well, I might get you one each," Brother Branham yelled back.

The next morning it seemed like the day just couldn't dawn. A fire helped us to get moving, but the sky was so heavy it looked like a big black garbage bag full of water hanging overhead. Before anyone left camp, Brother Branham warned us, "Now if you fellows are hunting up near those peaks, in the saddles, and it starts snowing or sleeting, you come back to camp in a hurry!"

They said they would, and everybody took off in a different direction.

About eight-thirty the storm seemed to settle in. The wind began to blow, carrying with it a stinging sleet. Just as they had promised, the hunters began arriving back into camp - everyone, that is, except Brother Branham. It was nearly eleven o'clock when he came walking out of the woods, and by that time the storm was long over and we were sitting around talking about how wonderful it was that it had passed so quickly.

He had a smile on his face, and he looked more relaxed than I had ever seen him look before. Yet, there was a controlled excitement about him. "Something happened just now that I've wondered all my life," he told us.

That's the very words he said, and naturally, we all began to question him. But he shook his head and said, "I'll tell you about it later, when we get into town."

You can imagine how we speculated amongst ourselves about what he was going to tell us. "Could it have something to do with the storm," we wondered? Otherwise, things were more or less the way they had been in camp, except the weather had warmed up considerably. I went back to fishing, and the others went back to hunting, and the horseplay around camp continued.

Never having had the experience of being in a hunting camp before, every event was new and exciting for me. I relished the enthusiasm and abandon with which the youngsters in our group tackled every situation. There was no lack of entertainment and never a dull moment! I do recall that Brother Branham had to come down on the boys a few times. Once, one of them had pestered a pine squirrel (a small squirrel about the size of a chipmunk) with a B.B. gun until finally he killed it. Brother Branham said, "David, you're going to have to eat that now." And he did skin it out for him, but I can't remember if David ever ate it or not.

Then, another time, they dared one another to eat raw deer liver. Sure enough, about the time two of them had their mouths full of the bloody liver, Brother Branham said, "That's going to make you boys sick," and they quit it pretty quickly. All in all, I would say that things were just light hearted and everyone was very, very relaxed. But looking back, I know that we should have behaved differently than we did. I know that it wasn't a matter of disrespect, but maybe we just got carried away and were not sensitive enough in our spirits to what was going on.

Whatever it was that we did, when we arrived back in Kremmling three days later, on Sunday the 27th, and asked Brother Branham to tell us what had happened on the 24th, he said, "Well, I was going to tell you, but I'm not going to just now. You all were taking it too lightly."

We stopped at a gas station there in Kremmling and we heard Brother Branham say to the attendant, "It sure looked like it was going to storm the other day." But we could only surmise that what he was going to tell us had something to do with the storm. Whatever the tremendous thing was, it remained a mystery to us until November 10th, when Brother Branham returned to Jeffersonville and preached the message, "He That Is In You."

Carl and I talked about our Colorado experience many times. After we heard Brother Branham tell about the wonderful things that happened to him that day, we were left in a state of spiritual shock for a while. We'd heard the story about the fish and the squirrels, and here we were in the middle of a similar event and didn't even realize it!

The experience which I have just related took place nearly 28 years ago. Today I realize that I, like so many others who had the privilege of being with God's prophet, was as much a spiritual greenhorn then as I was a wilderness greenhorn. Many times I have said, "If only I knew then what I know now!" But the Lord has been so gracious and merciful to us, revealing His spiritual food in due season, which is preparing a Bride that will meet Him in the air.

By His grace, I'll be ready. □

The Testimony of Georgia Mann

In 1964, Brother Carl Wheeler promised his girls, Jacqueline and Madeline, that he would take them on a trip to Tucson. But things didn't work out the way he had planned, and he was unable to go. Not wanting the girls to be disappointed, he asked Vernon and me if we would be willing to make a trip West with them, and we said we would.

We left Jeffersonville August 2, 1964, after the evening service where Brother Branham preached "Future Home Of The Earthly Bride And The Heavenly Bridegroom." Brother Branham was leaving to return to Tucson with his family the next morning.

When we arrived in Tucson, we checked into the Wayward Winds motel, and can you imagine our delight and surprise when we received a phone call from Brother Branham. "I'd like to show you around Tucson," he told us, and the next day he came by the motel and picked us up. He was driving his 1955 Cadillac.

When he asked us what we wanted to see, I spoke up and said, "Brother Branham, I want to see the places where these things happened that you've been telling us about."

He said, "That sounds just fine," and the first place he took us was Sabino Canyon. We drove back in the canyon to the end of the roadway, and he pointed up to where the sword had appeared and the direction of Eagle Rock. Then he drove us up to Mount Lemon, about a 45 minute drive to the top, and from that vantage point he pointed towards Sunset Mountain.

We appreciated so much being able to go to these places with Brother Branham, and yet we felt badly because the whole time he was driving us around, he was sick in his own body. Knowing he was suffering, we said, "Brother Branham, please take us back so that you can go home and lie down," but he just said, "I'll be alright."

When we were coming down the road from Mount Lemon, I was sitting in the middle of the back seat, and the girls were on either side of me. I could see Brother Branham's eyes in the rear view mirror, and I knew that he could see me, too. I said, "Did you know that I had turned in a prayer request to your office to see why I'm afraid of storms?"

He was looking at me in the mirror, and he said, "No, I didn't."

He was quiet for a few moments, then he said, "Your daddy was in a tornado in 1917, seven years before you were born in 1924. But it's just like when a horse gets bit by a snake. If it ever has a colt, that colt will just go wild when it sees a snake."

It was every word the truth. In 1917, my daddy was in the forest above New Albany cutting wood. He had a wagon and a team of horses. Suddenly, he noticed that everything became real still, almost like it took your breath. He didn't know what had happened until he came out of the trees that evening. On the road into town, suddenly the horses stopped and would go no further. He got out of the wagon to look, and there on the road was the body of a child that had been killed when a tornado ripped a path through New Albany and across the river into Kentucky. Many people had been killed, and the destruction was terrible. For the rest of his life, Daddy had a fear of storms.

I said, "Brother Branham, they've prayed for me in the Methodist church and they told me, 'Love casts out all fear.' I'd say, 'I know that,' but every time a cloud comes up, I just lose my love. I thought I was demon possessed."

He said, "No sister, you inherited that."

It may sound strange, but I was so relieved to hear that I was not demon possessed that I didn't even think to ask Brother Branham to pray that I wouldn't be afraid any more. I still have that fear of storms, but now I know why. □



Vernon & Georgia Mann of Tucson, Arizona.



Music

THE SOUND AND THE UNSOUND

INTRODUCTION

*"I don't care how good of a home a child has been brought up in, and how it's been taught to do right; if that child hasn't accepted the experience of the New Birth, rock and roll music catches his attention just as quick as he hears it. Because in him –born in him by nature –is a carnal spirit. And the power of the Devil is so great today that it catches the spirit of that little one."*¹

Americans are addicted to music. It is an addiction that last year alone, cost us seven billion dollars² and helped make music the most prosperous industry on earth.

However, we are not without company. The whole world has tuned in with us to become a part of the greatest social phenomena in all of history: Rock'n'roll music

Rock is now a generation old, and that in itself is nothing short of a miracle for something that was dismissed by the previous generation as being a flash-in-the-pan, in-one-ear -and-out-the-other, teenage craze. Even though we live in an era of blinding changes, rock has been able to assimilate, integrate and even mutate its way through nearly five decades to become something that is much more than music in the ear of the rock-believer. Resurrecting the deep-seated spiritual attributes of its ancient forbearers,

rock has now achieved the elevated status of deification. In every sense, it has become a religion, complete with a full contingent of its own high priests and false prophets.

It sounds incredible, doesn't it? But, have you ever stopped to ask yourself just what it is that makes rock different from other music? Why is it so powerful? What is its source, and where is it leading us? Unfortunately, most people never stop to analyze the multitude of sounds that bombard them daily, and that could prove to be fatal. Of course, it doesn't happen overnight. The story goes that if you throw a live frog in a pan of boiling water, he will jump out so fast that he won't even be scalded. But take the same frog and put him in a pan of lukewarm water, then gradually bring the water to a boil. The frog will allow himself to be slowly cooked to death.

Could it be that we Christians are being slowly conditioned to accept the compelling, pervasive, permissive attitudes around us without our even knowing it? As Message believers, how vulnerable are we to these attitudes?

These are questions that must be answered today, and that is what this article is all about. Be warned: This is not going to be easy reading, and you cannot breeze through it quickly. But when you are finished you will know how to test the temperature of the water you are sitting in right now. I challenge you to check it out for yourself –before it's too late.

ORIGINS

“One night I was standing with Brother Wood and Brother Sothmann, and I was looking up towards the skies. A great awe came over me, and I said, “Just look at all that great heavenly host, and everything is perfectly in harmony!”³

Harmony belongs to Jehovah, for in it He reveals both His nature (character) and relationship with His creation. As the Eternal One, He established the boundaries of a harmonious universe, joining the stars and the spheres in perfect concord with the voices of all heavenly beings. He blended the melodies of life and the rhythms of nature into an echoing chorus. Upon witnessing His handiwork, “... the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Job 38:7 His overture was being played; the Creator was worshipped by His creation, and worship brought God on the scene.

To praise God is the highest function that any creature can perform. Every living thing is enjoined to rejoice in God’s works, to make a joyful noise, sing, and perform music, which glorifies the Almighty. In eternity past, heavenly music was a duty of the anointed cherub, a being with expressed musical ability from the day of his creation (Ezekiel 28:13,15). He was perfect in all his ways, and possessed both beauty and wisdom, attributes which, by his own reasoning, made him equal to God. Thus, he desired to be worshiped equally with God—a false ambition that brought iniquity into God’s abode—and for this he was cast from Heaven’s holy mountain.

“The first battle that was ever fought began in Heaven when Michael and his Angels fought against Lucifer [Satan] and his angels. Sin did not originate on earth, it originated in Heaven, and then it was thrown down from Heaven—cast out of Heaven to the earth—and fell on human beings.”⁴

From his earthly refuge, this fallen angel designed a subtle yet clever plan to corrupt God’s paradise and establish his own kingdom in its place. He could not create, but he could pervert. “What God had created for Himself, Satan came to destroy. Then the battle began here on earth, and it began in us. And it’s been raging ever since.”⁵

With great skill Satan began to flaunt sensuality as a substitute for spirituality; he elevated knowledge above revelation; he equated holiness with physical beauty. Every ability he possessed he applied to one purpose and for one goal—the seduction of human souls. What were the tools of his trade? Melody and rhythm, for Satan was a gifted musician.

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES US ABOUT MUSIC

“A human has to worship. You have to worship something. It’s just in you to worship.”⁶

The Bible tells us that the Lord finds pleasure in the praises of His people. There are over 500 specific references in the Bible to music and musical instruments⁷—evidence that this is not a subject that God treats lightly. As a matter of fact, the lengthiest book in the Bible is a song book, and it is here that God demonstrates His concern for the kind of music that His children enjoy and perform by providing this example for us to follow: The Book of Psalms.

The collection of 150 poems that make up the Book of Psalms mirrors the ideals of religious piety and communion with God. They were written by David, Moses (Psalm 90), Solomon, Asaph (David’s choir leader), the sons of Korah (a family of official musicians), and others, for the express purpose of being set to music for worship. They even include musical notations to indicate when key changes are to be made. For example, the instruction *selah*, meaning “to modulate to the next key,” appears 71 times in the Book of Psalms and is not normally articulated when Scripture is being read aloud.

From the Hebrew language, *Psalms* translates as “Book of Praise.” This was the prayer book that our Lord Jesus used in the synagogue service, and it was His hymnbook at the Temple festival. He used it in His teaching, met temptation with it, sang the Hallel (Psalms 115-118) from it after the Last Supper, quoted from it as He hung on the cross, and died with it on His lips.⁸ The Book of Psalms remains the national hymnbook of Israel today.

Far from advocating a single style, Psalms range from the classical presentations, written for the temple musicians, to the simple but expressive ballads, which David composed while tending his sheep. In the Book of Psalms you will find rally songs, marching songs, victory songs, and teaching songs; there are songs of repentance, lamentation, petition, praise, renewal, and thanksgiving; there are songs for saints and songs for sinners.

The Book of Psalms has been called the door into the temple of praise and prayer, and in all ages and in more than a thousand languages, the church has found through the Psalter a means of access to God.

The Bible also shows us that man has long been aware of the effect of music upon our daily existence and its power to influence people both physically and emotionally.

In I Samuel 16:14-23, Scriptures relate an example of how a man was made well –body, soul, and spirit –through the music of a young shepherd boy.

“And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed[physical], and was well[mental], and the evil spirit departed from him[spiritual].”

In II Kings 3:15 we learn that the prophet Elisha once used music to create an atmosphere so that he could “inquire of the Lord” for the kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom.

“But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.”

As the tribes of Israel were set to war against their enemies, II Chronicles 20:21-22 tells us that they put a choir and musical instruments in front of the army.

“...he[Jehoshaphat] appointed singers unto the Lord, that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever.

And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.”

In the New Testament Book of Acts, chapter 16, we find the account of two early Christian leaders, Paul and Silas, who were cast into prison for preaching the Gospel. They used the opportunity to minister, through song, and glorify God.

“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed.”

Now, let’s review what we have just learned from these Biblical passages: 1) In both the Old and the New Testament, music was vital to the life of the believer, both as an expression of joy and as an act of obedience unto God; 2) God has given us instruction (by way of examples) as to the kinds of music that He wants His people to have; 3) Far from being merely a neutral recreation, music has the power to influence us mentally, physically, and spiritually; 4) There are certain types of music which can make demons feel very uncomfortable; and 5) Music can create an atmosphere wherein God can work miracles.

DID YOU KNOW...?

*THE LONGEST BOOK IN THE BIBLE IS
PSALMS, WITH 150 CHAPTERS AND A
TOTAL OF 2,461 VERSES.*

*THE LONGEST CHAPTER IN THE BIBLE IS
PSALMS 119, WHICH HAS 176 VERSES.
THE SHORTEST CHAPTER IN THE BIBLE
IS PSALMS 117, WHICH HAS ONLY TWO
VERSES AND A TOTAL OF 33 WORDS.*

CHAPTER THREE MUSIC AND RELIGION THROUGH THE AGES

“As soon as they went out from the Presence of the Lord, they started building cities, they started making instruments, they started in science –making brass and iron, and they started playing music.

Where did it come from? Who went out? Cain, the serpent’s seed. “⁹

Within man there exists an inherent impulse to worship. God even provisioned our physical beings with an instrument through which we can declare our devotion –the human voice. When we choose to vary the melody and rhythm of our vocal sounds, the result is music, and nothing characterizes the very essence of worship like the un-ornamented songs of man.

The Bible gives us very few written clues concerning the first music produced by man, but our oldest existent vocal traditions, such as that of the Jewish cantor, the Moslem muezzin calling the faithful to prayer, or even the chanting of the North American Indian, indicate that mankind’s first musical expressions were likely a part of his religious experience. As man’s musical skills developed, he began to fashion instruments from what he found in nature –bones, horns, willow bark, animal skin and gut–and he adapted these materials to suit his personal needs. Jubal, the great-great-great-great grandson of Cain, was “the father of all such as handle the harp and organ,” (instrumental music) Genesis 4:21, reflecting the love of beauty and the arts, which was his birthright.

In time, as men developed their artistic abilities, music began to take on many forms and serve many functions,

both sacred and profane. From generation to generation, musical expression played such a vital part in cultural development that the religious morals and social values of a given community reflected in the quality of the music that they produced.

Most music produced by the people of the Bible never developed beyond simple homogeneous songs and chants with basic accompaniment of harps, trumpets, and cymbals. Much of the Hebrew music was consecrated to the service of the Temple worship, but throughout the Scriptures there are numerous accounts of secular use also: songs of triumph after victory, songs at marriage celebrations and festivals, songs for shepherds and for kings.

In the great temples of ancient Egypt, the priests trained choirs in the singing of ritual music to pagan gods. Their songs were complemented by the clapping together of sticks and disks.

At the same time, in other parts of the world, more primitive societies evoked their deities in a wild abandon of religious fervor and emotional ecstasy, accompanied by the pounding of syncopated rhythms on a hollow log.

Music has always left behind evidence of its effect upon a given society. One can even trace the rise and fall of civilizations by making a parallel study of the types of music listened to during the corresponding era.¹⁰ Four hundred years before the birth of Christ, the Greek philosopher Plato said, "When modes of music change, the fundamental laws of the state change with them. Through foolishness they deceived themselves into thinking that there was no right or wrong in music, that it was to be judged good or bad by the pleasure it gave."

At the time of Christ, both vocal and instrumental music were flourishing. Jesus and His followers participated in the traditional Jewish synagogue music, and undoubtedly this directly influenced early Christian songs. The ornamented cantonal melodies were adapted to the new teachings of Christ and absorbed into the fledgling Christian faith. It was common practice for a cantor to serve a synagogue on Friday evening and then place his skills at the disposal of the Christians on Sunday.¹¹

Instrumental music played no part in the life of the early Christian church. Instruments had too many associations with the debauched life of Rome, and only the voice was considered to have the purity and nobility worthy of God's ear. Cantorial chant evolved gradually into a slow-moving, unison singing called plainsong (later known as Gregorian chant), which dominated Christian worship for a thousand years. During the Middle Ages, there was an attempt by

the church-world to gain widespread control of music by deeming certain chords to be un-harmonious and therefore blasphemous and unworthy to reflect the glory of God. The church denounced all music that was unsanctified by a sacred text.

In 1517, Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg (accusing the Roman Catholic church of corruption) and the Reformation was born. Luther, an accomplished musician, threw out much of the old church music and wrote new hymns, bringing the language of the people (rather than Latin) into use for sacred songs. He declared, "Nothing on earth is more powerful than noble music in making the sad joyful, the arrogant discreet, the despondent valiant; in charming the haughty to humility, and in mitigating envy and hatred." Luther believed that music in the church served as

a resounding sermon,¹² and he is accredited with saying that he didn't care who preached, as long as he wrote the song. By acknowledging the staying power of music in the worship experience, Luther single-handedly established congregational singing as an important part of the Christian church service. Elements of harmony, which had been reserved previously for highly trained musicians of the church, were now being mastered and sung by the common people. Music and religious worship became bonded into one, inseparable experience. It seemed that the fellowship of a common faith could be expressed through song far more effectively than through a formalized cannon, dogma, or ritual of the church.

In secular use, music was becoming a melting pot of sounds. The clash of cultures, which had been launched by the Crusades in 1096, brought many different musical traditions together, and increasingly these new harmonies and rhythms found their way into the music of Europe. Near the end of the sixteenth century, new printing methods and a newly developed system of musical notation made possible the duplication of every kind of music and placed it on the open market. It was the dawning of a new day for both the composer and the performer. Music was on its way to becoming a universal language.

With the passing of the centuries, there was also a darker, more sinister form of music finding expression and establishing its place within the musical brotherhood of mankind. This music involved a complex primitive theology embracing fetishes, totems, and magic. It was born in the sacrificial incantations to a river god, nurtured by the unimaginable horrors of slavery, and released upon the New World to wage war with the God of Christianity. It

DID YOU KNOW...?

*THERE ARE 1,897 VERSES IN THE BIBLE
DEALING WITH SEPARATION FROM
WORLDLINESS.*

*"AND HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP WITH
THE UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS,
BUT RATHER REPROVE THEM."
EPHESIANS 5:11*

was called 'voodoo,' and its throbbing beat prophesied of the evil fruit it would yield.

By the early 1600s, the Western colonization of other lands was a growing concern. Spanish and Portuguese colonies in the New World and Africa were already well established, and an armada of ships operated by slave traders plied the waters from Western Europe to the coast of Africa. After picking up their human cargo, they would continue their voyage across the southern Atlantic to Brazil, Central America, the West Indies, and the New World. And wherever they were sent, the slaves took their music with them—an agonized inspiration that would become the cornerstone for virtually every American musical expression to follow.¹³

By the time the New World was being recognized as a blossoming mission field by the various progeny of Luther's reformation movement, the rhythm and melody of Africa had already joined with the harmonies of European music, which the church had so carefully nurtured, and a powerful new musical form was born.

CHAPTER FOUR

SPIRITUAL ROOTS

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Ephesians 5:19

For three centuries, a flood of humanity poured into the New World. The willing came from Europe; the unwilling came from Africa. They were master and slave, and nothing has ever exacted such a heavy price on the conscience of a nation as the institution of slavery in America. But from the agony and suffering of the black captives was generated a heroic faith that, over the years, was given a voice that would echo across the land for all generations to come. To the slaves they were known as 'sorrow songs,' or 'anthems,' but within white communities they came to be called 'spirituals,' and in them America found its truest, most original, and most influential musical expression.

In the plantation states of the south, newly arriving slaves were expected to learn English and to adopt the professed religion of their owners. But the emotional and mystical ways of heathen, tribal worship could never be replaced by the bone-dry traditions of European faith. And neither could the rhythms, chants, and tribal stomps of the African culture be confined by the structured singing of psalms and hymns. "The spirit will not descend without a song," was a saying the slaves carried with them from the motherland, and it was in music that the brutalized Negro found a means of liberation.

The enslaved people found much within the Judeo-Christian tradition to identify with and anchor their hope: The Hebrews' four centuries of bondage in Egypt; the Israelites' captivity in Babylon; Daniel in the lions' den; and Elijah's journey to Heaven in a fiery chariot. They learned the hymns of their white masters then reworked them with the remnants of their African history to produce expressions of freedom through song that became the focus of both their spiritual and social life.

The majority of the slaves worked under the overseer's lash, cultivating the cotton and rice that were the mainstay of southern industry. Often they were forbidden to speak to one another while working in the fields, but since their fieldwork required unified effort, they were allowed to utilize the African tradition of work songs to coordinate their activities. These creative leader-and-chorus rounds were sung with so much musical mastery that they defied notation. Often the song was fashioned by combining verses from the Bible with portions of hymns, sermons or prayers they had heard in church. But in the fields there was also every opportunity to invent new songs and tunes, drawing from their newfound faith in a Christian God who could not only break their bonds of sin and suffering, but offered Heaven as a homeland. Best of all, He wasn't confined to a white church, nor did He negate the humanity of the black man. They heard a promise of freedom, and they made it the theme of their songs.

God told Moses, o'Lord!
Go down into Egypt, o'Lord!
Tell o' Pharaoh, o'Lord!
Loose my people, o'Lord!

DID YOU KNOW...?

*ALTHOUGH HE IS OFTEN OVERSHADOWED
BY HIS FAMOUS OLDER BROTHER, CHARLES
WESLEY IS PERHAPS THE GREATEST HYMN
WRITER OF ALL AGES.*

*IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT THE EARLY
METHODISTS WERE TAUGHT AND LED AS
MUCH THROUGH CHARLES' HYMNS AS
THROUGH JOHN'S SERMONS.*

*CHARLES WESLEY WROTE 8,989 HYMNS,
AN AVERAGE OF 10 LINES OF VERSE EVERY DAY
FOR 50 YEARS!*

In 1735 an English clergyman by the name of John Wesley sailed for the New World to proselytize the heathen Indians in the colony of Georgia. After three years, he acknowledged his failure as a missionary and returned to London, determined to find the missing element in his spiritual walk. Then one day, as he listened to a reading of Martin Luther's preface to Paul's Epistle to the Romans, he felt that his "heart was strangely warmed," and a new dispensation of the church was ushered in.

Nowhere did they embrace the new tenets of a faith that was being called 'Methodism' more rapidly than they did in the colonies of the New World. Wesley's teaching of a Second Blessing (also termed Christian Perfection or Sanctification) was "the fuse that set off a keg of repressed religious ecstasy throughout America."¹⁴ Stoking the fires of the revival that came to be known as The Great Awakening was Methodist evangelist George Whitefield and other circuit-riding preachers who traveled endlessly throughout the colonies expounding the doctrine of absolute holiness and attainable perfection. Their preaching style was bold and dramatic, which gave them limited access to the pulpits of the more traditional churches, so they resorted to preaching outdoors. Camp meetings (or bush meetings, as they were sometimes called) changed the structure of worship services for most rural churches in the young nation. 'Fire and damnation' preaching encouraged a new freedom of expression for the believers. They shouted, they prayed, they danced, and they sang like never before.

Once again, religious revival was accompanied by a stirring of the musical waters. Like Luther, Wesley was a songwriter and publisher. His first hymnal, *The Charleston Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, published in 1735, was the first hymnbook ever published in North America. Wesley's greatest concern was that singing should be both spiritual and have good musical quality. His instructions to the congregation included admonishments to "Sing All, Sing Lustily, Sing Modestly, Sing in Time and above all, Sing Spiritually."¹⁵ And it was in the unstructured style of the frontier camp meeting that spiritual singing came of age.

Long before blacks themselves were admitted to white society, they shared a lively, if somewhat uncomfortable, coexistence that was brought about through the cohesive forces of shared religion and music. Along with the increasing number of traditional hymns which were being penned by proficient songwriters such as Charles Wesley and Isaac Watts, Negro spirituals were becoming a major

part of the huge revivals and camp meetings of the 1800s. Here the spirit and personality of the black world was not segregated from the white culture. Although white and black worshippers were normally kept separate, "their voices and music could mix, echoing from camp to camp, feeding a musical union whose product would sweep the world."¹⁶ One observer at an early camp meeting wrote: "As the excitement increases, all order is forgotten, all unison of parts repudiated, each sings his own tune, each dances his own dance, as he leaps, shouts and exults with exceeding great joy."

They had found something real, and it was a revelation inspired by a new understanding of Scriptural truth. And that, in turn, generated a new brotherhood of holiness and sanctified churches –forerunners of the twentieth century

Pentecostal Revival that was to explode on Azusa Street in 1906.

But not every abused and humiliated black man found solace in Christianity. There was just too much magic in the 'old ways' that wasn't compatible with the new-found faith, so the old faith endured, hidden until the late nineteenth century and the period of Reconstruction that followed the Civil War. Then, a new branch appeared on music's family tree, and it was called 'The Blues.'

Although it descended directly from the emotional fervor of the spirituals, the only thing the blues had in common with its spirit-pleasing parent was its ancient roots. Every type of carnal indulgence became the theme of the blues singer: Crime, adultery, prostitution, gambling, alcohol, and imprisonment. Ties with the African elements of syncopation and rhythmic momentum were renewed,

taught, and performed by both black men and white men who had listened and learned from this new musical voice. "It is here that the blend of cultures once again began to generate something permanent and prophetic, a rhythmic vitality and melodic gift that would eventually produce ragtime and jazz."¹⁷

Coinciding with the beginnings of blues, ragtime, and jazz, religious music was also undergoing a metamorphosis. In 1875, songwriter Ira Sankey published a hymnbook entitled *Gospel Hymns and Sacred Songs* and the term 'gospel music' was born. Sankey and his partner, the revivalist Dwight Lyman Moody, intended for their songs "to implant the gospel in the hearts of the people"¹⁸ by suppressing emotional outbursts and passionate singing.

DID YOU KNOW...?

PSALMS AND EARLY HYMNS WERE OFTEN "LINED OUT" FOR CONGREGATIONAL SINGING. THE CLERK, OR LEADER OF THE SINGING, WOULD READ OR SING ONE LINE OF THE SONG, WHICH WOULD THEN BE SUNG BY THE CONGREGATION.

ISAAC WATTS SPURRED CONGREGATIONS TO SING AS THEY DO TODAY, ONE LINE IMMEDIATELY AFTER ANOTHER. HE WROTE SUCH CLASSICS AS "WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDROUS CROSS," "JOY TO THE WORLD," "JESUS SHALL REIGN," AND 694 MORE.

But, while Sankey and Moody were able to influence their initial development, gospel songs soon developed a character of their own, and this time it was “a coolly calculated commercial endeavor designed to capitalize on the enormous appeal of the Negro spiritual stylings.”¹⁹

In 1921, a young blues and jazz piano player by the name of Thomas Dorsey attended the National Baptist Convention and was overwhelmed by the force of the music he heard being performed. For “Barrelhouse Tom,” it was the handwriting on the wall. He would write religious music, and he would call his songs ‘Gospel.’

Dorsey wrote over a thousand tunes, including “Peace In The Valley,” “Search Me Lord,” and “Precious Lord Take My Hand.” “It was music that not only reflected the preaching and testifying heard in black Baptist and Methodist churches as well as the growing number of ‘sanctified’ congregations across the country. It also made brilliant and liberal use of the melodies, harmonies, and rhythms of Dorsey’s blues and jazz background.”²⁰

Touring the Midwest and South in the late 1920s, he performed his music and sold the sheet music for a few pennies apiece. But Dorsey’s voice lacked the conviction and excitement that was necessary for gospel singing, and he knew that if he was going to succeed he needed a new sales technique. He created the first female gospel quartet in history, and soon became a promoter of gospel performers as well as a publisher of black gospel music. He was well on his way to earning for himself the title “Father of Gospel Music.”

By the mid-thirties, several styles of gospel music were being popularized on the church and revival concert circuit. One of the most enduring was the gospel quartet—four or five singers who established their identity through vocal stylizing (such as a featured bass or falsetto) or through dress (porter’s uniforms, white tuxedos, etc). There was also the ‘gospel chorus’ of all-female hand clappers, dressed in choir robes and backed by a thundering piano or organ. And soon the professional gospel artists, such as Mahalia Jackson and Rosetta Tharpe began to make a name for themselves.

By the beginning of World War II, the careful re-packaging of slave spirituals was complete. This new image of ‘gospel music’ had been sprinkled liberally with the glitter of Hollywood and parlayed into a powerful and wealthy musical empire.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE MUSIC OF LAODICEA

“...that first little dirty song that slipped out on the radio without being censored, that ‘roll ’em girlies, roll ’em down and show your pretty knees,’ that was the first slip-up righththere.”²¹

The year was 1925.

William Jennings Bryant and Clarence Darrow battled in a Tennessee courtroom over the issue of evolution; in Germany, an ex-prisoner by the name of Adolf Hitler published his memoirs which he titled *Mein Kampf*; a new dance craze called the Charleston kept arms and legs flying in 4/4 time; and across America, radio became a major source of family entertainment, ushering in what came to be known as the Golden Age of Broadcasting.

Undoubtedly, the most revolutionary advancement of the early 1900s was the recording of sound. Man had at last discovered for himself an earthly, if somewhat fragile, immortality, and the force of its influence transformed our world and dominated our lives. It was good: No longer did we have

to rely on memory or evoke imagination to recall the voice of a loved one, the performance of the musician, or the intonations of the orator. It was bad: It opened doors into darkened sanctums, and with our minds we walked through those doors and into places we would never have allowed our feet to take us.

Music now occupied the center stage of the world, a feat unthought-of before the arrival of phonograph and radio. And its unique abilities to attract, entertain, teach, cajole, and influence its listeners was not overlooked by the smut-peddlers of the day.

Listen girls, listen girls
I've a word for you,
Just because you're up to date
And do the things you do,
Don't let anyone tell you that you don't act nice,

DID YOU KNOW...?

*BECAUSE MAN IS A RHYTHMIC BEING, THERE IS
A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSIC AND
MUSCULAR MOVEMENT.*

LARSON, THE DAY MUSIC DIED

*YOU CAN DETERMINE WHAT A GIVEN STYLE OF
MUSIC IS BY OBSERVING THE MOTIONS THAT
AUTOMATICALLY GO WITH THAT STYLE OF
MUSIC. YOU ONLY HAVE TO PLAY THE SONG FOR
A THREE-YEAR-OLD AND WATCH THEIR MOTIONS
TO KNOW IF A SONG IS WRONG. YOU DON'T
HAVE TO TRAIN A CHILD TO KNOW THOSE
MOTIONS. THEY'RE AUTOMATIC.*

GARLOCK, THE BIG BEAT

You're as sweet as Grandma was
 So take my advice.
 Roll 'em girls, roll 'em
 Go ahead and roll 'em
 Roll'em down and show your pretty knees,
 Roll 'em girls roll 'em, everybody roll 'em
 Roll 'em high or low just as you please.
 Don't let people tell you that it's shocking,
 Paint your sweetie's picture on your stocking,
 Laugh at Ma, laugh at Pa,
 Give them all the ha! ha!
 Roll 'em girlies, roll 'em, roll your own.

Roll 'Em Girls
 by Marr, Heath, and Fletcher
 Copyright 1925, Joe Mords Music Co.

Selfish, provocative, and defiant, “Roll 'em Girls” opened fire on old-time religion in a new, teasing way. Uncensored, it slipped its subtle message of immorality onto the airwaves and into the subconscious of an unwary public. A pathway had been cleared through the field of broadcasting for an army of musical goblins that was fast advancing on the horizon.

Gospel music continued to contribute its share to the musical stew. In 1929, the Graves Brothers recorded what they called “rockin’ and reelin’ spirituals” for Paramount Records –based loosely on the kind of congregational singing that was being heard in Holiness and Pentecostal churches throughout the South. In 1934 a live recording was made in a backwoods church that proclaimed:

“Oh, my Lord! Oh, my Lordy!
 Well, well, well! I’ve gotta rock! You gotta rock!”²²

At the onset of the 40s, it was estimated that fully half of all Pentecostal Christians lived below the Mason-Dixon line, and most of that half were hillbillies –dirt-poor farmers and sharecroppers. In the North, member churches thrived principally in lower-class neighborhoods, and by 1945, four-fifths of the 500 black churches in Chicago were of the Pentecostal variety. Pianos and organs were beyond the financial reach of most of these ‘holy roller’ congregations, but with guitar, drums, and horns they supplied the rhythm for the dancing feet and swaying bodies that were now an integral part of the Pentecostal church service.

As they struggled for position on the ladder to stardom, it was inevitable that those musicians who had been raised in church would begin to combine that familiar gospel fervor with the worldly lyrics and vocal characteristics of the pop (popular) and country (hillbilly) music of the day. But, for the general population of the 1940s, music was still as much segregated between blacks and whites, as were all other aspects of social life. This newest musical offering was simply too ‘racy’ for the mainstream music market.

Outraged parents protested when radio DJs tried to introduce white youth to the ‘jungle beat’ of ‘race’ music.

In 1947 a new term was coined: “Teenager.” And what teenagers wanted to listen to was something that moved them. They wanted to clap, sing, and dance. They wanted to “Shake, Rattle, and Roll.” The alliance of youth, rebellion, and sexuality (albeit as old as time) was explosive. It didn’t take record producers long to realize that if they could just find a white man who could sing with the style, energy, and passion of a black singer, they could both satisfy the teenage lusts, soothe parental concerns, and take control of the music industry in one fell swoop.

At the same time, it was unmistakably clear that American music was once again experiencing birth pains. Blues, jazz, ragtime, boogie-woogie, pop, country –all the driving energy and carnality that a generation eager to put the war behind it could muster – had come to term. And the evidence suggested that this offspring would be the most noisy that music had ever produced –a noisy, rebellious,

American brat to grab the attention of the entire world. Its name was Rock’n’roll

In 1954, a young truck driver named Elvis Presley recorded an old blues number titled “That’s All Right Mama” at Sam Phillip’s studio in Memphis, Tennessee, and by 1956 the phenomenon dubbed Presleymania had the entire music industry all shook up. They knew they had found their man.

“Pentecostalism was folded into the substance of Elvis’s music, like eggs folded into pancake batter...”²³ but in the process, the eggshell that had separated inspiration from exploitation, wholesome from unwholesome, had been cracked. The very definition of music was being blurred, and willingly America listened, as all of hell broke loose.

DID YOU KNOW...?

THE OCCULT IS RAMPANT IN THE UNITED STATES. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT AT LEAST 5,000 WITCHES ARE SAID TO PRACTICE IN NEW YORK, AND 10,000 IN LOS ANGELES.

THERE ARE NEARLY HALF AS MANY WITCHES IN THE US AS THERE ARE DOCTORS OR CLERGYMEN.

PETERS, WHY KNOCK ROCK

CHAPTER SIX

SATAN’S PENTECOST

“Looking at uncensored programs; listening to Hollywood’s dirty jokes; listening to old boogie-woogie music of the Devil that’s hatched out from men of ill fame and vile conscience –the Devil’s instruments, to inspire the works of the Devil.”²⁴

The American teenagers’ love affair with Elvis Presley was uncontrollable and unstoppable. Most parents shuttered at the hip-grinding rebel who boldly inquired of their swooning daughters, “Are You Lonesome Tonight?” But when the cherubic-faced choirboy turned to the adults and

sang gospel favorites like “His Hand In Mine,” and “Peace In The Valley,” (selections from an album which still holds the record for the most weeks at the number-one spot in the United Kingdom)²⁵ their perception of the “child corrupter” gradually began to change.

Undoubtedly, it was the trappings of Christianity that legitimized Elvis to the American public. The renegade-turned-respectable King of Rock’n’Roll was even able to reach the pinnacle of social acceptability—a command performance before the President of the United States, Richard Nixon.

“What happened? What happened is that we just got used to Elvis. The young people of the fifties grew up with him, and the older folks, after living with him for a while, decided that he wasn’t so bad after all. Very rich and very famous, Elvis became a folk hero.”²⁶

The kind of success that Elvis enjoyed has a tendency to make a person appear to be worthy of such greatness, but Elvis had not changed. No matter how much the spirit cloaked itself in gospel, the flesh remained pure rock’n’roll. It is generally acknowledged that “rock’n’roll” is a long-standing black euphemism for sex, and with Elvis, “it was the aggressive, taunting sexual performance combined with the music which drove fans to hysteria.”²⁷

The religious Elvis was often quoted as saying, “God gave me a voice. If I turned against God I’d be ruined.”

And yet, as Gary Herman points out in *Rock’n’Roll Babylon*, “He also recognized the Devil’s part in his success, saying that ‘my voice is ordinary; if I stand still while I’m singing, I’m a dead man’”²⁸

Other rock’n’roll performers took their cue from him. Pat Boone, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, and a multitude more (many of them raised in Pentecostal churches) propagated the vulgarity that Elvis preached with the Judas-like deception born of religious delusion. And what it produced was a decade of spiritual schizophrenics, flip-flopping between the pulpit and the stage.

For nearly a decade, rock’n’roll and Jesus were being weighed on the scale of financial profit, and in 1964 the results were made known. Jesus lost.

In April of 1964, a double-edged musical blitzkrieg from Great Britain invaded our shores. American rock’n’roll had been chewed, swallowed, and vomited

back at us under a new name: Rock. It was like rock’n’roll, but this new sound paid no lip service to anything resembling Western religious tradition. Instead, it came drenched in drugs and Eastern mysticism, and the deceptive seduction of rock’n’roll had to give way to the total, unconditional surrender which rock demanded.

The first wave, and perhaps the most influential of these invaders, was the four, cheeky, mop-heads with Limey accents that called themselves The Beatles. And along with their sassy new sound, they brought a new look. Perversion came out of the closet and became fashionable as millions rushed to adopt the longhaired look of these musical messiahs—a look that appropriately expressed their cynical response to all authority and

tradition. Seemingly overnight, a mocking sort of nihilism became the trendy substitute for religion among the spoiled, confused, flower children the 60s had produced.

The Beatles’ music offered gleefully shaking heads and infectious wit rather than sex as bait. On the surface, at least, it appeared to be clever and even humorous. Few adults were aware of the content of the music, and most teenagers perceived the Beatles’ message only at subliminal levels.²⁹ In retrospect, media experts agree that the main contribution that the Beatles made to western society laid not so much in their music for music’s sake, but in music for the sake of the message it carried. And what was the message? Psychedelic drugs.

The Beatles certainly didn’t invent marijuana. Its use could be traced back to the shamanistic rituals of the American Indians and the whirling dervishes of ninth-century Persia. What they did was to culturally legitimize its use for the general population of the world. Marijuana expanded the limits of both the imagination and sensory perception, challenging the user to re-create the sounds and visions that “spun and fizzed and cascaded through the frontal lobes of their brain.”³⁰ LSD went even further; it eliminated all barriers between real and unreal, it was “the ground zero of chemically induced revelation.”³¹ Spirituality was a trip, and LSD was the sacrament of the new faith.

“Christianity will go. It will vanish and shrink. I needn’t argue about that, I’m right and will be proved right. We [The Beatles] are more popular than Jesus Christ right now. I don’t know which will go first, rock’n’roll or Christianity.” John Lennon, lead singer for the Beatles; March 4, 1966³²

DID YOU KNOW...?

EVEN DEAF MUTES RESPOND TO MUSICAL SOUNDS AND CAN DISTINGUISH SEVERAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS BY THE NATURE OF THEIR VIBRATIONS.

SHRILL SOUNDS IN SUFFICIENT VOLUME CAN CONGEAL PROTEINS IN A LIQUID MEDIA. WHEN AN EGG IS PLACED IN FRONT OF A SPEAKER AT SOME OF THE LOUDER ROCK CONCERTS, IT BECOMES A HARD-BOILED SNACK.

The second wave of the British invasion washed ashore in 1966, and when the tide receded, gone were music's days of veiled sexual innuendo and carefully phrased allegories. The rock generation had arrived, and it was "time to tell it like it is –let it all hang out." Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones did just that, and in the process he created a role model for rock stars that would endure for 25 years.

A performance by the Rolling Stones has always been a macabre mixture of sexual debauchery, sadistic violence, Satanism and drugs. Most revealing is the fact that the violence that has become an intrinsic part of every concert is no accident, but a natural result of the music and the way it is played.

In his book *The Music of Man*, noted musician and historian, Yehudi Menuhin describes a Stones concert as follows: "I heard what sounded to me like a premonition of hell... Of notes, pitches, musical design, I could distinguish little... Under such overpowering circumstances, I understood how deliberately the whole madness is engineered. It aims to numb all awarenesses, to leave no choice but to surrender and participate ... The Rolling Stones are trying desperately to generate and liberate emotion, but as they know little of those disciplines and structures through which emotions are transformed into art, they can only generate hysteria. Their music is more like the elimination of structure, dissolving everything back to crude clay."³³

Eager to give credit where credit was due, in December of 1968 the Stones released a record titled "Sympathy For The Devil" –a descent into the feverish world of voodoo devils, hallucinogenic images, and pounding rhythms. It was not music. It was cacophony –a screaming banshee bent on inciting death and destruction. During one memorable performance, as lead singer, Mick Jagger, pranced on stage in his Lucifer-in-the-flesh persona, suddenly the drug-crazed mob erupted into a killing rage. Within minutes, five people were dead, including one man that had been stabbed and beaten with chains while Jagger watched from the stage, just a few feet away. It was as if "...the Rolling Stones had OD'd [overdosed] on a massive dose of their own medicine."³⁴

Satan had boldly shown his face and made his demands, and, like lemmings, the rock performers complied. They were victims of their own greedy lifestyles. Spurred on by a lust for more fame, power, and wealth, they openly declared their allegiance to the Devil in the music they

performed. And where they led, young people followed. Innocent, curious, naive teenagers stopped to listen, and Lucifer did the rest.³⁵

In 1971, musicologist Frank Garlock, a professor at Bob Jones University, wrote: "All one needs to do is to make a trip to the places where rock'n'roll has its roots (Africa, South America, and India) and observe the ceremonies which often go along with this kind of music –voodoo rituals, sex orgies, human sacrifice, and devil worship –to know the direction in which we as a nation are headed."³⁶

How right he was! By the mid 70s the music charts made it perfectly clear that, in America, Satanism was selling very well indeed.

DID YOU KNOW...?

*ACCORDING TO A RECENT
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA STUDY,
LISTENING TO MUSIC IS THE PRIMARY
WAY TROUBLED TEENS SAY THEY COPE
WITH PROBLEMS.*

*A POLL OF 2,000 STUDENTS IN
GRADES SEVEN THROUGH 12 SHOWED
THAT 68% OF THEM REGARDED
ENTERTAINERS, SUCH AS ROCK
MUSICIANS, AS HEROES.*

THE CHRISTIAN HERALD, MARCH 1987

CHAPTER SEVEN

RAISING CAIN

*"... they call in the
spirit by the rhythm of the
music."³⁷*

Evil is contagious, and the wave of demonic spirits which The Beatles and The Rolling Stones unleashed in the 60s had become a unstoppable flood by the 70s. But that was nothing compared to the whirling maelstrom of the 80s as rock expanded its repertoire even further into the realms of grotesque darkness.

Satan, who recognized the vulnerability of a human being's auditory senses, equipped his disciples of chaos and disorder well. Through the use of the latest space age technology, amplification became the essence of rock's roar. The electric guitars, keyboards, and drums that were a part of every performer's arsenal, gave musicians the ability to duplicate the hazy confusion and distorted visions that accompanied their psychedelic drug trips, while at the same time suffocating the senses of the listener with a heavy, steady, throbbing, mind-deadening, ear-popping beat.

Satan has now sent his troops into all the major fields of cultural entertainment.³⁸ The fact is that unless you are deaf and blind, it is virtually guaranteed that rock music has, in some manner, affected your view of the world. We may not be willing to admit it, but each of us is manipulated daily

by the persuasive techniques of the advertising media – through radio, television, films, billboards, magazines, newspapers, product packaging, etc. And advertisers routinely utilize the popularity of rock stars and rock music in the promotion of products and services.

Millions of young people today wake up every morning to rock music. They drive to it, study to it, play to it, eat to it, and go to sleep to it. Studies show that between the 7th and 12th grades, the average teenager will listen to and watch 11,000 hours of rock music and rock videos – more than twice the time they will spend in class!³⁹ And all the while, today's rock musicians continue to raise Cain in performances that are often openly occult and increasingly bizarre.

Rock's addicts are being virtually controlled by music, from the way they dress to the way they view and understand everyday issues of life. The *National Review* magazine has declared: "Rock's sheer pervasiveness makes it the most profound values-shaper in existencetoday."⁴⁰ How? For the purpose of our study, we'll need to take an even closer look at the many guises of today's rock music.

HARD ROCK vs SOFT ROCK - First of all, not all rock music is the same. It is important to keep in mind that through the years there have been dozens of rock-relatives added to each branch of the Rock family tree, far too many to name. However, there are two dominant genes under which we can identify and categorize each new offshoot.

Since the rock battle began nearly 40 years ago, Satan's main assault force has been a double-headed changeling that operates under the twin identities of Hard Rock and Soft Rock. If the sick displays of psychotic behavior that make up a large part of the Hard Rock scene are not your style, the n welcome to the world of Soft Rock, where themes of universal love (lust), peace, and the brotherhood of mankind color the lyrics, along with cleverly-worded references to the excitement of doing drugs.

Soft Rock (alias Pop Rock, alias Contemporary Rock) is the offspring of The Beatles' music, and much of the blame for what is now known as the Sexual Revolution can be placed directly to their account. And the older rock gets, the lower society's standards sink. In the three decades that have passed since T he Beatles arrived on the

scene with their seducing message of drugs and immorality, our world has seen an alarming increase in sexual crimes, abortions on a massive scale, epidemics of sexually transmitted diseases (including the plague of AIDS), along with rampant drug addiction and all the depravity that goes with it. Many of today's most popular entertainers, such as George Michael, Carly Simon, Prince, Madonna, Dino, Whitney Houston, Michael Jackson, and Barry Manilow are Soft Rockers. Soft Rock has become the 'elevator music' of the 90s, and, like it or not, we are being bombarded with it on every hand.

Hard Rock was introduced into music's family tree by the first, and still reigning, kings of satanic rock, The Rolling Stones. By flaunting behavior that the Scriptures plainly identify as being demonic possession (and yet today is dismissed as mere artistic showmanship), rock bands are being catapulted overnight into the coveted spotlight of mega-stardom. Performers and songwriters

candidly confess to receiving the inspiration for much of their music at seances, saying, "What we do is what we're about. If it comes out demonic, that's what we are."⁴¹ The bands will often choose a name to spell out its motive and intention: Styx (in Greek mythology, one of the rivers of Hades); Iron Maiden (a hideous, medieval torture device); W.A.S.P. (short for "We Are Sexual Perverts"); KISS, (meaning "Kings In Satan's Service"); Twisted Sister; Judas Priest; The Grateful Dead, and Black Sabbath are but a few out of many hundreds.⁴²

In today's rock message, absolutely nothing is forbidden – sex, drugs, witchcraft, murder, suicide, spiritualism, Satan worship, homosexuality, sado-masochism, sodomy. It is a monster that has adopted the nickname Heavy Metal – once a

literary synonym for torture, but now it is used as an umbrella term for a legion of snarling ghouls, including the newest blasphemies of Shock Rock, Satan Rock, and Armageddon Rock. Rock's voice has never been louder or more evil, and it is not just for listening any more. It is for watching too. With the advent of video and MTV, the intensity of rock's assault has been multiplied, and today, partaking of the hard rock experience is like stepping into the middle of an epileptic seizure. It is beyond human control.

IDENTIFYING ROCK – All music uses rhythm. For instance, a waltz rhythm is $\frac{3}{4}$ time, and goes like this:

DID YOU KNOW...?

OUR EARS CAN DETECT SOUNDS VIBRATING AT LESS THAN 20 BEATS PER SECOND, CONTINUING UPWARD PAST 20,000 PER SECOND -ROUGHLY, FROM THE LOWEST NOTE ON A PIPE ORGAN TO THE HIGHEST NOTE PRODUCED BY A VIOLIN.

THE NERVES OF THE EAR (AUDITORY NERVES) ARE MORE WIDELY DISTRIBUTED AND HAVE MORE EXTENSIVE CONNECTIONS THAN THOSE OF ANY OTHER HUMAN SENSE. CONSEQUENTLY, WHAT WE HEAR AFFECTS OUR ENTIRE BODY.

ONE two three ONE two three. For a stirring march written in 2/4 time, you would count: ONE two ONE two. The conventional way to count 4/4 time is as follows: ONE two THREE four ONE two THREE four.

Technically speaking, the rhythm of rock is 4/4. But all the normal conventions and principles of sound music have been laid aside, and here the accent is placed on the offbeat: one TWO three FOUR one TWO three FOUR. In addition, there is usually a highly accented “back beat” coming between the regular beats creating what is known as “syncopation.” In his book, *The Day Music Died*, author and former rock performer Bob Larson writes, “Syncopated rhythms evoke the most sensuous response from the human body, particularly when they are electronically accentuated.”⁴³

Rock music is written (and performed) to be felt, as well as heard, and one essential instrument for this type of music is the electric bass guitar. Its super-amplified low frequency vibrations give rock that gut-level intensity that preys on sensory perceptions. The tempo can be fast or slow, but if the beat is rock, the fundamental response will be erotic.

A second key to identifying rock music is repetition – words, choruses, instrumental parts or chord patterns that are repeatedly played or sung throughout the song. As any educator will tell you, repetition is one of the most effective teaching tools that can be employed. And when you consider the neurotic, profane, and suggestive words that are being fed into the brains of even very young children, it’s “no wonder people are going crazy. That’s enough to drive a human being crazy.”⁴⁴

A third important characteristic of rock can be its volume. As if the over-amplified, buzz saw screams of guitars, and the wild, incoherent vocals of the performers were not loud enough already, rock performers and fans enjoy their music best when it is cranked up to 100-plus decibels of sound (approaching the threshold of pain, where the body becomes completely disoriented). Such an intense, steady pounding can quickly cause the mind to lose touch with reality and even induce various stages of trances. The psychological principle being applied here is this: The louder the music, the more vulnerable the listener becomes to the lyrics being sung.

The last aspect of rock that we are going to review is the fact that it can have all the characteristics we have already mentioned (heavy beat, repetition, extreme amplification), or, it can have none of them! That is because rock has long ceased to be any one thing, and has denominated into a multitude of sects and schisms, each reflecting its own version of the aesthetic principle that masterminded its creation. And every new revelation that the prophets of rock can produce will echo a resounding “Amen” in the ear of a true rock-believer somewhere. No matter what musical principle that is applied to make it happen, the spirit will find a witness.

WHO WRITES THE SONGS? –As we have just learned, it is the beat of rock music that pulls the emotional trigger of its listeners, but, undoubtedly, it takes lyrics to produce the gun. The battle for men’s souls is being fought in the mind, so let’s take a look at some of the ideas that young people are being fed daily by the disciples of rock:

At the beginning of the song, there is the sound of little children shouting, “I don’t want to go to that place!” Then the singer begins to howl his deadly sermon:

“I’m the Lord of the wasteland
I gather darkness to please me
And I command you to kneel before the
God of thunder, and of rock and roll.
The spell you’re under
Will slowly rob you of your virgin soul...”

GOD OF THUNDER, from the album
“Destroyer” by KISS ⁴⁵

Fairly straightforward, wouldn’t you say? Rock groups today don’t mince words when it comes to paying homage to the Devil and spelling out his evil intent. Many of Hard Rock’s offerings are more incantation than song. A 1982 album, “The Number Of The Beast,” by the Heavy Metal group, Iron Maiden, contains such sentimental ditties as “Children Of The Damned,” “Hallowed Be Thy Name,” and “Run To The Hills.” Fellow rockers, Black Sabbath, sing such distinctly inspired songs as “Nativity In Black”:

Now I have you with me, under my power
Our love grows stronger with every hour
Look at my eyes and you’ll see who I am
My name is Lucifer, please take my hand.” ⁴⁶

There are sure to be those who, right now, are saying, “I’m not a devil worshipper. I don’t listen to the words; I just like the music.” Unfortunately, to such a statement there can only be one response: You are still guilty—by association. In a sermon entitled “Why Are We Not A Denomination?” the prophet, William Branham, accurately describes the situation: “If you hang around with somebody that is a thief, you’ll soon be a thief yourself. My old Kentucky mammy used to say, ‘If you lay down with a dog that has fleas, you’ll get up with fleas, too.’ You’re known by your company.”⁴⁷

Are you wondering whether Soft Rock should be included in that warning? The answer is “Yes,” because that particular flea infestation is far, far nastier (and more sneaky) than most people suspect. Let’s take a look.

Imagine there's no heaven
 It's easy if you try
 No hell below us, above us only sky...
 Imagine all the people
 Living for today.
 Imagine there's no countries
 It isn't hard to do
 Nothing to kill or die for
 And no religion too
 Imagine all the people
 Living life in peace...
 You may say I'm a dreamer
 But I'm not the only one
 I hope someday you'll join us
 And the world will be as one.
 Imagine no possessions
 I wonder if you can
 No need for grief or hunger
 A brotherhood of man
 Imagine all the people
 Sharing all the world...

IMAGINE by John Lennon

"Imagine" was written nearly 20 years ago, but the philosophy, which it applauds, remains as a central theme of today's Soft Rock. It is termed Humanism, and it doesn't sound really bad, does it? After all, we would all like to see an end to wars and strife, and a reign of universal peace and prosperity. But let's face it, man's idea of peace is just not the same as God's idea of peace. The humanistic hypothesis of "unity through diversity" is an exercise in self-deception. Unequal yoking is sin. And how can there be peace without the Prince of Peace?

Humanism –the belief that man, rather than God, is the sum and measure of all things –is one of the founding tenets of a faith called New Age. New Age (also called Age of Aquarius) is not a passing fad, and the only thing 'new' about it is the vocabulary. The movement itself is older than Hinduism and Buddhism; it is older than the oracles of ancient Greece and Egypt; it is as old as the serpent in the Garden of Eden, who beguiled Eve with the words "... and ye shall be as gods."

In some way, New Age has touched you, too. You've heard its philosophers, viewed its art, read its literature – probably without knowing them as New Age. You may even have participated in its therapies and shared in its rituals. But you have most certainly listened to its music.

Since John Lennon (the Beatle who once enjoyed the title of priest/king of the Aquarian Age)⁴⁸ wrote the song "Imagine," New Age music has broadened to include everything from reggae to contemporary rock, and is most often played on those radio stations denoted 'easy listening.' However, record companies do not take lyrics into consideration when they classify a type of music, so the only styles which you will find labeled 'New Age' in the record stores are the increasingly popular 'meditative'

and 'ambient' music. Often performed on sitars or other Eastern instruments, critics call it the 'audio valium' of the 90s, largely because it claims to transport souls into a kind of cosmic cohesiveness.⁴⁹

Topping the list of popular artists who champion such lyrical humanism are those who have joined together to preach the gospel of rock-in-the-service-of-mankind. Through fund-raising extravaganzas like "We Are The World" and Live Aid, the New Age dogma of "All is One, One is All" is being legitimized and assimilated deeper and deeper everyday into the general culture. For Christians, this may be the most deceptive and dangerous hybrid that rock has ever produced. The music is enthralling; the lyrics are intriguing, but guess who writes the songs?

I've been alive forever
 I wrote the very first song
 I put the words and the melodies together
 I am music, and I write the songs.
 I write the songs that make the whole world sing
 I write the songs of love and special things,
 I write the songs that make the young girls cry
 I write the songs, I write the songs.
 My hold lies deep within you
 And I've got my own place in your soul,
 Now when I look out through your eyes
 I'm young again, even though I'm very old.
 Oh my music makes you dance
 And gets your spirit to take a chance
 Some rock and roll so you can move,
 Music fills your heart
 Well there's a real fine place to start
 It's from me, it's for you, it's from you, it's for me
 It's a worldwide symphony,
 I am music, and I write the songs.

I WRITE THE SONGS, written by Bruce Johnson and performed by Barry Manilow

ROCK'S KISSING COUSINS - Just in case you're thinking, "Thank God I'm a country boy (or girl)," there's something you need to know. The land of country music is no longer a place where the deer and the antelope play and the skies are not cloudy all day. Some of the most obscene, sex-ridden lyrics heard today are being sung in the key of N –which stands for Nashville.

For those who grew up on country music and mistakenly believe that the good ol' boy hasn't changed much through the years, it's time to take another listen. As Al Menconi writes in his book *Today's Music: A Window To Your Child's Soul*, "If you take away the booze, the fights, the adultery, and the self-pity from country music, there would be nothing left to sing about except your mama and my pickup truck!"⁵⁰

Of course, there is one strategy commonly practiced by artists of the Nashville sound that many staunch Christians consider to be very noble, and that is the singing of a well-known hymn as the closing number in a country music

program. This particular form of hypocrisy was born on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry, and for more than 60 years country musicians from Roy Acuff to Barbara Mandrell have been using spiritual songs as a form of musical mouthwash to soothe the taste buds after several courses of filth have been served and consumed. In reality, such pseudo-spiritual placebos have nothing to do with Christianity.

The latest offering to be laid on rock's altar is a form of chanting known as Rap. There is no melody line (so technically it cannot be considered music), but the monotonous beat that accompanies the spoken verse offers a straightforward lesson in rhythm –Rock.

Rap began on the streets in lets-see-who's-the-baddest bragging contests among black teenagers. Consequently, it should come as no surprise to hear rappers today contend that in order to really rap, what you need is a boastin' attitude. Once again, such selfish egotism and downright arrogance bears no resemblance to any Christian ethic.

Although many of today's popular rappers proudly take a verbal stand against drugs, they invariably glorify gangs, crime, and violence (including sexual brutality) in their performances and recordings. All in all, Rap is Heavy Metal in disguise.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FORMS OF GODLINESS

"An then He said, 'Here comes the church of America now, to be previewed.'... I almost fainted." ⁵¹

Religion (and its multitude of accouterments) has always been a big business. That is legitimate and acceptable, because it is through the 'business' of religion that churches are built, Bibles and other materials are printed, pastors and missionaries are supported, and host of other worthy endeavors are maintained. But when, in the practice of religion, Divine guidance is by-passed, then Christian orthodoxy and devotion are left totally vulnerable to the manipulations of corporate profiteers. Subsequently, being spiritual and being led of the Holy Spirit cannot always be looked upon synonymously. "God moves by His Spirit, not by the amount of money or talent in the church." ⁵²

Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) is an industry, and, as in all industry, its motivation is subject to the bottom line –\$\$\$\$. With millions of dollars at stake in this highly competitive market, the majority of performers and recording companies do not hesitate to pattern themselves after their more-popular secular music counterparts, including rock artists such as those previously mentioned. As a result, the inherent Heavy Metal message of rebellion, and the Soft Rock smoke screen of New Age love have been so cleverly incorporated into the substance of

Christian music that it now represents 90% of the tapes and disks being offered today at your favorite local Christian bookstore.

Most pro-rockers who write on the subject of Christian music use the same line as Steve Lawhead does in his book, *Rock Of This Age*: "Rock communicates to the rock generation. It has the ability to reach a population that has grown up with it." ⁵³ But the question then becomes, "Reach them with what?" A perusal of the reviews that Christian artists and groups have been given in the pages of various CCM magazines may shed some light on the subject:

MICHAEL SMITH –

"Smith, with synthesizers blaring, drums blazing, and guitars screeching, sent a young crowd into a frenzy from beginning to end."

"With sweeping strobes lighting the stage and crowd areas, Smith took the stage with some twirling dance steps that sent the crowd into rocking frenzy."

AMY GRANT–

"Lyrically, the only difference between Amy Grant's love songs and, say, those of Olivia Newton-John, is that often Grant's pronouns come with capital letters..."

"It is important to understand that some lyrics are implicitly Christian while others are explicitly Christian... You trust the Jesus in them –even if they are singing about life and love, like in "Baby, Baby" [Grant's hit song that recently topped both the Christian and secular music charts]."

STRYPER –

"And rock they do. Their ninety-minute stage show includes all the outward trappings of secular metal –the sass, style, and bombastic bone-jarring sonic barrage of such secular acts as Motley Crue, Ratt, Iron Maiden, or Judas Priest..."

LOVE LIFE –

"I... was very impressed with the band's original, blues-based commercial material. The band showed its [musical] ability with a couple of acoustic-oriented songs and even a cover [re-recording] of the Beatles' hit, 'A Hard Day's Night.'"

KIM HILL –

"It's really encouraging to see someone who loves to sing in non-Christian venues, avoiding the 'Christianese' in so much of [today's] Christian music."

The purpose of sacred music is to turn a person's heart and mind towards God. Notwithstanding that CCM is

(naively, perhaps) dedicated to that end, the fact remains that sincerity is not a test of Christianity. God's work must be done God's way!

Remember, Satan is an imitator, and his game is to counterfeit every move of God. But he is powerless unless he has an instrument (person) to work through, so he recruits his volunteer army from every race, creed, and walk of life—even from the ranks of unmindful Christians. And that is why we can see in the performances of contemporary Christian musicians today echoes of the Judas-like deception that ushered in the Age of Rock'n'roll in the first place. But no matter how much they try to make it fit the sacred mold, it will never feed the soul of a truly born-again Believer. As Jesus testified in John 3:6, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."*

When we can't tell the difference between sacred music and worldly music, when the songs that are being sung in the sanctuary of the church could just as effectively be sung to one's lover, then it's time to stop and ask ourselves a very important question: "Who is really being worshipped here?"

CHAPTER NINE

GOD'S WAY

"Do you realize that there are really only two powers in all the universe? All of our differences between nations and differences between each other and all the rest of the little minor things are connected with one or the other of those powers. And those powers are God's power and Satan's power—the power of life and the power of death. Satan's power is only a perversion of God's power. Death is only a perversion of life; a lie is only the truth mis-told; adultery is a righteous act misused. Everything Satan has is something that was perverted, but it's a power."⁵⁴

Man's first approach to God through specific conduct and ritual was in the substitutional offerings of Cain and Abel. Cain sought to breach the gap between the known and the unknown worlds and to petition the spiritual realm through beauty and the physical senses. Abel offered a blood sacrifice as atonement for his sins. God accepted one, and rejected the other, for only one was made by revelation, and the other was a carnal (perverted) impersonation.

Since God is, by very definition, unchangeable, we can, on the basis of both His character and His past performance, have complete confidence in what He will do in the future. Although man continues to make offerings based on aesthetic principles, the precepts of God can never change. "Years ago we used to find the people in deep sincerity and worship. And today, it has become a big glamour of Hollywood, just some kind of trained music. Women are up on the platform with their clothes tight

enough that their skin is on the outside, almost, and dancing around the platform. There is no sincerity, making it just an outright ridiculous shame, while professing Christianity. I wonder if our offerings haven't become a kind of stench in His nostrils again?"⁵⁵

Does that mean that as believers, we should restrict the music we hear and perform to only the old, classic hymns in order to avoid the negative message of unsound music? Absolutely not. One style of music will never please everyone, however there are objective principles that are based on truth and not on taste by which we can judge what we listen to: Rhythm, lyrics, and lifestyles.

—In the jungle regions of the world there is a form of communication that is called 'talking drums,' and by beating out certain rhythms, messages are sent back and forth between the villages. The music which Satan has perverted for his own use performs that same role in our society, as "... they call in the spirit by the rhythm of the music."⁵⁶ You must learn to identify the rhythm of rock, so that before you pick up the telephone, you know whose number you will be dialing!

—Listen carefully to what the lyrics are saying. Are there unscriptural doctrines being taught? Is immorality being subtly endorsed? Is the message one of holiness, or is New Age love and peace being promoted? *"Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge."* Proverbs 19:27

—In Matthew 12:34, Jesus said, *"... for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."* Music (augmented speech) is an extension of the personality and the beliefs of the composer and the performer. Today, we must choose carefully who will minister to us in song. Do you recall the passages you read earlier from I Samuel, describing how David played music and the evil spirits that tormented Saul departed? Think about it. Saul was King of Israel, and you can be sure there were many, many skilled musicians in his court. Why did he need David? Because *"the Lord was with David."* David's music bore witness of the Lord's presence in his life, and it disturbed the evil spirits so much that they left Saul!

If evil spirits can be exorcised through a musical performance by a Godly person, then isn't it reasonable to conclude that evil spirits can be summoned through the music of an ungodly person? Make sure that your favorite artist isn't bringing uninvited guests into your home, your car, or your church.

Never before in the history of mankind has the whole world tuned-in to a single form of communication as it has with today's rock music. And over and over again, rock has proven itself to be the enemy of Christ, and one of the most effective instruments by which the Devil gains control over the lives of people and drags them into spiritual wickedness.⁵⁷ *"And the spirit [of rock'n'roll] is not only in America. It has spread itself out over the world, to bring them [all people] to the battle of Armageddon."*⁵⁸

There are two sides in this battle. There is no neutral ground. Which side are you on?

IS IT TIME TO CHANGE YOUR TUNE?

“Let me go into a person’s house, and let me see what kind of music they listen to; let me see what kind of books they read and what kind of songs they sing and what kind of pictures they have in their house. I can just about tell you what the nature of that person is.”⁵⁹

We live in a vibrating universe. Each individual voice and instrument produces tones, which vibrate at an established frequency. As these frequencies reach our ears, they cause our eardrums to vibrate in the same pattern as the source of the sound, thus allowing us to identify it. This acoustical principle is referred to as *sympathetic vibration*—the ability of one body to cause another body to vibrate in sympathy with it.⁶⁰

We can apply the principle of sympathetic vibration to our musical natures as well. In order for music to ‘speak’ to us, it must respond sympathetically to something that is within our being. It must vibrate to the same frequency as our emotions. In other words, a person responds to the music to which he is attuned, and conversely, the kind of music he produces reveals what he is.

So, let’s get personal. What does your music say about you? Does the water around you feel a little warmer now

than it did at the beginning of this article? If so, then maybe its time for you to change your tune.

Did you know that the Bible makes more references to a ‘new song’ than it does to a ‘new man,’ ‘new heavens,’ ‘new earth,’ or ‘new creature?’⁶¹ And that means new in kind, not just in sequence. A new song can only be sung by those who have been redeemed through the Blood of Jesus Christ.

In the past, the Devil may have tried to trick you into believing that music is neither moral or immoral. He may even have mislead you into thinking that the Message of Christ can be preached effectively through rock music. Don’t yield to Satan’s deceptions any longer. May your testimony be like that of the Psalmist David:

“And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.”

1. William Branham, “With Out Money Or Without Price,” (59-0802).
2. Statistics courtesy of Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service, figures for November 1991.
3. William Branham, “The Greatest Battle Ever Fought,” (62-0311).
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. William Branham, “The Oddball,” (64-0531).
7. Frank Garlock, *The Big Beat, A Rock Blast*. Bob Jones University Press, 1971, pg. 15.
8. “The Book of Psalms,” New Bible Dictionary, 2nd edition, Tyndale House Publishers, 1984, pg. 996.
9. William Branham, “The Power of Transformation,” (65-1031).
10. Bob Larson, *The Day Music Died*, Creation House, 1972, pg. 133.
11. Yehudi Menuhin, *The Music of Man*, Simon And Schuster Inc., New York, 1979, pg. 46.
12. “The Catholic World,” magazine (January/February, 1989), pg. 4.
13. Davin Ceay and Mary Neely, *Stairway to Heaven, the Spiritual Roots of Rock’n’Roll*, Ballantine/Epiphany Books, 1986, pg. 9.
14. Ibid., pg. 38.
15. Stanley Burgess and Gary McGee, editors, *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Zondervan Publishing House, 1988, pg. 691.
16. Yehudi Menuhin, *The Music of Man*, pg. 205.
17. Ibid., pg. 207.
18. Paul Oliver, *The New Grove*, Norton, New York, 1986, pg. 189.
19. Seay and Neely, *Stairway To Heaven*, pg. 23.
20. Ibid., pg. 24.
21. William Branham, “Why Are We Not A Denomination?” (58-0927).
22. Seay and Neely, *Stairway To Heaven*, pg. 10.
23. Ibid., pg. 57.
25. Ibid. pg. 53.
26. Steve Lawhead, *Rock Of This Age*, Inter Varsity Press, 1987, pg. 39.
27. Menuhin, *The Music Of Man*, pg. 282.
28. Dan and Peter Peters, *Why Knock Rock?*: Bethany House Publishers, 1984, pg. 18
29. Ibid., pg. 24.
30. Seay and Neely, *Stairway To Heaven*, pg. 134.
31. Ibid.
32. Seay and Neely, *Stairway To Heaven*, pg. 129.
33. Menuhin, *The Music Of Man*, pg. 287.
34. Seay and Neely, *Stairway To Heaven*, pg. 184.
35. William Branham, “The Greatest Battle Ever Fought,” (62-0311).
36. Frank Garlock, *The Big Beat*, pg. 22.
37. William Branham, “Return And Jubilee,” (62-1122).
38. Jeff Godwin, “The Devil’s Disciples,” Chick Publications, 1985, pg. 240.
39. “Hell’s Bells,” a video production by Reel To Reel Ministries.
40. *National Review*, magazine, as quoted in “Hell’s Bells.”
41. “Rock’s Primal Scream,” a video production by Gary Greenwald.
42. Godwin, *The Devil’s Disciples*, pg. 146-147.
43. Larson, *The Day Music Died*, pg. 15.
44. William Branham, “Identified With Christ,” (59-1220).
45. Godwin, *The Devil’s Disciples*, pg. 116.
46. “Rock’s Primal Scream.”
47. William Branham, “Why Are We Not A Denomination?” (58-0927).
48. Seay and Neely, *Stairway To Heaven*, pg. 154.
49. Russel Chandler, *Understanding The New Age*, Word Publishing, 1991, pg. 139.
50. Al Menconi, *Today’s Music, A Window To Your Child’s Soul*. David C. Cook Publishing Co., Elgin, Illinois, 1990.
51. William Branham, “Choosing Of A Bride,” (65-0429).
52. William Branham, *An Exposition of The Seven Church Ages*, pg. 342.
53. Lawhead, *Rock Of This Age*, pg. 109.
54. William Branham, “The Greatest Battle Ever Fought,” (62-0311).
55. William Branham, “The World Is Falling Apart,” (63-1115).
56. William Branham, “Return And Jubilee,” (62-1122).
57. Garlock, *The Big Beat*, pg. 27.
58. William Branham, “Ashamed Of Him,” (65-0711).
59. William Branham, “Condemnation By Representation,” (60-1113).
60. Garlock, *The Big Beat*, pg. 9.
61. “Christian Rock 2000,” a video production by Sketch Erickson Ministries Inc., 1981.

They had been taught from birth that there was no God outside of the Hutterite colony. But when their older brother returned from the outside world and testified of his transforming experience, they had to decide. Can there be two Truths?

Ye Shall
Know
The Truth,
and

THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE



der Bruderhof

*compiled by
George Smith*

Silently, the van rolled to a stop in front of the darkened house. The driver checked the illuminated dial on his watch. Eleven o'clock, just as he had promised. The night air was pleasantly cool, but still he knew there was a film of nervous sweat on his upper lip. "Lord Jesus," he prayed, "be with us just now." Muffled sounds coming from the direction of the front door signaled the readiness of his waiting passengers.

Earlier, the children of the house had been allowed to go to bed with their clothes on - a totally unheard-of experience that the three little girls had enjoyed immensely. Now they were being nudged into wakefulness. With whispered encouragements they were shepherded out of the house and into the van where, snuggled between their mother and 16-year-old aunt, they promptly went back to sleep.

As the man of the house loaded the family's suitcases into the back of the van, he cast frequent glances up and down the quiet street, scanning the black silhouettes that were the houses of his friends. Nothing stirred. It was as though a spirit of slumber had settled over the usually-noisy neighborhood.

In the back seat, the two women suddenly began to tremble, and alarmed, the driver squinted to see them through the shadows of the van's interior. "Are you sick, Sisters? Is something wrong?"

Their soft laughter reassured him. "No Brother," the older woman replied. "We are just laughing for joy. I think we must feel as the children of Israel did when they left Egypt. We are free!"

The man made a final check to make sure that everything being left behind was in perfect order before firmly closing the front door. At that moment, he knew that he was closing more than just the door of his home. He was also closing the door on a way of life that had sustained several generations of his family. "Now I'm on my own," he thought, "and I have a pregnant wife and three children to provide for."

He took his place in the van, and as they drove past the familiar buildings where he had lived, played, worked, and worshipped, he recalled the words he'd read a few weeks before in a book titled, "As The Eagle Stirreth Her Nest." He smiled to himself. He knew that for nearly two years the Lord had been pulling the soft fur away from the comfortable nest that had always surrounded and protected him, until finally the security that had once brought him comfort had become his prison. All he could feel were the prickles in the nest.

On this night, he and his family would leave that sheltered environment to sojourn in a strange land. Of material goods, they had none. But what they did have was a newly found faith in a God who worked miracles and answered prayers. They had received a touch from His hand and knew they could never let go. And now, for the first time in their lives, they were on their own - but they knew they were not alone.

THE ANABAPTIST OF MORAVIA

Scattered across the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, and into the states of Montana and South Dakota, are more than 350 colonies whose members are a part of the religious sect called Hutterites. They are one of the three principle surviving Anabaptist groups in North America today, the other two being Mennonites and Old Order Amish.

The Anabaptist movement had its beginnings in sixteenth century Europe at the time of the Protestant Reformation. However, they never associated themselves with Martin Luther's message of Justification, fearing that he was not serious enough about a Christ-like life. Instead, they remained an underground movement, stressing the separation of church and state and the practice of church order. Neither Catholic nor Protestant, the name 'Anabaptist' simply meant 'one who baptizes again.'

Anabaptists were convinced that the Christian was not capable of being a disciple by himself. Rather, he needed the help and understanding of others in order to follow the straight and narrow way. Only by entering a community with those of like resolve could God's will for the individual be realized. Predictably, this form of discipleship created new attitudes towards property. No longer could there be 'mine' and 'thine.' When a person entered the community he put all that he had at the disposal of the brotherhood. However, since Anabaptists also recognized a policy of congregational autonomy, having never become unified under a shared leadership, this practice of a common treasury became more highly developed within certain geographic areas. The most faithful followers of that tenet were the Hutterites of Moravia (a region in Czechoslovakia).

Jacob Hutter (1500 - 1536) based his teachings on the apostolic model of community of goods that is found in the Book of Acts, chapter 2, verses 44 and 45: "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had

need." In a climate of quarreling amongst the church members, widespread starvation, and persecution by King Ferdinand, Hutter brought stability and unity to those under his leadership through the practice of total economic sharing. Consequently, this group became known as the Hutterites, and 450 years later they are still thriving in colonies that continue to respect the strict communalism that Hutter instituted.

In the 1870s, the entire population of Hutterites (about 800) migrated to America and settled in South Dakota in search of religious freedom, land, and exemption from military service. But again at the beginning of World War I their practice of devout pacifism prompted a second mass migration - this time to Canada. Not until after World War II did new colonies begin to appear again in the United States.

The Hutterites are farmers and ranchers, and their lifestyle requires lots of room. Although they do not proselytize (you are born a Hutterite), their families tend to be large (averaging 10 to 12 children) and that eventually creates a group that is too big for the land. When that happens, a part of the population is sent to another location to start a new colony. Today there are an estimated 20,000 Hutterites living in North America.

DER BRUDERHOF

Rosedale Colony in southern Manitoba is spread out over 3,700 acres of flat farmland - a country within a country - isolated from the outside world by both distance and ideology. At its center is a cluster of multifamily dwellings, a communal dining room, and several farm buildings that collectively are called der Bruderhof.

Rosedale specializes in dairy farming and raising poultry. Both are highly profitable enterprises that utilize up-to-date farming equipment and techniques. Every member of the colony is assigned work according to his or her ability, and each man is required to learn a trade. No one draws a wage, but everyone's material needs are provided from the colony's common purse.

Except for the necessary business transactions, which are handled by a colony 'boss,' there is limited communication with the outside world. Hutterites are nearly self-sufficient, except for purchases such as flour, sugar, coffee, and fruit. Meals are prepared and eaten communally.

A minimal amount of ready-to-wear clothing is purchased, and instead, wardrobes are made by the women from fabric that is bought wholesale and then distributed according to the needs of each family.

Like the men, women are also given work assignments, such as gardening, baking, and canning. Women dress modestly, wearing their dresses well below the knee. In addition, each woman is required to wear a head scarf of a dark fabric covered with white polka dots.

On each farm there is a publicly licensed English-language school and a German school; Hutterite children attend classes in both. The German teacher is responsible for lessons in Bible, Hutterite doctrines, hymns, and the German language (which is spoken at all religious services). English classes cover subjects such as reading, history, and math.

At the church services, which are held each evening, sermons which were written by Hutterite teachers in the sixteenth century are read aloud by a preacher which is elected by the people.

The Hutterites view colony life as being a "spiritual ark" on a troubled sea. No one is in need, and God is being glorified through hard work and a simple life. And most importantly, only those that are safe in the ark will be saved and receive Eternal Life.

TESTIMONIES

MICHAEL WALDNER - First To Go West

I was born and raised in a Hutterite colony, the oldest of 14 children. At the age of eight, I had an experience in which I knew that God was dealing with me, and that was through a little

German tract titled "Yes, I Am Coming Soon." There I read about the end time and the coming of the Lord, and I knew in my heart that I was certainly not ready to meet God. I needed Salvation, otherwise I was lost.

I went to see my aunt, to whom I felt very close, in order to speak with her about Salvation and getting my heart right with God. I asked her, "What shall I do?"

"Just be good," she said. That is all she had for me, but that did not satisfy. That was the only occasion that I can remember in the 16 years I remained in the colony when God tried to deal with me.

All I ever knew was law and punishment, and I saw more hate there than anywhere else I have ever been. There was no Christian love, only a lot of form. People were not interested in God; they never spoke about God. In looking back, I realize that the only person I knew who actually lived a Godly life and served Him while living in the colony was my father. May God bless his soul.

I was always very rebellious towards the ways of the colony. In my heart I needed freedom. I couldn't understand why we should have to live under that kind of bondage. I would tell myself, "Something has to be wrong here," and I had a strong desire to be free, just in the natural.

There is no such thing as human rights on the colony. You are kept by force and by fear. If you don't bow to the will of the leadership, you face being cut off from your family (or even denied food) until you have fully submitted yourself to the will of the elders and totally repented. There is no way to protest this policy, being as how you are at their mercy for all your material needs.

Back when this movement started, in the 1500s, it was comprised of sincere people who were seeking more of God. The Hutterite people never followed Luther's message, so as a consequence, they have never been in the Message of the hour, in any age. However, they had some truth. I once read some

writings by one of the founders and I told the elders, "If we Hutterites would live the way this man preached, we would really have something."

We attended church every night of the year, in addition to two services on Sunday, with a Sunday school in between which is mandatory for all the young people up until they are baptized at age 22. The ministers don't preach by inspiration, they simply read sermons that were written about 500 years ago, which is commonly referred to as 'sliced bread.' When a person is elected as minister, it is accomplished by putting the names of several good workers in the colony into a hat and drawing out the name of the person who would then be in charge of the books of sermons.

Every year the ministers get together at a conference and they make more laws for the people. For them, Jesus Christ is not the same yesterday, today and forever. You can only survive in the colony by having confidence in what you are told, and what you are told is that "This is right and everything outside of this is false. God is in this, and outside of this there is no God. Leave the colony and you will be totally lost."

KATHY WALDNER:

When I began to read the Word, I was able to see that the Hutterites did not have the fruits of the Holy Spirit that Paul wrote about in the New Testament. I thought, "I will go see the preacher. Surely he will know the answers to all the questions I have. He has been in the ministry for years."

But his answer to me was, "Kathy, just be a good Hutterite and you will be fine. Just dress like a Hutterite and wear your polka dots and obey all the laws and you will go to heaven."

Well, I could not receive that. In my heart was the Word of God, and what the preacher said just wouldn't go through that filter.



Above: Michael & Helen Waldner with their daughter Jeminna

Right: Joseph & Eileen Waldner with their children: Johanna, Anita, David and Julie.



Below: Sisters Marilyn Waldner White and Kathy Waldner



At the age of nine I began helping my uncle with the turkey production, and by age 15 I was handling the turkeys all alone. We raised 60,000 turkeys a year in several big buildings with automatic feeders, but still there was a lot of it that had to be done by hand. I was a good worker, and I began to think that surely I could go somewhere else and perform the same job on another farm outside the colony.

On Sunday, May 19, 1963, I left the colony between the two services. I did my normal job with the turkeys on Sunday morning, and then waited until everyone else was in church. Then I went home, changed my clothes, and just took off walking down the road. Right away, a friend who had previously left the colony and was now working on a private farm came along and picked

me up. As we were driving away, I felt a tremendous weight lift off my shoulders, even though I knew that, being under 18, my father could still send the police after me and I would be taken before the elders and strapped. But he didn't do it, and I started to work on the same farm as my friend, near Port Ia Prairie.

After only three months, I moved to Winnipeg where I stayed for three years, working in factories and putting myself through technical school to learn a trade. By the time I was 19, I was a journeyman fabricator and welder and was working in the steel industry.

In 1969 I moved west to Vancouver. In those days I was very much into the Eastern religions and even the occult. I was reading books on reincarnation written by authors such as Arthur Casey, and I spent a lot of time in book stores looking for anything I could find on occult practices. But all that that brought me was depression.

I was a sinner, and I was living in sin. I believed there was a God, but I had no experience or relationship with Him. I had not even picked up a Bible since I was 16 years old. All I knew about Christianity was what I had seen on the colony, and that was not anything I wanted to be a part of.

How I thank God that He didn't give up on me! One day I was walking downtown when a girl came up to me and started speaking. I realized right away that she thought I was a friend of hers that she hadn't seen in a long time, so I introduced myself and she recognized her mistake. We became friends and saw one another off and on for about a month. I learned that she was into Hinduism and had spent four years living with gurus, and one evening she started preaching to me about what she believed.

When I thought she had finished speaking, I said, "I believe Jesus Christ." I don't know why I said it. I was sitting there, a long-haired sinner who had not touched a Bible in 13 years, but I confessed to her, "I believe Jesus Christ."

When I said that, she stopped talking, got up, and walked into her bedroom. When she returned a few moments later she handed me a piece of rolled paper and said, "I have something for you. You'll like this."

I walked home to my apartment and threw the paper on the bed and then fixed myself something to eat. When I had finished, I picked up the paper and unrolled it. It was a poster with a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, and at the bottom of the picture there was printed a scripture: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

When I read those words, my life

was instantly changed from darkness to Light. For the first time in my life, and I was approaching 29 years of age, I knew there was a God and that He was alive and real. God actually revealed Himself to me! The first word I spoke was "Jesus." I can look back to that simple occasion as being the time I turned from serving Satan and began to serve God. I was instantly transformed, and I had a fervent desire to read and study the Bible.

The next morning, I found a little New Testament and, starting in Matthew, I read it all the way through. And as I read the Scriptures I was convicted of my sins, and one by one they just dropped right off.

While I lived in the colony I would sneak and listen to country music, but when I moved to Winnipeg, one day I went to see a film starring Elvis Presley called "Jailhouse Rock," and from that time on I became totally possessed with the spirit of Elvis Presley. He was my god. I tried to imitate him in my looks, my clothes, my manners. I lived for rock'n'roll.

By the time I was converted in 1975, I had long hair hanging past my shoulders and I had not cut my beard in four years. Most of the time I dressed in black, and when I walked down the streets of Vancouver, looking the way I did, people would usually step aside. I looked really rough. But as I read the Scriptures, all these things fell

off, and I got rid of all the aspects and appearances of sin. I went out and got a haircut, and that day I cleaned house. I got rid of my television and the only thing that remained was my Bible.

For seven months I read my Bible. I had no church and no fellowship, but during those days God revealed to me that there was a church somewhere. I still loved my parents and my brothers and sisters, and I searched the Bible to find an excuse to be able to go back to the colony and live a Christian life. But I couldn't find one. I could only find that their doctrine was completely contrary to what I was reading. I said to myself, "I would be committing Spiritual adultery if I were to go back and re-join the Hutterite colony."

I wrote an 18-page letter to my dad, telling him what God had done for me. Later he told me that when he read it, he felt a surge of power and faith from within such as he had never experienced before, and he rejoiced at the knowledge of his son being converted.

I had a desire for fellowship, for baptism, and for communion. Once, when I was desiring to partake of communion, I went and bought a bottle of wine and a loaf of bread. I took it home, and after fasting all day, I took the communion by myself, not realizing that it should have been unleavened bread.

When I finally went back to the colony to visit my relatives, my brother Joe was the most surprised to see me. He was a very dedicated Hutterite, but when he saw me and realized the change that had taken place, he was puzzled. He said, "I have seen the change in your life. I know what you were like, just so full of hatred and sin, with your hair and beard and black clothes. Then, you show up clean, and changed completely. In all the years that I have been a Hutterite, I have never seen a born-again experience such as that spoken of in the Scriptures. How can it be possible for a person to have such a transforming experience outside of the Hutterite colony? There cannot be two Truths."



After the age of 16, Hutterite girls help with the cooking, sewing, baking, canning and gardening for the 100-member colony.

August of 1975 was the time of the Pacific National Exhibition in Vancouver (similar to a large state fair). I had been listening to the religious radio station and they said that they were going to have a broadcast booth at the Exhibition, so I decided I'd go and look for that booth. When I got there, I noticed that most of the denominations were represented, and they all had religious materials that they were giving away. Over on the right side, between some trailers, I saw a sign that proclaimed, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever." That caught my attention, because it was Scripture. I approached the little trailer and saw that on a table outside were many books being offered for free. I began to read some of the titles.

For more than two weeks I had been praying desperately concerning correct water baptism, and now, as I stood looking at the books on the table, a man I had never seen before came out of the trailer and said to me, "Have you been baptized?"

That really shook me, and I said, "Well no, I believe I have been baptized in the Spirit, but not in water. I have been praying for water baptism for some time." I began to talk to him about my experiences, and he began to show me around their display. He introduced himself as Peter Duyzer, and while we were visiting, another man came out. His name was Mike Hunt. They began to tell me about the books they had on display and showed me two pictures, one was of a halo above someone they said was a prophet, and another of a cloud in the sky. When I saw these photographs, I knew in my heart that this was of God.

After we had visited a while, Mike Hunt reached down and picked up about 10 or 15 books and gave them to me. I told him, "Mike, if I find one word wrong or contrary to Scripture in these books, I'll throw them away."

He just smiled and said, "They are anointed." I didn't know what anointed meant, so I just took the books and went back to my apartment.

When I arrived home, it was nearly midnight. I picked up one of the books, A Prophet Brings His

Message, and I began to read. The same power, the same Life that I got out of reading the Bible, was present as I read that book. I read until my eyes were almost glued shut. I said to myself, "My, this is it. This is what I have been looking for." This man was preaching everything that I believed.

Then I began to fear, "Maybe those people that gave me the book don't believe just like this man preaches." That had been my experience in the Hutterite colony.

I read until I couldn't read any more, then I went to sleep. While I was sleeping, I had a strange experience.

In my apartment I had a large window which faced to the East. In my dream, I was sitting up in the bed and I realized I was out of my body. My body was lying behind me, and I thought I had died. I became afraid, and I was trying to get back into my body, in order to wake up again. But I couldn't do it. As I was going through this experience, I looked toward the window and it looked like a light came through the window and began to circle around my room, slowly at first, then faster and faster. I was afraid, and then I heard a voice speak, "The Lord is near." Instantly, the fear left and I felt a love and comfort.

Peter Duyzer had given me his phone number, so the next day, Friday, I called him. "Peter," I said, "I read one of the books, and I would like to find out something. Do you people baptize in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, by immersion?"

He said, "Yes, we do."

I said, "I want to get baptized as soon as possible."

"Well, there is a service tonight," he replied. "Would you like to come?"

I told him, "I sure would!" At the time, I didn't have a car, so I took a bus to Cloverdale that afternoon. Mike and Peter came to pick me up, and as we drove to church I began to tell them about the dream I had the night before.

When I paused in my story, one of them asked me, "Have you ever heard of the Pillar of Fire?"

I said, "Well, no."

"Remember the Light that took Moses and the children of Israel out of Egypt?" he said.

From my German school days, I could recall the story, and I said, "Yes, I do."

Then Mike told me, "That is just the Lord telling you that He is near."

I said, "Mike, those are the very words that I heard in the dream!" And we rejoiced together.

I was in great expectation as we arrived at the church for services. I just couldn't be satisfied until I saw for myself whether or not they preached the Word exactly the way it is written in the Scriptures. I was looking for women that had long hair, and were without makeup. I was looking for men that looked like men and dressed like men.

That evening as I sat in the congregation listening to the preaching, the anointing was so great that in my mind I was anticipating each word that was being said. I had indeed come home, and I felt comfortable and happy.

MARILYN WALDNER WHITE:

Mike told me that there was a program on the radio that played Brother Branham's sermons, and he bought me a small transistor radio of my own. But the program was on Sunday mornings, so I would have to make excuses to stay home from church in order to listen. I would go into the closet, just in case someone would come, and I would put my head in amongst the hanging clothes and put the radio to my ear.

After service, I went to the tape library and began to read the titles of the messages on tape. For me, it was like reading an entire sermon in each title. I had finally found something I could trust in and give to those I witnessed to, knowing I would not be giving them anything false.

And I began with my own father. He had always been a man that loved God, and I began to send Message books to Dad, and he started reading them. Soon, he was writing to ask me to send him more.

Dad had once said to my brother, "We cannot understand the Book of Revelation. God will have to send us a prophet." I sent him An Exposition Of The Seven Church Ages and The Seven Seals, and he wrote to me, "Only now do I understand the Book of Revelation."

Four years after he started reading the Message books, he went to be with the Lord at the age of 55.

When I came in contact with the Message, I also began witnessing to my brothers and sisters. Henry had left the colony, like me, and was living in northern Alberta. I would send him books, and about once a month he would call to see if the rapture had taken place, thinking maybe he had missed it. He did not accept the Truth right away, but after about two years he was gloriously saved.

I had also been giving books to my brother, Joe, and initially his intention in reading them was to find errors so he could prove them to be wrong. But while he was studying, comparing the Message to Scriptures, he also became convinced of the Truth and was converted. Joe was very respected in the colony and would have been the next preacher, but he left with nothing. My sister, Kathy, left the colony at the same time as Joe and his family, even though she was only 16 at the time.

Two more brothers, Eli and Sam, both moved to Vancouver after Joe left the colony, and they began attending church. Within a year they gave their hearts to the Lord.

I went to Winnipeg with Brother Ed Byskal for the purpose of having meetings and inviting people from all the colonies in that part of the country. The Believers living in the Winnipeg area helped us, and we

MARILYN WALDNER WHITE:

I got up in the morning and I just felt like crying all day. I kept thinking, "How am I going to make this break?" I had seen how Mother was torn apart when Joe and Kathy left, and I thought, "How in the world am I going to do it. I'm her baby."

I went to do my daily chores, but I knew this was my last day on the colony. I would see all my friends and I couldn't tell them, but I looked into their eyes and I knew it was my last day. I knew that the separation had already taken place.

When I got home, Kathy was sitting in the kitchen witnessing to our teacher, and something came over me that said, "You have to do something. It's getting later and later, and Mike is coming to pick up Kathy for the service."

I went back to my room and called out, "Kathy, would you come in here?"

She didn't respond, so I called out again, "Kathy, come in here?" And still she didn't respond.

I raised my voice, "KATHY, COME IN HERE!" And a moment later she walked into the room.

I said, "Kathy, I'm leaving."

She just looked at me, then she began to rejoice and said, "Praise the Lord."

I said, "I believe this is my last chance. If I don't go now, I'm going to miss it. We'd better start packing before anyone finds out and catches us."

And she said, "Welt, I'd better pack my things too, because I know if you leave, I won't be welcome here anymore." So together we packed our suitcases.

sent out over 250 posters advertising the services into the different colonies.

Kathy had returned to Winnipeg with me and was staying with Mother and our sisters Marilyn and Ruth, on the colony. One night when I arrived to get Kathy for the meetings, I could tell that something was happening. The preacher of the colony was there, and he and Kathy were having a dispute. Marilyn, our youngest sister, was all dressed to go somewhere.

Months before, I had given Marilyn a transistor radio so that she could listen to the Believers' Broadcast from Winnipeg. It was a half-hour program which had been set up to beam Brother Branham's messages right into the colonies at the time of day when the young

people might be listening to the radio. They did that for two years.

Now, as I stood there in Mother's house, I looked at Kathy and said, "Let's go to the meeting."

Then Marilyn spoke up, "I am going also. God is calling me."

I looked at her, and then at my mother, who was terribly upset. The minister shouted, "Don't take her!" And my mother stood in front of her to stop her.

I didn't hesitate for a moment. If God is calling a person, then all relationships must be put aside. As much as I loved my mother, if God is doing something then I cannot compromise. I took the suitcase and told Marilyn to follow me, and we walked out and got into the car.

As we were walking away, I could hear Mother crying with a broken heart. But a person must

follow God. I could hear the minister say to my mother, "Devils will sometimes rise up in one's own family. You are looking at a devil right now," referring to me. We just got in the car and drove away. Marilyn has been serving the Lord ever since.

As for the meetings in Winnipeg, there was good attendance. Many ex-Hutterites came, but we found that the elders had withheld the posters from the young people and did not permit them to come. The responsibility is now on them.

JOSEPH AND EILEEN WALDNER

What I remember most from my childhood is the fear of God. I was so fearful of God all my life that I never felt comfortable doing anything wrong, such as cursing or breaking the rules of the colony. I believed that to live Godly was to live totally committed to the Hutterite commandments and doctrines.

I was very careful about such things as the width of the suspenders I wore (yes, there are rules about such things) and I never missed church. I believed that if I worked hard and did what the elders said, I would gain myself a better place in God's Kingdom. Everything was based on works, but somehow, there is no satisfaction. You are always waiting for judgement to fall.

When I was 11 years old, I went to work in the dairy. Every day, until I was 16, I would milk. The colonies are very prosperous, but the money is not distributed amongst the people.

I was a property of the colony also.

A Hutterite colony is run like a family - one big household - and what you need is given to you. For instance, the women receive material for so many dresses and so many shirts, and you are given a sewing machine to make them on. You get new boots when you need them. When you marry, you get a home and simple furniture. You eat in a common kitchen (except for maybe snacks which you would prepare in your own home). At Christmas time they would buy all the candies and things and distribute it. There simply was so need for money.

When I was 16 years old, I left school and was given the job of

driving a bulldozer in addition to my daily chores such as helping in the barns. Then, at 19, I was given full responsibility of the dairy. I became what is known as "dairy boss." On top of that, I was also the electrician for the entire colony.

I had a good life. We had the best farming equipment that was available. When I turned 22, I was baptized and became a full member of the colony, and I got married the same year. There was nothing outside the colony that attracted me at all. When I had to go to town on business for the dairy, I couldn't wait to get home.

There were six girls and eight boys in our family. The oldest boy, Mike, left the colony for what the world had to offer when he was only 16 years old. He would come back to see us once in a while (he was a worldly guy), but basically he disappeared from our lives. Then he moved to Vancouver and we didn't hear from him at all for about five years. When he did come back, he had a testimony that he had met God.

We could see that his life was changed, but soon he left again and it was nearly a year before we heard from him. That was when he sent books containing the sermons of William Branham to Dad.

Dad had always told us, "You don't touch any of these other religions out there. We have the truth." But when these books arrived, Dad started reading and enjoying the messages. He never offered it to me, but I would often see him reading these things. I wasn't attracted to what he was reading, anyway. At least not until the time Mike came home and they called me over to Dad's house.

When I walked in the room and saw Mike, I knew that something was different about him. He was changed. He was not even the Mike that I had seen a year before. He and Dad were talking and I sat down on a chair that was between the two. Mike had a book in his hand titled *Footprints On The Sands Of Time*, and they were talking about angels and Pillars of Fire - supernatural things. Then I heard them say "prophet," and my mind was trying to absorb all of this. I reached for the book and began to look at the pictures of the Pillar of Fire in

Germany, and I asked Mike, "What is this all about?"

"God has sent a prophet, and that is the same Pillar of Fire that was over the children of Israel in the wilderness," he said.

I looked at Dad and said, "What do you think?"

He said, "Sure, God has sent a prophet. That is true, what you see there."

I sat there stunned. I thought, "Here we are in the colony and we have everything. We have sacrificed our lives to this system. If anyone would know about Pillars of Fire and angels, it would be us. Surely, we would be the ones that would know about this! I am ready to die for this system, and here somebody that left the system is talking about supernatural things happening in the outside world."

I can hardly remember what else was said that evening, but I decided that I would go back to the Bible and read it again, so that it would be fresh in my mind. The Word of God had always been my absolute. What was preached in the services, the Hutterite doctrine and all, were good. But, I wanted to know what the Bible said.

So I went back to the Bible, and that whole winter I read. I was going to prove that something was wrong with these teachings that Mike was believing.

I knew that in the Hutterite system, how the people were taught was one thing, but how they lived was another thing. They taught you to live right, but whether you lived right or not was not the teaching's fault, I reasoned.

The first book I took from Mike to read for myself, now that I was able to point out the Scriptural fallacies, was *An Exposition Of The Seven Church Ages*. I started reading, and I hadn't even read a complete chapter, just the first part, when I knew that all my life I had been totally deceived!

The Bible was so fresh in my mind and what I was reading just opened the whole Word of God to me. When I read about the serpent's seed, I knew it could only be the Truth. It was just exploding in my face, and I was receiving revelation from it. I said, "How deceived we have been!"

For two and a half years, I studied this Word. We didn't have tapes, but every book I read over and over. Dad and I would talk about the Message all the time and it was so wonderful. My wife went to visit her family in another colony and she witnessed to them of what we were believing. One of her relatives there came to believe the Message, and she immediately wrote and started to receive books from the church in Edmonton, which she would read and then give them to us. In our colony we were not allowed to receive books through the mail, so we only had what Mike would bring us. You just can't imagine how we enjoyed this Word. There was not one bit of doubt in my mind. Brother Branham was a prophet from God.

I believed every Word to the fullest, and I thought that I could live this Message in the colony. Leaving had never entered my mind, but where I ran into my first problem was with water baptism. It was time for the next step.

I had no debt. I had a brand new home. All I had to do was to see that my cows got milked every morning and every evening. I didn't have to worry over whether my kids had shoes or food. But I couldn't get baptized in this place, and if I couldn't be baptized how was I going to receive the Holy Ghost? I had received the Word, but I couldn't move any further, and I was struggling with this.

Mike would come to see us and he would say, "You're not going to be able to stay here much longer," but I would just put that out of my mind. The way I saw it, he did not have the responsibilities that I had. He was not a family man. I had a wife and children, and I had to think of my family and the natural things of life too. I was secure. I had everything going for me. I had a job to do, and I loved and was loved by all these people.

What a burden I lived under. It bothered me day and night. I read where the prophet said, "Be certain of God; be certain of your calling." I knew that if I was ever to leave the colony, I had to know that God was with me. I needed to know that God would answer my prayers when I prayed.

In the colony, we had been taught that there are no miracles. Before I read this Message, I had never heard of anyone that had ever been healed, much less raised from the dead. Such things were not even thought of. When my wife became ill, I really began to ponder on these things.

One day I got a phone call from Mike and he said, "How's everything with you, anyway?"

I said, "I'm really going through a hard time. The wife is in the hospital." With all three previous pregnancies, Eileen had spent the last five weeks before delivery in the hospital with high blood pressure and toxemia. This time, even though she was still very early in her pregnancy, she was already suffering severe complications. I felt like I was in a daze.

Mike said, "Let me have the church pray for her, and I will send a prayer cloth, just like they did in the days of Paul."

I said, "Okay, I believe it. That's what the Word of God says and that is what the Message teaches."

A few days later I brought her home from the hospital, but she had to remain in bed constantly. Everyone in the colony knew that she was very sick, and someone else was doing her job, which was to keep all the equipment washed in the milking parlor.

One evening not long after the wife came home, my daughter began to run a very high fever. Ever since she was born she had experienced kidney problems, and the doctors told us that she would

need surgery very soon. Now, this high fever would probably mean that surgery would have to be done immediately.

I asked for a vehicle so I could take her to the hospital, and just as the wife and I were leaving the house with Joanna, a parcel was delivered at our door. Barely glancing at it, I put it on the desk and we rushed to the hospital.

My wife stayed at the hospital with our daughter that evening, but I went home. When I arrived, I saw that the package was from Mike and I opened it immediately. There was the prayer cloth he had told us about.

The next morning I went to the boss once again to ask for a vehicle so I could go see the wife and child, and I took the package with me. When I got to the hospital, I gave the parcel to Eileen. She read the letter that Mike had written saying that men who were filled with the Holy Ghost had laid their hands upon the cloth. "Lay it on your wife, and all will be well," he wrote.

We believed in divine healing because we had been reading the Message for two years, but we had never seen it applied or manifested. The wife was more concerned for Joanna, who was five years old, than she was for herself. Together we went to the child's crib and explained to her what we were going to do and that the Lord was going to touch her. The nurse had just taken her temperature and it was 104.

Everybody in the colony has a job to do.



We laid the prayer cloth on her and prayed, then Eileen took the cloth and laid it on herself as she sat down and leaned her head back in a chair. And as she sat there, she could feel her blood pressure going down. She said it felt as though air were being let out of a big balloon.

We began talking about the goodness of the Lord, and the nurse walked into the room to take Joanna's temperature. It was the very same nurse that had just taken it a short time before. After a few moments, she took her thermometer and shook it hard and said, "This thing doesn't seem to work," and she laid it down on the bedside table and left the room.

A few moments later she returned with another thermometer and she put that one in Joanna's mouth. After a minute, she removed it and said, "My, can you believe it? Her temperature is down to normal."

Only about 15 minutes had passed. Eileen and I looked at one another and we told the nurse, "Yes, we do believe it."

The next morning we were able to take the child home from the hospital, and two weeks later when we took her back to the doctor for a

check-up, every sign of infection was gone. What's more, the doctor reported that the damaged urethra which they had wanted to replace looked just like new. They didn't have to do any surgery, for God had put a new one in.

After two days at home, Eileen was totally back to normal, all the swelling and pressure was gone, and she felt really good. She went back to work washing utensils and doing her normal chores.

Everybody had known how sick our family was, and here, all of a sudden, they were not sick anymore. We spread the good news - The Lord healed my wife and child. I am sure that this was the first miracle of healing that had ever taken place in a Hutterite colony.

For myself, I was now seeing that the Lord loves us and that He answered our prayers. We must be children of God. At that point, I knew that I had to get out of the colony with my family.

I didn't know anything about the outside world. It was a strange land to me. I felt like Abraham, leaving my father and mother to go sojourn in a strange land, and what's more, I didn't know how my wife would

feel about this.

I knew that it would take God to get me out of there. I didn't have a dime, and I would need a roof from the day I went out. If it were just me, it would be simple. I could just walk down the road. But how would I make a living? I could farm, but I had no land.

Meanwhile, we kept witnessing to everybody, telling what the Lord had done for us. They said, "Why didn't you ask us to pray for you? We can pray."

The only prayers I had ever heard in the colony were the ones that we said every day that were hundreds of years old. That's not praying, that's just reciting.

Everyone was getting more and more upset about this, so they had a conference and then sent three preachers to my house. I knew that once they started attacking, they would be like wolves. They can excommunicate you; they can cut you off from everything in the colony; they can, and will, take the food from your mouth.

They asked me what I believed and why we asked another church to pray for us. I said, "We believe that God sent a prophet, and we have many books. God in this hour, has opened up His Word to us, and the signs, miracles, and wonders have been restored. The full Word has been restored. The seven seals are opened, and all the mysteries have been revealed by this prophet."

Then they began to try and convince me that what I was believing was false. They even called the prayer cloth an object of witchcraft. They said, "Your dad was a preacher, and he taught you the same things that we preach."

Dad had gone to be with the Lord just the year before, and I said to them, "My dad believed this Message. He read and studied this Message."

All this time my wife was praying in the back room. They couldn't bring up one word that the Lord didn't give me a Scripture to answer them with. Finally they said, "We don't go by what the Bible says; we go by our sermons. The men who wrote these sermons were men of God, and they were martyred for the Gospel."

I replied, "That was a different age, a different season."

KATHY WALDNER:

One day I had finished my work and I went to get one of Brother Branham's books from the drawer where I kept them, but they were all gone. I asked my mother about it and she told me that one of the colony preachers had come over to borrow them so that he could determine if what we were believing was true or not.

It is a terrible feeling when all of a sudden you have nothing to feed on. I started searching the house. I looked under the bed and in the drawers, but there was nothing. I searched through the linen closet, and again nothing. My last hope was Mom's room. I checked the drawers but there were no books there. Then I came to the closet and started at the top shelf, searching. When I got to the bottom shelf, I said, "Oh God, this is my only hope. I want a Message book so bad." And under the clothes on that last shelf was one Message book. I cannot describe the joy that I felt as I grabbed that book. I don't know how it came to be in that place.

The Waldner exodus from the Hutterite colony that began with Brother Mike has now grown to include families from several other colonies. And it is likely that their number will continue to grow as they faithfully witness to friends and relatives who remain trapped by tradition and fear. Pictured above are the ex-Hutterites with their spouses and children.



They asked to see the books, so I gave them several. I heard later that they had burned them, and the ministers from the other colonies that were receiving books went home and stopped all books from that point on.

You can't imagine the amount of pressure they can put you under. They just had to put that fire out, for it was damaging their system. They said that they were going to set up a council to deal with us.

Shortly after that, Mike came to visit us. As soon as he walked in the house, he said to me, "Joe, what have you got inside of you that is such a burden to you? Come out with it. I can't bear to watch you suffer any more."

My wife answered and said, "We can't live this life in the colony. We've got to get out of here."

I said, "Praise God. That's what I've been wanting to hear from you." That was the time right then when I made my decision. There was no holding back, and I said, "I'll go."

Mike had brought the films "Deep Calleth To The Deep," and

"Twentieth Century Prophet," and he showed them at my mom's house. When I saw that prophet, I was so overcome.

My friends in the colony who loved and respected me were coming and talking to me, almost like Job's comforters, trying to talk me out of going. I told them, "Before I will recant what I believe, I will give you the shirt off my back. God is going to be with me, and it would be a sin for me to turn back."

Mike gave me the address of Believers who lived in Winnipeg and one day when I was in town on colony business, I went to see them. Their names were Jake and Mary Wall, and in their home I saw pictures of the prophet on the wall and Message books laying on the table. It was the first time that I had ever seen anyone besides Mike that was a product of this Message. We just talked about the things of the Lord, and I fell in love with those people. I didn't know then that they were the instrument God was going to use to take us out of the colony.

Another thing that had added fuel to the fire that was burning all around us was the fact that my sister, Kathy, who was then only 16 years old, had also accepted the Message. Mom was in quite a state and we just didn't hardly know what step to take next or where it would all end.

We called Mike in Vancouver and asked him if he could arrange something for us on that end, but he was ill and bedridden at that time and it didn't look like there would be any help for us there.

On the last day of August, 1979, Brother Jake Wall came to my house in the colony and he said to me, "I have a van and I'll be here at 11 o'clock tomorrow night to take you out of here." Oh, the emotional pressure we felt. But we began to pack the few things that we planned to take with us.

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Conferences Draw Hundreds To Canada

During the first week of August, nearly 1,000 Believers gathered for five days of fellowship in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada at the International Believers' Convention sponsored by End Time Message Tabernacle. Pastor Harold Hildebrandt welcomed guests from 18 countries to listen, learn, and enjoy the presence of the Lord as they were ministered to by brethren from the US, Canada, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

Since 1975, End Time Message Tabernacle has been supplying much of Africa with booklets of Brother Branham's sermons, which they print locally and send out free of charge. This year alone, 50,000 volumes, each containing three messages, have been mailed from their small office. In addition, this year they provided 100,000 tracts and 10,000 translated copies of An Exposition Of The Seven Church Ages (5,000 in Lugandan, and 5,000 in the Ateso dialect of Uganda).

A few days later, a second convention got underway on the West coast of Canada as Pastor Ed Byskal and the congregation of Cloverdale Bible Way offered hospitality to the visitors who packed the sanctuary to celebrate the church's 20th anniversary.

Guests from India, Mrica, Poland, Trinidad and other far-away places agreed whole-heartedly as Brother Byskal pointed out that the term "foreign missions" does not appear in the Scriptures, and that perhaps the phrase "local assemblies of Believers," could be more fittingly applied. It was a timely reminder that something as simple as a re-worded phrase can be used to help dissolve the barriers which may distance us from fellow Believers around the world.



At the pulpit, Pastor Ed Byskal prepares to turn the service over to the songleader, Brother Rod Bergen. The evening speaker, Brother Joseph Chikosi from Zimbabwe, is seated in the background

Project Transcript

Eagle Computing has just published an updated report on the accelerated effort that is presently underway to enter the remaining 650 unpublished messages of Brother William Branham into a computer format. Upon completion, this remarkable data base will be used in conjunction with the specialized rapid search program, Folio Views, allowing instant retrieval of the stored information.

Project Transcript began in February '91, and as of November 21st, only 60 tapes remained to be transcribed. This represents an average of 400 man-hours of work per week by the 20 part-time, paid employees. After being transcribed, each message must then be proofread before it can be indexed into the search program. Next comes a

final proofreading, followed by the duplicating and labeling of the disks. The entire project is expected to be completed by May '92, and by that time, more than 21,000 hours of labor will have been invested.

A board of trustees was formed to oversee the fund raising necessary to launch the work. They have reported that, at present, nearly half the estimated cost of \$100,000 has been raised for Project Transcript, which includes the cost of a complete tape library, foot operated tape recorders, and the computers and software for each typist. Tax deductible contributions towards the completion of this deserving endeavor should be earmarked 'Project Transcript' and sent to:

Happy Valley Church of
Jesus Christ Rt15 Box407
Gray, TN 37615

Continued on next page



Political and cultural barriers cease to exist when brethren of like faith come together for fellowship. In Edmonton, Brother Zephaniah Peters of Tanzania (left) and Brother Joseph Daniels of South Africa rejoice in their opportunity to greet one another for the first time. Political sanctions do not permit any communications between their two countries.



Paying Their Own Way

This energetic group of youngsters from Idaho and Washington were willing to invest some elbow grease in order to fulfill their dream of visiting those places in Arizona they had heard Brother Branham refer to so many times on the tapes. Over a period of several months, the forty-two young people washed cars and organized bake-sales and hot dog stands in order to raise money for the 10-day trip. While in Tucson, they paused for this group photo in front of Brother Branham's den room.

A New Issue of Only Believe in Spanish

Ten thousand copies of the new 32-page issue of Solo Creed have just been mailed to our readers throughout Latin America.

It contains a selection of articles taken from the last five English editions of Only Believe, beginning with "The Call Of Arizona" and continuing through "Whose Book Is It?" Also included is the entire

16-page article from the Special Anniversary Issue.

Many of the articles which have appeared in the pages of Only Believe magazine have been translated into several foreign languages by local assemblies around the world, and are distributed amongst the non-English speaking Message Believers. Some of these overseas congregation also make photocopies of each issue to supplement the number of magazines we are currently able to send them.

The present circulation of Only Believe magazine is 17,000 copies which are being mailed to 75 countries.



Brother Roberto Murillo, a missionary from Juarez, Mexico, looks over a stack of freshly-printed covers of Solo Creed.

Unsound

And what is next on the horizon for Eagle Computing? The addition of sound. After using the rapid search program to locate a particular portion of the Message on screen, you will then be able to hear it just as it was spoken by Brother Branham - from a single paragraph to an entire message - with a push of a button right from your computer! Brother Neil Halava, director of Eagle Computing, reports that this exciting up-grade should be available in about two years.

For information regarding the rapid search program and the Message on computer, contact Eagle Computing at P.O. Box 490, Elizabethton, TN, 37644, or phone (615) 928-0333.E

There is a new album available in Christian book stores that has attracted the attention of more than a few Message Believers. The artist is Carman, a popular performer of contemporary Christian music who has often been credited with having "an Elvis-like charisma," and in question is his latest album release: "Addicted To Jesus."

In a song which he has titled "1955," Carman rock'n'rolls his tribute to the tent revivalist of that era, including a rapid-fire monologue in which he parodies a testimony service.

He begins verse two by naming four men, and he identifies them as being men who possess

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There were several reasons why we wanted to leave at night. First, we had young children to think of, and we didn't want words or deeds being done that might have a lasting effect on them. Secondly, these were our loved ones that we were leaving, and we didn't want to hurt and embarrass them in front of the other people in the colony. And third, my sister Kathy had decided she was coming with us, and since she was still under age, there was the possibility that the law could be summoned and she would be forced to stay.

The next evening, just as we were in the last stages of our preparations to leave, two ministers came to our house to tell us that we must recant. They sat talking to us until 10 o'clock, and I was in a turmoil trying to figure out how to get rid of them. Finally I told them that I had to go check on the cows in the barn, which was something that I always did just before going to bed. I walked out of the house with them and they went to their car and drove off.

I had told my brother John that I was leaving, and I took my accounting of the money that I was in charge of from the dairy and gave it to him. Then I did my last chores. It would be too hard to try and express what we were feeling just then.

Brother Jake, who is now a deacon in the Edmonton Church, arrived on time. We took with us, in our suitcases, just one change of clothes. Everything else we left, because it belonged to the colony.

That first evening we stayed at Brother Jake's home, and the next morning, Sunday, we attended services for the first time. I learned that the church Mike attended in Cloverdale had bought us airline tickets to Vancouver, and that afternoon we found ourselves on the plane and on our way west. I didn't have a penny to my name, so Brother Jake gave me all he had in his pocket, about \$40.

When we landed in Vancouver that evening, the first thing we did was to attend service. We were on pins and needles, for we had no idea what the church was going to be like. We didn't even know if they believed the Message the same as we believed it. We didn't know if anyone was truly living this Message.

When we walked in the door and looked at the people, for us, it was like walking into heaven. It was love at first sight. Just to be able to worship the God of our fathers in Spirit and in Truth, as much as you want, as free as you want; to testify, to speak of Him, to be able to hear tapes of the prophet preaching to you every day, morning and night, and as loud as you want. What a deliverance!

Now that we were here, we were trusting in God to provide for us. We were cramped into Mike's little apartment and I knew I had to get a job right away. I didn't believe that I could support my family as a hired dairy hand, but I didn't have any credentials as an electrician. However, when I went to the employment agency, on the board was a job for an electrician, and within a few hours I had been hired.

We were baptized, and two months later Eileen delivered a healthy son, the first baby she ever carried to full term.

Today, our children are nearly grown. They serve God and have all been baptized. When we left the colony, they warned us that our children would go into the world, but their children are the ones in the world today and they cannot control them. When we go back to visit in the colony, they don't even want to see our children because they can't stand to see a lived-out life.

But we don't want our testimony to stop there. I believe even today that the Lord works with mighty miracles. He is still the same yesterday, today, and forever. This Word is what I left the colony for, and this Word will see me through. □

Unsound, continued

the power of God: Oral Roberts, William Branham, Jack Coe, and Billy Graham.

Recognizing this particular collation of names as being one that is frequently mentioned in Brother Branham's sermons, many have speculated as to what, if any, significance this song may have for the Message Believer. The answer is:

None. However, there is a Scriptural precedent that is worth noting.

In Acts 16:16-17, the Bible records an occasion in which a soothsayer (witch) followed after Paul and Silas saying, "These men are the servants of the most high God...."

acknowledging that even the demons of hell are compelled to recognize the position and authority of God's chosen vessels.

Don't waste your money on this album just to hear the brief mention of the name William Branham. The total perversion of this performance negates any positive contribution it may otherwise have been able to offer. □

Calendar

December Fellowship Meetings

December 18 - 24
Sponsored by:
Rev. Pearry Green, pastor

Contact
Tucson Tabernacle office
(602) 623-0381

Winter Youth Meetings

December 27 - 29
Sponsored by:
Jeff Jenkins, pastor and
Paul La Fontaine, pastor

Contact:
Las & Kelly Kohli
(419) 221-3143
or
Doyle & Nancy Hatfield
(419) 647-6402

Thanks FOR WRITING

KEEPING THE BIBLE SACRED

• We have received the twenty copies of Only Believe, March, 1991. I say on behalf of the saints here, "thank you very, very much." May the Lord ever bless abundantly all the hands that support financially for the magazine to be printed and sent to us who cannot afford to send even a cent. Trusting also that one day the Lord will give us something to give. Your work is much of a blessing among the Bride. Indeed God is working miracles among us. It was fearful to learn in this issue of how the prophet taught you how to keep the Bible, and how he kept the Bible himself. It brings an awesome fear when we see how we have been keeping the Bible, most of us. The Lord used Sister Frances Montague to ask that question for the betterment and spiritual growth of many of us.

Davison Mwanza
Isoka, Zambia

SOME COMPLIMENTS

• Sister Rebekah, I have received all the magazines that I requested earlier this year. Only God knows how I felt and the many blessings I have received from reading each issue.

When I received the March issue last month, I quickly locked myself in the staff cloakroom and thanked the Lord for it. I had guessed from the postage stamps that it was an Only Believe magazine. Then I went into my classroom and read the first story by Maude Kelly Lomax. I had to stop reading because it really touched me for I was going through a spiritual battle and hardship (tribulation) at the moment. I felt so depressed and forsaken just like her) and twice the thoughts of suicide had crossed my mind (just like her). When I read Brother Branham's answer to her, I suddenly realized that he was also speaking to me! I stopped reading because I felt so emotional, and I thought that my students might find out that I was crying.



Believers in Kano, Nigeria.

Sister, maybe you don't realize the many blessing your magazine has brought to desperate people, (just like me). Experiences that you present in your magazines are Lord-directed because somewhere in another part of the world the same experiences are happening to some sons and daughters of God. When they read the prophet's response in those experiences, they find themselves also receiving those responses just like me).

Isikeli Martin
Suva, Fiji Islands

• No one really knows how happy I am over those Only Believe magazines. They don't only keep us up to date with what God is doing right now, but it tells us about all these believers we have read about in the Spoken Word books and wondered about. In the last issue I received there was a picture of Joseph [Branham] that I was so glad to see. I always wondered what he looked like now. My! He sure has grown since standing on the rock, waving, with his dad. He looks a lot like him, too, when he was young. I feel so enthusiastic about that magazine I feel I could go on to say a lot more. If you ever launched it, I'm sure I would win the MOST APPRECIATIVE READER contest! But I know you're a busy lady so I'll try to stop prattling and save the rest for when I see you in Glory. Promise me you'll take some time and sit and talk with me then. In the meantime, keep up the wonderful work and whenever you feel as if no one cares or appreciates how hard you work to produce what you do (we all feel that way at times), you tell that stupid, lying devil that Jesus cares, and Sister Rose cares too!

Rosemary Benjamin Trinidad,
West Indies

SOME CRITICISM

• Stick to your objectives: Dedicated to the continuing worldwide ministry of William Marrion Branham.

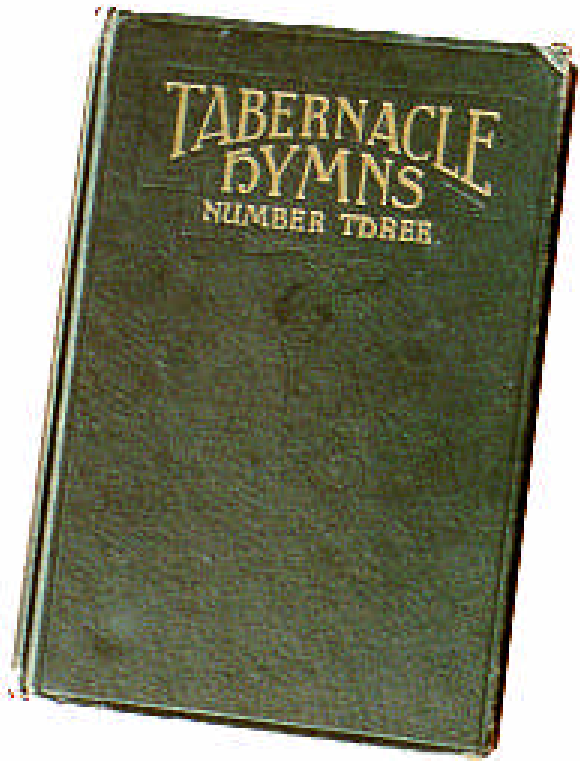
I wish you stayed with the above objective plus testimonies from people affected by the ministry of the prophet. Please, avoid individual comments on doctrines or on controversial topics as you did in Vole 4, No 1, March, 1991. Please, I greatly differ with some of the comments on the "Persian Gulf Crisis" [By The Rivers Of Babylon].

John Ben Toy Tema, Ghana

• In Christian love, as pastor of the Calvary Tabernacle, I am writing to request that you stop sending your magazine to our church. Each time I have viewed it I find myself so disgusted by the glorification of people and not Christ and the denominational spirit pervading your magazine that I get spiritual indigestion.... Lest you count me an intellectual type, as God is my witness for years I have had numerous spiritual dreams that have foretold the future and come to pass, even as your father told us would be the case amongst His true Bride in this last days. What a shame that you who could have lent your influence to a right cause have chosen instead to produce this magazine - you, who were blessed with the open door of being the prophet messenger to this age's daughter and had a ready audience (unlike a lowly person like myself who has had to fight for every inch of ground) for your efforts for the Master, what a shame that you have produced this magazine.

A Brother in Christ

**“If we had
more of
those old
songs,
instead of so
much of this
carrying-on
that we do have, I
believe that the church
would be better off.”**



William Branham

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