

THE

# HARVESTER

*"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)*

July 1988

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## FROM CATERPILLAR TO BUTTERFLY!

The butterfly is an interesting creation of God. In its early stage, it is a clumsy and awkward caterpillar. It feeds constantly, in a rather greedy sort of way, among the leaves of a field or garden which makes it very annoying at times. For months the caterpillar follows the same routine until it finally encases itself in a chrysalis which has a hard outer protective shell. Weeks later, the insect breaks out and appears in its adult form--a fully developed butterfly with wings of admirable colors!

What a marvelous change the ugly caterpillar undergoes to become a beautiful butterfly. But even this miracle of nature cannot compare with

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the change experienced by the believer who is baptized into Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:27-29)

By being baptized, the believer becomes a new creature altogether. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17) Immediately he becomes a member of the body of Christ. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (1 Cor. 12:27) He also becomes a priest in the spiritual priesthood of God's chosen people. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9). He becomes a saint, a disciple, and a child of God. In short, the result of this conversion is a Christian (Acts 11:26).

The baptized believer will "put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22). While in the chrysalis, the caterpillar had to shed its old covering. That skin could

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no longer be used in its future state as a butterfly. In the same way, a new-born Christian should not return to his former ways or sins. He must give up the gambling and the cursing and the alcohol (Rom. 12:17; Jas. 5:12; Eph. 5:18). These vices have no place or use in the life of a disciple of Christ. *"Ye are the light of the world... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."*(Matt. 5:14,16)

New converts should lead a new kind of life-style. *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."*(Rom. 6:4) The life of one who has been buried in baptism is much different than what it was before baptism. He has changed! He walks stronger and farther. He will go to church services more often. He will spend more minutes in fervent prayer and will study the Bible with a greater yearning for the truth. *"And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."*(Matt. 5:47,48)

Being "born again" also means not serving sin any longer. *"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."*(Rom. 6:6) Before its metamorphosis, the caterpillar was a slave to its belly. But as a butterfly, it had a new purpose: to reproduce and to lay its eggs in safety. Likewise, the Christian no longer lives to make money but he exists to save lives spiritually. He has a new master to serve--the Lord. *"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the*

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*other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*"(Matt. 6:24)

After baptism, a person's MIND is made new. *"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind"* (Eph. 4:23). A worldly person usually has his mind on evil things like *"lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"* (1 John 2:15). Today's thoughts are centered on pornographic magazines, sexual obscenities, and how to enjoy these pleasures of sin. But the Christian's mind should be otherwise. *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."*(Phil. 4:8)

Has the transformation of life really made us new creatures in Christ? Have we been baptized scripturally? Just as the caterpillar enclosed itself entirely in its chrysalis, we must be totally immersed in water in order to be properly baptized. Can the world see the difference in us? *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."*(Rom. 12:2)

RAY McMANUS

## FROM THE SCRIPTURES ...

## ABOUT SPIRITUAL CONFLICT

*But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (Rom. 7:23)*

*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; (2 Cor. 10:4)*

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Eph. 6:12)*

*This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; (1 Tim. 1:18)*

*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. (1 Tim. 6:12)*

*No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. (2 Tim. 2:4)*

*And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Rev. 12:17)*

## COMMON EVERYDAY EXCUSES

The following are answers to some excuses people give for not becoming a Christian. We as Christians will find some things that will also apply to us.

Excuse #1--I am as good as others.

The Answer--Builders are constantly using the level and the square. We need to live by standards--not by comparisons. We are to measure ourselves by Christ. Many who are out of the church feel they are living better lives than many within the church. Christians have obeyed the Gospel -- as Jesus asked. Non-Christians have not. *"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."* (Matt. 10:32) Moreover, non-Christians are forbidden to judge to justify themselves. They are not saved or lost by the deeds of others.

Excuse #2--I am doing the best I can.

The Answer--How long have you been doing your best? Have you succeeded? How long will it take you to become a Christian and be prepared for a home in heaven? Suppose you die today? The best you can do is to acknowledge you cannot do anything to save yourself, except believe and be baptized and live a true Christian life until death.

Excuse #3--There are too many hypocrites.

The Answer--Unless hypocrites repent and change they are lost. If you let hypocrites keep you from becoming a Christian, you will spend eternity in hell with them. If you hide behind a hypocrite, you must be smaller than a hypocrite. Hypocrites are hell bound unless they change. Do not let them take you to hell's fire. *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* (Heb. 12:2)

Excuse #4--A professing Christian wronged me.

The Answer--Granted, but is that any reason why you should wrong God and insult Christ, who loved you and died on the cross for you?

Excuse #5--There is too much to give up.

The Answer--Better give up everything in this world than lose your soul. Put Christ first in your life. Is it too much to give up dirt for diamonds? rags for riches? The words of Christ: *"For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (Mark 8:36-37)

Excuse #6--Not now.

The Answer--Everytime you say no, it is harder and harder to say yes. The time is today. *"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the day of salvation."* (2 Cor. 6:2)

To delay is a dangerous decision. Seek the Lord while you have time. "Today--if you will," saith the Lord. Tomorrow may never come. Tomorrow is a period nowhere to be found. God's call is not a call for tomorrow, but for today.

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One Step won't take you very far,  
You've got to keep on walking.  
One Word won't tell folks who you are,  
You have to keep on talking.

One foot won't make you very tall,  
You have to keep on growing.  
One trip to church won't tell you all,  
You have to keep on going.

--Copied.

## GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place &amp; Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
July 8-10	West Gadsden Church Gadsden, AL	Marty Livingston (Oxford, AL)
July 10-15 (Su-F)	Brushy Creek Church Lucedale, MS 7:30 evenings	Maynard Foster Tony Whiddon Ray McManus
July 10-15	Godby Road Church Atlanta, GA	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
July 10-15	Colquitt, GA 7:30 pm EST	Rufus Williams (Montgomery, AL)
July 10-16	North Warren Church near McMinnville, TN	Lindeal Greer (Bogue Chitto, MS)
July 11-15	East Lake Church Birmingham, AL	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
July 17-23	West Main Street Leitchfield, KY	Lindeal Greer (Bogue Chitto, MS)
July 24-30	Valley, AL 7:30 pm	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
July 24-30	Napolean Church Woodland, AL	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

[illegible]

THIRD SUNDAY SINGINGS will now be held every other month! Fellowship at the congregations of Brushy Creek, Freefield, and Moffat Road will now include a guest speaker. Singings will begin at 5:00pm followed by the speaker at 6:00pm. The location and date for these services are as follows:

August 21 -- Freefield Church (near Sand Hill, MS)

October 16 -- Brushy Creek (outside of Lucedale, MS)

December 18 -- Moffat Road Church (in Mobile, AL)