

A man has no more religion than he acts out in his life.

MISSIONARY

PREMILLENNIAL

BIBLICAL

BAPTISTIC

The Baptist Examiner

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"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them."—Isaiah 8:20

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"Quo Vadis"—Its Message Today

By EDWARD V. HOWELL
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In the July 31, 1951, issue of Look magazine, a word and picture preview is given of the MGM technicolor film, "Quo Vadis."

Phrased in the usual awe-inspiring adjectives of the cinema, the word description at once catches the mind of the reader, and the accompanying pictures appeal to the fleshly lusts of the masses.

Produced in Italy at a cost of approximately \$7,500,000, it is described in the following manner—"The spellbinding, world-

wide best-selling novel "Quo Vadis" now has become the most colossal movie ever made. The incredible career of this epic began in 1895 when it first evoked the delight and honor of a victorian world. IT HAD EVERYTHING: A TRADITIONAL MORALITY TALE OF GOOD vs. EVIL, SYMBOLIZED IN THE STRUGGLE OF CHRISTIAN MARTYRS AGAINST NERO'S CORRUPT ROMAN EMPIRE." (Capitals ours).

"That lofty message was apparently all respectable Victorians needed to send them plunging into florid descriptions of the lascivious debaucheries of

(Continued on page four)

Nero's court, the insane burning of Rome, the intimate agonies of Christians slaughtered in the arena amid the howls of drunken Roman mobs. Quo Vadis' fascination as a moral treatise combined with blood and thunder to triumph over all censorious critics."

The Fleshly Appeal

And so, amid all of this tremendous build-up and fanfare, another so-called colossal, stupendous, "religious" picture will be offered to a duped and lust-crazed public, which in turn will crowd the box offices and

"DO NOT TWO SPARROWS SELL FOR A PENNY? AND NOT ONE OF THEM FALLS TO THE GROUND UNRELATED TO YOUR FATHER....HAVE NO FEAR THEN; YOU ARE OF MORE CONSEQUENCE THAN MANY SPARROWS." MATTHEW 10:29-31 (BERKELEY 15)

"I Burned Up My Rosary"

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures."

—1 Cor. 15:33-34.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God."

I was born and raised in a Catholic home. All my known ancestors and relatives were Catholics.

I had a deep hunger and longing after holy things from childhood; but nevertheless, my family felt that I was not religious because I did not pray out in the open as they did, except when a big storm was raging and we would be called from our beds. The prayer books and rosaries were given to each of us, and we would all pray for God's protection.

We had large religious pictures of the saints of the church and of the Virgin Mary in our home. Often on the days that I was home from school, I

would help clean the house. While I was cleaning the bedroom, I would close the door and, instead of cleaning and dusting the room, I would stand before that Virgin Mary's picture and beg her to make me as holy as she was. Mother would often whip me for being so slow with my work in that room, not knowing what I had been doing. But secretly, when she left the room, I would again say, "Holy Mary, you know that I was worshipping you."

The Virgin Mary held a great place in my heart. I would tell her many and almost all, of my heartaches, since I felt that she understood. My rosary was always my secret prayer helper. Daily, for several years, I took the rosary from my purse when leaving the house on my way to town to catch a train to go to work. I would repeat the beads, trusting that I would have a good day at work.

Many times, while having birthday dances in the basement of our home, some heavy feeling often would grip me, and I did not get over it till I went to the second floor of our home and prayed to the saints asking them to have mercy on

me. When I thought that I heard someone coming up the stairs, I would slip the prayer book under my pillow, so that they would not know that I was praying. If I was sure that someone was coming, I would quickly lie down on the bed so that my mother or sister would think that I was asleep. I felt that it was too sacred to tell them that I was praying. My family would either pray before me or let me know that they were going in secret to pray, but I never felt right about telling them when I did.

I was taller than many girls my age, and so it made me happy to be one of the four taller girls to be chosen to carry a statue of the risen Christ on our shoulders, walking around the church on Easter morning. I would be dressed in white, wearing a veil. Before Lenten season I also helped to drape the statues in the church with purple cloth.

During Lent

We all loved music at our home; and so, during the lenten season we gave up playing the Victrola. Neither did we go

to dances during that time. My girl friend gave up chewing gum. Each one gives up something that they like to do best, during lent.

My heart was broken at one Easter season because, while we were all walking down the aisle to the front of the church, and one by one was kissing the feet of Jesus as He hung nailed to the cross, when I noticed a Protestant girl giggle and walk out. I could not believe anyone would show such disrespect to a holy service.

I wore medals. They were on a string which was around my neck. They were extra precaution against illness and accident. While going to and from school, I would hold the medals in my hands and would ask St. Christopher to ask Jesus to take care of me.

I went to confession and communion. When I returned home, mother would say, "Here you are, acting like this, and just after communion." But she did not know that I was already repenting myself. Many, many times I would say, "Oh, Holy Mary, why did I do this when you know I did not want to?" It kept me so discouraged, since

I did not want to sin.

I was told by a young lady who sang in the choir that the priest asked her a question that she was ashamed to tell anyone; and I so feared to do anything that I thought would cause him to ask me something embarrassing. My parents forbade us to keep company. I was glad for that, because that, whenever the priest would ask at confession if I was keeping company, I could always say, "No." Then I was asked no further questions along that line. Of course, we had many gatherings in our home. I do know that my girl friends were asked embarrassing questions by the priests at confession, when they told the priests that they kept company with the boys.

My grandmother told me that when my father was a young man that he thought of studying to be a priest, but of course, he never went ahead with it.



EXAMPLE OR SUBSTITUTE

At the close of a service in Germantown, Pa., some time ago, a stranger accosted the late Bro. D. M. Stearns as follows: "I don't like your preaching. I do not care for the cross. I think that instead of preaching the death of Christ on the cross, it would be far better to preach Jesus, the teacher and example."

"Would you then be willing to follow Him if I preached Christ, the Example?"

"I would," said the stranger, "I will follow in His steps."

"Then," said Bro. Stearns, let us take the first step: "Who did no sin? Can you take this step?"

"No," he said, "I do sin, and I acknowledge it."

"Well, then," said Bro. Stearns, "your first need of Christ is not as an example, but as a Saviour." And this is every man's need. (See Romans 3: 23-26).

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The First Baptist Pulpit

"Things Necessary For Our Salvation"

". . . these necessary things." Acts 15:28.

can save himself apart from the Spirit of God.

That is why it is that an unsaved man can't do anything to save himself. It is impossible for you to do anything whereby you might be saved.

"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God."—Rom. 3:11.

Some preacher may tell you to seek the Lord, but the Word of God tells us that there is none that seek after God. How could you expect a dead man to seek

the Lord? How could you expect a man who is as spiritually dead as a corpse is physically to seek the Lord? Beloved, it is the Lord that does the seeking.

"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he finds it?"—Luke 15:4.

Notice, beloved, the sheep doesn't seek the Saviour. It is

(Continued on page two)

Preachers are human beings. They make mistakes, but criticism does not help them.

The person who criticizes the preacher is limiting his ability to win souls; it makes it impossible for him to be the greatest possible blessing to the critic or to others: such criticism is often a means of the devil in limiting the usefulness of the God-called men.

Your prayers would do much more to help the preacher you are criticizing.

The preacher is the one who has given up the ordinary walks

(Continued on page four)

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**"Four Things Necessary
For One To Be Saved"**

(Continued from page one)
the Saviour that seeks the sheep. The sheep doesn't get on the shepherd's shoulders, but it is the shepherd, when he has found the sheep, who puts the sheep upon his shoulders and goes home rejoicing.

Beloved, no man seeketh after God, for every unsaved man is spiritually dead, and a dead man can do nothing.

That leads me to say that there are four things necessary for one to be saved.

I

**GOD MUST ELECT ONE
UNTO SALVATION.**

Chronologically, that is the first thing that must be done for you. If God doesn't elect a man unto salvation, that man will never be saved.

I have been impressed within the last few weeks time in listening to an evangelist of national repute, by the number of times that he urged the people to seek the Lord. I listened to him for twelve evenings, and in not one of those twelve sermons that I heard him preach did he ever tell a man how to be saved. Instead, his invitation was for them to seek the Lord. On one of those evenings, I heard him make this statement: "I won't guarantee that if you seek Him, He will save you; but I will tell you that He never yet has saved anybody that did not seek Him."

Beloved, that is a lie. Saul of Tarsus wasn't seeking the Lord the day that Jesus Christ saved him. Saul was on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christians. He wasn't seeking the Lord. He wasn't seeking salvation. Instead, beloved, he was doing everything he could contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When God spoke from Heaven and smote him and knocked him from his horse, it was an humble man that got to his feet and said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Saul wasn't seeking the Lord; it was the Lord that sought him.

Listen again:

"But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."—John 10:26.

In Jesus' day, some of the people did not believe. God's Word does not leave us in doubt as to the reason, for Jesus tells them that they have not believed because they were not His sheep. They had not been given to Him by the Father as a love gift before the foundation of the world.

We read:

"Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, HE HATH BLINDED THEIR HEART; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."—John 12:39, 40.

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ORDAINED TO THIS CONDEMNATION, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."—Jude 1:4.

This would tell us, beloved, that there are people who can't believe, and who are ordained to condemnation. These will bring just as much glory to God as the salvation of others, as both will vindicate His Word.

"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning CHOSEN YOU to salvation through sanctification of

the Spirit and belief of the truth."—II Thess. 2:13.

It is God who chooses men unto salvation. I don't say that the choice God makes is salvation, but it is unto salvation and results in the sinner's salvation. It is God that makes the choice.

I'll never forget when Evangelist Hyman Appelman came to Ashland several years ago. One night as he was preaching, he looked down in my direction and said, "I understand that there are a number of people around Ashland who are troubled about the doctrine of election." Beloved, I always had a feeling that he was saying it for my special benefit, for he was looking straight at me. Anyway, he went on to say, "I can explain election to you like this: God votes for you, the Devil votes against you, and you cast the deciding vote." I could not shake my head negatively fast enough against that kind of preaching, for, beloved, you don't cast the deciding vote. The deciding vote was cast by God before the foundation of the world when God chose you in Jesus Christ.

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as MANY AS WERE ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE BELIEVED."—Acts 13:48.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John 6:37.

I challenge you to find anywhere in the Bible where a person ever believed who wasn't first chosen of God unto salvation. There isn't a promise in all the Bible where there will ever be anyone else come to Jesus Christ other than those who were the love gift of the Father to the Son before the foundation of the world. You can seek the Lord until you are black in the face. You can start seeking Him right now and keep on seeking Him every day of your life until you die, but if God didn't choose you in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, you will never be saved.

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If you would be eminently useful, you must be eminently holy.

THE DEAD CAN'T CHANGE THEIR MINDS

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."—Heb. 9:27.



settles it. Or, perhaps you don't understand it. Beloved, if you could understand everything that God did, you would be just as big as God. The God I preach to you is a God who made the world and who fills the universe—a God of majesty and sovereignty and power.

The first thing that is necessary for one to be saved, is that God has to choose that one unto salvation.

II

JESUS CHRIST HAD TO DIE.

If the son of God had merely come into this world and lived a perfect life, which He did live, but had not died, not one individual would have ever been saved. You can't be saved by your goodness, nor by the goodness of Jesus Christ. You can't be saved because Jesus Christ lived a perfect life when He was here in the days of His flesh. Beloved, there is only one way that any man can be saved, and that is that Jesus Christ died to pay his sin debt and died in his place at Calvary.

The Word of God tells us that Jesus Christ had to die.

"Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."—Mt. 26:36-39.

What was this cup about which Jesus was praying? It was the cup of death. It was the cup which was filled with the dregs of the sins of all the elect of God, from the first one

that was saved to the last man that shall ever be saved. As Jesus neared Calvary, burdened down with the weight of the sins of the elect of God, though He came into this world to die for their sins, He prayed that "this cup" might pass from Him.

Beloved, it wasn't possible that that cup pass from Jesus Christ. It wasn't possible that the Son of God should escape death. Instead, it was written from before the foundation of the world that He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

"... the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."—Rev. 13:8.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS according to the Scriptures."—I Cor. 15:3.

"Who HIS OWN SELF BARE OUR SINS in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."—I Pet. 2:24.

"For Christ also hath ONCE SUFFERED FOR SINS, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."—I Pet. 3:18.

In the Old Testament we read the story of the Passover lamb. The Israelites were getting ready for the observance of that first memorable Passover, and they were told to kill a lamb and put its blood on the side-posts and on the lintel above the door. God said:

"And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."—Ex. 12:13.

Beloved, that Passover lamb had to be killed for that first-born to be saved. The Passover

lamb is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, for we read:

"And hast known which an WISE through Jesus."—

Some church men to hear so who have UNYEAR late do stirs some hear the Beloved, is that emotions your em to hear perience take God soul. The bring you Jesus C you the Saviour. saved ap the Word

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up."—John 3:14.

When the children of Israel were bitten by the serpents, in order to get a remedy for the snake bites, they were to lift up a serpent made of brass on a pole within the center of the camp. Everyone that looked to that brazen serpent would be healed of his snake bite. Likewise, beloved, any individual that is saved from his sins, has to look up to the Cross where Jesus Christ died to pay for those sins.

Beloved, Jesus Christ had to die. There will never be any individual in Glory except on the basis that Jesus suffered his Hell and paid his sin debt. Because Jesus suffered for him, that individual is saved.

III

THE WORD OF GOD HAS TO BE PREACHED.

There will never be any person in Glory except on the basis that he heard the Word of God, which told him about the Lord Jesus Christ and brought salvation to him.

Some preachers' specialty is sob stories. I know of a church that has been cursed for years by a preacher whose specialty is one sob story after another. There are thousands of such churches. The Word of God has

(Continued on page three)

God hasn't been fooled by all the red-hot political promises.

"Four Things Necessary For One To Be Saved"

(Continued from page two) never said that God will honor a sob story, nor a funny yarn, nor any kind of a story, but He has promised to honor the Word of God. Listen:

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."—Rom. 10:17.

Beloved, you have to hear the Word of God in order to be saved. That is why it is that some folk don't like to come to this church—they don't like to hear the Word of God. Brother, it is the Book that you are going to be judged by. When you get up before God at the judgment, you are going to answer for this Bible. You are not going to answer for some preacher's yarns that he has told, but you are going to give an answer to God in the light of this Word.

In the darkest jungles of Africa, in South America where the missionaries have never gone, in the Orient where the Word of God has never yet been preached, and in Russia where the Word of God flares and flashes at you every time you come into the house of God, regardless of where you are, if you die without hearing God's Word, you are eternally doomed and damned for Hell. God has said that men have to hear His Word to be saved.

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; THAT BY THESE ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.—II Pet. 1:4.

"Who shall tell thee WORDS, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved."—Acts 11:14.

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to MAKE THEE WISE UNTO SALVATION through faith which is in Christ Jesus."—II Tim. 3:15.

Some people like to go to a church where they call on women to testify and where they hear some old grandmothers who have walked with the Lord for years, tell about what they have done. They say, "It just stirs something within me to hear these old saints testify." Beloved, do you know what it is that it stirs? It stirs your emotions; not your spirit, but your emotions. You don't need to hear someone tell of his experience. What you need is to take God's Word and let that Word be implanted within your soul. That Word, beloved, will bring you face to face with Jesus Christ, and will show you the Son of God as your Saviour. You will never be saved apart from the hearing of the Word of God.

IV

THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS TO QUICKEN YOU.

It is the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, who takes the Word of God and applies it to your heart and quickens you and makes you alive in Christ Jesus.

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me DRAW HIM: and I will raise him up at the last day."—John 6:44.

"IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT QUICKENETH; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John 6:63.

We read the story of the lost coin how the woman who had ten pieces of silver, lost one. That coin which was lost didn't get up and find the woman. Rather, the Word of God says that the woman lighted a candle and swept the house and sought for the coin until she

found it.

Beloved, that woman represents the Holy Spirit. The work of a woman is on the inside. This woman sought for the coin. The work of the Holy Spirit is inside. He seeks for the sinner, and unless the Holy Spirit quickens an individual and brings that one to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, he will never be saved.

Listen again:

"And when he is come, HE WILL REPROVE THE WORLD OF SIN, and of righteousness, and of judgment."—John 16:8.

Has the Holy Spirit reproved you? Did you join the church without being reproved by the Holy Spirit? Is sin just as lovely to you as it was before you made a profession of faith? I ask you, has the Holy Spirit of God reproved you of your sin?

In order for you to be saved, God had to elect you, Jesus Christ had to die for you, the Word of God has to be preached to you, and the Holy Spirit has to quicken you. What is there left for you to do? Beloved, all you have to do is to furnish the sinner and God will do the saving.

I like to think of Jonah. God called Jonah to preach, but Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh. He wanted to go some place else. You remember how that he was swallowed by the fish and was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. When that fish vomited him upon dry land, he had been brought five hundred miles to Nineveh, instead of a thousand miles in the other direction which he wanted to go. When he stood up on the shores of Nineveh, he said:

"Salvation is of the Lord."—Jonah 2:9.

Beloved, when God wants you to do something, you might just as well do it, because you will have to do it in the end. God ordained that Jonah should preach in Nineveh. Though Jonah didn't want to preach there, God brought him to Nineveh by way of the fish's belly; and when old Jonah stood on the shores of Nineveh, he was ready to preach, as God had ordained that he should.

Listen to me, sinner friend, salvation is of the Lord. May it please God to open your heart and reveal Jesus Christ to you as your Saviour. Oh, may you trust Him and be saved today. May God bless you!



My Rosary

(Continued from page one) My one brother also thought of studying for the priesthood. One day the priest did something that disgusted him, and so he never went further with his intentions.

I remember the priest telling us that the world was going to come to an end. When anyone died and the priest mentioned at the funeral that they had gone to purgatory, I was frightened so; for, though I was spending much time in secret prayer, the Catholic faith never gave me an assurance that when I came to die that I could expect to escape purgatory. I often begged and pleaded with God to give me some kind of assurance, hoping that maybe He would take me to Heaven without dying. I tell you, my dear friend, hell and purgatory were a serious thing to me. I lived in fear of them, since I knew that young people died as well as old and were in danger of going there. Fortunately I was never ill while I was in the Catholic church, except for bad colds, as I fear that I might have gone insane

with fear that maybe I would die.

I would see the priest pious at mass on Sundays, and then during the week have a big time at the church carnivals and at the race tracks and weddings. I saw their nice, big houses and their housekeepers. Then I saw the nuns, and I heard about the way that they were treated. I knew a girl who went to the convent and who had a nervous breakdown because of the hard work and treatment put upon her. She was close-mouthed though in telling all that went on there. I would question why both the priests and the nuns were supposed to be sacrificing, and yet the priests had such a different life from the nuns. Yet because I had such a devotion to the church, I did not question further.

Superstitions

I also sang in the choir and loved the Latin songs, yet I did not know what they were about. The only song I really knew by memory in the English language was "Mother Dear, Oh, Pray For Me." I mention these things because so often Catholics, when questioned as to why some people leave the church, say to others, "They were not good Catholics, or they would not have left the church."

I often think of the many superstitious ways of the church. I remember at one time that my grandfather was very ill. Mr. grandmother took one of the palm sheaves that were given to us on Palm Sunday, and burned it in the furnace. Then she told us that she thought father would get better. I recall my mother going down to the furnace one night while a storm was raging. She felt that because the palms were blessed that by burning them before the Lord He would accept them as a sacrifice, and so our house would be protected from lightning.

I often think of how my sister and brothers and I would run to church because, if we got there after the priest had sprinkled "holy water" on the audience, it was as though we had not been to mass at all. It was a great sin not to be to church on time.

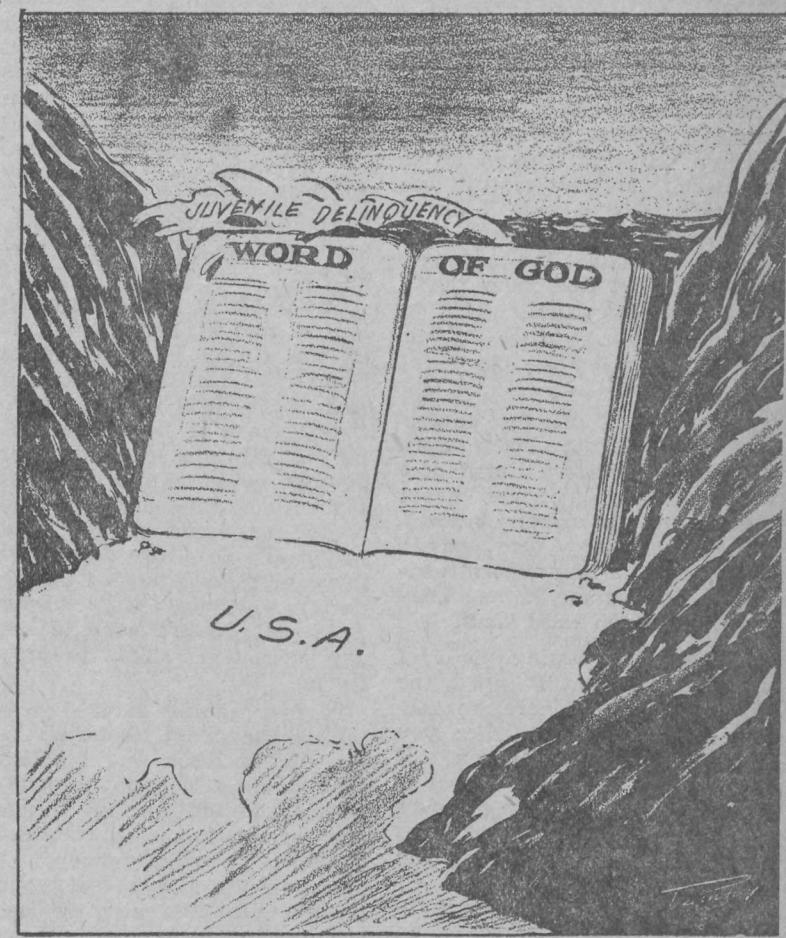
We did not dare to visit or laugh in church, yet I well remember that I could smell liquor on the breath of many who would kneel and pray near me. It seemed that they saw no harm in having liquor on their breath in church, where was supposed to be the place of God's presence.

I have seen and heard Catholics at their places of amusement, aggravated at something and swear by the name of God or Jesus. They would say, "Oh Crucifix," but I have never heard them swear by the name of any of the saints or by the name of the Virgin Mary. Why? Were the names of the saints and of Mary more sacred than the name of God and Jesus?

I wanted to live as close to all the church laws as I could, and with it I adored the name of Jesus. I loved to talk to God, and was so glad that I did not use their names in vain. I was grieved when I did wrong, right where I know that many of my friends did wrong and would say, "We will tell father." My whole life with all its praying was FEAR, FEAR, FEAR. Continually I would plead with God and would say, "Oh, God, can you take me to Heaven without dying?" Or, "Oh, God, please don't make me go to purgatory."

I recall that when all went to church, we each were given ten cents to pay for our seats

God's Floodgate



in church. Even as children we paid for our seats, and those ten cents were paid by the rich and poor alike. Besides that, mother would occasionally give us extra money which was to be used to buy candles, which we would light and set on a candle stand. Then we would pray for our dead relatives whom we had never seen, as they had lived across the sea.

We had the prayer books to read, but we were not to read the Bible because only the priest knew the right interpretation. Oh, how blind I was, because I did not realize that the Gospels and Epistles that the priests read to us were the same thing that was in the Catholic Bible! I never dreamed that by just reading them and believing them as they were written, would give me the peace that I needed. There is enough Bible in the prayer books to save any hungry heart, if he would take the Scriptures there just as he reads them. So blinded was I that I just believed what I was told concerning putting our own interpretation.

I recall some people dying, and friends of the dead would sit with the corpse every night until funeral day. But instead of thinking that they might be the next corpse, they would sit till early morning hours, drinking and playing cards. Often they would use the name of God in vain in their card disagreements.

Burning Candles

One day I met a young lady who was going south, who asked me if I would go with her. I went and for two months I did not work but attended daily mass, burning candles for my dead relatives in various parts of the world, kissing the statues in the church, and kissing the pages in the prayer books as I would turn each leaf. (I was twenty years old at that time.)

I attended nothing the church did to raise money, I wanted that longing that for years had held me bound, to be satisfied. I hoped that God would some way let some feeling or peace come over me so that I would not have continually to fear dying. I told God that for years I had to work, and so for a few

weeks I wanted just to pray and read the prayer book, hoping in return that He would in some way not let me go to purgatory. Could I possibly go to Heaven without dying?

Every Sunday morning it was the usual thing for the priest to announce the masses to be said during the week for those who had died years back and who were still in purgatory. The same fear would grip me each Sunday. Then the last Sunday of these two months the priest said that they were going to have requiem high mass the following Tuesday for a man who had died forty-five years before. His wife was having this special mass said for him.

Immediately God dealt with me—forty-five years in purgatory—how do they know? Haven't we been praying for them, and their loved ones praying too? Surely not—No—No—that cannot be. HOW DO THEY KNOW?—NO THEY DON'T KNOW. GOD, THEY CAN'T BE RIGHT. God, I have always believed in purgatory, but here this man is still there because the wife paid for this mass to be said for him. Oh, God! THEY'RE WRONG!

With a confused mind I left the church and went to my room. I thought about it the rest of the day. I did not go to church that night, because, tho I was in that church for twenty years and thought it to be the only right one, I now knew that the belief in purgatory was wrong—and, if that was wrong, I knew other things were also wrong.

I stopped praying to the saints and to Mary. I stopped using the rosary that very day and just prayed to Jesus on the cross (not the risen Christ) and to God. Yet I was not completely happy because I was continually begging that in some way I must now find peace.

I got employment. After a few weeks I was stricken very ill. While I was sick, I said, "Oh God, if you will LET ME (Continued on page four)

