

From The Pulpit

by Rev. Donald M. Clark

GOSPEL ARITHMETIC
(Counting)

IN MANY RESPECTS, the Gospel is like simple arithmetic that one learns in the elementary school. This is the first of a series of sermons which compares the various phases of the Gospel message to different lessons of basic arithmetic in the order in which they are usually learned.

Learning to count is a basic requirement for all future arithmetic and even the advanced mathematics courses. Counting is fundamental. It is the foundation of all knowledge of mathematics and computations. How can a person add, or subtract, or multiply, or divide without first knowing how to count? How can one work algebraic equations, or discern the size of figures in geometry, or solve the problems of calculus, without a knowledge of the order of numbers? Likewise, how can one be a Christian without first learning well the basic rudiments of Christianity?

The answer to all these questions is, of course, that it is impossible. In regard to the latter, there are many people today who actually are trying the impossible. The result is a confusion in their lives and thinking and the wrong answer is inevitable. In arithmetic when this situation exists, the papers are returned with a big "O" written at the top of the paper. When God grades the lives of men in judgment, those who have the wrong answers in their lives shall receive an "O" plus the bad news that they have failed the course. It is absolutely essential, then, that men learn well the basic principles of Christianity if they are to pass the course.

The first lesson in Gospel counting is HOW TO COUNT WITH FAITH. Rom. 4:3 says: "And Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Also Rom. 4:5 says: "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

From these scriptures we learn that faith is the basic requirement of righteousness in the sight of God. The Jews thought that righteousness was achieved on the basis of works or deeds of the law. Sacrifices were meticulously offered according to the provisions of the law right to the letter. The Pharisees were extremely careful to tithe all that they received, to the vegetables out of the garden. The ceremony and ritual of the Jewish pageants and festivals were precisely observed. All the requirements of the law, including the rite of circumcision, were carefully carried out to the letter. When they had done all these things, even though their hearts may have been evil, they felt that God owed them salvation because they were "righteous."

Paul emphatically tells us that righteousness cannot be achieved that way. "We reckon there-



REV. D. M. CLARK

Barbecue Dinner Sale At St. James Saturday

KITCHEN WEARY HOMEMAKERS are reminded that they can escape "hot stove duty" Saturday, Oct. 30, by picking up delicious barbecued rib or chicken dinners prepared by expert cooks anytime after 11 a.m. at St. James Catholic Church, 'H' and Morgan.

The package deal includes a choice of sweet peas or baked beans, potato salad, cole slaw, roll and cake—all for \$1.25. Advance orders may be placed by calling 385-9086, 385-9042 or 642-5642 during the day today and tomorrow, Oct. 28-29, or 642-5665 and 384-3935 after 5 p.m. and Saturday. Free delivery at times specified by purchasers will be made by members of the sponsoring Altar Society according to Brother George Barton, aide to Msgr. William Devlin, St. James pastor.

MRS. CLEVELAND L. ALEXANDER Prominent Churchwoman Goes to Her Reward

FUNERAL SERVICES for Mrs. Cleveland L. Alexander, 52, were conducted last week at Grace Emanuel Baptist Church, 815 Bartlett St., where the deceased's husband has served as pastor since its establishment in 1961.

A eulogy was delivered by the Rev. E. C. Kline, with remarks by the Rev. F.N. Addison and short talks by Mrs. R. Addison and Deacon C. Addison. Solos were rendered by Mrs. Jo Ann Sykes and Mrs. E. Williams.

Interment was at Woodlawn Cemetery, Las Vegas.

Pallbearers were the Revs. J.L. Kemp, J.L. Simmons, V.C.L. Coleman, T.C. Cole, A. J. Thompson and A. B. Carr. Honorary pallbearers included many other local ministers and church officials, including I.W. Wilson, L. A. Johnson, M.D. Bennett, J.P. Proby, J. Y. Earl, J. C. Coleman, T. J. Jenkins, J. O'Neal, L. Davis, N. Whitney, P.S. Walker, M.L. Carroll, J. Lovely, E. Pullins, L. Richards, R. Irwin, J. P. Jefferson and D. M. Clark.

Mrs. Alexander, who passed away on Oct. 13, was born on August 20, 1913, to Cornelia Delia Fultz and David Tillman in Lammon, Miss., and given the name of Lurlener. She attended Cherry St. School and Magnolia High School in Vicksburg, Miss., and was converted in 1925 at the Rock of Ages Baptist Church, Rev. E.S. Hicks, Pastor.

In 1930, at the age of 17, she married Cleveland L. Alexander and they lived in Tallulah, La., serving with the New Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, the Rev. Lin Henderson, pastor. They sang with the Madison and West Carroll parishes singers' association.

Moving to Las Vegas in 1942, the couple helped form a church here and Mrs. Alexander served as secretary for the Strangers Home Baptist Church. She later joined her husband in the Zion Methodist Church, where he trained for the ministry. She served as a den mother for a Girl Scout troop for two years.

Mrs. Alexander accompanied her husband when he was called to serve as assistant minister for the New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church in 1958 and later went with him to the Second Baptist Church in Henderson, Nev.



DECEASED AND BEREAVED—Mrs. Cleveland Alexander, who was laid to rest last week, is shown above (right) in a recent photo with her mother, Mrs. Cornelia Delia Booth, who survives her daughter. Mrs. Alexander's husband is pastor of Grace Emanuel Baptist Church here. (See story.)

At Grace Emmanuel Baptist Church, Mrs. Alexander was her husband's aide in many pastoral duties and served with all the church auxiliaries whenever she could.

In addition to her husband, Mrs. Alexander is survived by her mother, Mrs. Cornelia Delia Booth; a daughter, Betty Jean Alexander, and many other relatives.

fore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law." (Romans 3:28)

It was because of Abraham's faith that God considered him righteous. God appeared to Abraham when he was an aged man and married to Sarah, who could not bear children, and promised him that he was to become the father of many nations. (Rom. 4:18) Paul says that he "in hope believed against hope" the promise that was made unto him. "He waxed strong through faith" (Rom. 4:20)

It was Jesus' continual plea that men believe on Him—that He was the Son of God. "For God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (Jn. 3:16)

The next fundamental that is important in Gospel counting is HOW WE COUNT THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:28,29) How do you regard Christ's death? How do you regard the blood that was shed upon Calvary for the remission of your sins? In this fast-moving age of science and inventions, Christ's blood has little consideration in many hearts.

There are times when we all need to check up on how we count the blood of Christ which He shed in our stead!

The third basic principle that we should consider is COUNTING THE COST OF BEING A CHRISTIAN. (Read Luke 14:25-33)

When a man becomes a Christian, he goes

into partnership with God. In a partnership, each participating party contributes something. In the Christian partnership, God has provided the environment and the means. He has been abundantly liberal. Man then is required to acknowledge Jesus Christ as his Lord and allow the Holy Spirit to govern his life.

Before entering into a partnership the wise businessman will count the cost. His interest can no longer be for himself alone but for all other partners as well. In addition, all partners can't be boss. It is also necessary that all partners keep up their end of the bargain. The same applies to the Christian partnership.

Being a Christian is an expensive proposition and unless you are willing to pay the price, you won't win the reward. There is an old business proverb that says "It takes money to make money." Likewise, my friends, it takes your life to gain life! Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me." He said, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it." (Mark 8:34,35) Paul said, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ."

Let us learn well the basic principles of Gospel counting! Let us count up righteousness by our faith and obedience to Jesus Christ. Let us count well the great value of Christ's atoning blood. Let us count the cost of being a child of God and count all things but loss in order to gain Christ. When we have done these things, we have a right to count on dwelling with Him in all glory in the new heaven and the new earth according to His promise.