

From The Pulpit

by Rev. Donald M. Clark

GOSPEL ARITHMETIC
(III. Subtraction)

IN THIS SERIES thus far we have studied about counting and adding in terms of the Gospel message. Now we advance a step in our arithmetic lessons to learn about subtracting. Subtracting is an entirely different process and we shall discuss it in a little different manner than the preceding subjects. Before we begin, let it be kept in mind that something must be added before subtraction can take place. Of course in arithmetic, working with actual numbers, this addition may be assumed or inferred. However for our purposes in Gospel arithmetic something must be added before any subtracting can be done.

Therefore, the first process that we want to consider is the addition of Man plus Sin.

There is a rule of addition that must be applied here if the answer is to be correct. That rule is that the addends must be alike! In other words, it would be impossible to add 2 apples and 2 oranges and obtain a common answer. Now you can add 2 apples and 2 apples together. The answer would be 4 apples. Or you can add 2 oranges and 2 oranges and get 4 oranges.

Now let us apply this rule to the problem at hand. Can we add together man plus sin? The answer is yes. Man is of this world and sin is of this world, therefore the addition can be made. Man has a peculiar affinity for sin. By the very act of creation man was given a physical body. That body was created out of worldly substance. That physical nature of man was and still is readily susceptible to temptation and sin.

When the Devil set forth his tempting speech to Mrs. Adam, who in turn set the temptation before her mate, it was the physical, worldly nature of man that yielded to that temptation. The temptation was made to appeal to their physical natures. Adam and Eve were powerless to resist because the desires of the flesh were stronger than the resistance of the spirit within them.

As far as sin is concerned, by definition it is a transgression of God's law--regardless of the size of the transgression. Sin is of this world and originates with Satan.

THE PROBLEM at hand then is this--Man plus Sin equal what? The answer is this--Man plus Sin equals Sinner. This is a pitiful condition but nevertheless characteristic of all men. When God looked down and saw the addition of these two factors, He immediately made preparation to subtract the sin from the sinner. This is the exact reverse of the former problem. Let us mentally subtract sin from sinner. What is the result or the answer? "Man!" this is the only answer possible.

There is only one way, however, that this problem can be solved. That way is recorded by Paul in his Letter to the Romans 7:25: "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Jesus Christ, who gave up His life on Calvary as a sacrifice for our sins, is the only one who is able to separate man from his sins.

Now let us introduce a new addition problem. In the same manner that we discussed the previous problem let us consider this one: Man plus Christ equals what?

First of all applying the rule stated earlier,

Bethel Celebrates 17th

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH, 400 Adams Ave., the Rev. I. W. Wilson, pastor, is celebrating its 17th anniversary this week.

The four-day program started last night and continues tonight and Friday at 7:30 p.m., with sermons by the Revs. E. C. Kline and V. C. L. Coleman, respectively. Last night's sermon was delivered by the Rev. A. B. Carr.

Sunday's concluding service is scheduled for 3 p.m., with sermon by the Rev. A. J. Thompson.



REV. D. M. CLARK

It Can Be Yours



RAFFLE PRIZE--This 22 by 28 inch oil painting is being raffled off for benefit of Zion Methodist Church building fund. Tickets at \$1 each may be obtained from committee chairman Mrs. Minnie Wilkins (642-5181) or Rev. M. D. Bennett (642-3909). Drawing will be held Dec. 19.

are the addends alike? Yes, they are, although different from the other problem. Man is not only a physical being but he also has a spiritual nature. God created man of the dust of the earth and then breathed into him the breath of life. God gave man a spirit. Christ is also principally a spiritual being. He took on a physical body that He might overcome sin and the grave but, the first chapter of Hebrews indicates that He was of the same substance that God is. Jesus, himself states that God is a Spirit. So it is clear that this problem can be worked because the addends are alike.

WHEN YOU ADD Man and Christ together the answer is "Christian." This simply means "of Christ." It might logically be narrowed down just plain Christ. Man plus Christ equals Christian or simply Christ. Allow me to explain further. Galatians 3:2 says "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." When we are baptized into Christ we actually put Him about us and we are in Him.

The next step is to subtract Christ from Christian or Christ. Christ minus Christ equals what?

The answer to this problem cannot be "Man" as it was in the preceding subtraction of Sin from Sinner. When a man is added to Christ, he dies in the act of baptism. Romans 6:4 says, "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into (our) 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." In the act of baptism the old man dies and is buried and becomes a new creature in Christ. If this was not the case, the man was never added to Christ in the first place.

In the light of this reasoning, if you take Christ away from Christ the result can only be "Nothing". Let me illustrate in this way: "Suppose you add an apple to a bushel of apples. You still have a bushel of apples. Now subtract a bushel of apples from a bushel of apples and it doesn't leave one apple. The original apple is absorbed into the bushel and has become a part of it. This seems to be the condition of many churches through the world today. Christ is removed from Christ or Christianity and all that is left is absolutely NOTHING.

That brings us to this conclusion: When a person becomes a Christian, there is no turning back! It is an "all or nothing at all" proposition. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." When a man adds Christ and then tries to take Him away, he becomes "O" as far as spiritual values are concerned.

KEEP UP THE GOOD GROWING!

GARFIELD REED (1900-1965)

FUNERAL SERVICES for Garfield Reed, 65, were conducted at Zion Methodist Church on Nov. 5, with the Rev. M. D. Bennett delivering a eulogy. Also paying tribute to Mr. Reed's memory were the Revs. J. L. Simmons and N. W. Tigner, and Eld. John Logan. Cora Jackson read the obituary and acknowledgements and vocal solos were rendered by Jo Ann Sykes and Bro. Walker.

Pallbearers were Willie Thorn, Hampton Walker, Frank McDowell, Leslie Whitmore, Ted Grubbs and Renard Simmons. Interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Mr. Reed, who passed away Oct. 29, was born on Feb. 16, 1900, in Jacksonville, Texas, to Joe and Delcie Reed. He moved to Las Vegas in 1944 and was employed at the B.M.I. plant in Henderson for 21 years.

Survivors include the widow, Reaver; a sister, Nettie Wallace, Dickinson, Texas; six brothers, Andrew, Jesse and Tom, Jacksonville, Texas; Ike, Los Angeles; Emmett, Alamogordo, N.M., and Will Henry, Las Vegas; six nieces and seven nephews.

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