THOUGHTS OF AUGUST, 2011

1. How different should the church be from the world? That depends on the world and the church, doesn’t it. At times and places the world wants the church to be radically different from the world, especially when the world is looking for mercy and other solid help in some form. Similarly, at times and places the church wants to be radically different from the world, when the Holy Spirit is being given a free hand. In either case, the world is dependent upon the church whether the world knows it or not.

I think that we do not give [certain ones in] the world credit for desiring more of the church, wanting the church to measure up to its more outstanding times in history, and to its boldest [scriptural] claims. And, I think it is good that the world throws our best history and best scripture into our face when we fail them. That can awaken us.

Power is available to the church for being different from/rising above the world in which it lives. Weakness invades the church when it tries to be like the world. That may bring about a type of peace, but it is a peace in which the church is broken and the world is set adrift.

2. Some folks seem to be favored by the Lord more than others. That’s a true observation in regards to certain saints. See Psalm 5:12. Of course, there is a base-line truth that He is not a respecter of anyone more than another. However, after that baseline His favor is upon some more than others. It can be said that He favors those who respond wholeheartedly to Him and His calling; those who yield their lives to Him entirely.

Joseph was favored over his brothers. The Lord made that clear to the entire family. The “trouble” was that He made it clear in a dream to Joseph, who related it to the family, in which were 11 envious brothers – Gen. 37:4, 11.

Just like Joseph’s brothers hated him when they saw the special robe he wore, our brethren [yes, those among the saints] will be tempted to hate us when they see God’s favor working in our lives. That happened to Jesus and it will happen to anyone who now walks closer to Him than do others.

In the situation of many, that envy and persecution may come from their own Christian and blood families. Likely, they are being reminded of their own halfhearted response to the Lord. They see you being blessed by hearing the Lord’s voice, having biblical insights and the ability to apply them to life’s situations, and being involved in eternal things – while they only have temporal blessings, which they may have chosen over the spiritual. That is why Jesus could say that we will be hated by those of our own household.

“To be right with God has often meant to be in trouble with men.” -- A. W. Tozer

3. “Discernment is not knowing the difference between right and wrong. It is knowing the difference between right and almost right.” -- Charles H. Spurgeon

4. Long ago I ceased wondering how things came into existence. They were created. That required a creator. He has revealed Himself to me. He died for me and I live for Him. We are o.k. together as Creator and created. However, it is still interesting to read/listen to the debates on that which can be so easily settled, but which is otherwise unsettleable.

For example, there is the “Anthropic Principal.” When compiling the many physical and mathematical subtleties which make up the universe, scientists have discovered that a slight variation in any of them mitigates against the existence of life. Even at the atomic and sub-atomic level, the slightest variation in any of the primary constants of physics – some as sensitive as one part in over 1,000,000 – cause life to be impossible. Even secular science refers to these appearances of apparent design as the “anthropic principal,” since they yield the impression that the universe was designed specifically for man.

5. You liberals and conservatives, check out Ecclesiastes 10:2. ‘Nuff said.

6. Have you heard of transhumanism? It’s the ability of the human race to transcend itself. Man remains man but transcends himself by realizing new possibilities of and for his human nature. Julian Huxley, first director of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], wrote nearly 50 years ago that transhumanism is an international, intellectual and cultural movement supporting the use of science and technology to improve human mental and physical characteristics and capacities – in essence, to create a “posthuman” society.

This is not a fad. Transhumanist programs are sponsored in institutions such as Oxford, Stanford, and Caltech. Sponsorships come from organizations such as Ford, Apple, Intel, Xerox, Sun Microsystems, and others. The U. S. Department of Defense is also involved.

Anyone have reservations or recommendations?

7. It is said that David compiled the first and fourth books of the Psalms; Solomon collected the second and third; and Ezra combined the last forty-four psalms [107-150] after the Babylonian captivity. Book one is 1-41; book two is 42-72; book 3 is 73-89; book 4 is 90-106; and book 5 is 107-150.

8. Throughout the more recent years of the church age there appears to have been an effort to negate or obscure the probability/assuredness of the rapture. If the rapture is a reality, I do not consider the attempts to negate it some kind of conspiracy, except among the evil spiritual forces of this world. The obscure things [to our minds] are meant for us to discover.

We must have a biblically informed, spiritually sensitive, stretchable mind to be able to see things like Paul and others saw in the Bible as they had it. They were criticized and persecuted for seeing things there that others did not. In fact, when I read some of their writings I still feel like they were really stretching human insight and spiritual revelation. Peter had that problem with some of Paul’s writings – 2 Peter 3:14-18.

9. We Americans, and others, have been acutely aware of the silence in the Moslem community on and since 9/11. There have been no or few voices speaking out against those who attacked us and who continue to do so. At last, in Toronto, Canada, six groups composed of Moslems and non-Moslems are protesting Moslem imams who go into public schools to teach Islam and to lead the students in Islamic prayers. It is feared that the imams are turning those children into young radicals. It is good to see that parents are interested in what is taught their children, and that they do not want their children radicalized.

10. Job wrestled with the question of why the righteous suffer. The Lord did not stoop to answer Job’s question, but elevated His answer to say that He knew what He was doing even when Job did not. That means that Christians should have the faith and sense to not ask the same question Job asked, but to be honest about our unbelief by asking; “Lord, are you on the job? Do you have this entirely in hand?”

The Book of Job is probably the oldest written book in the Bible. It appears to have been written by Job or Elihu during the life of Jacob, not long after he and his little family moved to Egypt at the invitation of Joseph and Pharaoh. Job is presented as being very wealthy, indicating that Job lived before the new Pharaoh arose “who did not know Joseph” – Ex. 1. The new pharaoh enslaved the Israelites. Moses was born about 300 years later. To him is attributed authorship of the first 5 books of the Bible, but not the Book of Job.

11. The Lord calls Himself “God Almighty” [El Shaddai] 31 times in Job, more than all other times in the Bible. Genesis uses the name 6 times and the Revelation 8 times. Later, long after Job’s time, God gave Moses His name, Yahweh or Jehovah – see Exodus 6:3.

Concerning when the book of Job was written, notice that Job fulfilled the function/office of priest in his family – chapter 1. There is no mention of the tabernacle, the Levitical priesthood or a system of sacrifice. Thus we may assume that the priesthood did not yet exist, it being instituted by Moses in the wilderness after their departure from Egypt.

Also, about when the book of Job was written, after Job’s ordeal, he lived another 140 years, which matches the lifespan of the earlier patriarchs – Job 42:16, Gen. 11. We should know that when those long-lived men are mentioned, they are not the only ones of their times who lived that long, that those long life-spans were common to all humanity of their time.

12. Foundational Christianity of all types are found in Job. Example: Man cannot save himself, and we are saved by grace, not by our good works – Job 40:10-14.

We require a redeemer – Job 19:25. That need is shown from Genesis 3:21 [when God slays an animal to cover Adam’s and Eve’s nakedness/sinfulness] to Revelation 5:9 and 7:14 [when it is said that all peoples need God’s redemption].

13. There is bad news, and then worse news. The Death Star [Planet X] is coming our way. Yep; as the Mayan Calendar comes to an end in 2012, that still un-located planet is to bring an end to the world – say certain doomsayers. That’s the bad news. The even worse news is that it’s not going to happen, the world will not be coming to an end next year, and we will have to continue paying our bills.

Like the Rapture, endings of various sorts are not to get us out of responsibilities, but are to make us responsible saints in the meantime.

14. Are you ready for this? Today [8-12-11] Iran offered to send a peace-keeping group to England to help restore peace in the London area and to prevent the “excessive” measures England is taking against those mobs. In the past couple of months, Iran has killed thousands of their own people, who are protesting for more freedom. That makes their offer obviously ridiculous, but the sad thing is that many are taking the offer seriously, instead of laughing at it.

15. Humanity is getting itself into a corner. Because the Lord is in charge, that is where we need to be – even we of the church. We have churches that do not preach the full gospel, schools that do not teach, growing numbers of people who are dependent upon government handouts, a regulatory system that destroys entrepreneurship, and an impossible accumulation of debt on every level. What a wonderful time to have been chosen for birth and re-birth! Live for the Lord. Pay the price to live as Christ.

16. One of the reasons for governments and the rule of law is to make things predictable. Un-predictability stymies everyone who would move ahead. Variable court decisions, those not based on the Constitution, magnify unpredictability. The Lord is reliably predictable.

17. The Palestinian Authority is making preparations that will cause wholesale bloodshed in September. At that time, the PA officials, despite claims of non-violent action, are preparing to flood Israeli checkpoints with tens of thousands of PA Arabs who might force their way past IDF soldiers and into Israel’s major cities. At the same time, they will be before the UN petitioning for nationhood. I can see the bloodshed as Israel protects itself, and I can hear the wails of “Israeli brutality.”

18. Unimaginative minds have difficulty being deeply spiritual, cannot get good grasps on things spiritual, and shun the prophetic. Imaginative minds, as exhibited by artists of all sorts, have great potential for being spiritually minded and can move into and function in the prophetic arena.

19. John Owen, Britain’s great Puritan preacher and theologian, preached that God always sends His judgments in due time. In 1680 he was still preaching about an “approaching calamitous time, and considering the sins that have been the causes of it … I have told you that judgment will begin in the house of God .. these all now lie at the door and are entering in upon us.”

Lest we join with those who scoffed in his day, John Owen lived to weep over a flaming holocaust that engulfed London. He lived to see every one of his powerful prophecies: wars, destruction, a shattered economy, nationwide depression, and diseases that wiped out multitudes.

Yet, before he saw the calamities he admonished his flock with tears, “Get you an ark. Prepare an ark for the safety of you and your families. That ark is Jesus Christ.”

My Thought agrees with him and with Isaiah, that, “A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadows of a great rock in a weary land.” Jesus is our rock if we trust and obey Him.

20. Neither Nancy nor I, and as far as I know, none of you who share in my THOUGHTS are contemplating marriage. But, you have or will have children and grandchildren who are. Here is a nice list of questions to see if one is ready to marry. I intend to comment on only two of them.

1. Do you care about each other as good friends do?

2. Are you emotionally honest and vulnerable with each other?

3. Do you consistently reach win/win solutions to your problems?

4. Do you take care of each other’s needs?

5. Do you admire and respect each other?

6. For the man: Are you ready to take responsibility for the family? Marriage is not built on getting your needs met. It’s about taking on responsibility and giving yourself. Boys are takers; men are givers. Your wife will need to be cherished – meaning attention, affection and appreciation. That’s not only a nice idea that produces great rewards, but it’s God’s command – that we live like Christ did/does toward the church. [Well, this not so little Thought may have something to do with us older guys, after all.]

7. For the woman: Do you believe in him? Your man needs your respect. Do you have it? Do you believe in him? The world puts a lot of pressure/demands/temptation on men. The one place he does not need more of the same is at home. He needs to be strengthened in his belief that he is trying hard to provide for you and the family. The cruelest thing a wife can do is nag/tear down/diminish her husband. Give him your love, not your list of things he should be and do to be a good husband. Don’t turn on him.

8. Do you trust this person completely?

9. Do you want the same things out of life?

10. Do you have peace of mind about this decision?

21. When Elisha told Joash, the king of Israel, to shoot out an arrow and to strike the ground with a bundle of arrows, he was testing him in regards to his persistence in war – 2 Kings 13:14-19. Shooting an arrow toward an enemy was an ancient way of declaring war. Joash had gone to Elisha to bemoan Elisha’s impending death from an illness. In return, Elisha was encouraging Jehoash to take action and to do the most, quickly. Joash started well by shooting the arrow adequately, but he struck the ground only 3 times with the handful of arrows. Elisha correctly understood that Joash would not be continually forceful in battle.

Let’s take to heart that lesson. In our souls we have unending struggles with the enemy, do we not? My main enemy these years is haughtiness, a manifestation of pride. At least that is my observation. I am working on declaring war against the enemy on this front, not to give in, not to be crept up on, etc. If the Lord were not a “hands on” person among His sheep, I would not have a chance of winning. But, that means I also have to follow through by striking the ground that wants to yield only thorns and thistles – Gen. 3:18.

22. This story has been around for a while:

Kenny, a country boy, bought a donkey from an old farmer for $100. The farmer agreed to deliver the donkey the next day. The next day the farmer drove up and said, “Sorry son, but I have some bad news. The donkey died.” Kenny replied, “Well then, just give me my money back.” The farmer said, “Can’t do that. I went and spent it already.” Kenny said, “OK then, just unload the donkey.” The farmer asked, “What ya gonna do with him?” “I’m going to raffle him off.” “You can’t raffle off a dead donkey!” “Sure I can. Watch me. I just won’t tell anybody he is dead.”

A month later the farmer met up with Kenny and asked, “What happened with that dead donkey?” Kenny said, “I raffled him off. I sold 500 tickets at two dollars apiece and made a profit of $998.” “Didn’t anyone complain?” “Just the guy who won. So I gave him his two dollars back.”

Kenney grew up and was successful in politics.

23. We Christians do keep the Sabbath, but it is not a day of the week, or a time to attend religious services. It has nothing to do with the calendar. Our Sabbath is our continual abiding in Jesus. He wants His branches to abide in Him, the Vine. In that abiding there is no fear, no worry, no struggle, and no forcing of oneself to bear fruit. We simply live in union with Him. That is our picture of the Sabbath rest – Heb. 3, 4. We are told to labor to enter/stay in that abiding, and that it is only our unbelief that prevents our abiding.

The first day of Adam’s life, after he was created, was a Sabbath. It is that way with us, as we enter our Sabbath rest from our first day of rebirth. It seems that a major teaching of the church should be how to enter into that rest.

24. For those of us who might be thinking that the Ark is essential for temple worship, remember that there was no Ark in the second [Herod’s] temple. It had disappeared prior to the days of Nehemiah. The question is: Was it taken by the Babylonians? Was it taken by Shishak, King of Egypt, during his raid on Jerusalem – 2 Chronicles 12:9? Was it hidden by Jeremiah – 2 Maccabees 2:4-5? Is it hidden under the temple mount [that’s the official rabbinical version]? Was it taken by Menilik, the offspring of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, to Ethiopia during Solomon’s apostasy [that being the official legend that has been included in Ethiopia’s constitution]? Was it protected from the atrocities of Manassah, who was trying to eradicate Judaism, by the Levites under the protection of friendly Pharaoh Necho, who then took it to Axum, Ethiopia, where the Ethiopians say they still maintain it under guard? The Ethiopians believe it is their destiny to deliver it to the Messiah when He rules in Jerusalem.

Here is a very, very interesting thought. The Ethiopian treasurer was returning to Ethiopia when he encountered Philip – Acts 8. He had been sent to Jerusalem by Queen Candace on a special mission. We are not told the reason for the mission, but know that he was returning to Ethiopia confused. It would not be at all unreasonable to imagine that he had been sent to confirm a rumor that the Messiah had arrived. It was highly important to the Holy Spirit that the official get the truth, so Philip was taken to him to explain that the Messiah had indeed come but had been crucified, had died, been resurrected and returned into heaven. To do that, Philip detailed the Messiah’s execution and ultimate return by explaining the Isaiah passage the Treasurer was already reading.

This is also a good question to ask: On which throne in Jerusalem will Jesus sit during His millennial reign? Might it be the Mercy Seat of the Ark?

25. Our much-loved, recently deceased brother, David Wilkerson, yet reminds us; “The battle you’re enduring now is not about this world, not about the flesh, not about the devil. Rather, the warfare you’re facing is preparation for your eternal service in glory.” Let’s continue making ourselves ready – Rev. 19:7-8. Our diligence here determines our rule there – 1 Cor. 6:2. There are contrary consequences for well-run versus careless Christian lives. Put another way, we have been delivered from the eternal penalty of sin [justification], but not from the temporal bondage to sin [sanctification]. Our process in sanctification determines our position/rewards in the millennium.

26. Corpus Christi has been blessed by a better job market that the rest of the country. The area added about 4,000 jobs in the past year. In another year, there will be more good news for the economy, as a water park and several very large industries will be under construction and scheduled for completion in a couple of years. A Chinese firm is now constructing a seamless pipe plant here. It will be China’s largest investment in America.

Our faith is not in the economy, but faith and faithfulness can lead to less troubles and a good economy.

It is necessary for me to say here that even the most righteous of saints can suffer poor economies, poverty, persecution and death.

27. Little souls are addicted to their own significance – 3 John 9-10. Oh, how often I have [in hindsight] noticed having done that same thing! Thank the Lord for grace, repentance and His unending process of sanctification.

28. David Wilkerson [1931-2011] reminds us from the heavens that we should come boldly before the Lord for all the grace and mercy needed for every temptation and trial. He said that he stopped looking at the darkness of his heart because it was always black, but that he was covered by Jesus’ blood and since that was good enough for his Father; it was good enough for him. Besides, it was God’s idea for us to come in. Take God at His word.

29. Humility and faithful dying to self accomplishes much. Zeal is good, but it does not accomplish that which other character qualities do. Jesus had real and righteous zeal and it consumed Him at times, but only His death to himself got the job done.

30. Telling religionists that they need something they do not have insults their flesh – which is their control center. But, telling them they just need to do something a bit different with that which they have is found to be acceptable – but does not work the righteousness of God. Repentance is painful and hard, but only on the flesh. That’s its purpose. The righteous run to repentance.

31. The Lord offered Himself as new wine to the old wine skin [Judaism] but was turned down. So, He bought a new wine skin – the church. He did not proceed with His intention of putting new wine in the old wine skin because, 1) the new wine would have been lost, and 2) He still had/has use for the old wine skin – Matt. 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37.

In Luke 5:39 we are reminded to be compassionate toward those of the old wine skin, because for them the old wine is better than the new wine. Is not that also true for those connoisseurs who know their wines?! It may be due to my lack of adequate exposure, but new wines are my favorites.

32. Why was Adam afraid when he heard the Lord’s voice? Answer: He had unsettled sin, meaning an unforgiven sin with its resultant, ongoing sinfulness which had seared unbelief into his now-tainted soul. He knew what it was to have never sinned, and how good sinlessness felt in his soul. And, he knew what had happened. In that condition he was afraid to face “the boss.” Only genuine, full-blown psychopaths cannot identify with the soul problem Adam had. The solution he missed was the availability of God’s graceful, unchangeable character, which includes His unending mercy.

33. Why do some believers not believe that the Lord still speaks like He spoke in Scripture? This common loss of an aspect of fellowship with God is an unavoidable result of a religious culture of unbelief. God’s ways and character are unchangeable, even by God Himself. Again, it would seem that only genuine, full-blown psychopaths would not want to avail themselves of soul-cleansing grace, in order to enter into a conversational relationship with the Lord. But the openness and honesty, which Adam suddenly lacked, still holds us in our unbelief. Unbelief holds us in our sinfulness as we gather more sins.

34. A reliable source, the Superintendent of Public Schools in Corpus Christi, gives us these 3 simple things to help children stay in school and to do better in personal relationships and their studies: 1) Get them to bed on time. 2) Get them up sufficiently early that they do not need to rush to school. 3) Spend at least 30 minutes daily talking to them about school and home work.

Some of us who read and write THOUGHTS may have a hard time believing that any parents need to “increase” their parenting to reach those 3 levels, but in many areas, especially in cities, students go to bed whenever they want [1:00 or 2:00 a.m.], they get up whenever they want [late to school, or absent], and they have no educational boost from their parent(s).

It’s remarkable how some kids do so well with so little, or such negative parenting.

35. In Revelation 3:19 the Lord reminds us that He chastises those whom He loves. See also Hebrews 12:5-7 and Proverbs 3:11-12. Why is He telling believers to be “repentance addicts?” Because He must mete out justice among His family [at the judgment seat of Christ] the same as He must mete out judgment for those who are not His family [at the Great White Throne judgment]. In both cases it is costly to the one being judged. He does not want us to have to endure punishment – which for believers does not include going to hell, and for non-believers does not include going to heaven. He prefers our repentance, as should we.

36. “God, who foresaw your tribulation, has specially armed you to go through it, not without pain but without stain.” – C. S. Lewis

37. Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, operated in the power of the third person of the Trinity. He had given up ALL of Himself [except His identity] to become Himself in human flesh. He brought none of His power or glory with Him. Being already whom He was, and not having therefore to be born again in order to become [a] son of God, He yet lacked power beyond the godly human power which He had. He had that which was necessary to live a sinless life, being the/a Son of God. Yet, He needed and received the power of the Holy Spirit before beginning His ministry. The Holy Spirit coming upon Him was to possess the power of God. That’s exactly what He told those who believed in Him as the risen Christ: “Go out into the entire world. Do and be what I did and was. But don’t go anywhere until the Holy Spirit comes upon you like He came upon me.”

38. In 1956 the world’s population was 2.833 billion; in 1999 it was 6 billion; in 2011 it is 7 billion, and in 2100 it is expected to level off at 9 or 10 billion. The expected leveling off is due to world-consciousness of crowded cities, water shortages, world hunger, unemployment and the like.

There being nothing new under the Son, we find nothing different between the above statistics of our years and those of the years of Abraham and Lot. Their herdsmen had a crowded-lands condition like we are supposed to be having. It’s enough to make the unbelief in us wonder if the Lord is wringing his hands and saying to Himself; “Oops, not enough land!”

I’ll join with those who say, while we are living out the Lord’s commands to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, we need to be better stewards of His and the world’s resources. Subduing it is not destroying it. Yet, being better stewards through awareness and technology is not the basic answer; being better saints is the answer – then we will know the way to better stewardship, and do it.

39. We, the church, are not properly geared-up to go out into the world. We are uncomfortable there in the world, even though we who are of God’s kingdom have His permanent and powerful Presence. We are fearful of the world [physically, emotionally, spiritually, and financially] even though He who is within and with us is greater than he who is in the world.

The world challenges us to be real instead of religious, which it should, and it tests the reality of our realness – as it must and should. The world presents itself and its problems to us, and we describe and try to solve those problems, too often with tools devised by the world and already proven there to be inadequate.

We offer the world spiritual answers and methods without first bringing it to Life.

With all of that said, I’ll add that the life and ministry of the church is “out there in the world” almost all of the time. We may lack zeal, but that lack is o.k. if we have the simple commitment to act as citizens of God’s kingdom. That brings the God who is alive in our souls into our presence, our environment, our work and social efforts. He becomes One who is an actor, not just an observer who is with us.

How to begin? Read and implement Matthew 5, 6, and 7. That’s where the Lord started His first disciples. Then work on the following world-changing approach that will change your world. In Luke 9:1-6 the Lord sent His 12 disciples into the villages. He gave them power and authority over all demons, and to heal diseases. Theirs was the job of proclaiming God’s kingdom and to perform miracles. They were to take nothing of themselves, but to be utterly dependent upon the results of their ministry as they offered it and themselves to unbelievers. They were to stay with those who received them, and not be further concerned about those who did not receive them. They did what they were told to do, and had the expected results.

Then, in 10:1-24, He sent 70 others [not including the 12] in pairs ahead of Himself, as advance publicists. He told them the harvest is plentiful [as it is today], but the laborers are few [as they are today, but that is about to change], so they were to pray that laborers would be sent into the harvest [which is what we are here doing].

Notice that when He told them to pray, He next told them to be [at least part of] the answers to their prayers. You may recall that James wrote in 2:14-17 that when we pray about a matter/person, we are to insert ourselves into the prayer as the or part of the answer to our very prayers. James may have been inspired by that which his half-natural/full-spiritual Brother told those disciples in Luke 10:2-3.

Back in Luke 10, in verse 3 what do you think went through the minds of those 70 disciples? They knew what it meant to be lambs among wolves. It would be a slaughter house. To ensure their lamb-hood, He told them to not take anything with them that would indicate self-sufficiency, or be self-supportive. They were to be genuine sheep among wolves – as was He.

Now came their 4-fold instructions for ministry. First, in verses 5 and 6, He told them to first proclaim peace [not repentance, not Jesus, not righteousness, not the church, not religion]. They were sent out by the possessor of all peace, the Prince of Peace Himself, to pronounce “PEACE.” That’s not so hard, is it? We can do that. We can go to a bedside, to a desk-side, to a petrol station-side, to a waitress-side, to the side of anyone anywhere and pronounce peace upon them, such as by taking them by the hand, looking into their eyes, and saying; “Father, in the name of Your Son, Jesus, I pronounce PEACE upon this person. Amen.” That’s our first order of ministry, and it is from the Lord’s mouth in those 2 verses. We don’t need a religious education or any education to pronounce that word from our lips and hearts upon others.

Secondly, in verses 7 and 8, they were instructed to have fellowship with those to whom the Lord of heaven had given grace for fellowship. Eating and drinking and residing with them [fellowship], such as was provided, was their second step in ministry.

Then, thirdly, in verse 9(a), having developed a natural setting for ministry, do it! If their needs are not obvious, ask them what are their needs. It may be a healing or anything else. Every person and family has needs that are easy to elicit simply by the asking. The setting has been developed, so we can just move into calling upon “our Father Who is in heaven” to answer their needs. We had proclaimed His peace, enjoyed His selected fellowship with the objects of His love [found in the workplace, highways, etc.], and now had called upon Him to act.

What’s next? Instruction number four is in verse 9(b) – proclaim the kingdom of God. It would be good if we knew what that means, more than “It’s all about Him and it’s all His,” but that’s a good start. The all-mightiness of God is shown in the first 2 chapters of [the Gospel of] Job, in the entirety of [the Gospel of] Daniel, and in the [other Gospel of John in the] Revelation. However, the Lord has probably revealed to you those particular things and verses that speak to you of the kingdom of God. You can do it.

40. Sharing with our U. K. saints: There seem to be two basic, interrelated, major problems over there in Europe, and we in America are rapidly moving to join you. Both problems indicate that you have developed a permissive [wide or no boundaries], anti-freedom [subordination and dependency], and redistributive [legal thievery] society. You have forgotten the ideas on which the greatness of Europe was based – and that they were clearly Christian.

The first problem is your integration process, having to do mostly with Muslims. History shows us that immigration is good if the basic society is united and the immigrants want the new way of life as offered by the basic society. In America those who came from around the world, principally from Europe, wanted our freedom and brotherhood and form of government. Most first-generation immigrants became integrated into the New World in their generation. If not in the first generation, the second generation was thoroughly integrated by intermarriage and through other social structures of their newly selected society. That is still functional for us as Hispanics enter America by the millions, most illegally, and desire our life and government. I’ll add that our immigrants and their previous customs also developed and changed our culture for the better, so they did not need to change theirs entirely.

As with you, it is our Muslim immigrants who are resisting integration. That’s not an absolute statement, but it does appear to be a significant majority who want their Eastern ways and religion. Their main cause of resistance is their religion, which is not a new problem for us. For many generations we had a Catholic-Protestant problem of the same sort as your Muslim-Christian one. That has gradually faded into near-nonexistence.

We see, of course, that Western Christianity is no longer the social force it once was. As a result, our Christian character and charisma is progressively ineffective against aggressive Muslimism. I will add that it is quite understandable that Muslims and others who are serious about their families and religions should indeed resist a culture that promotes homosexuality, abortion, wickedness in high public and religious places, divorce, and other immoral practices. Such practices are presented to them as being part of our Christian culture and they want none of it. Rather, they resist us and plan to change our culture, including the taking over of our governments.

The second problem is the evolution of your economic-social system. Again, we are close behind you. Your quality, productivity and efficiency have fallen into disrepair. Instead of being the go-getters, achievers, and eager-beavers of the world missionary and empire generations, you are soft, non-demanding, paternalistic, and insufficiently productive. You are so people-friendly that you treat gently those who pillage and burn your cities and terrorize your citizenry. Your police authorities declined the counsel of our New York police, on the basis that our police “use force.”

You have such sweeping social benefits that motivation is weakened; such shortened work hours and lowered retirement ages that you have slowed your economic growth. You have introduced massive legal burdens and regulations to the workplace and businesses. You have expanded your ever-expanding welfare system. All of that weakens and restrains freedom and social accountability, not to mention efficiency and competitiveness. The result today is that you prefer leisure to work, security to risk-taking, and paternalism to individualism.

You seem to not understand that your current behavior has undermined the very institutions and attitudes that made your past successes possible. But it has become impossible to hide the critical state of your situation – and yet America is using you as a role model for doing the same. We admire your freedoms – looseness, ease, permissiveness and laxity. It’s like, “Move over, Europe. We can show you how to do the wrong thing right.”

Isn’t there someone over there in post-Christian Europe who admits to your many failures and possesses the moxie to tell nearly post-Christian America to turn back?

Yes, we know that it will take an outpouring of the Holy Spirit with plans to remake His world. It’s on the way. With America’s earthquakes in non-earthquake places, widespread tornadoes, hurricanes on our coasts, financial crises, etc., help is on the way.

PEACE