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Insight

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Q. Why do you oppose Federal aid to church-related colleges? Take the University of the Pacific (Methodist) as a case in point. In 1949, when it was still the College of the Pacific, it had an enrollment of only 900 and was struggling so hard to pay its bills that many said it would soon close its doors. But Federal aid came along in the nick of time and the university board gladly accepted it. New buildings sprouted everywhere and today UP has 2,500 students getting top-quality education. All this would have been impossible without Federal aid.

A. Maybe so, and maybe not so. Andrews University, where I teach, was a college in 1949 with an enrollment of 1,000 and, like most schools most of the time, was struggling to pay its bills. In the intervening years it has sprouted new buildings at the rate of one a year. Today it is a university with an enrollment of 2,000 students getting top-quality education. All this has happened without Federal aid.

Most significantly of all, while the University of the Pacific has scarcely even a "Methodist flavor" anymore, Andrews is still deeply committed to the great goals of the church that so generously supports it.

Q. What should Christian leaders do to clear up confusion over our Lord's second coming? The Gospels quote Him as giving assurance it would be within the lifetime of some who heard Him speak. Early Christians firmly believed in the promise thus given.

Now, nineteen hundred years later, His second advent is still awaited. The Billy Graham Association is urging worldwide preaching of the gospel to has-

ten Christ's return, while Jehovah's Witnesses clamor for immediate preparation, the Lord being almost at our doors.

A. In the same chapter (Matt. 24) in which Jesus appears most strongly to have promised that He would return in the lifetime of His disciples He gave intimations, which, carefully examined, reveal that His promise was conditional and might not be fulfilled as quickly as His followers desired.

In verse 6 Jesus cautioned, "Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." In verse 14 He went on to say, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

God's prophetic promises rest on certain conditions, as Jeremiah 18 indicates, and quite evidently the condition implied in Matthew 24 is that Christ's followers must first preach the gospel to all the world before He could return. That this is so is borne out by 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise [to come the second time], as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Q. I just recently noticed in LIBERTY for January-February, 1970, that you say that the Old Testament annual sabbaths "looked forward to the sacrifice of Christ on the cross and came to an end when Jesus died." If so, then why were people gathered on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 31 (Acts 2:1-4), and why does it say in Zechariah 14:16-19 that "every one that is

left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles"? During the millennium we will have to keep the feast. When the Messiah restores the sacrificial system, how are we to know how to keep these feasts if we haven't been trained how to while here on earth (Eze. 44:9-31)?

A. If in this present sinful state we are able to learn how to keep the Jewish ceremonial sabbaths, should we not be able to learn even more easily how to keep them in a future perfect age?

But it is not clear that your references in Zechariah and Ezekiel deal with an age still future. They more likely refer to a period shortly after they were written when God would have given the Jewish people great blessings if they had turned to Him with all their hearts. In any event, Ezekiel 44, which you cited, says that priests must be ritually circumcised. Do you believe that ritual circumcision will be restored during the millennium? If so, do you believe that ministers today should be ritually circumcised in preparation for that time? If so, what is the meaning of Paul's insistence that ritual circumcision must be abandoned by the church?

The seventh-day Sabbath and the annual Old Testament sabbaths fit into two distinct categories. The annual sabbaths were part of the ceremonies instituted to atone for sin and they came to an end when Jesus died for sin on the cross (Col. 2:15-17). The seventh-day Sabbath was created before man sinned and cannot have come to an end at the cross as its primary purpose was not atonement but fellowship with the divine.