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Confirming the Churches

world evangelistic work of Al Parr
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March-June Report

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Dear brothers, sisters, family and friends,

Preparing a large book for printing, and managing the promotion, shipping and accounting require a great deal more time and energy than I could have guessed. The bi-monthly report scheduled for April was continually squeezed out until the second week in June before I could find time to devote to it. By then it was nearly time for the next report, so I decided to wait until the end of the month so I could add the June news.

MARCH. In my previous report I mentioned a church in the Detroit area that had spoken to me about help during the preacher-selection process. They (the Riverview Church of Christ) had a special meeting scheduled Saturday, March 8 with a preacher from the other side of the state, so I went to meet with them during that time. It is a small church with aging leadership, but with a wide range of ages in attendance, including a good number of children. They scheduled me to preach on April 13. That day was a great day of fellowship and joy in the Lord for all of us. They schedule me to preach again two Sundays in June, but in May they found a man from the north suburbs who met their full-time needs and was able to support himself while doing so. We have continued to communicate, and they seem to have made a good start with brother Oz.

My 4-year-old grandson stayed with me the week of March 10. We got along fine, but he loves attention and seldom left my side, chattering all the time. (His 8-year-old sister, on the other hand, was a tremendous help in the house, and an encouragement to my work during her 16-day stay in the middle of June.) Somehow, I met all my goals and deadlines during the week. The same cannot be said for the men who were supposed to meet with me on Saturday the 15th. The men from that church in southwest Michigan who had several times spoken with me about leadership issues had scheduled a leadership training seminar for the weekend of April 18-20, and were coming to Saline to discuss specific goals and a schedule. They called at 7:30 that morning to say that they had cancelled the whole plan because one of the leaders of the church was moving away.

APRIL. April 1 began the new phase of my work with the Saline church. I am not scheduled to preach in Saline the second and third Sundays each month so that I can use the week before Sunday for writing and distribution of literature, and can travel to other churches as opportunities arise. The first of those weeks in April was completely consumed by proof-reading and editing of the book, and communicating with the printer as I learned procedures and formats. The following week I had a meeting planned with leadership of a church in north Alabama. Tuesday was to be a meeting with one, then Wednesday with the elders and possibly Thursday with the missions committee. At Tuesday's meeting I was informed that the other meetings were cancelled. It was a long trip for an enjoyable stay with Chris' sister and her husband.

Scheduled to preach in northwest Indiana, I left Alabama early and spent a couple of days in central Illinois with my mother and sister. Saline had received two inches of snow, but the weather in Illinois was great for backyard activities and a patio cookout.

The April 20 visit with the Crown Point, Indiana church was another delight in many respects. My friend and supporter, Sybil Peffley, worships with that church, which was looking for a resident preacher. There was considerable time to visit with numerous members of the church before class. They impressed me with their love for the Lord and His church, and their determination to be faithful servants of Christ in their community. They have long met in a community activity building, so they don't have the expenses of building maintenance, and are able to put a greater percentage of their available resources into evangelism. Sybil had a brother and sister visiting from Alabama, and we enjoyed a great lunch together, followed by an afternoon of singing in the living room.

The series of sermons from the prison epistles concluded on April 27 with a lesson from the epistle to Philemon. All those lessons, as are all the sermons preached in Saline, are on the church web site at www.salinechurchofchrist.org. There were two 5th Sundays in this reporting period. Since the early 1980's I have used the evening worship assembly on the 5th Sunday to answer questions that have been submitted by members of the church. Questions asked for March 30 were [1] Where do we go immediately at death?, [2] Are business meetings scriptural?, and [3] Will mental illness or loss of cognitive ability bar one from Heaven? The June 29

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questions were [1] How was the world repopulated after the flood? [2] Can a woman unknowingly violate the prohibition of I Timothy 2:11-12 against teaching a man? [3] How can one in Paradise view the suffering in Torments (Luke 16:19-31) and still have joy? [4] How should a Christian respond when introduced to a person with a religious title not authorized by God? [5] Do Christians “fall away,” or walk away? [6] Is it right for Christians to refer to sin as merely “mistakes”? [7] Is Jesus God? [8] As God has expectations of Christians, can Christians have expectations of one another? Listen to these and other lessons on the web site.

MAY. Jeremiah Tatum of Cookville, Tennessee was with the Saline church May 1-4 for a gospel meeting on the family (both earthly and heavenly). He stayed with me, and we had some very uplifting late night chats.

My mother’s birthday is about a week after Mother’s Day, so in recent years I have spent some vacation time with her during the week between the dates. When the schedule is right she likes to go to a Cardinals baseball game in St. Louis. This year, as two years ago, we saw the Cubs play (she wore red, I wore blue). Every trip to Lincoln also gives me an opportunity to meet with the small church there. The mid-week assembly this time, including Mom and me, was eight. On the way home I stopped in Three Oaks, Michigan to try to visit with the church. A local resident who is not a member of the church is a student at the University of Michigan, and visits with the Saline church regularly during the school year. I wanted to alert the local church to the family’s interest, but was unable to contact anyone in person. I have written, but have not yet received a response.

NEW BOOK. After over 20 years in writing, and over 2 years in editing – including two late format revisions for the printer – *Introduction to Old Testament Books* book was finally published on May 15, 2014. You can find the 330+page paperback at Amazon.com, at createspace.com/4753283, or on my web site at acts1541.org/books.htm. If you prefer to pay by check, I can ship from my office with an invoice payable in 30 days.

CONFRONTING HERESY. The last two weeks of May brought some very distressing news to the churches of southern Michigan, and to me personally. A preacher I have known and respected since about 1980, and another I met only last year, but have respected as highly, have begun to preach a destructive false doctrine wherever they can get a hearing. They have been calling and visiting churches from coast to coast in lower Michigan pushing the so-called “AD70 doctrine.” For those who may not know, this doctrine is (in brief) that all the biblical prophecies of the second coming of Christ were fulfilled in the destruction of the Jews’ temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70. We have heard from churches in Ohio, Alabama and even California that these two men have made personal visits, written letters or made phone calls pushing this heresy. Both of these men have long and happy histories with the Saline church. June has been a month of pain and sadness for this church, who just two years ago had a similar upset when their local preacher left the faith and went into a sect in Ann Arbor. In the first two weeks of June I prepared a 16-page tract on the interpretation of scripture with specific application to Matthew chapter 24 (one of the central chapters perverted by their doctrine), and preached what the Bible actually says about the second coming of Christ. Several churches in our section of the state have been deeply disturbed by calls and visits from one of these men. At least one other church has publicly marked them as false teachers. I asked one of the false teachers to engage with me in a written debate on Matthew 24, but he refused, even after publicly offering to explain his views to anybody any time.

THE NEAR FUTURE. The plan for the rest of this year in the work of Confirming the Churches begins with the writing of a study guide for Bible classes on the AD70 doctrine. I anticipate finishing that in time for the fall quarter in church classes, which typically begins in September. After that study guide, I intend to get back to the book on translations, which has been delayed by current needs for other material. I also have study guides on Isaiah and Jeremiah nearly ready for publication, and would like to have those available by the end of the year. August 7-10 is the annual Michigan Bible Lectures program hosted by Saline, Plymouth West and Garden City churches. This year’s theme is “Selected Bible Passages for Today’s Needs.” My topic is Galatians 6:1, scheduled for the closing lecture of the series. September 1-13 I am to be in India, and November 3-10 I am scheduled for public and private Bible studies with Christians and non-Christians in Riverview, New Brunswick, Canada. I am still in need of financial support for these last two trips. Please help if you can, or connect me with others who might be interested.

Thank you for your support and prayers, and may God bless you.

In His service,



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Contributions received March 1 - June 14:

Greensboro Road church	\$1000
Egypt church	\$200
LeIsha Kensey	\$100
Nettleton church	\$800
Drucilla McIntire	\$400
Sybil Peffley	\$800

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