

SEARCHING *The* SCRIPTURES

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." — John 5:39.



"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

—Acts 17:11

VOLUME 1

AUGUST, 1960

NUMBER 8

FORGETTING THE LORD

Jas. P. Miller

"And it shall be, when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not, and houses full of good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; then beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."

In the verses above, taken from Deuteronomy 6:10-13, we have the warning of the God of Israel to His people not to forget Him. He counts for them the great blessings they are to enjoy in the land of promise and reminds them that they came from God and were not the results of their own labors. All who know the history of Israel know they forgot God time and time again. Their history was one of bondage and sin. It did not have to be this way, however, for God had given them a plan whereby they would not forget him. Had they followed His plan they would have dwelt in peace in the good land on the other side of the Jordan. Let us consider the divine plan to make them remember. It was given, "That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged' (Deut. 6:2).

TEACH THY CHILDREN

In verse 7 God said, speaking of the statutes and commandments of the Lord: "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children." The tragic truth is that it only takes one generation for the commandments of the God of heaven to be forgotten and the truth lost to the sons of men. This is illustrated in the almost unbelievable fact that the story of the creation was forgotten. Fathers failed to teach their children that God made them and over the years the very origin of man was lost. Can you conceive today of a father not telling his son that he was made in the image of God? This great truth was known by Adam and by his sons. Adam surely taught it to Cain and Abel and they to the next generation, but somehow the entire Gentile world forgot. Paul states in Romans 1:22, 23: "Professing them-

selves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." It is so easy for one generation to think that the victories of today will suffice for tomorrow. The battle for truth goes on and on and so does the responsibility to teach our children.

In Ephesians 6:4 we are told to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Our children must be taught the truth. Our children must be taught all the truth. Our children must be taught the truth in such a way that they will be able to teach the truth to their children. The old ship of Zion in the generation that is past, came through stormy seas. Digression, persecution and battle was her story written in faith. Today a new generation that has not been taught by the fathers is in command. Herein lies the danger. The sons are no better than they have been taught by the fathers. The great facts of the word of God need to be impressed on young minds. That the gospel is God's power to save; That there is one faith, one body and one baptism; that the church is not a denomination, but the blood bought body of Christ; that we must speak as the "oracles of God;" that the church is all sufficient to do the work that God has given it to do; and that God has a pattern. If the church fails today it will be because we somehow failed, as Israel of old, to teach the statutes and commandments of the Lord to our children.

TALK OF THEM IN THY HOUSE

In this same verse (Deut. 6:7) we find these words, "and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house." Some readers will be quick to say that this was before the day of television. Let no one misunderstand. Television is a matter of selection as are so many other things of life: separating the good from the bad, but in too many homes there is no longer talk of any kind. All communications have ceased except the bare minimum required for life itself. All that the children will know in the home is what they see and hear on TV. Yet in the long ago there was a danger that God's people would forget to talk about Him in their houses. If that was true then it is fearfully true now. We are not reading the Bible to our children. We are not telling them of Jesus as we sit beside their beds at night. No longer around the family fireside are discussions held about the right and wrong of life. Hollywood has taken the job over for the home and the children know more

about GUNSMOKE than they know about David and Goliath, and more about HAVE GUN WILL TRAVEL than they know about the cross of Christ. We need to heed the warning. Israel forgot to teach the commandments of God in their homes and they were soon back in the "house of bondage."

WHEN WALKING BY THE WAY

Jehovah continues in this 7th verse in this manner, "and when thou walkest by the way." Here is the commandment to speak of the statutes and commandments of the Lord to our neighbors and fellow-travelers. The man of God must be interested in his brother's welfare. The Jews were told to talk of God's law one with the other. The New Testament puts it like this in Hebrews 10:24-25. "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." In Romans 15:1, 2 these words, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification." We are our brothers keeper. The Lord may be forgotten because we forget to encourage the weak among us.

UPON RETIRING AND RISING UP

They were further admonished to remember the commandments of Jehovah when "thou liest down, and when thou risest up." They were to live by the word of the Lord. His will was to govern them night and day. They were to remember that the day just spent came from God and that the day to come and the strength to live it would be from the God that brought them up out of the land of Egypt. As the chapter continues they were commanded to do material things that fitted the material covenant. The admonitions above however live from the pages of sacred history. They are for "our admonition" and what a great lesson they teach. The Jews would not remember. They soon passed back into the house of bondage. Will this be true of the Lord's people today? This much is sure, it will be true unless we heed the warnings of Jehovah: "Then beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."

SHORT SERMONS

The late Dr. Parfker once said: "It is a popular error to mistake that length is the only dimension of a sermon." A man said to a minister: "Your sermons are too short." Said the minister: "If you will practice all I preach, you will find them quite long." A sentence may be a sermon. You may measure sermons as you measure scars; not by their apparent bigness or littleness, but by the light they send through space. If a sermon reaches high enough and penetrates keenly enough, it does not matter much about its length.

—Borrowed.

The great mission of the church is to preach the gospel to the lost. As the pillar and ground of the truth, "she is to carry the word of life to a darkened people. Many times the church fails in its mission.

Searching The Scriptures
*Published Monthly At
Gainesville, Florida*

Application pending for entry as second class matter at the U.S. Post Office at Gainesville, Florida, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

EDITORS

H. E. Phillips 124 S.E. 7th St. Gainesville, Florida	James P. Miller 2523 W. Diana Tampa, Florida
--	--

Subscription: U.S. \$2.00 per year in advance
Foreign \$2.50 per year in advance

Address all communications and changes of addresses to:
124 S.E. 7th Street
Gainesville, Florida

Editorial H. E. PHILLIPS

WHAT IS REALLY WRONG WITH THE CHURCH?

From Galatians 1 we read: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:6-10).

That something is wrong in the church in many sections today no one will seriously deny. The party spirit, railing contention, angry charges and little or no spiritual progress characterizes many of the churches of Christ over this nation, and we would be little better than fools to deny it before the world. This is a shameful and disgraceful conduct of professed children of God. It is setting us back in evangelizing the world to the point that our great grand children will be suffering from the influence of this evil among us. Why does all this have to be? Is there nothing we can do to correct the perverse spirit that has developed this condition?

It is not reasonable to assume that factions exist simply because men do not want to have peace and harmony in the church. A few people might delight in disturbances, but the overwhelming majority would delight to have unity and peace. The first century Christians had the same problems that we have today. The verses just read express that very fact. The Christians in Galatia had been moved away from

the true foundation to what was called "another gospel," but Paul affirms it not to be the gospel given by Christ. There must be some reason or reasons why the disturbances exist in congregations today. To say that some special group has caused all the trouble is not to give the reason why these factions exist. This just suggests the source of the trouble. We must still find out WHY these factions exist and that will give us the reasons for the trouble today.

Let me say at this point that there can be nothing wrong with the church as it is pictured in the New Testament. The fault is not with the plan; it is with the people who compose the church. Whatever is wrong with the church in many sections today, it is the result of ignoring the perfect law of liberty. By searching into all possible influences that have been brought upon us both from within and without we find some of the reasons why departures are evident today. We note three in connection with present circumstances:

1. IGNORANCE OF THE BIBLE

God spoke of Israel through Hosea the prophet: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hos. 4:6). Ignorance of the Bible is rampant on every level in the church today. The average member does not know the truth from error; he spends little or no time in searching the Scriptures to establish himself in the faith once for all delivered. Ignorance is the most fertile soil for false doctrine and division. This condition is inexcusable because there are more copies of the Bible in existence today than ever before, and nearly every responsible person can read. The trouble is that members do not take the time to read, but would rather have "their preacher" dish out a little sermon each week that will not offend. With a membership like this it is no wonder that just about any doctrine taught takes roots and creates all sorts of division.

But it is not all with the membership. Many elders do not know what their responsibilities are; they do not know the nature or limits of their authority, consequently, they have led the churches into paths unknown to the word of God, or they have allowed the churches to drift into denominationalism and immorality. When someone calls attention to these conditions many elders childishly cry that the preacher is against them and is taking over the church. Some elders are so charged with ignorant zeal that they have begun projects that are unauthorized in the Book of God and completely beyond their authority, and when their attention is called to the Scriptures they ignorantly charge that their rights are invaded and a group of factionists are disturbing the churches. Deacons are also ignorant of their responsibilities and duties. In some places the deacons run the affairs of the churches. Some are completely unqualified for their positions. Some have been delegated with authority which God never permitted them to have, and they charge any opposition with meddling and causing trouble in the churches. Let me make it clear at this point that I am not speaking here of qualified elders and deacons. There are many across this nation, but we have enough who are unlearned in the word of God to cause a lot of trouble in many sections. I highly honor and respect all elders and deacons who have a proper knowledge and respect for the word of God. They deserve the highest honor we are allowed to give man.

We cannot ignore the fact that many preachers are also ignorant of the doctrine of Christ. This may explain why many elders and deacons do not know their places in the church of the Lord. This does not mean that there are not many true and faithful gospel preachers who have a good knowledge and respect for the Bible, but we are referring to those who are like the Pharisees in teaching more tradition of the elders than the word of God. Paul spoke of some when he said, "Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm" (I Tim. 1:7). These are the poetry reading, sad story telling, tradition binding preachers who are interested in personal honor and filthy lucre rather than in teaching the simple gospel of Christ.

This state of gross ignorance of the "meat" of the word of God is the bed in which the seeds of confusion and division take root and bloom. The sad part of all this is that most of these people are content to remain in this state of ignorance. Until there is a love for the truth, it will not be learned and respected. This is one of the reasons for the state of trouble now existing in the church.

2. WORLDLINESS IN THE CHURCH

John said: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I John 2:15, 16). James said: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). Jesus said of the apostles: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16).

From these verses we rightly conclude that the church and the world must be kept apart and the worldly influence must not be allowed to get into the church if it is to remain of the Lord. But in spite of this warning from the New Testament worldly influences have crept into the churches in many sections and are tolerated just as the case of fornication in the church at Corinth. But how does this cause factions and trouble among brethren?

Worldliness does not consist only of immoral practices, but also includes actions that originated by worldly standards and wisdom. We have practices that were invented by worldly minded men and women, such as the observing of special days of worship. Many of these grow out of pagan and Jewish rites. The formalism in worship appeals more to the worldly ambitions than to the doctrine of Christ and the apostles. The schemes and systems built upon worldly organizations show the influence of worldly wisdom in many churches.

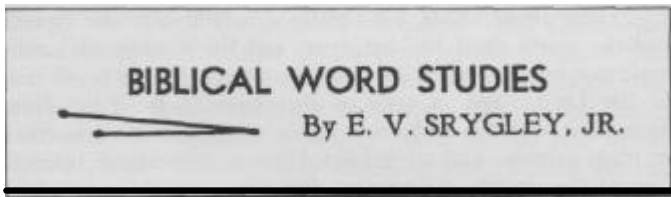
Worldliness also includes the low standards of morality. This is shown in the disgraceful dress of women who appear on the streets today. The conduct of young people of the church often indicates the low standards of their parents. Drinking, dancing, cursing, gambling and the like go on among those in the church just as freely as if the law of the Lord taught it. The fact that many will excuse and justify this conduct in the church separates them from those who will not indorse it. Worldliness in the church turns the mind from spiritual things to fleshly lusts. This is the difference between life and death according to Romans 8:6,7.

3. DENOMINATIONAL COMPROMISE

The church today is under the influence of denominationalism in some parts. The desire to have the praise of men in general, plus the desire to ease the resistance against denominational doctrines, has led to a sort of truce—a compromise. The social concept of the gospel that has long been a part of denominational tradition has become the concept of many brethren. The emphasis on wealth, buildings, customs and ritualism is so much a part of our thinking that it has become difficult to distinguish between the church of the Lord and those of men. The willingness of some preachers and elders to mimic denominationalism in organizations and observance of special days and rites has forced the compromise to the point that there is no return in some sections.

The idea of compromise is always agreement "by concession." One gives something to get something. Compromise with the world or with religions of men is scripturally impossible with the New Testament church. What can we concede that is characteristic of the Lord's church without destroying some part of the divine institution? If such could be done, who has the authority to make such concessions? No one! Compromise has always led to apostasy, and unless we stop the compromise, we will be lost.

Divisions result from these conditions and others not named. The church will never be what the Lord wants it to be until these situations are corrected. You and I as members of that one body can be "living stones" that will not become of the world and change the building of God into a building of satan, whose end is destruction. Let us strive to keep the church pure and free from the defilement of mans wisdom.



"BIBLICAL WORD STUDIES"

E. V. Srygley, Jr.

"BELIEVE"

Our English verb "believe" is commonly the translation of the Greek verb *pisteuo*. This Greek verb is used in different senses in different contexts. For instance, the term sometimes means "mere acknowledgment of God's existence," Thayer's *Lexicon*, p. 512. In this sense, even the demons believe, James 2:19. And yet, this is precisely the meaning that "faith only" advocates must logically attach to the word in the plan of salvation that they propose. Obviously, the faith that saves is not the faith of James 2:19.

When the term "believe" is used of the faith by which one embraces Jesus it means, according to Thayer, "a conviction, full of joyful trust, that Jesus is the Messiah—the divinely appointed author of eternal salvation in the kingdom of God, conjoined with obedience to Christ," *Lexicon*, p. 511. In this sense, "believe" and related words are used in innumerable passages in the New Testament, Jno. 3:16; Rom. 5:1, etc.

AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

NO. II

Thomas G. O'Neal, Butler, Ala.

Last month it was pointed out the necessity of authority in religion. On authority only can the religious world unite. This month we want to study some false standards of religious authority.

One false standard accepted by multitudes is tradition. One may define traditions as that which is handed down from the past, that which is inherited. The scribes and Pharisees by their *tradition* had made the word of God of none effect. (Mt. 15:9-) Teaching their tradition constituted vain worship (v. 9.) Upon this false standard much of the Roman Catholic Church is built. They establish religious authority mainly by the tradition of the Catholic Church.

Men hold to "their preacher" as the final religious standard. It is fine for the preacher to be respected just like any other man, but people need to learn "not to think of men above that which is written." (I Cor. 4:6.) Paul shows in Rom. 10:13-17 that a preacher is necessary for one's salvation. Paul said that he, Apollos and others were "ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man." (I Cor. 3:5.) Many think that because a preacher has a string of degrees as long as one's arm attached to his name, that makes his word authoritative. However, the preacher is just a man. (Acts 10:26.) Paul's teaching in I Cor. 4:6 is very much needed today!

Creeds are held to by many honest people as the final source of authority. One hears them say, "Well, my creed teaches . . ." Look at the record of creeds for a moment. First, they are the product of man's hands; not God's. Secondly, they are in constant need of revision. This year, 1960, the Methodist will meet to revise their 1956 Discipline. Third, they contradict themselves. On one page of the Baptist Manual one reads justification by *faith only*, and on another page justification by *grace only*. Fourth, they do not harmonize with each other. One will teach baptism by sprinkling, while another teaches baptism by immersion only. Fifth, creeds contradict the Word of God. Man has never written a creed that on at least one point it was not at variance with the Word of God. Sixth, creeds declare the Word of God, the Bible, to be an insufficient revelation by their very existence.

Ancestors are held up as the religious standard by many. The statement is made, "It was good enough for mother, father, grandmother, or grandfather, therefore, it is good enough for me." The Model T or the Model A was good enough for them, but who drives one today? But notice, which ancestor is your standard? One has two parents, four grandparents and eight great-grandparents. Do all of these fourteen souls agree religiously? If they do, it is the exception; not the rule. Paul followed his ancestors, (Gal. 1:14-15), but when God called him "to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood . . ." (Gal. 1:16.) Paul did what many need to do now, cease following their ancestors.

Many bow down to ecclesiastical organizations for their authority. Conventions, councils, synods, conferences, are the order of the day. They have various shades and forms. Many are not called by the above names. City-wide meeting

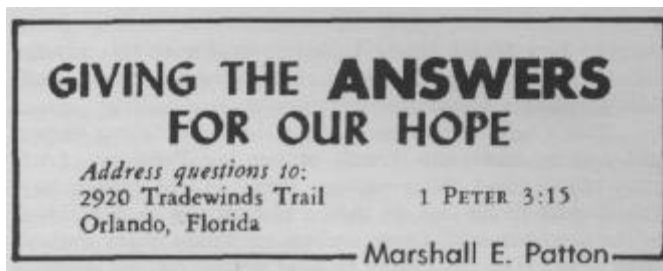
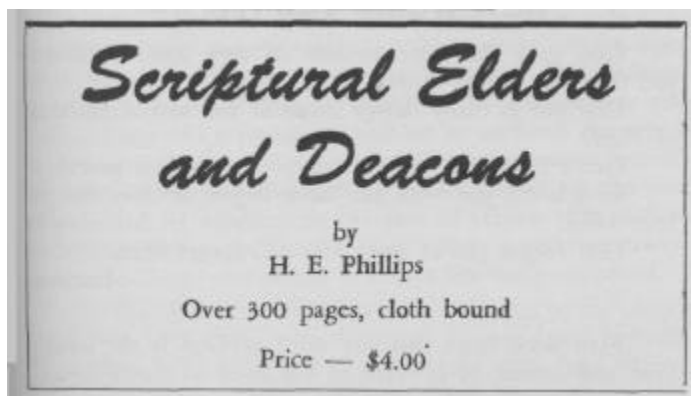
of the elders, lectureships, Bible Forums, etc., are the names of many ecclesiastical organization. Delegates and those not delegated meet, discuss issues, conclusions are drawn, then people bow to these decisions. They bow either by force or voluntarily; however, in either case they are governed by the ruling of the organization.

"As long as one is honest and sincere, it doesn't make any difference what one does," is the standard of many. Thus, one's own feelings, or his conscience, is the final standard. Conscience is a creature of education! Why can some commit adultery, steal, etc., and have no feeling of remorse, while others would live in horror if they committed such deeds. The answer is seen in the fact that their con-science has not been taught, or it has been seared. (I Tim. 4:1.) Paul made havoc of the church, (Acts 7:58; 9:1-2; 22:4-5; 26:10-11), and yet while he was so doing, it was with a clear conscience. (Acts 23:1.) After he had learned of the way, Paul could no longer persecute the church with a clear conscience. The "man of God" with a clear consci-ence was returning to Bethel with the "old prophet," how-ever, this did not change God's law. (I Kings 13.)

A paper, like this one, sometimes is held by some brethren to be the final word religiously. Let something appear on the editorial page of some paper and brethren will bow down to the dictate like wheat falling after the scythe. No more authority is needed for some than to read a practice in certain papers. To do so makes the practice "from heaven" in their minds.

The final false standard to be noticed in this article is religious institutions. This is done in various ways. Lec-tureships are held with many attending, decisions are reached, then voluntarily people go home and enact the decisions. Then, young men attend these institutions to prepare them-selves for life, and if they don't go along with the attitude or policy of the college, they are branded. Some, rather than meet the branding iron, will agree with the institution's attitude. Then when they preach, people will accept their word without "searching the scriptures" for themselves. (Acts 17:11.) Thus, directly or indirectly many accept the authority of the religious institutions. The above attitude does not always take place either with reference to the insti-tution or to those young men attending.

Take a look at the list of false standards: Tradition, Preachers, Creeds, Ecclesiastical Organizations, Ancestors, Conscience, Religious Papers, Religious Institutions, (colleges, etc.). These can all be added up in one word — MAN! "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23.) Jesus taught, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." (Mt. 15:14; Lk. 6:39).



QUESTION: Who will be the second after the dead in 1 Thess. 4:16?—J. J. M.

ANSWER: I have selected and adapted the above question from a letter received from an honest inquirer seeking information on the issue of Premillennialism. Because of limited space I cannot deal with all the references cited in the letter, however, the answer to the above question will deal with one of the major points of concern and will supply much of the desired information.

It is evident from the letter that our querist is confused by the theory of Premillennialism which associates 1 Thess. 4:16 and Rev. 20:5 then concludes a first resurrection (of the righteous) and a second resurrection (of the wicked) with a thousand years intervening during which Christ is to reign on earth on David's throne.

The *contrast* in 1 Thess. 4:16 is not between two resurrections nor the righteous and the wicked, but between the "dead in Christ" and those "alive in Christ" at his coming. This is the contrast in both the text and the context. Why pervert it or add more to it?

The Thessalonians thought the second coming of Christ was imminent and were greatly disturbed about their "dead in Christ" who would not be "alive and remain" at his coming. Concerning this Paul says, "I would not have you ignorant" and proceeds to show that those who are "alive and remain . . . shall not prevent them which are asleep." The word "prevent" as used in the Scriptures means "precede, anticipate; go before." Compare: Psm. 119:147; Matt. 17:25; 2 Sam. 22:6, 19; Job. 30:27. The meaning in 1 Thess. 4:16 is that those alive when Jesus comes will not be caught up to meet the Lord before "the dead in Christ." Evidently, they thought that those alive at the coming of Christ would have advantages over those in the grave, and this view was increasing the sorrow of those who lost loved ones. Thus the apostle shows that those who are "alive and remain" will have no advantage over the dead for "the dead in Christ shall rise first." Then both will be caught up together to meet the Lord. First, the dead in Christ shall be raised. Second, those that are "alive and remain" shall be caught up together with them (the dead in Christ) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Whatever may be the meaning of Rev. 20:1-6, it can-not be used to prove a thousand year reign of Christ on earth between two literal resurrections. According to Rev. 20:4 the only ones involved in the thousand year reign with Christ are "the souls of them that were headed for the witness of Jesus." This involves the *souls*, not bodies, of a few martyred individuals. This does not include all the righteous —not even us, and likely never will. Furthermore the pass-age does not mention the second coming of Christ, a bodily resurrection, a reign on earth, the throne of David, Jerusalem or Palestine, Christ on earth, or all the righteous. Premillen-

nialists *assume* these points, but, remember, *assumption* is not proof! In a future article I plan to deal with this passage from a positive point of view and to show that it is a mistake to place a literal interpretation upon it.

That Christ is now on David's throne according to prophecy is evident from Peter's sermon on Pentecost. (Acts 2:29-36). Here Peter quotes Psm. 132:11 which says Christ shall sit on David's throne and affirms its fulfillment in the resurrection of Christ and his exaltation to the Father's right hand. On this throne he now reigns and will continue to do so until he comes again. (1 Cor. 15:22-26).

According to Paul Christ was reigning when he wrote First Corinthians. He is reigning now and will continue to do so till death is destroyed. This will be "at his coming." Furthermore, "at his coming" he will deliver the kingdom up to God and, according to 1 Cor. 15:28 "then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

INTO ALL THE WORLD

(No. 2) *Connie W.*

Adams, Newbern, Tennessee

That the gospel message is universal in scope is recognized by all who have even a slight amount of Biblical knowledge. It is the remedial system sent forth from God to souls floundering in sin. Wherever sin may be found, there must the gospel be carried. All who have been bathed in that fountain filled with blood, should find no rest until they have made every possible effort to teach the truth to their neighbors, friends, relatives and to send it into distant places where such truth has either been withheld from the people, or where it once was taught but has now been silenced. The church distributively and collectively must be engaged in this pressing work. All this we established in the first article of this series.

While zeal is woefully lacking in many quarters, and while we would promote it in every scriptural way, it needs to be observed that zeal apart from knowledge can be dangerous. It is evident that more and more brethren have been impressed with their responsibilities in reaching the lost of earth with the gospel. This is cause for rejoicing. But zeal alone is not enough. The person who would teach another must not only be eager to talk with his neighbor, he must know what to say. It is not enough for a preacher to desire to go into some distant field, he must be grounded and settled in the faith so that he will wisely and properly instruct those he may convert. Nor is it sufficient for a congregation to be zealous to send a man to some field, she must accomplish her work through the local church and her elders must not assume more oversight than God intended for them to have. It will now be shown that in some respects the people of God have demonstrated more zeal than they have knowledge.

(1) The men who are supported to preach in foreign or distant fields are important. If a young man is a student in a college operated by brethren, sometime or other during his stay there he will hear reports from men in what are sometimes referred to as the "mission field." Or he may engage in a study in what is styled a "mission study class." The writer recalls being stirred quite deeply by a preacher from New York who visited the campus when he was a stu-

dent. With but little persuasion he would have "struck off" for New York. There have been cases when young men just out of school have gone off to some foreign country to preach. While there is a need for preachers all over the world, zeal must be tempered with knowledge. It would be good for the man to demonstrate his faithfulness among brethren who can encourage him and advise him when he needs it. It would also make it easier for him to secure adequate support. Then he needs to make every preparation which can be made before he embarks. If another language is to be learned, it would be helpful to work on that before going. The customs, history and nature of the people among whom he shall go ought to be studied. We are not inspired as were the apostles. We have seen brethren on the foreign field come up with some of the most "hair-brained" schemes to get before the people. Many are quite loose doctrinally. Men ought to go and brethren ought to support them, but men who have proved their soundness and who have their feet under them ought to go.

(2) The manner in which brethren support those sent can show more zeal than knowledge. At the close of World War II considerable zeal for the lost of other nations manifested itself. The spark was fanned into flame and brethren began to visualize whole nations turning to the Lord. Preachers were sent and supported through a sponsoring church. That church assumed responsibility for the work and asked other churches to assist by sending funds to her and said she in turn would direct it to the preachers. Here was *zeal*, yes, but did they not *know* that the only method employed in the early church for supporting preachers in the field was by each church sending direct to that man? "Other churches" sent wages to Paul at Corinth. (2 Cor. 11:8.) The church at Philippi had sent to him on another occasion. There is not a case on record in the New Testament where one church acted as a forwarding agency for others. Yet in the zeal of the hour, all that was overlooked, and what was cause for great rejoicing has been turned into unspeakable sorrow as the sacred body of Christ has been torn by strife and discord by those who in their zeal had begun a practice unauthorized and which could have been avoided by knowledge of the truth and faithful adherence to it. When men go forth being sustained by a *sponsoring* church, and preach to others about returning to the old paths, speaking where the Bible speaks, and restoring the church to its original purity, they are inconsistent. Let any of them show from scripture justification for their practice and we will gladly withdraw the charge.

There has been so little zeal for the lost of earth, it is a shame that many who have gone, in their zeal have forsaken knowledge. Both are necessary.

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF—

God gave the same amount of time and attention to you that you devote to Him??

God put as many things ahead of you as you put ahead of Him?

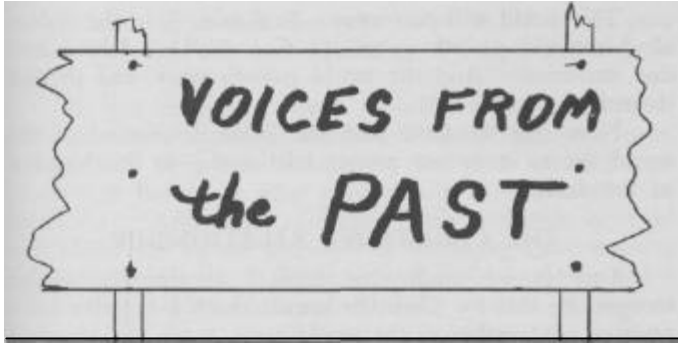
God's promises were no more certain than yours?

God loved you with the same degree of love that you love Him ?

God forgot you as quickly as you forget Him?

—Borrowed,

Man must learn that the word of God is the mind of God and cannot be lowered to the level of man's thinking.



(The article that follows was taken from the February 17, 1916 issue of the *Gospel Advocate* and was written by the beloved M. C. Kurfees. The causes of division remain with us and the need for re-study of articles of this nature is great. —Editor).

CAUSING DIVISIONS AND OCCASIONS OF STUMBLING

By M. C. K.

Division among the followers of Christ comes from two separate and distinct sources. First, it comes from teaching and urging things which God requires men to do; and secondly, it comes from teaching and urging things which he does not require. Now, guilt is always involved in both cases; but in the former it attaches to those who refuse to accept the things taught and urged, while in the latter it attaches to those who do the teaching and urging.

Our Lord himself declares that he came to make division in the former of these ways. We give the fact in his own bold and solemn language: "Think not that I came to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matt. 10:34-36.) "Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: for there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. They shall be divided, father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against her mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." (Luke 12:51-53.)

Thus he distinctly declares that he came to send a sword and division; to array the members of the same family against one another, and to create division among them in spite of the tenderest of all earthly relationships. But, in the light of the context, and, for that matter, in the light of all the word of God, it can plainly be seen that division, in all such cases, is brought about not by the reckless and wanton spirit which presses its opinion or anything else which is not required of men by the Lord, but by solemnly presenting what *is thus required* and by its acceptance on the part of some and its rejection on the part of others. Division in such cases must come, but the guilt which it involves always attaches to those who refuse to accept the things required.

Now, it is a lamentable fact that in all ages of the church there have been those who disturbed its peace and harmony by causing division in the second of the ways here named.

Strange indeed must be the infatuation which seizes one who will thus deliberately create division among the followers of Christ. In one of the many private letters received on the current baleful and regrettable controversy, a thoughtful brother says:

How any lover of the peace and unity among the brethren can ever bring himself to see that he ought affirmatively to urge any idea or notion to the disturbance of the peace of the church, except those things that are vital to the salvation of the people, is more than I have ever been able to understand. Brother Boll himself admits that his notions, whatever they are, are not at all vital to the salvation of people. This it seems to me would have held him back from the exploitation of his notions. But there is a peculiarity about the course of those who become imbued with some new idea. It overwhelms the individual till it becomes, in his mind, the beginning and end of all else.

No "lover of peace and unity among the brethren" *will ever do such a thing* unless, as just stated, he is seized by some strange infatuation; but instead of this being an extenuation, it is an aggravation of the offense. It is deplorable, too, that when men become thus dominated by the spirit of strife that is willing to rend the body of Christ, they lose all sense of shame over the outrageous spectacle which they present to the world. In the *Literary Digest*, February 5, 1916, we find the following report of such a scene:

In a little town on the Atlantic coast a church divided, a writer in the *Christian Work* (New York) tells us, "the outgoing element erecting their building just across the alley, which the town has named Hell's Alley," while the two factions, with no sense of shame, attend their respective churches, conducting prayers and songs and preaching and worship.

Surely such men in such a situation, if they will pause and seriously reflect for a moment, do not expect their "prayers and songs and preaching and worship" to be well pleasing to God or to be heard by Him. These "Hell's Alleys of separation," says the *Literary Digest*, are in "our various denominations," and the unholy strife goes on. As if in defiance of the Most High himself, men continue to press their opinions and speculations and the revolting spectacle of strife and division continues. The only effective remedy for it is the divine remedy given by Paul to the church in Rome: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned; and turn away from them." (Rom. 16:17.)

When the bishops of the church throughout the country and the churches under their leadership shall adopt this remedy, then, and only then, will the mouth of such disturbers of Zion be stopped. This high-handed sin of disturbing the peace of God's people has the distinction of being classed with the seven things hated by Jehovah: "There are six things which Jehovah hateth; yea, seven things which are an abomination unto him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood; a heart that deviseth wicked purposes, feet that are swift in running to mischief, a false witness that uttereth lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Prov. 6:16-19.)

Surely all who retain any regard for the cause of God will pause and reflect.

THE WORLD

L. A. Mott, Callahan, Florida

Recently I had occasion to run the references listed under "world" in Young's *Analytical Concordance*. This makes a most interesting and thought-provoking study.

In the scriptures we read of two worlds, *this* world and the world *to come*. Jesus spoke of the sin of speaking against the Holy Spirit in these terms, "... it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come" (Matt. 12:32). Jesus was raised "far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1:21). Also see Mk. 10:29-30.

This world is the present age, the time we are now living. The world *to come* is the eternal age. The former will end: "... so shall it be in the end of the world" (Matt. 13:40; also cf. v. 49; 28:20); the latter will never end; it is eternal. In it men will live on and on and never die (Lk. 20:36).

In this article I propose to examine some of the things the Bible says about *this present world* and our proper relationship to it as Christians.

USAGES OF THE WORD

World has a number of different usages in the Bible. Sometimes the word refers to the *material creation*: "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear" (Heb. 11:3).

The word is sometimes used to describe the *people of earth*: "For God so loved the world..." (Jno. 3:16).

A third usage and the one that holds our attention at present may be stated as follows: *The evil of the world; that on earth which is opposed to the kingdom of God*. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 Jno. 2:15).

Now let us study the essential character or nature of the world as that term is used in this last sense.

THE PRESENT EVIL WORLD

John goes on to define "the things that are in the world." Hear him: "For all that is in the world, the *lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life*, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (v. 16).

This world is the *present evil world*: "... who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father" (Gal. 1:4).

Peter mentions "the *corruption that is in the world by lust*" (2 Pet. 1:4), and also, "the *defilements* (pollutions, KJV) *of the world*" (2:20). In this latter the alien sinner is entangled and the Christian may become "again entangled therein and overcome."

This kingdom called "the world" has a ruler to which its citizens are subject, which ruler is the devil. Jesus referred to "the *prince of this world*" (Jno. 12:31; 14:30); Paul mentioned "the *god of this world*" (2 Cor. 4:4) and "the *world-rulers of this darkness*," or "the *rulers of the darkness of this world*," KJV (Eph. 6:12); and John wrote, "... *the whole world lieth in the evil one*" (1 Jno. 5:19).

This world will pass away. Paul said, "... the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor. 7:31). John echoes this statement: "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof" (1 Jno. 2:17).

Now that we have seen the Bible description of this world, let us study our proper relationship to this kingdom of the devil.

THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATIONSHIP

One cannot study this subject discerningly without recognizing that the Christian sustains both a negative and a positive relationship to the world.

VIEWED NEGATIVELY

Christians are *not OF the world*. Jesus told his disciples, "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (Jno. 15:19). Again, as Jesus petitions the Father, he says, "I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (Jno. 17:14-16).

Of course these words have a direct and special application to the apostles. However, the application of the principle extends to every Christian for Jesus "gave himself for our sins, *that he might deliver us out of this present evil world*" (Gal. 1:4). These conclusions may be stated: 1) We are *in* the world. 2) We have been chosen *out of* the world. 3) Therefore we are not *of* the world.

Two words in 1 Cor. 1:2 seem to me to define the Christian's proper relationship to the world. First let me get the verse before you: Paul writes "unto the *church* of God which is at Corinth, even them that are *sanctified* in Christ Jesus, called to be *saints*, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours."

The first word I want to emphasize is *church*. Most of you know that *church* comes from *ekklesia*, a Greek word compounded of the preposition *ek*, out of, and the noun *klesis*, a calling. So the church consists of those who have been *called out*. If you are a member of the church you have been called out of the world into the kingdom of God. God "called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9). Paul spoke of the same thing in different words when he said God "delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love" (Col. 1:13).

Now we shall study the word *sanctified*. *Sanctified* comes from *hagiazō*, a word which involves the idea of a separation, or a setting apart. One who has been sanctified as the word is used here has been set apart from the world and devoted to the service of God.

The Christian is a *conformist* and a *non-conformist*. This statement is not self-contradictory. The Christian is to be conformed to the will of God, but he is not to be conformed to the world. Paul wrote, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). In another age God called the Jews out of the world to be a special people. He instructed them not to make covenants with the heathen tribes about them, intermarry with them, nor to have

any participation in their sins whatsoever. *Israel was to be a separate people.* This is the meaning of 2 Cor. 6:14. Hear Paul:

"Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? for we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore *Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate,* saith the Lord. And touch no unclean thing; And I will receive you, And will be to you a Father, And ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1).

"Demas forsook me, having loved this present world" wrote Paul to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:16). *Christians are not to love the world* (1 Jno. 2:15). James seems virtually to exclaim, "Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4). There is no better interpretation of this verse than the book of Hosea. Jehovah instructed the prophet, "Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom: for the land doth commit great whoredom, departing from Jehovah" (Hos. 1:2). Hosea married Gomer who followed after her lovers and proved unfaithful to Hosea time and again. Thus did God impress Hosea with how he felt when Israel, his bride, played spiritual harlotry with idols (See chapters 1-9 especially). James brings this idea into the New Testament when he brands those who would be friends of the world "adulteresses." *The Christian who tries to be married to God and have an affair with the world at the same time is a spiritual harlot.*

James said, "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to *keep oneself unspotted from the world*" (Jas. 1:27).

"But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world," said Paul (Gal. 6:14). Again, "And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof" (5:24). What does Paul mean? Simply this: The Christian has taken that old man of sin up to the hill of Golgotha and *nailed him to the cross.* "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" (Rom. 6:12-2).

VIEWED POSITIVELY

Let no one think that Christianity consists only of "Thou shalt not's." There are many "Thou shalt's." The relationship of the Christian to the world may also be studied from a positive point of view.

First, observe that Christians are *sojourners* and *pilgrims* on the earth: "Beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2:11). "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20).

Thayer says of the word translated *sojourner*, *paroikos*, as used in 1 Pet. 2:11: "One who lives on earth as a stranger, a sojourner on the earth."

The word *parepidemos*, here translated pilgrim, is defined by the same authority as follows: "One who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives; hence stranger; sojourning in a strange place, a foreigner."

This earth is not the home of the Christian; our commonwealth is heaven. On this earth we are strangers just passing through on a heaven-ward journey.

There are many implications of this concept. The traveler does not carry so many bags, etc., as to be overburdened on his journey. So the Christian should not carry "excess baggage"; he should not take earthly attachments which would hinder his progress. Jesus said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth ..." (Matt. 6:19).

Another implication concerns our manner of life. A visitor from the United States to a foreign country is obligated to conduct himself in such a manner that his country will be viewed in a good light by those who observe his actions. Christians should live so as to reflect honor upon their homeland, heaven. We are to "show forth the excellencies" of God (1 Pet. 2:9). "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world" (Tit. 2:11-12).

But now to another point: *Blessing implies responsibility.* Are you a Christian? Have you been baptized into Christ? All spiritual blessings are *in Christ* (Eph. 1:3); therefore none are out of Christ. Members of the Lord's church are the exclusive recipients of these blessings. If you are a Christian then you are among those who have been blessed far more than any other people. Did you realize this?

But it does not end here. Blessings carries responsibility. Now that God has so blessed us he desires to use us as a means of blessing others. When God said to Abraham, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great," he added, "And be thou a blessing" (Gen. 12:2). Christians today are also commanded, "Be thou a blessing": *Ye are the salt of the earth:* but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. *Ye are the light of the world.* A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. *Even so let your light shine before men;* that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matt. 5:13-16).

Do all things without murmurings and questionings; that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ, that I did not run in vain neither labor in vain (Phil. 2:14-16).

Is yours a narrow and self-centered life that receives the blessings of God only to hoard them? Or is your life a channel through which God's blessings can flow to those about you?

CONCLUSION: VICTORY THROUGH FAITH

So the scriptures picture life as a conflict between the kingdom of God and the world. The coward and weakling will fall; only the victor will be blessed. The Saviour's promises are to "him that overcometh" (Rev. 2:7, **11**, etc.).

You can be victorious over the world. But there is only one way. This is the way of *continued faithfulness*. "For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith" (1 Jno. 5:4). "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life" is Jesus' promise (Rev. 2:10). Our prayer, then, is, "Increase our faith" (Lk. 17:5).

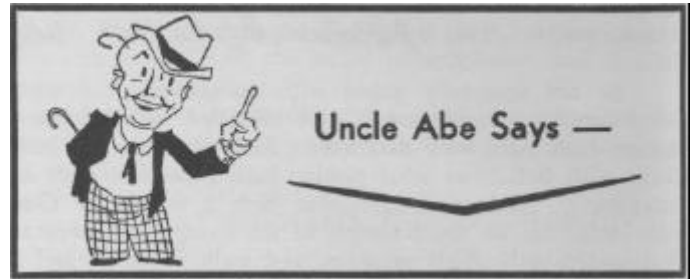


Not understood by many and misunderstood by many more the "theory of organic evolution" is taught and accepted by those in and out of our nation's schools as the "most logical explanation for the existence of man in the world today." Keep in mind that a theory is not backed by conclusive evidence that makes a general truth or a natural law. In spite of this there are those who would force or "teach" this to the students as a proven fact and ridicule those who dare to question them.

Some evolutionists contend that man and other animals have a common ancestor from which they arose. This is "assumed" to be true. This "assumed evidence" is necessary to begin the theory. It is "assumed" that a "common ancestor" did exist but there is a glaring lack of evidence to this effect. If we should go backward from this "assumed" point, where did this "common ancestor" come from? To have a living organism there must be a beginning. Did this first living organism come about by spontaneous generation? Did it just pop into existence from nothing? Paracelsus (1493-1541), a Swiss medical philosopher, gave instructions as to how a small human being could be made. There were certain substances to be placed in a bottle that was well stoppered and placed in a dung heap. Words were to be spoken over this each day and in time a small human being would appear in the bottle. This is not accepted by anyone as truth today. However, the evolutionist must have a beginning place for life. Where did original life begin? The law of biogenesis, all life comes from preexisting life, was demonstrated and accepted over one hundred years ago. If life came about by accidental union of atoms or molecules" as some "assume" it did, isn't this strange that it has never occurred before or since this "first" time? No means have ever been developed to indicate this either could or did happen. The evolutionist must not only begin with an assumption but must base his theory on this and other assumptions.

To seek truth is wise and good. To claim as true that which is conceived and nurtured upon assumptions and disproven theories is strange, strange indeed!

Christ became the author of eternal salvation unto them that obey Him (Heb. 5:8-9).



The failure to understand the nature and purpose of the church has caused indifference, carelessness and even opposition to the church of Christ today, even among those who claim to be members. This condition is growing more alarming every day.

Many look upon the church as a society of people primarily devoted to the care and relief of human suffering on a world-wide basis. To them the worth of the church is measured in the amount of relief given to others. This is not the prime purpose of the church; in fact, it has little obligation in this field. This work comes as a responsibility of each individual according to his ability and opportunity.

Again, many think of the church as a society devoted to the training and entertaining of the youth of the world. Some want the church to assume the responsibility of entertaining the young people and keeping them out of trouble. This is not the duty of the church, but one that belongs to parents.

Others look upon the church as a society of people headed by a "preacher" who is to solve the domestic, financial, political and social problems of the day. When problems arise, the church is asked to solve them. This is not the work of the church at all.

The true nature of the church is pictured in the New Testament. It is a "Called Out" people for the Lord. As a congregation it is to worship and glorify God through Christ; it is to pillar and support the gospel to the unsaved; it is to edify itself in love; it is to relieve its own in the manner prescribed in the New Testament. The church is spiritual in nature and "not of this world." It is the most important institution on earth. Christ loved the church enough to die for it (Eph. 5:25). How much do you love it? Enough to be faithful in all your duties as a member of it? Does it mean half as much to you as you claim when talking to others? Think on This!

What does the church mean to you? I know: it means everything! Most church members solemnly declare that the church is the most important thing in life to them, but their actions tell an entirely different story.

BOOK-MILLER DEBATE

"Instrumental Music In Worship"

Morris Butler Book, Christian Church and James P. Miller, church of Christ, discussing instrumental music in worship. As many as 1500 people heard some sessions of this debate. Many competent observers say it is the best discussion of music in worship available. Price — \$2.50

The News Letter Reports

" . . . They rehearsed all that God had done with them . . ."— Acts 14:27

Meetings in and around Birmingham are as follows: FRANKLIN PUCKETT preached at the Tarrant congregation . . . HARRY ROSE of Horse Cave, Kentucky preached at Mt. Olive . . . R. A. GINN, who has done a fine work at Meridian, Mississippi, was in a meeting with the Merney Points church . . . SEWELL HALL of Camden, S. C. was the speaker at Acipco . . . JAMES P. MILLER baptized 9 at Popular Street in Florence, Alabama where CURTIS FLATT has preached for a number of years. The crowds in the day time averaged over 225 . . . Miller went from Florence to Murfreesboro to speak for four nights where RICHARD WEAVER preaches. Large audiences and two baptized and one restored. JAMES A. ALLEN and HARRIS DARK finished the lectureship and meeting. Brother Allen spoke on Friday night and brother Dark on Saturday. Brethren came from all over middle Tennessee and Alabama . . . DALE SMELSER spoke in a meeting July 11-15 with the church in Fultondale, Alabama where WM. R. LAMBERT preaches . . . On two nights it was necessary to use folding chairs to seat the audience in the meeting JAMES R. COPE preached in with the Wendell Avenue congregation in Louisville, Kentucky. BILL HUMBLE works with this congregation . . . North Miami Avenue congregation averaged 181 for a new daily record in their vacation Bible school in June. BOBBY THOMPSON labors with this church . . . BUDDY MEYER of Tampa has preached at Ruskin, Florida and in Tampa at Habana Avenue and Hide Park recently . . . CHARLES BLAND, who preaches at Houston, Mississippi, is trying to interest the "One God" people in a debate. Announcement will be made if this debate is arranged.

Bible Truth is the name of a new bulletin published by JAMES NEEDHAM and the Ninth Avenue church in St. Petersburg . . . JAMES JUDD, who has been preaching in Africa, will keep appointments in the states to preach this summer. He will speak at the MacDill Avenue church in Tampa on August 17 at 7:30 . . . ARLIN CHAPMAN of Rome, Georgia spoke in a meeting with the Sulphur Springs church in Tampa at the end of May . . . FRANK ANDREWS finishes his work in Palmetto and moves to Floral City, Florida to begin work. He has done a fine work in Palmetto . . . HAROLD HOWARD preached in a meeting with Rock Church just out from Dickson, Tennessee last month.

EDGAR SRYGLEY is preaching for one of the congregations out from Florence, Alabama and attending school at Harding in Memphis for the Summer . . . FOY E. WALACE preached in a meeting in Vienna, 111. in June . . . R. L. ANDREWS of Abilene, Texas helped his brother, PAUL ANDREWS, in a vacation Bible school at North Street church in Tampa at the end of June. Paul was sent by the North Street congregation to South Hill, Virginia for a meeting in June . . . July 24-31 will find JAMES P. MILLER in a meeting with the Silver Street church in New Albany, Ind. This is across the river from Louisville, Kentucky. All readers of *Searching The Scriptures* are invited to attend . . . OLIN D. KERN is now preaching for the Front and Second Street church in Berea, Ohio . . . The church in Bedford,

Ohio has finished their new building. It is located at 512 Columbus Street in Bedford and is a credit to the city and state . . . JOHN DILLINGHAM is preaching for the Lanthan congregation near Columbia, Tennessee and is also in school work . . . HERSCHEL BASS has moved to Adel, Georgia to work with the little group there. This is a "mission work" at its best. His address is: Box 449, Adel, Georgia . . . July 17-24 will find CURTIS FLATT of Florence, Alabama in a meeting with C. L. OVERTURF, SR. and the Nebraska Avenue church in Tampa.

R. L. ANDREWS of Abilene, Texas was in a meeting at Forest Hills church in Tampa which closed June 19 . . . CLINTON HAMILTON began a meeting in Guyahoga Falls, Ohio, just outside of Akron, June 26 . . . HOMER HAILEY will be the speaker in a meeting at Franklin Road church in Nashville, Tennessee October 2-9 . . . BRYAN VINSON, JR. was in a meeting in Youngstown, Ohio in June. He was in Poteau, Oklahoma July 3-11, and at Longview, Texas July 17-24 . . . FERRELL JENKINS was in a meeting at Alder Springs, near Iberia, Missouri in July.

W. C. Hinton of Perry, Florida reports: Sunday, May 29 we had four baptisms. We are conducting a daily five minute radio broadcast "Let The Bible Speak." Brother Irvn Lee held our spring meeting June 6-15. When traveling on U.S. 19 worship with us. Local preacher, W. C. Hinton, Jr. A free bi-weekly paper *The Ancient Order* is offered to any who desire to receive it. Write 714 N. Calhoun St., Perry, Florida.

JAMES P. NEEDHAM of St. Petersburg, Florida reports : We have recently had 8 people to be baptized. HARRY E. PAYNE of the Drew Park church in Tampa recently held us a fine meeting, in which the pure gospel was preached in boldness and we feel that much good was done in many ways. On Saturday night of the meeting he dealt with the issues confronting the church at this time. His approach was new and refreshing, and we believe very timely. One was baptized the last night of the meeting. We have a fine attitude prevailing at 9th Avenue along with a will to work on the part of most of the membership. We look to the future with confidence.

JIMMY TUTEN, JR. of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida says: I recently conducted a gospel meeting with the church at Hahira, Georgia. It was a most enjoyable meeting in many respects. Two were baptized and one restored. Brother MARK RAULERSON has done a good job in working with this group of Christians.

Our work at Northside continues to progress. In the month of May we had two baptisms and three restorations. We enjoyed a very interesting series of lessons last April, delivered by five different speakers in the area. Brethren BILL REEVES, BOBBY THOMPSON, BOBBY ATKINSON, RAYFORD PETTY and R. E. HENSON brought us lessons dealing with some of the problems facing the church" today. We invite you to worship with us when in this area.

H. E. PHILLIPS will begin work with the Forest Hills church in Tampa, Florida about September 15.

THE WAY

J. Frank Ingram, Pensacola, Florida

In searching the scriptures, Christianity is spoken of as *the Way*. Jesus calls it "the Way" in Mat. 7:13-14. Paul speaks of "the more excellent way" (1 Cor. 12:31), and of the new and living way" (Heb. 10:20). Felix, "having more perfect knowledge of the way," protected Paul from the Jews (Acts 24:22). Apollos had been imperfectly instructed in the Way of the Lord, so Aquila and Priscilla "expounded unto him the Way of God more perfectly." (Acts 18:24-28). The maiden at Philippi cried, "These are the servants of the Most High God, who show us the Way of Salvation. (Acts 16:16-18). Peter speaks of the Way as the Way of Truth in 2 Peter 2:2.

Isaiah gave us a prophetic description of this way hundreds of years before it was opened up (Isa. 35:3-10). John the Baptist was to cry in the wilderness: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord" (Isa. 40:3; Lk. 3:4), and Jesus says: "I am the Way" (Jno. 14:6).

How sad indeed that Christianity has come to be looked upon as a system of philosophy, as a succession of creeds, or a chaos of dogmas! How sad indeed that men have put churchanity above Christianity, thus causing sectarianism in the religious world, and rendering asunder the body of Christ! How sad indeed that the way, said to be too plain for error (Isa. 35:8) has been clouded by the dogmas and tradition of men! What a message for a people who plead for a return to THE WAY—the primitive conception of Christianity! So consider the following three things of THE WAY:

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WAY

Before we enter the Way, we should desire to know something about it. First, it is a plain way (Isa. 35:8) and is simple to follow. There is no controversy in the religious world regarding Christ as not being the way. The controversy has arisen concerning things about the Way. An old pilot was asked if he knew all the rocks and reefs along the river. "No", he replied, "but I know where they are not." Any earnest man can find the Way and travel it by taking the Bible as his ONLY guide.

Secondly, it is "the way of holiness" (Isa. 35:8-10). No unclean person, that is, no one who has not been cleansed by the blood of Christ (1 Jno. 1:7), shall walk therein. The redeemed shall walk therein—not the perfect, for that would exclude all mankind and leave Jesus alone in the Way (Rom. 3:23; 1 Jno. 1:8; Heb. 4:15). Only those who have been redeemed through the blood of Christ shall walk in the Way (Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12).

Thirdly, it is the Way that leads upward. The Christian life is a growth (Phil. 3:12-14). Christ states this fact in a parable (Mk. 4:28). We enter the Way as babes in Christ who must be matured by the "sincere milk of the word;" by and by we can then stand meat, or sound doctrine (1 Cor. 3:1, 2). The downward Way is pictured in Gal. 5:19-21; while the Upward Way is pictured in Gal. 5:22, 23, and in 2 Pet. 1:5-11. It is the more excellent way of love. (1 Cor. 12:31).

Fourth, it is a Way where the gate is narrow and the Way straightened (Mk. 7:13-14). Any Way that leads

upward must be narrow and straight. Anything that cost nothing is worth nothing. A religion that cost nothing is worth nothing. That which is worthwhile can be attained only by zeal with knowledge and perseverance. Every way of progress is straight and narrow. Because it is the way of progress, it is also the way of joy (Isa. 35:10). It is a way of Joy because Christ is all in all (Phil. 1:21). Knowing the description of the Way, we inquire next as to:

HOW TO GET IN THE WAY

Christ is the Way, hence to be in Christ is to be in the Way. We therefore ask the question, how does one get into Christ? (1) By hearing of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ—or the Gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 10:17; 1 Cor. 1:21). (2) By believing in Christ (Mk. 16:16; Acts 16:31; Acts 8:37). (3) By repenting, or turning from the evil way to Christ (Jonah 3; Acts 2:38). (4) Then upon taking these steps being baptized into Christ (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27). The members of the church at Rome had obeyed "from the heart that form of doctrine which had been delivered unto them" (Rom. 6:17, 18). What was the doctrine? The fact that Jesus had died, was buried and had risen from the dead (1 Cor. 15:1-4). The above commands to be obeyed thus becoming a child of God through baptism. Therefore the form of the doctrine had to be an action which symbolized the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Baptism is that action (Rom. 6:3-6). As Jesus was laid away in the tomb and resurrected on the third day by the power of God, so the sinner is laid away in the watery grave and resurrected to walk in newness of life. This is the action by which the sinner is made free from sin to become a servant of righteousness (Rom. 6:18). Once in The Way we need to consider:

HOW TO KEEP IN THE WAY

A way begins at a certain point and leads to another point. The Way of Salvation leads from the world to the Father, and the Way is Christ. It is a Way of reconciliation (Rom. 5:10; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20). Christ suffered and died in order to open up this new and living way back to God (Jno. 14:1-6). This end can be gained by faithful continuance in well doing (Rom. 2:27). How? (1) By studying the Word (Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 2:15) Not preachers only, but every one in Christ should heed this admonition. (2) By prayer (Acts 2:42; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17; Jas. 5:16). (3) By the communion (Acts 2:42; Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:26; Acts 20:7). The purpose of this command is to test the loyalty of the Christian (Heb. 10:25; Jno. 6:53-54), in commemorating his death, burial and resurrection till he comes again. (4) By Service. A way is to travel over; it is not a place to go to sleep. We must be constantly on the move for fear we drift, or wander off in some bypath (1 Cor. 16:12; Jas. 2:17; Heb. 2:3, 4). In the last day every man shall be judged according to his works (Rev. 20:13; 14:32). To endure to the end, we must constantly have on the whole armour of God (Eph. 6:10-20).

Those who have grown old in the way, there is sweet peace in the words of Paul (2 Tim. 4:6-8). To those who have once traveled the way, but have wandered off into some bypaths we quote Acts 8:22 and Jno. 1:9. To those who have never entered the Way, the Master is standing with open arms pleading for you to come now (Matt. 11:28; Rev. 22:17; 2 Cor. 6:2).