

# 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.

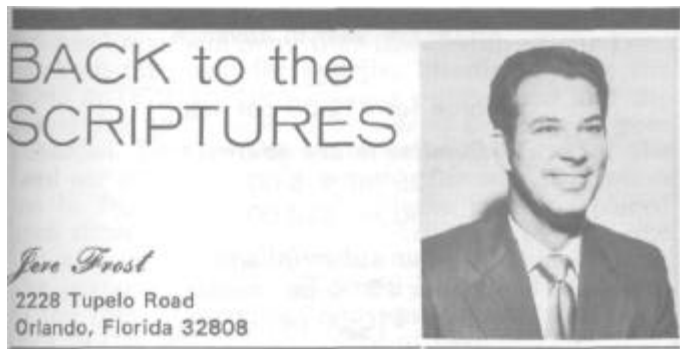
"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" — Acts 17:11.

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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## RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY — HOW IT IS WON

Jere E. Frost

"Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it? But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God . . ." (Jeremiah 5:22-24).

The prophet speaks of an incredible condition and attitude. God in his majesty and might controls all the forces of nature, and upon his mercy the very existence and well-being of puny man depends. But they do not fear. They do not tremble at his presence. Israel instead, as it were, yawned indifferently in the Almighty's face, disdained His person, rejected His statutes, trusted in their own wisdom, and declared that they were righteous and justified in so doing. Their swift destruction and calamitous consequences at the hands of the Babylonians are not a surprise. But our own generation evidences this same galling disrespect for divine authority, and much of the contempt in Israel then can be seen in the church now. It is one thing for authority to exist. It is quite another thing for authority to be respected. But rather than empty jawbone about the obvious problem in this area, or spend our energies in establishing the rightfulness of authority

(which we have already done), let us move on in our deliberations to consider how to solve the problem and to win respect for duly established authority.

### ESSENTIALS OF THE AUTHORITARIAN

There are certain fundamental and vital qualities that must be possessed by one who exercises authority, be it God or man, if respect is to be won. All of these qualities are possessed to the superlative degree by God, but men in authority can and often do bring authority itself into contempt because of their disregard for the principles that win respect. (1) There must be **competence**, the ability to understand and discharge the responsibilities and functions required of the position occupied. For example, the government that literally cannot conduct the affairs of state will neither have the respect of its citizenry nor long survive. It may have had a right to exist, but it is doomed to be disregarded and to fail if it is impotent and incapable. (2) There must be **character**, particularly in the context of self-respect (not pride, but the respecting of one's own laws and rules). Let us now use parents as an illustration. They may not be perfect (and in fact are not) but they must be fair and honorable in the making of rules and in their own respect for those rules if they would win Johnny's and Susie's respect. They cannot forbid swearing and vulgarity if they themselves speak profanely and obscenely; they cannot forbid smoking if they themselves are servants to tobacco; they can scarcely criticize the taking of marijuana and hallucinogens if they themselves imbibe alcohol. No, if they would win respect, they must have the character to genuinely respect their own principles and rules. This implies that their rules have been issued from conviction and integrity, and not from an arbitrary desire to restrict and dominate the child. Hypocrisy cannot be respected, not even in one who has an authority, and will produce ultimately a resentment against both the person in authority and the authority itself that he represents. Character is essential to winning respect. (3) **Enforcement**, including both the ability and necessary will, is imperative. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11). Permissiveness on the

part of government or parents is therefore not a persuasive deterrent. It is rather an exhibition of weakness of conviction. It declares that the authoritarian does not really respect the law himself, and hence it should not have been a law in the first place. Or else he is unable to enforce it because of a lack of ability, wisdom or will. In the nation or in the home, when this condition prevails, "the hearts of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" and authority is despised rather than respected. The same principles can be applied with equal force and parallel results to discipline in the church.

One of the reasons the authority of God is not more generally respected is that many of us who possess small measures of authority on lower levels have brought authority itself into a kind of disrepute. We present obstacles. Let us therefore resolve, as parents, to not simply declare our rights to rule but to take the steps necessary to win respect. Let us, as citizens, evaluate honesty in office above political posture, and urge the just enforcement of law. Let us, as lights in the world, preach the righteousness and wisdom of our God, and warn men that God will judge the world. He will not be mocked. "I will recompense." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

"THE BED IS TOO SHORT — THE  
BLANKET IS TOO SMALL" (Isa. 28:20)

Elvis Bozarth

In Greek mythology we can read of a giant named Procrustes. He was a very hospitable fellow, but he had a strange way of taking care of the needs of his guests. He welcomed all travellers and offered shelter to all who needed it. But, he fitted his guest to the size of his bed! If the guest was too short for the bed, he just stretched him out to fit it, -if the guest was too long, he just cut off his legs!

When I first read this some years ago I immediately thought of a sermon I had heard Brother C.R. Nichol preach several times as I was growing up. It was based on our text, Isaiah 28:20: "The bed is too short on which to stretch out, And the blanket is too small to wrap oneself in" (NASB). He made the historical background of the people of God trusting in their own wisdom and cunning to protect them from their enemies apply very clearly to the disposition of various denominations to reject the counsel of God and follow their own wisdom in seeking to please God. He showed that the "bed" --any denomination or lodge -- was too short because they did not measure up to the divine standard. He showed also that the "blanket" - safety and salvation offered by human religious bodies - was too small to cover the sins of mankind.

As the years have past I have noticed that most of my brethren have made the same mistake of the children of God in Isaiah's day, and of the various denominations of modern times. They have rejected the authority of God, i.e., "there is no pattern," — "we do many things for which we have no authority" — and have sought safety in their own wisdom and vain reasonings. They disregard some scriptures as if they were not in the Bible at all, and they pervert

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others by removing them from their contexts. They are making strange and new arguments on familiar passages to sustain positions already assumed.

To cite just a few examples of this behavior we can note the claim that no pattern exists to show the arrangements by which congregations may cooperate in preaching the gospel and in providing for the needy; the building and maintaining of human institutions through which churches may do their work; the promotion and support of fun, frolic, and social life from the churches' treasuries; and taking scriptures commanding individual activities and applying them to work of the collective, the church. Like Procrustes, they stretch them out or cut them off to fit their theological beds of digression.

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## CURRENT ISSUES AND THE DEEPER MEANING

James P. Miller

When we look at the problems that face us, no informed man will deny that the church of our Lord has been torn asunder and lies bleeding before the world in 1972. Division is upon every hand and the prayer for unity entered by Christ in John 17 goes unheeded. This terrible state is not the fault of the Lord nor of his New Testament, for only perfection can be found in them. The blame must be placed upon those who claim to be Christians in this age and who should love the truth with all their hearts. The purpose of this paper will be to call attention to the present divided state and to point the way back to the unity of the Word of God.

The support of institutions from the treasury of the church or the pooling of resources to preach the gospel is not the main issue. These things are the outgrowth of an attitude that began long ago in the history of the restoration. It stems from a liberal position in regard to the all-sufficiency of the scriptures and a disregard for the silence of the Bible. Both all-sufficiency and respect for silence are taught in the Word of God. In II Timothy 16:17 we are told that the scriptures will furnish the man of God unto all good work and in Hebrews 7:14 the writer argues that if nothing was said about an earthly priest coming out of Judah, it would then be impossible in God's sight. It was upon these principles that the New Testament Church was restored to mankind. A disregard for one or both has brought brother Wood's people to the sad plight where we find them tonight.

It was Thomas Campbell who said in the "DECLARATION AND ADDRESS" "No human authority can make new laws for the church where the Scriptures are silent." "Nothing ought to be received into the faith or worship of the church; or be made a term on communion amongst Christians, that is not as old as the New Testament." This cry was sounded from the housetops that WE SPEAK WHERE THE BIBLE SPEAKS AND ARE SILENT WHERE THE BIBLE IS SILENT and upon its noble sentiments the blood-bought church was restored (Page 150, The Disciples of Christ. Garrison and De Groot).

One of the thinkers of yesterday has declared that the man who disregards the history of the past is bound to repeat it. There never was a more true statement or thought when it is applied to the restoration. The first convention was called in 1849 in

the city of Cincinnati. It met on Tuesday, October 23 in the old meeting house on the corner of Walnut and Eighth Streets with L. L. Pinkerton as Chairman. This convention was called for the express purpose of starting a Missionary Society through which congregations could pool their resources in preaching the gospel. Brother Earl West makes this comment on page 196 of "The Search For The Ancient Order," vol. 1, "Scarcely had the American Missionary Society been organized when a wave of opposition began sweeping over the brotherhood."

In the same volume, page 197, there is a statement of what Benjamin Franklin wrote in the American Christian Review in which he says:

We are perfectly aware that if we wish to put the Christian communities into the power of men, to control them, wield them, and make them engines to honor man, we need some kind of an organization beyond the simple organization of the New Testament; but the simple, independent church, for keeping the ordinances; religious instruction, and saving the world, is all-sufficient for the good of the saints and the glory of God. Indeed, one of the principal reasons why this question of organization has perplexed the minds of so many is, that they are looking for, and trying to make out of some-thing unknown to the whole New Testament. They overlook the simple, easy and common-sense arrangement of the New Testament, and complain that we have no arrangement. The men who opposed the Missionary Society, as does my opponent tonight, used every argument they knew to show the breakdown of authority and autonomy without avail. Society advocates were wedded to their idol and meant to have it at any cost. These tragic events of 125 years ago have a direct parallel in our time. The Herald of Truth, pooling thousands of dollars under the elders of Highland in Abilene, is the old Missionary Society story all over again. Liberal brethren are going down the old, old path to division and sectarianism. Just as the introduction of the Melodeon at Midway violated the all-sufficiency of the scriptures and their silence, the introduction of human institutions to be supported by the church robbed the church of its authority, responsibility, and autonomy.

Brethren who stood against these innovations warned their more liberal fellows of the danger of these departures. It was pointed out time and again that a failure to recognize the all-sufficiency of the scriptures and the doctrine of divine silence would open the floodgates for digression of every kind. The brethren who opposed the society and organ were called anti-missionary and anti-music and every other name that would brand them in the eyes of the brotherhood. It is now a matter of history that the brethren who opposed these departures were right. After the flurry of excitement had died away, one innovation came after the other until, in many places and in many situations, the digressive church not only goes along with the sects but far too often is found leading the parade.

When the present parallel arose, exactly the same thing took place. The same division occurred, the same names were hurled, and brethren who stood on the very same ground were ridiculed. They were

called anti-orphan because they did not want to support a human institution from the church treasury, and anti-television because they would not support the unscriptural arrangement of Highland and the Herald of Truth, and every kind of misrepresentation that could be devised and charged with emotionalism was put upon them. The institutional brethren were wedded to their idols and meant to have them at all cost. They represented the conservative brethren as dead when they had not attended the funeral or even signed the book at the funeral home. Brother Woods in a letter published in the Philipian Christian, written just last year, September 9, 1971, had these shameful things to say to Eusebio M. Lacuata.

"You, too, have experienced what all of us in this country long ago learned, that the "Antis" are wholly undependable, using misrepresentation without compunction. I have been the target of such for years. Long ago, I learned it is useless to appeal to them on the basis of truth and fairness since they have no respect for either.

"The situation here is this: Some years ago, when the anti-movement was sweeping the land, many churches and preachers were disturbed. I was in the midst of the fight, engaging in more debates than all the other brethren combined in refuting their hobbies. In so doing, I met all of their representative men, some of them several times. Some of these debates were published, and are yet available. Eventually, the issues were crystallized and known to all. As the result of our debates, the anti-movement, in this country, is not only dormant, its own followers are confused and fighting among themselves. Seldom do I hear of any agitation in faithful churches thereon. One reason they have gone to your land is because they have virtually lost their ability to disturb churches here.

"Occasionally, one of them challenges for a debate yet. The purpose is to obtain an audience which they cannot get otherwise. The last discussion I conducted with them, they had a little handful of anti preachers sitting in one corner, and those who stood with me filled the house. The church which sponsored the debate (for the antis) had perhaps less than 35 or 40 members. Under such circumstances they would be willing to be "walloped" every night in order to get an audience they cannot possibly assemble otherwise. We met them fully when the need existed. The arguments still stand. It is absurd for them to contend that any of us are afraid of them. Afraid of a pygmy? The idea is absurd. They know this; but they noisily write about it to impress their readers."

We not only challenge the truthfulness of these statements, but for the sake of thousands of churches and hundreds of able preachers, raise some questions. Was it this debate in Montgomery in 1966 to which he makes reference? If it were, he knew better than to write such statements as "a little handful of anti preachers sitting in one corner." Most of

you were present and can bear witness that a host of sound preachers were present from all over America. When he says we have no respect for truth or fairness, he impugns the motive of every sound brother in the world. He brands as hopeless that host of venerable men who have lived and died steadfast in their belief in the all-sufficiency of the church of our Lord: Great and good men like Curtis Porter, Cecil Douthitt, and in the last few days, I. A. Newman, Seminole's oldest elder: W. A. Bingham, her esteemed deacon; Bennie Lee Fudge, Alabama preacher, and that great roster of mature and experienced men who stand before the great judge of all the earth.

How can he expect even reasonable treatment after such statements as made in his letter? The fact that we are outdoing the liberals in the Philippines gives forever the death-knell to the idea it takes unscriptural machinery to do the work of evangelism, whether it be on the radio or in the field.

The truth, tonight, is that brother Woods' position and those who stand with him are in great jeopardy. They are finding out that they cannot just have the institutional orphan home and the Herald of Truth, but that they have let down the door to everything else. He has already spent one week this month at the lectures of Freed-Hardeman College trying to save what he can out of the mess his position has brought him to. The subject of the lectures was THE BIBLE VS. LIBERALISM. Educated at the feet of the sectarian teachers, or by those who were taught by sectarian professors, the young men of the liberal movement today have little in common with him. In a class at Harding Graduate School, it was reported by one present that when a new student asked about brother Woods' commentary on James, a good part of the class was heard to snicker out loud. Brother Woods is out of step with these younger liberals to which he gave birth by his lack of respect for the authority and silence of the scripture. Many of these young men are opposed to anything and everything established. They could care less about the institutions he is here to defend. They do not want the meeting house for it has been there too long and represents the formal past. The organization of the church means nothing to them for they want to meet in small groups on the river bank, hold hands and dance around a hollow tree with a candle in it and have a dialogue with Jesus. Although he may deny it, he is bewildered tonight by this turn of events. The brotherhood of which he is a part is divided over things not clearly defined. Without an accepted standard with which to judge, they are at sea. What man among the liberals would admit he was not sound on the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, or the necessity of formal church membership. Yet, these are their problems, all brought about by the wrong attitude toward the Word of God.

Their big splurge is over. The city-wide meetings, merging of churches to make a big congregation, the ballyhoo and fanfare of great accomplishments, etc. has run its course just as it did 125 years ago.

I am not here to tell this intelligent audience that the brethren with whom I stand have not had problems. We have difficulty converting an indifferent world, but in even the county seat a new start has



been made. Congregations dedicated to the all-sufficiency of the scriptures can be found everywhere. To say that we are dead and of no consequence, is to make him look foolish this week. If I am a "pygmy" and the cause I represent "is dead and I have no respect either for truth or fairness," he is beating a dead horse, ridden by a midget he should have destroyed six years ago, representing brethren Who do not exist.

Brethren, the lesson is clear, brother Woods and those who stand with him, are not only wrong on the propositions before us in this debate, but have, unconsciously perhaps, spawned the giant of modernism which they now seek to destroy. History alone will tell what can be salvaged from their cause. It would have been far better just to sound the words of Thomas Campbell again: "We speak where the Bible speaks, and are silent where the Bible is silent."

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### "I HAVE DREAMED, I HAVE DREAMED"

L. A. Mott, Jr.

Some people claim that God has spoken to them in a dream. Such claims are not "a new thing under the sun." Jeremiah ran across such folk in his day. Thus runs Jer. 23:25-28:

I have heard what the prophets have said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies, even the prophets of the deceit of their own heart? that think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbor, as their fathers forgot my name for Baal. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the straw to the wheat? saith Jehovah. Which is to say: If you have a dream and want to tell it, go ahead. But do not pretend it is a revelation from God. Tell the folk, "Now this is just a dream; it is not the word of God. It is only the straw, not the wheat. In fact, compared to the wheat (God's word), my dream is only chaff, and entirely worth-less. Come to think of it, it was not worth telling in the first place. Just forget it."

That is the way you will have to tell your dream ... if indeed you must tell it!

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**QUESTION:** Was John the Baptist the Elijah of Mal. 4:5? If so, why did he deny it before the priests and Levites of Jerusalem (John 1:21)? Can his denial be made to harmonize with our Lord's statements in Matt. 11:14; 17:10-13? —R. L.

**ANSWER:** Before attempting to answer the above questions let us read the verses cited above.

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Mal. 4:5).

"And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No" (John 1:21).

"And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come" (Matt. 11:14). . . "And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist" (Matt. 17:10-13).

John the Baptist was the Elijah of Mal. 4:5. The apparent contradiction between John and Jesus grows out of a failure to distinguish between a literal and a figurative application of the prophecy. Since Elijah had long since passed from the earth at the time of Malachi's prophecy, the use of his name should have been understood by the Jews in the light of prophetic language — as symbolizing one who in some way would be similar to the literal Elijah.

That this is the true meaning of the prophecy is evident from the statement of the Angel Gabriel in announcing to Zacharias that he was to have a son: "But the angel said unto him. Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. . . . And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:13-17). Notice the angel explained that "he shall go before him in the spirit and power

of Elijah." Elias (Greek form), or Elijah (Hebrew form) perhaps did more to call the people of God to repentance in perilous times than any other prophet of Old Testament fame. John's work as well as the day of his preaching was beautifully prefigured by Elijah and his time. The Pharisees, priests, and Levites of our Lord's day had missed the true meaning of Malachi's prophecy. They were expecting Elijah in person.

John's denial (John 1:21), in answer to the question of the Jews, was from their point of view. He was not Elijah in person, hence, he told the truth when he said in answer to their question, "I am not." Furthermore, he told the truth again when he gave a negative answer to their question, "Art thou that prophet?" No doubt, they referred to the prophecy of Deut. 18:18,19: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will out my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not harken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." It seems that the identity of this prophet was not clear to some. However, John must have understood that it referred to the Messiah, which is the correct interpretation, according to Peter's application in Acts 3:20-23. John knew he was not the Messiah, hence his negative answer.

Our Lord made his comments (Matt. 11:14; 17:10-13) from the viewpoint, of truth, namely, that John had come "in the spirit and power of Elias." Thus, the harmony between the statements of John and Jesus is to be found in recognizing the different viewpoints from which they answered the question under consideration.

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### THE WEATHER IN PALESTINE

A general rule to follow with regard to the weather in Palestine is that as one moves from north to south and from west to east the rain decreases and the temperature increases. Westerly winds prevail in this region throughout most of the year. During the winter months they bring rain clouds in from the Mediterranean Sea and drop moisture along the western slopes of the Central Highlands. During the summertime the northwesterly winds are cool but bring no rain. As the winds pass through the Jordan Valley they once again become laden with moisture that in turn is dropped on the western slopes of the hills of Trans-jordan. In other words, the sea is the predominant influence on the western side of the mountain and the desert on the eastern side.

Palestine has an annual rainfall as great as that of many other places. For instance, Accho's rainfall (24"-26") compares favorably with London's (23.5") and Upper Galilee's (47") with that of New York City (41.6"). The chief difference, however, is that in Palestine all the rain falls during one brief season.

In fact, it may be said that Palestine has only two seasons: the rainy season (including the "early" and the "later" rains) and the dry season (from the middle of May to the middle of October). The farmers eagerly await the "early" rain in October that makes it possible, to plow their fields and sow them in November before the heavy rains come between December and February. The rains cause the grain to grow and ripen for the harvest in May and June. The two crucial periods are between April and May and between September and October when the humidity is the lowest. It is in the latter period especially that the terrifying "sirocco" (east wind) threatens the land with famine (Psalms 103:16; Ezek. 17:10; 27:26; Isa. 27:8; Hos. 13:15). Eight major periods of famine are recorded in the Old Testament (Gen. 12:10; 26:1; 43:1; Ruth 1:1; II Sam. 21:1; I Kings 18:2; II Kings 6:25; 7:4; 25:3).

Palestine frequently is called the "land of milk and honey" (see Exod. 3:8; Deut. 6:3), a land that receives abundant rain from heaven (Deut. 11:10-12), but actually it is precariously balanced between fruitfulness and famine. The Bible makes it clear that Jehovah providentially controlled the rain in relation to Israel's faithfulness to His covenant (Deut. 11:13-17). Thus periods of famine are sometimes recorded as acts of divine judgment (I Kings 17:1; 18:1).

The famous Gezer Calendar, probably nothing more than a schoolboy's exercise for learning the seasons of the year, was found in 1908 by R. A. S. Macalister during the excavations at Gezer. The type of writing is in the form of good biblical Hebrew and dates back to the tenth century B.C. It reads as follows:

His two months are (olive) harvest,  
 His two months are planting (grain),  
 His two months are late planting;  
 His month is hoeing up of flax,  
 His month is harvest of barley,  
 His month is harvest and feasting;  
 His two months are vine-tending,  
 His month is summer fruit.

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## EASTER IS PAGAN



*Shelby C. Smith*

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Paul said, "Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain" (Gal. 4:10, 11). We might make a modern paraphrase of this by saying, "Ye observe Christmas, and Easter, and Lent, I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain."

Easter is supposed to be the beginning of the Jewish passover, but this is the thing that Easter does not do. The year 1825 is the last time Easter fell on the first day of the passover. The two dates will not coincide again until after the year 2000. The observance of Christmas and Easter was begun by the Roman Catholic Church, and a few years later some of the denomination churches began to observe this pagan holiday. But what puzzles me, how anyone can observe anything that was begun by the Pope of Rome who in years past has claimed to be God on earth.

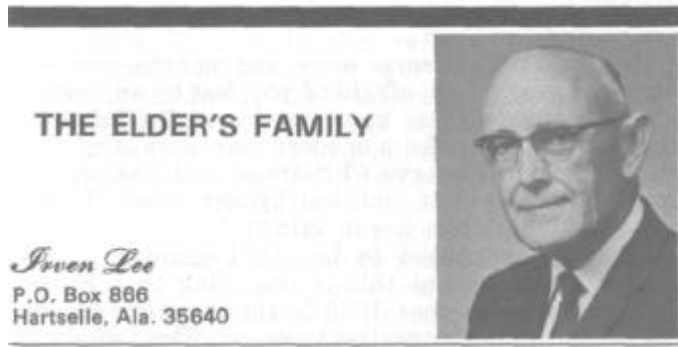
There is nothing in the Bible that would give a man excuse for using the name of a pagan goddess in speaking of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. As men are known by their gods, so the character of their religion is maintained by their festivals, and these festivals had their beginning in a corrupt age of the Catholic Church. The Encyclopedia Britannica says, "There is no indication that the observance of Easter is found in the New Testament, or in the writings of the apostolic fathers. The idea was absent from the minds of the first Christians" (Vol. VIII, P. 828; 14th ed.). The same authority says, "The Lord nor his apostles enjoined the keeping of this or any other festival." We have fallen away from the Living God, Lent, Easter, and Christmas, then, are evident tokens of apostasy.

In the early days only a few observed these pagan days, but now the Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and most all observe the pagan holidays vigorously. But like Lot who pitched his tent too close to Sodom, these religious bodies have camped too close to the gates of Roman Catholicism. Consequently, they are drifting back into the ways of the Mother of Harlots. And so-called protestants practice that which they claim to protest, they may as well make complete surrender to the devil. As a matter of fact, all churches are coming closer and closer to the teaching of the Mother of Harlots.

There are members of the church of Christ who are falling into the same rut. It is time that Elders withdraw from them. Paul told Timothy: "Them that sin reprove in the sight of all" (1 Tim. 5:20).

There are also ungodly preachers in many churches today. Elders, Paul told us what to do, withdraw from them. Don't ship him off to some other church with a letter of recommendation. Withdraw from him.

The only thing that Christians are told to do is meet around the Lord's table on the First day of the week and remember his death until he comes again. But one thing we can be sure of, He will destroy evil in every high place of idolatry both in denominationalism and Catholicism.



For any man to be his very best self, and to do his work with the greatest effectiveness, he needs a good family. Failure on man's part in meeting the responsibilities that are his by virtue of his being the head of the home is a serious and shameful failure. Success at home is basic to success elsewhere. He is responsible for the family's good order and well being, and their godliness upholds him in his worthy endeavors elsewhere. Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing. If she is a virtuous woman her price is far above rubies. Children are an heritage of the Lord (Prov. 18:22; 19:14; 31:10; Ps. 127:3-5).

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife,..." (I Tim. 3:2). There is a negative to this. He is not to be a polygamist, nor a man whose earlier marriage or marriages ended in divorce. But is it not also taught here that he needs a good wife if he is to undertake the great work of an elder? How could he be "the husband of one wife" if he is unmarried? He, especially in this great work, will need a wife meet for him. He is to have but one wife, but he is to have one wife. It is not good that this man should be alone.

Any member of the church should remember that his or her conduct reflects honor or dishonor to the holy name and the cause of truth. This would certainly be true of women whose husbands are elders. They should be honorable, temperate, trustworthy, and serious minded (See I Tim. 3:11). An unworthy wife can disqualify a man for this good work.

Many religious leaders of our day ignore the Bible on many points where clear instruction abounds. This grows out of the modernistic break down of faith on the part of some who claim to be leaders among Christians. Such church leaders may select some woman as an elder or bishop. Even the idea of

age or maturity inherent in the word elder may be ignored. Character traits listed and skill in teaching may also be lacking. People who respect the Bible as the revelation of God's will know that, in the age of woman's liberation movement, or in any other age, the elder is to be "the husband of one wife."

One would think the Roman Catholic church would pay some attention to Titus 1 and I Timothy 3 in their sharp contention over the question of marriage for their church officials. Their practice and doctrine in this regard are exactly opposite to the instruction for bishops in the Lord's church. This is just one example of their conflict with the scriptures.

Every man who is a Christian is to bring his children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Since an elder is to be an example to all of us, he is to be "one that ruleth his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." His children are "not accused of riot or unruly." In driving this truth home the inspired man asked the question: "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" His home failures are demonstrations of his inability to be a successful overseer in the Lord's church. It is also true that his failures would be called to his attention every time he, as a shepherd, would seek to counsel others. Let elders take their work seriously because they must give account to God. In like manner their wives and children should be assets and not liabilities. The welfare of the kingdom and the righteousness of God are far above our selfish and worldly desires.

An elder is to have faithful children. His children are to be in subjection with all gravity. Does the word children, as used in the Bible, necessarily require more than one child? It is the plural form of the word child, and many excellent people earnestly contend that an elder must have two or more children. Is the plural form of the word child (children) used in the Bible in reference to one or more, or does it always refer to two or more in the Bible? Faithful Christians would always like to agree with the Lord.

"And Abraham was a hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. And she said, who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have borne him a son in his old age" (Gen. 21:5-7).

Then Sarah did give children suck, did she not? Is that what she was talking about? She had only one son.

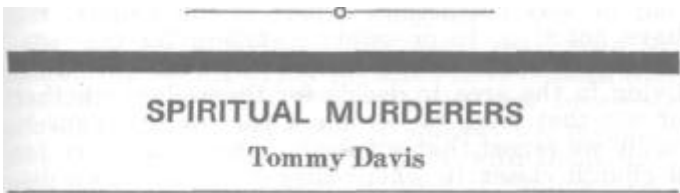
"Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection: and they asked him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother" (Luke 20:27, 28). If there had been one child before the man's death, would he have had children in the Bible sense in regard to this counsel? Did the Sadducees misquote the passage? The Old Testament passage that deals with this matter is Deut. 25:5,6: "If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry



without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother unto her. And it shall be, that the first born which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother who is dead, that his name not be put out of Israel." It seems obvious that the plural form of this word is used in the Bible in referring to one or more.

In the listing of genealogies in I Chronicles the plural of son (sons) is used to refer to one or more. Notice such verses as I Chron. 1:41a; 2:7,8. We are all aware, of course, that instruction to children concerning obedience to parents applies when there is only one child, and a father is to bring one or more up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Parents of one child should say yes if the census taker asks: Do you have children? the number and other details can then be given.

Those who understand the Bible uses the plural form of the word child (children) to refer to one or more certainly should not disturb, disrupt, and destroy a congregation in **demanding** that a man be an elder who has only one child. The unity is precious, and he cannot lead if they are unwilling to follow. This is written in the interest of truth. The Bible is right.



There is an ever increasing problem that is plaguing the Lord's church in this century. It is the problem of hatred and bitterness between brethren.

The problem centers around various issues in the church. It has become more of a name calling, mud slinging and slander battle rather than a search for truth. . . . No one seems to be interested in studying the Word (II Tim. 2:15). That is a little too old fashioned for some. Have you ever bothered to see if you are correct on the particular issue you are studying? You might be wrong (II Cor. 13:5)!

No one should ever compromise truth, but that does not give a license to you for personal hatred or bitterness toward your brother. Why did Paul condemn these attitudes (Eph. 4:28-32)? He condemned them because all they do is cause strife and division in a local church.

In the midst of our spiritual battles we cannot afford to become bitter and hateful. If we develop this attitude God says we are no better off than a murderer (I John 3:15-18).

Let's plug this gap and fight the good fight of faith that we might lay hold on eternal life. We need to work and serve God with an humble mind so that we do not develop these soul plaguing attitudes.

We need to stand firm against the devil and his allies, but we should not become bitter or hateful toward brethren or anyone for that matter (Luke 6:27; Rom. 13:10).

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## THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

### DOING BIBLE THINGS IN BIBLE WAYS WITH EMPHASIS ON DOING

Kenneth Thomas, Brooksville, Fla.

For years now this writer has listened to "great" men of God parrot the statement which serves as the title of this article and report. The sad fact is that not a few of God's people "say and do not." We often talk a good fight and pray a good work for the Lord and fail to put into practice that for which we pray and about which we speak. Brethren, these things ought not so to be!

The church is the pillar and support of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15; Matt. 28:20). We **must** spread the gospel to those who know it not and the church is the organization with which this responsibility lies (Phil. 4:15-16; Thess. 1:7-8 etc.). Likewise individuals who make up the Lord's church have personal responsibilities along this line to bear the "good News" of the gospel to others (Acts 8:4; Heb. 5:12-14; 2 Tim. 2:2; Eph. 4:15-16).

With such understanding of their responsibilities as Christians and as congregations, recently there was an outstanding effort begun which indicates to me that finally more Christians and congregations are awakening to the fact that we can, and must do what we have been preaching for years: "Do Bible things in Bible ways," but above all DO!

Several who saw the need for a congregation in the nearby city of Inverness, Fla. began to talk to others of this need. These included preachers, elders and saints of God, as to the possibility of doing such a work. Immediately the response to that end was good and enthusiastic and the word spread like wild fire from Florida to Illinois. There were discussions on the matter in business meetings of churches and among individuals from various places as to what each could do.

Several congregations simply supported "their" preacher to come and labor with us who were committed to the task of preaching the gospel during the two weeks from January 23rd to February 6th. The place of the meeting was the women's club building in Inverness, Florida.

Two congregations from Illinois sent "their" preachers who labored for over a week with us in door to door invitations and passing out literature. Each of us preached on the local radio station and publicly in the parking lot of the plaza shopping center over a P.A. system. With the P.A. system we also drove up the streets and through the sub-divisions encouraging people to come to the meeting. The preachers from Illinois were Jeff Kingry from Kirkland, Illinois and Dennis Shaver from Rochelle, Illinois.

The radio program which was aired for 15 minutes daily from January 17th to February 6th was

paid for by the Trilacoochee congregation where Jim Daniel preaches regularly. The literature, newspaper aids, P.A. system, etc. as well as this writer's expenses were paid for by the Broad Street church in Brooksville. Each congregation took care of the expenses of the men whom they sent to labor with us in this gospel effort.

The church on Silver Blvd. in Ocala, Florida where brother Colin Williamson preaches supplied the new congregation with a communion set and song books (brown back) in good shape. Sister Smallridge prepared the communion service during the meeting and we picked it up at their house on the way to the services. This writer opened the meeting on the first Sunday and closed on the last Sunday. We had visitors for all but about two services during the two weeks. By visitors I mean those not members of the church of Christ. At present there are about twelve who live in the immediate area of Inverness who may or may not become a part of this church. We have not tried to proselyte members for this congregation, but have asked those who were Christians living in the area to decide for themselves whether or not they wish to become a part of this church. Sadly we report that some who indicate a desire for a church closer to where they live, have been discouraged from working permanently in the new congregation by those of other congregations of the Lord's people. This I cannot understand. You would think all would be happy for a city the size of Inverness to have a congregation where the need is so great and the area is growing so fast.

Brother Ray Smallridge who is the preacher for the Cove Bend congregation near Floral City, Florida is presently laboring with the new congregation as well as his regular work at Cove Bend. He preaches Sunday evenings in Inverness and teaches the Mid-week Bible class. The Cove Bend church have changed their Bible study period to Thursday and they meet with the brethren at Inverness for Bible study, as many as are able to go. On the Lord's day in the A.M. different preachers are filling the pulpit. So far since the meeting these include brother Dug Black from Trilby, Florida, and Colin Williamson. Others have said they would help also.

We should mention also that in the course of the meeting brother Williamson preached one evening as did Steve Hudgins, each of these men are from Ocala presently. Brother Williamson is with the Church on Silver Springs Blvd. and brother Hudgins the Pine Street church there.

Several congregations of the Lord's people were represented throughout the meeting and we appreciated this so much. We were blessed also with several capable song leaders who did a fine job in leading the singing from night to night. These included brothers Jim Johnson from the Trilacoochee congregation, Jack Hill from Silver Springs Blvd.

congregation and Jeff Thomas the son of this writer. Also it was necessary for brother Dennis Shaver, Jim Daniel and I to lead one night each in the course of the meeting.

The rent on the woman's club building was paid for by brother Charles Phillips, a member of the Lord's church at Brooksville. A member of the newly formed congregation has accepted the responsibility of the treasury and we understand that a sign is being prepared by another of the members there which will soon be displayed in the lawn of the meeting place. It looks as if the contribution will be sufficient to pay the expenses that will be incurred as they continue to meet. This is also encouraging.

While the preachers from other areas and out of state were in our home we were aided by several other Christians with monetary contributions which took the shock off of the Thomas' budget. We had a wonderful time together day and night. We sat up until 3:30 A.M. on occasions talking and visiting. We made two trips daily to Inverness, during the day to work and teach, and each evening to the services from January 23rd through February 6th. Brothers Jim Daniel, Ray Smallridge and I intend to continue working in the area as time permits in teaching those of the community and helping the new congregation with teaching, etc.

In a business meeting this week, the Broad St. church where this writer preaches have decided that they will have fellowship with the new Inverness church of Christ in helping to support the preacher who is decided upon to come labor with them. This would be subject to their approval of the man, certainly. We hope and pray that those of you who read this will be moved to do whatever you have the ability to do to cooperate in this effort until such time as the Inverness church of Christ may become self-supporting.

If you desire more information, we will be happy to put you in contact with the brethren there, or you may contact brothers Jim Daniel, Ray Smallridge or myself. We give you these names simply because they are aware of the situation. There is a dire need for this city to have someone able and willing to preach and teach publicly and from house to house. This is the county seat of Citrus county and is the third fastest growing county in Florida according to the information I have received.

Brethren, here is a golden opportunity, here is another "Macedonian call." What will you do, or the congregation where you labor? (James 4:17)

## DEBATE

**Harold V. Trimble**, 19404 S.E. 196th, Renton, Wash. 98055 — I will meet Don Comish, a physicist, on the following propositions: Resolved: "That the theory of Evolution as originally enunciated by Darwin, and modified and held by many scientists of today, is true." Resolved: "That the Biblical accounts of the creation of the earth are not true." He is in the affirmative all four nights and I shall have the negative. There will be two thirty-minute speeches each night and the debate will be held in our building located at 2527 N.E. Twelfth St., Renton, Wash.,

May 8th through 11th. It will be at 7:30 each evening. Both the church and my personal phone number are the same, A.L. 5-3440.

**Len Spencer**, P.O. Box 16113, Houston, Texas 77022 — A new congregation was formed to serve the suburban areas along the North Freeway. We leave Greenwood Village with the goodwill and best wishes of the brethren there.

The congregation in Greenwood Village is small and the five families living in the North Freeway area are all that could be spared for this work. So we are starting with few in number. Among us, though, are abilities to preach, to teach classes (both publicly and in homes), and to lead singing. And we do have a will to work. We hope that others of like mind who live in the general area will soon cast their lot with us.

On February 13, we begin meeting at the Field Inn, North, in the Heritage Room. This is at the intersection of the North Freeway and FM 525-A1-dine Bender on the west side of the Freeway. Lord's Day Bible class begins at 9:30 a.m.; worship at 10:30 and 6:00. The midweek meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday. This will perhaps encourage brethren and others to visit with us who could not otherwise do so.

For further information about the work or to tell us of someone we may contact, please call any of the following: Len Spencer, 694-9795; John Fertig, 448-0442; Mike Murphy, 447-0855; Jack Brooks, 448-7782.

**William C. Sexton**, 2804 Lafayette, St. Joseph, Mo. 64507—After 5 years with the 10th and Lincoln Street congregation in St. Joseph, Missouri, I resigned my full-time relationship with them effective September 1, 1971. There was no dissatisfaction, I just thought that a new man could move them a little better than I. My expectations have been fulfilled. Brother Mike Rogcas moved to work with them, October 1, and attendance has increased, along with the contribution. Also, we have put a new roof on the building, put a new ceiling in, and paneled the auditorium. Mike has done a commendable job.

When I resigned, I fully intended to move to work with another congregation on a full-time basis. I was in touch with several congregations to that end, and I even made an appointment to speak at the Stilesville, Indiana, congregation. However, my family began to persuade me to stay in St. Joseph until my daughter, Geneva, finished high school in June of 1973. Even though I wanted to continue my full-time work, I consented to stay and seek work in the secular field and preach part time until she finished school. So, I am working for Rockwell Manufacturing Company in Atchison, Kansas, taking 12 hours of schooling at Missouri Western College, and preaching three Sundays a month at Worth, Mo.; Gilman City, Mo., and Barnard, Mo. The other Sunday, I teach an adult class at 10th and Lincoln.

However, I do plan to re-enter the field of full-time preaching in JUNE of '73! I would like to work with a congregation that is self-supporting and has as many teaching opportunities as possible, perhaps

a radio program, a bulletin, and several classes to teach as well as a good personal work program. Yet, I'd be glad to talk to brethren with less systematic activities but ample opportunities.

#### **Bob McClung**

It is with deep regret that we make known the death of our brother in Christ, Bob McClung. Brother McClung was found dead in his apartment in Louisville, Kentucky, where he resided, on Friday, March 10, 1972. For a number of years he preached in Texas and Louisiana. However, in later years he had been working with an insurance firm in Houston, Texas. He was one of my dearest friends and a faithful member of the Gardiner Lane Church of Christ in Louisville, where he preached the Sunday before his death. He will be missed by all who knew him. Our sympathy to his good family. — J. T. Smith

#### **Preacher Needed**

Small congregation in North Carolina needs full-time preacher. Support is arranged. Contact Eugene Edwards, P.O. Box 936, Aberdeen, N.C. 28315, or call collect 944-1315 during the day, and 944-1409 at night.

#### **DEBATE**

Dick Blackford, representing the Willow Glen Church of Christ, Central City, Ky., and Robert Daugherty, representing the Apostolic Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, Central City, Ky., will discuss: Water Baptism Formula, Holy Ghost Baptism, The Duration of Miracles, on May 17-19, 1972. The debate will take place at the Apostolic Church of The Lord Jesus Christ, Central City, Ky.

Ken Green, Louisville, Ky., and Edgar Tetrick, Jeffersontown, Ky., will moderate.

#### **Preacher Available**

I am available for part-time or full-time preaching work, preferably in Alabama or Tennessee. Contact Barry Hudson, P.O. Box 209, Florida College, Temple Terrace, Fla. 33617.

**David Pratte**, 5415 South Hanna, Lot 18, Ft. Wayne, Ind. 46806 — I have a brother-in-law stationed at DaNang, Viet Nam. I would appreciate very much knowing of any other faithful Christians who might also be stationed there that he might work and worship with. If anyone has friends or relatives they know of stationed at DaNang, please send the names and addresses to David Pratte, 5415 South Hanna, Lot 18, Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

**Clarence R. Johnson**, Springhill, La. — This is to inform you that the Lord's church that meets at 405 Butler Street here in Springhill, La. will conduct a series of gospel meetings June 12-18 with brother John Iverson of Tyler, Texas preaching. The services will be at 7:30 nightly. I would appreciate it if you would pass this information on to Searching the Scriptures readers.

West Knoxville Church of Christ seeks a full-time minister to work for the spread of the kingdom in this area. Though few in number, the saints here have a great love for God. For further information contact Nelson Roark, 804 Chateaugay Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37919.

**L. Bruce Taylor**, 23 Margaret St., Joliet, Ill. 60436 — On Sunday, April 2, 1972, thirty-three who were formerly members of the Margaret Street congregation began meeting in Lockport, Ill., some approximately ten miles northeast of Joliet on state route 171. This effort has been in the minds of some for a couple of years and definite planning began late last summer. The present meeting place will be Ludwig grade school in Lockport. Please address all correspondence and information to either: Elmer Gunchin, 115 S. Washington St., Lockport, Ill., or Kenneth Tolbert, 415 Scott Dr., Lockport, Ill. 60441.

These brethren have the best wishes and complete encouragement from the Margaret St. congregation. There is no strife, contention, or lack of co-operation among us now that is causing a so-called "split." We believe that this is a field ripe unto harvest and that the laborers should look unto the work. The Lockport, Romeoville, Bolingbrook area has been called the fastest growing in the state of Illinois and we feel a need to see Christ established in this community that the church may flourish.

We ask your prayers for these brethren in their endeavors ahead and that you encourage them by your presence when you are in the area and have the opportunity. Pray for us all that our labors might bring forth fruit for the Master's sake.

#### **A CANADIAN NEWS REPORT AND A PLEA FOR PREACHERS**

#### **Dave Bradford**

Three and one-half years ago my family and I moved to Calgary, Alberta, Canada to establish a congregation in this city of 400,000 people. Prior to this time, the one church in the city was drifting more and more into a liberal way of thinking and this was leading to things being done which some were questioning, but not energetically. Though we had in mind starting with just my family and felt we would likely be alone for quite some time before conversions would lead to much increase, our coming presented the opportunity to some open-minded brethren to see the local situation in light of a brotherhood trend that had digressed much farther. We met with immediate opposition from others and after futility attempting to promote brotherly discussions of these problems, several families felt compelled to leave the congregation where a trend to liberalism was becoming more prominent and where opposition to the truth was tolerated and upheld.

During the passage of time a few have been baptized, a few have come here from other places in Canada to worship with us, and we presently have approximately 60 in attendance each Sunday morning.

We began by having our services in a Community Centre and in our home, but after one year the



church bought a residence which with some remodeling served as our place of meeting for another IV2 years. After this, we began renting a building that we were able to buy six months later. We rejoice that as of last fall the church now owns its own building, but we rejoice even more in a recent baptism and the recent increase in opportunities to teach the gospel in home Bible studies.

Since my coming here I have been supported in this work by four (presently three) churches in Alabama and one church in Florida. This arrangement continues, but the local church has completely borne the burden of making the financial arrangements for purchase of the building.

Calgary is in the province of Alberta in Western Canada, just north of the state of Montana. 140 miles to the south is Lethbridge, a progressive city of 40,000 people with a recently opened university, and 180 miles to the southeast (100 miles east of Lethbridge) is Medicine Hat, a city of 27,000 people which is enjoying a recent flourish financially in connection with a newly opened Jr. College and other development. These are the only two cities in the province with churches that are opposed to the innovations related to church support of human organizations and sponsoring church arrangements. There are probably only five other churches of Christ in Alberta, a province about the size of Texas in land area and having a population of approximately 1 1/2 million.

The church in Lethbridge has an attendance of about 30, owns a very comfortable building and a nice four-bedroom house which they would furnish to a preacher. Since last fall they do not have a preacher working with them, but they are doing quite well as the men (including 3 teenage boys) have been preparing and presenting the lessons. I feel that with good sound preaching and energetic personal work, several restorations could be made in a short time that would lead to the attendance running 40 or better. Someone is needed as soon as possible and I believe that a capable preacher would find this a rewarding work because of the fine character of the brethren you could begin working with.

The church in Medicine Hat has an attendance of about 25, rents an I.O.O.F. hall for a meeting place, and presently has Marvin Noble working with them as a preacher. One difficulty here is that a division took place a few years ago and the few that would not stand for the truth on the issues mentioned above, retained the building, and this evident division in a city of this size is some hindrance. Marvin Noble, after working with the church about four years, has reluctantly but definitely made the decision to move from Medicine Hat, feeling that both the work there and he and his family can profit by a change. Therefore, a preacher is needed in Medicine Hat as well. The brethren there have put forth some effort toward securing a permanent meeting place, both by searching for and saving financially toward an initial payment on a building. I believe the purchase of or building of a permanent meeting place should be a matter of top priority in view of their local situation.

Is it possible that a capable preacher reading this article would be interested in moving into this much

needed field of labor? If two preachers whose families were close friends could plan to come at the same time to each of these cities, they could be a source of encouragement to each other. Or perhaps a long lost friend of mine would consider coming? In a field of this nature, the distances of 140 and 180 miles are very small, and we could find many occasions to encourage each other in the work.

Let me briefly add that this is not the frozen northland that some might picture it. While winter is longer and colder than in my home state of Alabama, because of the moderating influence of the warm "Chinook" winds in the winter, the climate is milder than in many places in the states further south. Both myself and my family have found this to be a beautiful and enjoyable place to live and a great part of this enjoyment comes from the wide variety of winter sports that characterize the area. The Canadian Rockies just west of both Calgary and Lethbridge offer a unique, rugged beauty and excellent recreation for both the summer and winter vacationer as well as the resident who desires to "get away just for a day."

It takes approximately 3 months after filing application with the Canadian Government to receive the approval for moving to Canada. However, one can visit here without even securing a passport. If you are interested in this work, you may contact me for further information or write to: Mr. Oliver Nerland

Mr. Marvin Noble	23 Colter Crescent N.W.
918 8th Avenue South	Medicine Hat, Alberta
Lethbridge, Alberta	Canada
Canada	Canada

These men could also direct preachers to churches that would be likely sources of support for this work. Are YOU interested? — Dave Bradford, 4804 Niven Road N.W., Calgary 47, Alberta, CANADA

**Richard W. Terry** — There will be a public religious Discussion with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the church of Christ. The Discussion will take place on April 18, 1972, at the Grandview church of Christ building. Participants will be Mr. William H. Day, president of the Kentucky-Tennessee Missions of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and Richard W. Terry, minister of the Grandview church of Christ. The time will be at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend. Brother Thomas G. O'Neil of the North Meadows church of Christ in Murfreesboro, Tennessee has consented to moderate for me.

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