

# 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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## THINK ON THESE THINGS

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### I DO NOT . . .

The church of the Lord is a special and separate body of people who are not only "called out" of the darkness of the devil's kingdom, but also called "into the kingdom" of the Son of God (Col. 1:13). It is probable that many professed Christians today do not place the emphasis upon the meaning of "into the kingdom of His dear Son" that should be there. There is too much negative emphasis sometimes and not enough positive teaching on the obligations of being in the kingdom of Christ. By negative emphasis we mean the teaching against things that are wrong such as drunkenness, stealing, lying, etc. It is right to teach against sin in all places, but there is more to the word of reconciliation than what we should not do. To many people all that the religion of the Lord means is not to do things that are evil and immoral. "I am a Christian because I do not cheat in business, I do not lie to my fellowman, I do not . . . I do not . . . I do not . . ."

Cornelius was a man who did not do these evil things, and he even did many of the good moral duties of man, but he was not a Christian simply because he did these things. It is only a part of the work of a Christian to oppose wickedness. He must not do these evil deeds, but there are some things he must do because he is in the kingdom of God. Just to emphasize the negative does not make one a Christian. In fact, in some instances one's sin might consist in "I do not."

Being called into the kingdom of God involves some duties that are often minimized. There is just

one hope of this calling (Eph. 4:4); it is the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:14); it is an holy calling (I Tim. 1:9), and we must be partakers of this holy calling (Heb. 3:1); we must give diligence to make this calling sure (2 Peter 1:10).

Called into the kingdom of Christ involves several positive and aggressive actions on the part of those so called. We are called into fellowship of Christ (I Cor. 1:9). Fellowship means partnership and working together with Christ. Paul said we are workers together with God; we are fellow-heirs with Christ. John said the basis of this fellowship is to walk in the light (I John 1:3, 7). This walking requires positive action—more than not walking in the way of the wicked. We are to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called (Eph. 4:1). This calls for meekness, longsuffering, forgiving, loving, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (I Peter 3:9; I Thess. 2:12).

We are called to liberty, yet this liberty is not to be used to destroy the work of God. Liberty from sin and its consequences and from the works of the law, which could not save, does not permit us to engage in actions that cause weak brethren to stumble and fall into sin. But we are called into the liberty to serve Jesus Christ. While enjoying the liberty from sin and the works of the law of Moses, we are bond servants of Jesus Christ and must do his will in all things.

In Colossians 3:15 we are called to let the peace of God rule the heart. This is not peace at any price; it is not peace with the evil forces because we are told to "fight the good fight of faith" (I Tim. 6:12). In fact, this fight is with all forces of evil, including "spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). There is no peace with spiritual error, in the church or out. This fight is not with the carnal sword, but with the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:17). We are to be aggressive with the word of God and fight all battles for the faith once for all delivered. Keeping peace of the Spirit involves a fight with all false teachers and forms of spiritual error wherever they are found, but the peace of God—that peace that comes from God by obeying His word—must rule our hearts. This is an objective of our being called into the kingdom of God.

In I Peter 2:9 we are told that we are called to

"show forth the praises of him who called us." To show forth the praises calls for something more than just "I do not do . . ." It includes worship as well as a life of godly living. It is by our "good works" that we give praises to God. 2 Peter 1:3, 4 teaches that we give glory and virtue in conducting our lives in accord with the living word of God. I Thessalonians 4:7 shows that holiness is the objective of this calling into the kingdom of God. This forbids the wickedness that the world practices, but it also demands those actions that are in harmony with divine nature of which we are to be partakers.

Paul and his company knew that the Spirit had called them to Macedonia to preach the gospel to the lost (Acts 16:10). The calling into the kingdom of God requires us to be teachers of the word of God. The lost of this world can be saved by no other means than to preach to them the gospel of the Son of God, which is the power of God to save when believed (I Cor. 1:21; Rom. 1:16). We cannot leave this to others to do because as a citizen of the kingdom I must do the work for which I have been called, and this includes teaching the word to others.

Let us strive to be aggressive in doing those things that are pleasing to our God as we oppose all evil.

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# Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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## LOOKING FOR LOOPHOLES

Human law is fallible. Many a known criminal has been set at liberty through some legal technicality, some "loophole" in the law. Divine law is perfect. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward" (Psa. 19:7-11). The gospel is called "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" in Romans 8:2. Paul said we are "under law to Christ" (1 Cor. 9:21). We are reminded that "if a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully" (2 Tim. 2:5). Concerning the new covenant God said "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts" (Heb. 8:10). James said the blessed man is the one who "looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein" (Jas. 1:25). John told us that "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 Jno. 3:4).

In spite of the whinings of certain among us who are well advanced toward shipwreck of the faith and who are sounding the way sectarians have always sounded when they lash out against what they call "legalism", God DOES have a law. It is as perfect as the lawgiver. Disregard for that law is a reflection of disrespect for the author of it. When Jesus sent the disciples out on the limited commission, he said "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me" (Mt. 10:40). We are the blessed recipients of divine revelation. That revelation is the "gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24). It is an objective standard by which all shall be judged in the last day (John 12:48). It is calculated to make the man of God "perfect, completely furnished unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). It contains "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3). It is God's only antidote for sin (Rom. 1:16-17). The revelation of this system of truth was not inspired by human merit but by divine grace. But divine favor is conditionally received. It is possible to frustrate the grace of God (Gal. 2:21) and for those who have come into divine favor to fall from grace (Gal. 5:4).

God requires obedience to his law. Jesus said "Not

every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt. 7:21). In answer to the question of the Jews on Pentecost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said unto them "Repent and be baptized every one of you" (Acts 2:37-38). The Son of God learned obedience and "became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8-9). The divine promise is that at the second coming of Christ he will take "vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thes. 1:8). It is not for man to sit in judgment upon God and determine what is just or loving. God is the potter and we are the clay. "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things" (Roman 2:2).

## Pardon For the Alien Sinner

God's plan of redemption, made possible by the blood of Christ, calls for the alien sinner (one who is not in the family of God) to believe the gospel, repent of his sins and be baptized for the remission of those sins (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38). These were the conditions of the Great Commission to be preached in all the world until the end of time. But this does not suit the fancy of many religionists. They must somehow find a loophole in the law of the Lord. So, they set forth hypothetical cases designed to arouse human sympathy and ending in a blatant denial of what the will of God states in plain language. They tell us about the man who believes in Christ, has repented of his sins and while on the way to be baptized has the misfortune of being killed by a limb falling on him. Or, the young man in his foxhole in time of war who is wounded and calls on the Lord to save him then and there when there is no chance for him to be baptized. And what of Floyd Collins, trapped in a coal mine? What of the man who decides to be baptized while out in the desert where there is no water? Would not a little sand sprinkled on him be all right since his intentions were good? All of these cases are supposed to prove that "he that believeth and is NOT baptized, shall be saved." But that is not what the Lord said. Those who bring up such cases want gospel preachers to make them a loophole in the law of the Lord and preach pardon where none was divinely offered. But, is there not a chance that God will show clemency? If so, he has not revealed it in his word and we are not at liberty to speak for God. Faithful servants of the Lord do not preach loopholes. They tell the sinner what the Bible says and call upon him to practice that. It is on this basis that God offers his grace.

## Pardon For the Erring Child

God has a second law of pardon for erring children in his family. When Simon, who believed and had been baptized, tried to buy the power of the Holy Spirit with money, he was rebuked for his sin and told to "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22). In 1 John 1:9 we are told "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to

forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." As the children of God, we stand continually in need of the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. John said that is granted on the basis of confession of sin. Now, that is what the word of God says. Some today are having much to say about "sins of ignorance" or sins for which one does not repent. They have resorted to the false position of the perfect, imputed righteousness of Christ. The Bible teaches that the one to whom God does not impute sin is the one forgiven. If God forgives his children on any other terms than repentance, confession and prayer, then we would appreciate it if someone would introduce the passage of scripture which so states. The truth of the matter is that these fellows who advocate this are not concerned about the danger of "perfectionism" as much as they are about finding a loophole big enough to drag in the instrument of music, Premillennialism, institutionalism and you name it. It is presumptuous to search for loopholes in the law of the Lord and hold out the promise of salvation on less than what God requires. Loopholes have a way of enlarging themselves. The old saw which says "nobody is perfect" is supposed to be elastic enough to include every digressive practice and speculative movement which those who chaff under divine law can invent.

#### Moral Loopholes

I am willing to affirm that it is sinful for a Christian socially to drink intoxicants. It used to be that any member who advocated social drinking was regarded as extremely dangerous and most certainly worldly in attitude. It was unheard of to find a preacher who advocated such. Not any more. Now we hear brethren say, "Now, I don't advocate social drinking, but if a man comes home from work and sits down with a cold bottle of wine or beer from his refrigerator, who can say he does wrong?" Well, this writer, for one. What is the purpose of this case being introduced, if not to find a loophole somewhere to justify the social use of intoxicants?

"Oh yes, I am against fornication, but now if a couple is REALLY in love and intends to marry anyhow, then what is wrong with their having sexual relations?" There again, this rationalization seeks a loophole in the law of the Lord which plainly says "Flee fornication" which is a sin against the body and which is a work of the flesh which will keep one out of heaven (1 Cor. 6:18-20; Gal. 5:19-21).

"Of course, I am against immodesty, but what is wrong with a decent mini-skirt, or respectable hot pants when the weather is warm?" "Decent" miniskirts and "respectable" hot pants are as nonexistent as fried snow balls. This is the Devil's ploy to make sin appear acceptable. It is a search for a loophole in the law.

"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). Proper respect for divine wisdom manifests itself in humble submission to the will of the Lord. His commandments are not grievous. It is high time to stop searching for loopholes and offering promises which the word of God does not make.

#### CORRECTIONS

The article, *Crumbling Foundations*, in the May, 1976 issue was incorrectly ascribed to Eugene Britnell. Ken Green wrote the article. Our apologies to him for this error.

In the editorial "And See How They Do" in the June, 1976 issue, the bottom line dropped off in both columns on page 3. Column one should end with the sentence "At 4 A.M., this young man's brother came bringing someone else to "put on Christ in baptism." The second column should end with the sentence "Some are sound asleep as to the dangers of the "grace-fellowship" controversy and some are not disposed to even admit there is a problem."

Also, eight page numbers are missing at the bottom of the page in the June, 1976 issue. This will only be a problem to those who buy bound volumes or save theirs to have bound. These were all printer's errors which we regret. Our apologies to the readers.

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**COGDELL'S "CAMPAIGN FOR CHRIST"  
REVIEWED — No. 1**

I have before me several pages of material that were sent to me by the editor of *Searching The Scriptures*, Brother Connie W. Adams, with the request that I review it for publication in this paper. I gladly accept my assignment.

The material is by Brother Gaston D. Cogdell of Cincinnati, Ohio, and was written in defense of the Clifton Church, for which he preaches, becoming a "sponsoring church" for the purpose of sponsoring a "Campaign for Christ" in 1976 in the Cincinnati area. We will not respond to everything Brother Cogdell has said, but will try to focus attention on some key issues. Since the time of the "sponsoring church" in modern times, a new generation has grown up among us and they need to know what is involved in the "sponsoring church" arrangement. It could not be defended by the word of God in yesteryears and Brother Cogdell cannot defend it by the word of God now. If he thinks he can, I am willing to sign fair and representative propositions with him for a discussion of the issues involved. I am sure there are any number of gospel preachers in the Cincinnati area that also would be glad to do so.

**Misrepresents**

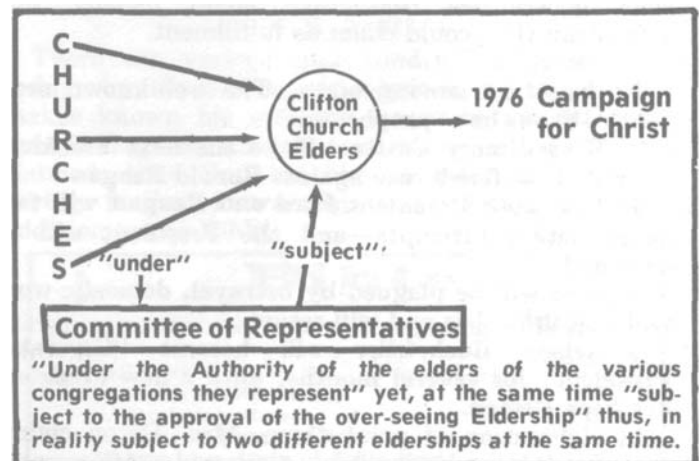
One of the tactics of error is to misrepresent its opposition. I have never minded someone telling another what I believed and taught as long as he represented me correctly. However, if someone can be made to look ridiculous in what he teaches, then few people will pay attention to him. This is one of the things Brother Cogdell does.

He charges in his material that those of us who oppose the "sponsoring church" kind of church cooperation are following the "doctrines and traditions of men", that we would "make a spastic—paralytic out of the Body of Christ", that we are guilty of "hypocrisy" in the claim that the "sponsoring church" is unscriptural, that we share in "the shameful, poisonous, devilish, soul-destroying rupture between us" and are opposed "to orphan's homes, Christian colleges, Bible classes," and "church literature". However, Brother Cogdell's charges do not make it so. Brother Cogdell, I call upon you to name one person who opposes an orphan having a home. Who is it that opposes schools operated by brethren? Just who is opposing teaching the Bible in classes? It is strange that brethren who

are charged with opposing "church literature" write, print and circulate so much of it if they are opposed to it. I am not opposed to these, and while I do not intend to speak for them, I do not think the editor of this paper or my fellow regular writers are so opposed to these things. It is easy to turn ears away from the truth by misrepresenting what truth says. Brother Cogdell, calling us "critics" will not establish Bible authority for the "sponsoring church".

**Clifton "Sponsoring Church"**

Brother Cogdell tells us that "money is being sent from the various participating congregations to the elders at Clifton, and a committee of representatives from those same congregations has been formed to help plan and implement the plans for the Campaign". This "committee" is to "advise and assist" and each member of this "committee" is under the authority of the elders of the various congregations he represents". We are further told, "The elders of the sponsoring church have sole final authority in all matters, and the decisions of the Campaign Committee are all subject to the approval of the overseeing eldership, but the Committee itself is not under the authority of the overseeing eldership".



The funds from the contributing churches "are placed in the name of the Clifton Church of Christ alone" yet these funds we are told "are under the control of the elders of those respective congregations". Now, if you think you are confused about this matter, so am I. Clifton Church has "sole final authority" over these funds, yet at the same time it is claimed these funds are "under the control of the elders of those respective congregations". The contributing churches claim control of the funds; the "sponsoring church" claims control over the funds. Who really has control of the funds? Do they really even know? If they really know, why are two different groups represented as having control of the funds?

Brother Cogdell thinks this "sponsoring church" arrangement is scriptural since the "funds are given voluntarily." If the funds were coerced or given voluntarily, in either case they are surrendered to another church, and, thus, lost to the control of the giving church. A thing is lost whether taken by force

or given. The Methodist Conference exercises its control over Methodist Churches by force. Baptist Churches claim their autonomy since they surrender their control voluntarily. Brother Cogdell thinks because churches agree to give away funds that they have not lost the control over them. He and the Baptists make the same argument and for the same reason. (*More to Follow*)

## Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

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### THAT CRYSTAL BALL AGAIN

Self-ordained prophets are becoming more brazen in their predictions. A few years ago the criticism was justly leveled that they made their predictions in such generalities that they could usually find something they could claim as fulfillment.

No more!

At least not among some. The well-known seer, Jeane Dixon, has "prophesied:"

**1. That Jimmy Carter will be the next President after a photo-finish race against Ronald Reagan.**

**2. That both President Ford and Reagan will face assassination attempts—and the President will be wounded.**

**3. Ford will be plagued by betrayal, domestic woes and a health crisis and will resign.**

**4. Nelson Rockefeller will become "Caretaker President" for several months, until a new President has been elected.**

In elaboration of point three, Mrs. Dixon claims that Ford faces betrayal by a trusted staff member who'll embarrass the President by revealing his plans concerning a foreign country.

**"This betrayal of trust will cause several men in high places to leave their jobs in disgrace,"** she declared (*National Enquirer*, March 30, 1976).

So we cannot accuse Jeane Dixon of talking in generalities. This just shows that Mrs. Dixon realizes millions of Americans are so gullible they'll follow her whether her predictions are fulfilled or not.

Along the same line, *The Nashville Tennessean*, April 3, 1976, recounts the "divine warning" by a woman prophet in Guatemala named Mrs. Dulce Maria Garcia.

Mrs. Garcia, who claims she foresaw the earthquake which devastated Guatemala in February, has predicted that Florida will be inundated by a tidal wave in April.

As a result, some 70 Cuban-Americans have fled Florida, leaving homes and jobs, to settle in Camden, Tennessee.

I sure do appreciate such zeal and devotion to

religious professions. Wish we had more works coupled with faith among us!

But so confident am I that **"that which is perfect" has come** (1 Cor. 13:10) and **prophecies have now failed or ceased** (v. 8) that I'm predicting on this third day of April that Florida will not be devastated by a tidal wave this month. If such has happened when you read this, my new address will be Camden, Tennessee. I'll be interested in learning what else the lady knows.

Then there's the "prophetess" who claims to be in touch with the Martians. They are supposed to land July 4. I bet they'll come secretly!

### The Name of the Game

From the "Pro-Life-Line," Citizens Action Committee, Santa Ana, California, comes this moving short story of a nurse who wept:

"Nurse, will you come in here and measure the mass in that bowl there?"

"Yes, doctor."

The nurse walked to a bowl at a table in the surgery of a Los Angeles hospital. She looked down and gasped. Her stomach churned. She began to weep. There was a perfectly formed child; seven inches long. Hair on the head. Fingernails, eyes, nose, mouth. The body still warm.

The doctor came over. "Are you ill?" he asked the nurse.

She wept; her body shook, "That's a child. How can you say that's not a child?" she asked.

"I didn't know you were so emotional," the doctor remarked.

"How can you say that's not a child?"

"I don't know," he snapped. "I never look."

That's the way the game is played. **The name of the game is ABORTION.**

### Even the Atheists are Lukewarm!

Jesus said He had rather one be either cold or hot than lukewarm (Rev. 3:15, 16). If He will spue the lukewarm Christian out of His mouth, what will be the end of the lukewarm atheist? We do not ask for information, but out of amazement.

A recent UPI release from Dallas, Texas reports that Madalyn Murray O'Hair has quit. She plans to join the ranks of apathetic atheists. The news article quotes the unofficial leader of American atheists as saying:

**"I quit. Anyone who desires to take over leadership of the American atheist community can have it.**

**"For 13 years the Christian community in the U.S. has abused and brutalized me. On the other side of the coin, the American atheist community has never supported me."**

So there you have it folks. It almost seems that Mrs. O'Hair believes she has been treated wrong. That her fellow atheists had some kind of moral obligation to come to her aid. Such statements get dangerously close to suggesting that there is some kind of standard of fair play and right-wrong.

Well, in my opinion, **Mrs. O'Hair has been the oddball all along!** I never have seen anything in atheism to get excited about. It's still the lukewarm

Christians I can't figure out.

I cannot leave this point without musing that neither the lukewarm atheist nor the lukewarm member of the church will remain lukewarm for long (Luke 16: 23, 24).

### On the March

*The Ensign Fair* is a monthly paper printed by the Farley Church of Christ in Huntsville, Alabama. Though purportedly "sponsored" by that church, it is sent out by subscription, \$2.00 a year, and contributions from both individuals and churches are solicited.

In the December, 1975 issue, the results of a "Church of Christ Survey" which was recently conducted by the *Christian Worker* (another monthly, edited by Loyd Connel of Tulsa, Okla.) were presented. The survey covered only the state of Oklahoma, but Editor R. L. Kilpatrick says, "... their findings are very close to the national average for churches of Christ."

Perhaps our readers will be interested in seeing how "on the march" our liberal brethren are in the areas of benevolence and evangelism. The author, Flavil R. Yeakley, Jr., cites a 1973-74 nation-wide survey which found that "the average congregation of the church of Christ was spending less than 3 percent of its budget on any kind of benevolent work and just a little over 2 percent of its budget on mission work. If our giving has increased enough to keep pace with inflation, the average contribution per member per week is probably closer to \$5 today. If these nationwide figures hold for Oklahoma congregations, then we probably have a total state-wide contribution of about \$20 million per year—but only \$600,000 of that going into any kind of benevolent work and only \$400,000 is going into mission work. That may sound like a lot of money, but what it means is that the average member of the church of Christ in the state of Oklahoma is giving less than 15 cents per week to help the needy and less than 10 cents per week to support mission work."

What has happened? We were told by the liberal brethren a few short years ago that the churches are obligated to relieve benevolent needs, not only of its indigent members, but of the world!

There was no reasoning with them. It was futile to suggest that if such be the responsibility of churches of Christ, we could spend every penny contributed in such an endeavor, and have nothing left to support the preaching of the word, and our contribution to relieve poverty and social ills would not be a drop in the bucket!

If the survey is correct, (and after all, the liberals published it) the average member of the church of Christ (institutional) in Oklahoma is contributing between \$4 and \$5 a week to the church, and a grand total of less than 25 c of that, is going to benevolent and "mission" work.

How many of us would be willing to contribute far more than that each week if we could erase the terrible division we've suffered in the Lord's body and say, "We're working together in the unity of the

Spirit." But as some of the old-timers used to say, orphan homes and the *Herald of Truth* is not the issue and never was. It's just the horse they rode out on. The issue is whether we shall abide within the boundaries of God's authorized will.

I'll repeat it again: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

## Using Great Plainness of Speech

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### HOW DOES GOD MAKE HIS MESSAGE KNOWN TODAY?

by J. T.  
Smith

There are various and sundry ways proclaimed today, by those who are religious, as to how God makes known his message for us today. Many say that God speaks directly to them, or as Joseph Smith claimed, that God led him to some special plates giving further instruction or revelation for us in addition to the Bible.

## Bible

1. God's ONLY Book. (2 Pet. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)
2. God's Way Given To Man. (Heb. 1:1-2)
  - a. Fathers—Patriarchs
  - b. Prophets—Moses
  - c. Jesus—Apostolic Era
  - d. Through a study of God's Word. (2 Tim. 2:IS)
3. Promise Made To Abraham. (Gen. 12:3)
  - a. Law added till seed should come. (Gal. 3:19)
  - b. Law Taken Away. (Col. 2:14)
  - c. First Covenant Not Faultless. (Heb. 8:7)
4. Must Know What God Has For Us. (Rom. 15:4)
  - a. Christ's Disc. — IF We Continue In His Word. (John 8:31-32)
  - b. Testament of Force AFTER men are Dead. (Heb. 9:16-17)
5. Therefore, We Must Know:
  - a. Who is Speaking
  - b. To Whom He is Speaking
  - c. What Subject He Has in Mind
  - d. When it Took Place
6. God Warns Us Not To Go Beyond His Word. "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, Hath Not God." (2 John 9)

Point number one in the above chart shows us what book we are to use in matters of religion; and what is provided for us today. In 2 Pet. 1:3 we read, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through

the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:" Thus everything that God wants mankind to know and do is revealed in the one book—THE BIBLE. The Bible points out (1) where man came from, (2) what he must do while living here on earth, (3) and where he will be in eternity.

Also, Paul wrote to Timothy and said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Thus when we take into account these two passages of Scripture, we must realize that God has completely furnished us with a book that reveals every good work that God wants his people to perform.

### How May We Know?

In Heb. 1:1-2 we read, "God who at sundry times and divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Now man has a complete revelation from God that was given by Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. Jesus told the apostles, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come" (John 16:13). Notice that Jesus said the Spirit would guide THEM into ALL truth. Now did the Spirit do what He was supposed to do, or did he fail to do what Jesus said He would do? Or, did the Spirit guide them into All truth, but they didn't, or wouldn't, preach ALL THE TRUTH. Yes, my friends, we HAVE everything we need to take us to heaven. "But," you may say, "how do we know what God wants us to know"? Paul told Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). Hence, today the word is not given directly to man; but God hath given His Book, the Bible, for us to study that we may know what his will is for us.

### What Part of the Bible Is Applicable Today?

In Gen. 12:3, God made a promise to Abraham that through his seed, all nations of the earth would be blessed. In Gal. 3:16 Paul tells us that the "seed" was Christ. However, this in no way places on man today, obedience to the specific things that God told Abraham to do that he might be saved.

After God spoke directly to the people in Abraham's time Paul said the Law was added because of transgressions till the seed (Christ) should come to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:56). The law of Moses was not faultless (Heb. 8:7), and thus Christ came to fulfill the Law of Moses and nail it to the cross (Col. 2:14). "So," someone may say, "you do not believe that the Old Testament is worth anything." Now, before you jump to any conclusions, let's let the Bible explain what value the Old Testament has for us.

First of all we know that the ten commandment

law is not binding on us today. Paul said, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4). "But," someone asks, "how do you know he is talking about the ten commandment law"? I know, because in verse seven Paul identifies the law about which he is talking. It is the law that says, "thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7:7). "So," you may ask, "what benefit then is the Old Testament today"? In Rom. 15:4 we read, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

### What Does God Require of Us?


We are now living under the "perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25). And James says, "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." What, then, does this perfect law of liberty require of us? Jesus made it very plain. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). Christ's will or testament went into effect when the testator (Christ) died (Heb. 9:16-7). Hence today, we are to be guided by the New Testament for it furnishes us unto "every good work."

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## Things Most Certainly Believed

*Julian R. Snell*

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### HEARTS MUST BE RIGHT

Following the death of Stephen the persecution of saints in Jerusalem intensified. It is said that Saul made havoc of the church, entering into every house and committing men and women to prison. The effect of this cruelty was a scattering of the disciples throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Among these was Philip who went to Samaria where he preached Christ. Among those converted was one Simon, a sorcerer. "Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done" (Acts 8:13). There can be no denying that he was in fact a Christian; however, subsequent circumstances turned the heart of Simon away from the Lord.

Upon hearing of the success of Philip in Samaria, the apostles which were at Jerusalem sent unto them Peter and John. The purpose of this was that the new converts might receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the apostles hands (of. 8:14-18). It is to be necessarily inferred that only the apostles had the power of giving the Holy Ghost to others since Philip had not conferred such a gift and Peter and John had to do it. Simon was apparently among the number so favored with the rest. However, he wanted more. Namely, the "power that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost" (8:19). His offer of money was rejected and his spirit was rebuked as Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (vs. 20-21). Here is the key to the proper relationship to God; attitude, the condition of one's heart. Simon's was not right, it was not ruled by the right spirit and attitude, thus the indictment of Peter.

There are several factors which enter into a condition of heart that is not right in the sight of God. The word "overcharged" is descriptive of one such condition and attitude. "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that the day come upon you unawares" (Lk. 21:34). Most will identify the circumstances in this context as relating to the destruction of Jerusalem. The principle is ever applicable, however. The end

result of the attitude here considered is to be unprepared and lost. Jesus here says "take heed to yourselves" which impresses the personal aspect. The guard and care required in maintaining the right heart in order to salvation is a personal thing. The elders of the Ephesian church were admonished by Paul to, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves" (Acts 20:28). First attention, not only by elders but by all, must be to self before there can be any measurable success in behalf of others. This conclusion is further complemented in the statement of Hebrews 2:1, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip."

Take heed "lest at any time your hearts be overcharged." Overburdened and weighted down by the physical and material things of life, is the thought here. The heart and life so burdened, so engrossed, has no time for the things of the spirit. In our own day and time this is the most obvious explanation for the unwillingness of many to serve and devote themselves to the things of the Lord. The anxieties of daily living leave no room for the Lord. The word "surfeiting" is from a term which signifies the giddiness and headache resulting from excessive wine-bibbing, a drunken nausea (W. E. Vine). The idea is obvious, enamored with the physical, mundane things of life, one is completely overwhelmed.

Upon these the day of the Lord will come "as a snare." Again, we hasten to point out that the Lord is specifically dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem. However, the principle here developed is without question deserving of a broader application. We thus conclude that this overcharged heart will at the Lord's coming, finally, as was the case with His coming in the destruction of Jerusalem, trap men in the snare of insufficient preparation and unreadiness for that coming.

The unforgiving heart is not right with God. Forgiveness from God is in part predicated upon our willingness to forgive our fellows. In the model prayer of Jesus, he taught, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). Brethren need to recognize that offenses will come but such ought never be allowed to develop into a breach. When they do such indicates that Satan is in control of someone, maybe everyone. A basic consideration is in the offering in Matthew 18:15-17, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." If an offense is serious enough to talk to any one about it is serious enough to talk to the offending brother about. Resolving differences is a two-way street involving all parties. This threadbare and time-worn phrase, "I am offended" is the most overworked statement in some brethren's vocabulary. Most of the time such only

involves petty grievances produced by ruffled feelings which are too childish to talk about. The immaturity reflected in this kind of attitude is among the saddest of commentaries on the way of Christ. Most brethren would do well to tuck their feelings in if they are easily pricked and pursue a course of forgiveness and seek forgiveness. The unforgiving heart is not right before God and invariably reflects a disposition which mars the beauty and happiness of the relationship of the citizens of the kingdom. Indeed, the unforgiving heart is not right before God.

"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgement of God" (Rom. 2:5), introduces the third factor which makes for a heart not right before God. Repentance is the resolute determination of mind to quit sin. It is illustrated most forcefully in, "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented and went" (Matt. 21:28-29). Herein is impressed a condition of heart which must be maintained. God has calculated that keeping in constant remembrance the factors responsible for repentance in the first place will aid if not accomplish this. Paul credits the "goodness of God" with leading to repentance (Rom. 2:4). That goodness must certainly comprehend all that God has done from the sending of His Son to die to the publication of His will and the preservation of it. If these factors will produce repentance, and they will, keeping them in constant remembrance will maintain the tender condition of heart originally in evidence. The impenitent heart has cast out the factors responsible for repentance. It is no longer touched by the fact of God's goodness but rather hardened to the appeal of the gospel. In this condition of heart and the life it produces there begins to be a delight in wickedness. This is the line of argumentation followed by Paul in the opening chapters of Romans as he identifies the Gentile first and then the Jew as being in sin, finally climaxing in the indictment of both. The heart that cannot be brought to repentance, that does not maintain a penitent posture is not right with God.

While the factors noted are but representative they are sufficient to enable the drawing of a most vivid conclusion. As Simon was in the "gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity" destined to perish with the money offered in payment of a measure of the Holy Spirit not intended for him, so it is with all whose hearts are not right with God. God be thanked that there is a remedy for the heart not right, "repent and pray God if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." May God help us.

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### PERSONAL INTERPRETATION—NO. 3

This is the third and last in a series on the personal interpretation theory. I used Billy Sunday Myers as a take off, since he took the position that no preacher could "preach the word", only his personal interpretation of the word. Myers, was pressed hard in debate when he espoused this position. Many believe this diabolical doctrine but have not been pressed enough to admit it. Any person who believes that a passage may be made to teach conflicting doctrines with the approbation of God must believe the theory.

When the early church had a confrontation over circumcision and eating meat sacrificed to idols, the matter had to be settled by inspired men. The record says, "And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question" (Acts 15: 1-20). They sent to Jerusalem and received the following reply from the apostles and elders, "And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greetings unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law; to whom we gave no such commandment" (Acts 15:23-24).

Now, I want to affirm that this matter was either black or white, there was no room for gray! The apostles either authorized the judaizing teachers or they did not. The text says they did not. But someone might say, preacher, what if a person says he could not understand either the law or the explanation of the apostles with reference to the law. My answer is that such a person is either lying or not accountable. Of the first, he must repent; if the latter he has no problem.

This brings up the next challenge. Some have argued that the early church was in a much better position than we. It is argued that when controversies arose, they could send up to Jerusalem and ask the apostles and thus the matter would be settled. For your information, that did not settle the matter with some. They just challenged the authority of the apostles! But someone says, wouldn't it be nice

to send up to Jerusalem and get the apostles to settle some of these HARD questions in the church? For example, we could ask them who is right on the hat and hair question, the war question, the invitation song question, the funeral and weddings in church building question, the college question, the fellowship question, the cooperation question, etc. Kind friend, before we raise too many questions, I have some good news. The apostles have already answered all of these questions for us. If we respect the silence of the scriptures, they are all answered! This is what makes the Bible a complete revelation. We call it plenary inspiration, from the Latin work *plenus* which means full or complete.


Madalyn Murray O'Hair, an atheist, from our Lone Star State is actively engaged in trying to destroy the Bible. We know what she is trying to do because she shows her true colors. However, any person who believes the "personal interpretation" theory is destroying the Bible, but in a subtle way. I had much rather deal with a Madalyn O'Hair than one who claims to believe it with one breath and then destroys it with another.

It is said that Harry Truman had a sign on his desk, "The buck stops here." I must insist that all controversies stop at the Bible. All one has to do to get the answer to his question is be honest! If he isn't honest when he gets his answer, he will not accept it. Gentle friend, if you have a question which troubles you, write it down and send it to the apostles in Jerusalem; you will get an immediate response. Just pick up your Bible and you have the answer. Yes, indeed it is a complete revelation.

**NEITHER  
BE YE IDOLATORS #1**

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In one of the warnings addressed to the church at Corinth, Paul said, "Neither be idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play" (1 Cor. 10:7).

In these words the apostle Paul sounded a stern warning against the age-old sin of idolatry. It is a warning that is just as much needed today.

Man is a worshipping creature by nature. The instinct to reverence, or pay homage to some object or being that he considers higher than himself, or to have some objective that he regards as the most important thing in life, and for which he will make almost any sacrifice, is as natural to man as hunger and thirst.

So whether it be in the steaming jungle of the tropics, or in the frozen regions of the north; whether in civilized or uncivilized countries; whether it be the

savage in his crude hut, or the rich man in his palatial mansion, man worships some one or something. It may be his effort to serve with godly fear the God of the universe, or it may be his effort to achieve some ambition, or to reach some goal in life. But man worships. Idolatry is simply misplaced worship—directed toward the wrong object.

Idolatry assumes various forms. Primarily it refers to the worship of images. The writer of Acts described the city of Athens as being "wholly given to idolatry" (Acts 17:16. K. J. V.). The evidence was in the great number of images that Paul saw throughout the city (verse 23). That is just one form of idolatry, however. In our text Paul defined idolatry as the feasting and revelry that accompanied the worship of the golden calf. Sometimes idolatry is used with reference to the importance that one ascribes to the satisfying of the sensual appetites. Paul spoke of some "whose god is the belly" (Phil. 3:19). Sometimes the term idolatry is used to describe the sin of covetousness. Paul spoke of "covetousness which is idolatry" (Col. 3:5).

The Bible has much to say about the sin of idolatry. God has always hated it. Especially was this true in his dealings with Israel. God had separated them from the other nations, and had made them a holy nation (Exodus 19:6). He pictured the relationship between himself and Israel under the figure of husband and wife (Jeremiah 31:32). Thus he regarded idolatry in Israel as the infidelity of a wife to her husband (Jer. 3:20).

When God thundered forth the Decalogue from mount Sinai, the first two commandments prohibited idolatrous worship (Ex. 20:1-5). Time after time throughout the law of Moses these prohibitions were repeated (Leviticus 19:4, 26:1, Deut. 16:21, 22).

With the memory of all God's goodness to them in delivering them from slavery, and awe-stricken by the voice of God as he spoke to them from mount Sinai (Ex. 20:18, 19), one might well suppose that Israel would not so soon have fallen into sin. But it is a characteristic of man that the lessons of life are soon forgotten, and gratitude soon gives way to a feeling of independence. Scarcely had the echoes of Sinai died away than idolatry reared its ugly head in Israel. Impatient at the long delay of Moses in the mount, they demanded of Aaron that he make them a god that they could see. This led to the episode of the worship of the golden calf. It was but the first of many occasions of idolatrous worship in Israel, and because of which God finally allowed them to be taken captive to Babylon where they remained for seventy years.

#### **The New Testament Picture**

With such a background, showing God's intense hatred of idolatry, it is not surprising that we find the New Testament punctuated with exhortations and warnings, forbidding Christians having any part in idolatrous practices. It will be recalled that Paul said that God had "left the nations (Gentiles. M. B.) to walk in their own ways" (Acts 14:16). Thus when Christianity was introduced, and while the New Testament was being written, idolatry was firmly

rooted in the religious life of the Gentiles. It was, we might say, the official religion of the Roman empire.

Thus one of Paul's first tasks as he went out preaching the gospel of Christ, was to turn men from the worship of idols to the worship of the God of heaven "not like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man" (Acts 17:29). Then, as now, religion was often commercialized, and the riot in Ephesus that almost cost Paul his life was instigated by the silversmiths who made their wealth from the manufacture and sale of images of the goddess Diana (Acts 19:23-25).

Because many of the Christians of Paul's day had come from an idolatrous background (1 Cor. 12:2), it was necessary that they be constantly warned and admonished lest they return to their former manner of life. The words of the text at the beginning of this article are but one of many such warnings. Down in the fourteenth verse of the same chapter, Paul said, "Wherefore my beloved, flee from idolatry."

In 2 Cor. 6:14, Paul said, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers." He gave a number of reasons in the form of a series of rhetorical questions, one of which was, "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" (verse 16). In Gal. 5:19, 20 he classified idolatry as being a work of the flesh. In Eph. 5:5 he said, "For this we know of a surety that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." Finally the writer of Revelation locates the destiny of idolaters as being "in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." (Rev. 21:8, 9).

In an article to follow we shall discuss the present day application of the above scriptures, and some of the idols that are commonly served.

## THE ISRAEL OF GOD

Norman E. Sewell

Is modern-day Israel the Israel of God? Many of our friends and neighbors have become convinced that modern-day Israel is fulfilling the prophecies made concerning God's people of long ago. I believe there are two fairly simple points to be made which will show the fallacy of at least this portion of the millennialist argument.

Modern-day Israel cannot fulfill the land promise made to Israel of old, because that promise and prophecy was fulfilled a long time ago. Notice, please, Joshua 21:43-45, "*So Jehovah gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And Jehovah gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; Jehovah delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not aught of any good thing which Jehovah had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.*" Surely, if all had been fulfilled as inspired scripture plainly says, there can be no more fulfillment of this prophecy today or in the future. II Chron. 9:26 tells us of Solomon: "*And he ruled over*

*all the kings from the River even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.*" This is exactly the land promised to Abraham's seed in Genesis 15:18. There can be no doubt that the land promise was fulfilled, and modern-day or future earthly Israel cannot fulfill that which has already been fulfilled.

But, who is the Israel of God today? Paul wrote in Rom. 9:6, ". . . *for they are not all Israel, that are of Israel*". In other words, not even all of physical Israel are of God's spiritual Israel. The point is further clarified in verses 24-26, "*even us, whom he also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles? As he saith also in Hosea, I will call them my people, which were not my people, And her beloved, that was not beloved. And it shall be, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, There shall they be called sons of the living God.*" The idea of a **SPIRITUAL ISRAEL** is further taught by Paul in Romans 2:28-29. "*For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*" God's man today is not necessarily a Jew physically. In Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek (Rom. 1:16; 3:29; 9:24; 10:12; I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11; and Rom. 2:9-10). The Israel of God is not physical, but spiritual, not based upon a physical birth and nationality, but on spiritual birth.

Herbert W. and Garner Ted Armstrong in their radio and T.V. broadcasts, and in their printed material suggest that there is a difference between the Jews mentioned in the passages above and Israel. However, this can be shown to be in error when we view a few passages in the New Testament. The disciples were sent to "*the lost sheep of the house of Israel*" (Matt. 10:5-6). Mark tells us that John the baptizer preached to those who came to him from "*all the country of Judea, and all they of Jerusalem*" which would have been the Jews according to Armstrong's ideas, but Paul says that John preached to "*all the people of Israel*" (Acts 13:24). When John tells us of Nicodemus coming to Jesus we are told that he (Nicodemus) was a ruler "*of the Jews*" (John 3:1), but Jesus refers to him in verse 10 as a "*master (teacher) of Israel*". We further learn that those who were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose regarding Stephen travelled to several places, "*speaking the word to none save only the Jews*" (Acts 11:19), but Peter speaking in the house of Cornelius, Acts 10:36 says the word was sent to "*the children of Israel*". We also find that on the day of Pentecost "*Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.*" (Acts 2:5), but when Peter addressed them he called them, "*Ye men of Israel*" (Acts 2:22). While there was in the Old Testament period of time a difference between those who were faithful (JUDAH) and those who went

astray (ISRAEL) in New Testament times, the distinction is no longer recognized. (BY THE WAY, JUDAH EVENTUALLY ALSO WENT ASTRAY). The Israel of God today is SPIRITUAL, not physical, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, "to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (Eph. 3:6).

If these two main points are both true, (1) that the land promise to Israel of old was fulfilled, (2) and that the Israel of God today is spiritual, not physical, those two points alone do irreparable damage to the man-made theories about modern-day Israel. Salvation is offered by Christ, to those who obey Him. This relationship makes one a part of spiritual Israel, having become a Jew inwardly, and having been circumcised in heart and not in the flesh.

I am deeply indebted to a special issue of the Gospel Guardian, dated July 24, 31, Aug. 7, 1969 for much of the material in this article.

2020 Vivion Road  
Kansas City, Mo, 64118

### EMPTY CHAIRS

The hostess has toiled,  
Most of the week,  
Preparing a feast,  
To pass critique.  
The house is clean,  
The silver is shining,  
The table is set,  
All ready for dining.  
The time has come,  
For the guests to appear.  
She's anxiously waiting,  
Their knock to hear.  
But no footsteps sound,  
On the silent stairs,  
So she's left to serve,  
Empty chairs.  
The preacher has toiled,  
Most of the week,  
A spiritual feast,  
He hopes to bespeak.  
With time and deep feeling,  
And always with care,  
He's studied and researched,  
Spent hours in prayer.  
The time has come,  
It is the Lords day,  
The sermons begun,  
Without delay.  
But his eyes are saddened,  
When he looks out there,  
For he's left to serve,  
Your empty chair.

Dody Gibson  
Kokomo, Indiana

## Restoration Footnotes

Earl Kimbrough

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### THE CHARMS OF POLITICAL LIFE

Some gospel preachers at various times during the past one hundred and fifty years have been attracted to politics. A few of these, with varying degrees of success, have actually entered the political arena to seek some public office. Gen. James A. Garfield is perhaps the most outstanding example of achievement in this field. While he took a liberal interpretation of the Restoration, he was a gospel preacher and continued to preach occasionally after he became a congressman from Ohio in 1863. He was elected president on the Republican ticket with Chester A. Arthur in 1882. Other gospel preachers have sought less honorable positions on the federal, state, and local levels of government. But most gospel preachers over the years have recognized that there is no higher calling than serving Christ and they have been content to live out their lives in relative obscurity while serving the Prince of Peace.

It is believed by some serious students of his life that Alexander Campbell possessed the qualities of character that would have made him an outstanding statesman, had his interests been in the direction of politics. The only elective political office he ever held was a representative of Brooke County in the Constitutional Convention of Virginia in 1829. He served with such men as James Monroe, James Madison, and John Tyler. He was also acquainted with Henry Clay and other political leaders of his day. But politics held no appeal for Campbell.

In a letter to Col. Charles S. Morgan, a friend and fellow delegate to the Constitutional Convention, he expressed his view of the subject. He wrote: "I am conscious that many are infatuated with the charms of political life. They never have any for me, and never will have any. I view mankind of a higher relation than as a subject of taxation, or as a name on the muster roll. I view him as one who may be immortal, a citizen of heaven, and a priest of God. I have more pleasure in thinking on man's eternal destinies, or in reading one section of the Oracles of God, than in all the splendid schemes of earthly ambition and political grandeur." (Quoted from Louis Cochran, *Christian Standard*, July 15, 1967, p. 9).

We believe that Christians may hold elective political office and that it is possible for them to conduct themselves as Christians should while occupying such a position. But we are also persuaded that the church is better off spiritually when gospel preachers refrain from political infatuation and devote

their time and talents to the gospel. We are also persuaded that the individuals themselves are better off. Campbell's view of the matter is certainly worth serious consideration, to say the least.

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(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

*Please Renew Promptly*

Editor's Meeting Schedule	
West Allis, Wis.	August 23-29
Monticello, Ky.	Sept. 5-10
Hamilton, Ohio	Sept. 13-19
Bowling Green, Ky. (West End)	Oct. 3-8
Berwyn, Illinois	Oct. 24-29
Mason, Ohio	Oct. 24-29
East Alton, Illinois	Nov. 1-7
Versailles, Ky.	Nov. 8-14

## THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

### DEATHS

**ROSS O. SPEARS**—With sadness we report the death of this well-known and much loved gospel preacher. Brother Spears was working with the church at Kettle, Kentucky but passed away at his farm near Butler, Missouri after completing a gospel meeting in Kansas City. Brother Spears was not only a capable preacher but also a talented singer and was often called upon to direct singing in gospel meetings. This writer shall never forget the night in Tampa in 1974 when Ross O. Spears led singing with about 1,000 people present. He led without a book, and the audience sang that way, a number of old songs of Zion. We saw tears in the eyes of many as he led us in Rock of Ages, On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand and Standing on the Promises. He was always a delight in the social circle, one of the best with a humorous story. Perhaps no tribute to him is more fitting than that which appeared in the STATE GAZETTE of Dyersburg, Tennessee on June 29, 1953 as the editor of that newspaper took notice of the Spears family leaving Dyersburg. We quote part of the editorial.

"Dyersburg as a whole joins with members of the Church of Christ in regretting loss of Ross O. Spears as that congregation's minister.

"Mr. Spears' connection with the church was severed yesterday, his resignation early in May having brought to a close ten years and one month of service as minister of the church and to the Dyersburg community. He has served both well, able and untiringly and those among whom he goes now to labor are certain to find themselves as fortunate as we who deeply appreciate his contribution to the community....."

"On the Air' every Sunday evening except during the summer months, ever since WDSG was activated, he was Dyersburg's oldest radio minister from point of service. His listening audience was large and he will be missed by it as well as in his own pulpit and the community life . . ."

"Unlike many, he leaves Dyersburg not in search of a larger congregation to serve but in answer to a challenge he has given himself — service to a much smaller church with the hope and belief that he can increase its membership and its usefulness to the community in which it is located. Few men want changes unless they bring what the world looks upon as a promotion — from the smaller to the larger — but in going from a church with a large membership to one with a smaller group, Mr. Spears actually is assuming a greater responsibility in his plans to build up the membership and increase the size of the congregation and therefore it is a promotion to a greater task. He has accepted the challenge and knowing his ability, his love of the Lord's work and his keen desire to be of every possible service to everyone, it is certain that his efforts will be crowned with the success they so richly deserve."

Our sympathies are expressed to sister Spears, their son Dudley Ross, gospel preacher, and to other members of the family.

**MAY JOHNS**—This beloved sister, second wife of the late J. S. Johns, passed away on May 9, 1976. Upon moving to Winchester, Ohio in 1952 she set about to establish a faithful church in that community. She was successful in teaching several members of her family and with the help of brethren from the Blue Ash congregation who preached, taught Bible classes, led singing and did personal work, the work was started, meeting first of all in the home of sister Johns until a building was erected and occupied on August 3, 1958. On October 12, 1961 she married J. S. Johns, gospel preacher whom she had known since 1937. She was 64 and he was 90 at the time of their marriage. He continued to preach until the week before his death on July 9, 1967. Sister Johns was a friend to many gospel preachers and many sought her out to discuss the scriptures. She was an exceptional Bible student, well versed even in the Greek. Robert Welch spoke at the funeral services. (Information supplied by Thomas H. Icard who performed the ceremony for the Johns and did some of his first preaching for the church at Winchester).

### Debate On Existence of God

A significant debate will be conducted September 20-23, 1976 in the coliseum on the campus of North Texas State University between Thomas B. Warren of the Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, Tennessee and Anthony Flew, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Reading near London, England. Dr. Flew is regarded as one of the world's ablest defenders of Atheism. As professor of Religion and Apologetics, Thomas B. Warren is ably equipped to meet this challenge of unbelief. Large crowds are expected to attend. The coliseum will seat 10,000. The debate has been widely advertised among brethren throughout the nation and on college and university campuses nationally. The debate is to be published in book form and in cassette tapes which will be available from the Bible Chair in care of the University church in Denton, Texas. No tape recorders will be allowed during the debate. This is being widely advertised as "the debate of the century." We are not prepared to go that far, but do believe it will be a debate of much importance.

### Thayer Street Lectures

The Thayer Street church, 640 Thayer St., Akron, Ohio announces its annual lecture series for September 20-23, 1976. Evening sessions will be Monday, Tuesday and Thursday with Peter Wilson discussing the character of the Christian from Romans 12:9-21, followed by Homer Hailey on God's Providence. Day services will feature Olin Kern on The Lord's Supper, Ted Beaver on Elijah, Bryan Sullivan on Jonah and Weldon Wamock discussing Daniel. At 1:30 daily Tom Oglesby will discuss and then lead the audience in Psalms which have been set to music. At 2:35 daily Aude McKee will discuss evangelism. Some housing can be supplied for out-of-town guests.

**H. E. PHILLIPS**, P.O. Box 17244, Tampa, Florida 33612 • I concluded a good meeting with the church in Pound, Virginia April 11th. The attendance was good each evening with some from the community and many from surrounding communities. This is a good church. I am to be back again in the fall of 1977 and look forward to returning to this beautiful country and these good people for another meeting.

**ROBERT E. HERNDON**, 342 Mt. View Court, S. E., Concord, N.C. 28025 — Sonny Dixon, formerly with the Lutz, Florida church, joined us as an evangelist in June. Dixon, who grew up in the Carolines, replaces Jack Byars, who resigned the work after some eleven years. Dixon's new address will be Route 1, Box 147, Concord, NC 28025.

**LARRY R. DEVORE**, Box 86, Roseville, Ohio 43777 — J. M. Kennedy conducted our meeting May 2-7 during which four were baptized, including our eldest daughter, Kimberly. The meeting had good interest and attendance throughout. One of our elders, W. O. Patterson will hold a gospel meeting at Corning, Ohio June 13-20. Roseville is about 13 miles south of I-70. Worship with us while on vacation through Ohio.

**EARL FLY**, P.O. Box 3295, Jackson, Tennessee 38301 — We recently had 3 restorations and 2 baptisms at the Medina church. Bill Cavender held our meeting June 7-13. I held a meeting in May for the church in Ridgeway, Virginia. We had good crowds with many non-members attending each night • but no baptisms. This church was converted from a Christian Church several years ago. Benton R. Graves, who lives in Eden, N.C., preaches for them, and is doing a good work. My next meeting is in Hidalgo, Illinois.

#### Debate On Holy Spirit Baptism

**Larry Ray Hafley** will meet **G. T. Sharp** of the United Pentecostal Church in debate October 25, 26, 28, 29 at 7:00 nightly in the meetinghouse of the Washington Ave. church of Christ, 309 N. Washington Ave., Russellville, Alabama. On October 25, 26 Hafley will affirm "The Scriptures teach that Holy Spirit Baptism is not for believers today." On October 28, 29 Sharp will affirm "The Scriptures teach that all true believers can receive Holy Spirit Baptism today."

**ROBERT J. LACOSTE**, 103 Margaret Street, Joliet, Illinois 60436 — We recently finished our second year with the Margaret Street church in Joliet, Illinois. During this period 26 have been baptized and 39 were restored. We have enrolled 42 students in a Bible correspondence course, and have a 15-minute weekly broadcast every Sunday over radio WJOL, 8:30-8:45 a.m. Many good reports have been heard from the community which indicates people are listening. This spring and summer I have been in meetings in Trenton, Missouri, Grand Avenue in Chicago and Yale, Illinois. I am to be at Macon, Missouri August 2-8 and at Powell, Wyoming November 14-21. I would like to hear from churches that would be interested in having a week's series on "Catholicism vs the Bible" or "The Home."

**BOBBY J. FRIZZELL**, Magnolia, Arkansas — The church in Magnolia, Arkansas which formerly met on Virginia Street has recently moved into a new building located on the corner of U.S. Hwy. 79 and Vera Street. At the new location the congregation will be known as the Sunny Acres church of Christ. Mailing

address is 1911 Vera Street. Those traveling through this area are invited to visit with us.

**EDWARD ROBERTS**, Apartment 35, Parkview Apartments, Powhatan Point, Ohio 43942 — In March, 1976 I came to work with the Powhatan Point congregation. Attendance averages between 55 and 60 with most of the members young. We are located along Route 7, next to the only traffic light in town. We are publishing two bulletins, one for the members and one for the town. Cottage meetings are also being conducted. We have been having only one gospel meeting a year but plan to begin having two. We ask all brethren to pray for us and our work, and welcome anyone in the area to drop in and study with us.

#### Preachers Needed

**CORVALLIS, OREGON** — This 2 1/2 year old congregation has 25 members. Corvallis is a university town with a population of approximately 37,000. Write to the church at P.O. Box 314, Corvallis, Oregon 97330. Or call Floyd Amick (503) 753-8539 or Jim Crownover (503) 753-2474, evenings only.

**ROSWELL, NEW MEXICO** — The church at 13th and Richardson St., Roswell, New Mexico 88201 is in need of a gospel preacher who will work and serve God diligently along with them. This is a fine little church with excellent potential in a growing city of 50,000 people. There is a great nucleus of faithful people here who will be grateful to have a faithful preacher to work for the Lord with them. Please contact D. P. Killgo (505) 622-0106 or Lee Verette (505) 622-0107 or Orval Buck (505) 622-8577, or write to the above address. Full support is available.

#### A Report and Appeal For Massachusetts

**MORRIS D. NORMAN**, 640 Thayer St., Akron, Ohio 44310 — During the week of April 19-25, Bill Calame of North Ridgeville, Ohio and I worked with the church in Framingham, Mass, in a gospel effort preaching and conducting classes. Jay Guyer and Skip Paquette are laboring in this difficult work. The church is enthusiastic, responsive to gospel preaching and working. On Sunday a new attendance record of 76 was set. One was baptized the week prior to the meeting, one confessed sins during the meeting and two have been baptized since.

The work is difficult. The members live over a wide area from southern New Hampshire to the north to deep in Rhode Island as far as 80 miles to the south. Most of them drive 20 or more miles one way for services. Two men are needed to serve here. Jay Guyer is supported from the outside but is losing some which needs to be replaced. It is my impression that he is losing some of this support because some of the supporting churches do not understand the circumstances there. The area is still in need of outside support and will be for a long time. The church is small, the territory is large and the harvest is white.

**Skip Paquette** is at present being supported by the Framingham church out of a fund accumulated for this purpose, but it is fast being depleted. Skip will have to go back into secular work if outside support does not come. I commend him as worthy of support. If any church has money they can turn loose, send it NOW. Contact Jay Guyer, 57 Holly Lane, Holliston, Mass., 01746; or Skip Paquette at 5 King David Road, Tyngsboro, Mass. 01879.