

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

H. E. Phillips

P. O. Box 17244
Tampa, Florida 33612



THE LORD'S WORK IN ITALY

The brilliant orange rays of the sunrise began to reach across the skies at 37,000 feet to dispel the darkness that had enveloped the big TWA aircraft through the night from New York as we drew near the Italian coastline and the airport in Rome.

Brother Connie W. Adams and I had been invited by the brethren in Rome to come to preach and study the gospel of Christ with them. We left Kennedy Airport at 9:25 p.m. Wednesday, November 17, 1976 and arrived in Rome at 11:20 a.m. Thursday, November 18 and were greeted by several Christians, including three preachers and three elders. After a nearly two hour wait for our luggage, due to a strike, we were finally released and driven to the home of brother Rodolfo Berdini, where we were to stay for the next ten days. Original plans were for us to stay five days with Rodolfo Berdini, five days with his son-in-law, Roberto Tondelli, and the remainder of our time in Italy with Sandro Corazza, but the illness of brother Tondelli's wife prevented our stay in their home.

I kept a daily diary of the activities with important details and figures for future reference. I will not try to give detailed accounts of our stay, but only those day by day events that relate to our work among the churches in Italy. I shall be as brief as possible in giving the important facts of our work there.

Upon entering the home of brother and sister Berdini, we received our first taste of the very warm and generous hospitality of the Italian brethren. One striking contrast between the hospitality of brethren

in Italy and many in the United States may be observed in the very small but significant things that are done. As soon as we entered the Berdini home we heard the familiar strains of the National Anthem of our country, enhanced by the very warm and inviting smiles of the household, accompanied by careful attention to every need that we had for the next ten days. This was beautiful hospitality.

Thursday evening the 18th, the day of our arrival in Rome, was the time for the regular meeting of the church in Via Sannio where brother Alessandro Corazza preaches. Instead of their regular Bible study they sang two or three songs, engaged in prayer, and then brother Corazza announced our presence and the reason for our being there. He stated that there would be a question and answer session that night instead of the Bible study. He invited brother Connie Adams and me to stand on either side of him and he did an excellent job of interpreting for us. We were asked questions from members of the audience, sometimes directed to one of us, but for the most part both of us made some response to the questions. A very friendly association followed the services that night.

On Friday the 19th, Roberto Tondelli, Rodolfo Berdini, Connie Adams and I began a four-hour drive from Rome to Sul Sarno, just south of Naples, where brother Vincenzo Ruggiero lives. He preaches for the church which meets at Poggo Marino, about ten miles away. Shortly after arriving at the home of brother Ruggiero, where we had a delicious dinner, about 6 brethren came to ask questions and discuss the Bible with us. Connie and I studied with the 9 men present for over four hours and retired near midnight.

On Saturday morning the 20th, some of the brethren carried us to Old Pompeii which had been immersed by the volcanic lava of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 A.D. We marveled at the remains of this city after excavations that throws much light on the Romans 2,000 years ago. It was very cold, windy and raining and we returned to the home of brother Ruggiero.

In the afternoon some brethren came to the home of Ruggiero and we continued to discuss Bible questions. Arrangements had been made for the church to meet that night at 5 o'clock. Brother

Adams spoke for about an hour on "What is Truth?" Then I spoke for about an hour on "Unity." Brother Roberto Tondelli was the interpreter for both of us. 41 were present that night. After two sermons, we spent over two hours answering Bible questions. The interest was so genuine that even after I got into the car to return to Rome one brother came in the rain and stood outside the car asking me one more question to be answered by the Bible. I say that to indicate the intense interest that these sincere Christians have in knowing what the word of God teaches. We left the meeting house in Poggo Marino and arrived in Rome at 12:20 a.m. Sunday morning.

On Sunday morning the 21st, we worshipped at Aprilia, some 45 minutes drive south of Rome. Brother Berdini preaches with this congregation and is also one of the elders. He has been working with this church for over sixteen years and is a very strong man in the faith with a good knowledge of the Word of God, and has much influence in Italy. The church in Aprilia has two other elders who are good men and sound in the faith. There are two young men with families who are studying with brother Berdini with a determination to become gospel preachers.

The weather was very stormy, raining and cold. In spite of this weather, and the fact that they had no heat in the building, did not keep 41 faithful souls from being present. Brother Connie Adams preached an excellent sermon in the morning. After the sermon I was asked to speak a few words "to admonish and exhort the church." I spoke some twenty minutes. Brother Tondelli, who preached at Pomezia earlier, had hurried to Aprilia to interpret for both of us.

We were invited into the home of a brother with several others, among them the three elders. After dinner 11 brethren were present to discuss Bible issues of one kind or another. I was impressed with their eagerness to know what the Bible had to say in the answer to their questions rather than to accept opinions from brother Adams, from me or from any other person.

After sleeping for IV2 hours we awoke to find 14 brethren present and we continued the discussion of Bible subjects. This lasted until the Sunday evening worship. It was still storming and raining hard, but 38 were present for the evening services at 7 o'clock. Upon this occasion I preached and afterward brother Adams "admonished and exhorted the church." Brother Tondelli again did the interpreting.

We went to the home of another brother after the evening service and with several present talked about the Lord's work in Italy. We returned to Rome quite late.

On Monday the 22nd no arrangements had been made to preach. Brother Berdini took us to visit the Vatican and the many world famous displays of Roman Catholicism. I can only describe my feelings as I saw the ancient but valuable relics that I was beholding as inexplicable mixture of great beauty and moral and spiritual corruption unequalled anywhere in the world.

We returned to the home of brother Berdini and spent some four hours talking about the conditions in

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Italy that were brought about by liberalism, primarily promoted by the so-called "Bible School" of Florence, owned and operated by the sponsoring elders of the Brookside church in Tulsa, Okla. This school in Florence has been successful in dividing faithful churches in Italy.

Tuesday the 23rd, Rodolfo and Roberto took us to another part of the Vatican City including the treasury of St. Peter's Cathedral. We cannot here give our impressions of this.

Brother Roberto Tondelli who preaches for the small church of 9 members (now 10), meeting in Pomezia, between Rome and Aprilia, had made arrangements to have four services during the week. This Tuesday night I was to preach. I spoke to a full house of 28 persons on "The Blood of Christ." After services brother Adams and I answered questions and studied with two separate groups. After returning to Rome we discussed the Bible until nearly 1 a.m. and retired.

On Wednesday the 24th, Roberto took us for

another visit to points of interest in Rome, and we returned home to prepare to go to Pomezia that night. Brother Adams preached to a full house of 31 present on the subject, "What Thomas Missed." Again we spent much time discussing the Bible after services.

On Thursday the 25th, brother Tondelli took both of us to the downtown area of Rome and we had opportunity to do some shopping. On Thursday night no preaching had been scheduled, but 10 brethren from Pomezia and Aprilia came to the home of brother Berdini and we studied the question of fellowship and withdrawing ourselves from those who walk disorderly. The discussion continued until about midnight.

On Friday the 26th, I had the privilege of preaching to the largest audience gathered in Pomezia. 39 were present as I spoke on "The Crucifixion of Christ." Brother Tondelli interpreted. Again there was a continuation of questions after service.

On Saturday the 27th we spent some of the morning hours seeing famous landmarks in Rome. We had been asked to come to Pomezia early to answer some questions before this last service. For nearly 1 1/2 hours we answered questions before brother Adams preached the last sermon on the subject: "What Manner of Persons Ought Ye To Be?" 29 were present. Brother Tondelli interpreted. We spent some 45 minutes studying the Bible with some who remained after service.

On Sunday the 28th, we moved from the home of brother Berdini to spend the rest of our time in the home of brother and sister Sandro Corazza. The hospitality in this home was warm and generous as it had been in the Berdini household.

I preached on Sunday morning at Via Sannio and brother Corazza was the interpreter. 34 were present, including four Catholics and a skeptic. Brother Adams spent a considerable amount of time discussing the evidences of God's word and the deity of Christ with this young man.

We ate in the home of a young lady who was a member of the church whose mother and grandmother were Catholics. Brother Adams and I had an opportunity to discuss the Bible with a young widow who was visiting in that home. Arrangements were made to continue the study the next evening.

There was no service on Sunday evening and we spent several hours with brother Corazza about the problems in Italy with liberal churches and with his work in translating the various Bible studies and brother Cogdill's book, "Walking By Faith."

Sandro is the publisher and editor of a monthly paper called "Sentieri Diritti" which is now going into many parts of Italy and is having a great influence for good. On Tuesday morning he received a call from an elder of one of the liberal churches in north Italy who requested that his paper be sent to all of the members of that congregation.

Monday the 29th Arrigo Corazza, Sandro's son, and the young lady whom he intends to marry, took us on a tour of Rome and the ancient Bible related

points of interest. Monday afternoon we went to the home of brother Alberto Romani, one of the elders at Via Sannio, for dinner. That evening we had an appointment with the young widow who was a Catholic, and we spent three hours with her. She agreed to study the next evening.

Brother Tondelli called the home of brother Corazza and told us that an 18 year old young lady, whose name is Mirella Blanchini, had heard the sermon at Pomezia on Friday night and had asked to be baptized into Christ. She had asked that I baptize her, which I was delighted to do. There was a service scheduled at Via Sannio for Tuesday night, November 30th and Wednesday night, December 1st. After spending part of the morning Tuesday seeing some additional sights of old Rome, including the Appian Way (the road by which Paul was brought to Rome), we returned home and made preparation for Tuesday night.

I baptized the young lady at Via Sannio just before the service began. I was permitted to preach to the largest audience assembled in Italy while we were there. 46 were present as I spoke on the subject: "What The Church Needs." There was great joy and happiness by all at the baptizing of this young lady.

We returned to the home of brother Corazza and as usual spent some time discussing Bible matters before retiring.

On Wednesday, December 1st, we made some preparations for our departure on Thursday morning, as well as for the preaching that night.

On Wednesday afternoon, one of the teachers, who was also the secretary for the Florence Bible School, came to the home of brother Corazza between 2 and 3 p.m. Brother Adams and I discussed with him at length his views on instrumental music, the sponsoring church system under which he was working, and the fellowship with those in the Christian Church, as well as the liberalism in Italy. We also talked to him about the unscriptural oversight by the Brookside church in Tulsa, Okla. of the Florence Bible School. While he seemed embarrassed and unable to answer questions, he did agree that many of the problems involved were wrong. We had made an appointment to discuss further with the two Catholic women with whom we had before studied and brother Adams had to leave to meet the appointment with them. I stayed and continued the discussion with the gentleman connected with the Florence Bible School. This man did promise that if we came back to Italy we would be invited to speak at the Florence Bible School to the faculty and student body. I urged that he give me written permission to sneak at least four times to this group of people at Florence and I would answer any question asked me of any of them. I promised to correspond with him about these issues, which I intend, to do. After he left I went to the place where Connie, was teaching and he had completed a very thorough course of study with her. We continued to talk to her until time for services.

Brother Connie Adams spoke at the last service at Via Sannio in Rome on Jude 3 and 4. It was one of

the best sermons he preached while in Italy and was a very fitting sermon for the last service. 25 were present upon this occasion. We returned to the home of brother Corazza and made preparation for departure from Rome on the next day.


On Thursday the 2nd, we arose about 7 a.m., ate breakfast and the whole Corazza household, except one son Stephen went to the airport with us. When we arrived about 10:45 a.m. we found a large number of brothers and sisters from Aprilia, Pomezia and Via Sannio there to "salute us and bid us farewell." According to their custom, they kissed us and bid us farewell and Godspeed. The tears flowed from the eyes of most all who were present as we boarded the Pan American Jet at 12 noon Rome time for New York. Due to bad weather we were 30 minutes late leaving Rome and had to spend 9 1/2 hours en-route from Rome to New York due to a storm. We arrived home 1 1/2 hours late but in time to make the connection for our homes. For the first time in 15 days brother Connie Adams and I bid each other goodbye for awhile and we parted, but with great joy and thanksgiving to God for the wonderful and unusual pleasure of being permitted to preach to people on foreign soil who love the truth of God and who sincerely expressed their appreciation for the efforts made on the part of both of us.

I would like to make three quick observations which left deep impressions upon my heart, and as brother Adams said to me: "We will never be the same again." These brethren with whom we talked and labored bear the battle scars of many conflicts with the liberals, Ketchersidism, Pentecostalism, the social gospel and with the sponsoring church of Brookside in Tulsa, Okla. through the Florence Bible School. There is a lot more evil in this school and through this sponsoring church than appears on the surface. But these capable warriors of the truth, brother Alessandro Corazza, brother Rodolfo Berdini, brother Roberto Tondelli, and brother Vincenzo Ruggiero speak loudly that they do not intend to make any compromise with error. These men deserve the support, both financially and otherwise, from faithful brethren and churches in this country. If you want to help in this work, contact brother Connie W. Adams or me.

My second observation is the great difference in the family life in the homes of Christians in Italy and in what I see so much of in this country in the home. In every home we visited there was a respect of children for parents and an obvious love and close communion of parents with their children. The explanation of it is in the belief and practice of divine truth in their daily walk of life.

My third observation is the firm stand for truth. While there is absolutely no compromise with error in any form by any person, the Italian brethren are unashamed to declare the truth and are very cautious about receiving any "new doctrine." They have a sincere, deep interest in the truth of God's word and will travel great distances at great sacrifice and spend long hours just to learn it. They have a very strong dislike for "American Missionaries," and I do too,

because this expression means to them and to me a group of emissaries from sponsoring, digressive churches in America who go to foreign countries to train and Americanize them. They do not want American missionaries or American churches meddling into their affairs. They simply want the scriptural relationship of brother to brother and faithful churches willing to support the gospel when they are able to do so. Here is where we can be of great help to these who are fighting a difficult battle on foreign soil. Any further information will be gladly furnished upon request.



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Editorial

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WHAT SHALL IT BE CALLED?

For many years local churches have hung a sign out in front of the premises where the saints come together indicating that this is, indeed, a meeting place for Christians. It has not only made clear the fact that this is NOT where the Rotary Club assembles, or a hardware store does business, but has been an aid to people both locally and from afar in easily locating the assembly place. Most brethren have chosen to put "Church of Christ", or "Church of Christ Meets Here", or something similar, on these signs, together with a schedule of meetings. I have never known of anyone thinking that the sign itself was either the building or the people who meet in that building at stated times. Of late, there seems to be a disposition on the part of some to create a stir as to whether local churches should any longer identify themselves as "churches of Christ." It is being argued that this is denominational. Some are saying, as if they have suddenly come into possession of some truth nobody ever thought of before, that there is no one exclusive designation for the Lord's people collectively in the New Testament. We have been hearing gospel preachers say that for many years and this writer has been preaching that ever since beginning to preach. We have pointed out that we read of "the body of Christ", the "church of God", the house of God", simply "the church" and that a plurality of churches were identified as "churches of Christ." We have shown that whatever term is used to designate the people of the Lord should be found in the Bible.

But now we are being told that it is confusing for a local church to identify itself as a "church of Christ" for fear that it will be confused with conservative Christian Churches which use the instrument and sometimes call themselves "churches of Christ, or with liberal brethren who practice many things to which many of us object. Such designation is no longer distinctive, we are told. Some have raised quite a noise over this. We have been advised by one scribe that "we" should give thought to using a different term. Who are the "we" of this recommendation? If that "we" is any larger than a local church then it is too large.

This proposal is fraught with dangerous possibilities. Shall some sort of convention be called, and if so, who has the right to call it? If a local church decides »to refer to itself as a "church of

Christ, what writers, leaders or whatever, can deny them this right? How could "we" augment a proposal that all congregations stop using such a designation in favor of another, or none at all, without interfering with the independence of every congregation on earth? When a congregation begins in any community, as a self-ruling body, it alone is to determine when it shall meet, where it shall meet, what identifying and informative information shall be placed in front of their premises, if any. If what they choose reflects unscriptural teaching or practice, then anybody has a right to ask them to give an answer from the Bible. If it chooses a designation which is according to the word of God (even if that same designation is chosen by other faithful congregations in that county, state, nation or the world), then no man on earth can gainsay it. If every local church in the world should decide to call itself a "church of God" on a sign, stationary, or in newspaper advertisements, then I am prepared to defend their right to do so. By the same token, if they all choose to say they are a "church of Christ" then I challenge anybody, anywhere to say that this is unscriptural.

It is certainly possible to misuse scriptural terms. It is no secret that some untaught brethren think of the church in denominational terms. Their language reflects such unsound thinking. Those who say that a certain man is a "Church of Christ Preacher" or that "he is Baptist but she is Church of Christ" need to be taught about gospel preachers and that a saved individual is a Christian. It is also possible to take a scriptural act, such as prayer, and distort it. If a denominational group refers to itself as a "church of God" then I cannot criticize them for that term. Of course, it takes more than calling something the Lord's to truly make it his.

In the New Testament the church is said to be married to Christ (Eph. 5:23-31). It is the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23). Those who compose it have been baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27). Christ is the head of it (Col. 1:18). He is the builder of it (Mt. 16:18). He is the foundation of it (1 Cor. 3:11), the saviour of it (Eph. 5:23) and the purchaser of it (Acts 20:28). The whole family in heaven and earth is named for him (Eph. 3:15). Based on these facts I must conclude that it is perfectly acceptable for a local body of saved people to refer to themselves collectively as a "church of Christ" — meaning simply, a body belonging to Christ.

There is a continuing need for iconoclasts. Idols fashioned after the imagination of men's hearts must be exposed for what they are. It is not wrong to have our thinking stimulated, or challenged. The difference between human traditions and divine truth must ever be distinguished. But if any would-be image breaker wishes to take upon himself the task of depriving local assemblies of the Lord's people of the right to put up a sign in front of their meeting places which simply indicate that bodies of people who are "of Christ" gather at stated times in such premises, or even call in question such right, then I, for one, am prepared to stop them and ask to see their credentials. Nor do I think I stand alone in this! Some of

these efforts are being promoted by men who write with angry pens, with a chip on their shoulder, with their bottom lip stuck out at the world and with a noticeable degree of intellectual snootiness.

Since I can read in the Bible of the church of God at Corinth, the body of Christ, the household of God and churches of Christ, I shall ACCEPT ALL of these and any others found in scripture. I shall repudiate NONE of them. When brethren misuse them, then they should be taught better. But when ANYBODY says "WE" should decide AGAINST any one of them, then that is another matter. It is time to ask this question: By what authority sayest thou this thing and who gave thee this authority?

THE DEBATE OF THE CENTURY AND THE LORD'S MONEY

The debate in Denton, Texas last fall between Thomas B. Warren and the infidel Anthony Flew was billed in advance as "The Debate of the Century." A number have reported their impressions of this event and most agree that Thomas B. Warren did a good job in opposing atheism and defending the truth on the propositions discussed. Nearly all the reviews we have seen stated that Mr. Flew did not advance anything worthy of note affirmatively nor address himself to what brother Warren had to say.

But there is another feature of this debate which deserves comment. The brethren who made arrangements for this debate paid the travel expenses of Anthony Flew to come from England and paid him \$3,000 in salary for his part in the discussion. Can you believe it? Several thousands of dollars of the Lord's money used to provide expenses and salary for a man to come and make fun of God, the Bible and the church! Money to finance this debate was solicited from churches all over the country and handled on a sponsoring church basis by one of the churches in Denton. We wonder if all the churches which contributed knew that this was going to be done.

It is our understanding that Thomas Warren has recently suffered a heart attack. We are sorry to learn of this and pray he will have a speedy recovery. We do not wish to burden him further until his health is recovered. But if any of the brethren who were involved in this affair, or any of brother Warren's associates in Memphis, or elsewhere, will affirm that this was a scriptural use of the Lord's treasury, then we know a number of gospel preachers, including this writer, who will deny it. I am safe in saying that any of us would come to Denton at our own expense, if necessary, to participate in such a discussion before the church which sponsored this previous debate, and will work without salary from them at all. This writer has engaged in a number of public debates but has never expected faithful brethren to pay the expenses or salary of a man to teach error. We have never heard of it being done before. At the very heart of the institutional and sponsoring church controversies has been the question of the proper use of the Lord's money. Are there any limitations as to how it may be used? Is it even the Lord's in any peculiar sense? Does the end justify the means? These and other

questions could be explored in such a discussion which will not cost the church in Denton anything in expenses or salary. Any takers?

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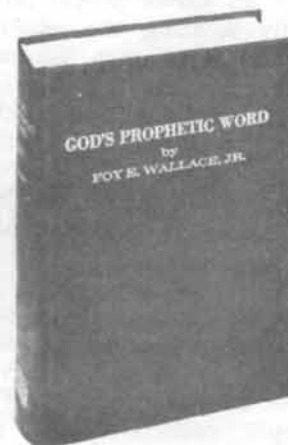
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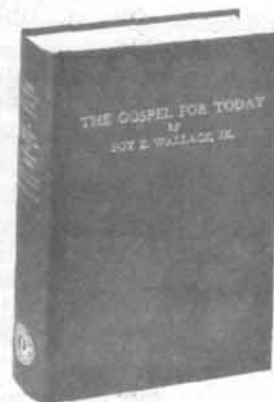


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DECEPTIVE ARGUMENTATION— NO. 1

Polemics is a peculiar field. If one is not careful, one will fall victim to a well designed, false argument. Ben M. Bogard, a giant among Missionary Baptist debaters, used argumentation which was well designed and smooth. He was skilled in making a series of true statements and with his opponent off guard, would "shift gears" and press his false conclusion. One of his arguments went something like this: 1) "The children of Israel came under the blood while in Egypt." Well, certainly Mr. Bogard is correct on this. In Exodus 12:7 we read of the passover and how they applied the blood. 2) "Later, the children came to the water of the Red Sea." One could not argue with this because it is in the Bible. 3) "The crossing of the Red Sea is a type of baptism 1 Cor. 10:1-2". Here again, one would have to agree with Mr. Bogard. Paul seems to emphasize this in the text under consideration. We are now ready for his conclusion. Please notice how smoothly Mr. Bogard "shifts gears" as he comes to his false conclusion. He says, 4) "Since the children of Israel came under the blood before they crossed the Red Sea, we come under the blood of Christ before we reach the waters of baptism and thus are saved before being baptized."

Since all of the above points are true except the last it makes it difficult for some to see through the sophistry. You will notice Mr. Bogard used the "TIME" element in an effort to connect the passover with the crossing of the Red Sea. There is absolutely no connection between the two. No passage in the Bible even remotely connects the two with reference to the emancipation of the Israelites. One might as well argue that Cornelius was saved before water baptism because the Eunuch was baptized before Cornelius. The statement about "time" is true but the conclusion is false.

In order to bring in their innovations, brethren through the years have used the same kind of deceptive arguments. For example, Tom Warren, in his recent book, "When is an Example Binding" uses this method. On page 142, he uses nine points based on Acts fifteen to justify the sponsoring church concept. I shall, as in the Bogard arguments, take each point separately. By the way, you need to read Acts 15:22-32, in order to understand what is being discussed. Now for his points. 1) "One church can scripturally send some of its own men to render assistance to another church." Brother Warren is

correct in this. He has Bible to back his statement; so far, so good! 2) "The assistance can be for spiritual rather than merely physical benefit." Here again, brother Warren is correct because the Bible so teaches. 3) "One church can send a written message (cf: a tract) to another church." Again, we must agree with Tom. The brethren in Jerusalem did send a written message to another church. So far, so good! 4) This written message can be for spiritual benefit." Again, we must agree with Tom. So far there hasn't been a single disagreement but hold on to your hats; we haven't reached the conclusion yet! 5) Thus, one church can render assistance to another church, and this assistance can be rendered either by sending men or by sending a written message (or by both)."

Once again, we are forced to agree with brother Warren. The church at Jerusalem did send both men and a written message. So far Tom has Bible to back his arguments. 6) "Since this assistance can be rendered in two ways, then the rendering of assistance is general, not specific." Here is where Tom begins to SLIP. He says the assistance is GENERAL not SPECIFIC. In polemics we call this "ambiguous terminology". For example, a man might say, "God told Noah to build the ark but he did not tell him HOW." If the person means God did not tell him what kind of wood to use he is incorrect. If he means God did not tell him what tools to use, he is correct. So really, it depends on what the man had in mind. Since we cannot read a mind, this "ambiguous terminology" gives an opponent a loophole. Brother Warren says the rendering of assistance is general. If he means that one church may send assistance to another for both physical and spiritual benefit, he is correct. However, if he means that the physical and spiritual benefits were sent the same way, he is incorrect. I will return to this later, but let us go to his next point. 7) Assistance from one church is not limited by the scriptures to that which is rendered for physical benefit." This is true. However, I have never understood why Tom keeps talking about PHYSICAL benefits in Acts fifteen. There are no physical benefits in Acts fifteen. The brethren sent letters correcting circumcision, eating of meats, etc. This is spiritual in nature and has nothing to do with "Physical benefits."

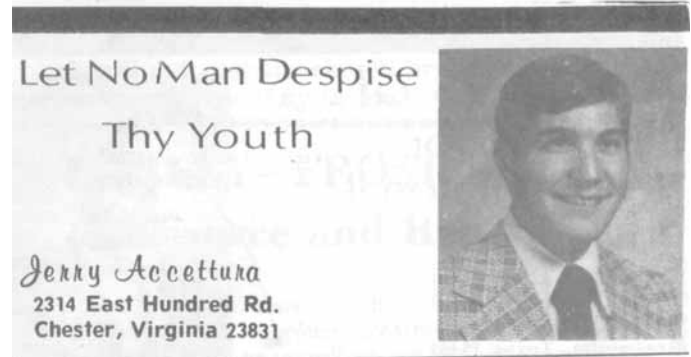
You may ask why does he continue to mention physical benefits in Acts fifteen? It is because later he plans to TIE them both together. In fairness, if he desired to discuss physical benefits he should have gone to such passages as 1 Cor. 16:1-2, or to 2 Cor. 9, etc. Now to prove he planned all along to tie them together, here is his next point. 8) "Since the instruction obviously applies to all church resources (and not to money only) then if a church can send a tract to another church, it can send money for that tract rather than merely sending the tract itself. Thus, if a church can send money for a tract (or a Bible etc.) to another church, then it can send money for a radio or television broadcast." Now let us go to his last point. 9) Thus, it is established that one church can send assistance to another church in order to render spiritual-not merely physical benefit."

Gentle reader, did you notice where brother Warren "changed horses" on us? Let us go back and see. Tom gave scripture for one church sending tracts (teaching) to another church. He gave scripture for one church sending Bibles (teaching) to another church. He gave scripture for one church sending a preacher (teaching) to another church. But when he asserted that one church could send MONEY to buy tracts, pay preachers, or buy Bibles, he gave no scripture. He said "It is obvious" that this may be done. Obvious to whom? Not to one who wants Bible authority for what he does. What brother Warren failed to tell his readers is that the physical (benevolent) and spiritual (evangelistic) work of the church are distinctive. He is correct in saying they are general in that both physical and spiritual help was given. However, he is completely incorrect in assuming they were rendered the same way! In 1 Cor. 16, we are taught that MONEY was raised and MONEY was given to the receiving church for physical or benevolent purposes. We have Bible for this, but where in all the Bible did any church send MONEY to another church for tracts, Bibles or paying a preacher? You will find it on the blank page of your Bible! As in the case of Mr. Bogard, Brother Warren was very smooth in shifting gears from the tracts, and Bibles to MONEY. With the art of a modern Houdini, he shifted from the physical to the spiritual. What he didn't tell is God has SPECIFIC laws governing both physical and spiritual benefits. In closing, permit me to try my hand at a "False conclusion" type argument. In Acts 2:42 we have "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship and breaking of bread, and in prayers." (1) In this text we have four acts of worship. (2) They are all acts of worship. (3) All Christians are to participate in these acts. (4) Since all Christians are to participate and they are all in one text, they are GENERAL and not SPECIFIC. (5) Since they are general, it is obvious that they may be observed at the same time. (6) We pray on Wednesday night so we may observe the Lord's Supper on Wednesday night.

Gentle reader, did you observe in the above just where and when I "shifted gears"? You answer, "Yes Hogland, I caught you red handed. You are correct in saying that worship is general in that all acts are mentioned in the text, but what you didn't tell us is God has SPECIFIC laws governing the various acts of worship (such as the Lord's supper, Acts 20:7)". Now, bless your life, you have got it! In closing remember Bogard tried it; Warren tried it and Hogland tried it. I pray God that none of us will get by with it! (More to follow)

EDITOR'S MEETING SCHEDULE

February 28 March 6 — Pascagoula, Miss.
 March 13-18 — Frankfort, Kentucky March 21-27 — Hodgenville, Kentucky April -10 —
 Waynesburg, Pa. April 17-22 — Galena, Indiana
 April 25- May 1 — Bancroft, Ontario



(EDITOR'S NOTE: Jerry Accettura was born and reared in Gary, Indiana, the son of faithful members of the church in Hobart, Indiana where he received his first encouragement to preach the gospel. After attending Florida College for four years, he married Cindy Fisher of Beckley, West Virginia. Jerry began preaching by appointment in 1968 and has preached one summer for the 40th Street church in Temple Terrace, Florida. He began full time work May 1, 1972 with the West Knoxville, Tennessee church. For the past two and a half years he has been working with the church at Rivermont (near Hopewell), Virginia. This is the home of the editor. We have heard many commendations of his work there. We are pleased to introduce him to the readers of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES.)

THE RARE GIFT OF FORGIVENESS

"As I finished the milking that Friday afternoon, I was glad it was done early, for now I would have time to do some other chores before supper and we'd be able to make the pet parade at the New Holland Fair.

"I knew how the boys yearned to see that parade, especially our youngest, little Nelson, seven, who'd be home from school any minute. I poked my head out of the barn door. No sign of Nelson yet, but I did see my wife Ruth coming out of the basement.

"Just then I heard someone running up the lane. Expecting Nelson, I came out of the barn only to be faced with his school-bus driver, Mike. 'Nelson's been hit by a car!' Mike yelled frantically. 'Call an ambulance!'

"When I reached the road I pushed my way through the crowd already gathered near the school bus. There on the blacktop on Highway 340 lay my son. I bent down and touched him softly. He didn't move. As I brushed back a fold of his hair, tears stung my eyes.

"There was silence until finally a young dark-haired man and a woman who looked to be his wife stepped forward. They seemed frightened and dazed. 'He just ran out in front of us,' the woman said, clutching tightly to the man's arm. I walked over to them. I'm not a man of violence—in fact I've never so much as laid a finger on anyone. Yet my arms felt heavy and my hands tingled. I took a deep breath, unsure of what I should do. 'Jack Meck's my name,' I said finally. At the emergency room, Dr. Show, the man who delivered all our boys, met us immediately

and said what I'd suspected all along, 'Nelson's gone.' "

The description you've just read, appeared in several newspapers around the country. They are the words of Jack Meek, the father of this tragedy. The article went on to describe the parent's grief. You see, Nelson died because the man didn't stop his car for the school bus that was unloading children. Several weeks after Nelson's funeral, an insurance adjuster arranged a dinner with the Meek's and the guilty couple.

What began in silence, ended in a sober happiness. The unusual thing that occurred was Jack and Ruth's ability to truly FORGIVE. They were able to forgive Frank and Rose Ann because they wanted to be forgiven by the Lord.

Why did this article arrest my attention?

Rare

First of all, forgiveness is rare. You don't hear stories like this everyday, especially in newspapers. Mr. and Mrs. Meek knew that forgiveness was not merely tolerance, make-believe, diplomacy, tact, politeness, just forgetting, pious pretending, or making light of a wrong. Jack could have ignored, rather than hate Frank and Rose Ann, but neither choice would have brought peace and freedom. Jack and Ruth saw a constant need to be forgiven so they chose to forgive others. General James Oglethorpe said to John Wesley, "I never forgive," Wesley replied, "then I hope sir, you never sin." Forgiveness is rare because it requires a constant awareness and need to be forgiven.

Hard

Even when the need to be forgiven encourages the desire to forgive others, it is not easy. One's first reaction to a wrong done is to hold a grudge and retaliate. But forgiveness denies the self that demands its "rights." It refuses the polite little schemes we often use to get the other guy "back." Forgiveness chooses to hurt, to suffer, to accept the undeserved suffering, and that takes effort and humility.

Costly

Suppose I ruin your reputation. To forgive me, you must freely accept the consequence of my sin and let me go free. If I break a priceless heirloom that you treasure, and you forgive me, you bear the loss and I go free.

But should we forgive those who don't seek forgiveness? We are to love others as ourselves, be understanding, and place the proper value on those we come in contact with, remembering that all men are created in the image of God. Luke 17:3 says, "Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; if he repent, forgive him." Peter told Simon, "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22). So then we have to have an attitude of kindness and a willingness to forgive, but a matter cannot be totally settled until repentance has been made. However, a person who has been mistreated has no right choice but to be kind and to encourage the wrong-doer to repent.

Substitutional

"All forgiveness, human and divine, is in the very nature of the case, vicarious, substitutional," writes James Buswell, Jr., "and this is one of the most valuable views my mind has ever entertained. No one ever really forgives another, except he bears the penalty of the other's sin against him."

Jesus Christ substituted Himself for us, bearing His own wrath, His own indignation, at our sins. Therefore, we must, as followers of Christ, possess that kindness and love, by forgiving others.

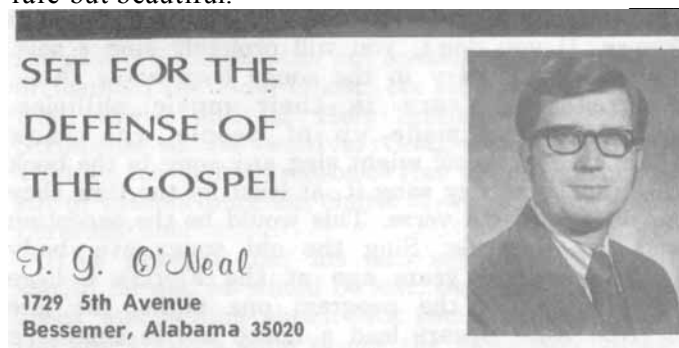
In Conclusion

May all of us strive to improve in the area of forgiving others by writing the following verses on our minds and hearts:

"May all bitterness, and wrath, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:31-32).

"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Colossians 3:13).

So then, to the Meek's and others like them, congratulations for being able to forgive others. It is rare but beautiful.



SINGING AND THE SONG LEADER — No. 2

In this article it will be my purpose to give some "pointers" to those who lead singing in the congregations of Christ.

(1) Learn Something About Music. If a job is worth doing, it is worth doing right. If a job is worth doing, it is worth learning how to do it best. I do not mean to imply that a knowledge of music is an essential to leading singing. However, it certainly helps. I have known some good leaders who did not know one note from another. These were probably exceptions.

The more one knows about the job he is doing the better he should be able to do the job. A knowledge of music would be helpful to any brother who leads singing. If you do not already know something about music, try to learn the essentials of song leading. In most any size congregation there is someone who could impart such information. A congregation might have a music teacher or music student in its membership. The average gospel preacher usually has some knowledge of music and would be glad to work

out a time for a class for those who are interested. If he could not help you, he would be glad to help you find someone who could. There are books on the market for a dollar or two that would give the necessary information. There is a school conducted each summer in Texas and advertised in most of the religious journals that gives instruction in song leading which several have found profitable enough to attend and pay the fee they charge for instruction. In most metropolitan areas like Birmingham, Nashville, Louisville, Tampa, Houston, etc. there are brethren with a reputation of being capable of teaching and probably would be glad to do so if they thought there were even just a few brethren who were really interested in learning. You could probably "talk up" a class without any trouble.

(2) **Selecting Songs.** I can not say too much about the importance of selecting the proper songs. Few congregations will or can sing every song in their book. There will be times when a congregation will want to practice singing and learn new songs. However, the regular service of the church is not the time or place to practice new songs.

How should songs be selected? First, the song leader should select the songs **he knows**. If he does not know the song, he can not lead it. Usually a song is not **known** if it was heard somewhere else once and that six months ago. Select songs the **congregation** knows. If you don't, you will probably sing a solo. Congregations vary in the songs they know. Also, congregations vary in their music abilities. Congregations made up of people who know something of music might sing any song in the book the first time they sang it, at least by the time they get to the fourth verse. This would be the exception and not the rule. Sing the old songs everybody knows. Several years ago at the Florida College lectures, before the program one night, the late beloved Ross Spears lead a house full in singing a verse or two of the old songs of Zion we all sang around our mother's knee. Such singing as was heard that night will long be remembered by those present. (If any of our readers have a tape recording of this, I would like to get a copy.) The difference in poor singing and good singing many times will be in the number selected—number 25 will result in good singing and number 26 will result in poor singing.

Select songs that are appropriate. What is usually called a 'funeral song' contributes little to an enthusiastic service. I have had song leaders lead 'funeral songs' for every song on Sunday morning and such does not create an atmosphere for energetic gospel preaching or listening. In a gospel meeting when the purpose is to convert the lost and build up interest for such gospel work a 'funeral song' or any song sung at a snail's pace does little to contribute to such a purpose in the service. My brethren, do not misunderstand me here, I am not suggesting a holiness-type service in which some claim to "get the Spirit" but I am suggesting an attitude that we want, we expect, and we want to encourage someone to obey the gospel. God knew the power of good singing upon people. Some song leaders can kill the able preaching of a Roy Cogdill and other song

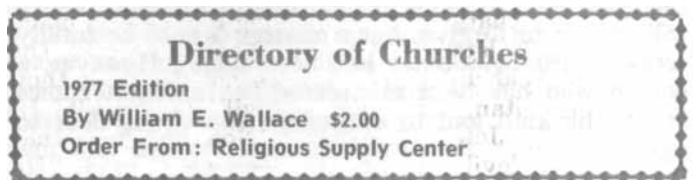
leaders could make the preaching of an inexperienced 16 year old boy holding his first gospel meeting.

Involved in song selection is the selection of an invitation song. It has often been told for a joke of the song leader that lead "O, Why Not Tonight?" at the morning service, but this has happened! An invitation song should be designed to further the encouragement of the sermon to obey the gospel. Often invitation songs are attempted that the audience does not know. Such has a psychological effect upon an audience. When we are singing to encourage people to obey the gospel, it should be enthusiastic like we really want people to obey the gospel. An unknown invitation song does not accomplish this purpose. I have visited places where the invitation song was one I had never heard and it was obvious most of the audience had never heard it either.

Personally, I see nothing out of order in a gospel meeting for one good invitation song to be selected and used at every service. The advantage would be everyone would know before hand what the song would be, it could be sung without being tied to the book very much and it would be one everybody could sing and it would have a powerful appeal to gospel obedience.

Another point needs consideration in connection with the invitation song. Most preachers present a lesson and close it with an appeal for those present to obey the gospel as it relates to their life — either to be baptized for the remission of sins or to be restored to fellowship with Christ. When the preacher says something like "Let us stand and sing" there is a psychological advantage for the song leader at that moment to be singing on the floor or from his seat while he is getting up. This will call for the song leader paying attention to the sermon, having his book open and being ready to sing rather than having to have someone wake him up. Recently I heard a well known gospel preacher present an outstanding sermon on the subject of "Faith" and when he said "Let us stand and sing" the song leader was sitting in the back of the building, too his time coming down the aisle and after getting to the front of the building took his good time starting the song which he drug. A song leader has as much to do, and sometimes more to do, with setting the mood for worship as the preacher does.

A song leader can show consideration for those in the audience. On a Saturday afternoon, or for that matter anytime during the week, a family has buried mother, father, a child or some other relative. Broken hearted and grief stricken they assemble to worship God on the next Lord's Day. My suggestion for what it is worth would be for the song leader to pick songs that were NOT used during the funeral service the previous day or week and maybe in that building. Think about this and I think you will agree.



EXPOSITION: TEXT and CONTEXT

Weldon E. Warnock

491 E. Woodsdale
Akron, Ohio 44301



THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (Mt. 12:31-32).

Notice the particulars of the text. (1) All manner of blasphemy shall be forgiven, except the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. (2) Whosoever speaketh against Christ, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him. (3) This blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven in this world nor in the world to come.

Why is blasphemy against the Spirit worse than other forms of blasphemy? What is the difference in blaspheming Jesus and blaspheming the Holy Ghost, since both are deity? These questions, and others, we will endeavor to answer as we pursue this study, but before we delve into this, let's consider different interpretations which have been offered.

Different Views

(1) **Attributing the miracles of Jesus to the power of the Devil.** The Pharisees had accused Jesus of casting out devils by the power of Beelzebub (Mt. 12:24). The parallel account in Mark seems to identify the charge, "He hath an unclean spirit," as the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost (Mk. 3:30).

R. C. Foster makes the observation in reference to Mk. 3:30 that this is a broken sentence. "But those who insist this is positive proof overlook the fact that this is a broken sentence. What is the connection in grammatical structure? To what shall we relate the words **because they said?** Does this mean that the entire discussion arose because they had said Jesus was in the possession of the devil? or does it affirm an absolute identification of the sin?" (*The Middle Period*, p.67). My persuasion is that the statement precipitated the discussion, rather than it being an identification of the sin.

This same charge of Jesus having a devil was made about a year later. We read, "Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil" (Jn. 8:48)? In verse 52, the Jews again said, "Now we know that thou hast a devil." Later, the Jews again said, "He

hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him" (Jn. 10:20).

Apparently, these same Jews who had charged Jesus with having a devil, were the ones who had him crucified. Yet, Jesus prays, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). This prayer was answered when multitudes of the Jews obeyed the gospel on Pentecost (Acts 2:22-41).

Attributing the miracles of Jesus to the power of the devil was not, therefore, the unpardonable sin. Their sin was blaspheming Jesus rather than blaspheming the Holy Spirit of which Jesus spoke.

(2) **A specific act.** If the sin is a particular act, what is it? Surely God would have told us if there is a specific sin for which there is no forgiveness once it has been committed. It is not murder because the Jews on Pentecost were forgiven for murdering the Son of God. It is not fornication, idolatry, homosexuality, etc., as the Corinthians were forgiven of these things (I Cor. 6:9-11).

Actually, there is no sin too heinous or grave that God will not forgive if a person wants forgiveness. It is a matter of meeting God's conditions and then the blood of Christ will cleanse us from all sins. There is power in the blood.

(3) **Rejection of the invitation.** This position fails to consider the word, "blaspheme," and the expression, "speaketh against." A person who rejects the gospel invitation has not spoken against, or railed or insulted the Holy Ghost. He may be a believer in God, Christ and the Holy Spirit and esteem the Scriptures as the word of God, yet reject the invitation for sundry reasons. Has he committed the sin of blaspheming the Spirit of which Jesus spoke? Certainly not!

It is granted that his sins are unforgiven, and should he die, he would be lost, but this is not what Jesus was talking about. Not coming forward when the invitation is sung is not the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. There are those who are almost but not altogether persuaded to come to the Lord who would not say a word against Christ or the Holy Spirit.

(4) **A repudiation of the Spirit's testimony in the gospel age.** This position, in my estimation, is more tenable to the overall picture of biblical teaching, both contextually and generally. Let us look at the evidence to justify this position.

Repudiation of Testimony

We are now living in the Holy Spirit dispensation. Jesus said, "I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter. . . . he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn. 14:16, 26). "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. . . . he will guide you into all truth. . . ." (Jn. 16:8, 13).

This Spirit dispensation, the gospel age, is man's last and only means of salvation. There is not going to be any more. He who would repudiate the Holy Spirit (cast off, disown, renounce, speak against, insult, the testimony of the Spirit) hath no forgiveness in this world (gospel age) or the world to

come (eternity). The worlds are perhaps used by Jesus in Matt. 12:32 in the same way Paul used them in Eph. 1:21 —now and in eternity. There will be no clemency or mitigation for those who treat with contempt and scorn the Spirit's testimony.

Speaking against the Holy Spirit is speaking against what he revealed. This is metonymy of speech, which is the employment of one name or one word for another. Here, the Holy Spirit is used when his testimony is meant. For example, Jesus said to the Jews, "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me" (Jn. 5:46). They never heard Moses, personally, but they had his writings. So Moses is put for his writings. The same is true in Lk. 6:29. Again, Paul said, "But ye have not so learned Christ" (Eph. 4:20), meaning the teaching of Christ. Hence, to blaspheme the Holy Spirit is to blaspheme his teaching.

No Difference

Really, today, there is not any difference in blaspheming Christ and blaspheming the Holy Spirit. The difference Jesus made was while he was in the flesh. Foy E. Wallace wrote, "There could be no reason why speaking against the Christ should be less fatal than speaking against the Holy Spirit, or that speaking against the Holy Spirit, should be more mortal than speaking against Jesus Christ, except for one thing: the element of time, of dispensation, of the gospel age, and of the Holy Spirit's testimony. The rejection of Christ during his earthly personal ministry was not final. But the repudiation of the Holy Spirit in the dispensation of his testimony to 'reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment' (John 16:8), would be the final act of rejection. Jesus was speaking of the present with reference to himself, and of the future as it applied to the Holy Spirit. There could be no difference now in the rejection of the Holy Spirit and the rejection of Jesus Christ, and there are numerous passages to sustain this assertion" (*Mission & Medium of the Holy Spirit*, p. 110).

He who "shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation" (Mk. 3:29). When Paul preached Jesus at Antioch of Pisidia, some of the Jews, filled with envy, "spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:45-46). These Jews blasphemed Jesus, that is, his word, and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life. In so doing, they had also blasphemed the Holy Spirit and were in danger of eternal damnation.

Paul said, "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed" (I Tim. 6:1). To Titus, the same apostle wrote how women are to conduct themselves so that "the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tit. 2:5). In both of these passages, the same sin of which we are

writing is involved. When the word of God is treated with scorn, ridicule and insult, the so-called "unpardonable sin" has been committed. The last and only hope, the gospel, has been repudiated.

Saints Can Commit It

Your attention is directed toward Luke's usage of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. He wrote, "... but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven" (Lk. 12:10). Notice the context. It is used in connection with Jesus' disciples confessing or denying him before men. Hence, it has to do with disciples blaspheming the gospel when brought under persecution. Paul said of the saints, "And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme . . ." (Acts 26:11). McGarvey and Pendleton wrote, "In his hour of trial a disciple must remember the tender compassion of the Master against whom he is urged to speak, and the extreme danger of passing beyond the line of forgiveness in his blasphemy" (*The Fourfold Gospel*, p. 318).

Thus, from Luke's usage of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, it seems abundantly clear that the sin is giving one's self over to railing, abusing, renouncing or speaking against the divine testimony of the Holy Spirit.

Apparently, the apostates of the Hebrew letter would be guilty of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. We read, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29). Doing despite unto the Spirit of grace is insulting the Spirit.

Thayer's lexicon defines "despite" as follows: "to treat with contumely." The word "contumely" means, "Contemptuous or arrogant language or treatment; scornful insolence" (Webster). Hence, when apostates renounce the gospel and speak against its power and merit, they are blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Also compare Heb. 6:1-6 in this connection.

In conclusion, let me emphasize that God cannot and will not save a man who repudiates the very system by which he can be saved.

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PUTTING REPENTANCE INTO PRACTICE

The majority of the religious world recognizes that repentance is one of the conditions of pardon. In this article, we are not so much concerned with trying to prove that it is a condition of pardon as we are in trying to define what is involved in the practice of it.

There are two Greek words that are translated "repent" in the King James Version. The first one is **metametomai**, and according to J. W. McGarvey "literally signifies to have a feeling or care, concern or regret. It expresses the emotional aspect of repentance" (Page 176, Vol. 1, *Lard's Quarterly*). Such feeling of concern or regret may result in genuine repentance — or it may degenerate into mere remorse. As an example of this from the Bible, read what happened to Judas in Matt. 27:3. We will have more to say about this later in our discussion.

The second word that is given in the Greek that is translated "repent" is the word **metanoeo**. I want to give a number of scholars' definitions of this word. "To change one's mind for the better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins" (*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*, Page 405). "A change of will produced by sorrow for sin and leading to reformation" (J. W. McGarvey, Page 176, Vol. 1, *Lard's Quarterly*). "Repentance denotes our mental determination to forsake sin, and turning from it (Page 60, *Barnes' Notes on Romans*). Many others could be cited, but I believe this is sufficient to show that repentance is that voluntary change in the mind of the sinner in which he turns from sins. This involves:

An Intellectual Element — Change of View

A recognition of sin (Cause) as involving personal guilt, defilement and helplessness is what we mean by the intellectual element of repentance. As David said in Ps. 51:3, "For I know my transgression; and my sin is ever before me." Although there may be a recognition of sin, and even a confession of it, this does not necessarily guarantee true repentance. We see this exemplified in the case of Pharaoh (Ex. 9:27); and Achan in Josh. 7:20. But true repentance does not ask "what will my sin bring to me?" but, "What does my sin mean to God." So it involves in addition to the mere recognition of sin:

An Emotional Element— Change of Feeling

A sorrow for sin as committed against goodness and justice and hateful to God is experienced by the one who is convicted by the word of God. This

element of repentance is indicated by the word **metamelomai** (our first definition of the word that is translated "repent") and is exemplified as in the case of Judas (Matt. 27:3) and the rich ruler (Luke 18:23). Paul expresses it in 2 Cor. 7:9-10 when he says, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." In these passages Paul uses both of the terms that are translated "repent" in the King James Version. Let's read it again and give the proper meaning to the words that are used. "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not **regret**; though I did **regret**: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to **repentance**: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh **repentance** (a change of will produced by sorrow for sin and leading to reformation) to salvation not to be repented of (with no regret): but the sorrow of the world worketh death." Hence, we must distinguish sorrow for sin from shame on account of it, and fear of its consequences. The last two, without the first, are only selfishness.

True repentance does not think of consequences, or other men as an excuse for failure to repent; but it sees sin as transgression against God, personal guilt, and a defiling of one's innermost being. Much "so-called repentance" is like the little girl's prayer: "Oh God, make me good—but not real good, but good enough so I won't get a spanking." But, however agonizing the sorrow, it will not constitute true repentance unless it leads to and is accompanied by:

Change of Purpose (Effect)

This involves an inward turning from sin and a disposition to seek pardon and cleansing as is stated by the apostle Paul in Rom. 2:4 and put into practice by the people on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:36-38). The idea is an abandonment of sin; an act of the will rather than a state of the sensibility. In the case of the prodigal son (Luke 15:18), he said "I will arise and go to my father, and I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee." This is the effect of a recognition of how good God has been to each of us and how it grieves Him when we violate His Word. Thus an abandonment of the sin was effected.

Conclusion

Godly sorrow is not repentance; and repentance is not conversion. However, godly sorrow will lead us to repentance, true repentance; and true repentance will lead us to conversion, a reformation of life, even as we are instructed by the apostle Peter in Acts 3:19. As according to our definition, "Repentance denotes our mental determination to forsake sin, and turning from it." If we will not do this, we have not repented. We will never be able to convince God that

we have repented unless there is an abhorrence of the acts we have been committing and a ceasing of those things that are sinful in His sight.

Restoration Footnotes

Earl Kimbrough
2212 Malibu Dr.
Brandon, Florida 33511



McGARVEY MADE MISTAKES, TOO

If there is no end to the making of books, as Solomon wisely observed, there is surely no end also to the making of mistakes in books. Everyone who has written anything for publication knows the chagrin of discovering a glaring error in the printed version of what he has written. The distress of mind is even worse when the error cannot be palmed off on the editor, the printer, or the man in the moon.

In a recently published verbal vignette on J. M. Barnes, I carelessly changed the good man's first name from Justus to James. This blunder was made in transposing the story from the raw notes (which had it correctly) to the finished product (which obviously did not). A daughter of Justus McDuffie Barnes, who resides in Montgomery, Alabama,

wrote a kind letter in which the mistake was called to my attention. I could wish that those who save their copies of Searching the Scriptures would correct the error before passing the papers on to posterity.

However, I would probably be no more successful than J. W. McGarvey was nearly a century ago. Soon after his Lands of the Bible was published in 1880, he sent a notice to the "brotherhood" papers asking the purchasers to make certain corrections in the text. He carefully cited "chapter and verse" where the errors were found. On page 51, third line below the cut, diameter should be changed to circumference. In other places, birth place should be changed to burial place, and 2 feet should read 3 feet.

Those who bought the book either did not read the papers or ignored McGarvey's plea. According to Restoration historian Claude E. Spencer, "Seemingly, no one gave any attention to Professor McGarvey's request for every copy of the first edition we have examined does not have any of the changes." (The Harbinger and Disciplina, October, 1953, p. 44.)

Mistakes in print are somewhat like mistakes in life. We may repent and be forgiven, but the consequences often live on.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH	
BAPTISMS	210
RESTORATIONS	102
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

DON GIVENS. P.O. Box 192, Haney, B.C. Canada — A young man was baptized in December. This makes 8 baptisms since we moved here 16 months ago, all of them coming out of denominationalism. Last year we were having attendance of 10-15, but now we average 26 on Sundays. Bill Spaun and I conduct several home classes every week. New prospects attend our worship service almost every week. 34 were present last Sunday. Several we teach prove to be indecisive but we must keep sowing the seed and not get discouraged. Much work remains to be done and we hope to stay with it for many years to come. More evangelists could be put to work in western Canada, but where are they?

RAY F. DIVELY, 425 Dippold Ave., Baden, PA 15005 — The year 1976 was another busy year for me. Besides the local work, I was privileged to preach in five states, Canada and India. The Baden church spent \$1,623 in gospel preaching in Mexico, Philippines, Nigeria and India. Though we are small in numbers, we believe in helping the gospel to be preached to others. We propose to spend at least \$2,000 in 1977 in preaching in other countries. We continue to press on.

GARY HARGIS. Box 715, Byron, Minnesota 55920 — I have been at Rochester, Minnesota three and a half years. When we moved here, my wife and I and two godly ladies were the only faithful Christians. Now there are 34 Christians meeting here. We have a house in which to meet. Two other congregations have started either directly or indirectly from our efforts here. The total Christians in the area now is 62 and the attendance of the three groups is 90. The work has far outreached our fondest expectations.

I am writing this letter to tell of our planned move further north. Within the next three months we plan to move to Grand Forks, North Dakota. The church at Rochester, Minnesota will therefore be needing a preacher at that time. The church here will be able to furnish some support, though the exact amount is not certain now. The congregation will furnish someone with a beautiful opportunity. The hardest of the work is behind and it is now ready to grow and expand quickly, with a good working preacher.

The church in Grand Forks is only 9 months old and they have grown from 11 to 45. An Air Force base with 11,000 furnishes a wonderful opportunity for good, substantial growth. Also there are 35,000 at Grand Forks. All members are basically Air Base related. Two families (the original ones) will be there three and a half years and then retire. I have been informed that there are about 40 Christians in North Dakota with only two congregations and one preacher. Brother Bonner is to be commended for his stand and hard work. He lives 150 miles away from the Air Base and preaches at Jamestown, North Dakota. He has driven up twice a week for nine months helping the brethren in Grand Forks. If you know of a zealous, energetic, enthusiastic preacher who is dying to move to Minnesota, please contact Don Hamilton (507) 289-1552; or Jerry Johnson (507) 534-2685.

ANDY DE KLERK. P.O. Box 31, Plaston 1244, South Africa — It has become necessary (doctor's orders) for me to move from this area. After years of abusing and misusing my voice, due to subconscious tension, my vocal chords have become completely hard. Also, they are enlarged and swollen due to something I am allergic to and the dryness of this part of the country. The special-

ist has told me that I must move to a more humid area After much prayer and after seeking advice from preachers in this country and overseas, we decided that it may be advisable to go to the States, find an established congregation in the Florida or South Texas area. This may help me to continue to preach for several more years, as long as the Lord gives me life.

But, before I can go there MUST be someone here to replace me! I cannot leave the work, even if my continued staying here is detrimental to my voice. That is why this appeal is so urgent. Can YOU come and help us? PLEASE CONSIDER THIS WORK. YOU will be helping in two ways: (1) The cause of Christ in this area will be built up by your efforts and (2) you will be helping me to continue preaching for as long as God so wills it. I have written to the churches and individuals who are now supporting me requesting that my support be transferred to the one who can come here.

I am more than confident that the work in this part of the country will continue to grow. The congregation at Plaston has 20 members. Another eight members and seven children moved to other areas and four fell away. At Nelspruit our Sunday evening attendance is about twenty. We have only been meeting there for about two months. There are 47 members at Pienaar. This is ' an African congregation with about 60 in attendance. About 40 miles from here another group of 20 members meet and just recently four were baptized in a new work at Komatipoort. People are still reading our weekly newspaper sermon and we continue to receive letters weekly as far afield as Swaziland. But for about \$900 the building and a typewriter will be completely paid for. We have no internal strife in the church and the church is well respected in this whole area. Our stand against the Jehovah's Witnesses and other denominations is known by all. We will leave this work to someone else knowing the great potential here and knowing the possibility for its continued growth and success.

THIS IS AN URGENT APPEAL. Please come over and help us! We cannot leave the work UNTIL someone can come. Won't YOU think about it? I will gladly supply you with all the information you need. The following preachers have been here to help in preaching from time to time and you may feel free to write any of them asking their impressions of the work in this place: Ray Votaw, P.O. Box 801, Springs 1560, South Africa; Eric Reed (same address as Ray Votaw); Ron Chaffin, P.O. Box 2093, Pietersburg 0700, South Africa. Visiting from the states we had: Sam Heaton, 7931 East 33rd St., Indianapolis, Indiana and Martin Broadwell, 2882 Hollywood Dr., Decatur, Georgia. Please contact us by AIR MAIL or should you desire to contact us by phone our telephone number is Plaston 68.

MORE PREACHERS NEEDED

GONZALES, LOUISIANA—The Southside church in Gonzales, Louisiana is looking for a full time preacher to work with us. If interested please call the following: (504) 622-2368 or (504) 644-4260.

SUMMERVILLE, PA — A self supporting, growing congregation with preacher's house seeks a full time preacher. We have an immediate opening, but would be willing to wait till the end of the school term for the right man. Our first preference is an experienced man. Contact: Lloyd A. Smith, Box 52, Summerville, PA 15864. Phone (814) 856-2710.

ROLAND WORTH, JR. is presently commuting from Richmond, Virginia to help the small congregation in Falmouth/Fredericksburg, Virginia. This small congregation has good potential in this rapidly growing area of the Old Dominion state. The church there desires the full time services of brother Worth and he has consented to work with them as soon as full support can be located. You may write him at Apt. 6, 215 South Boulevard, Richmond, VA 23219. His telephone number is (804) 353-3220. If you wish to secure further information from the congregation itself, you may contact any of the following members: Joe Carter (703-752-4508); Jim King (703-659-5861); Doug Kanatzar (703-373-7217); or Jerry Jamison (703-972-7639).

DEATH

GEORGE PATTERSON, Texas gospel preacher, passed away October 12, 1976 at the age of 77. He had preached in Dallas, helped establish the Saner Avenue church, and preached for the Hampton Place congregation. He also worked with the old Lake and Bedford church in West Dallas. During these years he supported himself by working for the Post Office (27 years in all). Upon retiring, he moved to Weatherford, Texas where he built a house and established a congregation. While running a dairy for support, he set up classes and taught many. The first summer he baptized over sixty. He worked with the church there for nine years. That church is now known as Northside in Weatherford. Later he preached for churches in Lufkin, Crockett, Bridge City, Sulphur, Louisiana and then back to his farm at Weatherford. At the time of death he was preaching for the church in Springtown, Texas, twenty miles from the farm, and preached on the radio the Sunday before his death. Funeral services were conducted by Pat Farish, Tom Roberts and Harold Fite. He left behind his wife of 56 years, three daughters, two sons and a host of grandchildren. To all of these we extend our sympathy. (Information furnished by his son-in-law, Leon Odom, Midland, Texas).