

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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Behaving Oneself in God's House

J. Wiley Adams

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Warner Robins, Georgia 31093



PLOWING DEEP

My mother told my brother Connie and me years ago something well worth remembering as a gospel preacher. "Boys," she said, "If you're going to preach the gospel, plow deep." Both of us have always tried to remember that. Those raised in the country know full well what this means. Unless the soil has been "plowed deep" it is hard to raise a good crop. Shallow soil produces weak plants. Shallow preaching produces flimsy-legged Christians who always have to be coaxed, persuaded, humored, and coddled lest they curl up and die. Such are of little use in the house of God. It saps the energy of the rest to keep them going.

Paul said to Timothy in I Timothy 2:3 that a good soldier has to "endure hardness" and in the same writing (chapter 4:5) he says "endure afflictions" as a part of the work of an evangelist. The man who always wears his feelings on his sleeve and who is prone to have a martyr complex will not be happy nor very successful in the work of preaching.

Not Men-pleasers. A politician tries to please men. A preacher should not be a politician. Such a one is no more than a hireling. Paul, in Gal. 1:10 said, "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."

A preacher will encounter many different kinds of people and situations in his work as a preacher. A man who is not willing to "plow deep" ought not to even start. Others will have to go behind him all the time and try to overcome the problem of shallow preaching. Young men, you will have to "toughen up" and grow a "thick skin" if you make it as a preacher. Otherwise

you will suffer many needless heartaches and you might get discouraged and quit. Always keep in mind that it is God you serve and not men. If the brethren are unwilling to accept "deep plowing", be ready to move on to a more fertile or receptive work. Shake the dust off, go on down the road and try another field of endeavor. There is no need to have a nervous breakdown. There is no record of Paul nor any of the other apostles ever having such a condition.

Timid Brethren. There will always be some who are afraid you are going to "run somebody off" and who will reach out and coddle the sinner, whether an alien or a devilish church member. These brethren are not timid at all, however, when it comes to rebuking the preacher. No fear seems to exist that they might run him off. They can and do show considerable "fire" when condemning open and plain speech. They seem to think that preaching in love is a mushy, emotional, insipid, and flat kind of thing. This reminds me of the present trend in law enforcement. The policeman knocks himself out to bring the law-breaker to the bar of justice and then the powers that be let the crook go and indict the police officer. This has happened to many preachers and elders all over the land.

Pressure Groups. Many times a preacher finds a pressure group in the church. If things do not run to suit them, they go and complain on the side to someone who is in a position to espouse their cause. Preachers, elders, and deacons ought not to allow themselves to become a "hit man" for those who will not endure sound doctrine. Issues of whatever kind should be met head-on and openly. No one should be made a "patsy" or a "scapegoat". Many a preacher and elder have experienced this type of thing. But where truth is at stake we must stand our ground regardless of who the opposition may be.

Once I remember an Episcopalian who was courting a sister in the congregation. He became very interested in the truth. He asked me to compare the Episcopal Church with the Bible teaching in a sermon. This I did one Sunday night. Several brethren turned pale, shifted in their seats, and kept looking at the clock. A deacon went out the door very indignant and said I was going to run that man off. I told the deacon the man had asked me to do it for his benefit. A little later on I baptized the Episcopalian but we nearly lost the

deacon.

Brethren, am I hitting too close to home? If so, maybe we need to examine ourselves.

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Editorial

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THE LORD'S WORK IN ITALY

Four years ago when H. E. Phillips and I visited Italy and worked among the brethren there, I was invited to return for some speaking engagements with the church at Aprilia (40 miles from Rome) where Rodolfo Berdini preaches and at Pomezia (25 miles from Rome) where Roberto Tondelli preaches. Since then brother Phillips has been able to make two additional visits as have several other American brethren who have a great interest in the work. My observations will be general and the result of my own impressions of the work. Some of the Italian preachers have visited in this country and several of them receive support from churches here to sustain them while they preach the gospel. It is hoped that these observations will prove useful to them, and encouraging and informative to other brethren who will rejoice to know of the work of the gospel in some other field.

More Open Doors

The first impression I have of the work is that many more doors of opportunity are open now than was the case four years ago. The number of preachers has increased. There now are many items in print in Italian to be used which brethren did not have available just four years ago. Daily, Sandro Corazza is translating and getting into print tracts, booklets, Bible class materials, a correspondence course, and the paper, *Sentieri Diritti* is now a 40 page monthly effort with excellent material and appearance and with ever increasing circulation all over Italy.

Also, there is significant work being done in radio preaching in several places now. Rodolfo Berdini already has two radio programs in the Lavinio area and prospects for a third one from a stronger station at Anzio. He is making many contacts through this work which have resulted in home studies. A few months ago he had a radio debate with a Catholic on the Lord's Supper, the Catholic having the approval of the bishop. The text of this debate was recently printed the *Gospel Guardian*. The first night we were at Aprilia, a 69 year old man was baptized and also a 22 year old man. The older man was a contact from the radio work. A five nights gospel meeting was planned in a community hall in Anzio in October with Rodolfo Berdini preaching.

Roberto Tondelli has a radio program from Pomezia which is beginning to establish contacts. Down near Naples at Poggiomarino, Vincenzo Ruggiero also has a radio program and the church there hopes to secure an hour of television time sometime this winter, a one-

time effort. At Trieste, on the Yugoslavian border, Gianni Berdini now has a 15 minute radio program on Saturday mornings paid for by the church there and while we were there he was granted 30 minutes on Sunday mornings on a stronger station, free, which program is to be heard again each Thursday night.

Added to the efforts of Sandro Corazza, Rodolfo Berdini, Roberto Tondelli and Vincenzo Ruggiero, all of whom are talented and experienced men, there is now the strength of three well trained and conscientious young men in Arrigo Corazza in Rome, his brother Stefano Corazza at Udine in northern Italy and Gianni Berdini at Trieste. These three young men spent some time studying in this country, acquitted themselves well and made many friends among brethren here. Also, Francesco Focci of Aprilia has been training for several years to prepare himself to preach the gospel. He is preaching at several places by appointment but is needed in the work on a full-time basis. He is married, has two children and is the son of one of the elders of the Aprilia church.

Places We Visited

Aprilia—I spoke 4 times here. Attendance ranged from 47 to 53 with a number of visitors in attendance each time. The brethren have made some improvements on their meeting place including the addition of a baptistery. It was a source of great joy the first night there to witness the baptism of the two men mentioned earlier. Rodolfo Berdini is a man of great ability. His knowledge of the scriptures and related subject matter is vast. When he could no longer countenance the multiplying innovations of the American missionaries, he began to work as a building contractor and with great success. When he gave up that work to devote full time to preaching again, he did so at considerable financial sacrifice. His car is 6 year's old, worn out and must somehow be replaced. At present his monthly income does not allow for such a payment.

The church at Aprilia appears to be on a good foundation and prospects for the work spreading in the Lavinio-Anzio-Nattuna area are very good.

Pomezia—Four years ago this work had just been started with 6 members from the Aprilia congregation. Now there are over 20 in attendance on Sundays. They have doubled the size of their rented facility and made some improvements with the members themselves doing the work. We saw many signs of spiritual growth among the members here. Roberto Tondelli is the capable preacher. Much strong teaching has been done both publicly and privately and this is evident among the members. Brother Tondelli speaks very good English and served as my interpreter at both Aprilia and Pomezia. My wife and I were also entertained in their home during much of our stay in Italy. They live at Lavinio in sight of the sea. My fiftieth birthday was celebrated while in their home, an experience never to be forgotten.

Rome—The Via Sannio church where Arrigo Corazza and his father, Sandro, work is contributing much to the progress of the work in Italy. Since Arrigo has been working full-time with that congregation, he has conducted a number for home studies and converted some as a result. Sandro spends much of his time

translating good material into Italian to be printed with equipment which he personally bought. He is also well along on a very thorough 24 lesson Bible correspondence course in Italian of which he is the author. The church there has its own meeting place and it is more than adequate for the present. One of the elders at Via Sannio has just retired from his secular job and is now donating his time to help in the printing work. The consequences of this work are far reaching and only eternity will reveal the amount of good being done. *Sentieri Diritti* is one of the finest looking papers I have seen and the effect of it is now being felt all over Italy. It was a privilege to speak at Via Sannio with Arrigo Corazza as my interpreter.

Poggiomarino—This congregation of about 45-50 is in the Naples area, about 200 miles south of Rome. The church owns its small but adequate meeting place. As is true at Via Sannio in Rome and Aprilia, the church here has elders. Vincenzo Ruggiero is the preacher. He is in his early to middle fifties, a man of learning and ability. He is most interesting to talk with since he has personally been involved in excavations at Pompei and in the general Naples area and personally found some inscriptions and artifacts in the region of what was called Puteoli in New Testament times. It was there that Paul landed on his way to Rome and where he stayed with the brethren for a week. Brother Ruggiero published an article on this in *Sentieri Diritti* and I have asked him to translate it into English and break it into two installments for *Searching the Scriptures*. We hope to have this ready before too much longer. The family of brother Ruggiero is a great asset to him. They showed us much kindness. It was my privilege to speak two evenings to the brethren there. It is my impression that the work is much stronger than it was four years ago when brother Phillips and I visited there.

As of the end of August this good brother lost \$400 a month support from one congregation and had not been able to replace it. This represents a great blow financially to this good man and his family. He did not really have as much support as he needed to begin with. While we were there his youngest daughter (they have two daughters and a son) was in the hospital with suspected appendicitis. His car is 11 years old and broke down on our trip from Lavinio to Poggiomarino. Transmission and brake repairs cost him \$350. Brethren, here is a knowledgeable, able and experienced man who is doing a significant work under tremendous financial pressure. H. E. Phillips, Truman Smith, Harold Fite, and others who have personal knowledge of this man and his work will verify what I am saying about his worthiness. He also has a radio program which is bearing fruit. We had dinner one day with one of the other elders and were impressed with his determination to keep that congregation standing for the truth. Brother Ruggiero also serves as one of the elders.

Udine—This congregation of 10 members is located in northeastern Italy in a city of about 100,000. The church has been under strong liberal influences but accepted Stefano Corazza to work with them knowing of his convictions. Their meeting circumstances are

not the best. They are not permitted by the owner of the room they rent to even put out a sign at the hours when they meet and during the week must meet in homes of members. Efforts to locate a more suitable place have not been fruitful yet. Stefano is not discouraged and is determined to do what he can to help the work in that area. His studies in this country were very helpful to him. An American service family with two children will soon be located near Udine for the next four years and plan to meet with the brethren there. They are originally from Mound and Starr in Nacogdoches, Texas.

Trieste—This city of 250,000 is on the Yugoslavian border. The church owns its meeting place in the heart of the city. Gianni Berdini has been working with them since February of this year. He also benefited greatly from his studies in this country. He publishes a monthly bulletin, and now has two radio programs, mentioned earlier in this report. I spoke for them on a Wednesday night when about 25 were present. Gianni was my interpreter. If the brethren here will stand together for the truth, much good can be done in this city. This part of Italy bears a much different appearance from the southern part of the country. The towns and cities resemble those of Switzerland and West Germany. Situated as Trieste is, radio work there is capable of opening doors even behind the iron curtain.

We were encouraged to see the congregations giving quite well and ready to bear as much of their own work as possible. Via Sannio in Rome, with 25 in attendance, plans to assume part of Arrigo Corazza's support the first of the year. Other congregations are giving well according to the number of members and circumstances and this speaks well for the future. All the preachers are laboring under the burden of a terrible inflation. It was 22% last year. Gasoline is between \$3.50 and \$4.00 a gallon. Food and housing costs continually rise. All of this needs to be taken into account in support of men there. It is my view that the men being supported there are working well and that progress is being made in that land where the intimidating presence of Catholic power and tradition is everywhere felt.

On our return, we came through London, England and worshipped on the Lord's day with the new congregation in South London where Brownie Reeves preaches. Though only a few months old, they have over 40 in Sunday attendance. It was a great pleasure to speak three times there and to visit with the Reeves family and the Phil Morr family, and in the home of the C. T. Joneses who are in England with Esso. Several have been baptized in the South London work in the last few months and follow-up of new contacts is resulting in many private studies. We found these brethren optimistic about the future of that work.

Indeed, "the field is the world." Let us labor "while it is day." One of the brethren who went to the airport in Rome to see us off said to me: "When you get back to America, tell the brethren that 'They of Italy salute you.'"

Please Renew Promptly!

**“Able to
teach
others also”**

Thomas Hughes

9208 Collingwood Rd.
Louisville, KY 40299



THE TEACHER

Much of what we have to say about the basic laws of teaching are ideas we have borrowed from one writer, Dr. John Milton Gregory, First Regent of the University of Illinois. These ideas set forth as 'Laws' were first published in 1884. Between 1954 and 1965 there were ten printings of the book. In the halls of learning in America this has a unique position.

Law number one has to do with people. The teacher is our subject. This is the law: "The teacher must know that which he would teach". Not a new principle at all as far as God is concerned. As a preview in scriptural comment consider the following:

"Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." I Tim. 1:7 is a comment upon the fact that we have not always had teachers in the church who knew what they were talking about. The previous verse lets us know that they were at one time 'of faith unfeigned' but have now "turned aside". In other words they forgot the message of faith and took off into areas of human wisdom. At least, that's the way we understand the thrust of those passages. Therefore Gregory's Law number one has a scriptural basis to it. Therefore I had better pay attention to this simple principle.

Nothing can upset a class and get it all unraveled like some teacher who leaves scripture and begins to expound in areas of human wisdom. Have you noticed that when that happens it usually is prefaced by the remark...." Well, I Think...." Which indicates, more often than not, 1.) that this particular point is not from scripture, 2.) hasn't been researched by the teacher or 3.) is a type of 'off the cuff remark to prove a position taken previously that cannot be upheld with scripture.

If this kind of teaching prevails, and sometimes it has, then we are off on the road to digression. On this first law hangs a principle of being right and right as God defines right, not as you and I do. It is so elementary and simple, yet quite often, it has been slighted and has directed away from Bible knowledge towards the smooth glib talker. For this the church has suffered.

The lesson of II Peter 2:1 certainly has an application here: "But there were false prophets also (see ref. of this in Matt. 7:15) among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, (so they were Christians . . . weren't they?) and bring upon themselves swift destruction."

And until they are rooted out, they bring a good bit of destruction upon the local flock of God. This first Law even has strong appeal to elders, for the command is that they be 'vigilant'. Now the obvious thing to be vigilant about is not the color of the paint on the building or if the carpet needs repairing but vigilant about teachers and what they are teaching.

If you turn that first law around it makes an interesting study in itself. Then in goes like this: What the teacher knows is what he is apt to teach. And with that we find ourselves back to the qualifications for an elder once more. "Apt to teach" was once described to me by an elder regarding why he did not place a certain man in a teaching position, even though he had much worldly ability "I don't know what he's apt to teach at all!" If more elders took that kind of care and concern the church of this century would have not had the heart rending strife that has plagued us since the late 1940's.

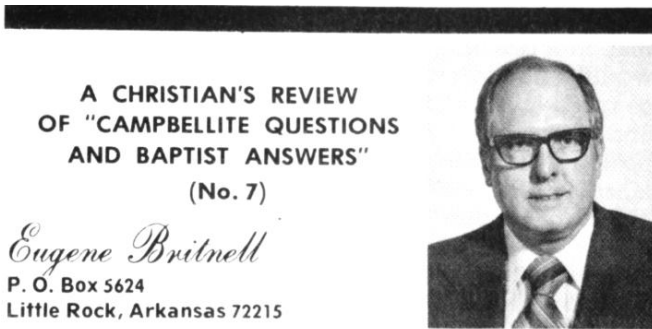
And all wrapped up in such a simple little law.

Now we don't begin to affirm that a Christian can not teach until he or she knows EVERYTHING about scripture. No one ever has grown to that level of knowledge, that I know of. Do you? Yet we are pleading for more than just superficial knowledge about scripture. That's surface knowledge. We are talking here about something deeper. The meat of the word (Heb. 5:12) and not the milk of the word. Though milk is absolutely essential at the early stages of Christian life. That's not our point. Our point comes after "study to show yourself approved" (II Tim. 2:15). All too often we note that there hasn't been enough of this study. We don't mean time spent in class absorbing by osmosis what someone else has already learned, but the driving desire to know God's Law. The "as much as in me is" sort of thing as described by Paul in his desire to get to Rome (Rom. 1:15). It's the same kind of drive you find in I Tim. 3:1 describing the 'desire' to serve as an elder. That's the kind of word that shows how you go after the knowledge of God's word. If you want to be an able and apt teacher. If you are able and apt.... you'll be excellent, be assured of that.

Along with the study of scripture should come a basic study of terms and words, of language and its use. At this point we almost begin to slip over into one of the later laws concerned with communication. What we are talking about here is basic understanding. This is the kind found within Proverbs 4:7 "Wisdom is the principle thing; therefore get wisdom' and with all thy getting get understanding." This is a redundant form of learning. It is repeated for the sake of being important to us as hearers. That's a repeat of what was said in verse 5 "Get wisdom, get understanding..

The getting of either of them is not an easy task. Self discipline is required. How much easier to graduate from high school than get that first degree from a University. The first is easier than the second and the third degree the hardest of all. That's in the world. But surely it has an application here. Growing on milk is easier than eating strong meat, yet that is what we are

to graduate towards if we are to be pleasing to God. It is quite discouraging to enter some adult class and see members of the Lord's body, who have been sitting in such a class for decades, tuned out and turned off because what is offered them is the same old milk diet they have been eating for years. The class is not always responsible for this lack of growth. It really falls upon the shoulders of the Pastors who do not lead to places where good food can be eaten. The second responsibility falls upon the teacher. If all he knows is 'milk' then that is the limit of his being able to teach. God expects more of us than that!



"11. 'Do the same steps that make one a Christian make him a Baptist, too?' No. Repentance and faith make him a Christian; but it takes New Testament baptism to make him a Baptist."

Again Mr. Taylor makes a distinction between a Christian and a Baptist. And again I would like to know why one should be both? Why not be just a Christian?

Repentance and faith never made anyone a Christian. It takes more than that, and he even has them in the wrong order. I know that Mark 1:15 says "repent and believe the gospel," but that was addressed to the Jews before the New Testament law became effective. They were to repent to God and believe the gospel (good news) of the coming Messiah. And Paul said that he preached "repentance toward God and faith in the Lord" (Acts 10:21), but that has one toward God and the other toward Christ. The Bible says that "godly sorrow worketh repentance" but why would one repent or be sorry who did not believe? It is neither logical nor scriptural to teach that one can repent before believing.

According to his answer, the only thing that baptism is for is to get into the Baptist Church. But since they deny that baptism is essential to salvation, then neither is the Baptist Church! Did baptism make Paul a Baptist? No, he said that he was a Christian (Acts 26:28, 29).

"12. 'If the gospel only makes Christians only, does it not require more than the gospel to make Baptist?' The gospel only does not make Christians. Paul said: 'Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance' (I Thess. 1:5). It takes the gospel and the Holy Spirit to make a man a Christian. It takes a Baptist preacher and a New Testament church to make him a Baptist."

He is wrong again. First Thessalonians 1:5 shows how the gospel was revealed, not what it does. It was revealed by the Holy Spirit and confirmed by his

power. Taylor contradicts Romans 1:16, for there we are told that the gospel is God's power to save. He is implying, as Baptists often teach, that it takes a direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the sinner to make him a Christian. The Bible does not so teach. The Holy Spirit worked through the apostles, and now works through their words in the New Testament.

I know that it takes a Baptist preacher and Baptist baptism to make one a Baptist, but the church doesn't make one anything. Another of their inconsistencies is in teaching that the church was established before the cross, and if so it could not have been a New Testament church, for there was no New Testament then (Heb. 9:16, 17). Where could one read in the Bible about a Baptist preacher and New Testament church making anyone a Baptist? Where is the book, chapter and verse?

"13. 'If a person can be saved and become a Christian without joining the Baptist church, is it not unnecessary—a useless institution?' No. A man may be born and live, as a savage used to do, without clothes all his life, but that does not prove that clothes are an unnecessary or useless thing. A man may live without hand or foot or eye or ear, but that does not prove that these are useless adjuncts to man's anatomy. Baptist churches are the most important institutions in this world; for without them the truth would fall to the ground, as they are the pillar and ground of the truth (I Tim. 3:15). Baptist churches, useless institutions? Nay, verily, they are the pillar and ground of the once delivered faith. They are the custodians of the ordinances (I Cor. 11:2). They are the only institutions that are divine on this earth. Without them Matthew 16:18 has failed of fulfillment. Baptist churches are the only institutions on this earth of which the Lord Jesus is Head and who carry out His last commission as He gave it (Matt. 28:19-20). Baptist churches do not save anybody; but Baptist churches are the only churches on this earth that receive no one but the saved into their membership. Baptist churches will not take anyone to heaven, but a failure to belong to a Baptist church will cause many saved people to be 'called the least in the kingdom of heaven,' when they get there, because of their willful disobedience to the plain commands of their Lord (Matt. 5:19). Alexander Campbell said in his debate with McCalla: 'From the Apostolic age to the present time, the sentiments of Baptists and their practice of baptism have had a continued chain of advocates, and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced.' If Mr. Campbell told the truth, then this world would be without New Testament baptism and New Testament churches, if it were not for the Baptists. Mr. Campbell was not a Baptist when he used those words."

The question implies a sensible and inevitable conclusion. If, as they teach, one does not have to be a Baptist or in the Baptist church to be a Christian or to be saved, then what good is it? His illustrations about clothes or dismembered bodies are not relevant. Certainly one may live without clothing, or hands, feet, etc., but in this study we are discussing that which IS essential to salvation.

It is absurd for him to argue that Baptist churches are the pillar and ground of the truth. There is not one

thing taught by them, peculiar to Baptist doctrine and existence, that is truth. No, not one! Matthew 16:18 has nothing to do with them, for Christ never built a Baptist church. His church was in existence hundreds of years before a Baptist church was heard of on the earth.

He says that Baptist churches are the only churches that receive only the saved into their membership. I deny that. The Lord (who alone can make the decision) adds only the saved to his church — the church of Christ (Acts 2:47). Taylor tells us that one doesn't have to belong to a Baptist church to be saved, but those who do not are guilty of "willful disobedience to the plain commands of their Lord." I did not know that one could be saved while willfully disobeying the Lord (see Matt. 7:21, 22), and I still don't know it! And I don't know where the Lord gave any "plain commands" for anyone to belong to a Baptist church. Does anyone know of such scripture?

First Corinthians 11:2 doesn't help his cause any, for that was addressed to "the church of God" and not the Baptist church. Certainly the early Christians kept the ordinances of the Lord, just as true Christians and churches of Christ do today.

I'm not obligated to believe or endorse any statement made by Campbell. I'm reasonably sure that Campbell did not mean what Taylor would have us believe. In the days of controversy over whether baptism was by sprinkling or immersion, the term "Baptist" was often used with reference to those who immersed. The word did not have the more modern connotation. If Campbell meant that the present-day Baptist church dates back to the apostolic time, then he was as wrong as he could be. If Mr. Taylor wants us to believe that Campbell was in agreement with Baptist doctrine, then maybe they, not people in the church of Christ, are the Campbellites!

"14. 'And if no reference to the Baptist church can be found in the New Testament, is it not an unscriptural institution without Bible authority for its existence?' Wrong again Beloved. There were no other churches in New Testament days but Baptist churches. A. Campbell well and truly said: 'The church at Jerusalem was a Baptist church; the church at Samaria was a Baptist church'."

Why didn't Taylor quote scripture rather than Campbell to answer this question? The reason is obvious, isn't it? There is no reference in the Bible to the Baptist church, therefore it is unscriptural and without scriptural authority for its origin and existence. Instead of saying "there were no other churches in New Testament days but Baptist churches" he should have said that "there were no churches in New Testament days that were Baptist churches." Campbell probably meant that the church at Jerusalem was a baptizing or immersing church. One thing for sure, the teaching and practice of the Jerusalem church was unlike that of the Baptist church today. For example, a sign in front of the building where the editor of the "Baptist Challenge" preaches says they are "premillennial." The church at Jerusalem was not, for Peter preached that Christ was then king over the kingdom and sitting on David's throne (Acts 2:29-35). Baptist churches baptize

"because of" the remission of sins, but the church at Jerusalem baptized "for" (unto) the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). One enters the Baptist church by the authority of that church upon receiving Baptist baptism. People were added to the Jerusalem church by the Lord upon their obedience to the commands of the gospel — faith, repentance and baptism (Acts 2:47). (To be continued.)

TEXT AND TRANSLATION—(2)

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In his classic work **Studies In The Life Of Christ**, R.C. Foster wrote "Most of the differences seen in the Authorized Version and the American Standard Version are matters of translation and not of textual variations." While I feel that textual variations contributed a much larger role to the differences between the AV and the ASV than Foster may have realized, his statement does call attention to the two factors we must examine to determine the accuracy and reliability of any given version: Text and Translation. Was the Greek text used a reliable one, and were sound rules of translation employed? It is to the matter of translation that we turn our attention in this article.

On the question of Biblical translation there are two opposing schools of thought. One is that the Greek text should be translated word-for-word, as literally as possible: while the other school spurns the word-for-word method and opts for an idea-for-idea translation, wherein the unit of translation is the phrase or clause rather than the individual word. From the English Revised of 1885 and onward, it has become increasingly the case that "Word-for-word literalism has been largely replaced by 'dynamic equivalence'."¹ The editors of recent versions make no secret of the fact they have rejected the word-for-word method of translation. The "Preface" to the Revised Standard Version contains this statement, "And we cannot be content with the Versions of 1881 and 1901 for two main reasons. **One is that these are mechanically exact, literal, word-for-word translations, which follow the order of the Greek words, so far as this is possible.**" The New International Version translators echoed this view when in their "Preface" they wrote, "Therefore their first concern has been the accuracy of the translation and its fidelity to the thought of the New Testament writers. While they have weighed the significance of the lexical and grammatical details of the Greek text, **they have striven for more than a word-for-word translation.**"

This idea-for-idea versus the word-for-word controversy is not of recent origin. In the latter part of the 18th century, Woodhouselee analyzed these two methods and summarized by saying "According to the former idea of translation, it is allowable to improve and to embellish; according to the latter, it is necessary to preserve even blemishes and faults." Conservative scholarship maintains that the idea-for-idea view is a

corruption of the translator's role. Translating the "dynamic equivalent" has already resulted in versions which are nothing more than perversions. The idea-for-idea method poses a grave threat to accurate translation of the Scriptures. It is a threat we need to be alert to.

1. By definition the idea-for-idea method is not translation. In *Translation and Translations* Postgate writes "Translation is 'transference,' that is merely transport from one medium to another . . . By use Translation is limited to transference from one language into another . . . Paraphrase is a term in common use for changes of expression in an original in order to give it a simpler or more familiar form." Paraphrase — "n. 1. a restatement of a text or passage giving the meaning in another form, as for clearness; rewording." (Random House Dictionary.) Note, paraphrase occurs when a "reword" not the work is used. Modern translators are attempting to defend paraphrase as translation. In some instances their blatant interpolations cannot even be properly referred to as paraphrase, (cf. Acts 20.7 in Today's English Version). If definitions mean anything, the attempt to substitute paraphrase for translation is proven fraudulent.

2. The problem with translating the Biblical text idea-for-idea is simple: what if the translator gets the wrong idea and puts it into the text? Translators of secular works clearly recognize this problem. Again Postgate writes, "Fidelity to the spirit, it is said, has the highest claim on the translator ... but the spirit may be lost if the letter is disregarded." Alexander Pope, a translator of Homer wrote, "It is certain no literal translation can be just to an excellent original in a superior language; but it is a great mistake to imagine (as many have done) that a rash paraphrase can make amends for this general defect; which is in no less danger to lose the spirit of an ancient by deviating into the modern manners of expression." Embellishment is not translation, but this is exactly what results when the idea-for-idea method is adopted (for numerous examples of faulty paraphrase and embellishment in the new versions, consult Wallace's *A Review of the New Versions*). The idea-for-idea practitioners are prone to departures from the role of the translator. They end up functioning as transfusers, which is to become a traitor to the text and the proper rules of translation. I wonder how Enoch would have ended up if the "dynamic equivalence" folks had had a hand in his translation.

3. Consider the statements of these scholars as to what the proper role and function of the translator is. "By general consent, though not by universal practice, the prime merit of a translation proper is Faithfulness, and he is the best translator whose work is nearest to his original." (J. B. Postgate.) "We are primarily concerned with exactitude of rendering; we are 'literal,' our business is so to render the original that in its new form the writer of the original should have no quarrel with it but admit it to be the precise rendering of what he had written" (Hillaire Belloc). "The most indispensable of these qualities is a strict adherence to the matter of the original: without which, however

excellent the work may be, its excellence will not be that of translation" (John Keble). "The first and last duty of a translator is faithfully and idiomatically to reproduce the original, especially in dealing with the Word of God" (Philip Schaff). Wallace quotes Schaff as saying, "Faithful translation consists in the nearest possible equivalent for the words which come from the inspired organs of the Holy Spirit." "The conscientious task is to take the actual word of the original and transplant it unchanged, in the trust that any strangeness will disappear by time and use, and its meaning acquired by even the unlearned or unlettered reader" (R. C. Trench).

4. The preceding collection of statements from translators in both secular and sacred literature at tests that FIDELITY to the original is the first and foremost task in translation. The role of the translator is purely passive. He should be content to give as full and exact a reproduction of the original as possible. A good translation occurs when a re-translation would read as close as possible to how the original originally read. The task of interpretation belongs to the reader. Whenever the translator introduces interpretation into his text, at that point his work ceases to be translation and becomes a commentary.

5. The question of how to translate idioms is sometimes introduced as supportive of the idea-for-idea method.² Even in this area no sound justification can be found for a departure from literal translation. With idioms and figurative language the original sense must still be translated (cf. 2 Cor. 6.12 in the KJV), with the trust that the reader will find the equivalent, contemporary idiom. "The translator is bound to provide all necessary explanations, but these in notes, appendices or indices, and not in the text."

6. The danger posed by the idea-for-idea method is 'not imaginary. Recently the American Bible Society finished a project of translating the Bible into Chinese. On May 5, 1980 I spoke with Mr. Moses Hsu who served as Chinese "stylist" for the translating committee. When I asked if the Greek text of Acts 20:7 was rendered in the new Chinese version as "Saturday night" he replied, "Yes, the Today's English Version rendering have been followed." I don't know how many Chinese versions the average Chinese has access to. I certainly hope there is one which gives the literal translation of Acts 20:7. If not, any Chinese effort to restore the first century pattern concerning the eating of the Supper, which is based on this latest version, will be needlessly handicapped. This is an obvious instance of where translating treachery could directly contribute to a false interpretation of a Biblical text.

Since the Tower of Babel, when men of differing tongues wished to communicate, proper translation has been necessary. When translation is faithfully executed nothing is lost in the process. The great majority of direct citations of the Old Testament in the New Testament, app. 280, were taken from the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. Both Jesus (Matt. 4:4,7,10, etc.) and the apostles (Acts 1:20, 2:17-21, James 2:23, etc.) quoted "from a translation. By using a translation which is faithful to the original, one which neither adds or absents, we can

be confident that what we are reading is indeed the word of God.

The intention of this and the previous article has not been to denounce the newer versions without qualification. Rather, this has been a response to the cloud of naturalistic critics (and those who have come under their influence) who 1) make claims for the newer versions which the evidence will not sustain, and 2) condemn the KJV (and the ASV) without qualification. Chesterton once said, "There is something highly maddening in the circumstance that when modern people attack an institution that really does demand reform, they always attack it for the wrong reasons." There are legitimate problems with the KJV; a notable one being the presence of archaic language. But archaic language is certainly no reason to consign the KJV to the bottomless pit! As Hills suggests, the problem of obsolescence could be easily remedied, "Perhaps the best way is to place the modern equivalent in the margin. This will serve to increase the vocabulary of the reader and avoid disturbance of the text." To attack the KJV because it is a literal translation based upon the Textus Receptus is to attack it for the wrong reasons. It is these two elements which constitute its strength! We ought not sink the boat when all we need to do is scrape off a few barnacles. The newer versions can be used profitably if used discriminately. But let it be clearly understood that we have absolutely no reason to apologize to anyone for our continuing use of the King James in teaching and preaching.

FOOTNOTES

1. "The Purpose of a Bible Translation" *Gospel Teacher*, No. 10, Steve Singleton.
2. E.g. "The New English Version — An Appraisal" *Firm Foundation*, Nov. 7, 1961, J. W. Roberts.


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EXAMINING THE BIBLE

Today as never before, people in all walks of life have the least regard for the Bible as the infallible word of God. Every Christian, therefore, should endeavor to carry out Peter's admonition, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God ..." (I Peter 4:11). In this article we want to consider the reason why we respect the Bible as the Word of God.

"Prove To Me That The Bible Is God's Word"

This is a statement that we often hear from those who are not Christians, but who are interested in religion and interested in their own souls. The Bible was written over a period of approximately 1600 years. The forty men who were involved in the writing of it, (even though many of them wrote on the same subjects and lived hundreds of years apart) did not pen one single contradiction. The only reasonable explanation, it seems to me, is that there was a greater mind than man's behind it. The apostle Peter affirms this to be the case in II Peter 2:21. He said, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Not only was this true of Old Testament writers, but it is also affirmed by New Testament writers.

New Testament Inspired

The New Testament was inspired of God, or so affirm those who wrote it. "But I certify you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:10-11). Also, in Hebrews 1:1-2 we read, "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time 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."

We Need To Approach It With Respect

In Exodus we read of Moses approaching the burning bush to see the amazing sight. God spoke to him out of the bush and because of God's presence, Moses was told, "put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place thou standest is holy ground." For us to approach the Bible, from which God speaks to man with any less respect is to deny the holy and divine nature of his revelation. If the Bible is to be our guide, we must have such a deep respect for it as God's way for us, no inducements nor pressures can make us turn aside from doing God's things in God's way. No one can

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claim to respect the Bible and say of God's commands, "I know that is what it says, but..." Do you have the proper respect for God's word to make it the "lamp unto your feet, and the light unto your pathway?"

We Must Recognize It As Infallible

Webster defines the word "infallible" as, "free from error: that cannot be mistaken." Unless we believe that God has given us a book that is free from error, then we cannot accept the Bible as being our perfect guide. With an attitude of this kind, it is easy to see why some have changed God's ways so that they are less objectionable to the world. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 55:8).

We Must Accept It As All-Sufficient

Every pattern that is set forth in the word of God is all-sufficient for us today. If in the Bible, God placed upon mankind the responsibility of doing things that will not only please him, but will make man the happiest, we may rest assured that we will be held responsible for doing them today. No man nor organization can be held responsible for doing God's bidding, unless a sufficient guide or pattern has been given him. Paul said in II Timothy 3:16-17, "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, completely furnished unto every good work." Now, Paul, being directed by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells us very plainly that if there is a good work that God wants done, He has completely furnished us to know about it through his word. If, therefore, I do not approach God's word as being all-sufficient, then obviously I will not allow it to direct my life so that I may go to heaven when I die. Thus error and confusion will be the result of trying to serve both God and man. And Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

We Must Be Determined To Be Guided By It

If we are not willing to be guided by the Bible, we have no place in the kingdom of God. We need to have the attitude of Samuel of old, "speak Lord, thy servant heareth." Christ said, "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). Peter said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth..." (I Peter 1:22). Christ is truth, his word is truth, and through truth we are made free. To be united therefore, we must all seek for and be guided by truth.

Conclusion

Many are seeking some kind of unity today in religious circles. But it can never be attained unless we have the proper attitude toward God's word. We must be determined to (1) approach it with respect, (2) recognize it as infallible, (3) believe it to be all-sufficient, (4) be willing to be guided by It. **WILL WE DO THAT?**

MY SERVANTS THE PROPHETS

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LET US RISE UP AND BUILD Characteristics Of Leadership AS Seen in Nehemiah.

II. Endurance.

The second great key to leadership is endurance. This quality is seen over and over in the life of Nehemiah. First, his endurance was seen in his willingness to continue in prayer, because from the time he began to pray that the king might release him, which would allow him to return to Jerusalem, was a period of four months. Secondly, it was seen in his work in the face of opposition from Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem once he got to Jerusalem. Thirdly, it is seen in the fact that once the walls were completed, he was willing to continue in Jerusalem to do the real job at hand, which was to restore the people spiritually. He was not looking for an excuse to leave Jerusalem and get out of the difficult situation in which he had now found himself. Once the walls were in place, it would have provided a golden opportunity for him to return back to the security of the palace. He could have justified this return in his own mind by saying to himself, "Well, I've done all I can here." Yet, as any real leader should, Nehemiah signed on for the duration and stayed until the work was completed.

True spiritual leadership has real endurance. The Christian race is not a "100-yard dash", but in reality is the "cross-country" course. When a group of men begin together to do their work for the Lord it is like the Indianapolis 500 on a very hot day, one by one the cars go smoking into the pits only to be pushed behind the garage in gasoline alley. The first teacher begins like a flash and then he or she has a problem in the class, and it is "So long." That one drops by the wayside and is useless. Another teacher may continue for a while doing excellent work. Then he becomes tired and discouraged later on, and so another one has fallen by the wayside. Finally, a third is really effective. So effective that he becomes consumed by a full-grown case of pride. The result is, that person as well becomes useless for God's cause. The real leader is the plodder who works at a consistent, steady pace, day after day, with **magnificent endurance.**

This plodder exemplifies "bull dog" tenacity. It is called "guts" by Bear Bryant, and it is what made LeRoy Jordan what he was. What was LeRoy Jordan? He was one of the smallest, but greatest, middle line backers in professional football. He was key man in the

flex-defense of the Dallas Cowboys in days gone by. The church doesn't need men in leadership who go up like rockets but come down like rocks. We need people: elders, preachers, Bible class teachers, and personal workers, who are like the fellow we went to school with some years ago. He wanted to run track so badly, even though he had no ability. His determination was so great that the coach let him run in the 5-mile race at one of the large track meets. The race was over, the winner had broken the tape, but he still had 2 laps to go. Still, he did not quit! He was so slow they had to stop all the other events and wait for him to finish the race. The crowd became so electrified by his determination that they gave him a standing ovation when he finished. He received twice the acclaim as did the fellow who won the race.

This is where character is revealed. Character is revealed in determination and endurance!. Reputation functions only when conditions are favorable, but character continues in the glory of the grind. Brethren, if we are going to convert the lost, a quick blast of knocking on a multitude of doors will seldom produce many results. What will do the job is the day in and day out plodding at teaching, teaching, and teaching. We find too many who want to run an ad in the paper one time and count the results. Leadership must see the job finished to the end.

Too many of us are like the church at Sardis in Rev. 3:2; "I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of my God." Oh, they had a name for big projects, but they were dead because they never finished what they started! It is fun to start a new project, or to undertake a new program, but there is no glory in beginning projects or programs. The real glory is in finishing the old ones. It is not difficult for the leaders to function in public before the people. Anybody can be turned on, hyped up and motivated, when the spot light shines on the pulpit, business meeting, Bible class, or debate. It is not difficult to function in the heat of the battle when the adrenalin is flowing. Real endurance can be seen, however, in the K.P. assignments of everyday life. Endurance is the glory of the grind, the ordinary moment. Nehemiah had the guts to stay with the job. Do we?

III. Strong Resistance To Opposition.

The handmaiden of endurance is resistance. Leadership must be resistant to opposition, but not to ideas. Nehemiah faced more opposition in six weeks than we face in a lifetime. Sanballat and Tobiah opposed from without. First, (4:1-6), it was scorn and ridicule: "What do these feeble Jews?" They were without worldly status and were the objects of laughter. When the devil laughs us out of the Lord's work, ridicule has won a victory. If leadership is not willing to face ridicule from the world, they are failures in God's cause. Secondly, (6:7-23), it was force. Taunts became threats, and sneers became plots. The early church faced intimidations and finally physical force to the point of death. Usually, we don't have to worry about force, because we give in on the first point of ridicule. It is only when we are willing to endure ridicule that force even becomes a possibility. Thirdly, (6:1-19), it was compromising brethren. After the

battle is almost won, the threat to compromise rears its ugly head. Shemiah is Nehemiah's Judas. He warns Nehemiah to give up and go back to the capitol. They called Nehemiah down to the plains to compromise. Nehemiah's message ought to be our message, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you" (6:3). If the leadership of the church today doesn't take the attitude of Nehemiah in the rebuff of compromise, all hope is lost. "Oh, we will not compromise the doctrine", is the cry of many leaders in pews across this nation. Yet, as we observe the cause today, we have stood firm against compromise with false brethren, but what about compromise with the devil? What about our **failure to give as we should?** What about our **failure to teach the lost?** What about our **failure to teach the church?** What about our **failure in regard to dedication and commitment?** What about our **failure in regard to discipline?** Maybe we stand firm in doctrine, but have we not compromised in other areas? Who are we trying to fool when we pick just one "issue" on which we are going to stand firm, and then neglect many other aspects of Christianity. This is the heart of Phariseism. These religious leaders of our Lord's day and time picked their favorite commandment and then determined one's entire relationship to the Lord on the ability to keep that particular commandment. "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" (Matt. 22:36). Is it not possible to single out one or two issues of the day and keep these as a test of fellowship while we totally neglect many other important teachings of the Lord? There are many areas which can be compromised by the leaders of the Lord's church today. All too often the chief compromisers are the leaders! What about the Bible class teacher who spends less than a hour a week to teach his or her class? Isn't that a compromising leader? What about covetous and materialistic brethren who give a few dollars a week when they could give much more? There are more ways to compromise than to bring in an instrument of music to the worship service. Listen to the response of Nehemiah to the three forms of opposition from without, (ridicule, force, and compromise): "Should a man like me flee? . . . I will not go . . ." That must be our response to the opposition of our cause today. This opposition comes often in at least four other ways.

First, criticism. Every time one stands to teach a class or preach the Word, he faces a room full of potential critics. This separates the leaders from the followers. Do you want to do the Lord's work? Then get ready for the point of the knife to pick the tender flesh in criticism. Every decision the elders make is subject to a review by all from the youngest to the eldest. Many times criticism can be helpful, but it should never be debilitating. Any congregation is certain to flounder if every time the elders say "we are going to move in a certain direction," and then at the first whiff of criticism cancel the plan. "Doesn't happen," you say. Well, it happens all over this land! For example: the Bible class program has a standard procedure to follow for discipline of unruly students in class. When a student is disruptive and the teacher

finds it necessary to use this procedure, what happens? BANG! Parents are critical! This is the moment of truth for leadership. Will they stand behind the teacher or will they back down?

Secondly, misunderstandings. Communications are difficult at best, and sometimes misunderstandings will occur. Can you, as a leader, shoulder it? I Peter 2:20, "what credit is it when you do wrong and suffer? But when you do right and suffer for it, this finds God's favor." Sometimes misunderstandings arise where there was no ill intent, and you as an elder, preacher, or teacher will suffer. Will you resign? "It wasn't my fault", we whimper. OK, so it wasn't. What difference does that make?

Thirdly, **pressure**. Prayer is offered, decisions are made, plans are revealed, and now it is time to begin the work. BANG! This is the response: "If you all do that I'm going to another church." Spiritual BLACKMAIL! We are continually aware of a world with political terrorism, violence, and hostages. Give in to terrorists one time, and the sanity of the world is at stake. Can't we recognize this when it happens in the local church? Personally, I have seen people threaten to leave the church over the temperature of the air conditioning system, color of the auditorium, drapes over the windows, and potted plants on the pulpit. Those decisions did not even involve important issues like a personal program, withdrawal of fellowship, and scriptural marriage and divorce, all of which usually are also points of pressure. Give in one time to spiritual blackmail and the elders have lost their authority to lead!

Fourthly, **discouragement**. Discouragement is leukemia of the spirit. Remember Elijah after the victory at Mt. Carmel? Evil was destroyed, right? No! The Queen was still out to kill him and evil was stronger than ever, it seemed. "Lord, I am the only one left." What he is saying in effect is this: "Lord, what are you going to do without me?" Of course, he was reminded of the 7,000 others that could be used any time the Lord needed them. The devil doesn't have to entice the leadership into adultery to render them ineffective. All he needs to do is get us under the Juniper tree, turn in our prophet's badge, and resign.

In conclusion, we remind ourselves that as leaders, if we are not being worked over by someone, maybe it's because we are not doing anything. The leaders ought to seek to avoid problems, but only as a means to an end. Too often the end objective of the leadership is not to have problems, never hurt anyone's feelings, and not to rock the boat. When such are the end objectives of leadership, they create a sad condition of gutlessness and will cause the church to fail. Our goal is to do the Lord's work, and that in and of itself will cause problems. Every time we say "Rise Up And Build, the Devil will say "rise up and oppose." Endurance and strong resistance to opposition are needed by every leader in every situation.

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Overseas Preaching Report

Wallace H. Little

1201 Meeks St.
Corinth, MS 38834



Read the report from Tom Bunting, who has been in Norway since June, 1980. If nothing else, it serves to remind us that some places are stony indeed. Although much work has been done in that nation by very capable men, Tom is "beginning from scratch". Seems like some have complained over this. But it ALSO seems like I remember a verse that says something about being not weary in well doing.

WE MUST TRY BY Thomas Bunting

During the time I was raising support for the work here in Norway, I received several letters of encouragement and I would like to share some of the quotations with you.

"a man is needed to carry on the work already started..."

"There is much work needed in Norway and many opportunities for good I commend you for your courage and determination to work in Europe. We need sound gospel preachers here and there are so few who are willing to take the step."

"We were delighted to receive your letter and learn of your plans to return to Norway. As you well know, Christianity in Norway needs all the help that can possibly be provided. News of a family coming to devote full time to the effort is just the spring tonic we need." ...

"Your desire to settle in Bergen, at least initially, is well founded but we prayerfully encourage you to consider Oslo as well. There is no full time missionary working for the Lord in this city today. This nation needs the Lord's word preached to it." Words like these encouraged us along the way.

It is a rather tedious task to raise money for the work of preaching the gospel and I must admit there were times of discouragement. But overall the brethren across the country responded generously, particularly the last 4-6 months before our departure. I do want to acknowledge in this public way my personal appreciation to all the churches and individual Christians who contributed to the work. There were so many people whom I need to thank for assisting me in raising support, some I know and some I do not know. I do feel that I should at least mention by name brother Connie Adams and brother Wallace Little who recommended me to many brethren and wrote concerning my plans in various publications.

It is most unfortunate the materials we had here in Norway some 10 years ago have been lost or destroyed, so that we find ourselves without anything in the Norwegian language. (Perhaps someone who has lived and worked here before may have some tracts in their possession.) In the absence of materials it is necessary for us to do a tremendous amount of translating, which takes a lot of time. I hope that we can get some materials ready and printed in the next few months to be used in personal work.

I saw an interview on T.V. recently of a prominent international figure. One of the questions asked by the interviewer was, "Are you not afraid of failure?" I do not recall from memory the exact answer, but I do remember this reply, "Nothing is accomplished unless you try, you must try."

How much this reminds me of the parable of the talents and particularly, the one talent man (Mt. 25:14-30). The one talent man had many faults, he surely made more than one mistake. But it does seem clear that one of his failures was that **he didn't try!**

The number of Christians here in Norway are few. The work is a trial of patience. Progress in the past has been slow, but no one denies the NEED for the preaching of the gospel HERE. Very little work has been done in this area of the world in the last 60 years. There is a language barrier to overcome. It is a hard field. There is not much to be said that would be any great encouragement for one to enter the work. But what will be accomplished if we don't try? We must try!

Everywhere I go in the area around Bergen I see a community that needs the gospel of Christ. As you go from community to community, one wonders, what might be the results if I should take residence here? Then you take out a map and there are thousands of communities in Norway with varying populations, I wonder—what would be the outcome if I should reside and work there (pointing a finger to a place on the map), or there, or there, or there, and there, and there, or even there and there. . . . There seems to be no end. There are so many nations, cities and small communities of this world without sufficient number of workers and in many cases none at all. Let us not be selfish with the precious seed but scatter it freely far and wide—some shall fall upon good and honest hearts. We need many more workers to enter the field of harvest.

I don't know how to determine success or failure in the work of preaching the gospel. But this truth surely cannot be denied—Nothing will be accomplished if we don't try! We must try!

Reference Books

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| Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary | Price \$17.95 |
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CAN MAN BELIEVE IN GOD? - #7

Royce Chandler
803 Sunset Drive
Danville, KY 40422

How does one explain the origin of a clock? **Did** it appear out of the air, result from an accidental explosion of gases and elements, or evolve **from** a primitive sundial? No sane man would accept **any** of these suggestions but would insist that a clock **is** the product of intelligent purpose, design, **planning**, workmanship, and engineering skill. Seeing the **logic** behind that explanation of a clock's origin, **so** we should see the logic in demanding the same explanation for the origin of our universe, that **mar-**velously precise and unerring cosmic clock from **which** our little timekeepers are modeled. If much intelligence and skill are needed to make the pocket-watch, **how** much more is needed to account for the universal clock?

Considering the intricate and superhuman complexity of the rain cycle, the never-failing rotation of the seasons, the structure and power of atoms, the DNA molecule, genes and chromosomes, the **human** eye (the entire body, for the matter), and the "laws" of nature; how can a rational man believe that they do not demand an infinite Intellect, Engineer, Mathematician, and Craftsman to explain them? Does one demand an intelligent cause for a pocket-watch but deny all rationality in trying to explain things far more complex and awesome?

In the name of education some have taken leave of their senses in suggesting that our world came about by a cosmic accident while never believing such an irrational explanation for the existence of their school building, automobiles, text books, and desks: the minor things require an intelligent purposer and maker, while the unfathomable universe can be written off as a lucky accident. Who can believe such folly? It takes a self-imposed imbecility and an intentional rejection of logic to say that God does not exist or that He is not responsible for the creation of all that is. Some are so highly educated that they haven't a lick of sense. Perhaps that is what David had in mind when he wrote: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 14:1).

Can man believe in God? How in God's world can he help but believe?!

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ALTERNATE LIFESTYLES

Greg Litmer
334 Muntz St.
Hillsboro, OH 45133

Recently there has been a rapid rise in both publicity and acceptance of what has come to be known as alternate lifestyles. We are being asked to accept as good and harmless that which only 50 years ago people were ashamed to admit they were involved in. Such things as homosexuality and all the fringes that go with it, unmarried couples living together, and married couples living together in an arrangement contrary to God's law; living in a home that has no head and if it does have a head, it is the woman. All of these different things constitute lifestyles that are contrary to God's word and we are being asked to accept them and in some instances, to allow them to be taught to our children as viable alternatives to God's revealed way. In this article, we will deal with some of these lifestyles and seek to determine if they are good and harmless or sinful and worthy only of rejection.

In recent years there has been an increase of publicity and interest in the homosexual lifestyle. It has been brought to the forefront in an organized effort known as the "Gay Liberation Movement." How large a movement is this? Well, it claims 2.5 million members and included in its number are many influential and famous people from all walks of life, including politicians and entertainers. Those who in the past were ashamed—and rightfully so—of their actions are now being convinced to come out into the open, or out of the closet as they call it. There is an entire religious denomination made up of homosexuals called the Metropolitan Community Church. It was started by a former Pentecostal preacher and it now has congregations in almost every large city in America. Even in Cincinnati, for years known as a conservative city, the mayor declared a day as "Lesbian and Gay Awareness Day" in 1979. This day was meant to promote understanding of the problems peculiar to this lifestyle.

For years the leading psychologists have told us that homosexuality was a sickness. They were not able to put their finger on what caused this disease. But Christians denied all along that homosexuality was a sickness, and they did so on the basis of biblical teaching. Now the psychiatrists are calling it an "alternative form of sexual orientation." But, friends and brethren, the Bible calls it sin. It was for this very type of behavior that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Yet, homosexual religious leaders deny that such is true. In the book, *Our God, Too*, the founder of the Metropolitan Community Church denies that there was homosexual activity involved in the downfall of Sodom and Gomorrah. A reading of Genesis 19:1-10 will show that this simply is not true. If that passage does not describe a homosexual act about to be perpetrated, then I have no idea what it could be. But by referring to other passages, such as Numbers 31:17, Judges 19:25, and 1 Sam. 1:19, we can come to an

understanding of the meaning of the word *know* as it is used in Genesis 19:5, and clearly see that this was indeed a homosexual act and characteristic of those things that caused the city to be destroyed.

Widespread homosexuality is not something that has just come up in this generation. Ancient Greece was literally filled with it. Many of its well-known historical figures were blatant homosexuals. It was into this society that Paul walked as he entered the city of Corinth. This was an extremely immoral city, as illustrated by the fact that one thousand young women gave themselves over to prostitution for the Corinthian temple. Doing this vile thing in the name of religion. In later years, the apostle Paul would write to that church in the city, the church that he had helped establish, and in his letter he mentioned their former condition. In 1 Cor. 6:9-10, the Bible says, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." The New American Standard Version renders the term "abusers of themselves with mankind" as simply homosexuals.

Look at the group into which Paul places the homosexuals. He includes them with fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners. There is no mention of homosexuality being a sickness, and there is no mention or implication that it is just an "alternate form of sexual orientation." Much to the contrary, homosexuality is included with other sins, because that is just exactly what it is, and the partakers of that sin shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Is that my judgment? No, it is the judgment of the Word of God.

Let us consider the growing number of unmarried couples living together as though they were man and wife. A recent article said that there are nearly as many couples living under that arrangement in California as there are married couples. We hear a lot about how these people don't need a piece of paper to prove their love and devotion to one another. How foolish can they be! Why, now we find people entering into this arrangement by drawing up contracts so they will know how to divide up their possessions when they split up. This is becoming a prominent way of life. Some of the larger and more popular denominations have actually begun to accept this "live-in" situation among its members and some have tried to disguise it by calling it a "Trial Marriage Program," but it is all the same thing and we are being asked to accept it as harmless and even beneficial for the emotional well-being of those who are involved. There is only one place to look to determine whether or not that is true, and that is to God's Word.

In Hebrews 13:4, we read a statement that is familiar to all Christians. There the Bible says, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." There we have a simple statement of fact, about which there can be no argument. The close intimate activity

engaged in by a husband and wife in the marriage relationship is pure and clean, sexual relationships outside of marriage are not. The only time that God permits sexual activity between two people is when they are married and the two people must be of the opposite sex. All other illicit sexual activity constitutes fornication and as such is a sin. Living together without being married is not a viable "alternate lifestyle," it is sin.

Even further, brethren, we hear a lot today about breaking down the old male and female stereotypes. We are being told that the burden for the support of the family should be removed from the shoulders of the man, that it is too much for him, and that the women should be told to get out of the house, hire a babysitter, and have a career equal in prominence to that of her husband. We are being told that young boys and girls should be taught that they have all sorts of options opened to them. For instance, that the man can stay home and clean the house and the woman can go to the office, bring home the paycheck, and be the sole support of the family. We are being told that there is no reason why the man should be the head of the house and that the woman might just be better qualified to assume that role. We are being told that there should be a merging of the roles and that there should be no difference between the responsibilities of the man and the woman, that we should all be viewed the same. But once again, that is not how God intends for it to be.

Certainly, God makes it clear in His Holy Word that he views men and women as equals in terms of His love for them and the availability of salvation to them (Ga. 3:26-29). But he also has made it clear that there are different roles and different responsibilities given to the man and the woman.

In His Holy Word, God has decreed that the man is to be the head of the house. In Eph. 5:23 the Bible says, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the saviour of the body." Today there is much talk among feminists and even sociologists that the man should not assume that role, that the woman has every bit as much right to assume that role as he does. They are wrong! Man is not free to relinquish the position that God has decreed he should occupy.

In addition, God has placed the responsibility for providing for the physical necessities of a family upon the shoulders of the man. In 1 Tim. 5:8 the Bible says, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." This idea of role reversal that is being advocated by so many today is not found in God's word.

But what of the woman? What is her function to be within the household? Well, I think that by turning to Titus 2:3-5 we can get a very good idea. There we read, "The aged women likewise, that they be in good behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." I

believe that the Bible teaches that the woman's place is in the home.

Just from these few verses that we have looked at, it is easy to see that there is a difference in the responsibilities given to the husband and the wife. And all of the sociologists, and the psychologists, and the feminists do not have the right to change that. This role reversal and push toward the neutralization of the different functions of the man and woman is not something that can find its seed in the Word of God.

The very use of the term "alternate lifestyles" implies a deviation from the norm and in most cases, a departure from what God has deemed right and proper.



Baker's Bible Atlas

by Charles F. Pfeiffer

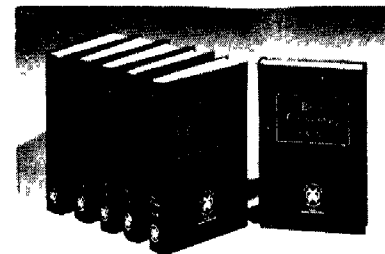
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WHAT CONSTITUTES FELLOWSHIP?

David D. Back
P.O. Box 515
Richlands, VA 24641

The Greek word KOINONIA is used 20 times in the New Testament and 12 of those times it is translated fellowship. The basic definition of the word is communion and is so translated four times in God's Word. It has also been translated communication, contribution, distribution, and to communicate, once each.

Much false doctrine and at best very poor judgment has been spread by the improper use of the word fellowship. We have those brethren that proclaim their suppers and such entertainment as fellowship, those who say as long as they are immersed for any reason we can fellowship with them for they are our brethren, and those who claim there is no fellowship as long as one does not contribute to the treasury, thus allowing them to worship with those in error when they please. But is this what God would have us believe? Just what does constitute fellowship?

Called By The Father

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9). Notice that what begins our relationship (or fellowship) is that the Father must call us. But then how are we called?

The apostle Paul writes in 2 Thess. 2:13,14 "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation THROUGH sanctification of THE SPIRIT and BELIEF OF THE TRUTH; whereunto he CALLED YOU BY OUR GOSPEL, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (emphasis mine ddb). God calls us by the Spirit who searched the deep things of God and revealed them to the apostles, who in turn spoke them unto mankind (1 Cor. 2:9-13). This is of course the truth that sanctifies us. Jesus as he prayed in John 17 stated in verse 17 "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." The only truth we have is the word of God. And we are told that we are chosen by belief in the truth. That we are called by the gospel the apostles revealed unto us. Can we say we have fellowship with our Lord and refuse to obey the words of truth? This reminds me of the words of our Lord in (Luke 6:46) "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Do we make mockery of our Lord? Why not obey the words of our Lord and begin your fellowship with him.

Is It Suppers And Entertainment?

In reading bulletins from time to time from our erring brethren persuaded to the ideas of human institutions being supported by the church treasury, I have seen them misuse many passages. But probably the worst I have ever seen was the using of Acts 2:42 to say that fellowship in that passage justifies the use of the building for such purposes as these. There was

no explanation, just the use of it. Brethren I believe in get-togethers, pot-luck dinners, and I enjoy entertainment, but this is not a gimmick we are to use to draw men to the Lord. Rom. 1:16, 17 tells us that the gospel is to be the drawing power to salvation, for therein lies the righteousness of God.

Brethren all we can hope to draw with food and entertainment are those the apostle Paul speaks of in Phil 3:18, 19. Their god is their belly and they mind earthly things. Let us not be guilty of this wrong. Jesus himself did not want any to follow after him because their bellies were being filled. In John 6 there were those that sought after Jesus not because they saw miracles but because they ate the loaves that were provided and were filled (verse 26). Jesus continues in verse 27 "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you:" We need to be concerned with that spiritual food as Peter puts it in 1 Pet. 2:2 ". . . the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:". Let us feed on the manna of God that we may have life through obedience unto it.

Fellowship is not a word to be trampled under foot in such a way. Acts 2:42 is talking about the communion they had with one another because of their relationship with God. That is that they labored one with another for the same goal to bring lost souls to Christ by the truth of the gospel. Take a look at Gal. 2:9 it is the same Greek word. There Paul and James, Cephas, and John extended the right hand of FELLOWSHIP to them, that they may go unto the heathen and the circumcised. The word means the same as in Acts 2:42. They said they stood behind them in their work, that they bid them God-speed. Again in 1 Jn. 1:3 the same Greek word is used both times. John tells them that he declares or proclaims the word to them so they can have FELLOWSHIP with them. This is not talking about feasting or entertainment. It is teaching us that those obedient to the word are now children of God and now are partakers together in the hope of salvation and we are working for the same cause, John continues to say that their fellowship is truly with God and his Son. Does this sound like the entertainment our erring brethren are promoting?

If you are involved in these tactics then you had better come out from among them. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).

Is Giving Into The Treasury All Of Fellowship?

The Bible teaches giving is a part of fellowship in passages such as 2 Cor. 8:4,5; Phil. 1:5; 4:14-16. But does the New Testament teach this is all that constitutes fellowship? The answer to that question is NO, as we have seen in other realms of this study.

In Eph. 3:7-9 the apostle Paul writes he was made a minister to ,preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. This in turn would make all men see the fellowship of the mystery that was hidden in God. Fellowship here has nothing to do with giving but our relationship to God. 1 Jn. 1:6 tells us we can say we have fellowship with Christ, but if we walk the worldly paths of sin we

are a liar and do not practice the truth. 1 Jn. 1:7 continues "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Here the fellowship spoken of is that horizontal relationship we have with our fellowman. That relationship is established because of our common bond with God. The fellowship here is established not because of our giving but because of our obedience to the gospel.

This is nothing but a cop out for those who want to attend where they recognize there is error.

This Is The Sum

As Heb. 8:1 puts it ". . . this is the sum. . ." as we look at all the evidence. Let us not stand in the works of darkness but come out from among them. Think of the words of John in 2 Jn. 9-11 "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. If there be

any come unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." You are bidding these erring ones God speed through your misuse of the word fellowship. Let us swallow our pride and obey God's truth.

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By Fay Mobley

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

News Items to: Wilson Adams, 317 Trinkle Ave., N.E., Roanoke, VA 24012

PREACHERS NEEDED

GONZALES, LA — The Southside church of Christ in Gonzales, LA (midway between Baton Rouge and New Orleans) is in need of a preacher. We have an average attendance of 35 to 40 and can provide partial support. For more information contact Dennis Stutzman (504) 644-4260 (after 6:00 p.m.), or Ronnie Martin (504) 622-2368 (after 4:30 p.m.). Or write the Southside church of Christ, P.O. Box 686, Gonzales, LA 70737.

BLUE SPRINGS, MO — A new congregation in the Kansas City area is looking for a full-time evangelist to work with them. We can supply \$300 per month support. We have access to other support. We are interested in someone to help us with the personal work. Please write P.O. Box 1053, Blue Springs, MO 64015, or call (816) 625-4711 during the day or (816) 229-2232 at night.

SALISBURY, NC — This congregation which has been in existence for the past two years is now looking for a full-time preacher due to the recent move of Bro. Hal Henson to Concord, NC. The church can provide \$250 per month in support. However, some of the churches that were helping Bro. Henson may be interested in continuing. Those interested should contact James H. Hand, Rt. 5, Box 347, Salisbury, NC 28144. Or phone (904) 633-1398.

SANFORD, NC — The church at Sanford which meets at 714 Hawkins Avenue is in need of a full-time preacher. If interested contact the church here by calling (919) 944-1409, (919) 776-0373, or (919) 775-7175

NEW CONGREGATIONS

CINCINNATI, OH — Plans have been made to begin a new congregation in the Fairfax area of Cincinnati by the first of October. Fairfax is located in the southeastern part of Cincinnati just

off I-71. Approximately 25 members from the Lockland congregation will serve as the nucleus of the new work. The church in Fairfax is the result of careful planning and diligent work. During the week of July 28 through August 2, a gospel meeting was conducted in a rented building in Fairfax as a work of the Lockland church. About 22,000 meeting announcements were mailed to the homes in the area, in addition to door-to-door, radio, and newspaper advertising. Dennis Allen and Mark Nitz, the preachers from Lockland, presented first principles sermons each night. The results

were encouraging. More than a dozen people from the community visited the meeting, three of whom were baptized. An additional sixty people have enrolled in the correspondence course offered through the mail-out. So the prospects for the new work are good. Bro. Dennis Allen will be moving from Lockland to preach for the new work. He will be needing some outside support. Any churches able to help Bro. Allen should contact him at (513) 821-7246. The brethren involved in this work request the prayers of faithful men that good may be accomplished as the gospel is spread.

CINCINNATI, OH — Word has also come to me that a new work is beginning this fall in the Walnut Hills section of this city. This new work will be meeting at 3625 Montgomery Rd. For more information contact Bro. Carroll Jordan at (513) 751-5067.

RICHMOND, IN — Beginning Sept. 1 a sound congregation will begin meeting here. Richmond is located on I-70 at the Indiana-Ohio border and has a population of 44,000. Bro. Larry Curry will be moving to help establish the new work. The nucleus of this effort will consist of ten people. If anyone knows of members living in or moving to Richmond please contact either Larry Curry, Rt. 4, Box 202A, Connersville, IN 47331, Phone (317) 825-7211, or Scott McCarty, Rt. 3, Liberty, IN 47353, Phone (317) 458-5395. Also Bro. Curry would appreciate hearing from any who would be able to contribute to his support. Brethren traveling through the area are encouraged to stop and worship with them.

WILLIAM B. WRIGHT, 246 Putnam Lane, Weirton, WV 26062. In searching through my attic I found 43 miscellaneous copies of STS. Those issues are:

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I am interested in an exchange of some sort that might result in another bound volume for me.

LARRY E. CHAFFIN, P.O. Box 473, New Philadelphia, OH 44663. I am looking for a 10" commercial lens. I am also looking for a used offset press. I am most familiar with Multilith 750 to 1400 series. If anyone has either please contact me at the above address or call (216) 343-4503. The work here is going well although it is slower than what I would like to see. We were able to rent a building the beginning of August and we have picked up more people to contact and visit because of that move. We have great hopes for the Lord's cause here.

REPORTS

CARLOS CAPELLI, Casilla 83, 1665—Joes C. Paz, Argentina, South America. Greetings! My family and I went July 15-26 to Mendoza City to help Bro. Venegas in the work there. I gave lessons almost everyday. Two precious souls were baptized and added to the church. We hope for more good results in Mendoza City. The work here at Jose C. Paz is encouraging with one recent baptism. We seem to be growing in spiritual maturity as well as in numbers. I have several studies going at present. Last Sunday we had 30 in attendance and our little meeting place could not contain them all. Pray for us!

J. B. GRINSTEAD, Rt. 2, Box 276, Horton, AL. Several months ago I began correspondence with M. M. Moses, a denominational preacher in Nigeria. Mr. Moses was president of "Evangelistic Society" made up of eight congregations and 278 members. Correspondence indicated he was interested in the truth. I wrote Bro. E. J. Ebong who lived 15 miles from Mr. Moses. Contact was made and several teaching sessions took place. At this writing 71 from that denomination have been baptized, including M. M. Moses, the group he preached for, a preacher from one of the other congregations in the "Evangelistic Society," and also four Seventh Day Adventists.

Bro. Ebong writes that Bro. Moses plans to remain in full-time work and needs \$150 per month support. They can also use teaching material, tracts, etc., especially Bibles. If you can help these brethren in any way please write E. J. Ebong, UYO Town church of Christ, P.O. Box 671, U.Y.O. Cross Village State, Nigeria, W. Africa. Or M. M. Moses, IKOT Ebat Village, P.O. Box 119 ABAK, Nigeria, W. Africa. I would suggest you write Bro. Ebong first and get details. I will be happy to supply any information possible. Also Bro. Leslie Diestelkamp has first hand knowledge of the work there. Remember the work there in your prayers.

H.L. BRUCE, 5108 Sherrill Dr., Amarillo, TX. I want to make known the progress of the Lord's work in Grand Junction, CO. The sound congregation there consists of a merger of the Valley church of Christ and the Mesa Ave., Church of Christ. Mesa Ave. was formerly a no-class group. These brethren got together and drew up a list of their differences. Then on Thursday nights for several weeks they would meet and study these differences. Through study, patience and prayer they were able to resolve their differences. Earlier in the year Bro. J. W. Hicks held a meeting and was able to convince a large portion of the brethren that Bible classes are scriptural. The two groups met together as one congregation for the

first time in June. I went there for a meeting in August and 74 were present for Sunday morning services. They have a nice meeting house located at 539 28 1/2 Rd. (at Mesa Ave.) in Grand Junction. Services are Sunday at 9:30 for Bible Study with worship at 10:30. Evening worship is at 6:00 and Wednesday night Bible study is at 7:30. These brethren are to be commended for their long, yet patient study of God's word. Paul A. Bruce who has been in Grand Junction for about four years is the full-time preacher. His address is 251 River Road, Grand Junction, CO 81501. Phone (303) 245-6978. Let me add that the work here at Pleasant Valley in Amarillo goes well. Several have been baptized and some restored recently. We now have six elders and seven deacons.

STEVE GOFF, 1744 W. 1375 N., Layton, UT 84041. The month of August was a very exciting one in the work here at Kaysville, UT. We had a very excellent meeting with Bro. Connie Adams. We had visitors present every night and we had one restored. The meeting resulted in two Mormon couples and one young Mormon boy promising studies with the members who brought them. During the meeting Bro. Adams and I drove to Salt Lake City to visit with the preacher for the institutional church there. We were able to discuss the institutional issues, and he attended that night and heard a fine lesson on authority. On the night the meeting closed we also rejoiced to see one man with whom I had been studying request to be baptized. Remember us in your prayers.

DAVID FRASER, P.O. Box 409, Gordon, GA 31031. Most of the readers know that Bro. Ray Coates of Macon and I have been involved in Bible studies at the Women's Penitentiary in Milledgeville, GA. I also have been able recently to gain entrance and teach classes at the Youth Development Center and also at the Women's Prison. We want to share with the readers the good news that on Sept. 2nd four boys were baptized into Christ. We are thankful that the Chaplain of the boy's prison is so cooperative with us in our efforts. We give the praise to God.

W. D. MEDLIN, Box 62, Pinehurst, TX 77362. The church in Pinehurst -Decker Prairie (Houston area) is now meeting in a new building on Hardin Store Rd. The building is located 1 1/2 miles east of F.M. 149. Services are Sunday at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Bible Classes are offered Sunday morning at 9:00 and Wednesday night at 7:30. Bro. Barry M. Pennington is the preacher. Phone 259-7588. Visitors are welcome!

DAVID GRIFFITHS, 1257-B Matthew Perry Rd., Key West, FL 33040. Christians traveling south through the Florida Keys this winter may worship with the Lower Keys church of Christ, located at 1609 Patricia St. in Key West. The congregation meets in a private home. If you are in the area call for directions at (305) 296-9764 or (305) 294-3042. This is the only sound congregation in the city. The congregation is a small one but is fervent in its desire to see the gospel preached in this hard and difficult area.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

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| BAPTISMS | 400 |
| RESTORATIONS | 134 |
| (Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor) | |