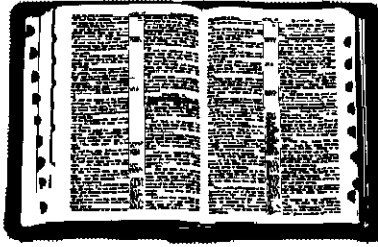


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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"

VOLUME XXIV

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

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For the past six issues of this good journal this column was devoted to what I believe had to be said about brother Yater Tant's work in Vanguard and through other avenues, to bring about a kind of unity that compromises the faith and brings a change in the function of the church. Of course, I do not charge him with teaching this expressly, but the inescapable conclusion of his arguments leads to this position.

Now, for the next two or three issues I wish to turn from the examination of brother Tant's position on his "box-in-the-vestibule" in an effort to attain unity of the "anti-institutional" and the "pro-institutional" churches, and give some attention to another matter of importance which I believe is much needed today. Following these articles we will return to examine the Crossroads System and brother Tant's endorsement and encouragement of much of this church's program. Every effort is being made to separate fact from fiction in the many differing reports about the Crossroads Doctrine and Practice. Watch for the articles.

SOME ATTITUDES AND PROBLEMS OF YOUNG PREACHERS

I am a preacher of the gospel. I have no allusion that there is a grandeur and glory of this world that will bring the praise and honor that may come to other fields of labor. I do not expect scriptural preaching to produce any lucrative rewards of monetary considerations. I have been amply rewarded in necessary substance, and I thank God for that. There are some things about preaching, however, that I must address in these articles.

Importance Of Preaching The Gospel

There is no question about it; preaching the gospel of Christ is the greatest and most rewarding work on earth. Salvation of lost souls and the strength of the church is the incomparable reward of faithful preaching of the gospel of Christ.

Both the greatness and the potential danger of preaching are found in the fact that the gospel is a tremendous power to change the hearts and lives of men so that they might be saved eternally (Romans 1:16); and in the fact that the preacher is dealing with the most precious possession in all the world: the soul of man. How could any work be greater and of more serious consequence than preaching the gospel of Christ? Its importance cannot be measured in terms of earthly wealth, and the good that may be done will span centuries in influence.

Young men who aspire to spend their lives preaching the gospel of Christ have my greatest admiration and interest. Whatever is right and within my power to do to encourage and help them toward this work, I am ready to do. Upon occasions the best help given to young preachers is to caution them about the pitfalls they face in the life of a preacher, both as to attitude and to conduct.

The Holy Spirit on Preachers and Preaching

The apostle Paul wrote three letters to two younger preachers: two to Timothy and one letter to Titus. Paul wrote as he was guided by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:4-13, 14:37; Eph. 3:2-5). These three letters contain much inspired information on preachers and preaching. Some of these valuable directions are:

"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained" (1 Tim. 4:6). "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. . . . Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. 4:12, 15, 16).

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1:13). "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:2,5). "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that can not be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (Titus 2:7,8).

Attitudes Toward Preachers And Preaching

There are attitudes and problems peculiar to young preachers because they are young. Attitudes of preachers, regardless of age, are extremely important to their success in getting the truth into the hearts of men to influence their lives for good. The message they proclaim must be free from the contaminating influence of human wisdom (1 Cor. 1:19-25); the message must be pure and complete as it comes from the word of God.

The manner in which both the speaker and the hearer view the message, and the attitude and conduct of the one who does the preaching, are extremely vital to the success of the preacher. There are several attributes that any young man (old men as well) must have if he is to succeed in preaching the gospel of Christ. And there are certain characteristics which he must NOT possess if he is to be successful as a gospel preacher. Some of these attributes are deserving of more than just casual mention. In this study I mention a few of them with the desire to be helpful to some young men as they try to prepare themselves to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ.

1. **The Attitude of Self-importance.** I have met young preachers who were so enchanted by their imagined self-importance and ability that they were disgustingly arrogant. Their pride prophesied their destruction (Prov. 16:18; 29:23), and that God would resist them (Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5).

I can understand how a young man who tends toward self-conceit, fresh from the school room, is very likely to have accumulated all the elements and impressions that would give him the idea that as an educated, professional preacher, he would have the answer to all the problems of the brotherhood. It is so easy for a young mind to lay hold upon the fascinating vision that he holds the key to scriptural knowledge his predecessors never imagined.

I do not condemn all young preachers with this statement; I speak of a very small group whose attitude is self-destructive. This attitude of self-importance includes a demand for almost any amount of income and side benefits that would rival most union leaders at the negotiating table. I am not opposing young preachers being supported as they preach the gospel, I am point-

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ing the finger at the unworthy demands of an arrogant, self-inflated, useless preacher because he has an attitude that must be changed if he is to be successful as a servant for Christ.

Moreover, this over-bearing young man presents his credentials to establish the fact that he is a full-fledged evangelist, and as such he is entitled to his share of meetings, lectures, debates, and various other significant personal appearances. This importance of self is the down-fall and finally the collapse of the career of many young men. Such young men (and old men) have not learned the elementary lesson that the power to convert people to Christ is not in the personality or greatness of the speaker, but in the word of God (Rom,

1:16).

I must insist that the reader keep in mind that I am not opposing preachers, preaching or young preachers. I am discussing ATTITUDES that hinder the good work of preaching the powerful gospel.

Editorial

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DECENT ATTIRE

It is often argued that what one wears has nothing to do with character. The word of God teaches otherwise. Solomon wrote of a woman who lurked in the streets "with the attire of an harlot, and subtle of heart" (Prov. 7:10). Her attire was an index to her true character. Otherwise, how would one recognize her from any other woman?

Our age is casual. It is not uncommon to see both men and women practically any place in garb which is not only in poor taste for the occasion, but which often reveals loose notions of decency. I do not set myself forward as a fashion expert nor do I wish to make my own personal tastes the standard to which all must subscribe. But I must speak out regarding the near nudity or form revealing garments which so often are displayed by those who profess to be the children of God.

Many who wear the name of Christ frequent the beaches, public pools, work in their yards or go to the shopping centers in the scantiest of apparel. The place of worship is not even exempt. Sunback dresses, low-cut garments, stretch pants and split skirts are common in some places. Men appear with skin tight jeans and sometimes with shirts unbuttoned half-way to the waist so the women can see their chains and medallions and macho chests. I have even seen some of these "he men" serving at the Lord's table. Men, women, boys and girls appear in sweat shirts and T shirts with all sorts of inscriptions, ranging from the commercial and athletic, to the humorous and sometimes the vulgar. Tell me, brethren, is it appropriate to stand before the congregation (or even appear as a part of it) wearing a "Michelob Light" T shirt? Or one that says "I am a swinger." I could not even print what is written on a few I have seen some young girls wear to services.

What saith the scriptures? "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds" (Rom. 12:2). Paul described two classes of holy people in 1 Timothy 2:8-10—holy men and women professing godliness. "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

Three Words

One who is holy is separated from the common and devoted to sacred use. The term godly speaks of a proper attitude toward the things of God. "Holy" men and "godly" women are those concerned with their peculiar calling and who are careful to manifest their true character. Consider these three words:

1. **MODEST.** The word is from KOSMIOS and means "orderly, well arranged, decent, modest, is used in 1 Tim. 2:9 of the apparel with which Christian women are to adorn themselves; in 1 Tim. 3:2 of one of the qualifications essential for a bishop or overseer" (Vines, Vol. 3, p. 79). It is from the same root word as the one from which universe (KOSMOS) comes and suggests the system and orderly arrangements of the universe. In the context of this passage the emphasis is on that which befits the women professing godliness and whose life is marked with good works. First emphasis must be given here to the absence of vanity. A woman who flaunted her wealth so as to appear elevated above others by extravagantly elegant apparel accompanied by intricate hair designs in which she showed off her breathe-taking jewelry to the dismay of those of humbler means, surely violated this passage. By the same token, one who is vain enough to display her feminine charms so as to attract undue attention to herself violates the principle here. The standard for her is not set in Paris, London or New York. She decides her apparel consistent with her character. Is it orderly, well-arranged and decent? If so, in reference to what? Why, godliness, of course.

2. **SHAMEFASTNESS.** This word is from AIDOS and is defined as "A sense of shame, modesty, is used regarding the demeanor of women in the church, 1 Tim. 2:9" (Vine, Vol. 4, p. 17). "Shamefastness is that modesty which is 'fast' or 'rooted' in the character" (Davies; Bible English, p. 12). "in it (AIDOS) is involved an innate moral repugnance to the doing of the dishonorable act" (Trench, p. 71-72) "that shamefastness, or prudence, which shrinks from overpassing the limits of womanly reserve and modesty, as well as from the dishonor which would justly be attached thereto" (Trench, p. 71-72).

This is the key word in the passage in deciding what is "modest" apparel. It is this inner reserve and sense of moral abhorrence for that which is dishonorable and indecent which enables a godly person to choose appropriate apparel for one professing godliness. The word denotes the very opposite of what is reckless, daring, gaudy or sensational.

3. **SOBRIETY.** This word is from SOPHROSUNE and is defined as "Soberness, sound judgment" (Vines, Vol. 4, p. 44-45). "Soundness of mind, self-control, sobriety" (Thayer, p. 613). Berry's Interlinear translates the word with "discreetness." Trench offers the following: "It is properly the condition of an entire command over the passions and desires, so that they receive no further allowance than that which the law and right reason admit and approve" (p. 70). "It is reason's girdle, and passion's bridle" (quoting Jeremy Taylor, p. 70). . . . "That habitual inner self-government, with its constant

rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to this from arising" (p. 72).

Notice also in the passage that woman's apparel is "in like manner also" to what had been said before regarding men who lift up holy hands in prayer; that is, their prayers arise from hearts that are pure and clean. Modesty here is regulated by a spirit of self-control which dresses so as to keep a check or rein on that which is unseemly. Please do not tell me that the way a person dresses has nothing to do with character. It has everything to do with it.

Two-Fold Responsibility

Since it is possible to have "eyes full of adultery" (2 Pet. 2:14) and for a man to lust by looking on a woman (Mt. 5:28), it becomes the duty of every godly man to guard his own heart and not allow a glance at indecently clad women to grow into a lascivious stare tempting one to make improper advances. Paul urged all to think on things that are "pure" (Phil 4:8). Likewise, it becomes the duty of women professing godliness to so adorn themselves publicly as to indicate purity of heart and to assist in preventing the lustful gaze. Man ought to keep his mind pure and woman ought to help him. One young woman was heard to remark after a sermon on modesty, "I have pretty legs and I intend to show them." The following passage is appropriate here: "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion" (Prov. 11:22).

Standard Not Provincial

It is argued by some that these principles might be true in the Ohio Valley but not in California or Florida. Come now, folks! Are we to understand that men in these places are incapable of lusting by looking? Are all the women so homely as to preclude the possibility that a man might generate undue attention to them? Holy men and godly women everywhere will adorn and attire themselves consistent with their character. Far too many preachers are silent on the subject. Some would be laughed out of court because their own wives and daughters are guilty of wrong doing and have no intention of changing. Some would find little support (and in some cases open antagonism) among congregational leaders. Some would find their popularity waning. Neither do I advocate an approach to the subject which results in abusive language and lurid descriptions which become as titillating to the senses as that which is being condemned. There is a refinement to truth. Dignity of speech should ever mark our efforts to teach the will of God. But "sound speech" is much needed on this subject. Some are soundly silent if not sound asleep while the situation deteriorates in all too many places.

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READING AFTER BROTHER WOODS

Since I started preaching I have seen quotations from the pen of brother Guy N. Woods, present editor of the Gospel Advocate in which he opposed "the tendency toward institutionalism." I accepted at face value the quotations as being what brother Woods said. Some brethren would quote more of his statements at one time than someone else would, but I have yet to see any quotation that was a misrepresentation of what he said.

I have searched for the original source from which these quotations have been taken. Believing that others would like to have the full statement from the pen of brother Woods, with accurate documentation as to their source, I present them here. If any reader doubts the accuracy of these quotations, please send me a self addressed, stamped envelope and I will send you a copy from the original source.

At the Abilene Christian College lecture program in 1939, brother Woods said, "We have successfully maintained the fact that the church is God's own missionary society for the evangelization of the world, and that all other organizations designed for this purpose are sinful. Many battles even in our own ranks, have been fought over this principle, but history and events have vindicated the justness of our claims in this respect" (page 51).

"We are unable to view the future with that unalloyed optimism which seems so characteristic of some. That God's people will ultimately triumph, we have not the slightest doubt; yet we think we see on the horizon signs which augur ill for the cause of primitive New Testament Christianity. He is a poor observer of men and of things who cannot see slowly developing trends utterly subversive of the principles which thus far have motivated us. There is being made a determined and persistent effort to prepare the mind of the brotherhood for changes, revolutionary changes, which will work ruin for churches of Christ if permitted to succeed. We purpose herein to instance a few:

"1. The tendency toward institutionalism. The ship of Zion has floundered more than once on the sandbar of institutionalism. The tendency to organize is a characteristic of the age. On the theory that the end justifies the means, Brethren have not scrupled to form organizations in the church to do work the church itself was designed to do. All such organizations usurp the work of the church, and are unnecessary and sinful. The veteran John S. Sweeney well said, 'Christians do not need

to spend time and means organizing and fostering such societies. The church of God is spiritual house enough for us to live in, temple enough for us to work in, husbandry enough for us to tend, building enough for us to work on, army enough for us to march, drill and fight in. People who are contending, as they say, for primitive Christianity, for New Testament Christianity, should stand for the church of the New Testament, and leave others to spend their time and money on human societies, if they cannot be persuaded to do better.' This writer has ever been unable to appreciate the logic of those who affect to see grave danger in Missionary Societies, but scruple not to form a similar organization for the purpose of caring for orphans and teaching young men to be gospel preachers. Of course it is right for the church to care for the 'fatherless and widows in their affliction,' but this work should be done by and through the church, with the elders having the oversight thereof, and not through boards and conclaves unknown to the New Testament. In this connection it is a pleasure to commend to the brotherhood Tipton Orphans Home, Tipton, Oklahoma. The work there is entirely Scriptural, being managed and conducted by the elders of the church in Tipton, Oklahoma, aided by funds sent to them by the elders of other congregations round about. We here and now declare our protest against any other methods or arrangement for accomplishing this work" (pages 52-54).

Reviewing the book, "Contending For the Faith" by the late brother G. C. Brewer, brother Woods' words are "The section on Colleges and Missionary societies in which the author attempts to prove that it is Scriptural for church, as such, to contribute from their treasuries funds for the support of Christian Colleges, falls, in this writer's opinion, far short of the mark. Brother Brewer insists that there is a difference in sending funds to a Christian college, a human institution, and in doing the same with reference to a Missionary society. Through long, dreary pages this is argued at length; all of which, to this writer, is a sea of mud! Perhaps it is our own denseness; and if Brother Brewer and those who profess to see such a difference wish to consider our inability so to do a manifest mark of immaturity, they are at liberty to do so. We can write only as the matter appears to us at present. We are frank to confess that we lack inner wisdom or whatever it is that enables one to accept without question the theory that it violates no principle of reason or revelation to support a human institution designed to educate young men for the "ministry," and yet insist that it is subversive of both reason and revelation to support an institution similarly organized to keep these young men in foreign fields preaching the gospel they learned in the College! In our view brethren surrender their contention against the Missionary society when they espouse such a view of the College" **Firm Foundation**, February 3, 1942, page 8).

Then in his comments for the Bible Class lesson on December 15, 1946, in the Gospel Advocate Adult Quarterly, he said, "... churches of Christ recognize no ecclesiastical head on earth, nor do they delegate their rights to any council, synod, or conference. There is no

higher organization on earth than the local church. The church, with its elders to oversee it, the deacons to serve, and the evangelists to proclaim the word is an independent entity and answerable only to Christ" (page 337).

After pointing the reader's attention to Romans 15, 1 Cor. 16, 2 Cor. 8 and 9, and Acts 11:27-30, brother Woods said, "It should be noted that there was no elaborate organization for the discharge of these charitable functions. The contributions were sent directly to the elders by the churches who raised the offering. This is the New Testament method of functioning. We should be highly suspicious of any scheme that requires the setting up of an organization independent of the church in order to accomplish its work.

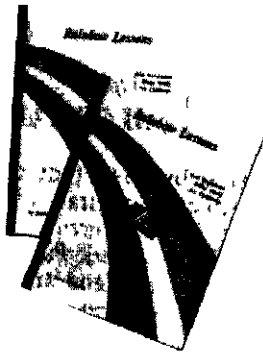
"The self-sufficiency of the church in organization, work, worship and every function required of it by the Lord should be emphasized. This lesson is much needed today. Religious secular organizations are always trying to encroach on the function of the New Testament church, interfere with its obligations, and attempt to discharge some of its functions. The church is the only organization authorized to discharge the responsibilities of the Lord's people. When brethren form organizations independently of the church to do the work of the church, however worthy their aims and right their designs, they are engaged in that which is sinful. All ecclesiasticism is wrong. Any movement to force churches of Christ to bow to the behests of any paper, clique, or group in the church is ecclesiasticism. There is a very definite trend in this direction in the brotherhood today. In some of the larger centers groups of preachers meet and formulate an attitude and then demand that the churches support them in such attitude, and if they will not, the churches are stigmatized and accused of holding to false doctrines. Preachers have no right to exercise any such powers over the free churches of Christ. Only the church itself, through its divinely authorized elders, has the right to formulate its policies. And in so doing is answerable only to the Lord. The teachers should impress these principles upon their classes as strongly as possible" (page 338).

Commenting upon 2 Cor. 8:18-21, brother Woods said, "In line with the fact that our lesson today deals with the autonomy of the church, we point out that the contribution here alluded to was raised wholly without the high pressure organizational methods characteristic of today. There was no organization at all; the churches, in their own capacity, raised the funds, and they were gathered by brethren specially appointed for the purpose. This is the Lord's method of raising money, and it will suffice in any case. There is no place for charitable organizations in the work of the New Testament church. It is the only charitable organization that the Lord authorizes or that is needed to do the work the Lord expects his people today to do" (pages 340-341).

Brother Woods comments on Phil. 4:15-16 by saying, "Here, too, we see the simple manner in which the church in Philippi joined with Paul in the work of preaching the gospel. There was no 'missionary society'

in evidence, and none was needed; the brethren simply raised the money and sent it directly to Paul. This is the way it should be done today. No organization is needed to accomplish the work the Lord has authorized the church to do. When men become dissatisfied with God's arrangement and set up one of their own, they have already crossed the threshold to apostasy. Let us be satisfied with the Lord's manner of doing things" (page 341).

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A CALL FOR COURAGE

In our society today there is a dire need for moral courage. The tendency to merely follow without thinking has so pervaded our society that even in political or sociological circles there is little independent thinking being done. I suppose there to be several reasons for this. First, it's easy just to go along. Secondly, we will certainly not isolate ourselves from the circle of acceptability out of such failures to disagree and so there is very little risk involved in following. And furthermore, the responsibility of involvement is easier to ignore, thereby assuring yourself of the time to "do your own thing." The fact is, it's just easier when you don't have to stand for anything.

The courage to be different may be the hardest kind of courage to develop. But all the great men, and particularly the great men of God, have had the fortitude to do so. In the midst of intense persecutions such men as Moses, Elijah, Daniel, Jeremiah dared to be different. With fortitude and conviction such characters as John the Baptist, Paul the Apostle, and Barnabas the son of consolation deliberately chose the lesser traveled way. And with a view toward glory. James and Peter and Steven and others chose death when the easier way was accessible (Cf. Heb. 11).

But let it not be understood that to merely be different equates to courage. Herod was different, but a moral degenerate. Pilate was different from the crowd, but a fearful coward. Diotrefes was certainly distinctive, but in a most selfish way undermined the work of God for the sake of his own preeminence (III Jno 9). No, just being peculiar is not what courage is all about for it lacks the one ingredient that ennobles distinction and enstrengthens particularness: conviction. Real courage comes from conviction, the personal persuasion that right must take precedence over convenience and comfort.

Real courage is an action of the heart. In fact the latin "cor" and "cordis" which has to do with the heart is the root of the word (we have "cordial" from the same source). Courage, like cordiality, springs from the heart. It rests on truth and proceeds from conviction. It has to do with the state of mind that is so convinced that it will cause one to stand even in the face of adversity or fear of retribution. In the Bible the word translated with our word courage has the concept of bold confidence and in regard to moral suasion perhaps the word translated with our word "virtue" is closer to our understanding of

courage, for it properly defines as the necessary ingredient needed to energize ones stand for the truth.

It's easy to call for courage from others. But it's hard to call it out of your own heart. It gets stuck sometimes between our recognition that we must stand and the fear of retributions if we do. It's hard to be courageous and stand knowing full well that you're going to get a face full of something for having done so. And you can imagine yourself as standing in the face of controversy better that you can actually do it. And that's really what courage is all about. It's the ability to stand up and be counted when it would actually be easier not to.

And never let the mere lack of fear be understood as constituting courage, either. I know a lot of folks who are not fearful, but out of ignorance, not courage. And I know lots of folks who are not afraid because they are hiding behind the skirts of someone. Actually, these people, although entirely devoid of fear, are not in the least courageous and may in fact be cowards. Von Goethe rightly observed that "The coward threatens when he is safe." It's easy to be courageous in tranquil circumstances. In his famous "Don Quixote," Manuel Cervantes said, "True valor lies halfway between cowardice and rashness."

There are many areas in the life of Christians where courage is needed. I cite a few for your careful consideration. You will be able to think of many others I am sure.

Courage in the home. Had you ever thought it takes a goodly amount of fearless determination to be a good father or mother? It takes courage to take hold of your own affairs and manage them properly. It takes strength of persuasion to correct and discipline. And who is it that has reared children but has seen the courage it takes to say "no" when the heart cries out to satisfy a youngster's longing to be accepted? It's hard to be a good parent! And children, particularly in their teen years, need special moral suasion just to survive in the midst of the always present pressures of their peers. It takes great courage to manage your own morality when the pressure to conform is bombarding you from every side. And it takes courage to honor father and mother when they are now aged and senile. To love that which is no longer lovely calls for a valor not less kin to the battlefield variety.

Courage in relationships. Everybody wants a friend. But to have a friend you must also be a friend. And that's hard sometimes. It takes courage to be a friend when it becomes necessary to correct a friend. But you're not really a friend until you muster the strength to do it. And what about your relationship to your occupation? When all the other employees take a few things from work (they usually justify such actions by saying, "he really owes it to me anyhow.") do you have the moral stamina to rebuke such actions? It's hard, right? But if you are what you ought to be you will have to gather the moral fortitude to do it. And if you are the boss, do you have the courage it takes to be fair, to offer good service even when it cuts down on the margin of profit? It's not easy, that's for sure. And when social pressures come along and you are called on for your opinion, are you ever hesitant and tentative? Or do you

speak up for truth and righteousness? I 'll tell you something, it takes courage to live right!

Courage in introspection. I suppose one of the hardest things any of us has to do is to be honest with what we see of ourselves. It takes real strength of character (and a good amount of it) to honestly evaluate oneself. What are my real motives? Am I courageous enough to answer that question? Actually, it takes courage just to ask that question, much less to honestly answer it! And do you have times when you find it easier to just pass over your faults than to sit down and honestly consider your weakness and character flaws? I do. It's just hard to face yourself sometimes. I am so impressed with the Prodigal's ability to "come to himself." It took great courage for him to do that. It is sometimes true what Owen Meredith said, "Tis more brave to live than to die."

Courage to act. It is a far easier thing to ascertain what should be done than to do it. We have very little trouble deciding what the Bible teaches us, but we seemingly have trouble gaining the courage to put the principles we find there to work in our lives. Take the work of preaching for example. Do you know what is the hardest part of a preacher's work? Preaching? Visiting? Personal work? Counseling? No, it is none of these. The hardest part of preaching is getting the people to do what they say they already believe. It's so. The hardest thing is to get people to adopt into their actions the principles to which they freely admit subscribing. And do you know why that is? It's because it takes courage to change. It takes fortitude to alter your course when you've been going the same way so long. And it takes great moral conviction to put to work some principle which calls for you to admit that you have been wrong about the way you formerly lived. It's a far easier thing to see what is wrong than to do something about it.

Courage comes from conviction just as enthusiasm comes from caring. And the bravery to act in the midst of sure adversity and certain discomfort lies deep in the heart of that person who has fixed his aim firmly on the eternal abode God has promised the faithful. Do you have it? I raise a call for courage. Let's cast off our fears, our deference, our doubt. Let's arm ourselves with the conviction of our faith and the confidence of our trust in the promises of God and stand up for the right! No matter where it is, no matter what it costs, no matter what consequences, let's be about the business of serving our great God. We are able to do it.

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**"CHURCH OF CHRIST" "Rev."
Reginald Kelly**

(Note: The following article appeared in a Catholic publication, "Our Sunday Visitor" on December 1, 1957.)

The "Churches of Christ" regard themselves as the true church founded by Christ and do not consider themselves a denomination. They may be classed among the Protestant fundamentalists. Their basic principle is that they "speak where the Scriptures speak and are silent where the Scriptures are silent," but, like all such groups, they decide for themselves what the Scriptures command and what they forbid.

They hold to the usual Protestant doctrines that the Bible is the sole rule of Faith and that it may be interpreted by the private individual. Baptism is received only by adults by immersion. The Lord's Supper is observed every Sunday, and each church is strictly congregational in character.

Any kind of instrumental music is forbidden in their worship services as, it is held, this is a matter about which the Bible does not "speak."

Some of their teachings are a little more distinctive from regular Protestantism. They hold that only those are saved who belong to their "Church of Christ." Salvation does not come through Faith alone, but good works are also necessary. Their violent attacks on the Catholic Church must be understood in the light of the fact that they consider the Church to be the Scarlet Woman, the Great Apostasy. Church of Christ people are also great believers in religious debate and argument. Great emphasis is placed upon the fact that their church has the name "Church of Christ," although nowhere in Scripture is the Church Christ founded given one particular name, which excludes all others.

This church broke away from the Disciples of Christ, founded by Alexander Campbell, a former Baptist minister, in Virginia in 1813. They first reported as a separate body in the 1906 census of religious bodies. On June 17, 1907, Elder D. Lipscomb of the Gospel Advocate of Nashville, Tenn., in answer to a query from S.D. N. North of the Census Bureau in Washington replied, "these disciples have separated from the 'Christian Church' that grew out of the effort to restore pure primitive Christianity."

The two main causes of the division were the introduction of the use of organs in churches and the question of missionary societies. When America began to

grow out of frontier conditions, many churches began to be able to afford to purchase organs. The conservatives objects to this, because, they said, the use of organs in church worship is unscriptural. Many of the conservatives, in opposition to the liberal Disciples, also objected to formally organized missionary societies, because, they said, such institutions are not taught in the Bible.

This church is a reaction against much of the Protestant liberalism that is so prevalent today, the believe-what-you-want-to, one-religion-is-as-another school of Protestant theology that has watered down Protestantism so much that it is almost impossible to discover what Protestant churches actually believe and teach. In opposition to this wishy-washy attitude, the Church of Christ comes along and says, "No, here is what you must believe and do to be saved, because we are the true church founded by Christ."

It is a mark of the one true Church that the Church is truly Catholic, that all types of people with conservative and liberal emotional bents can live in harmony under one roof, without being racked by liberal-conservative splits, as Protestant denominations have so often been in the past.

The Church of Christ has been very loud in its opposition to Catholicism. Shortly after World War II, "missionaries" of this church were sent to Italy and made the newspaper in this country over their battles with the Italian police over the legal question of their right to erect church signs. Catholics were immediately accused of persecution, although other Protestant denominations have lived at peace in Italy for generations. They also expressed their opposition to the Catholic Church through radio broadcasts, some of them over a national network.

The question might reasonably be asked, apart from their doctrinal attitude, why have they displayed such bitterness towards the Catholic Church where there is no direct, historical connection with us. The answer, of course, is that the Catholic Church is, as she is to other such sects, a living, historical refutation of all their claims.

In recent years the Church of Christ has begun to divide again, this time between those who hold that Sunday schools are unscriptural and those who do not. Great emphasis is placed on each church's congregational character to the point that no church conventions are held, although "Lectureships" take their place. There is no formal cooperation with other Protestant bodies or Protestant interdenominational bodies. Their popularity with other Protestant bodies is not high, because, starting with the principle of private interpretation of the Bible as the sole rule of Faith, as other Protestants do, they announce that their interpretation of the Bible is the only correct one and it is necessary for all to join with them.

Such an example, as they have shown, in picking over small points and ignoring some of the cardinal points of the Christian Faith, shows what happens when one makes religion something buried in a book and ignores the authority and tradition of the Catholic Church.

Catholics could well copy the members of this church in their zeal, especially in studying and learning their religion and in winning converts. Catholics should pray for them that they will find the true "Church of Christ."

(Please keep this copy handy and available, for in the next issue we plan to review this material. To conserve space, we will refer to the paragraphs as you count them from the beginning, with only brief quotes from the above article.—E. B.)

Using Great Plainness of Speech

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WHEN WAS CHRIST'S CHURCH ESTABLISHED? #2

Church Established On Pentecost

That the Lord's church had its beginning on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ was, I believe, successfully proved in last month's article in which I showed that the prophecies concerning both the kingdom and church (according to Old Testament prophets and Christ's prophecies) came to pass on Pentecost in Acts 2. In this article, I want to give further proof of why I believe the Lord's church was established on Pentecost.

If it was established before Pentecost in Acts 2, it was established before the gospel, with its facts, commands, and promises, could be preached. We know, for example from I Cor. 15:1-4, that the death, burial and resurrection of Christ were necessary to be preached and believed. Paul said, if Christ is not raised, we are yet in our sins (I Cor. 15:17). Thus the facts of the gospel could not have been preached before Pentecost.

Also, the commands along with the promises for those obedient to them, could not have been preached before Pentecost. Jesus said that repentance, a command of God to be obeyed, and remission of sins, a promise to be received, were to be preached in His name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). They were, in Acts 2:38. When the people heard the facts of the gospel (death, burial and resurrection of Christ) they believed the apostles' preaching that God had made Jesus whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ. When they confessed that they believed these facts, "they said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized . . . (commands to be obeyed, jts) for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (v.38) (promises to be received, jts). Hence, if the church was

established before Pentecost, it was established before the gospel (with its facts, commands, and promises) could be preached.

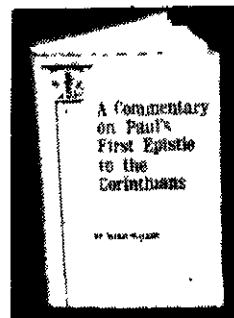
Secondly, if the New Testament church came into existence before Pentecost, we have a New Testament church without a New Testament. In Hebrews 9:16-17, Paul said, "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." Thus we did not have a New Testament until after the death of Christ. His executors (the apostles) met in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after His resurrection to make known the conditions of His will.

Third, the church was established on Pentecost or it was established before the cornerstone was laid. David said the cornerstone could not be laid until it was rejected. "The stone which the builders refused has become the head of the corner" (Ps. 118:22). Also, Peter affirms this very point in Acts 4:11. "This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." But, the death of Christ was to mark this rejection. "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mark 8:31). This also points to the church not having Jesus Christ as the cornerstone until after his death.

More to Follow

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

by Mike Willis



This 640 page work on First Corinthians examines the book in some detail. Based on the AV, the word examines the Greek text behind the English translations. An especial effort is made to grapple with the texts which have troubled brethren in the past. It is also militantly anti-Calvinist in an effort to offset the influence of the circulation of some of the Calvinist commentaries among brethren.

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WAYSIDE

GLEANINGS

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PARENTAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MORAL DEPRESSIONS Substitute Parents

Not every substitute produces an undesirable effect. In fact there are some areas of life, particularly the non-religious and unmoral realms, in which a substitute may work to an advantage. In athletics one player may replace another to the advantage of a team. In certain types of labor females may be much better suited than males. Certainly in some areas of life's affairs youth may perform more effectively than the aged while in other areas persons of mature years are more adept than the younger.

In family affairs God's wisdom has placed the father in the very meaningful role of nurturing children "in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Certainly, as a "helpmeet", the wife and mother is God's assigned counterpart and co-pilot in enabling the husband and father to obey the Lord's command toward his children's moral and spiritual training. That woman plays a partnership role in "completing" man is seen in his not being "without the woman in the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:11). Woman has some specific functions toward their common offspring. Younger married women are told to "bear children, rule the household, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling" (1 Tim. 5:14). The fact that children or grandchildren are ordered to "requite", i.e., repay, their parents (1 Tim. 5:4), is proof positive that the mother plays a tremendously importance role toward rearing the children of both. The role of a mother and grandmother in imparting God's will to the child from its earliest days of comprehension is seen in Paul's commendation of Timothy's mother and grandmother for their "unfeigned faith" and their diligence in building into Timothy from his infancy a knowledge of "the sacred writings" which were able to make him "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:14, 15).

In the moral and spiritual training of the children of Christians God has never provided any substitute for the child's own parents! This is not to say that any parent may not use any legitimate aid in obeying God's commands to him or her. It is to say that God has charged believing parents to show their personal faith toward him by their personal works toward their own children!

Areas of Parental Responsibility

What are some areas of parental responsibility wherein fathers and mothers either make or allow substitutions for themselves? We discuss only one in this article and will consider one or two others in our next installment.

Professional Educators and TV Specialists as Substitutes

Some person said, "When my child passed the second grade, I had to call for help!" Probably most of us have felt our grievous inadequacies in various fields of learning. Such awareness has produced both public and private schools. I submit that professional educators in public and private schools are not to be faulted simply because they teach facts and truth about any matter. Neither do I fault teachers who sincerely motivate their pupils in basic principles of honesty, ambition, diligence, charity toward their fellows and love God, home and country. On the other hand, I am unalterably opposed to any person or aspect of education at any level which will use or tolerate the use of the occasion, time and/or facility which my tax dollar supports to ridicule or undermine my child's personal religious convictions of his God-required moral standards. I fail to understand on what basis any faithful parent can think, feel or act otherwise.

The basic humanistic philosophy—essentially rooted in sheer, unashamed, even brazen atheism—is affecting public education generally and many private schools also. Classrooms are widely used as stages for the impartation of this philosophy in different forms. There is a determined effort to drive the God of creation from the hearts of believers. Increasingly believers in God are forced by law to listen to the humanistic heralds while they demand their salaries from the tax dollars supplied by persons whose faith and whose children's faith they are determined to destroy. That "there is no God outside and above man himself" is the "father" and that "the theory of organic evolution is a fact" is the "son" of this destructive concept is unmistakably clear to those who know what is happening! I freely confess that the foregoing statements are quite bold but the documentation of their truth is found in the **Freeman Digest**, a monthly publication of the Freeman Center for Global Studies, and can be ordered from 1331 South State Street, P. O. Box 116, Provo, Utah, 84601. The issue before me is for January, 1979, and lists its annual subscription cost at \$24. It probably has increased since 1979. Regarding Freeman Center is the following statement inside the front cover: "This institution researches and produces programs which endeavor to stimulate interest in political affairs at the national and international levels of government." Regarding the **Digest** is this statement: "Once a month the Center publishes the **Freeman Digest** which provides a documented analysis of the most pressing current issues and topics. It also conducts interviews with influential policy workers and private citizens of prominence in the United States and various parts of the world."

The lead article for the January, 1979, issue of the **Digest** is titled: "Global Ideology, Humanistic Studies and the Aspen Institute" and authored by Michael Loyd Chadwick, Editor of **The Freeman Digest**. In describing the Aspen Institute, located in Colorado, he says, "To those who travel in high circles Aspen... is a place where the world's elite gather to consider the problems of governance and to set forth possible plans for the future of humanity." Regarding goals of Aspen Institute, he quotes Joseph E. Slater, President of the Institute, as saying that they vary from "a deepening and broadening of public debate on vital social issues; to specific recommendations for new national and international policies and institutions in government, academic, and private enterprise; to proposals for new educational curricula and for innovative programs in the mass media."

If any reader has any doubt about the far reaching influence, the political clout and the unlimited resources involved in its operation, simply observe that Mr. Chadwick says that the "leading officials" of the various concerns listed here go to Aspen for advanced seminars in global ideology and humanistic studies. These groups are: "the Trilateral Commission, the White House, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Exxon Corporation, the Brookings Institute, **The New York Times**, the **Observe International**, **Die Zeit**, The IBM Corporation, Goldman Sacks and Company, the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the Xerox Corporation, the Citibank, the U.N. University, the Milbank, the Tweed, the Hadley and McCloy Firm, the World Bank, the Council on Foreign Relations, the University of Chicago, the University of Rome, Sophio University, the Coca-Cola Co., the Chase Manhattan Bank, etc., go for advanced seminars in global ideology and humanistic studies."

It should be carefully noted that Slater says that the Aspen Institute is "'humanistic' in nature and approach, whatever the subject. It seeks to solve problems 'from a human-centered viewpoint.'"

In the same article Sidney Hyman, author of **The Aspen Idea**, is quoted as saying that because the Aspen Institute is constituted of worldwide participants in its inner life that "any salient problem of contemporary human existence now shares a common frontier or merges with every other salient problem and that any solutions framed for a particular problem must take into account its linkages to the rest. The commitment is to all the meanings packed into the strategic word 'humanistic'—to search for ways in which 'man . . . can reach for the divine, not by reaching above the human, but by striving to become, in all that he does, more human.'" The foregoing, beloved, stripped of its verbosity, is saying **that man is his own god and needs no other!**

The same article quotes at length from "one of the most prominent humanist" philosophers, Carliss Lamont, who graduated from Harvard and Columbia Universities and later taught at Cornell, Harvard, Columbia, and at the New School for Social Change. In **The Philosophy of Humanism** Lamont specifies ten distinct

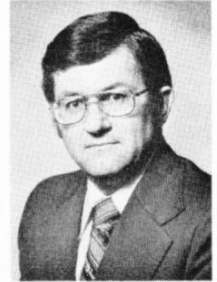
points. The first point forever settles the issue regarding that all bonified humanists are atheistic to the core. He declares:

"First, Humanism believes in a natural metaphysics or attitude toward the universe that considers all forms of the supernatural as myth; and that regards Nature as the totality of being and as a constantly changing system of matter and energy which exists independently of any mind or consciousness."

I have no desire to infringe on the splendid material our beloved Editor is presenting on Humanism. I quote the above, however, merely to emphasize that many public and private schools, systems and teachers are loaded with atheistic humanism! Don't doubt it, neighbor. Humanism is on the march! How some professed Christians can allow their children's constant exposure to such materialistic hogwash and never suspect what is happening to Johnny's faith in God and his moral values is more than I can fathom. May God deliver His people from such naivety and stupidity!

Things Most
Certainly
Believed

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WANTED! ELDERS

Lack of leadership within a great number of congregations is tragic. Men who are qualified, and or are qualifying themselves are in so many instances nonexistent. The tragedy of this is compounded when we so often are forced to accept the fact that the potential is obviously lacking. This, as I see it, is the greatest hindrance to congregational growth and strength. In the absence of qualified elders, operation and function is reduced to a situation where "everyone's business is no one's business". The result is usually floundering and blundering, with the decision making process reduced to periodic business meetings of men in a congregation and no real spiritual care and concern for the flock being evidenced. Where this type situation prevails corrective measures need to be instituted.

In New Testament times congregations obviously existed for a time without elders. To acknowledge this is to accept a developing and maturing period in infant and newly established churches. However, this is not to be seen as a permanent situation. As Paul and others planted the gospel in various places they

shortly returned to give scriptural organization to these churches. "And when they had ordained them elders in every church and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23). How long is a church to exist before appointing elders? The answer obviously is, until qualified men are available. Now, we are getting to the real issue. Why do some churches have such a difficult time qualifying men for elders? Several observations may be in order.

The preeminence factor is evident in some instances. Novice Christians, men who for various reasons are not and cannot qualify, bask in a sense of self importance which they are sometimes unwilling to relinquish. To share equally in the decision making process is a position they tenaciously hold to. Such most often generates a hypercritical attitude which refuses to see anyone qualified and is quick to reject anyone in consideration. Where legitimate and scriptural disqualification or lack of qualification is established, well and good, but we here speak of something else.

Others have so miserably failed to exemplify the qualities and characteristics of godliness that the respect required for an elder is totally absent. It may be an individual who teaches and identifies with truth verbally but in life there is such an obvious gap between saying and doing that he cannot lead the flock. Consistency between saying and doing, teaching and practice, is vital to one's worth in the kingdom of God and as an elder and leader especially. Examples to the flock, as one of the requirements in elders and potential elders, is certainly to be reckoned with. One who has not jealously and zealously guarded against saying one thing and doing another, seemingly thinking his teaching is applicable only to the other, is in reality a drawback to the course of righteousness.

In others there is such a deficiency in knowledge and understanding of truth they are not and will not be teachers able to "feed the flock" and "convict the gainsayer". Someone has said, "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing". Nowhere is this more evident than in the church. Elders are not to be men who simply think they know but men who have proven their knowledge and understanding through the righteous fruit of their life and teaching.

In other cases there is just not enough genuine concern and interest on the part of the church to encourage and promote the development of men. Within the men themselves there is no real "desire" to thus serve the Lord. This results in following the lines of least resistance, individually and collectively, and the lack of leadership continues. Maybe this is an area needing emphasis. Men potentially qualified who will not rise to the need of the hour and finish the job of qualifying themselves will surely have to answer to God for failure to use talents.

The problem of leadership or scriptural organization, the lack of it, will not be corrected anywhere until men within the affected churches want to resolve the problem. Men must want to badly enough to allow the Lord to take charge of their lives and develop through

the power and influence of His word the qualities and characteristics that will make them qualified to oversee the flock of God. This will mean attaining to knowledge and understanding of the scriptures. Applying those principles thus learned in life will produce godliness in character and actions, a good home relationship with properly trained children and a loving and submissive wife. It will cause men to respect and honor such faithfulness in action. An automatic bond of trust and confidence will develop as this kind of godliness produces a magnetism and fellowship that is unquestionably productive of good. To such, men rally and follow, and when the specifics of elder qualification are present you have what God planned for the church.

Let us awaken to the need for leadership, qualified men to serve within the congregation. Let each rise above pettiness, selfishness, egotism, and if there be any other like hindrance, and work zealously to bring self to the ultimate of potential. Let each of us be all we can be to the glory of God.

MY SERVANTS THE PROPHETS

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NEHEMIAH: LET US RISE UP AND BUILD The Place Of Growth In Spiritual Revival, Part 2—Knowing God

In our last study we saw the three problems that Nehemiah was facing in Chapter 11: (1) Occupation, (2) Delegation, and (3) Dedication. These are also the problems in rebuilding the walls of Zion today. Our problem with occupation is much the same as was Nehemiah's. We do not have enough people who want to live in Jerusalem. We are not populating Jerusalem today either, as we should be doing. As a matter of fact, local congregations are turning out the lights for the last time in far too many neighborhoods, communities and cities. Many other congregations are just a few years from extinction. Today we too can see the problem. Now what can we do to seek to re-populate Zion? Everywhere, you can hear about brethren who are trying a new idea. Sometimes, they accomplish some results, but all too often it is the same old story. How many new converts have been added to the local church? **NOT ENOUGH TO RE-POPULATE JERUSALEM!** So, what can be done to produce the growth that we need? The emphasis has always been placed on what WE need to do. Or, on what method WE need to be using, and what approach

WE need to make to the lost world. Then we try it again and the result is still basically the same. What then is the answer? It is a 4-fold problem that we must address and not just the symptoms of the disease. To ignite a local church, there is a 4-step plan that will get at the heart of the situation and not merely treat the symptoms. In this article and in ones to follow we will be studying about what is needed to create a growing, thriving, Spiritually motivated local church.

I. WE MUST COME TO KNOW GOD.

Far too few of us really know God. Oh, we hear about God every Sunday morning and some even listen on Wednesday night or Sunday night. But the problem is that we don't really know Him in a personal way in our own lives. If you spend as much time with your personal friends as you spend with God, how many friends would you have? In Brother Jim Poppell's lecture at Florida College this past January, he addressed the question concerning Abraham's faith. How was Abraham such a great man of faith? At least these two things come to mind from his moving lesson. Abraham realized his unworthiness, and he realized God's Greatness. Abraham had his great faith because he had seen the 'vision' of how great God was to him in a very real and personal way. When God asked Abraham to offer up Isaac, Abraham could do so because he had seen God do the impossible before in his life: the giving to him of a son when he was old and Sarah was reproductively dead. Abraham had already seen God's work, and he knew if God was able to do this at one time in his life, that he was also able to do it again with the life of his boy.

We who are in the Lord's body need to take a closer look at our God. We need to spend time with him in prayer, Bible study, and meditation. When we see that it is not how big WE ARE, but how big HE IS, then we will have the type of Faith that Abraham had. The majority of those in the church today spend no time with God daily. We walk into church on Sunday morning and walk out. We do the same thing on Wednesday night. We don't read the Bible daily, and we do not pray daily. The result of spending no time with God is the reason why we don't ever get to know Him. Prayerlessness is the greatest mark of Atheism that we can come to know. Prayerlessness is the greatest mark because this tells God that we do not need Him, that we can handle things all by ourselves, and that we really are a pretty independent sort of breed. When we make the church grow without long hours of prayer bathing our services, then WE can sit back and take the credit for it. "WE have to pull this one off, boys. Stand up and take notice." God will not bless any work or service that is not bathed in prayer. Men like Nehemiah prayed for 4 months concerning the work he was about to do. Yet, I preach, I teach, I run here and I run there, I hold a meeting and I even write an article all about our God, but I have not even taken a moment or two to talk with Him about whom I am writing, speaking or working. Such is Atheism!

We must see that WE cannot pull off this job of church growth without long hours of prayer. Brethren, the reason I know this is because I have tried it. I

worked harder and harder, You see, man is the only creature that when he loses his way runs all the faster in the wrong direction. In one summer's time we knocked on 7000 doors, taught 35 or more home Bible studies, printed thousands of sheets of literature to be distributed, and waited for the result. The result was that I, and the handful of brethren that worked with me, grew tired. That was really the ONLY result. We were tired and discouraged. Not one soul was added to the Lord's kingdom. Not one soul even came to visit the services where I was preaching. Why? It was done WITHOUT PRAYER! In the disappointed and disillusioned, burned-out preacher, it was easy to see the failure. His thoughts on the matter, certainly were: First, of course, there was the failure of the brethren. We didn't have the help and support that we should have had. It gets easier and easier to place the blame any where you want to: It was the fault of the neighborhoods. They were either too high-class or too low-class to be ready to receive the gospel. Actually, all the while the fault was clearly mine. Why? The effort was done without prayer.

You see, it was not until I had utterly and completely failed that I was able to see how small I was and turned to a source far greater than I. BRETHREN, IT IS NOT WHAT WE CAN DO TO MAKE THE CHURCH GROW, BUT WHAT GOD CAN DO! One brother handed me a booklet on personal work. It was a fine effort for what it covered. It told about what methods to use and not to use. By the time one got through reading it, he was sure of one thing. Success depends upon his doing everything correctly. Brethren, it does not matter what approach you use or do not use in personal work! It is GOD WHO GIVES THE INCREASE, and not the personal worker. Not one word in this little booklet emphasized the most important factor in reaching the lost, which is GOD'S POWER to change hearts and lives.

Moses was a man who knew his God. God spoke to Moses face to face. He waits every day to speak to us His inspired word, but we do have to stop and take time to listen. It was Moses prayer in Ex. 33:11-23 to have God's presence with him and to SEE GOD'S GLORY. When, after we have spent hours in prayer over a soul, and then see that soul come to Jesus, breaking all the shackles of sin that had bound him, then we assuredly know it is God alone who gives the increase. Only then will our hearts be prepared to give God the Glory which is rightfully His. Moses asked to see God's glory in Ex. 33:18: "Then Moses said "I pray thee, show me thy glory." How many days have we begun by praying Lord, Show me your Glory today?

For the local church to grow, we need to develop this dependence on what God can do by the power of His Will and His Word. We need to motivate the entire local congregation to start reading the Bible daily on an organized program. They need to keep journals of their daily Bible reading. They need to be told who they can pray about each day. We must develop devotional hearts for the Lord. Without this kind of hearts there can be no re-population of Zion like that which Nehemiah was striving for.

RE STUDYING THE NAME CHRISTIAN

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INTRODUCTION: The name Christian appears in the New Testament three times (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). It is translated from the Greek word "christianos"; and means "a follower of Christ." It is Jewish in thought, denoting unction, and anointing, or the Anointed One (Christ). The root, Christ, is Greek. And the termination, ianos, is Latin. Thus the three prominent languages of that age (Hebrew, Latin, and Greek) combine to give us the term "christianos"; translated "Christian". Compare with John 19:20. Some scholars take the position that the name was given by enemies of Christ, in scorn and derision; and that it was merely a nick-name which the followers of Christ finally accepted for themselves in the second century. It is natural for denominationalists to belittle and lower the name to human origin; since most of them today wear names which are admittedly of human origin, such as "Lutherans, Baptists, Episcopalians, Catholics, Presbyterians," etc. In discussing Acts 11:26, the Baptist A. T. Robertson, comments: "The three uses of Christian in the New Testament are from the heathen standpoint (here), Acts 26:28 (a term of contempt in the mouth of Agrippa), and 1 Peter 4:16 (persecution from the Roman government)." *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, W. E. Vine, in *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, makes a similar statement: "Though the word rendered 'were called' in Acts 11:26 might be used of a name adopted by oneself or given by others, the Christians do not seem to have adopted it for themselves in the times of the Apostles. In 1 Peter 4:16, the Apostle is speaking from the point of view of the persecutor; cp. 'as a thief,' 'as a murderer.' Nor is it likely that the appellation was given by Jews. As applied by Gentiles there was no doubt an implication of scorn, as in Agrippa's statement in Acts 26:28. Tacitus, writing near the end of the first century, says, 'The vulgar call them Christians. The author or origin of this denomination, Christus, had, in the reign of Tiberius, been executed by the Procurator, Pontinus Pilate' (Annals XV 44). From the second century onward the term was accepted by believers as a title of honour."

I. Contrary to the statements of Vine, Robertson, and several others; it is evident that the name "Christian" was given by God and was worn humbly, yet proudly, by disciples of Christ, even in the first century. Though Isaiah 62:2 and 65:15 may have a dual fulfillment (as is the case with Isaiah 7:14); there is in those verses an inspired foreshadowing of "a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." The only "new name" that I find in the New Testament for children of God is the name "Christian." God's people of the Old

Testament were called disciples (Isa. 8:16), sheep (Psa. 79:13), brethren (Psa. 22:22), saints (Psa. 30:4), and children of God (Deut. 14:1). But a time would come when the Lord would call His people by a NEW name. And turning to the New Testament we find the NEW name given first in Acts 11:26. "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." To me this is a fulfillment of Isaiah 62:2 and 65:15. It is a name given by "the mouth of the Lord." Note the expression "called" in Acts 11:26; **chrematizo**. **Chrematizo** has several shades of meaning: an impartation of a revelation or injunction or warning; something revealed or prophesied; to bear a name; to be called or named. To constitute a firm for business; a divine oracle. (**Arndt-Gingrich; Strong; Thayer; Green**). "Called" in Acts 11:26, as well as in Romans 7:3, indicates a divine call. The adulteress in Romans 7:1-3 is "called" an adulteress by God Himself. So the same word "called" is used in Acts 11:26. God Himself called them "Christians" first in Antioch. Thus the Old Testament prophecy came to pass which said, "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Here in Antioch, a GENTILE city, brethren were first called Christians. And the next mention of the name was on the tongue of KING Agrippa in Acts 26:28.

The Jehovah's Witnesses even score a point with Acts 11:26: "And it was first in Antioch that the disciples were by divine providence called Christians." — *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation*. (They scored a point in favor of the truth but not in favor of the name they wear). See also their *New World Translation*. You might remember these translations when talking with a Witness about the name. *Young's Literal Translation* has Acts 11:26 as follows: "The disciples also were divinely called first in Antioch Christians." Guy N. Woods, in his *Commentary on 1 Peter*, writes concerning Acts 11:26 as God naming His people Christians in fulfillment of Isaiah 62:2. Adam Clarke reminds us that the word *chrematizo* signifies to appoint, warn, or nominate, by Divine direction. — *Commentary*, Acts 11:26. Matthew Henry, in his *Commentary*, comments on Acts 11:26: "Thus the scripture was fulfilled, for so it was written (Isa. 62:2) concerning the gospel-church, Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." H. Leo Boles, in his *Commentary on Acts*, writes of Acts 11:26: "'Were called' is from the original 'chrematisoi', and has the force of divine command. (Mat. 2:12, 22; Lk. 2:26; Acts 10:22)." II. Acts 26:28 reads "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

A. **Albert Barnes** comments: "How it could have entered into the mind of any man, who carefully considered the circumstances of the case, to suppose that these words of Agrippa are spoken **ironically**, is to me unaccountable. Every circumstance in the case proves them to have been the genuine effusion of a heart persuaded of the truth; and only prevented from fully acknowledging it by secular considerations."

B. *Pulpit Commentary* states that the whole turn of the narrative indicates that the words of Acts 26:28 are "the words of a man shaken in his convictions and seriously impressed by what he had heard."

C. **Chrysostom, Luther, Beza, Bengel and Howson** are among the others who take this same view of Acts 26:28. Circumstances force us to conclude that the followers of Christ were commonly known as Christians in the days of Agrippa; and that Paul took advantage of the king's response with further persuasion.

D. Some modern translators have sought to change the meaning of Acts 26:28; but compare with *The American Standard*, *The New American Standard* and the *Douay Version*. They stay with the context. III. I Peter 4:16 reads: "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." *The American Standard* says, "but let him glorify God in this name." Here the apostle clearly states that "Christian" is the name in which saints were to glorify God. And this is another verse which shows that saints were wearing that name in the first century. For Peter was writing "to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." (1:1). They were all wearing the name Christian when Peter wrote this.

CONCLUSION: The name "Christian" cannot be spelled nor pronounced without giving praise to Christ. There is no question in my mind but what this is the name foretold for us in Isaiah, that it was given by God Himself at Antioch, that king Agrippa was almost persuaded to become a Christian, and that this is the name by which we are to glorify God today. The name glorifies both the Father and His Son; and not man. There is no name like the name of Christ. See Mat. 18:20, 28:18, John 16:23-24, Acts 2:38, 4:12, Eph. 1:21, Phil. 2:9-10, Col. 3:17 and James 2:7. "Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?" (Jas. 2:7). The footnote of *The American Standard Version* reads, "which was called upon you?" The name by which we are called is Christian. No hyphenations, just "Christians."

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WHAT IS GOD'S WILL?

"Now therefore hearken unto their voice. . ." (I Samuel 8:9).

Samuel was a godly man. One of the best, in fact, of whom we have record in God's revelation of ancient times. But he had his hands full with a couple of sons who flagrantly misappropriated funds, took bribes, and perverted judgment. They obviously **"walked not in his ways."**

It would have been bad enough had they not also been judges over Israel. But having been promoted to that awesome office, they served well as an excuse for the elders to demand what they had already set their hearts upon:

"And they said unto him, (Samuel) Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (v.5).

Samuel was disheartened. His gloom was not based on ignorance of what his sons were doing, or even perhaps of personal failures in that regard. Samuel was saddened because until that time Israel had enjoyed the unique pleasure of being different from other nations. God had been her true Judge. He had gone before her and had fought her battles (v.20). But now Israel's top brass wanted "to be like all the rest."

What was God's will in the matter?

As I understand the scripture, the will of God may be viewed from three vantage points: (a) His true will; (b) His permissive will; and (c) His decreed will.

What was God's true will in this situation? When Samuel went to the Lord in prayer, God revealed unto him His true will: ". . . **they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them"** (v.7). God's true will was that He continue to be their Leader, and they a "peculiar treasure . . . a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:5,6).

Israel had not fulfilled God's true will. The Lord said, **"... they have forsaken me, and served other gods...."** (v.8)

Having forsaken the true will of God, what was God's permissive will for them? The answer is found in verse 9: **"Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them."**

God's permissive will was not His true desire for Israel. It was a will of protest, It was second best, if even that. There would be grievous consequences in accepting second best. Israel's king would take the nations

sons and daughters, vineyards, and olive yards, men-servants and maidservants. Israel would pay dearly for rejecting God's true will (v. 10-7).

There is yet another aspect to God's will in these circumstances. In verse 18, Israel was advised of God's decreed will: **"And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day."**

God's true will for Israel was that he alone should be her king. His permissive will was that she should be permitted to have a king. His decreed will was that he would not listen to her cries for mercy because of her disobedience.

Perhaps this narrative will be of help in our comprehension of God's will in salvation.

God's true will is that all men be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth (I Tim. 2:4). He is not willing that any should perish but desires that all people come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

Must God's true will be fulfilled? No. Not all men are saved. What is His permissive will in the matter? Jesus tells us that God so loved humanity that He gave His only begotten Son that **whosoever** believeth in Him should not perish ... (John 3:16). "Whosoever" implies permission to reject this great gift.

Now we come to a consideration of His decreed will. It is two-fold, depending on man's choice. For we who are responsive to His true will, it is glorious: **"absent from the body . . . present with the Lord"** (2 Cor. 5:8). For those who are rebellious it is, **"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"** (Matt. 25:41,46)

Whenever you study the will of God in any scripture, consider this question: Is the passage speaking of His true will, His permissive will, or His decreed will? Several controverted sections of the Bible become clearer as we give thought to this.

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

Send all News Items to: Wilson Adams, 6334 Auburn Ave., Riverdale, MD 20737

FIELD REPORTS

B. G. ECHOLS, 5643 Newberry, Wayne, MI 48184. At the end of the school year my family and I would like to relocate out of the mid-west. Although we are presently in Michigan, most of my experience has been on the East Coast with 16 1/2 years in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. I am 51 with over thirty years of preaching experience. If you know or hear of a church needing preacher in the next few months, I would like to be put in contact with it. (313) 326-0690.

NORMAN E. FULTZ, P. O. Box 423, Raymore, MO 64083. As the church in Raymore reached its tenth anniversary in February, it also reached another great milestone with the appointment of elders. This was the culmination of a great deal of effort directed toward that goal over a period of nearly four years. To begin with, a series of sermons was presented and men who seemed to be nearing qualification were encouraged to continue their development. From time to time, the need to strive to become organized after the New Testament pattern was impressed. Then about two years ago detailed Bible class lessons on the eldership were printed and studied in the adult class, after which it was decided by the brethren to make a "trial run" to see if we had men whom the congregation considered qualified. The names of four men were submitted by the members; however, all but one of them stated a need for more time and thus withdrew their names.

The objective was kept before the church and encouragement offered to the men to keep their sights set if they desired to someday serve. Then in our business meeting in January '83, it was again decided another effort should be put forth to select elders. At the request of the brethren, a series of lessons was again presented, and the congregation was again encouraged to "look out among you" men for elders. Six names were submitted, but three of them asked not to be placed before the congregation. The other three were placed before the church to be considered and any objections offered. On February 16, Clyde Blaco, Norman Fultz, and Merl Watson were appointed. The church immediately set about the selection and appointment of deacons. Lessons were presented on the qualifications and duties. Exactly one month from the appointment of elders, five men—Bob Baldwin, Chuck House, Darrel McCoy, Mitch Oakes, and Larry Vaughn—were appointed as deacons.

A new attendance record of 103 was also set in March. A series of meetings is scheduled for late April with Dave Patterson of the 59th

and Sterling church. If traveling in the Kansas City area, we would be happy to have you visit with us. We are 27 miles from downtown on the southern perimeter.

STEVE GOFF, 2071 E. Kramer Dr., Sandy, UT 84092. In March of this year, I returned to Utah, to preach for the new congregation in South Salt Lake City. This church began in early 1982, and is now comprised of 9 Christians with 13 children. The members previously met with the Kaysville congregation (where I preached for 3 years), and began this work in an effort to spread the borders of the Lord's kingdom in Utah and establish a sound church in the Salt Lake City area. We are meeting in a rented building in the Union Square shopping center, located at 9400 South and 700 East in Sandy, Utah. My full support is being provided by the Melrose Drive church in Richardson, Texas. If you know of people moving to Salt Lake City, or just visiting here, please contact me. My new phone number is (801) 942-4788.

GENE PLYER, 1124 Stone Mill Run, Lawrenceville, GA. My father, Woodrow Plyer of Rt. 1, Box 17, Cookeville, TX 75558, has retired from located work after 50 years of preaching. Many souls have been saved because of those years in teaching. He still does fill-in work and would be available for regular and week-end meetings. Much work needs to be done in northeast Texas and brethren that would like a sound gospel preacher for special work should contact him. Phone (214) 572-1669.

WILSON ADAMS, 6334 Auburn Ave., Riverdale, MD 20737. The work continues to grow here at Wildercroft. We have done much rejoicing this year with several baptisms and restorations. It's a pleasure, as well, to see old records fall. Attendance runs in the 130's. On February 6th, Rufus Barfield was appointed to the eldership thus giving us four highly qualified men. We just recently concluded an excellent series of studies with Rodney and Carla Miller to help us improve our teaching program. Their ideas were well accepted and have been put to use. We look forward to a weekend meeting (Sept. 9-11) with Wiley Adams speaking on "The Home" and a fall meeting with F. O. White (Oct. 30-Nov. 4). If you vacation in the District of Columbia this summer we would be happy to have you visit with us. Located just off I-495 (the Capital Beltway) and the Baltimore-

Washington Parkway, we are just ten miles from Capitol Hill and the National Mall area. Also, one mile away is the New Carrollton subway station on the Orange Line, and we are only three miles from the main campus of the University of Maryland at College Park. For more information please write me at the address above or phone (301) 474-8133 or 249-1706. For any good that may be done here, we thank God and give Him all the glory and praise.

FLORIDA BRETHREN RECONCILED

We wish to inform all of our brethren of a successful resolution of the difference both doctrinal and personal between Ken Thomas and the elders and members of the West Bradenton church of Christ. We also desire you to know that the Manatee County church of Christ and the West Bradenton congregation have resolved the problems which caused division and can now work together in love and cooperate in advancing the cause of Christ in this community. Brethren, the above stated resolution was not reached easily. We know that Paul's statement, "give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3) does indeed take much effort. After several meetings and much prayer, we have realized what our Saviour prayed for as well as what the apostles taught concerning speaking the same thing and being of the same mind and judgment.

We urge brethren who find themselves in similar situations to make every scriptural effort to revolve the problems now separating them, realizing from our experience that such is not only desirable but also possible with patience and resolve. We appreciate all who have been praying and working for this great event to become a reality. May God receive the glory for the power of His word and the assistance of His divine providence in these actions. We ask for your prayers as these two congregations begin working together to the same ends yet functioning separately as autonomous congregations of Christ. Signed: Ken Thomas on behalf of the Manatee County church of Christ; and Charles Bridges, Walter Zipperer, and Albert Kipp, elders of the West Bradenton church of Christ.

PREACHING IN THE CARIBBEAN

JERRY R. HERSEY, 318 E. Cook St., Forrest City, AR 72335. I with my wife and three teen-aged children were privileged to move to the Caribbean island of Grenada in 1977 and live there for about two and 1/2 years. Although my work was concerned with secular education, we became very involved in the work of the church. For there we found a truly open and effectual door.

For over twenty years, peoples of the West Indies have heard the gospel of Christ preached, and many souls have obeyed the gospel. While they indeed obeyed the fundamentally correct gospel, what they have been led to practice is "another gospel" of American liberalism. Churches of Christ exist on practically every island. They have been founded by the evangelistic endeavors of American liberal congregations and promoters. Visits by American elders and preachers are made to these churches, and native preachers are supported financially. The native preachers are the product of a few preacher training schools, again American supported. The teaching by these schools may be fundamental, but an erroneous concept of the church emerges in practice with the native preacher showing more concern toward support and self-value than sacrificial evangelism. This is further encouraged through "crusades" sponsored by American churches which pay the way for a few organizing directors whose livelihood is dependent upon the mind-set of liberalism (look at the good we're doing) and the "no question asked" support practices.

Seemingly aware of shortcomings, specific efforts to train preachers in leadership are attempted by still another cooperatively supported individual. His "plan" of one day island visits and workshops still fails to correct the counterproductive attitudes and practices. Some sincere and honest elders and preachers have visited the island preachers and congregations whom they support. They usually find a congregation smaller in number than reports had led them to expect. But, there are zealous, sincere, polite brothers and sisters there. The native preachers appear eager and ready to preach the gospel to all. What visitors encounter in such a visit is a culture of very poor but polite people who will try hard to not disappoint the visiting American brother. They will therefore give diligence to appear what they think the Americans expect. They are not dishonest, they are polite. Yet, the Americans have repeatedly returned home with excited declarations of work well done. And the islanders will remove the face reserved for

tourists, and will resume the face of daily struggle with poverty, unemployment, hunger and even despair. This is characteristics of all islanders, and it is not considered dishonest by them. It is survival, and the native preachers have successfully concealed their unproductiveness and concern over support by the same tact. Social and economic factors may be responsible for a large part of the unproductiveness, but the exaggerated reports to supporting churches are their own. Such glowing reports have assured their continual support. All one has to do to realize the tendency to make great claims of victories for Christ is to read one of the newspapers which report on overseas and Caribbean evangelism.

As we lived and worked with the church at St. George's, capital city of Grenada, classes were taught about authority, autonomy, and apostasy, and a change was brought about. Many reading this will remember meeting brother Ernest Roberts at the Florida College lectures in January. Brother Roberts was the evangelist at St. George's who first saw the truth in our teaching. Being a fine Bible scholar on his own, Brother Roberts helped the brethren see the truth, and then the violation of that truth by the liberalizing, promoting teachers they had first heard. They, as a congregation, endorsed the truth and rejected the error. The congregation has since on several occasions rejected the promoters for crusades, medical/spiritual clinics, and such.

Several and severe battles have since been fought with the liberal elements by ourselves, the church at St. George's, and by Ernest Roberts. Even today, they persist in their attempts to destroy the work and reputation of the Lord's workers. All support was taken from Ernest because he had "became anti" in his thinking and teaching. Character assassinations and slanders are a daily matter. One can only do as has Ernest, to live a life and work so honest folks will know such affronts are a lie.

There are still thousands upon ten-thousands of people who have not heard the gospel nor of the church in these islands. Sadly, many who have heard of the church and its message have had their opinion turned by the people and practices described. Thus, they will reject the church and the message, seeing it function as merely another brand of American denominationalism. The simplicity of Biblical truth is as fresh to these people as the Caribbean trade winds—and as welcome.

I have prepared a pertinent history of the church in the Caribbean, through the conservative beachhead in Grenada. This also includes available information about Ernest Roberts and three other men who are capable and active in preaching the gospel. Four men, woefully under-supported, who are standing for truth in this 2,000 mile range of third-world nations. Please write for this report and give it your prayerful consideration of supporting evangelism in the Caribbean.

LECTURESHIPS

MT. PLEASANT, TEXAS—The Southside church in Mt. Pleasant will be having a lectureship the dates of June 12-16. The speakers will include Richard Montgomery, John Clark, Paul Earnhart, and Robert Harkrider. The theme for the week will be: "From Among Your Own Selves. . ." The morning services will begin at 9:30 and the evening service will begin with singing at 7:30 followed by the evening lesson at 8:00. For more information call (214) 572-2148, or 572-7521.

PASADENA, TEXAS. The Southside church in Pasadena will be having it's 1983 lectures the dates of May 30-June 2. The theme will be "Practical Passages For Faith." Speakers will be Colly Caldwell, Ron Mosby, Peter Wilson and Ed Harrell. Singing will be from 7:00 to 7:30 each evening and will be led by brother R. J. Stevens. For more information contact Dee Bowman at (713) 479-1443.

PREACHER NEEDED

LAUREL, MISSISSIPPI—The South Laurel church of Christ is in need of a preacher to begin work immediately. The church is able to provide partial support. If interested, please write to the church at P.O. Box 1444, Laurel, MS 39440. Or phone Hardy Eubanks at (601) 729-2736, or Richard Marquis at 649-4160.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	330
RESTORATIONS	111

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)