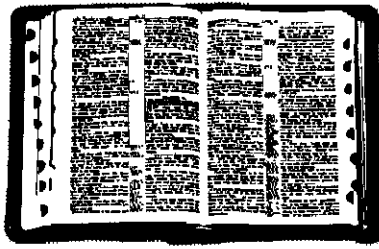


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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 XXV

JANUARY 1984

NUMBER 1

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

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Lutz, FL 33549



EMERGENCE OF THE CROSSROADS SYSTEM

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to write of the CROSSROADS CHURCH in Gainesville, Florida it seemed good to me also, having some understanding of these things from about the beginning, to write my conviction of the matter. Over the past few years both friend and foe have compiled letters, articles for magazines, news papers, bulletins, religious publications, and have written books to attack and/or defend the philosophy and practice of the Crossroads church of Christ. I have been impressed with the fact that many liberal, institutional churches, which have many things in common with Crossroads, will vigorously attack that church over and over with repeated charges that are designed to ridicule and condemn. These churches will do many of the same things in principle and then deny that they are guilty. So does Crossroads! An example: Crossroads solicits and obtains funds from sources other than their first day contributions and spends these funds upon unauthorized church activity. So do hundreds of liberal institutional churches!

I have no sympathy for the baneful doctrine of Crossroads, I understand that any effort to do something outside and beyond the accepted norm will usually bring an avalanche of criticism. I also believe that anyone who does something the Lord requires us to do will invite the wildest charges of radicalism. I do not believe the error of the Crossroads church lies in the amount of criticism she has received, nor those from whom it is

received, I am concerned about WHY Crossroads is being criticized and WHAT she is now doing that she should not do. In short, I am concerned about the AUTHORITY OF Christ and the OBEDIENCE (or lack of obedience) on the part of the Crossroads church. That will be what these articles are about.

I do not seek sensationalism nor fame of any kind for a Crossroads attack. I do not care about an approval or endorsement from anyone through any medium on what I conceive to be a dangerous movement in the Crossroads church of Christ. And I am not the least concerned whether Crossroads expels me and my memory from Alachua County or not. I have only one goal in mind as I write: to seek the truth about what has happened and what is now happening at Crossroads and like influences all over the nation on the one hand, and what God's word teaches on the other hand.

I will not try to assign a motive to the words and deeds of those of whom something is said or implied in these articles. I may judge the fruit of the tree (Matthew 7:16-20); I certainly can know something of a man's motives from his words and actions if I observe them long enough.

The Beginning of Fourteenth Street Church

The Crossroads religious movement is unique in the last half of the twentieth century in that it has attracted unfavorable attention from all quarters of the nation, among religious people and non-religious. The Cross-roads church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida has been the object of media attack from all sides: the news papers and magazines, television, radio, pulpits across the land, and religious journals and magazines from the extreme liberal to the most conservative. To a great measure Crossroads church has relished in this advertisement, claiming that it was a sure sign that they were doing right because the world was against them and Jesus has said, "the world hates you."

I have some personal knowledge of the beginning of what is now Crossroads church of Christ. In October, 1948 two lots were purchased by East University Avenue church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida. At that time it was the only congregation in the city. These lots were purchased in order to build a new and larger build-

ing when East University Avenue church was financially and numerically strong enough. A year later a dwelling house was purchased on the corner of what is now NW 2nd Avenue and NW 14th Street, a short distance from the lots and across the street. A group at East University Avenue insisted upon starting a congregation at the recently acquired property, but the elders and some others thought they should wait. The controversy was rather sharp, and the very zealous group separated from the others to begin the new work.

A building fund had been started and the entire amount of this fund together with the two lots and the dwelling house were given to the group who began the new congregation. Thus began the 14th Street church of Christ in Gainesville. This information is contained in a statement made by the elders to the congregation on July 19, 1950. More than half of the members of East University Avenue went with the new group, including two of the elders. That left three elders at East University Avenue, and there were no elders appointed at 14th Street church while I was in Gainesville.

Harry W. Pickup, Sr. was in Gainesville during the summer months of 1950 and he preached for East University Avenue church. Beginning in September of 1950 Clinton Hamilton drove from Tampa to Gainesville every week and preached for East University Avenue until June, 1951. The second Sunday in June, 1951 Rex P. Kyker of Abilene Christian College moved to Gainesville and began with East University Avenue church, and continued until July 19, 1953, when he returned to Abilene Christian College.

It was at this point that I entered the picture. I began work with the East University Avenue church August 9, 1953, which was about three years after 14th Street church began. C. L. Overturf, Sr. was preaching with the 14th Street church when I moved to Gainesville and he stayed for about a year after I moved there. Brother Overturf and I had a good relationship while he was in Gainesville, and as far as I know 14th Street church was glad to have him working with them.

I became acquainted with Rogers Bartley and Richard Whitehead soon after moving to Gainesville in August, 1953. These two men are now the elders of Crossroads church. I knew Richard Whitehead's good mother who lived in Largo, Florida when I was in nearby Clearwater from 1945 to 1953. I also know John and Jack Whitehead, brothers of Richard. John Whitehead is now director of the Tape Ministry at Crossroads.

Charles H. "Chuck" Lucas and Crossroads

Forrest McCann and Parker Henderson worked with the 14th Street church during the last years I was in Gainesville and before "Crossroads" came into being. I did not have a close personal contact with 14th Street church from the time I moved to Tampa from Gainesville. Occasionally I returned to that city for a funeral or to visit some friends, and I did return for two or three meetings.

Charles H. "Chuck" Lucas moved from Central church of Christ in Miami, Florida to 14th Street church

(Continued on Page 4)

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Editorial

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THE WISDOM OF GOD

Nothing appears more foolish to the unbeliever than the preaching of the cross of Christ. To him it is an exercise in futility calculated only to satisfy the superstitious whims of the weak, elderly and uneducated. He sees no power whatever in the relating of the death and suffering of a descendant of Abraham centuries ago. It does not fit the vaunted views of the scholarly. Nothing about it flatters the vanity of those who appear to know everything except a right relationship with the Almighty.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" and "wisdom" (Prov. 1:7; Psa. 111:10). The greatest trained thinkers are woefully uneducated when they leave God out of their calculations. Without acknowledging Him they cannot explain their origin, mission or destiny. Strike God from the picture and there is left no sane basis for moral conduct.

The Greeks of Paul's day were the self-admitted enlightened ones of all time. Both Athens and Corinth were centers where the wisest of the wise congregated and strutted their brilliance before the dazzled eyes and ears of the intellectually deprived. When Paul wrote to the Corinthian church he got to the heart of this problem when he said "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). He even went so far as to say "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (v. 21).

In the Greek philosophers, God allowed the human mind to reach as far as it could, unaided by revelation, in trying to unravel the origin, meaning and destiny of life. And they really did grapple with these issues. Yet, in the final analysis, they came up empty. Some of them recognized there had to be a power higher and greater than man. But without divine revelation they understood neither his nature nor his will. At one point they conceived the gods to be up on Mount Olympus, so far removed from man as to be uncaring as to his fate. By the time of Plato's Republic, they had brought the god's down among men where they acted capriciously and became more wicked than men. Such extremes of thought produced an increasing number of cynics and skeptics. The human intellect was bankrupt without knowledge of the true God and revelation from his

mind. Paul argued that such a development was according to the wisdom of God, himself. It showed the futility of human wisdom unaided by divine revelation and set the stage for the entrance of the gospel into the very citadels of intellectual strength.

The true God was not so remote from the human predicament as to ignore the plight of mankind. While he is just, he is also gracious and merciful. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son..." (Jno. 3:16). Yet, when his Son left heaven to dwell among men, he (unlike the gods of Greek mythology) manifested all the attributes of deity and resisted every human temptation. In his virgin birth he satisfied what was missing in the wisdom of the ancients. He was divinely conceived but was born to an earthly mother. He was at once both God and man. This admirably suited him to become mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5).

In his death he satisfied all the needs of both God and man for sacrifice. Until that time, even divinely required sacrifice could only foreshadow what was to be offered by Christ and served but to underline the insufficiency of such sacrifices to take away sin. When Jesus died on the cross, he ended there the need for all blood sacrifice. But he also satisfied the laws demand. Sin is the severing of spiritual life from God. In order to bridge the chasm between God and man, God required that physical life be given to expiate for the spiritual life forfeited. Since the life of a thing was in its blood, then God ordained bloody offerings. But Jesus was sinless. He was the true lamb without spot and blemish which the flocks of offered victims up until then could only typify. He was wounded for our transgressions. Our sins were laid upon him. No wonder John said once when Jesus approached, "Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (Jno. 1:29). While the cross depicts human vice at its lowest ebb, paradoxically it was here that mercy and justice embraced each other. Christ lifted up on the cross presented vividly the desperation to which sin leads men. But that event also was the proffered hand of the Almighty giving the best he had to offer to tell us of his great love for us, even when we were sinners.

In spite of all the scorn the unenlightened intelligentsia heaps upon that awful scene centuries ago, it remains that the simple telling of it with all it truly means has evoked from the human family its finest response. It has made men ashamed of sin. It has evoked wonder at the depth of such love. It has produced soul searching and prompted resolution to change for the better. It has replaced the bitter in life with the sweet. It has prompted the great deeds of love which welled up from the admonition to "do good unto all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). It has produced and refined the spirit of the martyr who reasons that "to live is Christ and to die is gain." It has tamed and gentled the tongues of the coarse and profane. It has brought out the noblest sentiments and responses of which the human spirit is capable. It has given the Christian a reason for living and a hope in dying.

Our best attempts at eloquence are puny when placed beside the sweeping statement of the Holy Spirit as Paul penned these words:

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. 1:22-31).

My brethren, this is the message that turned the Roman Empire upside down. It is the message that saves the lost. The gospel of Christ, with all that properly includes, is what it took to save my soul. It is what my children had to hear, believe and act upon. It is what my grandchildren will have to learn if they obey the Lord. If this is not central to our preaching, then all had better beware lest we be found preaching "another gospel, which is not another" but a perversion of what inspired men taught. The wisdom of God is known by what God said. It is only when we preach his word that we instruct men in divine wisdom. May the preaching of the cross never become foolishness to us.

(Continued from Page 2)

of Christ in Gainesville, Florida in the fall of 1967 to serve as "campus minister" at the University of Florida. According to An Open Letter to the Brotherhood, which appeared in Firm Foundation, November 17, 1981, he said he was 28 years of age when he moved to Gainesville.

Lucas directed the Daytona Advance during spring break in 1969-1970. This was in the second year after moving to serve the 14th Street church in Gainesville. If they wanted a fireball to put them into orbit, he was the man. Glowing reports of his work had popped up everywhere. An example is found in April 7, 1969 issue of Christian Chronicle, the first paragraph of an article entitled "Living in Acts 2"

"Instead of Peter the fisherman, there was a UCLA speech professor named Prentice Medor, he served as master of ceremonies.

Rather than speak in tongues, the disciples who astonished the crowds used their talents as singers (Pat Boone and Ray Walker), saxophone player (a David Lipscomb College Bible major named Ken Wyatt), and composers-performers (The Blue Sky Investment, a singing group from Abilene, Texas). The scene was Daytona, 1969, instead of Jerusalem 33 A.D. But as Chuck Lucas, a sure standin for Timothy, said—"Man, we are living in Acts 2."

A movement began in 1967 after Chuck Lucas moved to Gainesville. By 1978 14th Street church had grown to one thousand members and a new building was constructed for the growing and changing system. It was called "the Crossroads Philosophy," "Crossroads Movement" and "Crossroads Ministry." 14th Street church changed its name to CROSSROADS CHURCH OF CHRIST. It emerged a self made denomination. It is named for its philosophy, not the Lord. "Crossroads" and such names like it do not identify the location of the meeting place, or the city, or the state, but an idea. Every term used to identify the church in the New Testament, more than to indicate a people belonging to the Lord, always indicated location, such as: Jerusalem, Corinth, Ephesus, churches of Galatia, Laodicea, Philippi, Antioch, etc. But the term "Crossroads" refers to philosophy, a decision to be made, a time of choice. When I first heard the word used of the church formerly known as 14th Street, I thought they had located the building at cross streets generally known as "crossroads," but I soon learned I was wrong. The word had reference to a verse in Jeremiah 6:16 which is wholly unrelated to the church. "Thus says the Lord: Stand at the CROSSROADS and look; ask for the ancient paths, where is the good way; then walk in it, and find rest for your souls." This is taken from the masterhead of the CROSSROAD bulletin.

The religious section of the St. Petersburg Times Newspaper is called "Crossroads." There is a Baptist Church in north St. Petersburg with a big sign on the building: "CROSSROADS BAPTIST CHURCH." Since these do not refer to cross streets, there must be some psychological, philosophical or theological principle in common with these and the Gainesville "CROSSROADS Church of Christ.

(More to Come)

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"POPE SAYS RELICS ARE ST. PETER'S"

When the apostle Paul wrote of the apostasy from the truth which would turn people from the faith, he said they would be deceived by "signs and lying wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9). The majority of the "lying wonders" have been within the Catholic Church. Under the above heading, an article was printed in the newspapers several years ago, datelined Vatican City, by the Associated Press. The article follows:

"Pope Paul VI announced Wednesday that the Vatican has conclusively determined that remains found under St. Peter's Basilica are those of the apostle revered by the Roman Catholic Church as its first Pope.

"The relics of St. Peter have been identified in a convincing manner,' the 70-year-old pontiff told his weekly general audience.

"The tomb of St. Peter was located in 1950 under the Altar of Confession of the basilica. Pope Plus XII announced then that bones had been found in it but that it was not proven they were St. Peter's. Some archaeologists claimed they belonged to an old woman.

"Later, in a nearby niche, fragments of a skull and other parts of bones weighing about 4 pounds were discovered. Italian archaeologist Margarita Guarducci claimed in a recent book that the bones belonged to St. Peter, who reputedly was a man of a large frame. But until Wednesday, the Vatican had remained silent.

"Very patient and accurate investigations were made... with results which we believe positive...' Pope Paul said.

"The Pope said he felt it his duty at the present stage of the scientific and archaeological investigations to make the 'happy announcement.'

Of all the "signs and lying wonders" ever to come out of Rome (and sometime we will give you a list of all the things they claim to possess of this nature), this surely takes first prize. What an appropriate place for them to find Peter's bones!

Assuming that they found some bones under St. Peter's Basilica, how on earth can they prove whose they were? They avoided revealing the method by which this identification was so "convincing." Do you suppose they will claim that they have Peter's dental records? We would not be surprised if they did.

We recognize that scientists can examine and determine approximately when the person lived, whether man or woman, etc., but to identify 1900-year-old bones

personally, —well, that's another matter entirely. Authorities found the bones of a person here in Arkansas recently, and have not been able to identify them, even with modern methods and a relatively short time since death. Maybe they should send all bones to Rome for identification from now on. The FBI can't begin to match the record of the RCC.

Suppose they did find the bones and could prove beyond doubt that they were Peter's, what would that prove? Only that they found Peter's bones! That would not prove that he was the first pope. The Catholic Church can come as near proving that those are Peter's bones as they can that he was ever in Rome, or bishop of Rome, or a pope.

If the Catholic Church thought as much of Christ as it does Mary and Peter, it would be closer to the truth. Christ is the only head of the church. It was built by and upon him (Matt. 16:18; I Cor. 3:11) and that happened long before the world ever heard of a pope or the Catholic Church.

It is pathetic that millions of Catholics now believe that they have Peter's bones, and that without any proof whatsoever. They will believe anything the popes say, even though they have contradicted and reversed themselves many times.

• * * * * *

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF CATHOLIC PRESSURE

A brief news item in the newspapers a few weeks ago read as follows:

"Jimmy Swaggart, an ordained Assembly of God minister who began his television ministry 10 years ago, confirmed in Baton Rouge that two Atlanta television stations have decided to drop his popular show after the Roman Catholic archdiocese complained that he made anti-Catholic statements on the air."

We do not agree with much of what Swaggart does and teaches, but we defend his right as a free American to teach what he believes — any time and any place. When he loses his religious freedom, ours may be next!

If we have been informed correctly, the "anti-Catholic" statements by Swaggart were his teaching that all Christians are priests and can pray to God through Jesus Christ. That is certainly "anti-Catholic" for they pray through Mary and many so-called saints. Swaggart was right, for there is "one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ" (I Tim. 2:5).

One disgusting thing about this is that the Catholics would oppose a man saying what he believed while paying for the time, when they get millions of dollars in free time and space in the news media each week.

When the Catholic Church speaks of religious freedom, it means only the right of Catholics to do and teach what they please! They will silence all others whenever and wherever they have the power and influence to do so. History proves that.

Building Better Families

James R. Cope

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PARENTHOOD A SACRED TRUST

In our last installment we pointed out from a Biblical viewpoint that parental responsibility is two-fold (1) to God because he commands parents and (2) duties to children because children are the objects of parental care. We further showed that **parental duties** are to one's own, not the child or children of others. We also pointed out that God did not authorize a local church to become involved in a recreational activities program as a substitute for parents not performing their God-assigned duties as **parents**.

The Old Testament presents the idea of children being "gifts" from God. This occurs twice in connection with the life of Jacob—once in regard to all of his own children and again with reference to Joseph's sons.

Having determined to return to his father's house after many years with his uncle Laban, along with his wives, their handmaids, his children, servants, and livestock, Jacob came into the presence of his longestranged brother Esau who, upon seeing the women and children, asked, "Who are those with thee?" Jacob replied, "The children which God hath graciously given thy servant." (Gen. 33:5). Many years later when Joseph, with his two sons, appeared before his aged and about-blind father, Jacob asked, "Who are these?" Joseph replied to his father, "They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place" (Gen 48:8, 9). The reader will observe that the reply which Jacob gave Esau and the reply Joseph gave Jacob were identical as related to the source of their sons. Both father and son said God had given them their children. We only repeat revealed truth, then when we affirm that the ancient patriarchs looked upon their children as "gifts"—gifts from God! And I ask why should any parents consider their children with less than that esteem which Jacob and Joseph bestowed upon theirs?

In this connection I submit that all of us look with a favor upon a material gift as something to be honored more than if we purchased it with our own money. It is not the great price paid for the gift which counts so highly with us as it is the sentiment of good will by the giver behind the giving of that gift. How carefully we respect and handle the gift itself, usually placing it in a place to be often seen and as a reminder of the kind feeling of the donor toward us! We treasure such remembrances, looking upon and handling them with care. A gift may be a silent expression but it always

carries a meaningful message of appreciation, of love, of good will. How shall any thoughtful parents look upon their children as less than a great blessing from the Lord?

How expressive of such sentiment is Psalm 127:3-5:

"Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are children of the youth.

Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: They shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate."

Children are to be welcomed joyfully and affectionately, not regarded as burdens grievous to be borne or encumbrances to happiness and prosperity. Someone has observed, "It is a most unenviable home, if home it can be called, where a child is unwelcome. They are a sacred trust and solemn responsibility not to be weakly fondled or foolishly spoilt; but to be wisely, kindly, and strictly disciplined to obedience and duty." Another unknown wrote: "Parents must not trifle with their children, like idiots playing with sharp tools; but as the bowman straightens and polishes his arrow, gives it a solid point and wings it with proper feathers, they must educate their sons and daughters in the name, and with the help of the 'rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.' The arrows that are not prepared and directed when in the hand, may, when they are gone abroad into the world, and all parental training is too late, prove arrows in the heart."

Beloved, how can any two Christians expect to meet their parental responsibilities without seeing their children as the Lord's special entrustment to them? If a parent cares not enough for their "gifts from God" to care for and nurture them while they are impressionable and moldable, why should that same parent be disappointed in his old age when these same children care not for them but neglect, avoid, and look upon their parents as burdensome and hindrances to their would-be freedom? Shall we not reap what we sow in this field of life as in all others?

CLAUDE WORLEY

With sadness of heart we report the death of another faithful preacher of the gospel. Claude Worley, longtime and beloved California preacher, passed away in late October according to information relayed to us by Roy E. Cogdill. He was a man of great ability and exerted stable influence among the brethren where he lived and labored. He did much work among the Mexicans and was fluent in Spanish. His kind will be greatly missed. Our sympathies are extended to all the family.

Restoration Footnotes

Earl Kimbrough

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"DEBATE THY CAUSE"

Religious debating in the nineteenth century became what one historian calls a "serious American indoor sport". Many at the time certainly practiced this method of defending and spreading their beliefs. But no people used it more effectively than the restorers of New Testament Christianity. Most of the outstanding preachers among "the disciples of Christ" before 1900 engaged in debating. The questions discussed cover a wide range of differences between them and the various religions popular in pioneer society, not excluding rising cults and "free-thinkers".

The restorers became so skilled in using the Scriptures to establish basic Bible truth that by the end of the century few opponents of ability and influence were willing to debate them. This, together with a growing liberalism among the Restoration leaders themselves and a lessening of denominational zeal among others, led to a general disinterest in debating in the early years of the present century. Polemic warfare largely became a thing of the past, with some notable exceptions.

However, the more conservative brethren in the churches of Christ continued the practice wherever willing antagonists could be found. Debating had become so engrained in them that no "sound" preacher would refuse to debate his cause, nor speak out against debating. Some very able brethren debated so often that they came to be known as "debaters", or "debating brethren". But the more liberal brethren tended to regard debating as foreign to "Christ-like behavior". No doubt their acceptance of unscriptural innovations contributed to their loss of interest. Conservative brethren may have been about right in concluding that those who did not believe in debating did so for the same reason that "the old muley cow doesn't believe in hooking".

The prominent "debaters" in the Restoration movement differed widely in their ideas and methods of debating. Alexander Campbell thought that only the most talented brethren should represent the truth in debate, and that only the ablest men of the opposition should be met. He also seemed to believe that once an issue had been thrashed out in debate by the best men on both sides, there was little need to continue debating that issue. His was an idealistic concept that fit very well into the post-millennial drama he espoused, but time and circumstances proved it impractical. Nevertheless, Campbell set a standard of excellence in debating that probably remains unsurpassed.

Tolbert Fanning, like Campbell, felt that only the highest order of conduct should characterize opponents in discussing differences. With this in mind, he agreed on one occasion to debate a Methodist preacher named Chapman at Lebanon, Tennessee; but the man turned out to be less than honorable. Fanning made his opening speech in his customary dignified manner. His points were assertive rather than argumentative, and he expressed them in clear and forceful language, confirming each with appropriate Scripture.

When Chapman arose to speak, he began with a bombastic quotation from Alexander Seikirk:

I am monarch of all I survey. My right
there is none to dispute,
From the center, all round to the sea, I
am lord of the fowl and the brute.

He bore down on the last word with oratorical force, pointing significantly to Fanning, lest any dimwit miss his haughty application. The uncultured portion of the audience roared with laughter. As T. B. Larimore tells it, "Brother Fanning, without uttering a word or seeming to recognize even the existence of his discourteous adversary, quietly, but quickly, picked up his hat and his book and went home" (**Franklin College and Its Influence**, p. 414.)

While the nobility of Campbell and Fanning is admirable, the approach of C. R. Nichol was far more practical. Asked if he would debate a man whom he knew to be "ungentlemanly in deportment and unchaste in language", Nichol replied:

Yes if the church he proposed to represent endorsed him, for it is not the man I am proposing to meet, but the doctrine he has espoused and of which he is an exponent; and bearing the endorsement of his brethren, if such he has where the debate is had, he becomes their representative, and his conduct reflects on them, not on me. (**Gospel Advocate**, February 22, 1934.)

Nichol went on to say:

Debates properly conducted are productive of much good. I know of hundreds who have been convinced of the truth in debates I have engaged in, when possibly they would never been led from the false teaching of denominationalism but for the debate; but I will never knowingly engage in a debate where the opposition does not have a following, nor will I engage in a debate where there is faithful congregation of Christians over their protest. (Ibid.)

Clark Braden of Illinois, who preached the gospel for more than fifty years before 1915, held about 130 debates with all sorts of opponents, eighteen of whom were Mormons. His 1884 debate with the Mormon in Ohio "virtually exterminated Mormonism in that state", according to one historian. During the last twenty years of his life "every prominent champion of infidelity" backed out of debating with Braden. He had little respect for his brethren who belittle debating, and once said, "When you get so very good and so very

refined and cultured that you are unwilling to debate, you will know more than God Almighty, you are better than Jesus Christ, and you are purer than the Holy Spirit". (**The Disciples of Christ in Ohio**, p. 72.)

Within a month after Joe S. Warlick met F. L. DuPont, then the leading Texas debater for the Baptists, the Baptist church at Bedford where the debate was held moved "lock, stock, and barrel" to a neighboring town. More than fifty people obeyed the gospel after a debate at Lockney, Texas, and one Baptist moderator, pastor of the endorsing church, quit preaching and moved to New Mexico to farm, as did the Baptist moderator in Warlick's debate with J. M. Brandy.

Few would seriously deny that debating as a method of teaching has fallen on hard times. Well-meaning brethren have contributed to this by "mounting the polemic platform" without sufficient preparation and knowledge to successfully carry the issue. Others have failed to conduct themselves in a manner becoming of Christian soldiers on service. And some debates have been carried out in a circus atmosphere, or more like a spiritual wrestling match, leading one good brother to express the view that on such an occasion, "They ought to sell tickets".

No doubt the days of great debates are gone forever, but there is no reason to abandon the practice. Jesus, the apostles, and other first-century preachers debated their cause successfully. They did so because: (1) their cause was right; (2) they were prepared to meet the opposition; and (3) they conducted themselves as godly men. Debates still do good and accomplish what preaching and writing cannot accomplish. It will be a sad day in the history of the Lord's people if we become "so very good and so very refined and cultured" that honorable debating is no longer held in honor. But that day very well may come.

Half a century ago, Cled E. Wallace said, "Brethren who think debating never did any good missed something by being born too late". But one does not need to be an octogenarian to know that debates have, and still do, accomplish good. Aside from what history and experience tell us about debating, the word of God also testifies in its favor. Could it be that those who see no good in debating have missed something because they have quit reading their Bible too soon?

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**"Damnable
Heresies" Second
Peter 2:1-3**

CULTISM ... Could it arise in the church?

It is a REAL DANGER: "Exploding like atomic bombs the CULTS have mushroomed on the American religious horizon." ". . . continue to attract admirers with increasing success." ". . . millions of Americans involved..."

Definition:

CULTISM—ITS DEFINITION:

"An organized heresy: a religious group not in the mainstream; a fanatical group that demands blind faith and unquestioning obedience; groups which concentrate on one belief or custom out of proportion to everything else; usually crystallized around a charismatic personality."

Seven Danger Signs of a Cult:

1. "FOLLOW ONE HUMAN LEADER."
2. "DILUTE THE BIBLE."
3. "DESERT YOUR FAMILY."
4. "FORGET THE CHURCH."
5. "BELIEVE NEW REVELATIONS."
6. "Park" YOUR MIND.
7. "KEEP OUR SECRET."

Watch Out... If ...

any religious teacher or organization ASKS YOU TO...

1. Add to or subtract from the Scriptures.
2. Accept the word of any man as final.
3. Accept "new" truth in addition to what is in the Bible.
4. Believe that "God leads us" CONTRARY to our MINDS.
5. Believe that God's truth is "secret," and "for a few clever people to find and hoard!"

CULTISM Its Characteristics:

1. Usually: A "LEADER" who is thought to possess "unique powers," special abilities, etc.
2. Strict, arbitrary rules and regulations.
3. Slavery of the mind.
4. A powerful "father figure" or modern Messiah.
5. An attempt to use scripture to bolster the movement, which ends in perversion of Bible texts.
6. Total CONTROL and cohesion by human leaders.
7. NO independence of thought and study.
8. One must give to the "leader(s)" an account of every secret or private detail of his/her individual

life.

9. Must withdraw from normal involvements: especially one's family, and sometimes one's job.
10. Thorough regimentation: no private life of your own.
11. The cult leaders do all the "thinking" for the members who are to "believe only what they are told."
12. In order to discourage leaving the cult, some "systematically maintain conditions designed to weaken resistance" and "induce a state of physical and mental EXHAUSTION."
13. To BIND members tighter in the cult, its leaders create the image of an "evil outgroup" that is supposedly trying to destroy them:
14. IF you reject the cult, "God will punish you . . ." or your friends or relatives . . . with illness . . . disease... tragedy ... death... etc.

CULTISM Its Causes:

1. Changes in social and value systems in America have brought about a "ROOTLESS SOCIETY."
2. The decline of strong family units.
3. Churches have failed to meet the SPIRITUAL needs of people.
4. "Religion" has been looked on as a "leisure time" activity.
5. Modern day churches lack "solid convictions."
6. Children are raised WITHOUT instilling within them aims, goals, and purpose in life.
7. Secular skepticism leaves the field wide-open to QUACKS, religious RACKETEERS, and rascals.

CULTISM Its Method of Recruiting:

1. All methods of recruiting are based on DECEPTION, (not all cults use the same type methods.)
2. The victims are mainly the young (college age and 20s.)
3. TIMING is important—
those suffering broken romances
crisis in family
failures at school
those unsuccessful in dealing with problems in life

Step No. 1 "Love Bombing"

(Hugged by members, fed, everything is pleasurable; endless initiation discussions and constant attention; called "heavenly deception.")

Step No. 2 Victim is Bombed With "Guilt, Little Sleep, and Isolation."

(NOT allowed to ask probing questions, or to investigate open-mindedly, or to argue with the "authority" or Messiah figure.)

Step No. 3 The "Brainwashing" Stage

(Techniques of persuasion by means of tight information control. "Believe" and "do as you are programmed." Accept blindly the word of your superiors.)

Step No. 4 The Development of a "New Personality"

(Made to feel a tremendous GUILT about their PAST ... Undergo "re-birth" of their fellow cult members ...

"new name..." "new family..." Compelled to sever all other attachments.) (Some of these are a horrible CORRUPTION of Christianity.)

Step No. 5 The Final Stage often includes classic Mental and Neurotic Symptoms:

Schizophrenia
Suicide (for some)
Loss of ego boundaries (person identity)
INABILITY to distinguish between **REALITY** and **FANTASY**. Described as:
Zombie—like
Programmed
Glass-eyed stare
Fixed facial smile
Robot-like responses

Why are people drawn to false religions, including the cults?

"Some shall depart . . . giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons ..." (1 Timothy 4:1).

1. Love of Darkness:

A person determined to live an immoral life, or even a self-centered one, will flee from the truth of the gospel which shows his life for what it is: AN OFFENSE TO GOD (John 3:19-21).

2. Spiritual Immaturity:

Spiritual babes are most "VULNERABLE." A time of great danger! "Childhood diseases" are common spiritually as well as physically.

The KEY to spiritual GROWTH is a STUDY of God's Word (2 Peter 3:18).

3. Spiritual Subversion:

"Perversions" of the genuine gospel (Galatians 1:6-9). See also Gal. 4:17; 5:1.

WEAK and SPINELESS, they allow themselves to be "knocked around," and EXPLOITED (2 Corinthians 11:19, 20).

The Colossians had to be warned of those "who would SPOIL YOU..." (Col. 2:8).

4. Intellectual Pride:

Their minds are CORRUPTED from the SIMPLICITY that is in Christ (2 Cor. 11:3, 4).

Intellectual pride and arrogance has led many to feel that Christianity is "not sophisticated enough" or "too simple" for their perceptive intellects!

See I Corinthians 1:19-21.

The Contrast between "Cultism" and N.T. Christianity:

1. The church of Christ has ONE HEAD, the TRUE MESSIAH, not an impostor (I Cor. 3:11; Eph. 1:22,23).
2. Jesus urges us to count the cost of following Him. **NO DECEPTION** is utilized (Luke 14:27-30).
3. NO COERCION is used in attempts to convert lost souls. (POWER is in the GOSPEL—Romans 1:16).

4. In Christianity there is no concentrating on a certain AGE group or on the WEAK and VULNERABLE. (The gospel is for ALL—Mark 16:15).
5. NO attempt is made to cause a person to develop simply a "GUILT COMPLEX."
(Man has sinned... God so loves us... Christ died for our sins . . . abundant pardon and peace—for the obedient!) Romans 3:23; John 3:16; I Cor. 15:3; Eph. 2:1-6.
6. Genuine Christianity does NOT make people PECULIAR in "dress," "lack of manners in public places," or general **OBNOXIOUSNESS**.
The New Testament does not teach us to be bizarre, or grotesque.
7. Nor does Jesus teach us to WITHDRAW from society (John 17:15; I Cor. 5:10; Matthew 5:14-16).
8. Nor does the Bible demand that one ABANDON his "job" or family! (Unless it involves one IN SIN.) I Timothy 5:8; Mark 7:10-13.

BEWARE! Be on Guard:

CHRISTIANS MUST BE CONTINUALLY VIGILANT (Acts 20:28-31; I John 4:1).

- 1) BEWARE of groups who work in ISOLATION, not within the framework of the congregation under the oversight of the elders.
- 2) BEWARE of those who talk about everybody else being "dead" or "cold" or "unspiritual" EXCEPT their initiated group. (Their group is the only one really carrying out God's commands!)
- 3) BEWARE of those who seek to UNDERMINE the Eldership, and set up "leaders" and organizations not authorized by the Scriptures.
- 4) BEWARE of people who come with sectarian (non-Biblical) terminology, doctrines, and methods.
- 5) BEWARE of those who dictate that one who spends time with parents, friends, leisure, etc., is "neglecting the truth, etc."
- 6) BEWARE of indoctrination through psychological pressure, harassment, and intimidation.

CULTISM is a blight on our society ...

and it can infiltrate the church of Christ:

Let no congregation, eldership, parent, or youth think the problem is non-existent!

"BE SOBER, BE VIGILANT, your adversary the devil, AS A ROARING LION, walketh about, seeking whom he may DEVOUR" (I Peter 5:8).

**GODLINESS
AND WORLDLINESS**

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"Godliness" is frequently defined as God-like-ness. Similarly, worldliness is defined as being like the world. While these expressions certainly describe the godly or worldly individual, they are not really accurate as definitions.

Vine says godliness "denotes that piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him" (**Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words**, p. 502). A Godward attitude. The English suffix "ward" means "that moves, tends, faces, or is directed towards" (**Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary**, 8th edition). Hence we are talking about a disposition inclined toward God. Or conversely, a disposition inclined toward the world.

Of course, there is a type of conduct that is appropriate to godliness. "Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness" (1 Tim. 2:9, 10). A certain type of clothing "befits godliness." Godliness will result in our behaving and being "God-like," just as worldliness will surely result in our misbehaving like the world. But the point is these things are more than conduct or actions—they are dispositions of heart. One might even have a God-like quality (e.g. be charitable) without being at all Godward in attitude.

David described himself as a godly man in Ps. 86:2. Besides righteous conduct, three things in his life demonstrated that Godward disposition: (1) **Confidence in God**. When the boast of the mighty Goliath melted the hearts of the defenders of Israel, godly David said, "The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine" (1 Sam. 17:37). David rejected conventional weapons and won the battle of faith. (2) **Concern for the things of God** (2 Sam. 7:1,2). It bothered David that he lived in a splendid house while the ark of God dwelt in tent curtains. He was concerned that the things of God be given the proper regard. (3) **Capitulation to God's will**. David had a lot of family trouble as the result of and in punishment for his sin with Bathsheba. When his son Absalom rebelled and forced him to flee Jerusalem, some Levites brought the ark to stay with David. But he told them, "Return the ark of God to the city. If I find favor in the sight of the Lord, then He will bring me back again, and show me

both it and His habitation. But if He should say thus, "I have no delight in you," behold, here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him" (2 Sam. 15:25,26). What an excellent exemplification of the Godward disposition!

Worldliness is the opposite of godliness. We are using the term "world" in the sense of men's alienation from and opposition to God, the world as "the sum of all influences emanating from men and things around us, which draw us away from God" (Findlay). Satan is at the helm (1 Jn. 5:19). Worldliness, like godliness, is not mere conduct, but a disposition of heart; a leaning toward the world. Most of our preaching on worldliness deals with its symptoms. That is needed. But we must be careful not to treat the symptoms and leave the disease.

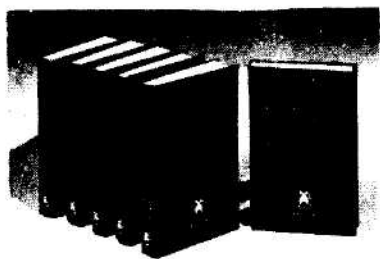
Worldliness is demonstrated in the same areas in which David exhibited godliness: putting our trust in the things of the world to provide happiness, answers to our problems, etc.; being concerned about the things of the world; capitulating to the will of the world. Why do you want that, wear that, drink that, say that, watch that, do that, etc.? Is it because you are directed toward the world or toward God?

The Bible gives us several reasons for rejecting worldliness. Loving and serving the world, and loving and serving the Lord, are mutually exclusive. No man can serve two masters (1 Jn. 2:15; Mt. 6:24). The world and its lusts are passing away (1 Jn. 2:17).

The challenge to the Christian is to be in the world but not of the world (Jn. 17:14-16); to maintain, and even add to, the Godward disposition (2 Pet. 1:6).

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GOOD AND BAD COGNOMENS

According to the dictionary a nickname may be given a person in fun, affection or derision. I suspect most people have enough acumen to know the difference. I recall, as a lad students in school were given names based on their appearance, habits, size and even their intelligence. One lad small in stature was known as "runt" Sorrels. Then, there was that boy who lived east of town known for his excessive height, he was called "slats" Kramer. The obese boy down the street was known as "fatso." One boy in school had a long nose and won the name "moose." This nickname business finds its way into professional football because we hear of "whiteshoes" Johnson, "bum" Phillips "too tall" Jones and "crazy legs" Hurst! Oh yes, I was about to forget I was known in some quarters as "chief" (and a few names I won't mention at this time). This was due to my Indian ancestry. However, like Will Rogers, I did not resent this cognomen in that I have always been happy with my American Indian heritage.

When I became a member of the church of the Lord I found that this cognomen business had infiltrated this divine institution. About thirty years ago when the division exploded like an atom bomb, it left shock waves down to the present. One of the ways the division was expressed was by the giving of appellations on both sides. One group was known as "liberals" and the other as "conservations." These two names were not considered ignominious but rather descriptive of the two positions espoused. Liberal brethren felt the name "conservative" did not carry the stigma they sought to impose so they came up with the cognomen "anti." They did an excellent job in "brain washing" their people and stigmatizing this name. You have heard the old cliché "I had rather be dead than red." Well, the liberals said, "I had rather be anarchic than anti." One man went far enough to say he had rather join the Baptist church than worship with the brethren who opposed his innovations.

Well, it seems that time and tide change almost everything. Sometime the very things we use to stigmatize one person boomerangs and we get hung as high as Haman. I was reading an article the other day by my friend Roy Deaver titled, "Who split the log?" In this article Roy was crying crocodile tears because someone had branded him as an "anti." By the way, this name is not so bad because obviously a fine man in the Bible was called by this nickname. In Rev. 2:13 the Lord said, "I

know thy works and where thou dwellest even where Satan's seat is; and thou holdest fast my name, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth." The word "Antipas" means "anti all" or "against all." Many commentators feel this nickname was given Antipas because he was AGAINST all their innovations. Therefore they called him "ANTI" in derision because he opposed those things which were wrong. The Lord said this "anti all" man was a faithful man and I would think this approbation from God is the greatest. In this article published in a paper called Biblical Notes, August issue, Roy says, "I say this because liberals try to make it appear we are antis." So there you have it. He has been labeled with the same appellation he gave to us thirty years ago. He bemoans the fact that anyone would dare call him an anti. Well, his chickens have come home to roost and he is suffering the same stigma he sought to place on us. Actually, what has happened is that the liberals we knew some twenty five years ago have divided into two groups and are locked in a bitter conflict. Every week scores of articles cross my desk in which the "conservative" liberals are calling the "classical" liberals all kinds of names. You see, kind friend the "classical" liberals believe the church can from its treasury build gymnasiums, hospitals and even contribute to colleges etc. However, some of the more "conservative" or as Roy mentioned the "anti" liberals oppose these encroachments. This is why the two groups are engaged in this forensic fray. You can rest assured that this will lead to another cleavage within the confines of the church. When Roy wrote his article on "Who split the Log?" I got the impression he was pleading innocent to the charge. He made it quite clear that others had "split" the log but he was still in the "rocking chair" where he had always been. He was not nebulous when he charged all who opposed his sponsoring church with log splitting. From reading his article one would get the idea that one could find a sponsoring church on almost every page of the Bible. However, upon investigation one will find it on only one page and that is the BLANK page. Kind friend, if you will read 2 Cor. 11:8 and Phil 4:15, 16 you will find that churches in Bible times sent directly to their evangelists and not through a sponsoring church arrangement. Not one dime was ever sent from one church to another for EVANGELISM. Think it over before you decide who really split the log.

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**CALVINISM AND THE SOVEREIGNTY
OF GOD**

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Throughout the centuries Calvinism has proved itself to be one of the most influential of religious philosophies. Stoutly defended by John Calvin, the 16th century reformer, the system received its most organized and concise statement in 1646 with the Westminster Confession, the traditional creed of the Reformed and Presbyterian churches. Today, Calvinistic principles in modified form can be found in numerous denominational creeds and lie behind much of modern man's religious thinking.

Calvinism did not originate with John Calvin. By his time the basic philosophy had been in existence for centuries. The doctrine of election, for example, is at least as old as Augustine of the 4th century. Martin Luther, Hulerreich Zwingli, and other of Calvin's reformation contemporaries upheld the basic system as strongly as did Calvin himself. But John Calvin's special contribution was that of synthesizing and systematizing these prevalent religious beliefs of the day. In his work **Institutes of the Christian Religion**, first published in 1536, he molded these beliefs into an apologetic form that was appealing and very persuasive. Ever since, these doctrines have been Calvin's namesake and he has been regarded as their chief defender.

The modifications which Calvinism has undergone through the years will not be dealt with here. This study will focus upon traditional Calvinism and its foundation principle divine sovereignty. It is Calvinism's misconceptions regarding sovereignty that have precipitated its peculiar errors, particularly the doctrine of unconditional particular election and the denial of human free will.

Mention Calvinism to most people and they will immediately think of the five tenets signified by the acronym "Tulip."

1. **Total depravity**, due to the fall of Adam all men have inherited a thoroughly sinful nature.
2. **Unconditional election**, God in eternity selected particular individuals whom He would unconditionally save, leaving the rest to be condemned for their sin.
3. **Limited atonement**, the benefit of Christ's sacrificial death is offered only to the elect.
4. **Irresistible grace**, the Holy Spirit regenerates the elect so that their hearts are opened to accept the gospel.
5. **Perseverance of the saints**, once saved an elect individual can never be lost.

But these "Five Pillars of Calvinism," as they are com-

monly called, do not form the real basis of the system. Even unconditional election, the crux of the other four, is not Calvinism's foundation principle. Election is not even discussed in the **Institutes** until well into the second half of the work, and then only as a corollary derived from what had already been asserted about the nature of God. Calvinism is a theology, not simply a compilation of religious doctrines. It is the Calvinistic view of God which spawns its various doctrines. Specifically, the basic principle upon which the entire Tulip superstructure is built is the Calvinistic conception of the sovereignty of God.

"The Reformed Theology." explains James Orr, "comprehensively considered, affirms the entire dependence of all things in nature and grace, in their being, ordering, and capacity for good, on God" ("Calvinism," **Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics**, p. 148). These words describe what Calvinism means by divine sovereignty, and they need to be taken in an absolute sense if one is to understand Calvinism. God is the creator and ruler of the universe. He is the omnipotent sovereign, and as such, He is the absolute cause and controller of all things. In eternity God foreordained what should occur in time, and by His infinite providence history unfolds precisely as He has decreed. Thus, with Calvinism sovereignty necessitates divine determinism. The theology can conceive of no other way for an infinite, omnipotent sovereign to rule. As Calvin says, it would be irreverent to believe in a "(divine) government which consists in giving an impulse and general movement to the machine of the globe and each of its parts, but does not specifically direct the action" (**Institutes**, 1:16:4).

To illustrate the point further, when Calvinism speaks of God's foreknowledge, it does not refer simply to His cognizance of historical events prior to their coming to pass. Rather, God foreknows what will occur because He foreordained that it occur. Natural events as well are under the complete control of God's omnipotent hand. Each drop of rain that falls does so in accordance with His command. The length of a man's life is determined and set by God. The traditional Calvinist would not view Jesus' statement about the very hairs of a man's head being numbered (Matthew 10:30) as an affirmation of divine omniscience, but as an affirmation of divine decree.

Chance, therefore, has no place in Calvinistic theology. Fortuitous occurrences would contradict sovereign control. Calvin says,

If one falls among robbers or ravenous beasts; if a sudden gust of wind at sea causes shipwreck; if one is struck down by the fall of a house or a tree; if another when wandering through desert paths meets with deliverance; or after being tossed by the waves arrives in port, and makes some hairbreadth escape from death—all these occurrences, prosperous as well as adverse, carnal sense will attribute to fortune. But whoso has learned from the mouth of Christ that all the hairs of his head are numbered . . . will look farther for the cause, and hold that all events whatsoever are governed

by the secret counsel of God.

(**Institutes**, 1:16:2)

According to Calvinistic theology God's rule necessarily extends beyond those things that happen to a man, even to the very actions of a man. God does not govern beings possessing the power of independent choice as to whether they will or will not submit to the divine will. Such human prerogative would negate sovereignty as Calvinism conceives of it. Men have no choice but to do what God directs. It is not that they are compelled by brute force, but rather that God determines irresistibly what men will do. "Men do nothing save at the secret instigation of God, and do not discuss or deliberate on anything but what he has previously decreed with himself, and brings to pass by his secret direction" (**Institutes**, 1:18:1). Calvinism's understanding of divine sovereignty denies human free will.

Is even man's sinfulness attributable to God? Calvinism repeatedly answers, "No." God is holy and cannot be the author of sin. In this regard Calvinism does speak in a sense of human volition whereby all men, viewed corporately in Adam, freely chose to violate God's law and thus brought themselves under bondage to a sinful nature. The Westminster Confession is very explicit about this point, stating, "God... did... freely and unchangeably ordain whatever come to pass: yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures" (III:1). Just how a God who determines all that occurs can still not violate this "free will" of man in the matter of sin, Calvinism does not explain (though appeal is usually made to the unfathomable wisdom of God, Romans 11:33). Yet, in the final analysis, Calvinistic theology cannot allow any facet of God's rule to be abrogated, even in regard to the occurrence of sin. When pressed on this point Calvinism must speak even of the fall of man as occurring ultimately by the divine decree. "I admit," says Calvin, "that by the will of God all the sons of Adam fell into that state of wretchedness in which they are now involved" (**Institutes**, III:23:4). Nor can Calvinism say that God merely permitted the fall to occur, for deterministic sovereignty disallows mere permission. Calvin concedes the logical conclusion and remarks, "If this frigid fiction is received (that God only allowed man to fall—M.P.), where will be the omnipotence of God, by which, according to his secret counsel on which everything depends, he rules over all?... The decree, I admit, is dreadful; and yet it is impossible to deny that God foreknew what the end of man was to be before he made him, and foreknew because he had so ordained by his decree" (**Institutes**, III:23:7). Here is Calvinism's concept of sovereignty—the absolute, all-encompassing control of all things—taken to its logical end.

The Calvinistic system, however, concerns itself primarily with the matter of man's salvation from sin and reconciliation to God. But Calvinism's perception of the salvation process is rooted in its doctrine of sovereignty. Calvinism reasons in this way: since all men are not saved, it must be that God does not desire the salvation of all. For God could not be truly sovereign if

what He desired to occur failed to come about. It is here that the doctrine of unconditional election is introduced. Calvin calls it

the eternal decree of God by which he determined with himself whatever he wished to happen with regard to every man. All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death.

(Institutes, III:21:5)

This election unto salvation is necessarily unconditional, and the salvation process is monergistic. That is, God alone effects redemption apart from any cooperation of the human will. Man's cooperation would imply self-determination, and Calvinistic theology cannot allow man to possess this. God is the one who directs human agency. The man whom God graciously desires to save, He saves; and He does so absolutely and irresistibly. This is Calvinism's understanding of the salvation process, a view derived from the Calvinistic perception of sovereignty.

(To be Continued)

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC "RACCOLTA"

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The "Raccolta" is a book containing prayers and pious exercises to which the various popes have attached indulgences. The word is an Italian word, and simply means "a collection". It was first published at Rome in the year 1807. It is forbidden to publish a translation of the entire Raccolta without the approval of the Roman congregation. All the indulgences contained in the Raccolta are applicable to the souls in Purgatory. (According to Roman Catholic doctrine... NOT according to Holy Scripture.)

From the Raccolta—"What, then, is an Indulgence? An Indulgence is the remission by the Church, (Roman Catholic. LWM.) on specified conditions, of the whole or a part of the debt of satisfaction remaining due to sin. The Church has power to absolve from guilt; she has also power to remit the punishment." (Page ix.)

From the foregoing, it can be readily determined that the Roman church claims the authority to remit both the punishment and guilt of sin. This is a bare assertion that has no basis in Holy Scripture. In fact, the whole system of "indulgences" is completely foreign to the Bible.

The sale of indulgences was an abusive practice that prevailed in Catholicism that contributed to Martin Luther's break with the Papal Church. As a result of the

efforts of the European Reformers, subsequent popes forbade the further sale of indulgences.

Specifics On Indulgences

It is amazing how particular and technical the Roman Church becomes in laying down rules to be followed by the faithful, if they are to acquire the benefits of these indulgenced prayers. Let us look now at some specific regulations:

"One Communion satisfies for all the Indulgences of the day." (May 29, 1841.)

"Indulgenced prayers may be said in any language, provided that the version in the vernacular is a faithful rendition of the original.. ." (Dec. 20, 1884.)

"Unless specially required, indulgenced prayers need not be said kneeling." (Sept. 18, 1862.)

"Devotions which admit of being said alternately, such as the Angelus or Rosary, may be said by several persons together." (Feb. 29, 1820.)

"Blessed objects can only be used by the person for whom they were originally blessed, or if blessed for distribution, can be passed on by that person to others; but they can go no further. They cannot be given away, or lent with the intention of transferring the indulgences attached to them. If they be so dealt with, the indulgences are lost, and the objects return of their original unblessed condition..." (Feb. 6, 1657; Jan. 10, 1839; July 16, 1887; July 10, 1896.)

From the foregoing quotations, we can easily see that to faithfully practice the Roman Catholic religion, it is far more complex and complicated, than just being a New Testament Christian.

"Prayers For The Dead!"

In the sixty-six books of the non-Roman-Catholic Bible, there is not even so much as a "hint" of such a practice as "praying in behalf of those who are dead". There is a reference to such an idea in a legendary book, one of the apocryphal books, that the Roman Catholic Council of Trent decreed should be accepted as canonical. (1546 A.D.—1564 A.D.)

Allow me to briefly relate the story: About 165 B.C., a military leader named Judas Machabeus, was leading a revolt of the Jews against the King of Syria. Judas M. was a very successful warrior and military tactician. Being the son of a Jewish priest, this Judas was reasonably faithful to his Jewish religion. In one of his skirmishes, a number of Jewish warriors were slain. So the story goes, Judas M. decided to return the bodies of the slain soldiers to their families. And in checking the corpses, he found that each of the slain had an amulet of the idols of Jamnia, under their tunics. Judas therefore concluded that the reason for the deaths of these soldiers was that they had sinned in wearing these charms or talismen under their garments . . . these "charms" would probably protect them from harm... (Much like a Roman Catholic's use of a St. Christopher Medal. LWM.) Anyway, to get back to our story, Judas took up a collection, amounting to several thousand "drachmas of silver" to be offered in sacrifice "for the sins of the dead". In 2nd Maccabees 12:44, (For if he had not hoped

that they¹ that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead.) Then, in verse 46: "It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins,"

The foregoing constitutes the entire "scriptural" basis for Catholics to pray for the departed dead.

It is this false practice that has contributed to the abuse of indulgences, the idea of purgatory out of which indulgences release the suffering soul, the idea of the infestation by evil spirits in material things, along with the Catholic Church's supposed ability to engage in exorcisms — the driving out of evil spirits from those persons or things which have housed the "demon".

Conclusion

"And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words" (Matt. 6:7).

"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

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SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES contains 288 pages a year with material from writers who are true to God's book and who have been tested in life. The Newsletter Reports brings word from near and far concerning the work of the gospel. The church ads are used often by brethren who travel and provide a contact in places where you may have a loved one. Think about it —then write us.

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

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

FROM THE FIELD

JAMES BAKER, 759 NE 128th St., Apt. 4, N. Miami, FL 33161. I am interested in moving to the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area. I am seeking information concerning Christians who may live in town and if there are any faithful churches within the city. Anyone who could fill me in on the situation in that area should drop me a line. I would appreciate it.

HOYT H. HOUCHEN, 1838 S. Fairplay St., Aurora, CO 80012. This year I have preached in the following meetings: Augusta, Georgia (Feb. 1-7); Longmont, Colorado (Feb. 18-19); Honolulu, Hawaii (Feb. 23-27); Grand Junction, Colorado (April 3-8); Westside, Fort Worth, Texas (April 17-22); Pine Mountain Valley, Georgia (June 26-July 1); Camden, Arkansas (Aug. 14-19); Beatrice, Nebraska (Sept. 4-9); Richardson, Texas (Sept. 18-23); Highland Blvd., San Antonio, Texas (Oct. 9-14); and Brea, California (Oct. 30-Nov. 4). Our work here at Boston Street in Aurora is most encouraging. On October 13th I began my 16th year of work with the congregation. Sunday morning attendance has been close to the 200 mark and over, contributions are good and enthusiasm prevails. Larry, our son, recently did the preaching in a gospel meeting here (Oct. 2-7). Some time ago, the church in Montbello (northeast Denver) disbanded and nearly all the members merged with us here at Boston Street. They are an asset to our work. In addition to my work as an evangelist, Joe C. Moody and I serve as elders in the congregation. When visiting in our area, we shall be happy for you to worship with us.

JIMMY TUTEN, 7911 Country Dr., Mobile, AL 36609. Our fourth year with the Tillman's Comer church has been a good one. We have lost some but we have gained some, too. Our average contribution has increased and more involvement has been witnessed overall. There have been several baptisms, the gaining of some from liberal churches, and the restoration of several who have been delinquent. In addition to our Spring meeting with John Welch, we had an outstanding Summer

meeting with Mike Willis who dealt with the current "Grace-Unity" issue. Brother Willis did an excellent job. Our Fall meeting with Leo Rogol was cancelled due to an auto accident that Leo was involved in prior to our meeting date. In his place two speakers came over for one Sunday each (Owen Calvert and Jerry Henderson). In 1984 we have Ron Halbrook and O.C. Birdwell scheduled. Come by Mobile and visit with us. We are one-quarter mile from I-10, west of Mobile at Tillman's Corner (5700 Old Pascagoula Rd.) Phone (205) 633-6769 for instructions.

SOUTH AMERICA WORK

FERNANDO VENEGAS, Casilla No. 122 C.C., 5500 Mendoza, Argentina, South America. During September 9-11 we had a gospel meeting here at Mendoza with brother Efrain Perez from Chile. He presented many good lessons and several visitors came. One was baptized as a result of the meeting. Later in September I made a trip to Buenos Aires (the largest city in Argentina, population 11,700,000) which is over 600 miles from my home. There are five faithful churches there and I had the privilege to preach in the area for 14 days. There was one baptism at the Jose C. Paz congregation where Carlos Capelli preaches. Four of the churches in Buenos Aires are relatively new and small. However, each of them is working to grow spiritually and numerically. Also I received an invitation to preach in the neighboring country of Chile during October. First, I was in Olmue (Oct. 17-19) where brother Perez preaches. Also, I preached in Quillota on the 20th and Quilpe on the 21st-23rd. It was a pleasure to be in Chile again. The work here at home in Mendoza continues well. I am teaching two new families at this time. Pray for us and our work.

CARLOS CAPELLI, Casilla No. 83, 1665 Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Recently in the Boulogne congregation three persons were baptized into Christ. They all had been Catholic. At this time there are four other persons studying the Bible in Boulogne who show an interest in the gospel. Boulogne is 40 kilometers from Jose C. Paz where we

live. I have traveled there to preach for the past two years. Since that time, 12 have been baptized. The work here at Jose C. Paz continues well. A recent meeting with Fernando Venegas did us much good with one baptized. Our Spanish radio program "LA BIBLE NOS HABLA" (The Bible Speaks To Us) continues well. It is a five minute program on Monday through Friday at 1 p.m. This radio station is heard for 100 miles which represents millions of potential listeners. Continue to remember us.

PREACHERS NEEDED

PASO, CALIFORNIA—The church of Christ meeting in Paso Robles is looking for a sound gospel preacher. The church is presently meeting in the Parks and Recreation building but has purchased property in Templeton, California (four miles south) for a future building site. Outside support would be needed. Please contact Jack Howell at (805) 233-0173 or John Kennedy at 466-8633.

MARYVILLE, TENNESSEE—The church in Maryville, located in the heart of the Smoky Mountains is in need of a full-time preacher beginning the first of the year. The church consists of about 35-40 members who are to provide about a third of the financial support needed. Referrals to other churches interested in helping support a man working here are available. If interested please write the church at 717 Cates St., Maryville, TN 37801. Or contact Gene Bobbitt at (615) 982-8536 or R. L. May at 856-3192.

PREACHER NEEDS SUPPORT

MICHAEL DIVIS, 2412 E. 11th St., Sioux City, IO 51105. I am fixing to move to begin work with the LeHeights church of Christ in Grand Island, Nebraska. This congregation was formed only four years ago and is not yet a self-supporting work. They can provide \$400 a month towards support. If any congregation or individual can help please contact me at the above address or phone (712) 255-2391.

HELP NEEDED IN BROOKLYN NEW YORK

SAMUEL L. TURRENTINE, 68 Martin Ave., Hempstead, NY 11550—The lease on the premises in which the Prospect Heights church in Brooklyn meets will expire and we have been asked to vacate the premises by December 31, 1983. The church here is yet small with about 20 souls. We have some funds of our own but they fall far short of what is needed to supply a meeting place of our own. We believe this work needs to be continued. Many have visited with us in the past and can attest to our need. We would be glad to hear from any individuals who might be interested in helping. (Editor's note: Sam Turrentine is a personal friend of the editor and a faithful preacher of the gospel. He is working where much needs to be done and where few are even willing to try.)

NEW PAPER ON CATHOLICISM

CATHOLICISM EXAMINED is an 8-page bulletin-size monthly publication edited by GREG LITMER. Greg Litmer spent 12 years in the parochial school systems in Cincinnati, Ohio. In high school, he was a member of the Gregorians, a seminary-preparation program. After graduation, the inconsistencies he witnessed between doctrine, dogma, and practice in the Roman Catholic Church, when compared with the Bible, caused him to leave the church of his childhood. He was baptized in 1975 by Wayne Chappel. He has since worked with churches in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. Concern for lack of materials suitable to hand Catholics has prompted him to publish this paper. Single subscriptions are \$3.50. Bundles will be mailed to one address at \$5 for 25, \$8.50 for 50 and \$15 for 100. Address: CATHOLICISM EXAMINED, P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102)237.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS 317
RESTORATIONS 104
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

REVIEW OF THE MOODY— FIELDS DEBATE

JERRY PARKS, 1400 Hobart Dr., Louisville, KY 40216.

Honorable debates are not a thing of the past. As a matter of fact, there seems to be renewed interest in debating, even among atheists.

Such interest was demonstrated by the overflowing crowds that filled the auditorium of the Louisville First Unitarian Church on the evenings of November 14th and 15th. Atheists, denominational people, as well as members of the church gathered to hear Tom Moody, preacher from the South End church of Christ and Emmett Field, of the Louisville Free Thought Society discuss the issue "Is The Bible The Word Of God?"

The much publicized debate came about as a result of several "letters to the editor" written by Fields and appearing in the Louisville Times. The letters not only chided President Reagan for declaring this the "Year of the Bible", but also asserted that it was foolish to believe the Bible to be inspired. Moody responded to Fields' letters and challenged him to a public discussion on the issue. The challenge was finally accepted and the issue was simply stated: "Is the Bible the inspired Word of God?" Moody affirmed and Fields denied.

Moody began the discussion by identifying the issue as well as showing what the issue was not. He then proceeded to zero in on one form of evidence to support his affirmation. That evidence was "ful-filled prophecy." He called attention to several clear examples, such as Ezekiel 26 and 28 regarding Tyre and Sidon, as well as prophecies regarding Babylon in Isaiah 13 and the Jews in Jeremiah 5 and 30.

Fields, in every speech, simply read from a prepared text and never deviated from that method of presentation. Thus, the affirmative arguments made by Moody were totally ignored and remained unanswered throughout the debate. It was also interesting to note that in several speeches Fields finished early and could have addressed the arguments being made. He chose, however, to speak out from his table on several occasions; and rising from his seat checking his books on another occasion, as if he was getting ready to reply to Moody's arguments. But when Fields would return to the podium for his next speech, he continued to ignore the arguments presented by Moody.

Fields presented reference after reference concerning what he viewed to be immoral stories and Bible contradictions. He called attention to Judges 11:29-40 and asserted that Jephthah offered his daughter as a human sacrifice, and that Jephthah did so with God's approval. He contrasted passages such as Jeremiah 4:10 and 15:18 with Numbers 23:19 and Hebrews 6:18 as he tried to show that God lies, yet reminding the audience that the Bible says that God cannot lie. Moody pointed out that passages such as Jeremiah 4:10 involve idioms of the Hebrew language. Moody then called attention to Bullinger's book on figures of speech and explained that such passages simply mean that God permitted people to be deceived.

Throughout the debate, Fields continued his assault on the Bible and those who would believe it. He referred to the Bible as blasphemy, a myth and a lie. He said that those who produced it were primitive priests claiming to speak for God.

During Fields' presentation the first night, he stated and inferred that Christians were superstitious, afraid to think, afraid to investigate, closed minded, unreasonable, dangerous, insane, dishonest, ignorant, and on and on he went. Moody presented a chart the second night listing 21 of these unkind statements and asking Fields if this was a sample of "Free Thought"?

Moody dealt with the arguments with excellent stage presence as well as being aided by the use of approximately 50 overhead charts. He quoted from archaeologists such as Nelson Gluek and William Albright. He also quoted such textual scholars as Gleason Archer, Frederic Kenyon and Bruce Metzger. Anticipating that Fields would assert that Christianity was a form of organized insanity, Moody had a chart prepared listing a number of psychiatrists such as Karl Menninger and Alan Stone and others who had written to Moody stating that such a charge was not so. Fields was challenged to produce some evidence to support his assertion. He failed to do so.

Fields made many bold assertions but gave absolutely no proof. He stated that the Dead Sea Scrolls prove that the Bible is a myth. He stated that honest historians reject the historicity of Jesus. He asserted that the Bible is responsible for wars, hate, persecution and misery; but he offered no proof.

The general presentation given by Fields portrayed God as being a very immoral God. Moody answered this objection with a series of charts showing that Fields had no basis for knowing what is moral or immoral, because he has no standard to measure morality by.

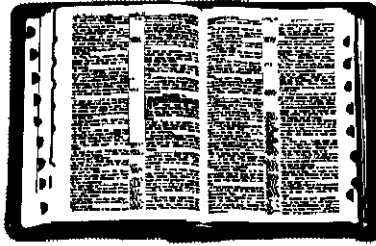
Moody's final question to Fields simply asked if Fields would be willing to have another discussion on "The Existence of God?" Fields declined, even though he had just finished saying "I deny that a vengeful God exists." Earlier he had stated that religious leaders were constantly monopolizing the media. It would appear that one who believed that to be the case, would be anxious to take advantage of another opportunity to deny that God exists.

PREACHER IN URGENT NEED

THOMAS G. O'NEAL, P.O. Box 723, Bessemer, AL 35021—Gospel preacher David Fraser of Savannah, Georgia is in a critical condition in the hospital as a result of brain surgery for a malignant tumor with no hope for recovery. What insurance there is, is in litigation. Medical bills have been heavy. The Fifth Avenue church here in Bessemer where I preach raised over \$1,100 last Sunday to send to them. Think-ing that other brethren and churches would want to do the same I am making this information available and know they will respond to his need. His wife is having to attend to all business, so make checks payable to: Judy Fraser, 933 Black Weiner Rd., Savannah, GA 31406.

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 XXV

FEBRUARY, 1984

NUMBER 2

THINK ON
THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



YATER TANT'S INVOLVEMENT WITH CROSSROADS

"I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill thy ministry" (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

In January, 1980 I learned that brother Yater Tant had been invited to speak to the Wednesday evening assembly at Crossroads church of Christ, Gainesville, Florida, on December 5, 1979. I had some idea about how he might have been invited, but I was not sure. If my idea was not true, I could not explain the occasion except that Yater or Crossroads was changing.

I talked with a friend who had some knowledge of what had occurred and he told me how to obtain a tape of his speech. I got the tape and listened to it. I had some questions about brother Tant's influence as the result of what he did not preach while he was at Crossroads.

I went to Birmingham, Alabama in April, 1982 and talked to brother Tant about what he was writing in Vanguard and about his partial endorsement of the Crossroads church. He continues to believe that his

speaking at Crossroads will do them good, and eventually he will get other churches to accept Crossroads. If he does not believe that now, I do not know WHY he continues to seek opportunity to fraternize with them.

I asked him why he did not tell Crossroads what was wrong with the social gospel which they preach and practice. He said they probably would never have invited him back, and by returning he could teach them again. But I asked, if he continued to be mute about the things wherein they were wrong, what good would it be for him to keep preaching to them?

The elders at Crossroads wrote letters to Reuel Lemmons, Jimmie Lovell, Yater Tant and Guy N. Woods, inviting them to speak on the 1982 Florida Evangelism Seminar, Friday, August 13. They were to speak on the topic, "That They All May Be One. Only Yater showed up to speak, but with no more effect than the first time he spoke at Crossroads.

I have no desire whatever to misrepresent in any way brother Tant's connection with the Crossroads church in Gainesville, Florida, nor do I want to misapply or misuse any of his quotes and statements of the glowing reports of the great work being done by this false religious system. I think I understand what he means in his reference to their "success," but I sharply disagree with both his evaluation of their work and his Crossroads "Total Commitment" concept.

I fully understand the fleshly ties and the friendship-business bonds that explain why some take a very lenient and tolerant view of the known sins of Crossroads. It explains the silence of some on the scriptural departure of 14th Street as it progressed toward the present Crossroads System as it is today. In particular, I can explain to my satisfaction the influence that moves Yater Tant toward the Crossroads church and its work. Aside from the fact that Yater is compelled by the desire to bring all "factions" among churches of Christ together in one congregational function, regardless of differences and the basis of differences, he has emotional and nostalgic ties with some in "high places" at Crossroads. His goal for unity is good, but his method is impossible and unscriptural! I love him for trying to provoke peace and unity among brethren, but I cannot

strike hands with him on any plan he has proposed in the last three or four years.

Brother Tant is fascinated by the zealous program they call "total commitment," which he obviously believes will achieve two goals which every sincere Christian desires: salvation of souls, and unity of divided groups in the church.

In the first place, I do not believe Yater Tant knows what the Crossroads system really is. When he explained to me that he saw and talked to young men and women, and attended some of their "soul talks" and prayer sessions, and he did not find such as I described, I told him they had provided a show case for him, and he saw what they wanted him to see.

I have not been to any of the meetings or "soul talks," but I have talked to many who have been there and are still part of the system, and they were not "thrown out" for any reason. They told me what takes place and how the plan works. In most cases they thought they were teaching me "a better way."

Brother Tant is also drawn to Crossroads because he is thrilled with the number baptized. Several have charged that Crossroads baptizes many of their converts two or three times. They are charged with making them so guilty and unhappy that they want to be baptized again, and this explains the large number of baptisms. Chuck Lucas vehemently denies this both publicly (on tape) and in print. I do not have the proof in hand to charge him with lying. I do know this: by some method Crossroads has increased her membership to several times what it was when Lucas arrived in Gainesville in 1967.

I do not believe the problem is with "re-baptism" of young converts, but with the unscriptural methods of indoctrination and discipline of those baptized. I am concerned with the great emphasis on the social gospel and the commercial involvement of the church. I am concerned about the error taught and practiced relating to the organization of the church. These are the things I know to be contrary to the word of God. Brother Tant, why baptize people into such a mess of doctrinal corruption regarding the nature, organization, name and work of the church?

Yater Tant is "totally committed" to bringing about UNITY among brethren at about any cost. Crossroads has an attraction for him because he thinks the zealous program will promote unity in action that will bring parties together. Tant makes it known that he has aimed his biggest guns at bringing together the "pro-institutional" and "anti-institutional" brethren to worship and work together as one body. He says, "Anyhow, for my remaining years, I still want to pursue a course that will lead eventually to the unity of God's people. I realize that liberalism is making serious inroads into the brotherhood, particularly among the larger 'pro' institutional churches; but if brethren in both the 'pro' and the 'anti' congregations can become truly committed and involved in reaching the lost, liberalism will have a very difficult time in creating much of a problem." (Editorial, Vanguard, December, 1981).

(Continued on Page 4)

Searching The Scriptures

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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CONTRIBUTIONS AND BUYING SERVICES

Until the problems surrounding church contributions to various private business enterprises began to lead to division, brethren did not seem to have much trouble understanding the difference between a church purchasing a service from a business and making a contribution to that same business. All seemed to understand that in the realm of expediency congregations had a right to pay a service company for supplies they needed in the execution of scriptural work.

For example, a meeting house is an expedient to the command for Christians to assemble (Heb. 10:25). There is a vast difference in paying a construction company for supplies and work on erecting a building for the church and in making a monthly contribution from the church to the construction company. In cases of benevolence for which the church is responsible, who would argue that the right to purchase a bill of groceries to feed the needy would authorize the church to make a monthly contribution to the grocery store?

By the same token, churches may purchase Bibles, communion ware and supplies, maps, chalkboards, tracts and class literature to utilize in scriptural work, but they cannot make contributions to church supply houses.

I thought this principle was pretty well understood, but evidently not by some. In the November, 1983 issue of BIBLE HERALD, Clifton Inman, former editor of that paper and for years operator of a church supply business, calls in question the right of churches to purchase ads in such religious papers as GUARDIAN OF TRUTH and in SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES. He also raised the issue in his last speech in the debate we had a few years ago at Middlebourne, West Virginia. Strangely enough, he also had somewhat to say about giving away free samples of religious papers during gospel meetings when I have personally seen any number of preachers in the Ohio Valley hand out copies of BIBLE HERALD at meetings. And all this during the time he was the editor. Brother Fred E. Dennis carried bundles of BIBLE HERALD and a number of other papers around with him for years and gave them out. That neither proves the practice right or wrong but if brother Inman objected to it then, he did not say so loudly enough to be heard very far.

But what about ads purchased by churches in SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES? Brother Inman

charges that these ads are just ways for churches to subsidize such papers. Further he asserts, "And these ads do not help the churches one particle. The churches cannot be helped by these ads!" That is a strong affirmation and has no greater support than the fact that Clifton Inman said so.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES has never accepted a contribution from a congregation and has no plans to begin that practice now. We sell a product. In addition to making a subscription charge for the paper, we sell some advertising space. Religious Supply Center of Louisville, Kentucky purchases two pages of ad space per month. We also sell ad space to churches who wish to advertise their services for our readers. There are two essential issues involved here: (1) Do congregations have a scriptural right to advertise their services? and (2) May they purchase some of that advertising from a paper such as SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES? If churches cannot purchase advertising space then brother Inman needs to instruct his brethren to stop doing so through newspapers when they have meetings, or on the Saturday church page ads. If it be contended that churches may buy advertising space, but not from a paper operated by brethren, then upon whose authority is that to be based?

The amount of good done in any form of advertising is a matter of judgment. In our own case, people regularly tell me they use our ads when traveling, or to put their family members who are away in school or in the military in touch with brethren who can help to teach them while they are away from home. I have personally been present in congregations in distant parts of this land when visitors came in with ad in hand from STS or one of the other papers.

Perhaps brother Inman could enlighten the editors of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE and FIRM FOUNDATION on this subject since they accept such ads also.

We do not, solicit and will not accept contributions from churches but this editor defends the right of churches to buy advertising space in this paper, in a public newspaper, and to purchase supplies from houses operated by brethren without being falsely charged with making a contribution to a private business. There is a difference in buying a service and making a contribution and I am sure brother Inman recognized that difference when, for many years, he sold literature to churches from the BIBLE HERALD BOOKSTORE in Parkersburg, West Virginia. Interestingly, the same issue of BIBLE HERALD in which brother Inman's article appeared carried back page ads from an insurance agency and from AAA Motor Club both of Fairmont, West Virginia and also one from a jewelry company in Moundsville, West Virginia. Question: Did these businesses make a contribution to BIBLE HERALD or did they buy a service? I wonder if "these ads do not help" the businesses "one particle." Is it true that they "cannot be helped by these ads?" Things surely do get interesting sometimes.

WISDOM FROM GRANDMA GARDNER

My maternal great grandmother was an unusual woman in many ways. She spent her last few years in our home when I was a small child. She knew much about many things, wrote poetry, composed songs and knew a seemingly endless number of old folk songs. She was also very outspoken and sometimes her descriptions were graphic. For instance, my father used to tell of the time a neighbor lady came to visit and soon was about to divulge some juicy bit of gossip to Grandma Gardner about another woman in the community. When Grandma Gardner saw the drift of the conversation she interrupted as follows: "You know, if everyone who totes news had her tongue run out about a yard, and a slit cut in it, and her leg pulled up through it, there would be a whole lot more folks goin' around hump-backed than what there are now." Total end of conversation!

(Continued from Page 2)

Editor Tant notes that APATHY is "the one greatest problem" he sees, and he thinks Crossroads church has the answer. He said, "It was for this very reason that I visited with the Crossroads Church in Gainesville, Florida, and have been strongly impressed with their success in **getting the members involved in Home Bible Studies.**" Then he says, "How are they doing it? Not by recreation, not by 'gimmicks,' not by high-pressure tactics and hoop-la, but by getting the members actively involved and participating in the soul-winning process." (ibid).

I do not know where brother Tant has been, and I do not know what he saw when he was at Crossroads and preached to them, but they DO have church suppers, refreshments, banquets, a camp-ground, entertainment, "Crossroads Singers" who are entertaining all over the country. Some of the strongest pressure tactics found in this country are used in Crossroads' cell-type-confessional-prayer-partner system of control. Far too much evidence over the past several years is available to deny this. Chuck Lucas has created a smoothly operated organization, and he DOES use recreation, gimmicks and high-pressure tactics in the operation of Crossroads.

Finally, a very strong factor in brother Tant speaking at Crossroads church was his friendship and business tie with John Whitehead, brother of Richard Whitehead. I do not know when their friendship or business relationship began, but in October, 1967 Yater Tant introduced in an editorial of The Gospel Guardian IM-PAC, a new Personal Evangelism program which he and John Whitehead sold. This business relationship continued for several years.

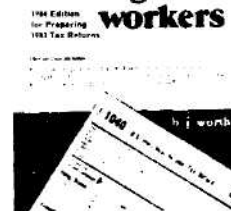
In those days John was a strong, outspoken "anti" institutional, "anti" church sponsoring, "anti" centralized oversight, "anti" social gospel preacher. But John has changed over the years, and he now serves in a

church he once condemned as unscriptural in doctrine and practice. He told me more than once that if he were in the position of his brother or any at Crossroads, and could not give Bible authority for what they did, he would quit. I wonder if John has found the Bible authority? I am certain John feels more secure to have Yater join him at Crossroads!

This explains in great measure why Yater would seek the opportunity to visit and speak at Crossroads, and why the Whiteheads would desire to have him. There is nothing evil about such a relationship, but it just helps me understand why Yater Tant has tried to defend The Crossroads System.

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EXPOSITION: TEXT and CONTEXT

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GOOD ADVICE FROM A DENOMINATIONAL PREACHER

In the December 18th, 1983 issue of the Dayton Daily News, eight area ministers were interviewed in regard to their lives and their congregations. One of the ministers was a Church of God preacher. What he said about "church growth" caught my attention. I believe there is a good lesson in his assessment as to what makes a church grow.

The article reported that Mr. Grubbs, the preacher of the Salem Church of God, came to Dayton in 1968 when attendance average 225 people every Sunday. Today more than 1000 people attend Sunday morning services. Grubbs said: "Growth is not stimulated by gimmicks and publicity—Like a person, a church can gain weight, get fat and not grow at all.

"Rather, a church that grows has to have these three things: First, they must have a vision of who they are and what they're supposed to do; second, they must believe God is able to empower them to be who they're supposed to be; and finally, they must pay the price—in time, talents and treasures." Certainly, Grubb's evaluation is in the right direction of what is required to build up the church. Of course, many of us already knew this, but our problem in far too many places is not implementing his suggestions. Let us enlarge upon what Mr. Grubbs enumerated.

Vision

You will notice, first of all, that a church should have **VISION AS TO WHO THEY ARE**. A faithful, local congregation is the Lord's church, purchased and redeemed by the blood of Christ. Paul said to the Ephesian elders that they were "to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). God's church has been redeemed from all iniquity, purified and made a peculiar (possessed) people, zealous of good works (Tit. 2:14). A local church is the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27). We are God's husbandry, God's building (1 Cor. 3:9), and the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). These facts should provide the impetus to be enthusiastic servants in the church.

Secondly, a church needs to **REALIZE WHAT IT IS SUPPOSED TO DO**. Too many times congregations do nothing more than worship on Sunday and have a couple of Bible studies during the week for the members. Religion is confined to the meetinghouse. There is no sounding out the gospel like the Thessalonians did (1

Thess. 1:8), or personal evangelism like those who were scattered abroad from Jerusalem (Acts 8:4; 11:19-21). Grubbs went on to say, "The church can be the most cloistered, remote and unreal place in the world—a real microcosm of unreality. People go to church to get away from the pains of the world, when they should be going to the world —"

Christians must get out into the "marketplace" with the good news of salvation and bring the lost to the Savior. We must hold forth the word of life (Phil. 2:16). Jesus came to seek and save the lost (Lk, 19:10). That must be the church's mission, also. We must break out of our self-imposed isolation and insulation and move out into the field, white unto harvest.

God's Empowerment

The second thing a church needs to grow is to **BELIEVE THAT GOD IS ABLE TO EMPOWER THEM**. Paul had this confidence. He said, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengthened me" (Phil. 4:13). He also stated, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in the glory by Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:19). To the Ephesians Paul wrote, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20).

Yes, God provides the strength, the help and needs for the inner man through the Spirit (Eph. 3:16). Of course, this is not miraculous or mysterious, but by permitting our hearts to be influenced and directed by the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures. By increasing in the knowledge of God, we are strengthened with all might (Col. 1:10-11).

To convert the lost, God empowers His children with the gospel, which is His only power unto salvation. The gospel in **THE** power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). Paul said, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18).

The church does not need gimmicks or claptrap methods to win the lost, yea, it must not employ such carnal measures in its efforts to convert the world. Depend on God—not on theatrics, games, entertainment, pleasure, etc. We need to sow the seed of the kingdom and God will give the increase.

Paying the Price

Paying the price of time, talents and treasures is where many of us balk. The cost is too much, the sacrifice is too great.

Our **TIME** is disproportionately consumed on our own interests rather than devoting to the Lord's work the share that it rightfully deserves. Many of us are not willing to take a few extra hours each week, in addition to church services, to have Bible studies in the community, visit the weak, the shut-ins, the sick, and to call on the visitors to our services. As a result, we are not witnessing the baptisms and restorations that we once did.

Our schedule for many of us during the week is one to four hours at the meetinghouse for church services, with the rest of the week, year in and year out, taken up

in bowling, fishing, socializing, club meetings, ball games, shopping, school events, etc., and not one hour is used toward helping some soul be saved for now and for eternity.

All of us need to be "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:16). In view of God's judgment of every man's work, we need to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear (1 Pet. 1:17). It is "high time to awake out of sleep" (Rom. 13:11).

We will give account to God as to how we use our TALENTS. Every Christian has some ability and when an opportunity presents itself to him, he becomes responsible. Someone correctly stated that "responsibility equals ability plus opportunity." This lesson is taught in the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30). Some of us are going to lose our souls because of the apathy we manifest toward the life of a Christian in general. May God help us to become more interested and more involved in His work.

The church has too many in it like the old fellow misquoted Matthew 22:14. Jesus said, "For many are called, but few are chosen." The old gentleman's version was, "For many are cold, and few are frozen."

Finally, church growth demands TREASURES. To preach—the gospel at home and abroad requires money—a lot of money. There are many avenues that may be utilized to take the gospel of the world, such as television, newspaper articles, correspondence courses, gospel meetings, filmstrips, radio programs, distribution of tracts, etc. Inflation has caused a great increase in all of these and the members of the church must give more than they used to in order to compensate for the spiraling costs. Churches should set challenging budgets for the year and then endeavor to meet the budget to accomplish the work planned. Too many times brethren wait to get the money and then decide for what to spend it, with all too frequently having a lucrative bank account left over. This is going at it backwards.

The more we give, the bigger our treasuries and the more with which to work. Hence, generous giving leads to larger and larger churches, providing the money is put to proper use.

In conclusion, it is time that we open our eyes to the field of labor, open our hearts to the power of God, ration our time to allow a generous share for the Lord's work, unleash our talents and overflow His treasury with love offerings and then behold one of the greatest revivals we have seen in our lifetime.

MARDI GRAS

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Paul wrote to the Galatians, "You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain" (Gal. 4:10,11). Likely the observance of no day would cause more consternation than participation in all the activities of the day we call "Mardi Gras." This article will serve as an introduction to that day.

Origin

As in several other holidays (holy days), the celebrations of Mardi Gras are descended from pagan festivals. Spring festivals in celebration of the fertility of the earth were common long before the first century. These were often characterized by various sacrifices—sometimes of humans, especially virgins—and general debauchery. In time they were adopted with modifications as "Christian festivals" in commemoration of some Biblical event of significance.

A number of historians relate Mardi Gras to the Roman festival of Lupercalia, a fertility god, which was celebrated February 15. "During the Lupercalia complete and universal license was granted the citizens of Rome. Almost all laws were abandoned and a Roman might do anything, not always even excluding murder, on that one day. It was an uninhibited debauch during which every caprice was freely and openly indulged . . . Rape, robbery, and the slaying of enemies, while disguised, were popular diversions. All social barriers were down, and slave and freedman, patrician and pauper, ran riot in the streets of Rome, hand in hand."¹ That description would not miss by much the scene of Mardi Gras in the twentieth century.

Many participants in the Lupercalia were masked. The first to wear them were female impersonators. The aristocracy often wore them to avoid being recognized in association with the common people, or "to avoid the gossip that might follow in soberer days ahead."⁵ Though there is a good bit of secrecy about the modern celebration, I fear it is not out of a sense of shame (Jer. 6:15).

The Roman feasts of Saturnalia and Floralia are also mentioned in connection with Mardi Gras.³

Religious Significance

Mardi Gras is the day preceding the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, which occurs forty days prior to Easter, not counting Sundays. In Roman Catholic

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theology the Lenten season is a time of fasting and penitence in preparation for the celebration of Easter.

The three days immediately prior to Ash Wednesday were known as Shrovetide. The name is from "shrive," which means to administer penance and to absolve from guilt. During these days the people would make their confessions to the priest and be "shriven" in anticipation of Lent. The last day was known as Shrove Tuesday.

Meats and fats were often forbidden during Lent. So it became customary to have a feast in which these things were consumed the day before the Lenten season began. That practice was abused and perverted into a time of unrestrained merriment which evolved into the modern celebration. "Mardi Gras" is French for "Fat Tuesday." The season became known as Carnival.

"Carnival" is from two words meaning farewell to meat or flesh. Some think it came from the practice of leaving off meat during Lent; others, that flesh is the more accurate idea, denoting the putting aside of all earthly pleasures. "Carnal" is from the same root. Carnival actually covers the period from Epiphany, the twelfth day after Christmas (a commemoration of the visit of the wise men), until Ash Wednesday. It might last less than one month or more than two, depending on the particular year.

In spite of the abuses Carnival still has the approval of the Catholic church. "The Carnival in Catholic countries, and in Rome itself, is a special season for feasting, dancing, masquerading and mirth of all sorts. In itself this custom is innocent. . . . But the pleasures of the Carnival easily degenerate into riot, and the Church therefore encourages pious exercises at this time."⁴ Needless to say the religious aspects of the season, and Mardi Gras in particular, have long since lost their emphasis.

History

Carnival has been observed in a number of European countries for several centuries, particularly in Italy. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries their Martedì Grasso was a day much like the ancient Lupercalia. After decades of savagery, laws were finally enacted which stopped much of the violence. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries peaceful celebrations took place in the Colosseum.

Carnival celebrations were also common in such cities as Paris, Madrid, Geneva, and Warsaw. At one point the season was lasting as long as half the year in Venice.

In England the last day of Carnival was often called Pancake Tuesday, after the custom of making great quantities of pancakes and having contests in flipping them (thus the "flapjack"). Football games between various parishes were common in the eighteenth century as a part of the celebration. There was also a custom in some parts of beating cocks to death—thought by some to be a kind of punishment of the one heard by Peter when he had denied the Lord, though that tradition is not sure.

Specifically when the observance began in the United States is uncertain. It is generally considered to have begun with some French explorers early in the eighteenth century. With few exceptions the celebration is limited to the gulf coast of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and a few counties in the panhandle of Florida, areas explored and settled by the French. When the Spanish occupied this territory in the eighteenth century much of the celebration was outlawed, but it was gradually renewed after the Louisiana Purchase.

Nineteenth-century observances varied greatly from one year to the next. The day was frequently marked by violence on a large scale. Often dozens were killed. Prostitution was rampant. Mardi Gras appeared in danger of extinction when in the middle of that century a mystic "Krewe" was formed, a private, secretive club that paraded on Mardi Gras. Its members were dressed as demons with Satan himself on the throne. Other krewes were formed in the decades to come, and presently there are more than sixty of them, though the activities of some are limited to balls, anointing kings and queens, etc. Many are named after Roman gods. The modern celebrations are financed completely by these private organizations, hence Mardi Gras is billed "the greatest free show on earth" (it might be argued that it is worth what you pay for it!).

Celebrations

Much of the Carnival festivity is hidden from public view in exclusive, lavish balls and ceremonies. Parades begin more than a week before Mardi Gras. These feature gaudy floats manned by members of the various krewes, many of whom are so inebriated they must be tied onto the float. They throw beads, doubloons, coconuts, trinkets, etc., to an audience shouting, "Throw me something, mister," while scrambling, shoving, stomping, and scratching to snatch the worthless throws. Several children have been killed in the shuffle in the past couple of years.

The French Quarter, where parades are banned, becomes one giant party. Nudity is commonplace and drunkenness prevails.

The attitude of most is summed up by one local writer. "There is pleasure to be had as a spectator, but not nearly so much as when you become part of the show. This is supposed to be your farewell to the flesh, too, so make the most of it. You can do penance tomorrow. If you are not going to be a Mardi Gras [a costumed participant], you might as well spend the day in the country"¹ (exactly what my family did last year).

Words like drunkenness, sensuality, immodesty, idolatry, revelling, carousings, and the like sum up much of the day's activities, though I wonder if they capture the real picture. It amazes me that people attempt to observe religious holidays God has not authorized by doing things He has specifically forbidden.

Fat Tuesday is the pride of New Orleans. I am reminded of Isaiah's statement, "Woe to those who

call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; . . . Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink" (Is. 5:20,22). Peter warned, "For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. And in all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excess of dissipation, and they malign you; but they shall give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead" (1 Pet. 4:3-5).

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Robert Tallant, *Mardi Gras* (Gretna, LA, Pelican Publishing Company, 1947), pp. 86,87.
- ²Tallant, p. 86.
- ³ Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977), Vol. III, p. 401.
- ⁴ "Carnival," *A Catholic Dictionary [Addis and Arnold]* (London: Virtue & Co., Ltd.), p. 124.
- ⁵ Tallant, p. 219.

Using Great Plainness of Speech

J. T. Smith

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MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE Introduction

The world in which we live today is in a state of upheaval. The home is in serious trouble, and a divorce is almost as easy to obtain as a new suit or dress. In many cases, it is not as expensive.

Probably everyone who reads this series of articles has experienced the heartache of divorce, either in their own lives or in the lives of a family member or some close personal friend. For the past few years the Devil has done a good job breaking up marriages; and we, the American people, have certainly been willing subjects. Nearly 50% of today's marriages end in divorce, and in some areas the rate is 2 out of 3. This condition is not confined to any given area. In 1980 Paul Harvey re-ported that in a small county in West Tennessee there were more divorces per capita in one given month than any other county in the United States.

My purpose in preparing this material is three-fold. First, it is my prayer that those who have never married will be able to grasp the awesomeness of the responsibility they are undertaking in choosing a husband or wife and will understand that marriage is a life-time commitment.

Second, I hope that those who study this material will be able to see the truth on the subject of divorce and

remarriage as taught in the Scriptures and use it to combat false doctrines being propagated by false teachers both in and out of the church.

And finally, to those who have already made the mistake of being divorced and remarried, I hope that the study of this material will in some way help you to see the position that you have placed yourself in before God and rectify it before it is everlastingly too late.

The thoughts for the first article on marriage have been drawn from several different sources; however, the material and charts for the divorce and remarriage is-sues were compiled while I was preparing for four de-bates on this subject.

Marriage — God Ordained

That marriage is ordained of God cannot be successfully denied. In the very beginning of time, when God made man in His own image and after His own likeness, He saw that it was not good for man to be alone; and he made him a help meet. The word "meet" means, " 'a helper,' literally, 'a help,' ezer. Her position is further defined by the expression 'like Turn,' keneghdo, literally 'as agreeing to him,' or 'his counter part.' She is the kind of help man needs, agreeing with him mentally, physically, spiritually" (H. C. Leupold Commentary on Gene sis, page 130). "And God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of the Man. There-fore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gene-sis 2:21-24).

What Constitutes Marriage?

Since the origin of marriage is divine and since it is the first and most permanent of all human contracts, we would certainly expect God to tell us what it takes to constitute marriage as He would have it.

"MARRIAGE" APPROVED OF GOD	
<small>Matt. 19:5</small>	
Man's Actions	God's Actions
1. AGREEMENT	1. DIVINE SANCTION
2. COMPLIANCE WITH CIVIL LAW	2. A BONDING TOGETHER (One Flesh)
3. VOWS	
4. COHABITATION	

According to Matthew 19:5-6, it takes four things on man's part to constitute a marriage. As you can see from the chart, the first thing to be considered is "agree-ment." This "agreement" is based on God's statement to "leave and cleave." The word "leave" means "to leave behind" (W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, Page 666); while the word "cleave" means "to join fast together, to glue, cement, is primarily said of metals and other materials" (IBID page 198).

Thus the man and woman are to be "glued or cemented" together agreeing to "leave behind" father and mother and "cleave" to each other.

Because of Romans 13:1 which says, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," they must, in order for their marriage to be approved of God, comply with whatever civil laws are in effect wherever they are living, as long as these laws do not violate God's law.

The third consideration is the matter of taking vows. All marriage ceremonies with which I am familiar end with both parties vowing to remain together "till death do us part." Not only is this vow made between male and female, but God is also witness to it. Thus there are actually three parties involved in the marriage — the bride, the groom, and God. The taking of vows constitutes a covenant between marriage partners to live together as husband and wife.

There are many occasions recorded in the Old Testament where vows were taken, and we learn that God was very strict in insisting that the vow be carried out. Solomon said, "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou has vowed" (Ecclesiastes 5:4 cf. Romans 15:4).

Finally the marriage is consummated by the sexual union or cohabitation. Obviously, all of the above things must be involved in order for there to be a marriage. Marriage is not just agreement for sexual union, this alone would constitute fornication.

God's Purpose for Marriage

I believe that God has at least four purposes for marriage: sociological, biological, procreative, and religious. We will examine these in the order which I have listed them.

First, we will consider the sociological aspect of marriage. Companionship is one of the primary purposes for which God instituted marriage. In Genesis 2:18 we read, "And the Lord God said, it is not good that man should be alone, I will make him an help meet for him." This is the abiding value of marriage.

The second purpose is biological. For every desire that God has placed within man He has provided a lawful and Scriptural way to fulfill that desire. God has placed within man the urge for sexual relations (I am told that hunger and thirst are man's greatest desires, and that the sexual desire is the next greatest) and has provided a lawful means to fulfill that desire. "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife her due: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one another, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency" (I Corinthians 7:2-5).

God's prescription for fulfilling the sexual desire is for every man to have his own wife and every woman her own husband. However, it is not enough just to know

the solution. Paul continues by commanding every husband and wife to "render their due." Here are some comments on the expression "rendering their due." "Some have rendered the words, not unaptly the **matrimonial debt**, or **conjugal duty** — that which a wife owes to her husband, and husband to his wife; and which they must take care mutually to render, else alienation of affection will be the infallible consequences, and this in numberless instances has led to adulterous connections. In such cases the wife has to blame herself for the infidelity of her husband and the husband for that of his wife. What miserable work has been made in the peace of families by a wife or husband pretending to be wiser than the apostle, and too holy and spiritual to keep the commandments of God" (Commentary on I Corinthians, by Adam Clark, Page 221).

Often we witness the very thing set forth by Adam Clark. People do not carry out the commandments of God; and after the husband or wife has allowed themselves to be tempted by Satan, and because of incontinency has yielded to temptation, the one who is unwilling to "render their due" is then ready to "put away" their mate, placing all the blame on the one who yielded to the temptation. (The word "incontinency" means want of strength to regulate one's desires or appetites. "Want of power, hence, want of self-control" — W. E. Vine, Page 594). However, it may be pointed out here that the one who "holds back" on yielding to his or her mate has violated specific commands of God and is also guilty. Paul said, "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath now power of his own body, but the wife" (I Corinthians 7:4).

Notice also another command that is violated in this situation. Paul said, "Defraud ye not one another..." (I Corinthians 7:5). Notice in the paragraph above that Paul said we are to, "render that which is due." Paul says that failure to "render that which is due" is "defrauding" the other, thus making the one who failed to "render their due" guilty in God's sight of "defrauding." That one is guilty of violating two commands of God — to "render that which is due," and to "defraud not." However, it should be noted also that these sins on the part of one do not give the "defrauded partner" the right to seek the fulfillment of his desires elsewhere.

Since God has given a lawful means of satisfying this strong desire He has placed within man, satisfying it by any other means is sinful. Notice various means which God condemns:

1. **Homosexuality** is an unlawful means of satisfying our sexual urges. This is so stated in both Old and New Testaments (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:26-27; I Corinthians 6:9; Jude 7).
2. **Bestiality** is also condemned by God as a means of satisfying our sexual desires because beasts are not suited to man (Genesis 2:20; Exodus 22:19; Deuteronomy 27:21).
3. **Polygamy** is also sinful, for God has set forth that there is to be one man for one woman for life (Romans 7:2-3).

The third reason for which God instituted marriage is for the procreation of the race (Genesis 1:28; I Timothy 5:14). However, as we have already observed, this is not the only reason for marriage, though some religious bodies teach this.

The fourth and final purpose for marriage that I consider here is religious. You will recall that Paul said one of the reasons for each man having his own wife and each woman having her own husband was "to avoid fornication (I Corinthians 7:2). You will also recall that Paul said fornication is a sin (Galatians 5:19). The Hebrew writer said, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4). Thus marriage was instituted by God so that man may fulfill the sexual desires given him by God and yet avoid the sin of fornication.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

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For more than twenty years I have been saying that, according to the Liberal position on sponsoring churches, **ALL OF THE MONEY OF ALL OF THE CHURCHES OF ALL OF THE WORLD** could be placed under the elders of a single congregation and that they alone could decide who should preach, where he should preach, what he should preach and when he should preach. I suggested that they would be reluctant to admit it because they simply did not know where they were headed. I suggested this to Guy N. Woods, in my debate with him. He wouldn't admit it, but he DIDN'T deny it! I presented the same to W. L. Totty, and H. C. McCaghen, and Alan Highers. None of them admitted it but **NONE** of them **DENIED** it!

Now comes a report of the Dale Smelser-Buster Dobbs debate in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. And Dobbs is reported to have swallowed the "whole thing" hook, line and sinker. He is reported to have admitted that if the elders of a congregation decided to do so they could contribute every cent they took in to a sponsoring church and that the latter could then spend the money as they saw fit. And he admitted that every congregation in the world could do the same. Thus it would seem that the whole "ball of wax" of the Sponsoring Church type of work has been reduced to an absurdity.

When a thing can be thus reduced to an absurdity it is not the truth and it is contrary to the truth. At the time I was advancing this argument with Woods, Totty, McCaghen, and Highers, I did not realize it was so potent and so powerful. I should have pressed them to at least say something about the matter. Instead, they just

ignored it. But I am glad somebody among them has now come out flat on the matter and admitted the obvious. I am going to ask Smelser how he managed to get Dobbs to come up and lick the log.

Surely, now that Dobbs is co-owner of the Firm Foundation, things will move fast among the Liberals. On the other hand, perhaps Dobbs will act like Reuel Lemmons before him and write up and down, in and out so that nobody can pin him down as to exactly what he believes. At any rate it is refreshing to know that somebody has had the courage to admit the consequences of his doctrine.

Of course, if a church can send \$100 to a sponsoring church, it could send \$200 or \$300, or as Dobbs said it could send **ALL OF IT!** But will our liberal brethren now back off and shell down the corn and admit that they have over stepped the bounds of reason as well as Scripture? And will they take a stand for the truth? Or, will they be like Brother Woods who said "there is no place for benevolent organizations in the work of the New Testament Church" and then say he wasn't talking about any of the benevolent organizations it is now supporting. It appears that they are in the position of the man who took in a mouth-full of scalding hot coffee. He realized that he had to do something quickly and realized that whatever he did was probably the wrong thing to do. But I hope and pray that this admission by Buster Dobbs will at least cause them to pause and take stock of the situation and pull back and get in line with the word of God.

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IS CALVINISTIC SOVEREIGNTY BIBLICAL?

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4102 Young #1023
Pasadena, TX 77506

There can be no doubt about the fact that John Calvin and his theological allies believed the Bible to be the inspired word of God and the true testing ground for all religious propositions. They were convinced that the Scriptures upheld their views. (In the Institutes Calvin refers to no less than 2400 passages to support his system.) But every lover of truth in every generation is morally bound to take the Bible in hand and conclude for himself whether Calvinism can legitimately be found there. II John 9 says, "Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God"; and I Thessalonians 5:21 warns us to "examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good."

No one can deny that the Bible teaches a man is saved by the grace of God and not by his own meritorious works (Romans 3:23, Ephesians 2:5, Titus 3:5, et al.). But does this mean that God saves him unconditionally, apart from the cooperation of his own will? Paul says in Romans 1:16 that "(the gospel) is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes." John writes, "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12).

Traditional Calvinists, however, have consistently regarded those passages which affirm salvation apart from works to be denying all human cooperation in the salvation process. Requirements which a man must fulfill, they say, would negate salvation by grace and oblige human free will. While these scriptures do say that no man can earn his salvation by works (for this would demand perfect obedience, Gal. 3:10-12), they do not teach that salvation by grace is unconditional. Faith as the basic prerequisite for redemption is continually emphasized throughout the New Testament, along with repentance, baptism, and other human activities. Romans 4:16 is decisive on this matter. Describing how a sinful man obtains righteousness Paul says, "it is by faith, that it might be in accordance with grace." Far from teaching that the need for man's response would nullify God's grace, Paul says it is his response of faith that establishes his salvation as being by grace. The Scriptures repeatedly affirm the necessity of human cooperation in the salvation process. Conditions must be met. Instructions like those given in Mark 1:15 are clear: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Calvinism attempts to counter these passages by arguing that faith, repentance, and other so-called re-

quirements for salvation are actually brought about in the elect by the supernatural impartation of God. Appeal is made to such places as II Timothy 2:25, Romans 12:3, II Peter 1:1 and Philippians 1:29 where faith and repentance are said to come from God. But these verses do not state that they are given supernaturally or apart from a man's own determination. Romans 10:17 on the other hand teaches that faith comes by hearing the word of Christ, and Romans 2:4 says that God's kindness is what motivates one to repent. The majority of passages dealing with faith and repentance clearly present them as autonomous responses to the gospel of God. The Bible only speaks of repentance and faith unto salvation coming from God in the sense that God provides the motivation and the opportunity. Calvinism's notion that they are bestowed supernaturally makes them symbolic, rather than authentic human activities. The frequent pleas in the New Testament for all men to believe and repent become feigned. They are vain petitions addressed to those who could not possibly heed them unless God supernaturally granted the power to do so.

Calvinism argues in this fashion in order to maintain its doctrine of divine sovereignty. But its errors along this line become even more apparent in the face of several key scriptures. Revelation 2:20-23, for example, gives Jesus' indictment against the church at Thyatira for tolerating "the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she leads my bond-servants astray, so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols" (verse 20). This wicked woman, to whom the record ascribes the name of the most treacherous of Old Testament women, was influencing these early Christians to associate themselves with the festivities of pagan worship. Notice what is said in verses 21 and 22: "And I gave her time to repent; and she does not want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds." It is obvious from this passage that the Lord's desire was that Jezebel repent; if not, why does He say, "I gave her time to repent"? Yet, she did not. The verb employed is *thelo* ("to will"), and literally the verse says, "she does not will to repent." How can Calvinism explain this statement? Here is a clear example of an individual who was not under the absolute, deterministic control of God, but possessed the freedom to choose whether she would or would not submit to God's wishes.

A similar text is Luke 7:29-30: "And when all the people and the tax-gatherers heard this, they acknowledged God's justice, having been baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John." God's will regarding the Pharisees and lawyers was that they submit to John's baptism of repentance even as others had done (cf. Luke 3:3-14). But these stubborn men "rejected God's purpose for themselves." Thayer says that the verb Luke uses, *atheo*, means "to thwart the efficacy of anything, nullify, make void, frustrate" (**Thayer's Lexicon**, p. 14). Calvin-

ism teaches that men do not have the ability to thwart the will of God, that the only reason why some reject the gospel is because God does not desire for them to accept it. This passage teaches the opposite. God's desire was for these men to repent and be baptized, but they had the right to not comply, and they exercised it.

Jesus' lament over sin-sick Jerusalem in Matthew 23:37 further attests to the fact that salvation depends upon a man's voluntary submission to the divine will. He cried out, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling." Calvinism teaches that the only reason some are not gathered into the family of God is because they are not of the elect, and therefore not regenerated by God. But Jesus says that the people themselves are to blame, for they refused to believe in His gospel. Twice in this passage the very *thelo* ("to will") is used, once positively to denote Jesus' willingness to save these Jews; then negatively to denote their unwillingness. Here then is another passage demonstrating that the divine will is not deterministic and irresistible. If Calvinism is correct then Jesus' declaration of remorse for the lost city is nothing but a facade. Lord, why are you bemoaning their rejection of the gospel when it was by divine decree that they not be granted the power to obey? The Scriptures plainly teach that election is not unconditional.

Nor does it consist of the selection of particular individuals for salvation and others for reprobation. The Bible teaches that the gift of salvation, while not universally efficacious, is universally offered. Paul told Timothy, "God our Savior... desires all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:3-4). To Titus he wrote, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men" (2:11). Peter said in his second epistle, "The Lord ... is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (3:9).

In an effort to skirt the obvious sense of these passages, Calvin suggests that there is both a general call to redemption and a specific, effectual call extended only to the elect.

There are two species of calling;—for there is a universal call, by which God, through the external preaching of the word, invites all men alike; even those for whom he desires the call to be a savour of death, and the ground of severer condemnation. Besides this there is a special call which ... God bestows in believers only, when by the internal illumination of the Spirit he causes the word preached to take deep root in their hearts.

(Institutes, III:24:8)

The Scriptures never talk about two types of calling. But by making such an assumption at the outset, Calvin can then regard all passages speaking of a potentially universal salvation to be referring to the ineffectual call, something the original readers of the New Testament were expected to understand. Calvin's posi-

tion makes the universal call unauthentic. God invites even the reprobate to enjoy redemption, knowing they have no ability to accept for He has not granted it. (Curiously, Calvin still asserts that the full blame for their failure to respond lies not with God, but with the reprobated individual himself. The unchosen, he says, have "an asylum to which they may betake themselves from the bondage of sin, while they ungratefully reject the offer which is made to them", *Institutes*, III: 24:17.) In what kind of God do Calvin and his followers believe? A sovereign God, is the consistent reply, who has the right to withhold mercy from whomever He desires. Certainly God has this prerogative, but the same Bible that affirms His sovereignty also proclaims His love and equity. "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him" (Acts 10:34-35). The God of Calvinistic theology could not adequately be represented by the good Samaritan in the Lord's parable. He is more akin to the priest or Levite. Calvinism's God sees one sinner lying on the side of the road and extends His aid; but further down the road He unsympathetically passes by another in precisely the same predicament. *(Continued)*

The Mystery of Iniquity

Eugene Britnell

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THE POPE SPEAKS TO THE LUTHERANS

During the early days of the Reformation, Pope Leo X called Martin Luther "the wild boar that has invaded the Lord's vineyard." Luther responded by calling the pope "Antichrist" and the Catholic Church "the most licentious den of thieves, the most shameless of brothels, the kingdom of sin, death, and hell."

But times, and people, and attitudes, and convictions have changed! In December of last year, 1983, the Associated Press published the following article under the heading "Pope joins in service at Lutheran Church."

"ROME — Pope John Paul II, in a historic visit to a Lutheran church, said Sunday that despite bitter past differences between Roman Catholics and Lutherans, 'we desire unity, we work for unity.'

" 'The gift of this encounter moves me deeply,' the pope said during the first visit by a Roman Catholic pontiff to a Protestant church in his own diocese.

"It also was the first time a pope attended a service of the Lutheran church, which is founded on the precepts of Martin Luther, the excommunicated German priest who led the Protestant Reformation that split the

church 462 years ago.

"I have come in the spirit of the Lord that calls us in our days, through ecumenical dialogue, in the search for full Christian unity,' the pontiff said in German.

"'And in the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther we seem to discern from far away the dawning of an advent of a recomposition of our unity and community,' John Paul added.

"The pontiff shook hands with many of the estimated 400 worshippers who took part in the service, which was broadcast in part on nationwide television. About 100 journalists from various countries crowded into the balconies.

"John Paul appeared tired as he sat beside his host, Pastor Christopher Meyer, on a raised platform before the marble altar of the small church. The pontiff stumbled over several words in his sermon during the hour-long service.

John Paul was without his mitre — the symbol of the papacy — when Meyer greeted him as bishop of Rome at the white travertine church on Via Toscana just off the Via Veneto.

"Together they joined the congregation in reciting a prayer written by Luther for Christian unity.

"It is Advent, from Latin for 'an arrival,' a celebration leading to the anniversary of the birth of Jesus Dec. 25. The service did not include Holy Communion — a sacrament the two churches celebrate differently."

When something is done or said which is antithetical to what a dead man believed and practiced, it is commonly said that if he knew it he would "turn over in his grave." If that were true, surely Martin Luther would be spinning in his grave. His modern-day followers have compromised the cause for which he suffered and labored so diligently.

From a recent article by the local preacher of the Christ Lutheran Church we quote:

"Luther held the priesthood of all believers. This meant when one believes in Jesus, he does not need the Pope, the priest or anything else but Jesus to intercede for him. The washerwoman could serve the Lord just as much as the priest in front of an altar. The celibate life was not better than a Christian carrying out his faith in service to God and man. Luther gave dignity to all work, all men and their tasks.

"The bulk of his writing was against the institutionalized church. He felt the Pope was not infallible; that he was not the only one who could call a council, or place himself over the word. Luther thought the laity should receive both bread and wine in the Holy Communion and that the sale of indulgences, which were supposed to enable sinners to get out of purgatory, was not scriptural and should cease."

While Luther was a man of ability and conviction, and the freedom-loving people of the world are indebted to him, we certainly do not defend all that he did and taught. For example, he taught salvation by faith only. While we can appreciate the fact that he was driven to this position by an equally false position, the Bible does not teach it. The apostle Paul expressed the truth on

this, clearly and succinctly, when he wrote that salvation was by "faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6). See also James 2:14-26.

Is there hope for unity among Catholics and Lutherans? An article in *Christianity Today*, December 16, 1983, answers the question by saying: "What does this increasing doctrinal unity signify for the reunion of the two Christian communions? Msgr. Jerome Quinn of Saint Paul Seminary does not believe the two theological systems are yet sufficiently compatible for a united church to emerge in the next generation. Gerhard O. Forde of Luther Northwest Seminary in Saint Paul also says there are 'all kinds of conditions about eventual union' that must first be resolved. He notes that to date the Vatican has been 'remarkably silent' about the dialogue team's continuing efforts."

Yes, and we note that the pope was silent about his position as Vicar of Christ and head of the church when he addressed the Lutherans. The news report said that he appeared "without his mitre — the symbol of the papacy." Could it be that he wanted the Lutherans to think of him as the bishop of Rome, rather than the pope of the universal church?

We can be reasonably sure that any compromise in their efforts toward unity will not affect the office of the pope. And that is the real issue, and one that we plan to study in future lessons. Will the Lutherans accept the office of the pope? If not, how can there be unity among the two groups? We say again, the pope will stay as he is presently regarded, for without that office there would be no Catholic Church!

The pope said that he came before the Lutherans "in the spirit of the Lord... in the search for full Christian unity." If he and all others would follow the teaching of the Lord and his true apostles we could have unity among all believers in Christ. Christ prayed that we be one by believing on him "through their word" — the word of the inspired apostles (John 17:20). Their word which described the "unity of the Spirit" was that we all believe in one God, one Lord, one Spirit, one faith, one baptism, one body, and one hope (Eph. 4:3-6). Why can't we all understand and accept that? That is the only plan for unity revealed by the Spirit, and the only one acceptable to the Heavenly Father. If Catholics, Lutherans, and all other denominations would turn from their man-made doctrines and traditions and accept the plan given by the Lord and his apostles, all believers would be "sufficiently compatible" to experience peace and unity in the one body, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's all work and preach and pray to that end.

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DAVID LIPSCOMB (THE MAN) VERSUS DAVID LIPSCOMB (THE COLLEGE)

Dudley Ross Spears
Rt. 1, Box 121A
Alvaton, KY 42122

David Lipscomb the man, once edited the **Gospel Advocate** and was known for his opposition to unscriptural innovations in the church. A college named after him is located in Nashville, Tennessee and has not followed the principles he strongly held to. In fact, David Lipscomb the man, could not teach at David Lipscomb College where he taught when he lived.

The November issue of the David Lipscomb News has an article on the back page, written by G. David England, Director of Lipscomb News Bureau. The article is entitled, "First Elders Conference Meets Goals." It seems that England should check his facts for this is not the first "elders conference" to meet goals. If the facts had been checked, another elders conference could have been thought of. In fact, it was an elders, preachers and teachers conference which was vehemently and adamantly opposed by David Lipscomb the man.

The article tells us that "some 48 men from congregations of the church of Christ in middle Tennessee and southern Kentucky visited the David Lipscomb College campus Oct. 8 for the first Elders' Conference." The purpose of this conference was to try some group training and be better elders. One elder is quoted as saying, "Of the many things that have marked this administration, one has been building stronger ties with the brotherhood. As I serve as an elder, I have sensed my own personal need and have sensed from my fellow elders the need for learning more about how to fulfill the role of shepherd and overseer." My mind went almost automatically to 1 Peter 5:2-3, which teaches elders to "tend the flock of God among them" and I wondered if this man might not be better off reading Peter and Paul than he would be attending a DLC Elders' Conference.

Another statement the report made that is interesting is as follows. One of the elders of the Division Street church in Smyrna, Tennessee is quoted as saying, "I think it potentially is one of the greatest things to happen to the church in middle Tennessee. It brought together a group of elders representative of elders of Middle Tennessee congregations. Many good things can come of it." I ask you to please remember that last statement to the end of this article.

The other elders' conference these people should have known about is one that the man for whom the college takes its name was rather deeply involved in. Earl West wrote a biography of David Lipscomb and in the book he describes Lipscomb's involvement with a meeting in West Tennessee.

Early in January 1910, this problem (of combining churches, DRS) forced itself anew on Lipscomb in the form of an overture from the church in Henderson, Tennessee, a call for a meeting of all elders and preachers to meet at Henderson, January 25-28. The call referred to those congregations in southwestern Kentucky, eastern Arkansas and northern Mississippi, and was signed by J. W. Dunn, G. A. Dunn, G. Dallas Smith, John R. Williams, N. B. Hardeman, L. D. Williams, W. Claude Hall, F. O. Howell, D. A. Parish and T. B. Thompson. The article went in part:

Fully appreciating the condition of the cause of Christ in West Tennessee and adjacent territory, and knowing too, what great good can be accomplished by concerted action on the part of both preachers and churches, we desire to call a meeting of all loyal preachers and teachers of the gospel of Christ, and all elders, with all who are interested in strengthening the walls of Zion and carrying the gospel to the lost, to meet at Henderson, Tennessee on January 25-28, 1910. (*Gospel Advocate*, 1910, p. 59).

The purposes of the meeting were said to be "that the brethren might get better acquainted; learn from one another more of the conditions of this great field of labor; mutually encourage and inspire one another for the work of preaching the gospel, and gain a more intimate knowledge of the Henderson school."

Lipscomb responded to the invitation by saying:

Some of the brethren last week called for a meeting of the preachers and elders in West Tennessee. We do not doubt that these brethren intend only the best for the churches, for themselves and others. But I have been through and under these meetings so much it surprises me to hear of such meetings. . . I have seen much evil come out of them to the preachers and the people. I never saw any good come out of them to anyone... (Remember the statement made by the elder from Division Street in Smyrna, Tennessee?, DRS) It is scriptural and right to call one man in to teach the members aright. But I never found an inspired man called in at a council of elders and preachers. Let us all individually and solidly try to stand on solid ground. *Life and Times of David Lipscomb*, p. 271-

272.

There can be little doubt about David Lipscomb (the man) and his attitude toward an elders' conference. His attitudes was that there was no good to come from it. Today, those who attend the same thing that he opposed at a college named for him think there is nothing but good that can come from it.

But then David Lipscomb the man was severely criti-

cized for his opposition to the meeting. The late A. G. Freed learned that such meetings were conducted regularly in Nashville and wrote a scorching rebuke to Lipscomb. (Ibid, p. 273). Following that there was quite a lot of discussion about whether or not Henderson church should control and direct the funds of other congregations and Lipscomb finally wrote again about the problem.

Now what was that but the organization of a society in the elders of this church. The church elders at Henderson constitute a board to collect and pay out the money and control the evangelist for the brethren of West Tennessee, and all the preachers are solicitors for this work. This very same course was pursued in Texas a number of years ago. The elders of the church at Dallas were made the supervisors of the work, received the money, employed the preacher, directed and counseled him. For a number of years they employed C. M. Wilmeth. He then dropped out of the work and the Texas Missionary Society took the place. Other experiments along the same course have been made. All of them went into society work.

All meetings of churches or officers of churches to combine more power than a single church possesses is wrong. God's power is in God's churches. He is with them to bless and strengthen their work when they are faithful to him. A Christian, one or more, may visit a church with or without an invitation and seek to stir them up to a faithful discharge of other duties. But for one or more to direct what and how all the churches shall work, or to take charge of their men and money and use it, is to assume the authority God has given to each church. Each one needs the work of distributing and using its funds as well as in giving them (Ibid. p. 275). I realize that we still do not operate according to the standards of living set in 1910, but we ought to operate by the same standard of authority David Lipscomb appealed to then. Lipscomb was opposed to more than the arrangement of several churches in a sponsoring church aggregate—he opposed "all meetings of

churches or officers of churches to combine more power than a single church possesses." He saw no good that could come from them and he was right. He lived to see such meetings develop into missionary societies which in turn divided the church of the Lord. Now, it is different. The college which wears his name leads in conducting the very type of conferences and councils he opposed.

One of the stated purposes of the 1910 meeting was to get the churches better acquainted with the Henderson school. One of the purposes of the 1983 meeting was to develop "stronger ties with the brotherhood" through the college itself. We can look for more of the same and it is said to know it will happen. A college that wears the name of a man like David Lipscomb and who practices the very things he devoted his life to opposing, is not worthy of the name.

But why such an article as this? It is not mere expose or fun-making. We urge all to seriously consider these events and the historical background. Apostasy does not occur instantly—it develops over a long period of time. I believe that we are along the way now and are seeing the growth and development of something that our grandchildren will see clearly as another apostate group with all the denominational trappings and machinery available to them. It is never too late as long as there is life. Perhaps someone who has not been able to see before the direction the institutional brethren have been going can see it now. Let us all sincerely hope so.

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

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HERSCHEL E. PATTON, 7637 Fleming Hills Dr. S.W., Huntsville, AL 35802. My first year of retirement (from local work) has been a very enjoyable and satisfying one. Both Reba and I have enjoyed excellent health. For the past year I have preached regularly for the Vinemont church, near Cullman, Alabama. Besides this, I have preached in meetings in Nashville, Murfreesboro, Memphis and

Columbia, Tennessee and Little Rock, Arkansas. At the invitation of the brethren at Jordan Park in Huntsville, Alabama where I formerly preached for five years, I have decided to terminate my work at Vinemont the first of November to assume the responsibilities and work of a full time elder at Jordan Park. I have now been appointed an elder at Jordan Park, along with brother Jimmy Hooper, one of the

most talented, dedicated, humble and loved men I have ever known. Brother Ken Green is the preacher at Jordan Park, whose ability, Bible knowledge, and devotion is a great asset to the elders and the whole congregation. The brethren at Vinemont have been very fortunate, I think, to secure the services of brother Dick Poplin of Shelbyville, Tennessee to move there and work with them on a full time basis. After retiring from the Postal Service, brother Poplin desired to preach regularly for a church that would not be able to otherwise support a man full time. He has preached for years by appointment and for several years has served the Eastside church in Shelbyville as one of it's elders. I believe Dick and Sybil will do a wonderful work at Vinemont and be a great asset to the Lord's cause throughout Cullman County. I have some meetings scheduled and plan to continue preaching in a limited number of meetings, but my duties as an elder at Jordan Park forbids my being away very much.

ROBERTO TONDELLI, Via Quirino Roscioni, 69, 00129 Roma, Italy. The dates of October 3, 4, 5 I was with the congregation of Christ in Trieste, Italy in a special engagement of sermons dealing with "Death, Resurrection, and Judgment." Trieste is about 700 kilometers from our home near Rome. The brethren there received us very well and were especially prepared for the meeting. They printed 1,200 copies of a 16 page bulletin to pass out. In addition they put up 500 large posters advertising the meeting all over the town and surround-ing villages. The meeting was also advertised through the radio and by newspaper. The first night there were 80 total present including 45 non-members. The second night there were some 30 non-members present with the same number again the last night. Following each lesson we had an hour question and answer period set aside for discussion. This proved quite interesting. The church in Trieste is meeting in a very nice apartment which includes an office, large auditorium, and two classrooms. Gianni Berdini is the local preacher. Several visitors who came to the meeting indicated a desire to keep on studying with Gianni. I am to go back to the Trieste congregation November 18-20 for another short meeting. On Thursday, October 6, I went to Udine, Italy (about one hour from Trieste) to meet Stefano and Antonella Corazza. I preached for the church there that night. We were all very glad to see each other again. Here at home in the Pomezia congrega-tion things are going well. I have been preaching some of the material presented in Trieste and it has been received favorably. In fact we did much advertising concerning these sermons. We printed up 500 posters to place on walls in various places: Pomezia, Albano, Ardea, and Rome. We also printed 6,000 pamphlets to distribute to people locally. I am also writing letters to RAI LAZIO REGION, which is the government radio broadcasting in the region called Lazio (where Rome is). I am trying to get them to announce our meetings on the radio. We continue to have our weekly radio program on Radio Pomezia each Wednesday at 6 p.m. Some of you may know brother Rodolfo Berdini. Brother Berdini is to have surgery in a few weeks to remove his thyroid. They have to do this to avoid cancer of the thyroid. Remember him in your prayers please. Greetings to all the saints in America.

CARLOS CAPELLI, Casilla #83, 1665 Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina. It is thrilling to see that when the same gospel is preached today as was preached on Pentecost that the results are also the same. Here in the Jose C. Paz church, one precious soul was won to Christ after the sermon on October 23. She was formerly a Catholic. I continue to have several Bible studies with many non-Christians. Also we are happy to note that four souls were baptized into Christ in Boulogne. While in Boulogne on November 1, I had a debate with 10 men and a "pastor" of a Pentecostal church. The debate lasted about three hours. I had another debate in Boulogne on November 9th with some people from the "New Apostolic Church." Next week I am to have a discussion with a "Only Jesus Pentecostal" concerning the trinity. This should prove to be a very enlightening and interesting study and is an excellent way of eliciting and proclaiming the truth.

My work, "Comparing the Churches" (Comparando las Iglesias) is now ready. I printed about 5,000 copies and hope it does much good. Also I printed 1,000 booklets entitled "Investigating the Church of Christ" (Investigando la Iglesia de Cristo). We continue to have our radio program — The Bible Speaks. However, the cost will increase 100% in January. We hope we can continue with this work. On a national note — the Democracy has returned to Argentina after eight years. The coming period will be critical in deciding the future of our nation. Pray that the Lord will turn the events of history into a blessing for this land and for glory to His name. Lord willing I will leave January 1st to go to Bogota, Columbia to work with the brethren there for a short time. My family is well and we send to you our best wishes.

ANOTHER FAITHFUL SAINT HAS GONE TO HIS RE-WARD

FORD CARPENTER, 18468 Catalpa St., Hesperia, CA 92345. Claude Eugene Worley, well known business man, who for the past 30 years has been preaching and teaching among the faithful churches throughout southern California, departed this life at Desert Hospital, near his home in Palm Springs, California on October 31, 1983, after what seemed to be a brief bout with cancer. Claude was 81 years old when he died. W.C. Moseley of Folsom, California and I conducted a memorial service at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Hollywood Hills where his body was laid to rest beside his faithful wife of 42 years who preceded him in death by about 8 months.

Claude was born February 27, 1902 in Rochester, Texas near Abilene, and attended school in Sabinal. When he was 9 years old his family moved with a small "American Colony" into Mexico under the leadership of a gospel preacher named W.A. Shultz. A short time later they returned to McAllen, Texas, where he finished grade school and High School. He attended college at Stanford in Palo Alto, California; University of Texas at Austin, and U.C.L.A. and U.S.C. in Los Angeles. He had an A.B. and was an M.A. candidate at U.S.C. He served as Assistant Supervisor of Public Instruction for the Los Angeles City School system for 19 years before retiring to enter into business. He operated an Import-Export business for 5 years, and for about twenty years engaged in buying and selling investment properties. But in all of his life, Claude's primary concern was being a faithful Christian. Being a successful business man he was able to be a great financial help to the congregations with which he worked and often assisted in the financial support of gospel preachers in difficult places. He helped in the establishment of several churches in places where a need was brought to his attention and often drove many miles to preach for struggling groups who needed help.

Claude never did consider himself a "full time" preacher for or with any congregation although on several occasions known to me he drove from his home in Beverly Hills every Lord's Day to preach on an interim basis for a year or more — to Bakersfield (Pioneer Blvd.), Simi Valley, Palm Springs, Culver City, and Winnetka Ave. in Canoga Park on two different occasions. There are few faithful congregations in the area which have not called on him at some time to "fill in" for a Sunday. Meeting work for small churches with little means of support took him to San Francisco and several remote areas of Oregon and Washington and on at least one occasion to southwestern Canada. He also left a provision in his will for a substantial amount of his resources to be put into a trust fund to support gospel meetings for small churches which cannot afford such support. This fund, when it is set up, will be administered by brother W.C. Moseley and myself.

Claude will be sorely missed but all who visited with him in the weeks that he knew the end was near heard him confidently quote Paul's statement in Phil. 1:23 — "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better..." So, we sorrow but "not, as others who have no hope" (1 Thess. 4:13) because we truly believe "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord... that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13).

THE ROBINSON — CRAWFORD DEBATE

On the nights of December 5,6,8,9,1983, brother Bill Robinson, Jr. met Mr. R. Lawrence Crawford in debate. Bill Robinson, Jr. is a gospel preacher and Mr. Crawford is a Baptist preacher. The first two night were conducted in the meeting house of the Floral Heights church of Christ, Wichita Falls, TX where brother Robinson preaches, and the

	IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH	
BAPTISMS		422
RESTORATIONS		118
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)		

last two nights were conducted in the Victory Baptist church in Wichita Falls. The Victory Baptist church had imported Mr. Crawford from Hayward, Calif, to meet brother Robinson in the discussion.

All four nights were given to a discussion of the subject of salvation, and at what point in one's obedience is one saved. Is one saved at the point of faith, or is repentance and baptism essential before one receives the remission of sins? The question is certainly a timely one in view of the fact that much of the religious world teaches and practices the Baptist position that one is saved at the point of faith, before and without water baptism.

It was obvious from the very outset of the discussion that Mr. Crawford had under-estimated brother Robinson. Mr. Crawford having had 37 debates obviously thought that this twenty-eight-year-old kid would not last through the discussion against the mighty Dr. R. Lawrence Crawford. In fact, he said the second evening that he was surprised that the "young man" was doing as well as he was. Yes, brother Robinson was doing "weller" than Mr. Crawford anticipated I am sure.

A number of things "stood out" in the debate. In his first speech, brother Robinson presented some charts showing that no one passage teaches everything that a person must do to be saved. He then began to show charts with passages like Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, etc. that teach beyond shadow of doubt that baptism is essential to salvation. Mr. Crawford in his first negative required of brother Robinson some-thing that he (Mr. Crawford) could not do himself. He demanded that Bill find where the Bible said that baptism was "essential" to salva-tion — "in those words" and he said he would quit the debate. I guess he would. The word "essential" is not found in the New Testament... PERIOD. However, during the course of his speech, Mr. Crawford said that repentance was "essential" to our salvation. When brother Robinson asked him for the passage that said so, he gave Luke 13:5, "Except ye repent..." Well, brother Robinson pointed out, that you didn't have to be a "Dr." to know that "except" doesn't spell "essential." However, the good "Dr." was saying that if the passage could be found that said "except" you are baptized you cannot be saved. In his next speech, Bill used a chart on John 3:3-5 which says "except" one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Also, the chart showed that Dr. John R. Graves (on whom Mr. Crawford relies heavily as one of the great Baptist scholars) had said that the word "water" in John 3:5 meant baptism. Crawford said, "I stand by Dr. Graves," but he did not quit the debate.

Another glaring mistake made by Dr. Crawford was to translate the word eis in Acts 2:38, "because of." In reply to this, brother Robinson had a chart with twenty-two translations which translated the word eis in Acts 2:38, "unto," "for," "in order to." However, none of them said "because of." Yet, when Mr. Crawford replied to the chart, he said they all meant "because of." What Baptist preachers won't do to try to win a point.

Needless to say, Mr. Crawford basically followed the false theories that are set forth by Baptist doctrine, throughout the discussion. It was evident to all that Mr. Crawford had taken on more than he had bargained for. Brother Bill Robinson, Jr. did a marvelous job in de-fending the truth. He is to be commended for his knowledge of The Book, for his conviction and courage. Even though both men "pressed

their points," the discussion was orderly and neither speaker became "ugly" in any way. Would to God that there could be an increase in this kind of discussion.

Lectures in Yoakum, Texas

The church in Yoakum, Texas announces a lecture series for February 24-26 on the theme of "Modern Controversies." Speakers will be: Bill Crews, Dee Bowman, W.R. Jones, James Rodgers, Elmer Moore, Harold Fite, Harland Huntoon, James Trigg, Elton Haley and Eddie Callender.

New Paper to Begin

A new 32-page journal named TODAY has been announced by Bob Buchanan of Bowling Green, Kentucky. The flyer announcing it states "It is designed to be edification and meat for the Christian, while at the same time containing milk for the new convert and/or the non-Christian. A discussion of our internal problems has often con-fused the non-Christians we have given religious journals to. TODAY will try to present the gospel in more of a positive thrust." Annual subscription price will be \$15 in the U.S.A. and \$18 in foreign countries. The address: Today Publishing Co., P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237.

NOTE TO ALL SUBSCRIBERS OF STS

With the January issue we had our mailing list transferred to a computer at the printing plant in Beme, Indiana. The paper has been printed and mailed from there for a number of years. With the new computer mailing printout, we ask all readers to check their addresses for accuracy and also to notify us of failure to receive any issue.

SEND NEWS ITEMS TO THE EDITOR

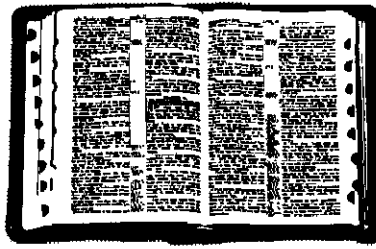
For the past three years, the Newsletter Reports has been edited by Wilson Adams. We thank him for a job well done. We would like for him to be able to write more than his work now allows and therefore release him from the responsibility of handling the news column. From now on all news items should be sent to the editor at P.O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109. There is much good news among brethren over the country. Please share it for the edification of others. Again, we ask that you please be as brief as possible. Debate and lectureship notices need to be sent much sooner than some do. We work on a one-month-in-advance basis with our printer. To allow editing time, an item to appear in April, should be on my desk by Feb. 25.

The News Column and Church Splits

Unless we have information to the contrary, news items are received at face value. We cannot know of every disturbance which may result in brethren parting company. Should an item be carried which speaks critically of another congregation, then those of the contrary part will want a hearing also. We carry a news column to edify readers with news of activities among brethren the knowledge of which will inform and strengthen the readers. The fact that we carry an item from a preacher and about a given congregation does not mean that we endorse everything about either the preacher or the congregation. Please do not try to put us in the middle in such cases.

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 XXV

MARCH, 1984

NUMBER 3

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



CROSSROADS: ORGANIZATION OF HUMAN POWER

Every successful operation must be organized to produce exactly what the organizer desires. There is a close relationship between the creator, the organization and the work done. A major difference between religious systems is the difference between their organizations. These organizations differ because the nature and scope of their works differ. And the nature and scope of the works differ because the philosophy and goals of the founders of these religious bodies differ. I suppose, therefore, we should expect to find unscriptural organizations in churches where the doctrine has been corrupted to suit the fancies of religious zealots whose appetites for greater emotional thrills are never quenched.

Any church that undertakes a work for which it finds no New Testament authority will find it necessary to employ some additional organizational arrangement by which to do that work. Additional or perverted organizations signify corrupt doctrines; and, of course, doctrines of men mean practices that lead away from God rather than glorify Him.

Those who have been in the Crossroads church of Christ have made the charge both orally and in print that the real power in the organization of Crossroads is in the preacher, Charles "Chuck" Lucas, and his assistants, both locally and across the nation. It is further charged that the elders at Crossroads are puppets to expedite the programs of Lucas. Of course, Chuck

Lucas and the elders, Rogers Bartley and Richard Whitehead all vehemently deny this. About the only way we can be certain of anything of this matter is to read what Crossroads has been saying and doing for the past twelve to fifteen years and see who receives the credit for the good they claim to have done, and who is blamed for the evils committed. When we read the reports and records of both friend and foe, whoever is in power will receive the most praise or blame. He will be the chairman of the board, the chief of the system, the founder of this "strange" evangelistic system!

Thirty-five years ago churches of Christ across this nation began to create benevolent organizations, such as orphan homes, homes for the aged and other institutions through which to do benevolent work of all kinds. The fact that the Lord did not make provisions in the organization of the church to do such benevolence should be proof enough that it was not authorized in the word of God. But such evidence is not proof of anything to those bent on doing their own will. They require a "Thou shall not" before they restrain themselves from doing whatever they want to do. They argue that Bible authority allows them to do anything that is not specifically forbidden in the word of God. It does not register with many that God AUTHORIZES what He wants us to do; His silence does not authorize anyone to do anything.

I am not using the word "organization" in this article in the ordinary sense. We usually think of the term as signifying the process of arranging of the parts in order for function. It is the act of getting the body ready for action: putting the members in proper relation to each other. As it relates to the church, there will only be bishops, deacons and saints (Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). There is absolutely no organic tie of any kind that binds members of one congregation to members of another. Preachers have no more authority to direct a local work than any other member.

In this study I use the word "organization" to mean the work being done and the system of operation. What are in the unscriptural organizations at Crossroads? What is involved?

The Fascination and Disgust of the Crossroads Operation

Crossroads church of Christ is doing most of the things that other liberal institutional churches are doing. In addition it has launched into new areas of endeavor not before undertaken by churches of Christ.

This is not just another case of institutional digression; it is a well planned and zealously executed scheme to attract and excite college students and sensitive people who are emotionally disturbed by world affairs today. They are motivated by some promises and threats that drive them deep into the system.

One of the deceptive features of Crossroads church is that it appears to many not to be "liberal" or "institutional." Yater Tant seems blinded to everything at Crossroads but the number of baptisms per year and the "WORK! WORK!" of each member in their various Bible classes. His editorials in Vanguard glow with reports of the great work Crossroads is doing, and what an example she is for others of us, both the "institutional" and the "anti" churches.

Now if the number of baptisms is what we are after, why not mimic the Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses? I wish brother Tant would tell me if he would applaud the Vine Street Christian Church in Nashville, Tennessee (we both know this church) if they baptized 300 souls per year, and would he encourage all of us to imitate their pattern of evangelism to attain such results? Do you believe the members of the Christian Church will be saved if they stay in that denomination? I do not! They are not doing the will of the Father (Matt. 7:21-23). Do you believe those who are baptized there and continue with the Christian Church are any better than those who have never obeyed the gospel? (2 Peter 2:20-22).

I will assume that brother Yater Tant would not take the position that those who stay in the Christian Church will be saved. There is no difference in principle between the digression of the Christian Church and the Crossroads church of Christ. Both have abandoned the authority of Christ regulating the nature and work of the church. Both have proceeded to promote their own wills. I could not pray for the success of Crossroads anymore than I could pray for the success of Vine Street Christian Church in Nashville, Tennessee. The whole issue is the authority of Jesus Christ.

Now seriously, brother Tant believes that Crossroads church is wrong about some things. He has said so in some of his editorials in Vanguard. I wonder, however, if he thinks these sins are significant enough to cause the loss of souls? I believe all sins separate us from God; That is the nature of sin (Isa. 59:1,1; Rom. 3:23; 5:12; James 1:14, 15). If brother Tant believes Crossroads is in sin with their works, school, orphan care and recreation centers, missionary programs, school of ministry, campus ministry and religious days observance, etc., how can he encourage them in baptizing all those who will go right into the system and become worse than they were before? How can he encourage all "faithful" churches and brethren to imitate what Crossroads is doing?

(Continued on Page 4)

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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WHO IS GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM?

The "me first" concept is not new. Throughout the history of man the pursuit of preeminence has surfaced repeatedly. It festered among the apostles. They disputed as they walked by the way as to who should be greatest (Mk. 9:33-37). Even the mother of James and John requested that her sons should sit, one on the right hand, and the other on the left in the kingdom (Mt. 20:20-22). She did not want much!

On one occasion they came right out and asked "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus set a child in the midst of them "And said, Verily I say unto, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 18:1-6). The concept of a spiritual kingdom seemed hard to grasp. Their minds ran to the external trappings of power structures such as developed in the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon. The Roman Empire had its chain of authority with certain posts being regarded as greater than others.

The humility of a little child, innocent as to power and privilege, served as the appropriate rebuke to such ambition. The child was dependent on his parents for sustenance and protection. He was open, trusting and forgiving. Unless they could develop the spirit of humility manifested by the little child they could not even enter the kingdom, much less hope to be an "official" in it.

Greatness Measured By Service

"But Jesus called them unto him and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Mt. 20:25-27). Nothing more vividly impressed this lesson upon their hearts than the time when he girded himself with a towel and got down and washed their feet. Then he said "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you (Jno. 13:15). Jesus did not ask of them what he was unwilling to do.

The **apostles** had a ministry to perform. Paul said that Christ "hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18). They delivered the "word of reconcili-

ation" and in so doing fulfilled their role as "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor. 5:19-20).

Elders in the church have a ministry, a service or work. Paul told the Thessalonians "to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (1 Thes. 5:13). To Timothy he said "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (1 Tim. 3:1). And what a work it is! They watch for souls, guard the flock, stop the mouth of the gainsayer, and tend the flock of God as they that shall give account unto the chief Shepherd.

Deacons in congregations have a ministry to perform. The word "deacon" itself denotes a minister, a servant. These attend to special responsibilities on behalf of the church and in such way as to be identified before saint and sinner as servants of the church. They are to "use the office well" (1 Tim. 3:13).

Preachers of the gospel have a ministry as well. "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ..." (1 Tim. 4:6). Timothy was told to "do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:5).

All Christians have a ministry. We do not all have the same office (function) though we are all members one of another. Peter said "if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 4:11). In the verse before that Peter said "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." Paul said there must be an "effectual working in the measure of every part" to make increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Eph. 4:16). The ministry of every part is of vital importance to the health and growth of the whole body.

Plenty of Work For All

In light of the foregoing passages, not to mention many others which want of space prohibits, it should be evident that there is enough service to keep us all busy for a lifetime. It is a common fallacy that all spiritual work must be assigned in a congregational structure. Certainly there are areas where we pool our time, talent and money to function as a unit. Yet, the success of that depends on personal response to opportunity. But brother, don't wait for the elders to give you a class to teach, or honor you by having you to fill the pulpit. Find someone to teach and teach him. Occasions arise almost daily for all of us to "wait on our ministry." In painting the judgment scene, Jesus said he will say to those on the left hand "Depart" for they had not ministered unto him (Mt. 25:41-46). In feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, providing for the stranger, clothing the naked, attending to the sick, visiting those in prison, we are attending to our ministry. Do we have to call a business meeting of the congregation or wait for elders to call upon us before we can attend to these things? Are they not the daily opportunities of life?

The fulfillment of such ministry must be done because it is right and not to gain attention and qualify for awards. That was the gist of the Lord's rebuke of those who pray standing in the street or give alms to be seen

of men (Mt. 6:1-6). To serve in order to gain attention and recognition and make curtain calls before an applauding world is to pervert our ministry. God sees, knows and cares. He not only recognizes our action; he sees the motivation behind it.

No Matter Who Gets the Credit

Someone once said it is amazing how much good can be done when we don't care who gets the credit. Rivalry promoted by jealousy is an ugly thing. That is the meaning of "emulations", listed by Paul as a work of the flesh in Gal. 5:19-21. Has another brother accomplished something we either could not or did not? Then let us all rejoice in it. We need to stop looking at certain kinds of service as higher rungs on the ladder of success while other service is more menial and therefore less desirable. David expressed what should the sentiment of every child of God now when he said "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Psa. 84:10). Can you preach? Then attend to your ministry. Can you serve as an elder? Wait on your ministry. Are you a deacon? Then serve with diligence. Have you a box of ointment? Then break it and perfume your area. Can you sew garments for the poor? Then be a Dorcas. Can you speak words of encouragement? Then be a Barnabas. Can you tell someone you have found the truth? Then be a Phillip and find your Nathanael. Can you write teaching articles in a journal, the newspaper, a bulletin or a book? Then do it. Can you defend the truth in debate? Then do that. Can you open the door at the place of worship and greet all who enter with a cheerful countenance? Then remember what David said. It is a far greater rank to be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell among the wicked.

Let us all find our place of service and perform it. Let us forget about becoming generals, presidents, board directors and supervisors. The Lord sent out to hire "laborers" in his vineyard. Who is greatest in the kingdom? Greatness will be determined by Him who sits on the throne. But it will be measured by service. "To the work, to the work, there is labor for all."

(Continued from Page 1)

But if he does not believe that Crossroads church is involved in anything that jeopardizes the souls of men in Hell, why does he not fully endorse Crossroads and urge that we all unite on their terms and be brethren? Just forget our differences and accept each other as we are. I think I have heard that record somewhere before. I conclude that in the light of all evidence we have, brother Yater Tant is so enamored with the Crossroads system that he is willing to compromise all else. I do not know any other conclusion to which we can come in the face of all the evidence from both Crossroads and brother Tant's pen.

If that conclusion is right, I can understand why he twice addressed the Crossroads assembly when both

Chuck Lucas and the elders were present and he did not withstand them to the face (Gal. 2:11,14). If he believes they are walking uprightly according to the truth, he, of course, would not oppose them.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr. has appointed himself the chief umpire, head referee, field judge and commissioner of brotherhood activities. All churches and brethren who do not accept him as such are not worthy of the term "faithful" in the Lord. He says as much in his paper.

He is a professional, experienced man on "anti-ism" from its beginning, he claims. Ira Y. Rice, Jr. has a dream! He dreams that he is the shining knight in armour who is in charge of all forces against "ANTI-ORPHAN CARE," "ANTI-MISSIONARY WORK" and "ANTI-CO-OPERATION" of churches. Since he will not listen to anything spoken or written on the subject except that which agrees with his views, let him sleep and dream. He does not know that there is NO "anti orphan care" for him to fight. The issue was and is NO CHURCH SUPPORT of ORPHAN HOMES for this care. There is NO "anti missionary work" problem, but the issue was and is CHURCHES CONTRIBUTING TO CHURCHES AND SOCIETIES TO DO EVANGELISM. There is NO "anti cooperation of churches" issue to battle, but the issue was and is NO CENTRALIZED CO-OPERATION IN WHICH SEVERAL CHURCHES DO THEIR WORK THROUGH ONE.

If Ira Rice does not understand that "anti" refers to the human institutions through which they try to involve the church, and not the work for which the church is responsible, he is still sleeping and dreaming. When he awakes he will find that by every definition of the word he is about the strongest "ANTI" one could find. He is strongly opposed to the "Liberals" among churches of Christ. I believe he is right about them, but inconsistent with his own practice. He is very much against Chuck Lucas and the Crossroads philosophy! His paper tells that over a long period of time. I agree with many of his conclusions, but again I have a problem with his practice. Ira Y. Rice, Jr. is definitely ANTI! He is ANTI ANTI! That is a fact! He does not, however, define what he means by "anti" most of the time, and when he uses the word it results in a false charge.

Crossroads church is an organization developed from human power to promote the philosophy of the Crossroads system. *(To Be Continued)*

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PARENTAL DUTIES AND NEEDS

There are two areas of parental duties — the physical and the moral-spiritual.

Food, clothing, shelter and medical care are generally thought of as essentials of physical life. That the parents are to provide for the physical needs of their children is unmistakably clear from two New Testament passages written by the apostle Paul. In 2 Corinthians 12:14 he says that "the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." In I Timothy 5 he declares, "If any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever," That a husband who is a father able to do so has a responsibility to care for his children and his wife is implied in James 1:27 where exhortation is made to the Christian "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." There would be no need for such exhortation were the breadwinner alive and meeting these moral obligations. In the I Tim. 5:8 text obviously "the faith" demands its adherents care for their own families. Further, it is clear that even a self-respecting infidel recognizes that general society owes him nothing as concerns providing for his own.

Moral and spiritual functions are bound upon every Christian and some of these obligations relate particularly to a Christian toward his own children. Apostle Paul makes this point unmistakably clear when he declares, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4) and "Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged" (Col. 3:21). Hebrews 12:9-11 reflects the good which comes to the child whose father did not withhold chastening: "We had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed good to them. . . All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness."

Parental Needs are Two-fold

There are two general areas of parental needs — knowledge and wisdom.

Parental knowledge looks three ways: (1) toward God's will for the parents because they are parents, (2)

toward the parents' responsibility to understand each child's physical and mental abilities and emotional temperament and (3) toward each child's moral strength and weaknesses.

The second area of parental need is wisdom to deal with the various stages of the physical, mental, social and spiritual development of the child. Wisdom is a necessity for the parent who would have the child to be physically healthy and grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 22:6 admonishes parents to "train up a child in the way he should go" and promises that "when he is old, he will not depart from it." We need to be careful lest we jump to an unwarranted conclusion regarding the promise of this passage being peculiarly spiritual in its implication, i.e., that proper childhood training guarantees the eternal security of the child's soul. If one is not careful he may thoughtlessly be affirming that a child of God cannot sin so as to be lost in hell. I do not subscribe to this popular Calvinistic meaning which I have heard brethren place on this text. One needs to remember that while **Proverbs** is an inspired book of wise sayings that many of its expressions are not exclusively related to spiritual matters but often deal with principles which will aid one in the pursuit of everyday secular life activities apart from any religious implication. In my judgment Proverbs 22:6 is such a text and conveys the thought of training a child "according to his way," (Hebrew text), i.e., according to the natural gift or aptitude God has placed within him, if I correctly understand the literal meaning of the Hebrew text. Delitzsch, according to the "Critical Notes" of the **Preacher's Homiletic Commentary** on Proverbs, Vol. 13, p. 633, renders the passage "give to a child instruction according to his way, i.e., conformably to the nature of youth." To illustrate, I understand the divinely inspired writer to be saying that if a child has a natural aptitude or bent for music that this inborn trait should be exploited by the parent. If one has a natural aptitude to work effectively with his hands his training should capitalize on this quality. It will set him in a favorable position all his life. My mother often said, "Don't try to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." I think her proverb applies in the interpretation and application of Proverbs 22:6.

Parents cannot be overly knowledgeable about their children's nature or their acquirements. Their physical strengths and weakness, mental abilities, peculiarities, emotional reactions and general stability or lack thereof, will manifest themselves early in life. Parents, of all people, should be the first to discover and, therefore, have knowledge of their children's innate qualities and potentials.

Another important realm of parental knowledge is the environment in which their children live and move inside and outside the regular domicile. Though the child may not realize the impact of its environment any thinker knows that every person and every condition is playing a part in the molding of the child's understanding, attitudes and actions. It behooves concerned

parents, therefore, to be alert to every person and situation to which the child is or will be exposed because physically, mentally, emotionally and morally the child will be affected. Well did Tennyson say, "I am a part of all that I have met."

Think about some of those influences which affect for weal or woe. At home are to be found parents, siblings, possibly grandparents, other kinsmen and playmates. Constantly TV and/or radio blare forth their mental menus to eye and ear. Newspapers and magazines contribute their part. Outside the child's home are the parents of his playmates when he may be visiting and listening to their profane speech and observing their alcoholic consumption. Whatever happens in or about the school-house is a major impression factor. Parents should never forget that five days each week for 36 weeks each year the child spends more awake time in the presence of school teachers and other influences than he spends with either father or mother. It is here that peer pressure probably exerts its greatest power in terms of personal loyalties, thought development, speech, moral concepts, dress habits and sports. Unfortunately the impossibility of close supervision by school administrators and faculty helps the negative influences. If the child attends church services (he probably follows the parents' practice) he may well learn most of what he will ever know about the Bible and religious duty. If his parents are negative and critical of elders, teachers, preachers and what usually happens in the church services the child will grow up with the same attitude. The family influence for righteousness in a sea of secularism and immorality must indeed be a strong one if the child is to be spiritually able to cope with the environment in which he daily lives.

More is needed by successful parenthood than mere knowledge of the child itself and of its environment. Proper parental guidance calls for wisdom to implement parental knowledge. Everybody knows that none becomes wise simply by the accumulation of knowledge. Wisdom is the art of reaching a righteous means. A great Greek scholar defined wisdom as "that endowment of heart and mind which is needed for the right conduct of life." Every parent should heed the exhortation: "If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not" (Jas. 1:5). Parents should analyze carefully the treatise of James 3:13-17 on earthly and heavenly wisdom and study diligently all that the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes say on this subject.

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MY SERVANTS THE PROPHETS

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NEHEMIAH. LET US RISE UP AND BUILD The Place of Growth In Spiritual Revival Part 5—Reaching The Lost

In the 11th chapter of the book of Nehemiah, we have been studying the problem of re-populating the city of Jerusalem. We have said that it is much like the problem we face today of re-populating spiritual Zion which is the Lord's church. We are living in a day of declining baptisms, declining attendance, and declining interest. If we are going to be successful in a future generation, we, too, need to re-populate Jerusalem. We have said that there were four basic principles that we need to adhere to if we are going to re-populate Jerusalem. Number 1 is that we must know God; Number 2 is that we must become a people of joy; Number 3 is that we must become a people of love. We subdivided becoming a people of love into Part I, Loving One Another and Part II, Accepting One Another. Now we come to the fourth principle of re-population for the city of Zion. That is reaching out in evangelism to touch other people. It is so difficult to know how to do personal work today. That's why many are failing to re-populate Jerusalem.

Most means of personal evangelism today involve a person going and reaching for a person X whom he has never met, whom he does not know, and with whom he has very little, if any, influence or prior contact. Such means of evangelism reaches very few individuals and they do not bring the results that we would like for them to bring. If they did, we would not face the problem that we face in Jerusalem today. Let us share together some statistics of church growth that we find that should be very informative. We find that in a questionnaire given to basically fundamental religious people the question was asked, "How did you come to Jesus Christ?" These are the answers that were given. 4-6% just walked into a church building. 4-7% came as a result of the preacher or the minister. 2-4% came because they heard and liked a particular church program of activity. 1-2% came because of visitation. 3-6% came because of Bible school activity. .001% came because of television or evangelistic meetings or crusades. This represents a VERY SMALL MINORITY of people. The bottom line of this survey was that between 70-90% of the people that filled the different churches today came because of a FRIEND OR RELATIVE whom they knew, whom they trusted, and WHOM THEY RESPECTED SHARED THEIR FAITH WITH THEM. You see,

most of the means that we are using today are methods that seek to put in contact an unknown person and we wonder why we do not have any impact or any influence in the life of the person without the gospel. God's plan for salvation certainly involves preaching the gospel to people that we do not know personally. There are many examples of this in the New Testament. But yet there is also another concept of evangelism in the New Testament that we have almost altogether or completely ignored. That is the concept of a friend reaching another friend. If you will, **THE ANDREW PRINCIPLE**. When Andrew found the Lord, he reached for his brother, Peter, and brought him to Jesus Christ. As we begin to look at the method of reaching people today, we want to talk about the most effective plan and that is the plan that puts an individual in contact with someone whom he already knows and already respects.

God's plan for evangelism today is a plan of beauty. What God does is that He desires to build into us the beauty of His own character. That's why we studied these three prior concepts before we studied the concept of personal evangelism. We, ourselves, must know God and His character before we can share Him with anyone else. We, ourselves, must become a people of love before we can share the will of God with anyone else. We must become a people of joy before we can share that with anyone else. You see, first of all God wants to build into us the beauty of His character and then He wants to put us on display before a lost world. The idea found in Matthew 5:13-16 of being a light set on a hill is the exact principle which we are seeking to establish in these lessons. We are the light of the world. We are to reflect not our own light, but the beauty and the character of God in our lives. Then, God's means of communicating truth to an individual is always through a fleshly preacher or individual. We see this is true. He could have sent the angels to proclaim His gospel, but rather He sent his own Son. His own Son as an individual would come and live among men and proclaim it to His fellow man. Thus, as a result, we see that God always communicates to man through man, through life on life.

It is so unfortunate that the average Christian has no non-Christian friends and the tragedy is that the non-Christian has no Christian friends. The world outside today is seeing no alternate (Christian) life style. We hear a great deal today about the terminology "alternate life style". But, we are finding today that the world sees no alternate life style of Jesus Christ in any one else's life. The non-Christian has the right to see a Christian, a child of God, become a thing of beauty amidst his own imperfections and see the Spirit of God form in him the fruit of the Spirit so that they can observe the peace and the hope and the joy and the self-control in the life of him who is a child of God. Israel of old was to be this kind of nation. The command to love one another was given to Israel of old in the beginning of the nation. That is not just simply a new command given by Jesus Christ to His disciples.

We find that Israel of old was to love, accept, and care for one another. In all of their institutions and in all of

their relationships, they were to be a thing of beauty and the pagan nations round about them were to see this in their lives. Thus, leading the pagan nations to see that Jehovah, could produce something different than what their pagan gods could produce. The terrible tragedy with Israel of old was that they did not let the beauty of God become manifest in their lives.

Today, as a corporate body of believers, unless we know God, unless we have the joy of Jesus Christ in our hearts, unless we really become a people of love, we have no corporate beauty to share with the world at all. And so, as a result, we have concentrated on **METHODS** to use rather than what we are to be. Personal evangelism is much less what we do; rather it is much more what we are. The method of personal evangelism is very unimportant. As we have said before, it is unimportant because it is God that gives the increase. It is also unimportant because what we need to do is to establish a relationship with our friends and with our neighbors so that they can see Jesus Christ in us personally and then make a decision that they want to copy that life style. The key word in personal evangelism is the word "**RELATIONSHIP**". Many today do not want to recognize this fact. It is much easier to talk about how we are going to reach person X—by direct mail, by the radio, by the television, by a knock on the door—because we do not put anything on the line with person X. But, when we begin to build close relationships and invite people to come, not only into our homes, but into our hearts and to see exactly what we are, then we are putting our credibility on the line. It is much like a person that is always going on a diet, but never tells anybody. When you do that, you are not accountable to any one. We want to reach a person for Jesus Christ that we have never met, that we do not know. In doing that, we put absolutely nothing on the line. But, when we begin to build a relationship with someone in our office, with someone on our street, with someone in our P.T.A. group, we are inviting them to see how we cope with worry, how we cope with reversal, how we cope with frustration, how we cope with being ill-treated and passed over for a promotion or a raise, how we treat those that do not love us, how we respond to criticism, and as we invite them to see that in our lives, then they can see how Jesus lives upon this earth. Jesus came and walked for 3 1/2 years and was open to total scrutiny by those that were close to him and around about him. He built a relationship with them. We must, then, seek to develop relationship with those that we live around.

We have got to become a people conscious body of believers. We have got to become genuinely in love with the souls of people. We must first begin by realizing that we do not deserve the love of Jesus Christ. For while we were yet sinners, he died for us. He cared for us first before we ever deserved it or before we ever merited it. So, as a result, we have not earned the love that Christ has for us. We must learn then to become people conscious. We must understand that people do not have to earn our love or merit our concern for them. If this were true, you and I would still be unsaved and Jesus

would not have reached for us. We must take how God, through Christ, feels for us and apply that across the spectrum to other people. We must love people, we must care for people and we must seek to build relationships with people. It does not matter whether they are worth it or not. If we will simply love and teach people into Jesus Christ, we can find our effectiveness being far increased because this is the divine plan rather than the human plan.

It goes against our basic nature to try to love people that are not lovable, but remember, our God loves us and we often times are very unlovable. People must learn to see that we care about them, that we love them and that we are concerned about them. They must see that we care about them whether they will be baptized or not. It is not like here is a pie and here is a tract on baptism. Eat the pie and read the tract, leaving them with the full idea that if they are not baptized, we will come back and try to reclaim the pie. They need to understand that we are reaching for them in an unconditional, no strings attached, loving, caring attitude and relationship. This means going out of our way to take our time, our talents, our ability and to spend them in the lives of other people. This means that we must become an unselfish people rather than an extremely selfish group of individuals. We must be willing to give up our golf, our tennis, our hobbies and our recreation to spend our time working and building a relationship in the lives of those that are not Christians. When they see that we really love them, then, and only then, can we find that we can have a marked influence upon them in times of crisis, troubles, and reversals. Who will they turn to? They will turn to us because we have been a friend to them.

We need to spend time and prayer for the lives of other people. But, not only that, we need to spend time and prayer that we can meet their needs. That we can have the opportunity to serve them and to care for them in the daily activity of life. We might start with making concentric circles; circles that begin with those that are the very closest to us and moving out to those that are farther away from us. This is the exact point of Acts 1:8 where the gospel started in Jerusalem, the second concentric circle was Judea and Samaria and the third concentric circle was then to the outermost part of the earth. It started in Jerusalem and gradually went to the outermost parts of the earth. Thereby, we start with the inner circle of our closest friends and our closest relatives. We begin, first of all, by developing Jesus Christ in our own lives and then we begin to pray, "Lord, help me to meet the needs of my immediate family and relatives." Every day you pray, "Lord, help me to be able to meet the needs of these people. If they need something, give me the ability to know it and the ability to supply and answer their needs." Then secondly, you begin to pray, "Lord, help me with my close friends. When they have a need, let me be the one to respond to their needs and help them and care for them." And, then thirdly we move out to our neighbors and to our business associates, "Lord, help me meet the needs of this group of

unbelievers, of my neighbors, of my business associates. When they have a need, help me to be the one that responds to that need." Next is all of our acquaintance. These may be the fellow at the service station, the clerk at the grocery store, or whoever they may be. "Lord, help me to meet the needs of these people." And, finally, "Lord, help me to meet the needs of person X, whom I as yet do not even know." If we can establish in our own hearts and minds an attitude of meeting the needs of other people, we can establish a principle by which we will be looking for every single possible opportunity to reach and to care for other people. The key is "relationship". "Help us, oh Lord, to build relationships with those that do not know Jesus Christ.

Using Great Plainness of Speech

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IS "THE EXCEPTION" APPLICABLE TODAY?

There are those who say that the "exception" that Jesus gave with regard to those who divorce and remarry is not applicable today because it is nowhere repeated after Pentecost. This is to say that unless instruction given by the Lord during his personal ministry is repeated after Pentecost (Acts 2) it is in no way applicable today.

Those who have taken this position, however, would be forced, by consistency, to take the same position on many other things taught by Jesus during His personal ministry. But where is the Bible authority for such a rule? After all, the four gospels were written to Christians telling them of the life of Jesus, as well as setting forth some of His teachings that were applicable to the kingdom. Let's look at a couple of examples.

In John 3:3-5 Jesus tells Nicodemus that one must be born again in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus describes this "new birth" as a birth of water and the Spirit. All of us (including those who take the position on the "exception" of Matthew 5 and 19 not being repeated after Pentecost) understand and accept the fact that one must be "born again" in order to enter the kingdom. But where is the "new birth" explained as Jesus explained it in John 3, after Pentecost? Obviously it is not.

Second, just one chapter before Jesus' instruction on divorce and remarriage, Matthew 18:15-17, He gives instruction regarding the man whose brother has trespassed against him. He tells the man what should be done to try to correct the situation. Where is this in-

struction repeated after Pentecost? It is not.

Was Christ Explaining The Law of Moses?

Another objection to using the teaching of Christ in Matthew, Mark, and Luke on the subject of divorce and remarriage, is that Christ was not teaching something different from the Law of Moses, but rather was giving the proper application of the Law to the Pharisees. They tell us, for example, that the Lord had a specific purpose in telling the people that unless the "putting" away was "for fornication" they could not remarry. They then go to Deuteronomy 24:1 and try to make the "uncleanness" found in this passage mean that the bride was not a virgin, and had committed fornication before they were married. Thus Jesus was simply explaining this to these people. However, this is an assumption. There are a number of different opinions among scholars as to what the "uncleanness" was in the new bride in Deuteronomy 24. However, I believe this to be inconsequential. For, first of all, it is assumed, by those who believe this doctrine, that the word "fornication" always referred only to the unmarried. This is neither true in the Old nor the New Testaments. As we stated in a previous lesson, the word "fornication" is only found five (5) times in the Old Testament, and every time it is used, it is used figuratively to describe the spiritual condition of Israel which constituted those who were "married to" or belonged to God.

And even though it is sometimes used in the New Testament to describe those who are single, it is a general term that is also used to describe every kind of sexual activity. (It is used in I Corinthians 5 to describe one who had married a married woman which would usually be referred to by the word "adultery"; homosexuality and sodomy in Jude 7 which obviously could include those who are married, unless one wants to take the position that all homosexuals and sodomites are single persons). However, it is obvious in some passages where both the words, fornication and adultery, are used that sometimes a distinction is made. cf. I Corinthians 6:9. Thus we can readily see that in order for the above position to be true, the word "fornication" would always have to be committed by an unmarried person, and this is not the case.

Did Christ Change Moses' Law?

Second, the problem with saying that Jesus was trying to correct the Jews regarding the Law of Moses and was telling them that the only reason to put away under the Law of Moses was for fornication, cannot be substantiated. In fact, this would mean that the Law of Moses only allowed divorce "for fornication," and the one who was "put away" could not remarry; for that is what Jesus said in Matthew 19:9b. However, when we read the instructions in Deuteronomy 24, we find just the opposite.

Notice in Deuteronomy 24:1 that the man whose bride did not find favor in his eyes, because of the uncleanness, (which, as we have pointed out many brethren believe is fornication) gave her a bill of divorcement and sent her out of his house. But Deuteronomy

24:2 says when she is sent out, she may be **another man's wife**. However, this is not what Jesus said at all. He said, "whosoever marrieth her which is put away committeth adultery" (Matthew 19:9b). Also, under Moses' law, according to Deuteronomy 24:3, Moses tells us that if the second husband hate her, he may give her a writing of divorcement and send her out of his house. Thus we see that Jesus' teaching comes no where near describing Moses' Law.

We have already substantiated the fact that in both the Old and New Testaments the word "fornication" can include those who are married; thus include the adulterer. But notice why Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:32; 19:9 could not be discussing the Law of Moses. In Deuteronomy 22:22, Moses' Law described a man lying with a married woman. The consequences under Moses' Law was that both were to be stoned to death. Jesus could hardly have been giving regulations for remarriage regarding either of these, now could He? And, if He was, then he was changing the Law of Moses, which He denied He had done. cf. Matthew 5:17.

So, Christ's teaching in Matthew 5:32; 19:9 could not have been applicable **then**, for it would have changed Moses' Law. And if it is not applicable now, when was it applicable?



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HOW'S THIS FOR EXTRAVAGANCE?

The Tulsa World, Sunday, Sept. 11, reported on the building plans of the Garnett church of Christ of that city. With current attendance running 2,000 plus, the congregation plans to construct an auditorium complex that will seat 2,400 on the lower floor and 1,500 in the balcony.

Extravagance par excellence seems to be the name of their game.

"A baptistery near the pulpit will be surrounded by plants and flowers to recall times when baptisms were held 'in the crick.' Skylights and indoor trees and plants will highlight an entry mall by which the proposed auditorium will be tied to the existing building..."

"This addition will also permit an information desk for visitors and greatly enlarged toddler and nursery areas, available to both the auditorium and the fellow-ship hall."

"An existing auto turnaround will become a pedestrian mall and canopies on the north side of the educational building will be extended to provide covered walks to either parking lot on the congregation's 40 acre site."

All this is but "phase two" in their long-range plans. A housing facility for the elderly, a counseling center, and a chapel are being projected for the future.

The congregation is presently meeting in two morning services in the facility "originally intended as a fellowship hall in the educational building completed four years ago at a cost of 4.4 million.

Now instead of having "fellowship" (which to the liberal brethren means to eat a sandwich and have a socially good time, see I Cor. 11:34), they are reduced to using this space for worship (which is fellowship according to the true New Testament usage of the term).

The news article assures us, however: "With completion of the proposed auditorium, the meeting place in use now will revert back to its original purpose: a fellowship hall to seat approximately 1,000 at meals, with space for an already-planned commercial kitchen..."

The architect who is a member of the congregation, is quoted as saying, "We have studied every aspect of the church program, and we are trying some innovations we think have not been utilized in other churches."

He was referring to the facility, of course, but his words could well apply to the work and worship of the church as well, with the exception that one would find it

doubtful that any innovation into such is not being utilized by other churches.

The big news story in all this was in the more than \$1.5 million dollar contribution they were attempting to raise the following Sunday.

Marvin Phillips, "their minister", was so certain of success that he had accepted an invitation from an Oklahoma City congregation to address them on Sunday afternoon on "How We Raised \$1.5 Million In A Single Day."

"A helicopter will pick him up from the Tulsa church grounds following morning worship. It will return him to the 31st Street site in time to address a 5 p.m. worship service to be followed by a 'victory picnic' on the church grounds."

They had their victory picnic.

Monday's edition of the **Tulsa World** reported they had pushed the total to more than \$5,000 over the \$1.5 million mark. They thus shoved Robert Schuller's Crystal Cathedral out of third place in the running for the largest single day offering of any church in this country.

Many "collectible" automobiles were contributed. Diamond rings, even some wedding rings, and homes were donated. Many members borrowed up to \$10,000 to donate with the church backing the loans.

"A mission congregation begun by the Garnett church in Augusta, Ga., numbers 60 members. They took a collection last Sunday and sent \$1,105."

Sounds to me like they're mixed up on a thing or two, not the least of which is the New Testament authority for one church to send a contribution to another church for such an extravaganza as this.

And so it goes.

4.5 billion people are living and dying without the gospel while brethren spend their resources on perishable bricks and stones and carnivals.

They're competing with the denominations and it's a losing battle. Newsweek reports that Second Baptist in Houston's new building cost \$34 million, of which only \$3 million remains to be pledged. It will have eight bowling lanes. I suppose you really do try harder when you're second. But First Baptist in the same city has a Christian Life Center **"featuring two full-size basket-ball courts, a roller rink, six bowling lanes, four glassed in racquet-ball courts, a suspended jogging track, saunas, whirlpool baths, and a restaurant called 'The Garden of Eatin'."**

Mr. Fred Williams, a member of Second Baptist, is quoted in the Newsweek article regarding the church bowling lanes: "It makes sense to me."

That is apparently authority enough for most folks. It makes sense to them.

Another Baptist preacher in the city, however, is quoted as commenting: They're measuring themselves "with a different measuring stick than God has."

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CALVINISTIC SOVEREIGNTY AND ROMANS 9

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The classic passage to which Calvinists have traditionally appealed for the support of their concept of sovereignty is Romans 9:6-26. They find in these verses substantiation for the doctrine of unconditional particular election, and thus a deterministic mode of divine rule as well. They focus primarily upon the following: verse 11 and what is stated there about God's choosing Jacob over Esau, "Though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls. . ."; verses 15 and 18, "He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion'... So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires"; verse 23, "And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory."

No passage can be correctly understood isolated from its context. It is especially disastrous when the isolated passage is then used as the standard proof text for an entire religious system. Calvinists have customarily regarded this section of Romans as a definitive and comprehensive explanation of what the Bible has to say about election. But these verses need to be looked at objectively, keeping in mind always the immediate context of this part of Romans and the overall teaching of the epistle.

Romans 1:16-17 gives the theme of the letters: "(the gospel) is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Chapters 1-3 demonstrate the total helplessness of both Jews and Gentiles to attain righteousness on their own merits, and show how justification can come only through God's grace. Chapter 4 presents Abraham as the classic illustration of justification by faith. His being justified without circumcision proves that faith is the condition for salvation and not meritorious works or physical ancestry. Thus, salvation is offered by God to the Jew and the Gentile on the same basis. Chapter 5 glorified Jesus, whose atoning death makes possible man's justification. Chapters 6-8 discuss the justified individual's present relationship to righteousness.

Beginning in chapter 9 Paul addresses the practical problems which the Jewish Christian faced because of Justification by faith; namely, the rejection by God of the disbelieving Jewish nation and the acceptance instead of the Gentiles to the messianic hope. Were not God's promises to bless the Israelites left unfulfilled? The Jews were God's chosen people; did they not de-

serve better treatment than pagan nations? It is important to realize that what Paul has under consideration in Romans 9 is the circumstance of the Israelites nationally, not the matter of the personal salvation of individual men. The truth regarding the latter had been already discussed.

Thus, Paul begins the chapter with a solemn affirmation of his personal grief at the rejection of the Jewish nation (verses 1-5). "But," he stresses, "it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants" (verses 6-7). Paul shows how the Old Testament scriptures testified that the intended recipients of the messianic benefits were not those of a certain lineage, but those of faith. These were the "children of the promise" whom God had chosen (verse 8, 24-31). And the choice was God's own to make, for salvation is His gift and He has the right to bestow it to whomever He desires according to His terms.

Paul illustrates this divine prerogative by referring to God's choice of Isaac and Jacob, both of whom were selected over others also of Abraham's lineage. God chose them, not because of how righteous they had been or because of how wicked others had been, but because He, sovereign God, desired it that way. Paul's point is that God has every right to extend salvation to the believing Gentiles if He so desires. It is His prerogative to "have mercy on whom I will have mercy" (verse 15).

In verses 19-21 Paul harshly condemns the Jewish Christian who answers back to God and pompously says that God's final rejection of the Jewish nation was not right. God is the sovereign ruler of man, and He has every right to endure with sinful men (as He had done with the Jewish nation for so long) in order that He might finally bestow His mercy on others who would come to Him in faith—even if these others were Gentiles. Paul says, "God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction ... in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles" (verses 22-24). These verses are not speaking of a divine decree to save particular individuals and destroy others unconditionally. Verse 32 states that the reason the major portion of the Israelite nation was condemned was "because they did not pursue (righteousness) by faith, but as though it were by works." They rejected Jesus as the Messiah and "stumbled over the stumbling stone." Calvinists consistently overlook the clear sense of verses 30-33 which give faithlessness as the reason for some persons becoming "vessels of wrath prepared for destruction."

Calvinists also view reprobation as final; a vessel of wrath can never become otherwise. Paul teaches the opposite in chapter 11. Speaking of the divine rejection of the Jewish nation he says, "They did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be!" (verse 11). In verses 17-22 Paul figuratively describes the Jews as the

natural branches that had to be broken off of God's olive vine; but he adds, "They also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again" (verse 23). The Jews could still be God's chosen people if they would repent and believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Their rejection by God was not an irrevocable reality; it was contingent upon their continued unfaithfulness. Similarly, God's present acceptance of Gentile Christians was contingent upon their continued faith. Paul warns these Gentiles, "You stand by your faith. Do not be conceited but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you" (verses 20-21).

It is true then that Romans 9 strongly emphasizes the sovereignty of God. But it is not propagating unconditional particular election and a deterministic mode of divine rule. All men possess an independent will, and God expects each to respond voluntarily to the gospel in order to be saved from their sins.

Final Comments

As we have seen in this study, traditional Calvinism considers determinism to be a necessary aspect of sovereignty, and argues therefore that unconditional election must be true in order for sovereignty to be established. Not only is such a view unbiblical, it is a purely unwarranted assumption. Robert Shank's comments on this point are excellent:

The sovereignty of God does not need to be established. As an essential aspect of His being and person, it is in no way contingent. The sovereignty of God does not depend, for either its existence or its manifestation, on either the fact or the mode of election. God is sovereign, regardless of whether He elects, or does not elect... whether He elects some, or all... whether election is conditional, or unconditional. Neither the fact of election nor the mode of election nor the extent of election affects the fact of the sovereignty of God, and the assumption that unconditional election is necessary for the preservation of the sovereignty of God is a theological humbug which for generations has been used by Calvinists to beg the question.

(*Elect in the Son*, p. 144)

The assumption which Calvinists make regarding election they make regarding divine determinism generally. But determinism is not an essential facet of sovereignty. God could have chosen to rule the world which He created in an absolute, deterministic way, but He chose not to. He could have created men with no freedom of will, as robotistic creatures incapable of functioning except in accordance with their programming. Yet God chose not to do this. He made men autonomous, not automatons. That this is the case does not impugn God's sovereignty. It is because God is sovereign that He has the right to create men as He pleases. Ironically, in trying to magnify God's sovereignty by affirming determinism, Calvinism has actually limited God. Calvinistic theology restricts His rule by not al-

lowing Him the prerogative of creating independent beings if He so chooses.

The Bible affirms that God did give men an independent will. He does not force men to comply with His desires. He wants them to submit freely to His righteous mandates, not because foreordination necessitates it, but because morality compels it. That men possess self-determination does not diminish God's glory; it actually makes possible His greatest glorification. For when men decide for themselves to acquiesce to the sovereign's will, God receives the highest possible form of praise. This is what gives the apostle's admonition such import: "Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified" (1 Peter 4:11).

Only when the errors of Calvinism are made manifest can God's sovereignty be elevated in man's heart to the highest plateau. And yet, this should also bring home to each of us the gravity of our personal accountability to God for our actions. If the reason for our being created as free agents is truly to glorify God by our submission, we must ask ourselves, how well have we carried out our function? God cannot be blamed for our failures, the responsibility is ours. It is not enough to understand how Calvinism has perverted the biblical presentation of divine sovereignty. We must make certain at all times to live in accordance with that truth we have come to understand. If we do not do this, then how much better off are we than the Calvinist?

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REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION

QUESTION: I recently heard a well known preacher say in a gospel meeting that all the Bible requires in the confession of an erring child of God is to say "I have sinned." A comparison was made to the alien repenting of his sins in a general way. Must the child of God be specific in repentance and in confession or will general repentance and confession suffice?—DVR

ANSWER: The answer to the above question can hardly be determined or appreciated without a clear understanding of 1 John 1:9, which reads:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness."

The verse begins with the word "If." This makes forgiveness conditional. Obviously, the condition is that "we confess our sins." It should be noted that the condition is not "If we confess sin." Again, it is not "If we confess that we have sinned." It reads plainly "If we confess our sins" (plural). The use of the plural ("sins") does not mean that one must be guilty of more than one sin before confession is in order, but it does mean that whatever one is guilty of is the thing that must be confessed. This throws a great deal of light on the question submitted.

Furthermore, the word "confess" is significant and enlightening. The Greek word for confess is "Homologeo" and is defined as follows: "(a) to confess, declare, admit, John 1:20; e.g., Act 24:14; Heb. 11:13; (b) to confess by way of admitting oneself guilty of what one is accused of, the result of inward conviction, 1 John 1:9; (c) to declare openly by way of speaking out freely, such being the effect of deep conviction of facts, Matt. 7:23, 10:32 ..." (W. E. Vine, EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS).

In the light of the full definition of "confess," we must conclude that forgiveness demands that one "speak out freely" the "inward conviction" of guilt. Since this "speaking out" (confession) is not the fact of guilt, but rather the thing of which one is guilty, it follows that one has knowledge of the guilt confessed. This excludes sins of ignorance from consideration here.

This does not mean that a child of God must confess specifically every sin of which he may be guilty. His confession may be generic to a degree and still comply

with the demands of our text. For example, one may confess dishonesty in the realm of business transactions without recalling and naming in particular every act of dishonesty involved. He would be confessing more than the fact of sin; he would be confessing what he was guilty of, namely, "dishonesty in business" without identifying all the specifics of the genus. If one were guilty of wholesale apostasy, then that is what he should confess, without naming all the specifics. One might be guilty of "riotous living," as the prodigal son of Lk. 15. If so, one could confess the same without naming all the specifics of the genus. If one's sin were more limited, so should his confession be. All such would comply with the demands of our text.

Concerning "repentance," it, too, demands a great deal of study. It should be obvious that repentance should precede the confession of 1 John 1:9, otherwise, it would be a hollow mockery. Repentance is a condition of forgiveness to both the alien and the child of God (Acts 2:38, 8:22). But what does repentance involve?

Basically, repentance involves a "change of mind" (W. E. Vine). This is confirmed in the parable of the two sons (Matt. 21:28, 29). The father said to the first, "Son, go work today in my vineyard." Verse twenty nine gives his response, "He answered and said, I will not: but afterwards he repented and went." Obviously, the son changed his mind, and by obeying his father's command brought forth the fruits of repentance.

The repentance that is related to the confession of 1 John 1:9 necessarily involves a change of mind with respect to that of which one is guilty. A good question to consider here is: How can one change his mind about any guilt of which he is not aware? In fact, such a person would not change his mind or turn from his guilt, but likely would continue in it. The very nature of repentance demands a knowledge of that of which one repents. The child of God is called upon to repent of and confess that of which he is guilty. This involves the specifics of the genus sin, i.e., specific enough to identify what he is guilty of.

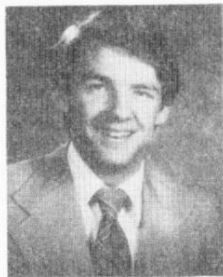
The repentance of an alien is somewhat different. The difference is found in the object from which he turns or of which he repents. His repentance is not related to a confession of sins. This is not a part of God's law of pardon for an alien. The alien is in a state of alienation, and is a rebel against the divine authority by which one becomes a child of God. He must be brought to a knowledge of his guilt—see himself as a sinner—and turn from disobedience to obedience. His repentance relates to the whole genus of sin without necessarily recalling all the particular instances of sin in his life. His repentance is somewhat like that of a child of God guilty of wholesale apostasy (mentioned earlier in this article). There is a firm resolve in his heart to henceforth live in submission to the divine will. However, after one becomes a child of God, whenever he sins he must obtain forgiveness according to God's second law of pardon, namely, repentance, confession, and prayer (1 John 1:9; Jas. 5:16; Acts 8:22).

TAKE HEED

UNTO THY DOCTRINE

Donnie V. Rader

4724 E. Manslick Rd.
Louisville, KY 40219



Paul instructed young Timothy saying, "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. 4:16). As Timothy would be preaching to others about how they were to live, he was to consider himself as well. He was to take heed unto the things he taught. Paul is simply saying "practice what you preach!"

Too often those who preach God's word do not take heed to their doctrine. That is what is under consideration in Matt. 7:1-5. Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (v. 1). He is not saying it is wrong to condemn someone, but you really don't have that right when you are guilty of the same things. Jesus further said, "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" Nothing wrong with trying to remove the mote out of your brother's eye. Yet when you have a beam in yours, who are you to say anything? Such a person is called a "hypocrite" (v.5).

The Jews of Romans 2 had the same problem. They were ones who would point their fingers at the Gentiles and cry, "Oh, what sinners!" They would instruct the Gentiles in the right way (vs. 21-23). Nevertheless Paul said, "Therefore thou art inexcusable O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doest the same things" (v. 1). They were not practicing what they preached. Believe it or not, they did the same things that they condemned. Paul goes on to give some examples of this serious problem. "Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal" (v.21)? They preached against adultery, yet they committed the same (v.22). They abhorred idols (in their teaching), however they committed sacrilege (v.22). They would boast of the law and yet by their actions dishonor God. What's the point? **THEY DID NOT PRACTICE WHAT THEY PREACHED!**

Now what kind of an effect would that have on the Gentiles whom they were trying to teach? Would the Gentiles just ignore their practices and follow their teaching? Paul answered that saying, "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles THROUGH YOU, as it is written" (Rom. 2:24, emphasis mine DVR). Israel could have no influence on the Gentiles as long as they lived as they did. This is no doubt why the Gentiles

did not come to salvation (as a whole) until these Jews had been cast off (Rom. 9,10,11,12,30). Would you listen to someone who doesn't endeavor to practice what he preaches?

Preachers, like everyone else, need to examine themselves, whether they be in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5) If preachers would judge (examine) themselves, then they would not be judged (condemned) (1 Cor. 11:31).

Let us consider just a few areas wherein preachers need to take heed unto their teaching.

1. **Pride and Arrogance:** All preachers at some time or another will find themselves teaching the Bible truths along this line (1 Pet. 5:5-6). It seems that we can so boldly tell others about how their pride is a great sin. Yet sometimes preachers can seem to be the most arrogant people of all. Because the work involved in preaching the gospel requires constant studying and a good knowledge of the Bible, preachers can easily look down their noses at those who have less knowledge than they. Are we willing to preach before large numbers but turn up our noses at the invitation to preach and work with the handful of brethren who meet in a rented hall? I see some preachers who can deliver excellent lessons on the Christian's attitude toward criticism, and then swell up when someone questions a point in their lesson. We sometimes urge people to discuss the Bible with us and show us where we are wrong. Then when they do, we often act as if we are infallible.

2. **Jealousy:** Nearly every gospel preacher that has been preaching very long has at one or another taught a lesson on envy and jealousy. That is as it should be for the Bible condemns such (Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 1:29-32; 1 Pet. 2:1). If there were a problem of this nature in a local congregation, the preacher would naturally become concerned and "lather up" a lesson on the evils of jealousy. In this also, preachers are not exempt from such a sin. It is possible to envy the success of another preacher, his number of converts, his number of meetings, his influence or even his ability. Naturally the envious hearted preacher will be tempted to defame the character and influence of his brother. Preachers should rejoice at another preacher's success (Rom. 12:15).

3. **Worship in Spirit:** Jesus commanded that we worship in spirit as well as in truth (Jno. 4:24). That is, we are to worship Him from the heart, inwardly as well as going through the motions (cf. Rom. 2:28-29; 1 Cor. 14:15). We as preachers need to warn the members of the body of Christ about the dangers of merely going through the acts of worship and not thinking upon what is taking place and having our minds centered upon the proper thoughts. Yet we too can find ourselves thinking on our sermons, etc. during the songs, prayer or Lord's Supper. Just because I am about to get up and deliver a lesson doesn't mean that I don't have to worship in spirit like the rest of my brethren.

4. **Fornication:** Fornication is a common problem in society and in the church as well. It is nothing uncommon to hear of an "affair" going on between those who are supposed to be the backbone of the church. When such is the case, any preacher who thought much of the

charge that has been given him would "lay it on hard" concerning what the Bible said about this sin (Gal. 5:19-21). However, preachers need to take heed and be careful of their actions and where they go without their wives lest they be guilty of the same. It is no longer shocking to hear reports of some preacher who is also engaged in an "affair". (I actually prefer to call it "fornication" or "sin".) When such is the case we are no better than those Jews who would teach the Gentiles not to commit adultery and yet they did the very same thing (Rom. 2:22). Preachers, lets all take heed to the doctrine!

5. **Divorce:** There are about as many divorces as there are marriages, even among "Christians". We as preachers find ourselves teaching what the Bible says about divorce (Mt. 19:9; 5:32). We warn that it is a sin, and try our best to keep couples together. And yet, as you can guess, a good number of preachers have passed before the judge in a divorce court. Some for reasons other than fornication. Would you be willing to listen to such a man as he labors to tell you what the Bible says about the sin of divorce?

6. **Time and consideration given to family:** Any man that is married and has children is obligated to give his family much consideration. He cannot come and go as he pleases or constantly stay away from home and be a good husband and father. What preacher wouldn't seek to correct the brother who ignored his wife and children? What would he say to the father who doesn't have time to spend with his children to make sure they are guided in the right way? And yet preachers at times can be the world's worst at the proper treatment of the family. Their wives get mighty lonesome while their husbands spend many many hours on the road in meetings and in the study. Children often wonder why daddy can't spend a little time at home. I have personally watched preacher's children beg their dad to just take five or ten minutes to answer a question or throw a ball, while he repeatedly refused. Preachers seem always to have time to straighten out everyone else's family prob-

lems but their own. Preachers, lets continue to preach on the home and family relationships, but lets apply a little at home when we do.

On we could go making application of this principle. The point is: **PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH!** Be an example of the believers (1 Tim. 4:12). In so doing you not only save yourself, but also those that hear (1 Tim. 4:16). Otherwise both may be lost (Rom. 2:23).

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LECTURESHIP IN RIVERDALE, MARYLAND

WILSON ADAMS, 6334 Auburn Ave., Riverdale, MD 20737—The Wildercroft church of Christ in suburban Washington, D.C. will be having a special series of sermons the week of April 9-13 on "Striving As Saints." The speakers will be Connie W. Adams and Harry Pickup, Jr. At 7:30 each night Connie W. Adams will present a series on Colossians—Completeness in Christ: The Preeminence of Christ; Christ In You, The Hope of Glory; Established In The Truth; The New Man; and Complete in Christ. At 8:15 each night Harry Pickup, Jr. will speak on 1 and 2 Peter—Living As A Saint In A Modern World: The World In Which We Live; Becoming a Saint; The Testing of the Saint; Saints Demonstrating the Excellencies of God; "Receiving the End of Your Faith... In A Little While."

There will be congregational singing from 7:15-7:30 each night and also from 8:05 to 8:15. We invite all who have the opportunity to be with us during this week (a week normally noted by Washingtonians as being Cherry Blossom week) to worship and praise God. Our members will be more than happy to open their homes to folks from other places. For more information please phone me at 301-474-8133/474-7460.

FIELD REPORTS

JOHN GERRARD, 639 E. 56th St., Indianapolis, IN 46220—After four years with the church in Hamilton, Ohio (my second full-time work with them), I have moved back to Indianapolis. I will be available for preaching appointments in the area and for some meeting work.

JODY BROYLES, 375 S. 6th St., St. Helens, OR 97051—In March of this year my family and I will begin work with the church in Bremer-ton, Washington. We have been with the St. Helens church since January, 1982. During that time there have been 13 souls added to the body for which we thank God. There is much more that can and will be done in the future. The brethren at St. Helens will need a preacher to labor full-time with them. The congregation consists of 35 members and can offer partial support. Phone 503-397-6766, or Mark Wingfield at 397-0668. Or write the church. 1911 Columbia Blvd., St. Helens, OR 97051

GOOD NEWS FROM AFAR

RAY VOTAW, Box 801, Springs 1560, South Africa—"Holiday" periods are always busy times among the blacks in southern Africa. Brethren who live and work in the urban areas use this time well to return to their villages in the homelands to preach the gospel. Usually during these periods I travel with these brethren to these village areas. Over the Christmas season just passed I took Eric Reed and Hendrik Jourbert (up from the Cape) along with Ephraim Radebe and went into Kwandebele for preaching work. I thrilled to hear these good men tell the "old, old story" so effectively among these Swazis. Some were baptized and the churches were certainly strengthened. One very promising young man from Tembisa in this area was baptized in the efforts there.

The church in Alra Park is making good progress on their new building—the first to be constructed by a non-white church in South Africa. The building will seat comfortably around 200, has been built by the members and without any indebtedness. They should be in this new house by June of this year.

Brother Paul Williams did a very fine job of exposing the error of the Moslems and teaching the truth concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ in his recent debate with Ahmed Deedat. There were between two and three thousand present at the stadium where the discussion took place and there was rapt attention. Although Mr. Deedat ignored Paul's affirmation of the gospel was simply and powerfully presented. Christians from as far afield as Zimbabwe to the north and Capetown to the south were present for the debate, but the Muslim people were by far in the majority.

REPORT ON TRIP TO COLUMBIA

ROYCE CHANDLER, 3891 Bunnell Rd., Lebanon, OH 45036—I have just returned from 11 days in Columbia and am happy to report the churches in Bogota and in Manizales are doing well. Herman Genton, an elder with the Lockland church in Cincinnati, went with me, as that church has had a strong and consistent interest in those works for several years.

BOGOTA: There had been reports of some possibly severe problems relative to the idea that apostolic examples and necessary inferences are not binding as a part of the law of God for us today. Two or three of the young men had been studying this issue and we were fearful that they might reject these two means by which the Lord has revealed His will, but I am happy to report that after several hours of discussion on these things, that these men expressed their acceptance of the things I taught and said that we were all in agreement that these things are all means of divine revelation and, therefore, cannot be ignored or rejected as means by which we establish authority. The last night of my stay there, Santiago Castro, the full-time preacher there, apologized for all the trouble he had caused over the questions he had been raising and for the fears caused in those who have been close to that work over the past six years. We had a delightful week with those brethren.

MANIZALES: another wonderful week with Herman Urdinola and the brethren. He continues to be "the cream of the crop" in my judgment so far as overall maturity, stability and Bible study goes. He is doing a very good work and we rejoice in our visits and studies there. Lord willing, I will leave February 20 for a week in Chile, with Efrain Perez, and then a week in Buenos Aires, Argentina, for a week-long lectureship planned by those brethren. Later in the year I hope to do some preaching in Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic.

* * * * *

FERNANDO VENEGAS, Casilla 122 C.C., 5500 Mendoza, Argentina—Another soul has been added here by baptism. Valente Rodrigues of Laredo, Texas was with us for three days in November on his month long trip to Chile.

CARLOS A. CAPELLI, Casilla 83, 1665 Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina—The Lord continues to bless the efforts in Jose C. Paz with two more souls added to the body of Christ. One was formerly a Jehovah's Witness and the other formerly a Catholic. The church in Boulogne has been blessed with three more souls converted to Christ. Two of these were Pentecostals. One man came 15 blocks in his wheel chair to be baptized. After Bible studies with the San Miguel church, two persons were baptized. February 20-24 there will be a lectureship in Presidente Derqui, Buenos Aires with these speakers: Bill Reeves, Royce Chandler, Efrain Perez, Marcos Morgan, Ivan Valdez, Raul Caro, Roberto Perez, Nestor Sanchez, Fernando Venegas, Waldo Sanchez, Tommy Holly.

CAN YOU HELP?

DEAN BULLOCK, P.O. Box 35, Nacogdoches, TX 75963-0035—The Northside church in Georgetown, Texas, began meeting some three or four years ago. They began with eight persons and now number about twenty. Their collection averages about \$200 per week. They are sound in the faith and zealous for the cause. The Georgetown area is growing. Roy Fields, a retired military man, recently moved there to work with them. The local church provides about \$300 a month. The bulk of his support comes from faithful churches elsewhere. Three in the immediate area (Wonsley Dr., Austin; Oaks-West, Burnet; and Southside, Temple).

The Georgetown brethren have no central meeting place. They were renting a place but had to vacate it, and have been unable to rent or lease anything else. They are meeting in homes, but every house is far from where they need to be. They have about \$7,000 for a down payment on lots and are searching for a suitable location. A few contributions from individuals would mean much to them. Address: Northside Church of Christ, c/o Bill Kenas, 803 Cavu Rd., Georgetown, TX 78626.

DEBATE IN PHILIPPINES

Romeo S. Quesada of Ipil, Zamboanga del Sur, Philippines will debate Cyrus Gesulga this spring on Premillennialism. Cyrus Gesulga seems to be the chief man relied upon by the premillennial folks to subvert preachers and churches. It is odd to see American premillennial churches of Christ aid and encourage a henchman in debating when they would not touch a debate here with a ten foot pole. Here they think it is beneath them. They will hobnob with W. Carl Ketcherside and fellowship the Christian Church and fraternize with the sectarians freely. But they could not get very far in the Philippines unless they are willing to publicly debate their cause. I suppose necessity is the mother of invention. An all-out effort is being made to infiltrate as many churches in Mindanao as possible. Thank God for faithful men who are willing to stand up for the truth and be counted.

ITALIAN PREACHER NEEDS SUPPORT

DUDLEY ROSS SPEARS, Rt. 1, Box 121A, Alvaton, KY 42122—Brother Francesco Fosci is a very capable dedicated young man who wants to devote his entire time the remainder of his life to preaching the gospel. At present, he is able and willing, but must limit the preaching he does in order to support his family. He has a wife and two children. He comes highly recommended by brethren Rudolfo Berdini, Allesandro Corazza, Roberto Tondelli and this writer. Any congregation who is able and wants to support a worthy work should give serious consideration to supporting this man. His address: Francesco Fosci Via Leopardi, 5 0411 APRILIA (LATINA) Italy Or you may write to: Rudolfo Berdini

Via Giusepee Perego
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00144 Roma
Italy

The faithful brethren now at work in Italy are men of good character and are doing as much or more as is being done anywhere on the globe. I urge brethren to consider helping this man add to the work force in Italy.

(Editor's note: I also know brother Fosci and highly recommend him. He is mature in the faith, well prepared in study and practical experience and badly needed on a full-time basis.)

DAVID FRASER AT REST

David Fraser (age 48) succumbed to a malignant brain tumor on December 2, 1983. About two years ago he began work with the Middleground Rd. church in Savannah, Georgia. In May X-rays revealed the tumor and an operation confirmed the severity of his condition. On November 27 he lapsed into a coma and died the same week. He was married to Judy Tate of Bessemer, Alabama and preached there for two years. His was a brilliant mind with a phenomenal memory of the scriptures and a fine, clear voice to deliver the word of God in the many meetings and congregations where he proclaimed the word of God for 28 years. Judy is left with three children: Jonathan (15), Hamilton (11) and Elizabeth (8). They presently live at 933 Black Weiner Rd., Savannah, GA 31419.

The funeral was conducted in Bessemer by E. Ray Coates with Huey Hartsell and David Tant assisting. A son, a husband, a father, a preacher, a saint has departed this life and is really missed by all who knew and loved him.

—E. Ray Coates

DEBATES

ROGER L. SHOUSE, P.O. Box 903, Greenwood, IN 46142—April 23, 24, 26 and 27 there will be a debate between L.A. Stauffer and Ben Vick. April 23 and 24 the sessions will be held at the Shelbyville Rd. Church of Christ in Indianapolis and will concern direct support to an evangelist and also the sponsoring church arrangement. On April 26-27 the sessions will be held at Greenwood Church of Christ with the subject being church support of orphan homes. For further information call 888-8288.

HILLSBORO, ALABAMA—A public debate on "Unconditional Salvation" will be conducted on March 12-13 and 15-16, 1984, between Eddie K. Garret (Primitive Baptist) and Thomas N. Thrasher (Christian). This will be the third debate between these men since 1971. The sessions will be held in the building of the Piney Chapel Church of Christ, Alabama Highway 20 (Alternate U.S. 72), Hillsboro, Alabama. This is about 8 miles west of Decatur. Sessions begin at 7:30 P.M. For additional information, call 205-353-3085.

PREACHERS NEEDED

HARRISON, OHIO—Congregation seeks a faithful gospel preacher. We are a small work located 15-20 miles west of Cincinnati. We can provide partial support and would assist in locating possible sources of outside support. We especially are interested in someone with personal work skills. For more information contact: Jim Farris, 102 Circle Dr., Harrison, OH 45030. Phone 513-367-6153.

SHEBOYGAN FALLS, WISCONSIN—Mature preacher needed for a challenging work. Contact: Church of Christ, c/o Mabrey Tayse, Route 1, Bridgewood Rd., Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085.

FRED R. SMITH, P.O. Box 31, Telford, TN 37690—I will be looking for a new location as of April 1, 1984, Anyone interested may contact me at the above address or call 615-257-6215.

----- EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS-----

A NAGGING QUESTION

After six months of sowing seed without seeing any harvest in Norway in the late 1950's we rejoiced in the interest of a young man who became the firstfruits of that work. In the course of our study one day, he fixed his gaze on me and asked me a question which terrified me then and yet disturbs me. He said "If you are teaching the truth, and it is clear that you are, then I am lost and so are all my countrymen. WHY HAVE YOU WAITED SO LONG TO COME AND TELL US?" He accepted my answer but I am not sure it satisfied me. For a long time I awakened in the night thinking about it.

All right, brethren, I'll just drop it on the rest of you. WHY ARE WE WAITING SO LONG TO PREPARE AND SEND MEN TO REACH THE LOST OF THIS WORLD? While there are native preachers at work in Canada, India, South Africa, Nigeria, Italy, the Philippines, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Columbia and perhaps a few other places, do you realize how pitifully few men are currently in the fields of the world from this country? If I am correctly informed, we have about 7% of the world's population and yet about 90% of what gospel preaching is being done to that 7%. Why is this? How many men are preparing to go? How many congregations are seeking men to send and sustain in this work?

Before you lay this down and dismiss the question from your mind, just exactly what would you have said to that young man in Norway if he had put that question to you?

* * * * *

MEN OF CONVICTION

The great need of this, or any, hour is men of conviction. Men who know the truth, have counted the cost of discipleship and who cannot be intimidated, bought off or discouraged. Men who would rather dig ditches or work in a rice paddy, or as a carpenter's helper to keep life and limb together than to sell their souls to the highest bidder and be pampered by rich worldlings who have itching ears and desire only enough religion to appear respectable. Where ears itch, there are usually scratchers who are waiting to be hired. We had a down home expression for that in Virginia when I was a boy. We called such an one "anybody's dog that would hunt with him."

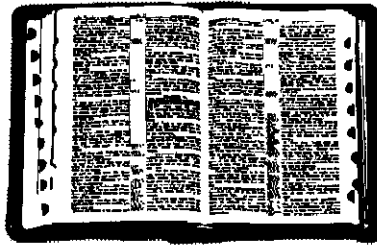
IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	262
RESTORATIONS	79

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

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 XXV

APRIL, 1984

NUMBER 4

THINK ON
THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



UNSCRIPTURAL ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF CROSSROADS

In New Testament days every local church had "bishops and deacons with the saints" (Phil. 1:1). Every church had elders appointed to oversee that church (Acts 14:23; 20:28); this was true in every city (Titus 1:5), and their scope of work was limited to that flock where they were overseers (1 Peter 5:2,3). That is all the organization the New Testament church had.

Each church had the opportunity to grow to the extent of its ability. There were no special rewards offered, no praise given, no special glory expressed to any church because of its large membership. Several churches in New Testament days grew rapidly in the beginning days. The record we have in the early chapters of Acts concern the activity in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria where large numbers were added to the Lord, but when Paul was in Athens, as recorded in Acts 17, the record does not give the glowing success in numbers as found in Jerusalem. Only a few believed. That did not signify anything wrong with the gospel, or with the preacher, or that the church had no plan.

Crossroads church is aggressive by the very nature of its philosophy, and defensive of its name and work. It is a success at what it strives to accomplish. The organization functions smoothly. It is WHAT is being done and HOW it is being done that concerns us at this point. The fact that the operation runs smoothly and is successful at something does not indicate that it is scriptural in either its organization or its operation.

Unscriptural Power and Control at Crossroads

Who has the power at Crossroads? Who is the real architect of the campus ministry? Who controls and directs the policies and programs at Crossroads?

There are times when expediency and best judgment must dictate that the Crossroads elders, Rogers Bartley and Richard Whitehead, step forward and speak out, sign a statement or make a defense of the Crossroads system. But the whole country knows that Charles "Chuck" Lucas holds the power at Crossroads church. Here is some of the best evidence to that fact:

1. The very operation of Crossroads revolves around Chuck Lucas. The printed material from Crossroads boldly points to Lucas; nearly any defense of the Crossroads doctrine and practice will be made by Lucas. His name, person and plans will move more wheels in the operation than anyone else. I realize there are some zealous young fireballs who are well trained, but as long as Lucas is around he will be the power.

2. The outpost churches—those established or taken over by Crossroads trained ministers (Yater Tant says there are nearly a hundred, editorial, Vanguard, January 1984) acknowledge Chuck Lucas as the director of the Crossroads system. Most of them will deny that they have any connection with Lucas or Crossroads, but when either comes under fire they immediately come to their defense. If you can keep them in discussion with you on the subject, you will learn three facts: 1) Lucas IS the power at Crossroads, at least in their minds; 2) Crossroads is NOT just a local church at work, but an organization with tentacles from headquarters in Gainesville into many sections of the nation; and 3) Crossroads presents the face of an extremely successful church, but the inner-workings are a destructive force to Bible authority.

3. The elders at Crossroads reflect Lucas as the person in power. Certainly they would not admit this for they likely do not realize it. But in their attitude and practice they are subordinate to Lucas, and his name and his skill of operation prove it!

4. The critics of Crossroads all acknowledge Chuck Lucas as the head of the movement. The Gospel Advocate addressed Lucas as the leading advocate of errors

taught at Crossroads church. One could not read the articles appearing in the Gospel Advocate about Crossroads without understanding that they perceive Lucas to be the power in the Crossroads system.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr. and his staff have painted the pages of several issues of his paper, Contending For The Faith, with a "skinning" of Chuck Lucas, the elders and the "Crossroads Philosophy." Probably no source has presented more evidence in picture, correspondence, reports and articles of the scandalous activities of some in connection with Crossroads than Ira Rice and his staff. I do not know whether it is all fact or not. Crossroads vehemently denies their charges. My purpose here is not to judge the validity and accuracy of the charges in Rice's paper, but to show that from their articles they recognize Chuck Lucas as the principal one with influence and power at Crossroads.

5. Campus ministers and Crossroads ministers around the nation consider Lucas to be the center of operation. I have talked to some of them and I have read what several have said in defense of Lucas and heard them praise him. They consider him to be the most important person connected with the Crossroads movement.

6. Those outside: people of the world, the media, denominations of the area, and the business world. We generally understand that those of the world have some idea that the preacher is the man with power, but due to publicity about Crossroads there is a more concrete way in which Lucas is considered the man of power.

Unscriptural Activity And Methods at Crossroads

The "ministries" at Crossroads and their organized arrangements are in evidence as to the unscriptural organization of the system. Following are some of the works listed by Crossroads in both the bulletin and the budget:

1. **Christian Family Services.** This is a ministry of Crossroads designed to assist families in distress (Taken from letter of August 23, 1983, by Kent Brand, ACSW Director of Social Services). This program is also a child adopting agency through which children are placed in homes. In the letter just mentioned a footnote stated that eight children had been adopted through this agency so far this year (1983).

New Testament churches have no authority to be involved in child adoption programs of any kind. This is a family, social or government matter.

2. **My School** is a day school, open to the public, where the facilities, personnel and care are provided by Crossroads. It is a "ministry" of that church, but they charge for the service. It is another example of an unscriptural operation through an unauthorized organization within the church.

Providing school for children on any level is not the function of the church of the Lord. There is no Bible authority for any thing but spiritual and moral teaching from the word of God.

3. **Evangelistic Campus Ministry.** This operation has a high priority both as to time and money spent. It is a tightly knit and well organized operation. Those who

(Continued on Page 4)

Searching The Scriptures

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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A SHAMEFUL FAILURE

That the gospel is for all men of all nations is too well known among Christians to be a subject of dispute. The seed of Abraham was to bless all nations (Gen. 12:3). On Solomon's porch in Jerusalem, Peter cited this promise and said "Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:26). The business of turning men away from sin and to God should be the principal concern of the people of God, both collectively and individually.

Sin ravages the soul and alienates the sinner from God. In that condition he is dead, walks according to the course of the world, serves the Devil, has a disobedient spirit which fits him for the just wrath of God (Eph. 2:1-3). Those to whom the gospel is hidden are lost (2 Cor. 4:3). Those who obey not the gospel will perish (2 Thes. 1:6-9). The gospel is God's power to save the lost (Rom. 1:16), The gospel provisions spring from the rich love, abundant mercy and amazing grace of God (Eph. 2:4-10).

But the gospel must be taught. Our Lord's religion requires a teacher or preacher to go and make known the gospel of the grace of God. In the New Testament both individuals and congregations had fellowship with those who went about teaching the truth. John wrote that when Christians "bring forward on their journey" those who went forth "for his name's sake" that in so doing they became "fellowhelpers to the truth" (2 Jno. 6-8). Churches supplied wages to Paul at Corinth (2 Cor. 11:8). At Thessalonica, the church at Philippi "sent once and again" unto his necessity (Phil. 4:15-16). This is God's plan. It is simple. It worked then and it will work now.

Brethren, we are not ignorant of these things. We often speak of them. Yet, in works we deny what we confidently affirm to be so. Many congregations are doing very little to even evangelize their own immediate neighborhoods. There are populous areas of this nation which are virtually untouched with the gospel. Even in states where there are numerous congregations, some of which are large and prosperous, there are yet vast areas in those very states which are barren fields. Christians work every day for years with people, sit down day after day with them at lunch time, or stand around and chat with them at "coffee break" time and never once mention the Lord, his church or the gospel.

Christians live for years in the same community, converse amicably with neighbors, work with parents in school affairs, little leagues and projects to better the community, but never once mention the Lord. Some are not even trying to evangelize their own children. They are given clothing, food and drink, money, their own television set, education and preparation for some avocation, but leave the family nest ignorant of that which they need most—a personal knowledge and conviction of truth. When God, Christ and the word of God were not part and parcel of daily life, it is no great surprise that such children are converted to the persistent voice of humanism.

Beyond that, there are vast reaches of the world where no men and women labor to plant the seed of the kingdom. Indeed, as the song goes "millions are groping without the gospel." Who will go? Who will send?

The task will not be done until we absorb the attitude of our Lord when he looked upon the multitudes in his day. First he "looked." There are opportunities and open doors, if we will only look. Then, he looked "with compassion." It mattered to him whether they were serving God or not. Until we develop a yearning for souls, springing from hearts full of deep feeling for mankind, (perceived not in mass, but in units of one), we shall continue to fail. Then he charged the disciples when he said "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few." Next, he urged them to "pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:36-39).

The number of men and their families now working around the globe is pitifully small. What few are scattered among the nations are overworked and often undersupported. The world is aflame now with wars, terrorism and greed. The answer to these perplexities is found in the same one who calmed the turbulence of the sea with his word. When his word is planted now in the hearts of men, it produces not only peace with God, but the by-product of it is peace with all men as much as possible. Wherever God's people are found, there is light to illuminate the darkness, and salt to add seasoning to what would otherwise be an unsavory mixture.

While the world groans under the burden of sin with all its tragic consequences, we pride ourselves in the "good life." We have our houses, lands, cars, boats, campers, trips, televisions, micro-waves, video-tape recorders, stereos and retirement plans. And, oh yes, aren't we fortunate to be only 15 minutes from the meeting house? There we park on neatly striped pavement, after letting out wives out under the carport, walk into vestibules covered with lush carpet, enter a well heated (or cooled) auditorium, sit down upon a cushioned pew, sing "Count Your Many Blessings" and "The Gospel Is For All", hear a sermon, put our check in the basket (after all, don't we send \$100 a month to some poor fellow out in who knows where to help him preach), then rush out to beat the Baptists to the cafeteria and rejoice in that we have "done" our religion for the week!

There are congregations with huge bank accounts and no plans made to use the Lord's money in the very

work for which it was given. Some of these will not even answer a letter from a godly man who has compassion on souls without a shepherd and who asks a modest amount of help to go to the back side of the world and preach the gospel.

Why are so few even talking about going to some needy field to preach the gospel? Where is the failure? Is it in the pulpit? Is it with the elders? Is it with parents (or grandparents) who encourage their children to do everything else but teach the gospel? Parents, let me ask you a question. If your son were to announce to you that he earnestly wants to go to some far away place to plant the seed of the kingdom, what would you do? Would you encourage him or think up two dozen reasons why he should not go? If your daughter were married to such a man, what would be your reaction? If they have children (your grand children), what would be your reaction?

Elders, let me ask you a question. Have you looked over your teaching program to see to it that effort is made to prepare young men and women for lives of devotion to gospel work, at home and abroad? Or do you plan that for an "off night" when perhaps a small hand-full show up?

Will God hold us guiltless who are so blessed, if we selfishness clasp the gospel to our bosoms, lock it up in the back corners of our minds, and occasionally dare to sound it forth to the four walls of the meeting house? Brethren, look at the huddled masses of humanity without a shepherd. Have compassion—feel their hurt and despair. See them, not as poor unfortunate souls just to be pitied, but as a **harvest of grain** ready to be gathered. See yourself as one of the **laborers**. **Pray** for others to enter into the harvest. Our failure is intolerable. May the Lord have mercy on us.

(Continued from Page 1)

succeed in this work are used in other areas to organize and put into operation such programs.

4. Florida Evangelism Seminar and Youth Forum. This is a program of lectures, sermons, classes, youth forums, special training programs, banquets, entertainment and programming for further expansion of the Crossroads philosophy. Some young men have been sent to these seminars to be prepared for the Crossroads style evangelism.

Crossroads has been having these annual seminars since 1967. This was the launching pad for their campus ministry program, soul talks, prayer partners, retreats and advances, school of ministry, and a dozen other programs.

5. The Crossroads Singers. This special group of trained singers form a chorus in the Crossroads church which they list as a "mission activity." They write that this group "is an integral part of the total unit and work of the congregation," for evangelizing and edification.

The Crossroads Singers was formed in 1973 as a special group for the purpose of entertaining and giving

special worship in song at Crossroads and other churches. They perform as any other secular group for entertainment at special functions such as dedications of malls, college buildings, fairs, special interest groups, tours and "concerts" all over the country. They sing secular songs to entertain in church buildings, often at Crossroads. They sing songs of praise and worship at functions where the setting is obviously secular and the singing is for entertainment. In a word, the Crossroads Singers is an important part of the system for promotion, display, entertainment, recruiting of new members, and not to be forgotten, it is a source of **INCOME!** They produce and sell tapes and records of their songs. One such album was advertised by Crossroads as follows:

Holiday Souvenirs

The Crossroads Singers are pleased to announce the arrival of their latest album—Holiday Souvenirs. It is a collection of traditional songs of the holiday season, as well as several original compositions. It is available in records, 8-track tapes, and cassettes for \$6.98 each. Included are 'Home for the Holidays,' 'White Christmas,' 'Silver Bells,' 'Winter Wonderland,' 'Silent Night,' and more. Orders and inquiries should be sent to The Crossroads Singers, 2720 S.W. 2nd Ave., Gainesville, Florida 32607."

The money from sales of tapes and records and "concerts" go into the church treasury at Crossroads, and expenses for the Singers are paid by the church. At least the budget indicates that. In the 1983 Crossroads church budget the Crossroads Singers were given \$13,402.00 from contributions (Lord's day), and nearly \$55,000.00 "funded separately."

6. Tape Ministry and Book Ministry. This operation has become a business within itself. Tapes of sermons, Seminars, Retreats, Lectures and other activities are offered for sale by the church. The book ministry publishes and sells books to its membership and to the general public. This is an operation like any commercial business.

Unscriptural Revenue And Use of Funds at Crossroads

I believe the New Testament is quite clear in its authority for both the source of revenue for the church and the expenditure of those funds. The only authority for income for the church is the first day contribution of saints (1 Cor. 16:1, 2). The silence of the scriptures forbids revenue from any commercial endeavor, funds from persons other than saints, and proceeds from investments.

The New Testament church is authorized to use funds to support the preaching of the gospel (1 Cor, 9:14; Phil. 4:15; 1 Tim. 3:15), to provide some place for worship and the essentials to that end, and to provide benevolence to the saints for whom it is responsible. Beyond that the church has no responsibility.

The 1983 budget of Crossroads shows two separate sources of income: "Funded by Contributions" and "Funded Separately." The latter is from sales of books,

tapes, records, registration fees for Seminars, Forums, Ministers training, kindergarten and day school, charges from camp sites and activities at Fanning Springs, interest from loans made to students and others, rental property or financed homes for poor members who pay mortgages with interest, and a dozen other similar sources of income. The Singers earn money for some of their concerts.

Crossroads is a system which renders a service to many different people who pay and calls it a "ministry" of Crossroads church of Christ. The amount of income at Crossroads from other than contributions is nearly as much as the annual contributions.

The fact that Crossroads flourishes as a commercial business in many different areas, is established proof that it is not the New Testament church, but an unscriptural organization doing an unauthorized work.

ANSWERS for our hope

Send Bible questions to:

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ELDERS AND ADOPTED CHILDREN

QUESTION: Will you please write an article on whether a man with only adopted children can qualify as an elder and if those children can disqualify him if they stray from the truth?—A.M.

ANSWER: The verses which involve the qualifications of an elder in relation to his children are:

"One that ruleth well his own home, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)" (1 Tim. 3:4, 5).

"If any be blameless, the husband and wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly" (Titus 1:6).

The answer to the first question can best be understood and appreciated after a study of the meaning and use of the word "adoption" in New Testament times. Such study is very significant.

W. E. Vine defines the Greek word translated "adoption" as follows: "HUIOTHESIA, from huios, a son, and thesis, a placing, akin to tithemi, to place, signifies the place and condition of a son given to one to whom it does not naturally belong."

According to Roman law and the concept prevailing in New Testament times the term was more meaningful then than in our day. This is evident from the study of a few quotations from authorities.

William Barclay in commenting on Eph. 1:5 says, "In the ancient world where Roman law prevailed, this would be an even more meaningful picture than it is to us. In the Roman world the family was based on what was called the patria potestas, the father power." He then proceeds to emphasize the "father power" in relation to the adopted child. Of course, the rights and privileges of the adopted child are also significant which he admits, saying, "The person who had been adopted had all the rights of a legitimate son in his new family, and completely lost all rights in his old family. In the eyes of the law he was a new person" (THE LETTERS TO THE GALATIANS AND EPHESIANS, pp. 91, 92).

Charles R. Eerdman says, "The word translated 'adoption as sons' is peculiar to Paul. It expresses a particular relation to God, implying special privileges of access and communion and also the rights of inheritance. It is an idea borrowed from Roman law. According to this provision one who was a stranger in blood became a member of the family into which he was adopted, and had all the rights and privileges which would have been his had he been a son by birth" (EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS, p. 30). I can well understand what this meant to the early Christians from the view-point of assurance—no favoritism from God the Father toward those who became adopted sons, whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

From Vincent's WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT we learn that the word "adoption" is from "huios son, and thesis a setting or placing: the placing one in the position of a son. Mr. Merivale, illustrating Paul's acquaintance with Roman law, says: 'The process of legal adoption by which the chosen heir became entitled not only to the reversion of the property but to the civil status, to the burdens as well as the rights of the adopter—became, as it were, his other self, one with him . . .'" (p. 708). Vincent proceeds to focus attention upon the union of the father and the adopted son.

In view of the meaning and use of the word "adoption" in New Testament times, I do not see how anyone could exclude an adopted child from the word "children" in the qualifications of an elder, especially if the father were one who had "brought up" the adopted child in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

It would follow from this conclusion that just as surely as a child related by blood can disqualify an elder, so may an adopted child.

The qualification of an elder related to his children has to do with his ability to rule those under his jurisdiction. There is both a positive and negative aspect to the qualification. Positively, he must have his children "in subjection with all gravity"—have "faithful children" or "children that believe" (ASV). Whether the word translated "faithful" relates to the father or the Lord is a point of some controversy, but it hardly seems possible to me that a father could have a child "in subjection with all gravity," if that accountable child were not in subjection to divine authority. This is further confirmed by the negative aspect of the qualification:

"not accused of riot or unruly." The word "unruly" simply means not in submission to duly constituted authority. This would include parental, civil, and divine authority. If the word "children" means one or more in the positive aspect of the qualification (and I hold that it does), then it means the same thing in the negative aspect of the qualification. This means that the individual with only one accountable child (though he may have more not yet of accountable age) meets the demands of this qualification, if that child is a faithful Christian. However, if he has two accountable children and one is "faithful" and the other is not, he fails the qualification—having "one or more" who is "unruly," i.e., not submissive to divine authority.

It should be remembered that this qualification has to do with one's ability to rule those under his jurisprudence, hence, "his own house." A father's "rule" does not extend to another household—not even that of his son or daughter. The rule of elders is limited to the congregation "which is among you" (1 Pet. 5:2), and the rule of a father is limited to his own house. Hence, I do not hold that in every instance children who "stray from the truth" after they leave their father's house and establish households of their own constitute a reflection upon the father's ability to rule those under his jurisprudence. Perhaps other factors besides this particular qualification should be considered in such instances.

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The Mystery of Iniquity

Eugene Britnell

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AN AMBASSADOR TO THE VATICAN

On November 22, 1983, President Reagan signed the State Department Authorization Bill that included an amendment lifting the 1867 prohibition against expenditure of funds to support diplomatic relations with the Vatican. The road is now open for an ambassador to the Catholic Church. This development represents a serious and dramatic reversal of the long-established U.S. policy of not having such official relations with the Vatican.

We honor and respect our president, but we oppose this action. We think our readers are interested in our views, and those of others, on this controversial issue.

Just what is the Catholic Church? Is it a religion or a state or both? If it is a civil state, then it should stop pretending to be the church. On the other hand, if it is only a religion, then why official connections with nations? Why not also send ambassadors to the headquarters of other major religions and denominations of the world?

In providing answers for the above questions, the following quotations may be helpful:

"The fact is that the Vatican is a state-church hybrid which alternately poses as a church and as a state depending on which will prove the most profitable at the moment. The Vatican claims all prerogatives as a state, but denies all responsibilities as a state because it is a church." (C. Stanley Lowell, *Christianity Today*, Feb. 1, 1960.)

The Roman Church believes it has authority to enter the political arena and control the affairs of the world. O. C. Lambert proved this by quoting the following from their own source:

"There is nothing strange in attributing to the Roman Pontiff the fullest authority and power to lay bare, a just cause moving him, not only the spiritual but also the material sword, and so to transfer sovereignties, break sceptres, and remove crowns. The canonists produce numerous instances when this has been actually done, as when Gregory II deposed the Byzantine emperor Leo III; Gregory VII deposed the emperor Henry IV; Innocent IV in the Council of Lyons deposed the emperor Frederick II." (Catholic Dictionary, p. 258.)

George W. Cornell, AP Religion Writer, said, "Among Roman Catholics, bishops had been non-committal prior to Tuesday's formal announcement by the Vatican, although some have reservations. Jewish leaders have shown no particular concern about it."

"Except for objections by Baptist and Seventh-day Adventist leaders, most Protestant opposition has come not from current denominational leaders, but from umbrella agencies on the basis of past stands, some not reviewed by denominational representatives for decades.

"The reactions seemed distinctly mellowed from the storm of protest that arose when the late President Harry Truman sought to take the same action in 1951, but dropped it."

The difference in the degree of opposition in 1951 and today may be attributed to a change in attitude and conviction among religious leaders. Ours is an age of compromise. One is not to say that anyone or anything is wrong in religion.

According to the **Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine**, James T. Draper, Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Convention, called it an "extreme disappointment" and said it "violates every rule of reason as it relates to church and state." He further stated, "The Vatican controls no country so there is absolutely no reason for any formal tie."

A brief news item in the newspapers on February 8 said: "Rev. Billy Graham, the evangelist, played a behind-the-scenes role in President Reagan's decision to establish formal diplomatic relations with the Vatican, the Rochester **Post-Bulletin** reported in Rochester, Minn."

So Billy Graham was in the deal. It would be interesting to know what his behind-the-scenes role may have entailed. With no more conviction than he has, we would not be shocked to hear of Graham's endorsement of Catholicism. He doesn't condemn it!

Liberty magazine offered four interesting objections to the Vatican appointment:

"1. Diplomatic ties with the Holy See run counter to the fundamental U.S. concept of separation of church and state.

"2. Vatican City is really an artificial state. It is exclusively the headquarters of a church—the Church of Rome.

"3. It is impossible in practice to differentiate clearly between the Pope as head of the Roman Catholic Church and as head of the Vatican City state.

"4. The manner of the Senate's surprise action favoring diplomatic relations with the Holy See seems inappropriate and a cause for concern."

We now quote from a letter by Travis L. Bishop of Malvern, Arkansas to the local paper. Having observed that Christ built His church (Matt. 16:18), and that it is a kingdom that is "not of this world" (John 18:36), he said:

"When the great falling away came (I Tim. 4:1), one of the first things that the carnally-minded church did was to start diplomatic adventures with Rome under Constantine. Little did he and the following Emperors realize the nightmare they had conjured up for when the Pope came to rule, freedom became a fading dream. Under that Religious Theocracy the torch of freedom went entirely out while the dark ages settled over the world.

"But the flickering fires of the bodies of many martyrs kindled a burning passion for religious and political independence that could only shine brightly in separation of church and state. The waves of freedom would wash upon a different shore as multitudes fled the tyranny of the Holy See. A new nation was born in this search for freedom. My fellow Americans, we cast out this spirit of popery once. Shall we invite him and his legions back? See Matthew 12:43-45.

"I know that the Papal head is more than ready to let a U.S. attache into the walls of the Vatican. The spider is always willing for the fly to come into his parlor—why, he'll even invite him to dinner. It is obvious that Mr. Reagan is pleased with what he has done, but remember: 'A lady from Nigar smiled as she rode on the back of a tiger. The tiger returned with the lady inside and the smile on the face of the tiger.'"

The moves to appoint an ambassador to the Vatican were very subtle. Announcement was made in a one-sentence statement. To endeavor to bring about such a radical change in a longstanding national policy without public discussion and with no hearings seems to be a circumvention of the democratic process. Such an appointment merits full debate and careful constitutional scrutiny. It is much too momentous a question to be settled without recorded votes and without opportunity for input by interested parties. But we know politics, and remember the percentage of Roman Catholics in the Congress.

Ironically, about the time our ambassador to the Vatican was announced, it was reported that the nation of Italy and the city of Rome were taking steps to break some relations with the Vatican! They have had enough, while we are just getting started.



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BREAD OF LIFE

"I am the bread of life. . . so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." Jno. 6:35, 57.

Henschel E. Patton
7637 Fleming Hills Dr. S.W.
Huntsville, Ala. 35802



I am honored by the request of brother Connie Adams to write a periodic column for *Searching The Scriptures*. The magazine has a very fine group of writers. Because of it's influence for good, I am glad to contribute what ever I can to the teaching of God's Word to all who will read.

I have chosen to write under the heading, "Bread of Life". Jesus, being the bread of life on which we are to feed, means every teaching of our Lord, or that authorized by Him, is bread of life. This gives a very wide field of subjects or themes. As long as it is the teaching, character, or practice of Christ, it is bread of life. In this initial article, I want to expand on this thought, which may be entitled—

EATING THE BREAD OF LIFE

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:32-35).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am the bread of life" (John 6:47-48).

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world"

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" (John 6:53-58).

WHAT IS THE BREAD?

Having just miraculously fed a multitude, he said to some who sought him, because they "did eat. . . and were filled", "Labour not for the meat which perisheth,

but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the son of man shall give unto you" (John 6:27). Jesus pointed to a "meat" different from that for which they physically labored, identifying it as a meat "that endureth unto everlasting life" and given through the Son of man. When the people asked "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Jesus replied with "believe on him whom he hath sent," thus pointing to faith in Christ as the meat or bread for which man should labor. He then identifies the "true bread" as "He (A he, not a something) which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world" (vs. 33); In other words, Himself (vs. 35).

How One Eats Of This Bread

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." A material illustration of this statement might be, Here is the grainery: he that comes and partakes of what is therein shall be fed or fully supplied. Eating of the spiritual bread (Christ) involves these same conditions. Coming to Christ is a must (Matt. 11:28). The comer must be a believer, and believing involves more than mental accent (Jno. 12:42; Jas. 2:19). The how of eating this bread is expressed thusly in John 6:40, "that everyone that seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting life". An educational process is involved, "hearing and learning" (vs. 44-45), which produces faith (Rom. 10:17).

When Jesus said "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (vs. 51), He was referring to his death on the cross. Since believing is equated with eating, then the death of Christ must be believed and accepted in order to have eternal life. "Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed" (vs. 53-55). Here are life-giving ingredients. Jesus further says, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven" (vs. 56-58). To eat of this bread that results in everlasting life is simply a matter of coming to Christ in true gospel obedience.

Continual Eating

Christ is not only the life-giving bread for the redemption of lost, starved, spiritually dead man, but he is the bread that sustains spiritual life. The one who passes "from death unto life" through Christ must continue to feast on this bread (eat and drink the blood of Christ) or he will weaken and die. The new born babe in Christ must desire and feed upon "the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Pet. 2:2), and "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:16).

Our Lord says "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. . . for without me ye can do nothing" (Jno. 15:4-5). Continual feast-

ing upon Christ is a matter of abiding in Him, His word abiding in us, remaining faithful in the midst of purging, and bearing fruit (Jno. 15:) Indeed, Christ is the bread or meat of life. Eating and drinking involves an obedient, living, active faith. Faithfulness in study, prayer, worship, endurance, separateness from the world, and diligence in every good work is eating and drinking of the life-giving bread from heaven.

SPECIAL FEATURE

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS, GRACE AND FORGIVENESS—NO. 1

by
Franklin T. Puckett

(The following is the first of three articles of a sermon preached by brother Puckett at Paden City, W. Va. not too long before his death. He had not planned to preach this sermon on that occasion but got started in that direction and just kept going. Thanks to Paul Rockwell of Paden City for supplying the tape and to Carol Smith of Xenia, Ohio for transcribing the sermon. We have omitted some preliminary remarks and we regret that the tape ran out before brother Puckett finished. However, the major thrust of his speech will be presented,—Weldon E. Warnock)

There are those who are now holding to the idea that children of God can be wrong in their lives and in their practices and in their beliefs, and that they can even live in these errors and die in them, and that God will take the imputed righteousness of Christ, the perfectness of Christ, take it and apply unto us who are over here, and accept us as being righteous because Jesus Christ was righteous, even though we are unrighteous. My friends, that is not what the Bible teaches. And such a supposition is fraught with all kinds of dangers.

I

Now it is true that Jesus Christ lived perfectly. And he was absolutely sinless and by his sinless perfection he was qualified to serve as the sacrifice for our sins, for he was the Lamb of God without spot, without blemish. And, not only that, he is thereby qualified to become for us our Advocate with the Father and the minister in the role of our great High Priest. But the perfection of Christ is not, somehow, transferred to us. I know that none of us are perfect, but all of us will sometime stumble and fall. But God's grace is provided for us by means of the atonement that Jesus Christ, the perfect One made, a system whereby we who are guilty of sin can come to the forgiveness of our sin and stand innocent in that forgiveness.

But the righteousness that is attributed unto us is that righteousness that comes when our sins have been

remitted, not while we are still continuing in them, but when our sins have been forgiven. And any thing that is necessary for the forgiveness of sins is essential unto being accounted righteous. And in order that we might see that, and this is not my subject, I'm just giving you a free sermon before I get started. But in order that we might see that, in Romans, chapter 4, the apostle Paul declares that David describeth the righteousness which is apart from works, and how did he describe it? "Saying, blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. 4:6-8). Now, to whom is it that the Lord does not impute sin? Who is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin? It is the man whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. That's what the word of God says about it and that's what I believe!

But this man whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered does not have sin imputed to him because of this forgiveness. And since he must not have charged to him because of their being forgiven, he stands in the same condition as if he had never committed sin. Had he never committed sin he would have been declared innocent, righteous, not guilty. And now that his sins have been forgiven, he can be declared innocent, righteous, not guilty. It is he who is righteous because through the redemption that is in Christ, he has come to the forgiveness of his sins. And whether he be alien sinner of erring child of God, my friend, whatever is necessary for the forgiveness of sins is necessary for the imputation of righteousness.

Now we could spend the rest of our time tonight and tomorrow night and the next night on this subject, dealing with the various facets that belong to it and with some of the sophistry that is used in connection with it. But I want you to see the truth regardless of what people may say about imputed righteousness, according to the word of God.

As given here in Romans, chapter 4, a person to whom the Lord does not impute sin is the person whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. And this is the person to whom he imputes righteousness, apart from works. So if you want righteousness imputed unto you, you are going to have to come to the forgiveness of your sins and if you are an alien sinner, you are going to have to come in compliance with those conditions of pardon by which one who is an alien obtains forgiveness. If you are an erring child of God, you are going to have to come unto the forgiveness of your sins by compliance of the conditions upon which our sins are forgiven. And so we need to learn those conditions and realize the necessity of walking day by day in the humility of spirit and of soul and of mind, complying with every condition of pardon that we may stand free of sin and have righteousness imputed unto us.

II

Now, what is righteousness? Words are the signs of ideas. We need to know what words mean. The word, "righteousness," is used here in the Scripture as a term that means "the investiture of righteousness or ac-

cepted as righteous or justification." A second definition is "the state or condition of being as such an one ought to be." And a third is "innocence, not guilty, acquitted, pardoned." These are definitions of the term "righteousness." Now the person who is righteous is one who is accounted not guilty. The word, "impute," simply means "to account, to regard, to deem." One is regarded or deemed innocent, not guilty, either when he has never committed a sin or when, having committed a sin, his sins are forgiven. And so, while the Bible talks about the possibility of one being righteous through two different processes, one by law, the other through faith, to be accounted righteous by law would demand sinless perfection of us so that we would never have violated divine law at any point, but would be as innocent and as perfect in our doing that which is right as was the Son of God, himself. None of us can so be accounted righteous because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

So if we are ever accounted righteous it will have to be through faith and we are accounted righteous through faith when, by the faith, we through faith, come in compliance with the conditions on which forgiveness of sins is bestowed. When our sins are forgiven, then we are innocent, not guilty, having been acquitted or pardoned of our sins. That is what it means to be accounted righteous or to have righteousness imputed unto you.

Now you watch what I am telling you, brethren. This very position is not simply an innocent position that brethren assume. It is part of Calvinian theology. It has been the teaching of Protestant denominationalism down through the years. While some would deny it's logical proof, other readily accept it. And some among us have already begun to accept it. But the logical end of that kind of teaching that, here, we can live in sin, be imperfect, and thus continue in our wrong doing without compliance with the conditions of pardon, and God will take the perfection of Christ and say, "Well, he is a Christian. I will put it over here with him," will yield as its ultimate fruit the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy. It can't keep from it.

Already, some are beginning to take that position that we are always in grace, in the grace of God. Well, that expression can be used in different senses. True, those who are Christians have come into that relationship which grace has established. In that sense they continue in it. True, we are under the influence and direction of the gospel and in that sense we are under the grace of God. But when we do wrong even as children of God, we do not stand in divine favor for the wrong we do until we get forgiveness of it. Now we are not again thrown back into the world but we are still covenant children of God in that sense—are continuing in the covenant of grace, the gospel of Christ, but we cannot go out and continue in sin without being guilty. When we are guilty God will charge sin against us. The only hope that we can have is to get forgiveness of it. Now that's what the Bible teaches.

Now this idea that Christians can get out here and go off the straight and narrow, start practicing things that are erroneous without divine authority, and that God

will just continue to hold them in divine favor, that they can live in error and die in it, and every thing is all right, is completely out of harmony with what the Bible teaches. And it's going to encourage a lot of people to continue in their wrong doing, thinking it's all right.

And that is exactly what Jeremiah was talking about as we quoted him last night when he talked about those that would say that no evil would come upon you, no harm will come upon you, peace be unto you. And God said that they would encourage them to continue in their sin and would not turn from the error of their way. If you don't point out what is wrong, why then, they will never be encouraged to turn from the error of their way. Now this emphasis that is now being placed upon this has for its background something that you should keep in view that you may have it in proper perspective.

—To be continued

Using Great Plainness of Speech

J. T. Smith

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PROOF TEXTS AND DEFINITIONS

Today those who endeavor to bring lost souls to Christ are plagued by finding so many who, even though perhaps in their 20s, have already been divorced and remarried a number of times. This is due in part to the "no fault" divorce law that has now been ratified in nearly all fifty states. In most large cities an uncontested divorce may be obtained for less than \$100.00.

What should we do about the people who are in this condition? Should we "overlook" all of these adulterous relationships and, like the ostrich, hide our head in the sand and hope the problem will go away? It is not going away. If anything, it will probably get worse.

In giving some of the reasons for the decline and fall of the old Roman Empire, Gibbon said it was: "The rapid increase of divorce: the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society" (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 1788). It appears that this is the exact road we here in America are traveling today.

In this article, I want us to read all of the New Testament passages that actually deal with divorce and remarriage. Later on in our study, I will deal with some passages that brethren "think" apply to these issues. **Matthew 5:32**—"But I say unto you that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." **Matthew 19:9**—"And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall

marry another, committeth adultery: whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." **Mark 10:11-12**—"And he said unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."

Luke 16:18—"Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."

Romans 7:2-3—"For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she shall be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from the law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

I Corinthians 7:10-11—"And unto the married I command, yet not I but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband; But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife."

Definition of Words

Besides having before us the passages that deal with subject, I also want to define some of the "key words" that we will be discussing in this study. You will probably need to refer to these definitions from time to time.

"Put Away"

According to Mr. Joseph Henry Thayer in his Greek-English Lexicon, the words "put away" are from the Greek word *apoluo* and mean, when used to divorce, "to dismiss from the house, to repudiate" (Thayer, Page 66). W. E. Vine in his Dictionary of New Testament Words (Volume 3, Pages 235-236) defines *apoluo* as, "To put asunder, to send away, Matthew 19:6, Mark 10:9." Sometimes people confuse the "putting away" with the writing of divorcement. Even though both are involved in that which Jesus was discussing, the word "divorce" is a technical term that is used in the English language implying the right, according to civil law, to remarry. "(1) Legal dissolution of marriage; (2) Complete separation" (Webster's New World Dictionary, Page 181).

"Fornication"

The word "fornication" is from the Greek word *porneia* and means, "prop, of illicit sexual intercourse in general" (Thayer, Page 532). "Prostitution, unchastity, fornication, of every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse" (Arndt and Gingrich's Greek-English Lexicon, Page 699). "Which is rare in classical Greek originally meant 'prostitution,' 'fornication,' but came to be applied to unlawful sexual intercourse in general" (Moulton and Millikan, Page 529). In the New Testament the word *porneia* ("fornication") is sometimes used for "adultery," as it involves married people; "homosexuality," illicit sexual relations with those of the same sex; "incest," sexual intercourse with family members; and

"bestiality," as one tries to satisfy his sexual desire with animals.

"Adultery"

The word "adultery" is from the Greek word *moicheuo*. Its basic meaning is, "to commit adultery with, to have unlawful intercourse with another's wife" (Thayer, Page 417). In the Old Testament the word "adultery" was used almost exclusively of all kinds of illicit acts. In fact, according to Young's Analytical Concordance, the word "fornication" was only five (5) times in the Old Testament, and each time it was used in a figurative sense to refer to the illicit spiritual actions of God's people (Ezekiel 16:15, 26,29; II Chronicles 21:11; and Isaiah 23:17). Although in the New Testament the word "adultery" is generally used to denote illicit sexual intercourse with another's spouse, it is sometimes used in (in context) to include all people, cf. Matthew 5:28, II Peter 2:14.

"Bound"

The word "bound" is from the Greek word *deo* and means "to bind by a legal or moral tie, as marriage, Romans 7:2; I Corinthians 7:23,39" (Bagster's Analytical Greek Lexicon, Page 89). "To bind, i.e. put under obligation, sc. of law, duty, etc. to be bound of one; of a wife, Romans 7:27, 39" (Thayer, Page 131). As you can observe from the definition of the word, the "binding" is a "spiritual binding" in the mind of God. The same idea is set forth in the word "joined" in Matthew 19:6. "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." The word "joined" in this passage is from the Greek word *sunzeugnumi* and means, "to yoke together, is used metaphorically of union in wedlock" (W. E. Vine, Page 616). Since it is God's law that binds, only God is able to release from "the obligation of law,"

"Bondage"

The word "bondage" found in I Corinthians 7:15 is used by some brethren to discuss the "marriage bond." The Greek word used in I Corinthians 7:15 is *dedoulotai*, and is "3rd person, singular, perfect, indicative, passive of *doulooo*, to be under restraint, I Corinthians 7:15" (Bagster, Page 85, 107). The word *doulooo*, or a derivation thereof, is used 133 times in the New Testament; and unless it is so used in I Corinthians 7:15, it is never once used to mean "the marriage bond." It means, "To make a slave of, reduce to bondage. In I Corinthians 7:15 to be under bondage, held by constraint of law or necessity, in some matter" (Thayer Page 158). "Originally the lowest term on the scale of servitude, came also to mean one who gives himself up to the will of another" (W. E. Vine, Volume 1, Page 139). (I will have a complete lesson on this point later, jts).

Context Determines the Meaning

As you will observe from the next three charts, even though we must have the proper definition of a word, its meaning must always be determined by its usage in the context.

2 Context Determines Meaning

THE WORD "MARRY" IS FROM THE GREEK WORD GAMOS AND ACCORDING TO LEXICOGRAPHERS MEANS, "TO BIND, UNITE" — THAYER - PAGE 109. "MARRIAGE IN GENERAL, INCLUDING THE MARRIAGE STATE, WHICH IS TO BE 'HAD IN HONOR,' HEB.13:4" — VINE, VOL.3, P.44.

BUT

SOMETIMES THE WORD "MARRY" IS USED BY THE LORD TO DESCRIBE AN ADULTEROUS SITUATION WHERE THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED ARE "NOT BOUND" AND THE RELATIONSHIP IS "NOT HONORABLE"...MATT.5:32, 19:9 MARK 10:11-12; LUKE 16:18; ROM.7:2-3.

THUS

THE MEANING OF ALL WORDS USED IN THE SCRIPTURES MUST BE DETERMINED ACCORDING TO THE USAGE IN CONTEXT WHICH MAY DIFFER FROM THE GENERAL MEANING GIVEN BY LEXICOGRAPHERS.

4 God Chooses Word

AS A GENERAL RULE, WHEN ONE IS HAVING UNLAWFUL INTERCOURSE WITH THE SPOUSE OF ANOTHER, IT IS REFERRED TO AS ADULTERY.

BUT

IN 1 COR. 5, ONE HAD HIS FATHER'S WIFE (THE SPOUSE OF ANOTHER) AND IT IS REFERRED TO AS FORNICATION, 1 COR. 5:1. THE WORD "HAVE" HERE MEANS, "TO USE A WOMAN UNLAWFULLY AS A WIFE" (THAYER, PAGE 266).

THUS

THE HOLY SPIRIT DEVIATED FROM THE GENERAL RULE HERE AND REFERRED TO THE UNLAWFUL INTERCOURSE WITH THE SPOUSE OF ANOTHER AS "FORNICATION".

3 Context Determines Meaning

THE WORD "ADULTERY" IS FROM THE GREEK WORD MOICHOS AND ACCORDING TO LEXICOGRAPHERS MEANS "THE UNLAWFUL INTERCOURSE WITH THE SPOUSE OF ANOTHER" — VINE, VOL. 1, P. 32, 33.

BUT

SOMETIMES THE WORD "ADULTERY" IS USED BY THE LORD TO INCLUDE ONE WHO IS NOT THE SPOUSE OF ANOTHER AS IN MATT. 5:28; 2 PET. 2:14.

THUS

THE MEANING OF ALL WORDS USED IN THE SCRIPTURES MUST BE DETERMINED ACCORDING TO THE USAGE IN CONTEXT WHICH MAY DIFFER FROM THE GENERAL MEANING GIVEN BY LEXICOGRAPHERS.

Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT



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HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

In San Salvador drunk drivers can be shot. In South Africa the penalty is ten years in jail and a \$3,800 fine. In Turkey, a drunk driver is often taken 20 miles from home and forced to walk back. In Australia the drunk driver's name is listed in the local newspaper in a column with the headline, "He's drunk and in jail".

That information is included in a 1983 Random House publication entitled, "How Much Is Too Much? The Effects of Social Drinking" by Leonard Gross.

The author of the book is not a teetotaler. He is a social drinker. But the facts he has amassed in this well documented work presents a mighty good case for abstinence.

Some of the observations presented include:

1. The effect of alcohol on nerve cells is to dissolve fat, increase fluids, and make the cells temporarily inactive. Every time you take a drink you are putting some of your brain cells temporarily out of commission. Drinking at moderate levels can impair the drinker's brain power when he is sober. The threshold between moderate and heavy drinking should probably be about half the alcohol consumption that is normally considered to be such. Gross views consumption beyond two drinks a day as in the "heavy" range.

2. Perceptual and attentive mechanisms are affected after just one drink. This is the primary cause of alcohol related accidents. It's not the drunk that's weaving down the road who causes most such accidents. It's the impaired driver who simply fails to see the red light, pedestrian, motorcyclist, or curve. Such a driver is not aware of his problem because he obviously doesn't know that he fails to see things. With a blood alcohol concentration of .05% (half that of legal intoxication in most states), the driver has increased his accident probability by 100 percent. At .10%, he has increased it by 600-800 percent. At .15%, by 2,500 percent.

3. Widely publicized studies which indicates that those who drink in moderate amounts have lower mortality rates than those who do not drink at all leave a great deal to be desired in terms of research and a fair and adequate conclusion. In all such studies, the all-important question: who were the abstainers who died prematurely? Were they true abstainers who never drank? Or were many of them former drinkers who were no longer drinking for reasons of health? When this question is considered it is found that former drinkers

who had quit account for most of the abstainers' excess deaths. The reason abstainers have appeared to compare so poorly to moderate drinkers in mortality tables is "because unhealthy former drinkers are loading the category."

"Said Don Cahalon in an article in the journal of the American Heart Association: "These findings would incline one to be cautious about concluding that small amounts of alcohol taken frequently tend to stave off heart attacks.'"

4. Alcohol produces an immediate effect on the liver that is actually visible under a microscope. A single dry martini substantially increases the fat in the liver.

5. Enormous quantities of evidence have established that drinkers contract cancer more frequently than non-drinkers more or less in direct proportion to the amounts they drink.

6. Most studies show that anything more than two drinks a day raises blood pressure and contributes to hypertension which increases in proportion to the average daily consumption of alcohol.

7. Indications are that even small amounts of alcohol imbibed by pregnant women, including those who aren't aware they've conceived, could produce some damage to the child.

8. While wine is portrayed as a benign drink by comparison to spirits, still, a person drinking a 5 ounce glass of wine is consuming just as much alcohol as if he were drinking a standard highball.

9. Alcohol beverages are ranked second in terms of their actual annual contribution to the number of deaths in the U.S. They contribute to 100,000 deaths, exceeded only by smoking, which accounts for 150,000.

10. There is a trend throughout the field of alcohol research toward implicating smaller and smaller amounts of alcohol in adverse consequences of drinking. For example, a new report has appeared to the effect that even moderate amounts of alcohol damages the bone marrow, which in turn affects the production of red blood cells.

A quotation in the book from alcohol researcher Ernest Noble is appropriate, I think: "If my cognitive stuff tells me that my social drinking is going to affect my ability to conceptualize, I'm not going to drink when I'm going to do any business. I won't drink in the daytime, even a beer for lunch. My advice is not to drink at all in situations when you have to use your high mental faculties. If I wanted to be sinister, I'd get the man with whom I'm doing business the best stuff to drink, and I'd order a Perrier water. Because I'd have the edge on that person. That's what they do in Las Vegas. It's not because they're generous that they give out all those drinks."

No wonder the Scripture says: **"It is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink. Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted"** (Prov. 31:4,5).

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (I Thess. 5:6).

Building Better Families

James R. Cope
301 Green Castle
Temple Terrace, FL 33617



GOD'S ORDERS FOR PARENTS

We have observed previously that parental duties are two-fold—physical and moral-spiritual. Parental needs are also two-fold—knowledge and wisdom. First, knowledge has to do with the child's natural bent, turn, or inclination, or aptitude as to strength, weakness, mental ability and emotional reactions and stability. A moment's reflection by any careful observer of children, particularly a parent of two or more children, reveals that no two are identical and therefore cannot be placed realistically in the precise mold of treatment in every detail without creating lifelong emotional problems for the child and probably, unwittingly, for the parent. Second, profitable parental knowledge deals with various facets of the child's physical, mental and emotional environment. Well did Tennyson say, "I am a part of all that I have met." Far-reaching effects are necessarily born of child's contacts with the regular in-house realities of parents, siblings, television, radio, recordings, reading, etc., along with the influences of teachers and associates in school, church, scouts, and even parents of playmates.

Coupled with knowledge is that wisdom set forth in James 3:17 as "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy." Every one of these qualities is indispensable to the parent who recognizes his or her responsibilities to his or her offspring.

When one reads the New Testament he may be amazed at how few commands or exhortations, are addressed specifically to Christians as parents. We should remember, however, that God need not say anything but one time for it to be his word and thereby express his will.

There are two passages from apostle Paul's pen which contain specific "no-no's" for parents. Ephesians 6:4 says, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath" and Colossians 3:21 says, "Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged." The fact that the Holy Spirit addresses fathers implies that father may be directly responsible for either of two forbidden actions—the unnecessary anger of his child on the one hand, or the unnecessary loss of courage by his child on the other. Too often a parent angrily addresses the child only to find that fire added to fire makes a greater fire. Though a parent may provoke a child by a deed done or left undone as well as by a word uttered or left undone

as well as by a word uttered or left unspoken, it is the angry word that usually brings forth anger in the child. I like the following observation on Ephesians 6:4 regarding "Provoke not your children to wrath" from Albert Barnes' **Notes on the New Testament**, pp. 118, 119:

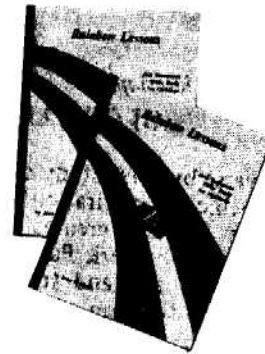
"That is, by unreasonable commands; by needless severity; by the manifestation of anger. So govern them, and so punish them—if punishment is necessary—that they shall not lose their confidence in you, but shall love you. The apostle here has hit on the very danger to which parents are most exposed in the government of their children. It is that of souring their temper; of making them feel that the parent is under the influence of anger, and that it is right for them to be so too. This is done, (1) When the commands of a parent are unreasonable and severe. The spirit of a child then becomes irritated, and he is "discouraged," Col. in. 21. (2) When a parent is evidently excited when he punishes a child. The child then feels (a) that if his father is angry, it is not wrong for him to be angry; and (b) the very fact of anger in a parent kindles anger in his bosom—just as it does when two men are contending. If he submits in the case, it is only because the parent is the strongest, not because he is right, and the child cherishes anger, while he yields to power. There is no principle of parental government more important than that a father should command his own temper when he inflicts punishment. He should punish a child not because he is angry, but because it is right; not because it has become a matter of personal contest, but because God requires that he should do it and the welfare of the child demands it. The moment when a child sees that a person punishes him under the influence of anger, that moment the child will be likely to be angry too—and his anger will be as proper as that of the parent. And yet how often is punishment inflicted in this manner? And how often does the child feel that the parent punished him simply because it was right! and how often is the mind of a child left with a strong conviction that wrong has been done him by the punishment which he has received, rather than with repentance for the wrong that he has himself done!"

Temperaments Vary Greatly Among and Within Individuals

We need to remember that the same heat that hardens clay melts butter. Everybody knows that the temperament of one child may be different from that of another child and may manifest itself because of parental treatment. Reactions of different children vary, as do reactions of the same child to the same or different stimuli. Like the clock pendulum's extremity swing, the

temper of the same child, may reflect anger today as one extreme and loss of self-confidence tomorrow as the other. In one instance antagonism is stirred like boiling water inside a tank. Reacting to heat from beneath, it produces steam which bursts the container. On the other hand the same water in the same tank may be frozen so hard that the tank bursts. I have known some children so enraged by a provocative parent that they resolved to break their parents' hearts in retaliation. (I discouraged one teenager from leaving home because her parents were hyper-critical of her, majoring only in what they considered faults and never seeing any good qualities in their growing daughter.) Discouraged by undiscerning or uncaring parents some youngsters escape the trap by putting bullets through their own heads. Parents need to study carefully the implications of Colossians 3:21 and Ephesians 6:4.

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Compromise of The Truth

A. C. Grider
Rt. 4, 1671 Bill St.
Shepherdsville, KY 40165



I have preached on the radio, perhaps as much as any body in the church. I know something of the "rules" and arrangements of radio preaching. There are many stations on which you CANNOT preach the truth and condemn error. I have never preached on such a station. But it is common knowledge that one can't preach on a nation-wide radio hook-up where sectarianism is condemned. It is common knowledge that one who contemplates such a program must "program himself" to back off and ease up and soft pedal and compromise the truth. But our brethren who preach and teach nation-wide admit that such a compromise with denominations is present in their work.

WORLD RADIO (Mail bag section of World Radio News) reported as follows:

"Clearwater Highlands, California . . . We heard your program this evening for the first time, and I must say our hearts were thrilled with the message on the 'New Birth'. We are Baptist and must say that your sermon lined up with our beliefs 100%."

I don't know what World Radio said in the sermon. Perhaps they said baptism was NOT essential to salvation. Or maybe they said water didn't mean water. Or could they have said baptism is an outward sign of an inward grace? I say, I don't know what they said but I DO KNOW what they said TWASN'T SO or it would not have lined up with Baptist beliefs.

Direct Mail Evangelism (Letter from Don Dewelt, Christian Church preacher said this:)

"The brothers of Hurst, Texas are of the group who do not use the instrument in accompaniment with their singing. We are in full agreement that neither of our convictions will be violated in this effort to reach the lost world."

The only convictions these people have on both sides is their conviction that their convictions should be SUPPRESSED in their efforts to compromise the truth.

G. VINCENT GASKILL (Gospel Advocate March 23, 1961) reported: (Commenting on signing of contract to televise the Herald of Truth)

"This in itself is quite an achievement, in view of the dominant Catholic influence here; which in the past had been exerted against the Churches of Christ because of some unfortunate radio preaching. To the knowledge of this writer there has been no opposition to the Herald of Truth program by the Catholics, or any other denomination."

Were the Catholics and denominations promised in

advance that they would not be condemned? Why wouldn't they oppose the Herald of Truth IF THE TRUTH WERE PREACHED?

WORLD RADIO (Germany, Letter from a Young Catholic Priest) reported:

"Often I have been listening to your sermons and contemplations over the radio and have taken material from them for my morning and evening lessons and also for my sermons. I am yet a young priest (age 31—3 years priest) and have come to realize through many radio sermons that one should and must use the Holy Scriptures more often. Certainly your help would be a brotherly service to a young fellow-brother."

He had listened to sermons often yet hadn't learned that he was not saved. In fact he thought he was a fellow-brother.

I moved to Harriman, Tennessee several years ago and started preaching daily on the radio. I preached two weeks and had to go away for a meeting. The preacher I succeeded was still in town and we asked him to fill-in for me while I was away. He went to the station and when he had finished his sermon the announcer asked him into the studio. "You don't agree with Grider's preaching, do you?" he was asked. "Yes I do, we just don't approach the subject the same way." said the preacher. Then the announcer said: "You don't approach it at all. I have listened to you seven days a week for three years and I didn't know that you thought one had to be in the church of Christ to be saved. But I learned from Grider in two days that such was his belief."

A WORTHY WOMAN

By Darlene Craig

This is a well-written book with a chapter on each verse of Proverbs 31:10-31. The author is the wife of a faithful gospel preacher, a mother, homemaker, and grandmother. Her writing style is fresh and her research is extensive. Her applications are alive to the needs of godly women today. This 220 page paperback book is attractively bound, the layout is neat and the printing is excellent.

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

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VERNON LOVE, Box 742, Tarpon Springs, FL 33589—We began work with the church at 570 E. Orange St. in Tarpon Springs on August 1, 1983. They had never had a full time preacher before, but it is going well. One has been baptized and several non-members are attending. A Bible correspondence course advertised in the paper is creating some interest. Some members are doing personal work. We have also been busy with correspondence for the brethren in the Philip-pines. I am grateful that some churches in the U.S. are supporting faithful men there to proclaim the gospel. I would be glad to put interested brethren in touch with worthy men needing support. We had a discussion on marriage and divorce on February 20 and will have a lectureship in April.

JAMES W. ADAMS, 1402 Robinwood Dr., Lufkin, TX 75901— I ceased full time local work on January 1st. We have purchased a residence in Lufkin and have identified with the Timberland Dr. congregation. I shall be holding several meetings each year, doing supply preaching, teaching Bible classes, and hopefully doing some writing which I have been neglecting. I am presently teaching two adult Bible classes at Timberland Drive, preaching on Sunday nights until June for Loop 287 here in Lufkin and have just concluded a short meeting at Mound and Starr in Nacogdoches. I shall conduct four or five more meetings this year. I feel certain I shall have more to do than I can get around to doing, but I will enjoy being free of the technical details and responsibilities of full time work. On December 31 I concluded fifty years of gospel preaching and 48 years of full time local work. My health is good and I think my mind yet alert, though some might consider that a debatable subject. At present, peace, happiness, and a reasonable degree of usefulness in the Lord's service seem very attractive.

DON MARTIN, 105 Smith St., Clute, TX 77531— I have now moved back to Texas to work with the church meeting at 343 South Main in Clute. Clute is on the Texas Gulf coast about 40 miles south of Houston. Thus far we have had 5 baptisms and 8 confessions of public sin. This is indicative of the kind of people among whom we are working—sincere, open-minded people. The church is overseen by three good elders and served by four conscientious deacons. The potential is good in this populous area which has the world's largest refinery in Dow Chemical. We have an unusually large percentage of young couples most of whom are interested in spiritual matters and advanced studies. When in the Brazosport area, be sure to worship with us.

GARY FISHER, 112 E. 35 St., Jasper, IN 47546—After preaching for the church in Galena, Indiana for 3 1/2 years, I am now working with the Duff congregation in the Jasper area. Galena was my first full time work and the church helped and encouraged me while overlooking my inexperienced mistakes. The Duff church is 7 miles Southwest of Jasper and has about 40 in Sunday morning attendance. To my knowledge it is the only church of Christ in Dubois County (pop. 35,000). The area is predominantly German Catholic. If you know anyone you would like for me to contact and encourage spiritually in Jasper, Huntingburg, English, Tell City, Boonville, Petersburg or Washington, please contact me. Remember us when traveling. We are 25 miles from the Patoka Lake area and about 2/3 of the way from Louisville to Evansville, only 10 miles off of I 64. Call Jerry Whitsitt (683-3386) for details of directions and times of meetings.

JOE R. PRICE, 1053 N. 1390 W., Layton, Utah 84041—February, 1984 marked nine months with the Kaysville, Utah church. During this time we have baptized four and 10 have moved in to join with us. Several Bible studies are under way by myself and other Christians

here. We have 28 members with a Sunday morning attendance of 38-40. The church has been able recently to pick up part of my support. This August we will have Connie W. Adams here for a meeting with future meetings planned with Hoyt Houchen (August, 1985) and Leon Goff (August, 1986). Unity of purpose has generated enthusiasm. Should your travel plans bring you through northern Utah, we are located 25 miles north of Salt Lake City and 15 miles south of Ogden, on I-15. Take the Kaysville exit off I-15, go west about 1/2 mile, then turn left onto Flint. We meet on Sundays at 9 A.M. for worship, 10 A.M. for Bible classes and 11 A.M. for a second worship service. We meet Wed. nights at 7:30. For more information, call me at 801-546-6216.

YOUNG PREACHER NEEDS HELP

DEE BOWMAN, 808 Fresa Rd., Pasadena, TX 77502—As many of you know, several people have been left with financial difficulties as a result of the recent demise of the RELIGIOUS EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, a group insurance plan administered by Garrett Street Associates, from Madison, Tennessee. DALE HENDRICKS, a fine young preacher and son of Roger Hendricks, a well respected preacher among us, has been left with a huge debt as a result of the bankruptcy of the Tennessee firm. His total expenses not covered by the insurance he thought he had amounted to \$14,800. Of this amount he has been above to pay about \$4,000, leaving a balance of \$10,800.

It would be a fine thing if people everywhere could help Dale and his family through this hard time. It is hard enough that he has faced two surgeries (one for his wife, Judy, another for his young son, Chad), but how sad that after having paid in over \$3,600 in premiums, he has been able to collect nothing from it. Will you help?

Dale said to me, "Though we don't feel responsible for creating the problem, we are certainly responsible for the payment of these debts and are determined to pay them." I believe him to be entirely worthy of our help. Brethren, "let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." If you can help, please send any amount to: Dale Hendricks, 716 S. 8th St., Nederland, Texas. You can call him at (409)722-8331.

AN INSIDE LOOK AT DAILY LIFE IN THE PHILIPPINES

(Editor's note: The following report is lifted from a letter written by a mature, seasoned preacher in a large metropolitan area in the Philippines. Because of the political situation there and the fact that many copies of this paper are circulated each month in that land, we withhold his name.)

"Today, there is no sight for improvement in the life of the people, but instead, the closing of factories, business enterprises continue to lay off their employees. It is not quite safe to go out at night. Snatching, holdups of banks often happen. The government is facing terrible problems. Unless this Catholic nation will turn to the living God in heaven, they will not find the right solution (Prov. 3:6; Deut. 7:12-13). The government's move in order to pacify the agitation of the masses is to publish in the papers that helps from other countries are forthcoming. There is no specific date for the coming of these helps. Someone asked 'What will you do with the grass when the horse is already dead?'

Our Christian faith is now put to the test. We are encouraged by studying the life of the apostle Paul who experienced abundance but also hardships. He survived them all and did not hesitate to shout to the world that he was triumphant in his service to the Lord (Rom. 8:35-39; 2 Tim. 4:6-8). Please remember us in your prayers that trials of any kind will not deter us from doing what we have committed to do for Jesus."

DEBATES**SMITH-DEAVER DEBATE ON BENEVOLENCE**

All agreements and propositions have been signed for a religious discussion between Roy C. Deaver and J.T. Smith to be conducted in the church building in Gainesboro, Tennessee, located on Murray Street. The dates are April 23-26, 1984. For information on lodging either contact the church in Gainesboro at (615)268-9675, or P.O. Box 341, Gainesboro, TN 38562.

On April 23-24 J.T. Smith will affirm that "The Scriptures teach that God has placed the responsibility for orphan care on individual Christians." Roy C. Deaver will deny.

On April 25-26 Roy C. Deaver will affirm "The Scriptures teach that a congregation, from its treasury, may (has the right to) contribute to (send funds to, render assistance to) a home for orphans." J.T. Smith will deny.

Roy C. Deaver is associated with Tennessee Bible College in Cookeville, Tennessee and is an experienced debater, lecturer and writer. J.T. Smith is a native son of Putnam County, Tennessee and reared in and around Cookeville. He is an experienced debater and preacher and writes a column for this paper. This debate is perhaps the first of its kind in this area of the country. We urge brethren to attend and spread the word.

MOSELEY—GIBSON DEBATE ON APOSTACY

The following propositions will be debated April 23-24 in Beaver Dam, Kentucky.

April 23—"The Scriptures teach that it is impossible for a child of God to go sin as to be finally lost." James Gibson, pastor of the Beaver Dam Bible Baptist Church will affirm this, while Mark Moseley, evangelist of the Beaver Dam church of Christ will deny. April 24—"The Scriptures teach that a child of God can so sin as to be lost." Mark Moseley will affirm and James Gibson will deny.

April 23 the discussion will be held in the building of the Beaver Dam Bible Baptist Church. April 24 the discussion will be held in the building of the Beaver Dam church of Christ. Sessions begin at 7 P.M.

Preachers Needed

GATESVILLE TEXAS—A good family has moved to this county seat town of 6,500 people. They presently are driving into Waco for services but wish to begin a congregation in Gatesville. The brother is a pharmacist and his wife works for the U.S. Postal Service. Fort Hood is nearby. Support would have to be raised. Should anyone be interested in coming to help, please contact Paul D. Stringer, Rt. 2, Box 230 A, Gatesville, TX 76528.

GALLATIN, TENNESSE—The Southeast church of Christ, 165 Witherspoon Avenue, is looking for a full time man to work with the congregation. The church has about 35 members and is able to provide about \$500 per month support. Gallatin is located about 30 miles northeast of Nashville. If interested, please write to the church or call (615) 451-2667, 451-1582, or 451-2750.

GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI—The Morris Road church is in need of a full time preacher. We are not far from Keesler Air Base. Most of the support must be raised elsewhere. Contact Leroy Henry, 603 Rosemary Dr., Gulfport, MS 39501. Phone (601) 896-6312.

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA—The church meeting at 9923 Sunny Cline Dr. in Baton Rouge is in need of a preacher. For information contact Gerald L. Wise, 3246 Winnipeg Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70819 or call (504) 272-9820.

PREACHER AVAILABLE

CAROL BATES, 3114 N. 18th, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814—For the past five years I have been engaged in secular work but I am very much interested in resuming full time preaching. For 2 1/2 of the five years I worked and at the same time preached every Sunday for a small congregation. I preached full time for 13 years prior to coming to Coeur d'Alene. I am 46. For anyone interested, I would be happy to furnish further information and references. Phone (208) 667-7922.

DEATH COMES TO THOMAS OSCAR OGLESBY

On January 24, 1984 Thomas Oscar Oglesby passed from this earthly life. He is survived by a loyal wife of 48 years, Eunice Oglesby; three sons, Harold, Tom and Don; a daughter, Helen; their spouses; his own sisters and brother and a host of grandchildren, friends and brethren in Christ. While he was not widely known outside the Pensacola, Florida area, brethren there knew him as a perceptive, diligent Bible student and as a man of courage, hard work, quiet determination and selflessness. All his children and their spouses are faithful Christians. When the institutional battle heated up, he was quick to see the fallacy of liberalism and was forced by his conscience to a heart-rending separation from friends and brethren of many years and from a congregation where he had served as both a deacon and an elder.

Randy Pickup and Sam Hastings spoke words of comfort to the family and a large crowd of friends and fellow saints who gathered for the graveside service in a chilling wind and rain. We will meet again in Heaven.

Tom Oglesby
Hohenwald, TN 38462

PREACHER LOSING SOME SUPPORT

We have learned that Keith Clayton, who is doing such good work in Vermont, has recently lost \$200 a month of his support and is about to lose \$150 more. It is urgent that this good man be allowed to continue his fruitful work in New England. You may write him at 55 East St., Bristol, VT 05443, or call (802) 453-2593.

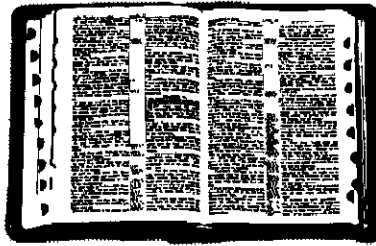
IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

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RESTORATIONS	111

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" — John 5:39.



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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MAY 1984

NUMBER 5

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



WHY DOES CROSSROADS TEACH ONE THING PUBLICLY AND PRACTICE ANOTHER?

Why does the Crossroads church of Christ teach one thing publicly on a given subject and practice something else on the same subject? There is sufficient documented evidence to show both what Crossroads claims as doctrine and what she practices. The preacher at Crossroads is Charles "Chuck" Lucas and what he says fairly well represents the church. If you have read the previous articles that will be understood.

So many have written so much on every phase of the Crossroads system that it will not be my objective in this article to discuss the various issues I mention to show the contrast between doctrine and practice.

I want to be as honest and fair as possible. I do not want to misrepresent Chuck Lucas or Crossroads and that religious movement anywhere. But it is a fact that Chuck Lucas, the elders and teachers at Crossroads, and Crossroads trained preachers teach and preach one thing and practice another on many subjects. Some-times this involves something they preach against, but they practice; sometimes they teach to do something and do not do it. This is the nature of the matter I am discussing.

Charles G. Goodall wrote a good booklet called **The Crossroads Heresy In The Light of The Scriptures**, in which he observed that there was a "wide discrepancy between the reports of those presently in the Crossroads system in contrast with that of those formerly associated with it." (page 2).

Charles Goodall reports a meeting he and the elders at Nebraska Avenue had with Martin Bentley, preacher at Sunrise church in Tampa, and four Sunrise leaders to discuss some of their practices. He said, "Their strategy was exactly as I had appraised the elders it would be; they categorically denied every indictable facet of their practice. Crossroads brethren have consistently done this whenever challenged." (page 4).

Crossroads is not the only religious system that is guilty of this sin. Many of those who will read these lines and approve every word against the Crossroads doctrine and practice will be guilty of the very thing which I am discussing. Perhaps not in the same area, but having to do with the authority of Christ and the obedience of the word of God.

Those churches who are involved in church support of orphan homes, homes for the aged, homes for unwed mothers, day schools, colleges, hospitals, and a dozen other social, medical, educational and recreational activities will argue long and loud that they accept NO authority but the word of God. They claim that they believe the Bible is verbally inspired and the only source of authority. They will say, "We speak where the Bible speaks, and are silent where the Bible is silent." That is what they preach! But if that be true, what is all this that I see and hear about these human organizations supported from the church treasuries to do "works" that the Bible says not one word about by direct command or statement, necessary conclusion or Bible ex-ample?

If you are wondering why many of the liberal churches are so vicious in their attack against Crossroads, it is in part because they are more advanced in their technique than most others. Besides, Crossroads has been somewhat "unorthodox" from the liberal point of view in their work. They have maintained an independent, highly organized operation, and are more successful in numerical growth than most of these others, and they are reacting.

What Crossroads Teaches versus What She Practices:

In November, 1981 Charles Lucas published "AN OPEN LETTER To the Brotherhood of Churches of Christ" in the Firm Foundation. In this Open Letter Lucas listed some things he said, "I strongly believe..."

This Open Letter was as much a defense of the Crossroads church as it was of himself. I want to state a few of these and point to the common practice of Crossroads.

1. "The gospel is the power of God for salvation—not any method, program or merit of man."

I am in complete agreement with that statement. I believe it is exactly what the Bible teaches (Rom. 1:16; Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Thess. 1:7-9). But in practice the Crossroads evangelistic programs of Campus Ministry and preacher training for the spread of the Crossroads philosophy is more important than the gospel. The "methods" of "soul-talks," "workshops" and "seminars" which serve more for indoctrination of the system than gospel preaching, are deemed essential. This is the evidence of their practice.

2. "Total commitment to Christ as our Saviour and Lord is expected of every Christian."

I believe that statement as it stands represents what the New Testament teaches on the subject. But in practice it is not to Christ as Saviour and Lord that Crossroads teachers and disciples are "totally committed"; it is to the system of Crossroads and its philosophy, as well as its leaders. They demand and get total commitment.

Do not be misled: Crossroads' "total commitment" is not in practice what Lucas claims for it in public teaching. I have carefully read several reports and papers from those who left Crossroads, and I have read two or three in defense of the system. I believe I understand fairly well what each side says, and the bottom line is: Crossroads preaches one thing, which Chuck Lucas, the elders and the leading element try to defend from the Bible, and practice another, which nearly all, both in and out of the system, who will talk about the subject, will agree is different.

To be "totally committed" to a form of doctrine and a human organization to promote it, as Crossroads church is, is far from being "totally committed" to Christ as our Saviour and Lord. The later will result in unity of the faith which will not allow us to be divided as Crossroads is separated from others.

3. "The Bible alone is the inspired and authoritative Word of God."

That is exactly what the Bible teaches. It is not only inspired; it is VERBALLY (word for word) inspired. (1 Cor. 2:9-13; Acts 2:4; Matt. 10:19,20; Rev. 22:18,19). It is not only authoritative, it is COMPLETELY and FULLY authoritative (2 Tim. 3:16,17; Jude 3). It would be interesting to see an article from the pen of Chuck Lucas on the verbal inspiration of the Bible and the complete and final revelation from God in it.

4. "Real church growth should not and will not occur through appeals of entertainment, recreation or humanistic psychology but only through the power of the gospel."

I agree with this statement as being based in Bible truth. But again, the statement is one thing and the practice is another. The fact is Crossroads does depend

(Continued on Page 4)

Searching The Scriptures

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

P.O. Box 69
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THE WORD OF THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL

From the place of his imprisonment in Rome, Paul wrote a letter to the church at Colosse, a place where he had not personally preached. These citizens of the Lycos Valley had become citizens of the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1:13). Paul was thankful for their faith. He wrote "Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of your love which ye have for all the saints, For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth" (Col. 1:4-6).

It is interesting that in this passage several divine principles are tied together. They had faith in Christ, love to all the saints, hope of heaven, and had come to know the grace of God. But notice that none of that could be enjoyed apart from "the word of the truth of the gospel." Indeed, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). There is a "hearing of faith" (Gal. 3:2). Later in Colossians 1, Paul spoke again of "the hope of glory" but hastened to connect that hope with the message which he preached: "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:27-28). You will observe also that "the grace of God" is something which they "knew... in truth."

We are living in an age of subjectivism. Too many are looking within themselves for satisfying answers to the nagging questions of human existence. Forgotten is the precept stated long ago by Jeremiah "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). The humanist philosophy is that whatever we choose voluntarily from alternatives, having considered the consequences, is right for us and that we ought to prize that choice and assert it to the point of making it a pattern of conduct. This is what is meant by "values clarification" in education today.

Denominationalism has, for many years, placed emphasis on religion that is "better felt than told." Great store has been placed by being satisfied with religious faith and practice, assuming that whatever is sincerely done must be right. Many have relied upon subjective "feelings" as the evidence of salvation whether the word of God taught it or not.

Much is said about salvation by grace through faith. That is Bible doctrine and is certainly taught in Eph. 2:8-10. But God's truth on any subject is the sum total of all he said on the matter. The passage from Colossians 1 shows that there is a "word of truth" by which things may be determined and that word of truth is in the gospel. So then, the final measure of truth in the spiritual realm is the gospel of Christ. Every doctrine and practice must be measured by that standard. The Holy Spirit was to guide the apostles into "all truth" (Jno. 16:13). If the Lord did not teach it and the Holy Spirit did not move the apostles and prophets to preach it or write it, then it is not part of "the word of the truth of the gospel." And since God proposes to save all men, Jew and Greek alike, by the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17), then if it is not in the gospel there is no salvation in it. If it is not a part of salvation then it becomes a source of damnation. That is why we must not go beyond "what is written" (1 Cor. 4:6; 2 Jno. 9-10).

We all need a warning here. It is not our right to offer pardon to an alien sinner on less terms than God has provided in "the word of the truth of the gospel." Neither is it our right to offer pardon to an erring child of God on less terms than the word of God directs. In either case we have acted presumptuously and have not benefited our hearers in the least. All the fallen trees on the way to the baptistry and suddenly stepping in front of unexpected trucks, or praying soldiers in foxholes, or death bed stories, will not change what the God of all truth has said. I will leave the right of clemency in the hands of him who made us all, but I dare not offer it unless I can put my finger on it in "the word of the truth of the gospel." Paul said the secrets of men will be judged "according to my gospel" (Rom. 2:16) and exactly there I propose to leave the matter. I can do no other without intruding into a realm which is not mine. I appeal for others to do likewise.

AUGUST SPECIAL ISSUE

We have been concerned over the past few years to see more and more Christians come to Bible classes with an assortment of the newer translations and paraphrases of the Bible. I fear that many are depending entirely on some of these for their Bible study without understanding the danger involved. Certainly there is some value to be gained by comparing different translations on a passage. We believe that, regardless of what some have said, the best and safest translations of the Bible are still the King James Version and the American Standard Version. These are based on the Textus Receptus and have been declared by all concerned to be the most accurate and exact English translations available. In fact, proponents of some of the newer translations have criticized these two versions for being "too mechanically exact." Well, I would prefer to be as exact as possible in studying the word of God.

Unless some study is given to this matter, we are going to soon have a generation which is Biblically illiterate and which has absorbed much error due to faulty translations. One of the versions we see more and more people using is the NEW INTERNATIONAL

VERSION. We think this version has serious flaws and that it teaches outright error in a number of instances. Those who produced it have defended their right to comment in the text as well as to translate. This is extremely dangerous. For instance, they translated the word SARX, rendered "flesh" in reliable translations, with the words "sinful nature" on 25 occasions. They did it 9 times in Romans 8 and 6 times in Gal. 5. This is inexcusable and actually is blatant Calvinism.

Dorris V. Rader and his son Donnie V. Rader have done a considerable amount of work on the NIV and we are going to publish their material in the August issue of this paper. There will also be related articles by former editor H.E. Phillips and the present editor of this paper. We believe the material is such that many brethren might want to consider extra copies of this edition to put in the hands of members where you worship. If so, we would appreciate some indication of your interest so we might be able to better project the number of copies we will need to print. This material needs as wide circulation as possible.

(Continued from Page 1)

upon the Crossroads Singers and other forms of entertainment for "church growth." Do not be naive; if all the social and entertainment functions were eliminated from Crossroads completely, it would die as far as its present reputation is concerned. The very things that Lucas says will not make real church growth are the things that make Crossroads what it is. Thus, it must not be "real" church growth.

What Crossroads Teaches Against But Practices:

In the same Open Letter Chuck Lucas gave a list of things he says he never believed, taught nor sanctioned. Among these are some things they teach against but practice.

1. "That every sin of thought or action should or must be confessed to a prayer partner."

Now I have never been in their "prayer-partner" operation, and by actual practice I do not know what is done or not done. I must take the evidence supplied by others to draw the conclusions that form my conviction. I have three sources of testimony: 1) those who have been prayer partners but are no longer in the system; 2) those who are still in the Crossroads church and are prayer partners, both mature and novices; and 3) the literature written both by Crossroads and those aligned with her and others who have been there as a part of it. Now where would I go to get better evidence? To Chuck Lucas or the elders? I am quoting from an Open Letter from Chuck Lucas. I know what he says about it. I am saying that what they preach and teach is one thing, and what the overwhelming evidence shows the practice to be is another.

The junior prayer partner is taught to confess all sins of deed or mind to the senior prayer partner and seek his help and advice as he prays for him. It is so widely practiced among all of the Crossroads philosophy that I am amazed that one would deny it.

2. "That women may lead men in prayer in the assemblies of the church."

I suppose by "assemblies of the church" Lucas means the Lord's day morning and evening worship in the main auditorium of the church building. Other assemblies where men and women are together for worship and Bible study are excluded because both Lucas and the elders practice it. That is fact I have encountered with some from Crossroads or who have been taught under Crossroads influence. These all learned the practice at Crossroads, even though Lucas says he has never believed, taught nor sanctioned it.

3. "That the book by Robert Coleman, THE MASTER PLAN OF EVANGELISM, or any book other than the Bible, should be the basis for our doctrine or practices in evangelism or personal relationships."

Charles Goodall says in his tract, page 5: "The September 21, 1975 Crossroads bulletin lists this book to be reviewed in their Campus Ministers Training Program. It does not take a scholar to see that it is the blueprint of the Crossroads philosophy. Roger Lamb, a proponent of the Crossroads system, said in a speech promoting the Campus Advance program: 'This is it; this is the plan; it's all in this book.' (He referred to THE MASTER PLAN OF EVANGELISM he was carrying in his hand.)¹¹" (Ref. quote from Jackie M. Stearsman, in **Con-tending For The Faith**, XII, No. 4,12).

In some of the printed material and on cassette tapes of sermons and lectures, Lucas and the elders have defended the use of Coleman's book in their programs.

4. "That peoples' sins or other confidential matters should or may be freely shared with others in the church."

This is the main function of the prayer partner concept. The junior partner is urged to confess all of his sins, private and public, to his senior partner in the hope that he will be relieved of the guilt of sin. He is expected to seek counsel from the senior partner about all areas of his life, with the promise that he will be made closer to the Lord and sin less. The attitude and teaching of the leaders and more mature members of a soul-talk group bring out the confessions and confidential matters of one's life or he soon leaves the class. This is almost a universal report of behavior at these sessions.

5. "That there should be any superior/inferior or junior/senior concept of spiritual ranking among Christians."

It is somewhat startling that Chuck Lucas would make this statement when his writings and taped sermons and lectures are so filled with the idea of a prayer-partner concept of a mature and young convert as partners. If this isn't a "junior/senior concept" I do not know how one would be created. The idea of this arrangement is to have "confessions of sins (and it is always from the weak to the strong, the young to the old, the junior to the senior, the inferior to the superior in spiritual maturity, it is supposed), and the one who hears the sins can pray for the sinner. Lucas says he does not believe this and has never believed it, but he helped create the prayer-partner arrangement and promotes it.

Chuck Lucas concludes this list with the statement that even though he has never believed and taught any of these things, he is aware that some of them are taking place. I do not understand why he does not get in the pulpit and denounce all of them. He should call upon his brethren at Crossroads to repent and forsake these unscriptural practices! Over two and a half years have passed since he wrote this Open Letter in the Firm Foundation and they are still doing all these things I have stated in this article. It is a matter of teaching one thing in public and practicing another.

The Crossroads system is a false one. The Crossroads philosophy is a dangerous one. It is a promised panacea for apathy and worldliness, but its carnal appeals draw away disciples after the human rewards of this life. Its numerical growth stems from the dynamic personality of the leadership, the entertainment, the social gospel with all its empty fruits and rewards, and the individual involvement in time and energy consuming programs. And finally the system will fall to rest with all other schemes and relics of men. God's word will live forever (Matt. 24:35).

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WHERE'S THE SCRIPTURE?

A. C. Grider

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I have been amused in recent days by the television commercial in which there is a large bun but only a very little beef. Somebody in the back asks several times "Where's the beef?" The thing that makes it interesting is that, indeed, many times you can hardly find the beef in some of the hamburgers you buy.

But in spiritual matters we also have a question. It is presented as a caption for this piece. Where's the scripture? I maintain there is absolutely no scripture for the following:

1. Where is the scripture for the church helping any kind of a home. Call it the original home, or the substitute home, or the restored home, or the legal home, or the divine home. I don't care what you call it, where is the scripture for the church supporting it? I say there is none.

2. Where is the scripture for a church helping another church to preach the gospel? Of course, I suppose, when each church does all of the preaching it can do they are helping each other. But I am talking about scripture for one church sending money to another church to preach. I say there is none.

3. Where is the scripture for the church helping anybody but saints. I can read several scriptures that teach churches to help poor saints. But where does the scripture teach churches to help non-saints? I say there is no such teaching in the Bible.

4. Where is the scripture that instructs churches to build and maintain benevolent organizations such as orphan homes? I say there is not such scripture.

5. Where is the scripture where two churches ever pooled any money to preach the gospel? Two or three thousand are doing it but where is the scripture to authorize them to do so? I say there is none.

6. Where is the scripture for a church to take charge of another church's money for any purpose whatsoever? Churches are to assist sister churches in taking care of their poor saints when they are unable to do so without assistance. But where is the scripture for a church soliciting or otherwise obtaining money to be spent as it is being done among our liberal brethren? I say there is none.

7. Where is the scripture for a church assuming a work which is beyond its ability to pay for? I am not talking about some kind of a calamity where a church might be temporarily short of funds to carry on. I am talking about assuming a work that it knows it will not be able to support and who then must solicit help from

other congregations. I say there is no such scripture.

8. In short, where is the scripture for a sponsoring church of any kind, at any time, for any purpose? I say there is none.

Our brethren have simply overstepped the bounds of the Bible and they are completely without chart or compass in what they are doing. Most of them have realized that and have quit trying to defend what they are doing. We are going to keep on asking where's the beef, I mean where's the scripture? Until they find it I am going to charge that they have gone on and are not abiding in the doctrine of Christ and that they have not God. See 2 John 9-11.

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"TREATY SIGNALS END OF CATHOLICISM AS OFFICIAL STATE RELIGION IN ITALY"

In the closing paragraph of our last article we said, "Ironically, about the time our ambassador to the Vatican was announced, it was reported that the nation of Italy and the city of Rome were taking steps to break some relations with the Vatican! They have had enough, while we are just getting started."

We consider this development to be of great significance and importance to the two nations and the world, therefore we desire to present additional material for our readers. Under the above heading, the following article appeared in the **Arkansas Democrat**, a daily newspaper, February 19, 1984:

"ROME (AP)—Italy and the Vatican signed a revised treaty Saturday that ends the status of the Roman Catholic Church as state religion and reduces the emphasis on religious instruction in public schools.

"Premier Bettino Craxi, a Socialist, and Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, the Vatican's secretary of state, signed the agreement revising the Lateran Pacts that have been in effect since 1929.

"Pope John Paul II did not attend.

"The revised relationship between church and state comes at a time of increasing secularism in Italy. Many practices defy church teaching. Nudity is routine on television programs, surveys show more and more Italian women use contraceptives, and abortion and divorce are legal, despite the church's condemnation.

"The signing ceremony at Villa Madama, a Renaissance palace now used as a government guest house for visiting dignitaries, was broadcast live.

"The state and the church are, each in its own area, independent and sovereign,' Casaroli said, borrowing phrases from the new agreement. 'Both collaborate for the promotion of man and the common good.'

"Craxi, standing by his side, added: 'We are closing in a happy way a long and sometimes difficult chapter involving the church and state.'

"Negotiations for the revised agreement began in 1967.

" 'Catholicism had and continues to have deep roots in the Italian heritage,' said Craxi, Italy's first Socialist premier. He read the entire Concordat, as the pact is known, to the television audience.

"The 14-article treaty starts by noting the 'process of

political and social transformation witnessed in Italy during the last decades.'

"Under the treaty, Rome loses its status as a 'sacred city' and becomes a capital city of 'particular significance' for the world's Roman Catholics, who number more than 790 million.

"The treaty does not alter the Vatican's status as an independent state run by the pope.

"The agreement says Catholic religious education will continue to be offered in public schools but parents will have to specifically request it. Now, Italians who do not want the instruction have to ask for an exemption.

"The Vatican has retained some privileges. For example, Italian priests will still be exempt from military service and the state cannot take over Catholic churches without approval from church authorities.

"The Vatican will turn over control of Italy's Jewish catacombs to the Italian state. Rome's small Jewish community hopes the state will allow the Jewish catacombs in the city to be opened to tourists. The Vatican will retain control of Italy's Christian catacombs, which are a popular tourist attraction.

"Before Parliament decides whether to give the pact final approval, a special commission has six months to sort out the most complex issues—including the tax exemptions of some charities and religious institutions not part of Vatican City or its extra-territorial property."

We regret that this separation has been caused, at least in part, by the increase of humanism and immorality among the Italian people. We have the same problem in America.

There's another interesting aspect of this change. For many years the Catholic Church has tried to convince the world that Catholicism is the antidote of communism, socialism, and immorality. History and present facts do not support the claim. The truth is, totalitarianism breeds totalitarianism, and enslavement breeds defiance. That's what Catholicism is experiencing.

Seven hundred ninety million Catholics in the world! What a task before us! Each of them should be converted to pure and simple New Testament Christianity. Of course the majority of those people were made Catholics without their knowledge or consent. It happened when they were infants.

From the Vatican viewpoint, we have serious doubts that this change in relationship between Rome and Catholicism came about "in a happy way."

We would hope that this development in Italy might be a warning to America concerning the problems and dangers of entangling alliances with the Vatican.

SPECIAL FEATURE

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS, GRACE AND FORGIVENESS—NO. 2

by
Franklin T. Puckett

There are those who want to fellowship everybody no matter what they do. Men like Carl Ketcherside, and others, want to fellowship everybody, and I heard Ketcherside make the statement that any baptized believer was his brother and, therefore, was in fellowship with him and he with him. Even though they might be in error, they were still in fellowship.

III

Well, the word, "fellowship," may be used in different senses. We'll have to use it in the light of the context in which it appears and in the relationship in which it is used. But from that standpoint he reasons then that people in the so-called Christian Church who brought in instrumental music without divine authority are to be accepted in full fellowship because they may be wrong in that, but he says because they have been baptized back here, and are people who have been baptized into Christ, he says, then God will not look at their imperfect service, but He will reach over here and take Christ's perfection and put it over here to their account.

And though they live and die in this erroneous doctrine and practice which has divided the people of God and has opened up the door for all kinds of error, God won't hold it against them. That is why I'm saying unto you it's going to produce the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy among us. And one step leads to another.

And he has gone so far now as to say we ought to fellowship even those who have not been baptized, by immersion, who are believers. Why, the unbaptized he said are his brethren in prospect—in prospect. So, we ought to go ahead and fellowship them. And it opens up the door for extending the hand of fellowship to all of those who have brought in their institutionalism and all kinds of promotional schemes and have disrupted the peace and harmony of God's people and have opened the door for all of the errors that are now sweeping astray hundreds and even thousands of people. Because they say, "Well, after all, they are sincere, and earnest, and God will just take the perfectness of Christ and put it over here to their account. And he'll go ahead and save them anyhow; he'll impute righteousness unto them."

IV

My friends, I want you to see something of what the Bible teaches along that line concerning this matter of fellowship. Over in 1 John, chapter 1, John says, "That

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which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you that your joy may be full." Alright, this is why he was writing the letter. And this is what he is writing unto them—what he and his fellow apostles were declaring unto them.

Now then, he goes right ahead to say, "This then is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you." Alright, here's the message. Now the fellowship that we may have with them is conditioned upon conforming unto the message they were declaring. The message is the instrument or the means by and through which they might obtain unto fellowship. Alright, this then is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you, that God is light. In Him is no darkness at all."

Now get the message. The message is that God is light. In him is no darkness at all, not one bit. Now watch the next statement, which is a conditional sentence and the condition, of course, must be considered and accepted in order for the result to follow. But just as surely as the condition is true, the consequent result is also true. Now watch it! "If we say we have fellowship with him," that is with God, "and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth." Could you put it any plainer than that? If we say we have fellowship with God, or with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.

There are two realms. One of them is the realm of light and the other is the realm of darkness. So, here is the realm of light. (*Draws diagram on chalkboard.*) And here is the realm of darkness. Now the realm of light is the realm in which we walk with God. The realm of darkness is the realm in which we walk in sin. Light stands representative of righteousness. Darkness stands representative of sin. And so, here you have light and darkness.

Now this is the message. God is light and in him is no darkness at all, not one bit. Now if we say we have fellowship with God, that is, we are partners with him, we jointly share with him, and walk over here in darkness, we lie. He did not soften it by some euphemism, either. He did not say, "We miss it slightly." He didn't say, "We prevaricate." He said, "We lie!" That's just what it is, and do not the truth. No man can claim to have fellowship, partnership with God, be sharing with God and be walking in darkness. If he does he lies about it. That's what the Scripture says. Do you believe the Scripture?

Now that just simply means, my friend, we can't get out here as Christians and dabble around in the world and be walking in sin, having our course of conduct, and our way of life, our mode of conduct in sinful practices, no matter what they are. For, fellowship with God demands that we walk in the light. Now if we are walking in darkness and claim fellowship with God, we lie about it. That will be the result if that condition is true.

V

Now watch the next passage. "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another

and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin." Alright, now then, here again you have a conditional sentence. "If we walk in the light," but the walk in the light is to walk in the counsel of God, to walk in righteousness, to walk with God. That is our mode of conduct, our way of life, our habit, our procedure, and so if we walk in light as he is in the light, then we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.

Now then, the next verse says, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Now, none of us are perfect. If we say we have no sins, we are deceiving ourselves. We're not deceiving many other people. I've bumped into a few people in life who claim to live sinlessly. They claim that they live without ever committing a sin of any kind. And so John says, "If we say we have no sin (there is your condition), we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." There is your consequent result. So, we cannot claim to be without sin.

But, now then, notice the next statement, "If we confess our sins," here is your next conditional clause, "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The forgiveness of our sins and cleansing from unrighteousness is conditioned upon our confession of our sins. And our confession of sins is conditioned upon the recognition of the fact that we have sinned, but our cleansing by the blood of Christ is conditioned upon our not continuing to walk in sin or in darkness. And we cannot continue to walk in it and claim fellowship with God, without lying. Now those are simple sentences if we will just look at them and accept them for what they are.

Furthermore, an interesting thing that is noted here is that the tense of all these verbs here is what is called, "present tense." And in the original language in which the New Testament was written, which was the Greek language, tense does not have nearly as much to do with time as it does in English, but rather places the emphasis upon the stated condition of action. Only in the indicative mode does it have to do with time and even then it is not the primary point of emphasis.

Now in the "present tense," the state or kind of action is "durative action," that is, it is "continuative action," going on and on and on. It is continuative. But there is another tense called, "aorist tense," which is called, "point action." And so it has to do with just a point. And it comprises the entirety of the action. When it began, when it ended, how long it continued is not set forth in that tense. It is simply the action of undefined, but the action considered is a point.

VI

Alright, now I want us to notice some things here. If we say we are having (that is present tense, continuative action), we are continuing to have fellowship with God, and we are walking, continuing to walk in darkness, we are lying. Just as long as we are claiming to have fellowship with God and as long as we are walking in darkness, we are lying. But if we are walking, (present tense, continuative action), if we are continuing to walk

in the light as He is in the light, then we are having (continuing to have), fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, is cleansing (continuing to cleanse), from all sin.

The blood of Christ continues to cleanse us from sin just as long as we continue to walk in the light as he is in the light. When we cease walking in the light, then the blood of Christ ceases cleansing us from our sin. But yet, it may be said that we are not without sin, and that is true, if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But we cannot continue in that sin. We cannot continue to walk in it and still have the cleansing blood of Christ.

Sin may sometimes invade our lives in the moment of weakness or sudden temptation but continuative action is prohibited. We cannot continue in it day after day, week after week and month after month and year after year and still be constantly being cleansed by the blood of Christ. For the cleansing is commensurate with the continuing to walk in the light. That's what the passage is teaching.

Now then, one might commit a sin over here, point action, and not continue in it, finding himself guilty of sin, stop it right there, quit it. But then he is to confess his sins. So if we are confessing our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

—To be continued

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Media advertising has become very sophisticated during the last several years. Talented writers, musicians, actors, and production experts have joined forces to produce works of art in twenty-second vignettes which not only capture your attention, but tug at your heart strings (remember the "Mean Joe Green" com-

mercial?). In such a short time they can set the stage, tell the story, and tempt the buyer. Anyone not impressed with the finely tuned abilities of today's electronic media has not been watching it.

Perhaps the cleverest of all today's commercials are being done by the beer companies. Even those of us who would never use the product are amused by their commercials. The ability of the producers to paint a picture of and thereby appeal to the average worker is astounding. They can make any profession seem as if it is the most important job around. And every holiday season the air waves are saturated with timely and beautiful pictures of family and friends, warm fires, and the spirit of togetherness. And who has not felt chills of excitement at the sight of beautiful horses pulling sleighs of happy people through the snow-laden country side at dusk, passing lighted houses half-buried in the new fallen snow, and gliding effortlessly toward the small village and on to the country home elaborately adorned in the decorations of the season. The comedy of their commercials ranges from subtle innuendoes to vaudeville slapstick and is done with flawless capability. Some of the most entertaining moments on television are the beer commercials. Actually, there's more professionalism in them than in most of the programs.

But in the midst of all this professionalism and intriguing production there is something terribly wrong. The commercials don't tell the whole story. I suggest to you that while the commercials are works of art, the product they advertise is helping to erode the morality of our people. We are being "sold a bill of goods."

You will not find a word in the commercials about all the heartache the product causes. They don't show a husband coming home in a drunken stupor slapping his wife and kids around. They don't show how many marriages have been sacrificed to the foam-crowned golden brew. They don't picture for us the problems encountered by the teenage alcoholic. They don't show us pictures of a man's liver which has been eaten away by excessive use of the so-called "heavenly potion." There is never any mention of the grieving mother and father who have lost a son or daughter because of some teenage drinking party, many times "just down the street." They don't tell us that about half the arrests made in America last year were alcohol-related. And they don't ever show the medical reports that link alcohol to such things as heart disease, emotional breakdowns, and literally dozens of other health problems.

The beer commercials don't show the number of accidents and deaths caused by their product and others like it. Did you know that in the past ten years alone more people have died in alcohol-related auto crashes than were killed in the Vietnam war? And the National Highway Safety Commission estimates that from 1980 to 1990 the figure will double, to about 500,000. It should also be noted that huge outlays of cash are required to investigate, prosecute and otherwise handle all the legal ramifications attached to these cases. I saw one recent report that said that citizens of this country pay out an average of \$616 in losses for every dollar collected by the government from taxation of alcoholic

beverages. But we don't see that on the commercials, do we?

And why is it that the fancy dressed, appealing commercials don't tell us what alcohol does to the eternal welfare of its users? Beer and whiskey and other inebriants are the adhesive that holds much of today's immorality together. The practitioners of immoral actions and lewd conduct almost always accompany that action with some kind of intoxicant, alcohol being the most prominently used. Alcohol, by destroying inhibitions and eroding shame, breaks down resistance and encourages all manner of illicit and lewd activities. Drinking is habit-forming and anyone who says differently is not your friend. It very often introduces its users to stronger drugs. It takes away a man's will and leaves him devoid of the mental mechanism he needs to be wise in his judgments. He turns to situation ethics because such a standard releases him from obligation regarding morality. Such loss of control is sinful and wrong and will cause a man to lose his soul. But do the commercials tell us anything about Hell? I haven't seen it, have you?

The next time you decide that "weekends were made for beer," or that "this one's for you," or it's "filler time," just remember that the beer commercials which have so impressed you with those little musical slogans didn't tell you the whole story.

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J. T. Smith

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MAY ONE MARRY A "PUT AWAY" PERSON?

If only men would accept what Jesus said about the matter of divorce and remarriage in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, we would not have the problems that we have today on this subject. The majority of the problems are caused on all religious subjects, not by what the Bible actually says, but by what men want it to say. Paul warned of this when he told Timothy that men "... after their own lusts shall leap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables" (II Timothy 4:3-4).

In the passages under consideration, Jesus gives a rule and then gives the exception to the rule. Here is the rule. "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another committeth adultery." No question about it. The one who puts away his wife and marries another commits adultery. However, Jesus made an exception to this rule. "Except it be for fornication." That's the

"exception" made by Jesus. The obvious conclusion is that if one does put away his wife "for fornication" (that is the **reason** he put her away), he does not commit adultery when he remarries.

TO illustrate the above point, let's look at another rule given by Christ with an exception. Jesus said, "Ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). If there had been no exception to this rule set forth by Jesus, the people would no doubt have perished. However, there was an exception given. Jesus said, "Except ye repent." So, Jesus made the rule, but He also gave an exception to it. Thus Matthew 19:9a is very clear as to what God authorizes regarding the person who does the "putting away." If he puts away his wife for any cause other than fornication, when he remarries he commits adultery. However, if he puts her away "for fornication" and remarries, he does not commit adultery.

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia sets forth seven things for which a Jew could put away his wife and give her a writing of divorcement under the Law of Moses. The following chart shows some of these causes along with the only cause Jesus gave.

Reasons To "Put Away"	
Pharisees: Put Away For Every Cause (Matt. 19:3)	
(ISBE Vol. II P. 864)	
<i>Put Away</i>	Personal Dislike
	Breaks Any Vow
}	Spins In The Street
	Burning The Bread
}	Fornication
Jesus: Only One Cause (Mt. 19:9)	

Today the majority of people are put away and given a writing of divorcement for "every cause" besides the cause given by Jesus, even as the Pharisees expressed. Jesus said Moses allowed it because of the hardness of their hearts, but from the beginning it was not so (Matthew 19:8).

In discussing this subject, some have taken the position that "committeth adultery" is a one-time-act, and therefore after the act is committed, those involved may then repent of this "one-time-act" and be free to remain together. The original language, however, will not bear this out. In fact, to the contrary. The expression "committeth adultery" in the original language is present indicative, and is used "to denote that which habitually occurs, or may be reasonably expected to occur." Or, "to describe that which recurs at successive intervals, or is conceived in successive periods" (Dana and Mantey, Page 183-184). In order for it to be a simple one-time-act, it would have to be in the aorist tense.

May The Guilty Party Remarry?

Some have come to the conclusion that the person who has been put away "for fornication" (the guilty party) is not under consideration in these passages. However, it would be ridiculous, as you can see from the following chart, to say that the one who has been "put away" for fornication is not "a put away person." Yes, they have been "put away." What did Jesus say on this subject? "Whoso marrieth her that is put away commits adultery." Thus Jesus said that one who marries a "put away person," (whether she is put away for "burning the bread" or "for fornication," she is still a "put away person"), commits adultery.

**Marrying The
"Put Away" One**

**"Whosoever Marrieth Her
Which Is**

Put
Away

**Personal Dislike
Breaks Any Vow
Spins In The Street
Burning The Bread
Fornication**

Jesus: Only One Cause (Mt. 19:9)

move the "exception" to the second clause, it would no longer exist with the first. This is clearly seen in our second point.

Second, as you can see from the chart which I had diagrammed of the Greek, simply giving the literal translations of the words in English, of Matthew 19:9, the phrase "except it be for fornication" is an adverbial phrase which modifies the verb "shall put away." But if it is transposed to the latter part of the sentence it would have to modify "her that is put away." That would mean that you would have to change an adverbial phrase to an adjectival phrase. This cannot be done grammatically.

Matt. 19:9

Whoever ὅς	and καί	shall put away ἀπολύσῃ	the τῆς	of him αὐτοῦ	commits ἁμαρτανεύσει	adultery ἡοικεῖται
		not for ἄνευ	fornication πορνείας			
		shall marry γαμήσῃ	another ἄλλην			
		and καί	he, who ὁ ἀπολυθεὶς	her that is put away ἡ ἀπολυθεῖσα	not for ἄνευ	fornication πορνείας
						commits adultery ἁμαρτανεύσει

This cannot be done grammatically!

Matthew 19:9b Not In Text

In an effort to try to circumvent God's law regarding the "put away fornicator," some have suggested that the latter part of Matthew 19:9 is "spurious," not in the original text, and therefore should not be considered. However, 48 Greek scholars believed there was enough evidence for it in the manuscripts, to place it in the text of the King James Version. And, 101 Greek scholars of the American Standard Version thought there was enough evidence to leave it in the text, but with a footnote that states, "The following words to the end of the verse, are omitted by some ancient authorities." However, if you decide that Matthew 19:9b should be thrown out, which I am not ready to admit in view of what 149 Greek Scholars who wrote the King James and American Standard Versions did by placing it in the text, you would still have the same statement in Matthew 5:32b about which there is no question regarding its authenticity.

Does The Exception Clause Apply To Both Parts Of The Passage?

Some say that the one "put away" for fornication is not committing adultery when she remarries, because the "exception clause" in the first part of the passage also applies to (and could be inserted in) the last part of the passage.

There are at least two things wrong with this position. First, by reason of the position of the "exception" in the sentence it cannot modify both clauses. And if we

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HUBBARD HOWELL OBEYED THE GOSPEL

Stan Adams
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MATTHEW 13:23—"AND HE THAT WAS SOWN UPON THE GOOD GROUND, THIS IS HE WHO HEARETH THE WORD, AND UNDERSTANDING IT, VERILY BEARS FRUIT, AND BRINGS FORTH, SOME AN HUNDREDFOLD, SOME SIXTY, AND SOME THIRTY."

I realize that many good righteous souls have obeyed the gospel in other areas, and that much good is being done in sowing the seed to a lost world. I believe, however, that the story of brother Howell is worthy of relating, because of its' unique nature, in our modern world.

Hubbard Howell is a simple man. He is 54 years old and married with four girls and one son. He is a second generation pulp-wood hauler who works hard and is known as a man of his word. He expects people to be honest and he deals this way with others. He was born and raised in Shelby County, Alabama and has had an interesting life. He is one of the few pulpwooders, who will still take the time to hitch up a team of Belgian horses and go "stump a field", which is thankless work. He lost an eye in an accident with a chain-saw, but he is able to see in other ways than with his eyes. Hubbard is also my friend and I love him.

He recently has a heart attack while working in the woods and had a life-threatening situation for a while as a result. While in the hospital, I went to see Hubbard and found he was very humble about his lost state before God. We had a word of prayer, which I began, and in which Hubbard intervened. He cried out "Oh God, Oh Jesus, my Lord, please help me to do what is right, I am lost, and I know that I ain't got many more chances to do what I ought, help me find what is right and do what you want me to do, I don't want to go to hell, I just want to love you and know you, Oh Jesus, Oh God, Oh Lord, IV sure been mean but I am going to do better..."

He stopped here, because he was crying, and I finished up our prayer and wiped my eyes also. Here was a soul who prayed as Cornelius must have for salvation and the right way. Two other brethren and I went to see Hubbard in the hospital and read the Bible to him and prayed with him. You see, the reason we read to Hubbard is that he never learned to read for himself.

He has had the blessing of working with a faithful and devout Christian for many years. This good saint has been working on Hubbard for several years and Hubbard respects him dearly. He believes that this man is

what a Christian ought to be. Hubbard has had some experience with "religious people" before, and they made him think that he had to "feel" something before he was saved. He never could get that feeling for some reason. I guess He was just too honest to have fallen for any false idea about "feelings." He had been to our gospel meeting before he had his heart attack and was really impressed with "Bible preaching" as he called it. He came in his overalls and brought his granddaughter, who came barefooted, because she had no shoes.

After he was released from the hospital, Hubbard met with his friend from work and they continued to talk about the Bible. I received a call from our brother one night stating the good news that Hubbard wanted to be baptized. I met them at the building and before baptizing Hubbard, asked him a few questions. He answered this way: "I am not going to try to fool nobody, I don't know what the Bible says cause I can't read it, but I know that I am lost and going to hell, and from what has been read to me, I know that I should be baptized. I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and I am willin' to change my life to be like Him. I want to go to heaven and I am on my way to hell like I am. I want to start now to do what he said. After a word of prayer we baptized this man into Christ, after hearing him make the good confession. The cold water did not bother him a bit, and he was certainly a happy soul when he came up out of the water.

Hubbard told us to be sure and tell him when he messed up so he could make it right. He told us he was serious about going to heaven and that he wasn't just hoping to go, he was "aimin" to get there. We had another word of prayer and heard him express his gratitude for salvation and then returned home refreshed.

I could not help thinking as I drove home; "Isn't this what it is all about"—one honest precious soul with a tender heart, who wants to serve God and do what he can in the kingdom. I had ask myself, whether I had been plowing the wrong fields. I would probably have bypassed Hubbard's house, while going door to door, because it is real messy and rough, and they probably wouldn't listen anyway. How many others like him are out there waiting to hear the truth? But, I am ashamed to say that many of them will never be reached, because too many are too busy planning how to do personal work in the safety of their office, and too good to get out there and dig into the business of plowing the spiritual soil. Under the guise of organization, we often neglect the fields which are white unto harvest. We often streamline our "programs" for the middle class, who often have so much of this worlds goods, it blinds them to the need for Christ. They have everything within their grasp and overlook the greatest need of all, Jesus. Yes, Hubbard is a case of a simple, down-to-earth man hearing the Truth, believing it, and obeying it.

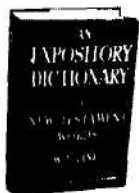
Hubbard has adjusted well to our services and feels accepted by the kind brethren here. We are thankful for Hubbard and his example to us. He has helped us more than he will ever know. One Wednesday night I read Matthew 27 about Christ's crucifixion, and noticed that Hubbard was wiping his eyes with his handkerchief. He

told me after services that he had never heard that they spit on Jesus, and it was a good thing he wasn't there when they spit on his Lord. He has said that he thinks his talent is to lead people by example. He did not tell his wife, he had obeyed the gospel because, he figured it would be better for her to notice his change, than for him to have to tell her.

Hubbard is progressing well in the kingdom and brings his grandchildren with him to what he can. He fervently wants his family to obey the gospel, and we are working on that now. He is not an ignorant man, he just cannot read. He has to rely on memory while we can look up what we forget.

Hubbard Howell has helped me to be a better Christian and has shown me that there is a lot of good soil right in front of us if we will but open our eyes and plow the right fields. I have rediscovered the simple joy of just reading the precious Word. I have also learned again, that happiness lies not in what we have in this life, but in the spiritual peace which is available to all through Christ. I am afraid that in some instances many who claim to be Christians, are little more than spiritual bigots, in regards to whom we teach. There are congregations all over this land that have worked for years establishing a work, only to close it up, after a few years, making no effort to reach those who surround them. Instead, they abandon an area and move to a "better" part of town and sell the old building they labored so hard to purchase, to a denomination. We may have come a long way, materially, in a lot of places, but could it be in our quest to be like others, we have set ourselves up as an elite club of spiritual snobs? Who made us the standard, anyway? Perhaps, we have lost a grasp on the true purpose for which we preach and teach. We have made a long journey from the simple, plain teaching, which rocked the hills of Zion and turned the world upside down for Christ. Let us resolve to fervently sow the seed to every creature, and may God bless the church with more servants like Hubbard Howell.

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BREAD OF LIFE

"I am the bread of life... so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." Jno. 6:35, 57.

Herschel E. Patton
7637 Fleming Hills Dr. S.W.
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"FEED MY SHEEP"

As Jesus drew from Peter a three-fold affirmation of love for him, he charged Peter to "feed by sheep" (John 21:15-17). Jesus was not a literal shepherd with literal sheep and in need of someone to help tend them. Both "sheep" and "feed" in this text are obviously figurative.

Paul spoke of his work of evangelism and ministering as "feeding". He said to the Corinthians, "I have fed you with milk and not with meat" (1 Cor. 3:2) and referred to himself as a "minister by whom they had believed" (vs. 35). This activity is further signified by such figures as "planting" and "watering" (vs. 6).

Elders in the church at Ephesus were told to "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). They would do this through teaching that would protect the flock from those "speaking perverse things" (vs. 30J) and "convince the gainsayers" (Tit. 1:9). Peter charged elders to "Feed the flock of God which is among you" (1 Pet. 5:2). The word "feed" (K. J.) is poimaino in the Greek, meaning "to tend-to shepherd" (Vines). Actually, the word means "to act as a shepherd. It is used of feeding cattle (1 Cor. 9:7; Lk. 19:7). The thing signified is the teaching, protecting, admonishing, and leading that elders are to do, and are able to do because they have the qualifications of 1 Tim. 3:2-7; Tit. 1:6-9.

The Sheep

In all the afore mentioned texts, sheep is figurative. The context shows the sheep under consideration are people—a special kind of people. The charge given to elders (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2) involved the church of God (flock) where they were elders. The sheep were not the property of the elders, but of the Lord. They were His church (flock) and elders were charged with feeding (tending) them.

The sheep that Peter was told to feed involved the Lord's people-sheep- in prospect. Besides those early disciples of the Lord, many others would enter the fold through Peter's feeding, and that of the other apostles, to whom they would have a continual feeding responsibility. The Lord said "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." The sheep of this passage were people who would be a part of the one fold through hearing (heeding) the voice (word) of the Lord—the true shepherd, and owner of the flock.

The Lord informed Paul, by a night vision, that he had much people in Corinth, the result of his "speaking and holding not thy peace" (Acts 18:9-10).

The sheep of the Lord are all those people who will and do "hear his voice" and "turn to the Lord". In every case of people becoming sheep in the Lord's fold, they heard the gospel message, believed, repented, confessed and were baptized into Christ-His body-the fold of God.

The Feeding

Reflecting upon who the sheep are, and how they became such and remain, reveals the nature of the "feeding". People become the sheep of God through the "feeding" done by Peter, Paul, and all others who shouldered the responsibility of "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"—"preach the word ... reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine..." The thing fed (Bread of life) is what results in salvation... in everlasting life. Indeed, it is the word of God that quickens (gives life), builds up, and saves.

The Importance of Feeding

God still wants every soul that would be receptive to spiritual food and would "hear His voice" to be fed. He still says to every gospel preacher, elder, teacher and whosoever will "feed my sheep". If we would say with Peter, "yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee", even three times, we should also hear the charge "feed my sheep".

The world can not be converted and the converted can not endure unto the end unless this feeding is done. Let there be a dirth of preaching and a lack of "watching for souls" (tending) by elders and there will be the loss of many souls—spiritual starvation.

Churches that become caught-up in flesh-satisfying projects, material things, even to maintaining a large bank account, to the neglect of feeding the Lord's sheep, have lost sight of their primary mission. The elders of such churches are more interested in numbers, projects, and an abundant, satisfying social life than in "watching for souls".

Unless material things are "expedients" and "feed my sheep", they have no place in the plans and budget of a congregation. And, when we as individuals, lose sight of our responsibility to "teach others also", by word of mouth, an exemplary life, and financially supporting "sounding out the word", we are not heeding our Lord's command to "Feed My Sheep".

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"ALMS TO MY NATION"

Several years ago I was meeting a Baptist preacher in debate and he made what I considered a fatuous argument. My moderator whispered in my ear, "Ward that argument is so silly I would not answer it." I replied, "we both think it is silly but some of his people think it is great. I must answer it." Many people feel the argument I shall answer in this article to be somewhat ludicrous and perhaps even asinine, but it must be answered. As a matter of fact, I have a request from Oklahoma to answer the argument.

When Paul stood before Felix the governor to urge his claims of Christianity he spoke of the alms he had brought to his nation. As one goes back in the New Testament, he will find Paul as a SAINT, raised money among SAINTS for the poor SAINTS in Jerusalem. Passages vindicating this position may be found in 1 Cor. 16:1-3; Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8, 9 and other places in the Bible. To my knowledge, no one has ever argued this money was not raised for SAINTS. However, we have some who will argue it was not raised for "saints only." They will insist that sinners were also supported out of the church treasury. One of the latest arguments used to try to sustain that position is the "Nation" argument. Some brethren have compassed both land and sea to find a scripture which will uphold their view. Brother Roy Deaver has kept me busy the last few years answering such quibbles. About the time I think I have all of them answered he pops up with a new one. Even if I consider these arguments contemptuous they must be answered.

In his **Biblical Notes**, December issue, page 98, Roy says, "As previously indicated, this collection was 'for the saints.' more specifically, it was for the 'poor among the saints' (Rom. 15:26). But, we hasten to emphasize, it was not for the saints only." Roy then proceeds to make the "nation" argument by saying, "in Acts 24:16 it is recorded that Paul said (with regard to the collection presently being considered) 'now after some years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.' Paul took the collection to his nation. Obviously, the word 'nation' cannot be limited to people who were Christians. The 'poor among the saints' were a part of the 'nation,' but the nation included **more** than the poor among the saints."

There are a number of reasons why the above argument will not stand the Bible test and I shall give a few. First, the argument is false because Roy Deaver, him-

self, will not accept it. There is an old cliché in the field of polemics which says, "that which proves too much proves nothing." This argument proves too much for Brother Deaver and his colleagues. For example, they have argued for years from (2 Thes. 3:10) that if a man will not work "Neither should he eat." They have insisted that a no-good lazy man could not be supported from the church treasury. Now let us try the argument on for size. The thrust of the argument is this (1) A nation has both saints and sinners; therefore, money sent to a nation goes to both saints and sinners. (2) Now let us use the same logic on 2 Thes 3:10 (the man who will not work). A nation has both men who will work and men who will not work; therefore money sent to a nation goes to both men who will work and men who will not work! This is what we call meeting oneself coming back! Brother Deaver argued that the word "nation cannot be limited." Gentle reader, if it cannot be limited then it includes all. These brethren also argue from (2 Jno. 9) that a false teacher cannot be supported out of the church treasury. Well, let us use his argument again, (3) Any nation has both true teachers and false teachers; therefore any money sent to a nation goes to both true and false teachers. Remember he said the word nation "cannot be limited." Obviously, what these brethren would like to do is LIMIT it in the way they want to and forget the rest. Kind friend, I apologize for having to answer such a ludicrous argument. Speaking of Acts 24:17, A. T. Robertson, the fine Greek Lexicographer, says, "To bring alms (eleemosunas poieson). Another example of the future participle of purpose in the New Testament. These alms were for the poor saints in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8 & 9; Rom. 15:26) who were none the less Jews." Obviously, A. T. Robertson, a Baptist knew the word nation did not include sinners. Please note he said the money was for saints.

Another reason for rejecting the "nation" argument is that this word ethnos (nation) does not always include all people of that nation. Proof of this can be found in John 18:35. When the Lord and Pilate had their famous conversation Pilate said, "Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me." Please note the conjunction and between nation and priests. The priests were Jews and a part of the nation but not included in the word nation as used in the context. Notice Christ had been delivered by the nation (some of the Jews) and also the priests (other Jews). The conclusion is irresistible that the word "nation" does not always include all people of that nation. When the Lord said, "He that believeth and is baptized," we know believing is one thing and baptism is another. When Peter said, "Repent and be baptized" we know repenting is one thing and baptism is another. When the Bible says, "Thine own nation and the priests" we know nation is one thing and priest is another. One does not have to be astute to see that the so-called nation argument is turned into a tail-spin.

Then again, if one will turn to Acts the 28th chapter he will find a refutation of the "nation" argument. Paul was in the city of Rome where he had a meeting with the chief of the Jews. In the text he says, "Men and brethren

though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs or our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans." I would like to emphasize the word Jerusalem in the above context. Now notice what he said, "Not that I have aught to accuse my nation of." Please observe that Paul's confrontation was not with Jews from all over the world but at Jerusalem! Paul referred to the Jews ONLY at Jerusalem as his nation. Then to seal the argument the Jews in verse 21 said, "We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee." Please notice these Jews did not say, "We did not receive letter from Jews all over the world." but only **Judea** where **Jerusalem** was located. Yet Paul called this his nation. In summary let us observe the use of the word "Nation" as used in the New Testament. (1) When Pilate said, "Thy own nation and the chief priests" we understand that the word "Nation" was limited! When Paul said, "Alms for my nation" the word nation had to be limited because it could not include lazy people, false teachers or sinners. Kind friends, remember the corollary used above will help all see the truth and thus solidify the bleeding body of Christ.

SOME THINGS GOD DOES
NOT INTEND TO DO

Johnie Edwards
4001 E. 3rd St.,
Bloomington, Indiana 47401



There are some things that God just does not intend to do. A lot of people have wrong concepts of what they believe God has in mind to do. Let's take a look at some things God does not intend to do.

God Does Not Intend to Speak Any More Truth:

There are those who are waiting for God to speak something more than He has already spoken. There are no new doctrines yet to be delivered. Paul wrote the Ephesians, "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3: 4-5). The word of God has been revealed and God "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son..." (Heb. 1:1-2). Wait no longer for God to speak to you except as He already has in the Word of God.

To Be Mocked

Paul wrote the Galatians, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). God does not intend to be mocked

by allowing man to sow one thing and not reap what he sows. In fact, the apostle further stated: "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:8). We all will reap as we sow. It will be as the people of the Old Testament. "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. . ." (Hosea 8:7).

To Be Blamed For Confusion

Often men believe that God is the cause of all the religious confusion that exists in the world today. Not so! In fact, God does not intend to be blamed with such. He wrote the Corinthians, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (1 Cor. 14:33). Man, not God, is the cause of religious confusion in the world. God says the same thing to all of us who read the Bible and the Bible is of no "private interpretation" (2 Pet. 2:20).

For His Word To Be Destroyed

Down through the ages, man has tried to destroy the Word of God—but it cannot be done! The Psalmist said, "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psa. 119:89). The word of God is eternal. Jesus said of the word, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). Most of the things with which we have to do will not endure for long "but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:25). We might laugh at the word of God, deny it, reject it, but it will be present and face us in the judgment day. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jno. 12:48).

To Save You In Your Sins

Sin separates man from God (Isa. 59:1-2) and God does not intend to save us in our sins. In fact, Jesus said, "... that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jno. 8:24). God commands "all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). Unless you change your mind about sin and as a result of that thinking mend your ways, God does not intend to save you! A public confession is required to please God. Paul wrote the Romans, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:9-10). God's plan of salvation includes baptism. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:15-16). Did you realize that God means that? God does not intend to save those who are responsible short of their obedience for Jesus is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9). Neither will God save the one who has been baptized unless his living is in harmony with the New Testament. Faithfulness is required of God's people in order to receive the "crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

Let's not be guilty of God-playing!

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

Send all News Items to: Connie W. Adams, P.O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109

PREACHING TRIP TO CHILE AND ARGENTINA

ROYCE CHANDLER, Mason, Ohio—From February 19—March 4, I worked in Chile and Argentina. Although I had visited brethren in Columbia eleven times, this was my first trip to these other two countries.

In Chile: The churches are spread out there, but I was able to preach in Santiago, Quillota and Quilpue. It was a great pleasure to meet those brethren and to see the maturity and stability of those churches. We drove to Cartagena one day to baptize a lady there who had studied a Bible correspondence course and expressed the desire to be a Christian. This week in Chile was preparatory to going to Argentina for a week's lectureship, and 23 brethren from Chile chartered a bus (no frills, such as a bathroom), and they rode for 36 hours through the Andes Mountains and across the hot and humid plains of Argentina in order to be in Buenos Aires for the lectureship.

The Lectureship: There were 13 preachers present, representing Chile, Argentina, Columbia and the U.S.A. Nine of those men took turns preaching five lessons each day, Monday-Friday. In addition, all five local churches in Buenos Aires held gospel meetings all week so there was even more preaching every night following the day lectures. Those who attended every service and every lecture (and that was most of them) heard thirty-six lessons during the week, going Sunday-Sunday. Quite a feast. The result of all that, besides the fellowship and edification, was seen in that eight were baptized and two were re-stored, not counting the baptism in Chile.

This has redoubled my interest in this work and I am eager to return someday, Lord willing. The work is also expanding in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Puerto Rico, and Bill Reeves and Wayne Par-tain are planning to go, for the first time, into Spain later this year. What a thrill to be a part of such a work that seems to be growing more

and more every day. Thanks to everyone who helped with my support for this trip. Your keen interest and fellowship are a tremendous encouragement to me and to all the brethren in the Latin world. You are a special breed!

NOTICE

The Panlener church of Christ in Las Cruces, New Mexico, is trying to locate ERCIL RAY WARREN in regard to a bond he holds on the building here. If you know of his whereabouts, please contact the church at 1325 Panlener St., Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001.

SERMON OUTLINE SERVICE BEGINS IN MAY

PREACHER TO PREACHER begins in May with a monthly mailing which will include a minimum of four previously unpublished two-page sermons from various contributors and a religious variety page. A three month trial subscription is available for \$3, or you can send \$10 and two of your sermons (\$12 with no sermons) for a one-year subscription: **PREACHER TO PREACHER**, do Art Adams, 2805 Russell Street, Portage, Indiana 46378.

JOHNIE EDWARDS, 4001 E. 3rd St., Bloomington, IN 47401—After seven years with the Plainfield, Indiana church, I have begun work with the church in Ellettsville, Indiana, just outside Bloomington. I worked with this congregation before the work in Plainfield. The church publishes a teaching bulletin mailed twice monthly and you may request it by writing to me at the above address. Phone: (812) 336-4630.

INFORMATION SOUGHT

ROSS SPEARS, Rt. 1, Box 121A, Alvaton, KY 42122. Anyone who knows of any brethren who live in or near State College, Pennsylvania, please contact me at the above address or call (502) 781-4947. I will be studying at Perm. State University and would like to work and worship with brethren who do not support or endorse institutionalism and the social gospel. Anyone who knows of the nearest local church to State College, PA, please let me know that also.

MT. PLEASANT, TEXAS LECTURES

The Southside church of Christ, Mount Pleasant, Texas will conduct a gospel meeting with different speakers June 17-21. The theme will be: Jesus Christ: His Church, His Mind, His Completeness. Speakers for the week will be Marshall Patton, Huntsville, Alabama; A. W. Goff, Russellville, Arkansas; C. G. "Colly" Caldwell, Tampa, Florida; and Max Dawson, Beaumont, Texas. Singing will begin at 7:30 led by Richard Montgomery. Limited housing is available upon request. Call or write: Randy Harshbarger, P.O. Box 242, Mt. Pleasant, Texas 75455. Phone (214) 572-7521/2148.

RICHARD C. SIMS, P.O. Box 57, Dubach, LA 71235—After three years with the Hwy. 80 church in Ruston, Louisiana, my family and I are moving in June to Gatesville, Texas to help a new work. At the

present Paul Stringer and his family are living in Gatesville and driving over 30 miles to services in Waco. I will need to raise all of my support for the work and for moving expenses. If any congregations are able to help with our support we would like to hear from them. Also, if any readers of **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES** live near Gatesville or know anyone who does, please contact us. Until June we can be reached at the above address. Phone: (318) 777-8595.

CHARLES DEGENHART, 117 Harrington Rd., Newport News, VA 23602—One Air Force family of two transferred to England recently. Two placed membership or two were baptized. Attendance and contributions are the highest they have been over the last three years. We would like to move away from the East Coast to a less humid climate. If you can use us contact us at the above address for references. Phone: (804) 874-2928.

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

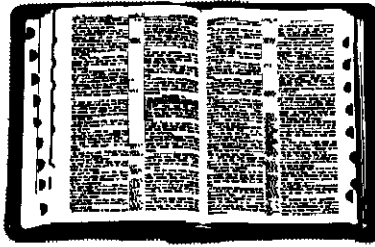
The month of March found us in three gospel meetings. At Perry, Florida we worked with Charles Murray in a well attended meeting. The church is blessed with two good elders, one of whom is J. Ed Nowlin who also preached at Perry for several years and is remembered with great appreciation for his years of excellent work in east Tennessee and Atlanta, Georgia. This north Florida church is blessed with much talent. .. We were also in a good meeting at Mound and Starr in Nacogdoches, Texas, our third time there. Robert Harkrider and Dean Bullock provide an excellent balance of teaching strength with this good church. Much life is added to the work by the presence of 50-60 students from Stephen F. Austin University. Alan Finley also works with them on a part-time basis. Two were baptized and one restored... Then, late March found us (Bobbie and me—not just the editorial "we") in Houston, Texas with the historic Norhill congregation, Oscar Smith, who preached there for 17 years, continues as one of three fine elders. Derrell Shaw is the local preacher and is respected by the church for his good work. Norhill is now in an older part of town and many younger families have moved into the suburbs. Many Spanish speaking people now live in that area and there is a Spanish speaking congregation which meets in one section of the building regularly with Ruben Amador as the preacher. It was also a personal pleasure for me to spend time with Hollis Blackmon who led singing at Norhill for over 20 years and who is the brother of the much loved and greatly lamented Luther Blackmon. I don't know if Luther learned his down-home expressions from Hollis or the other way around, but in any case, the week provided refreshing to my spirit. I greatly miss the likes of Luther Blackmon, Franklin T. Puckett, James P. Miller and other good men who have passed on in the last few years.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	205
RESTORATIONS	82
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

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 XXV

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



WHY CROSSROADS IS CALLED A CULT

(Author's Note: It is not possible to analyze every trait of a cult and note them one by one as they might apply to the Crossroads church in Gainesville, Florida. Suffice it here to give the main reasons for the Crossroads system being labeled a "cult" by the world, religious and non-religious, and by most churches of Christ we would call "liberal.")

It is my judgment that Crossroads church of Christ, Gainesville, Florida, has been and is now receiving far more recognition and attention than she deserves, both in the secular press and in publications by Christians. Perhaps the foremost reason for all this attention is the "cultism" most think they see at Crossroads. I am certain some who have made the charge do not actually know what a cult is; others have developed very strong feelings against Crossroads because of reports of treatment to many youth there. Truth lies somewhat under the rumors and wild charges. Truth is what we want. The truth will make men free! (John 8:32).

What is a cult? The question is difficult to answer because of the emotional barbs it creates in the mind. The dictionary says: "Cult: 1. a system of religious worship or ritual. 2. devoted attachment to, or extravagant admiration for, a person, principle, etc., especially when regarded as a fad..." That definition might get several religious groups not considered cults.

Why Do Cults Appeal to Youth?

Young people of college age are ripe for the type operation conducted at Crossroads. Chuck Lucas and the

Crossroads elders are well aware of that fact. A college campus is a very fertile field in which any cult embryo can develop and multiply rapidly. While I do not consider myself an expert by any standard, I do believe I have learned something about the susceptibility of youth to the kind of emotionally charged religion, energized by the bubbling, ignorant zeal of those who really want to do something to evangelize the world, just anything! (Romans 10:1-3).

Following are some of the reasons why young men and women are attracted to cult movements:

1. Youth of high school and college age have an insatiable curiosity for the unknown and the unknowable. Most are not satisfied with the sterile ritualism of religion today, and are seeking something with a personal meaning and application.

2. The gross ignorance of God's word by denominationalism and by many churches of Christ has driven youth to seek someone who "knows" the answers.

3. Youth has a drive for the new, different, even the bizarre, and they tend to discard the traditional and orthodox. This presents some problem of rebellion against the established authority of home, elders and civil law. It even reacts against the authority of Christ.

4. The failure of the home, school, government leaders and the church to provide a basic moral foundation for the youth of the nation has driven them to search for a way that will work without the hypocrisy that has characterized two generations of Americans. Generally speaking the home has been a total failure, and some of these are looking for a "father" and "mother" figure. Man has an underlying need for the security of family and social bonds.

5. Youth is looking for escape from all the financial, social and moral tensions found in the world today. The perennial threat of war, nuclear destruction, and political corruption is very discouraging. The increase in murder, rape, robbery, assault, drug addiction and every form of evil has inundated society.

6. Many do not find meaning and purpose to their lives anywhere in the framework of our civilization. Hope for the future is very dim. These all seek happiness by seeking a way to fulfillment for their lives.

Cult leaders recognize this and appeal to these people

with their special promises for this life and the one to come.

Why Cults Grow Rapidly

Anytime a church is growing abnormally fast, the question is always raised about cultism because that is said to be a mark of the cults. We are talking about what happens in the twentieth century, not in the first century. From several sources the following was found to explain the rapid growth of cults:

1. **Human need.** They meet the human need at a time when others do not notice the need. They give the down-trodden a reason for living and they promise a hope to these hopeless souls.

2. **Aggressive.** The cults are very aggressive in preaching their doctrine and ideology. They will teach any who will listen.

3. **Thorough indoctrination.** They are convinced of their doctrine and operation. They believe they are right. They are thoroughly indoctrinated with every part of it that concerns them. They have been trained to use the Bible, and they use it effectively to the un-learned. They cite history, quote scripture, speak some Greek and Hebrew words, and even define Bible terms in their favor.

4. **Sacrifice for his cause.** Every cult member knows what he believes and is ready to sacrifice whatever is necessary for it. That is one reason he will abandon all else and hold to it.

5. **Zeal for evangelism.** They have a zeal for evangelism—go from door to door—use any method to reach people with their message. The technique for "witnessing" their doctrine is learned as an actor learns his lines.

6. **Urgent.** The cult member has a strong sense of urgency. He speaks as if tomorrow will be too late. He eagerly presses his message upon the hearer to accept it TODAY!

7. **All work.** Cults involve every member in some way in the operation of the group. This is a part of the training. It cements each member to the group in responsibility and work.

8. **Willing to suffer.** Each one is willing and expects to suffer ridicule and hardship from the public and other religions. They interpret this as a sign of their holiness and acceptability with God.

The fact that you may have these qualities in your life does not indicate that you are in any sense cultish. These are the qualities that make a group grow, and most cults have all of them. That is why they grow so rapidly.

Some Reasons Why Crossroads is Called a Cult

No less than a dozen congregations have written letters and published extensive articles branding Crossroads a cult with all the destructive characteristics of any cult.

If I cited even half the quotes in the religious papers that brand Crossroads a cult, and gave their reasons for doing so, I would have enough material to fill this paper a dozen times.

(Continued on Page 4)

Searching The Scriptures

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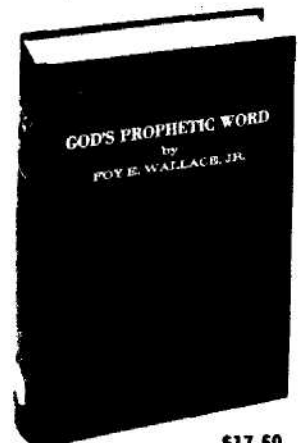
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GOD'S PROPHETIC WORD

By Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

A compendium on the Abrahamic Promises and the Mosaic, major and minor Davidic Prophecies, consisting of a complete exposure and refutation of the multiple theories of premillennialism, including a review of the claims of British Anglo-Israelism, and the Judaistic system of Seventh Day Adventism.

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

P.O. Box 69
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THE COLLINSVILLE AFFAIR

A simple case of congregational discipline in Collinsville, Oklahoma has been propelled into national prominence when a member of that local church sued the elders for invasion of privacy after they publicly withdrew from her. They charged her with forsaking the assembling, the sin of fornication and refusing to submit to the oversight of the elders of the church. The wire services picked up the story and CBS did a segment on it on "60 MINUTES." It is remarkable that the woman in question complained about invasion of privacy when by her action she has become nationally known and her sin of fornication is known from one side of the nation to the other. Additionally, she has been approached by ten different groups, each wanting to make a movie of her story.

The jury awarded her a total of \$390,000 in the case. The decision has brought jubilation to the liberal press (*TV Guide* applauded the decision) and consternation to elders, preachers and other members of churches of Christ across the nation. The case has been appealed and we shall all be anxious to see how a higher court will rule in the matter.

Newspapers in Oklahoma and Texas have carried extensive information on the case. If all that has been reported is true, there may be some room for question as to how the elders handled this case. The legal battle centered around two basic things: (1) The fact that the woman delivered a letter to one of the elders in which she stated that she was withdrawing her membership from that congregation; and (2) the fact that while the church claimed to be autonomous, the elders sent letters to adjoining congregations notifying them of their action. The court interpreted this as a violation of their own stated belief in autonomy. They argued on the first point that she had a right to change her belief.

In carefully listening to the "60 Minutes" segment, it is evident to me that the woman did not have a clear understanding of the truth about the unique nature of the Lord's church nor of the role and relationship of elders to a local church.

Already, we have learned of a number of Christians who have been approached by fellow workers, relatives or neighbors about this matter. Some Christians have been ridiculed for believing the Bible teaches that the church can exercise corrective discipline against wayward members. People who do not know where the pas-

sages are found nor the context in which they appear have been quoting "Judge not, that ye be not judged" and "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." Indeed, the Oklahoma woman referred to these when interviewed for "60 Minutes." Her attorney said in the trial "He was a single man, she was a single woman, and this is America." He further argued that if she wanted to fornicate up and down the street, the church had no business to stick its nose into her business. That all may sound very democratic and enlightened to a jury of modern-day men and women, but it is a far cry from what the New Testament teaches.

What Saith the Scriptures?

Jesus said the time comes when a sin must be told "to the church" and that if repentance is not forthcoming, "let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18:15-17). Concerning the unrepentant fornicator at Corinth, Paul instructed the church when "gathered together" to "deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh." He warned that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" and said "Purge out the old leaven." He closed by saying "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:1-13). Paul also commanded the Thessalonian church to "withdraw" from "every brother that walketh disorderly" (2 Thes. 3:6). Further, the New Testament clearly teaches that elders have the oversight of local churches. Christians are to "know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you" (1 Thes. 5:12). Elders are to "feed the flock of God" among them, "taking the oversight" (1 Pet. 5:2). "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17).

These passages set out the parameters within which congregations function and in which the discipline of local church memberships must be managed. These principles are divine and no earthly tribunal has a right to set them aside. The social mores of the times which wink at sin, call evil good and good evil, do not alter the will of Him with whom we have to do.

Far Reaching Consequences

The Collinsville affair is a watershed decision. If this ruling is not overturned in a higher court, then churches of Christ will be in for trouble from disgruntled worldlings who want the respectability of the congregation without accepting the incumbent responsibilities for godly behaviour. The legal implications of the case do not end with local churches of Christ. The Roman Catholic Church has for centuries excommunicated members. The Mormon Church has a form of censure. Many other religious bodies exclude members for their conduct. Some lawyers have commented that if each church of Christ had a set of bylaws which spelled out such matters, then the danger of such litigation would be minimal. But we do have a guideline. It is the New Testament. The court objects that the New Testament is capable of diverse interpretations. So are state and

federal laws. The underlying assumption of such a position is that the Almighty cannot state a law so that it may be understood while uninspired men can do what God Himself cannot do. Such is presumptuous, if not blasphemous.

The application of New Testament instruction to the practice of local churches is not a proper subject for the civil courts in a nation which guarantees religious freedom. In such a society, an individual enters covenant with a local church by his/her own volition. Such action presupposes a willingness to live consistently with the principles of the New Testament which bind those people together. Should one decide to violate those principles, he certainly has the civil right to do so (provided civil law is not violated), but moral right is another question. Elders and other Christians have the right to indicate their disapproval of sinful conduct and to take scriptural steps to restore the fallen brother or sister. To argue otherwise is to limit the field of rights to the transgressor while stripping the godly of all such rights.

We have always advocated that elders and all other brethren involved in corrective discipline should proceed with caution, take steps which are well thought out, keep adequate records, maintain pure motives which always seek the salvation of the wayward and take public action only where it is necessary and after all reasonable efforts have been exhausted. Times like these test the resolve and fidelity of those who shepherd God's people. Hirelings will flee before the wrath of the malicious. The timid will falter. Untaught members will exercise pressure to keep from being embarrassed before their unbelieving friends. Discipline has never started in some places, and this ruling may provide a pretext to avoid it in the future. Others will stop exercising such discipline for fear of reprisals. The Devil will have a field day. It is a time for elders to resolve to perform their God-given duties to each flock without fear or favor and with a willingness to go to jail, if it comes down to that, to lead the Lord's people in doing what He said.

It Is Getting Late

It is my judgment that it is much later in America than some seem to think. If this ruling is allowed to stand, then we are now at the cutting edge of the end of religious liberty in America as we have known it. When civil courts require that New Testament congregations write human creeds and by-laws to protect themselves, and when spiteful and malicious malcontents can sue church elders for doing what the word of God teaches that they must do to please God, and win huge cash settlements, and when movie producers can take such affairs and package them as entertainment to the further embarrassment and ridicule of Christians, then my friends, it is indeed late. It is a time to watch and pray. Pray for those in authority that just judgments may be rendered. Pray that the gospel may continue to run and have free course. The effectual, fervent prayers of righteous men avail much. The early Christians prayed the Roman Empire off its foundation and cell doors off their hinges. It is a time for prayer.

(Continued from Page 1)

The following practices at Crossroads are some of the reasons that church is labeled a cult.

1. **Cell-type indoctrination.** Crossroads uses the "soul talk" plan to indoctrinate and begin the "control" of new converts. Deny this as much as they wish, but the fact remains that reliable testimony from unimpeachable witnesses establish the fact. Many cults have the same type plan for the same purpose.

The Family Bulletin of White's Ferry Road church of Christ, West Monroe, Louisiana, January 5, 1980 advertised a seminar on Bible Talks and Prayer Partners by Chuck Lucas. It said Lucas "developed in the main the Soul Talk concept." It further said that his work was so successful at Crossroads that "the seminar plans were born." If this statement is true, Chuck Lucas developed the Soul Talk concept as it was used at Crossroads.

2. **Total commitment.** There is a "total commitment" required of every member at Crossroads. Lucas said, "Jesus said, 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.' That is total commitment!" There is no issue at all about what Christ taught, nor about the fact that it is a total commitment, but the issue is that Christ did not require a total commitment to a system such as Crossroads, nor to men like Chuck Lucas, his assistants and the elders at Crossroads. Cults want a "total commitment" but they want the commitment to the cult group, its leader and chief men, and to the doctrinal system.

A coerced commitment by guilt and fear methods to induce total submission and conformity is far from "total commitment" to Christ. The "total commitment" of Crossroads means to abandon parents, friends and all others if they disapprove of "soul talks" and special meetings of the system throughout the week. They equate devotion to the Crossroads system with devotion of Christ.

3. **Prayer partner.** The prayer partner concept is a trait of cultism. It is a religious gimmick for emptying the mind of the convert and holding him to the group through guilt, confession, intimidation and constant obligation to his superiors.

A system of spying and mind control of converts is the value of the prayer partner system. It is a manipulation of people by way of peer pressure, fear and guilt. Of course, Crossroads denies that anyone there makes any effort to control anyone, but the testimony of many from different parts of the country affirm the fact. This is one reason many brethren and the denominational world call Crossroads a cult.

The new convert may be compelled to sever ties with family members and friends and establish new relationships with group members, particularly the "soul talk" leader or senior "prayer partner." A new set of values and goals replace the original ones and a separate environment is created for the new convert which shields him from his former "sinful" life. He begins to adopt a new thought, new will and a new mind.

The prayer partner system is arranged so that the young convert must confess sins to the prayer partner,

and this means they must confess ALL their sins, even those of thought. Their most secret thoughts and weaknesses are known through the confessions to the prayer partner. A guilt, shame and fear complex is created through the prayer partner concept to compel obedience and thought control to a degree.

Chuck Lucas adopted "The Master Plan of Evangelism" by Robert E. Coleman and developed the Crossroads style "Soul Talk."

Charles Goodall said in his booklet, **The Crossroads Heresy**: "The sources interviewed from Sunrise com-plaind that their senior prayer-partners had shared confidential information with their soul talk leaders and the preacher. Specific identifying details were mentioned during public lessons by both the soul talk leader and the preacher, which revealed public knowledge of what they considered to have been private matters. Such an arrangement is totally unscriptural. It utilizes psychological behavior modification techniques used by professional psychologists." (page 13)

4. **Money schemes.** Money raising gimmicks is a trait of cultism. Crossroads has invited the criticism of both brethren and the religious world by pooling into the operation at Crossroads just about everything that religion could get into for the purpose of collecting money. They have a day school, family counseling services of various types, preacher schools, vacation camp-grounds, a professional entertaining choir with recording tapes and records to sell, a publishing and printing department, a recording tape department, financing various projects from student loans at going interest rates, and other enterprises by which the coffers at Crossroads are regularly fed.

In addition, Crossroads has followed the cultish image of separating as much money from as many members as possible. Reports are many that Crossroads has had students borrow on their savings, jewelry, from their parents or friends, and even made arrangements to help them make loans in order that they could "give" to the church.

5. **Superior leaders.** The "leader" or "teacher" becomes the "spiritual father" and "spiritual mother" to new converts. The cult form of getting and holding control over the minds and lives of the members is accomplished through a system such as Crossroads.

Members are taught not to question the wisdom or judgment of a "leader" of a program or a "soul talk." A strong word against a senior prayer partner is a very serious offense. The whole group must be obedient to their "leaders" and "prayer partners."

Crossroads may not be a "cult" in the strict sense of the word, but enough traits of cultism have become a part of her doctrine and practice to understand why so many charges have been made and are being made. God is not with all these opposing sects and cults who think opposition to them is His approval. Crossroads is no different.

The Crossroads system is a dangerous religious operation for all, especially for the young.

SPECIAL FEATURE

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS, GRACE AND FORGIVENESS—NO. 3

by
Franklin T. Puckett

But our being forgiven and our being cleansed is conditioned upon our confession of that sin of which we are guilty. We have got to cease from it, confess it. Somebody may say we may not even know about them. Oh, we can confess unto the Lord our imperfections, even concerning those things of which we may not be aware.

Under the law there was a sacrifice offered for ignorant sins. But they had to offer that sacrifice. They could not disregard compliance with that condition on which God extended mercy, even for ignorant sins. And David prayed unto the Father, "Lord, keep me from secret sin." He was not talking about sins that he knew about and that nobody else knew about that he was keeping hidden from the views of others. He was talking about sins in his own life of which he was not aware. "Now, Lord, keep me back from that."

We can every day not only confess the sins of which we are aware, but recognizing imperfections, go to God in humbleness of heart and of mind and praying unto Him earnestly, "Lord, forgive me of any sin that may have invaded my life, even though I am unaware of it and keep me from secret sins, or sins of which I am not aware." Day by day we can come unto Him unceasingly this way, confessing our sins that we may be forgiven. We cannot just go ahead and justify continued practice of sins, that is, what some of these fellows are doing. They need to get their eyes open to what they are doing.

VII

Let me point out something else. When one is a baptized believer, one is baptized but once. That is point action. The action is begun, carried out and completed—point action. So, it's point action. It is not continuative action. You don't continue in the action of being baptized. It is point action. But walking in the light is continuative action, two different kinds of action. And I asked Carl Ketcherside one time, before an audience larger than this, to tell me whether these in the digressive Christian Church who have brought in the instrumental music and are continuing in it, and have for one-hundred years or more, are they walking in the light or in darkness?

I am not talking about somebody who in a moment of weakness may stumble, and who could come to the Lord for forgiveness of sin and obtain divine pardon, but what about these folks who begin that which is without

divine authority and continue in it on and on in continuative action? Are they walking in the light or darkness? Tell me? What about those who create their missionary societies and continue in them? Are they walking in the light or in darkness? What about people who develop all the things that have come to trouble the churches of our Lord in the past twenty years? And they have been continuing in them for at least two decades. What about them? Well, they are continuing to walk somewhere.

A walk is a mode of conduct. It is not just one step, but is progression. Now then, where are they walking—in the light or in darkness? If they are walking without divine authority, contrary to the will of God, my friends, they are walking in darkness! That is where they are. And only if they are walking in the counsel of God, according to His will, are they walking in the light.

I'm not talking about one isolated mistake. We're talking about a mode of conduct, and so, are they walking in the light or in darkness? Ketcherside never did answer. His only reply was, "Well, Frank you don't understand that passage you are talking about," and wouldn't give me a chance to say any more. Now isn't that what the passage is talking about? If we walk in darkness and say we have fellowship with God, we lie and do not the truth. If we walk in light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

Lest somebody think that means we are sinlessly perfect it says "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." But it does not stop there. "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." If we say, "We have not sinned, we make him a liar." Does that mean, is that showing, that we can go out here and God is so gracious that he will just take the perfection of Christ and put it over here on us, even though we are continuing to walk in sin? God forbid that any of us should reach that conclusion.

VIII

God called upon us to turn from our errors, quit our wrong doings, to cease our wrong practices, and come unto Him for the forgiveness of our sins, and start living day by day and all the way in the counsel and light of God's eternal truth. That is what He is talking about. I know that sometimes people want to picture God as being something like an ogre sitting there. But you say, "One has got to be obedient to the conditions; that you make God sitting there ready to pounce on you." No, God is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. God calls for repentance. God doesn't want anyone to be lost. And He will be patient and longsuffering with us. But the call is for repentance!

Paul tells us in his great letter to the Romans that we are to count the longsuffering of God as calling upon us to come to repentance. God's longsuffering, His patience with us, is leading us unto repentance and if we do not repent we are treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath.

Take the letters that the Lord dictated unto the seven

churches of Asia in Revelation, chapters 2 and 3. And even the church at Ephesus, which measured by the present day standards would be a pretty good congregation, but He said, "You have left your first love. Repent, therefore, and do the first works." He called for repentance! And even unto the church at Smyrna, whose character is far above that of many congregations today, He said, "Be thou faithful unto death." Faithfulness, He commanded and "I will give thee the crown of life." And then concerning that woman over in Thyatira, that Jezebel who seduced the servants of God and taught them to commit fornication, He said I gave her space to repent, but she repented not, therefore, I shall cast her into a bed of affliction".

Now then, don't get the idea that God doesn't call for his children, who err, to repent. The fact that He is longsuffering to usward does not mean that He is condoning our wrong practices. But it is a call for repentance. Repentance is a condition of forgiveness. So we are to come in genuine faith, and humble repentance and honest confession unto God for forgiveness, and when our sins are forgiven, then we are counted righteous because we do not have sin anymore. It has been blotted out, covered over. Not that He is borrowing something over here.

That always reminds me of the Catholic doctrine of the works of supererogation whereby they teach that some people have been so saintly, that lived so perfectly, that they did a lot more than the Lord even wanted them to do. They had some works that were unnecessary, and so God just took their extra good works and put them under the depositor over here, and when Catholics today fall short of what God requires of them, they can pray unto the saints, and God will reach in here and take it out of the saint's account and put it to theirs. This smacks at the same kind of concept.

My friend, the Bible teaches that you and I are individually and personally responsible for our own individual lives. I may stumble and fall but God calls me to repent of my sins and to confess my sins and pray God for forgiveness. Even if it be a sin of which I am not aware, I'm to be conscious of the fact that I'm not perfect before Him and come pleading for tender mercy. But God is the one who determines the extent of His grace and it is conditional, both to the alien sinner and to the erring child of God, despite the claims of some. And, so, we must comply with whatever conditions the Lord has laid down.

Romans, chapter 9, the apostle Paul said, as he quotes a statement that the Lord made unto Moses, "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion upon whom I will have compassion." God determines those upon whom He will have mercy and those to whom He will show compassion and He has determined on the basis of the conditions laid down in the book of God.

Somebody says, "Will there be no exceptions?" I can't tell you there will be. If God wants to make some exceptions, that is His business. But clemency is the right of the judge, not of the person who is proclaiming the law. And so preachers today cannot hold out clem-

ency beyond what God's law declares. They must stay within the scope of that. Now, if God wants to save somebody without their obedience, that's His business and I'll not complain about it. But I can't hold it out, and if I do, I would be holding out to you a hope that the word of God does not declare.

But they say, "Oh, you're judging." No, I am leaving all judgment in the hand of Him who is to be the Judge. I am simply telling you the principles upon which judgment will be rendered according to the revelation of God's word.

CAN
CONSERVATIVE BROTHERS
EVANGELIZE THE WORLD?

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A former treatise have I written on this topic. And now another like unto it, with the encouragement of the editor and others.

Is it possible that those of us who believe in letting the church be the church, who have not gone wild over the promotional schemes of institutionalism and such like,—is it possible that we can evangelize the world without becoming enamoured with the Crossroads movement, Jimmie Lovell, and such like? If I did not believe my brethren could succeed I probably would not bother to write about it. But if we were fully convinced that such is an impossibility, would that lessen our duty to try? Would it alter the Great Commission in any way? What of the possibility? If we could be convinced that it is possible, it might encourage us to make a bonified, serious effort.

Mathematically Possible

We recently gave some statistics which showed that if there was only one Christian on the earth and it took him a whole year to convert another, and then each of them a whole year to do likewise—that if this process continued, over 4 billion (world population) could be reached in 33 years—the same amount of time our Lord spent on the earth. (We are indebted to brother Harris Dark for the statistics and for his foresight and concern).

Now think of it this way. There is not just one Christian on the earth and it doesn't usually take a whole year to teach another. Consider that there are approximately 750,000 conservative brethren. According to brother Dark's statistics (which are mathematically correct), we are at year 12 on the scale. Conceivably, with a faith in God that works through love (Gal. 5:6) the world could be evangelized in 21 years or less!

A Prerequisite

We must be truly converted to Christ ourselves. It is He who gives the increase, we only plant and water. The one who plants and waters is nothing (I Cor. 3:7). If a man thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself (Gal. 6:3). We are unprofitable servants (Lk. 17:10).

When we come to appreciate the love of one who came to seek and save the lost (Lk. 19:10) we will also come to respect His authority when He says "Go." *It is not the imperative of an external command that sends us after the lost. . . We may be commanded forever to take the gospel. . . and it will never move us. But when we are fully possessed by him whose life it was to seek and save the lost, we shall go, command or no command. Back of all successful work for the lost is an inward spiritual impulse; and back of the impulse is Christ in the heart of the individual, and the brand mark of it all is the cross,...* (J.E. Conant, *EVERY MEMBER EVANGELISM*, preface). Yes, there must be the transformed life.

All Out for P.E.!

Many of us are gung-ho for P.E.—Physical Education. Can we be as enthusiastic about Personal Evangelism? How do we evangelize? Contrary to our suspicions there are no Top Secret, "yet-to-be-discovered" methods to reach folks with the gospel. There are no gimmicks, shortcuts, or tricks. Things are pretty much as they were in the first century—an abundant harvest with few laborers (Mt. 9:37f). Some tools may be helpful but you need not invest in numerous books, records, or other paraphernalia. A knowledge of the power of God for salvation, an awareness that life is brief and the need is urgent, and a compassion for lost humanity are the things most needed. We need not wait for the perfect situation or until we have mastered and memorized the whole Bible forward and backward. Most of the NT conversions were characterized by circumstances that seemed less than ideal.

Getting The Home Bible Study

Getting someone to agree to a HBS is the biggest part of the battle with Satan. This is why he steals the word away, "lest they should believe and be saved" (Lk. 8:12). Since we are dealing with the will of man and the influence of the devil, there is no guaranteed formula for getting a study. There are some things that may help.

1) **Become All Things To All Men.** Why did Paul do this? "That I may by all means save some" (I Cor. 9:22). He said he "pleased all men in all things" Why? "That they may be saved" (10:33). This doesn't mean become a hypocrite but to be as peaceable as possible (Rom. 12:18). It means not alarming your prospect's prejudices or needlessly exciting his opposition. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col. 4:6). Make your words palatable. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Mt. 10:16). Sometimes we get that backwards. Don't bring out the wolf in a man by tactless remarks. Tact depends on understanding the feeling and situation of others. Great

causes have suffered at the hands of tactless bunglers, but none so great as the cause of Christ. Love is not rude. Sarcasm and harsh denunciation is often the first and easiest course to follow. In the life of the Master Teacher these were the exception rather than the rule and were used as a last resort to shake people who knew they were wrong but were dishonest and hypocritical (Mt. 23). While we should be ready to answer every man let us not forget the manner—"in meekness and fear," (I Pet. 3:15). Brethren, it does make a difference how you say it! We cannot be like a bull in a china shop when trying to save souls.

2) **Keep It Simple.** When trying to get a lost person to consider the simple gospel, a complicated or high pressure approach is not needed. It has been helpful to me to say, "Many people would like to know more about the Bible. I believe you are one of those people, Bill, and I would really like to study the Bible with you." Lest he think you are suggesting a never-ending arrangement tell him how many times, how often, and how long each study will take (be reasonable). It is also a good idea to let him know that you believe religion is the last thing one should get mad about and you try to make it your practice not to get mad even if there is an area of disagreement. If there is a difference that may prevent a HBS, you might say "If there is anything important enough to keep us divided, surely it is important enough to talk about without hurting each other's feelings. Don't you think so?"

A forthright approach is best and each Christian should find a way of asking for a study with which he is comfortable. If one resists your sincere approach it would be best not to try to "argue" him into it. You might say, "Bill, I hope after you have had time to think about it that you will reconsider the study. If you change your mind, please don't be embarrassed or hesitate to let me know. I will be glad to come." You never know when one may have a change of heart and this will leave the door open.

"The Gospel Is For All"

We sing. Do we believe and practice? Most congregations are composed of white, middle and upper class Americans. And they certainly need the gospel. But it is also for the downtrodden, the poor, the alcoholic, the person burdened with problems, other races, etc. Many of these will need a lot of attention. Are we ready to put our Christianity to the test? Let us be sure that we have not turned the church into an organization that primarily meets our social needs, with some religious flavoring thrown in. "My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons (Jas. 2:1).

Will We Evangelize The World?

We can be like the ten spies who said "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we." Or we can be like Caleb who said "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it," (Num. 13:30,31). God blessed Caleb by allowing him to enter the promised land! With all of my heart, I believe my brethren can evangelize the world. We won't have to

compete with the promotional techniques or popular money-raising schemes. The Great Commission applies to all of us (Mt. 28:19, 20; 2 Tim. 2:2). When each one does what he can where he is, the gospel will spread. We can do all things through Him who strengthens us (Phil. 4:13).

The Mystery of Iniquity

Eugene Britnell

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"CONFESSION?—ASK THE MAN WHO GOES THERE!"

The Knights of Columbus of the Catholic Church publishes material in newspapers and magazines over the country. One of their popular articles is on confession under the above heading.

The Catholic Article

"Catholics go to Confession to a priest for one reason only: to obtain divine forgiveness for their sins.

"But why, you ask, go to a priest? Why not confess our sins directly to God?"

"Ask the man who goes to confession and here's what he will tell you: Sin is an offense against God; it must be forgiven by God. It is God, not man, who determines how forgiveness must be obtained. Christ plainly pointed this out when He empowered His apostles and their successors to forgive sins or to refuse forgiveness.

"Whose sins you shall forgive," Christ said, "they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (John 20:21-23) Thus Christ authorized the apostles, and their successors, to pardon or to deny pardon as they judged the sinner worthy or unworthy. To do this they had to know what they were forgiving... the secret dispositions of the sinner... his sorrow and willingness to repair the wrong done to his neighbor by his sins. Who could make this known but the sinner himself—and what is this but Confession?"

"But Confession—the Sacrament of Penance—is only one of the seven Sacraments Christ left in His church. Yes, seven—no more and no less! Christ's religion is not merely a message to be accepted, but a life to be lived—from the cradle to the grave. Christ's seven Sacraments are the answer to man's seven basic needs _____

"Would you like to know more about each of the seven Sacraments? How they can help you to meet the seven basic needs of your life? Then write today for a free pamphlet which gives important information concerning them. Ask for Pamphlet No. 5-N."

Our Review

One of the first problems which we detect in this teaching is the failure to understand who and what a priest really is. The apostle Peter said that every Christian is a priest and member of the "royal priesthood"—the church of Christ (1 Peter 2:5,9). Jesus Christ is the Christian's High Priest to "make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17). The Bible does not teach that any man can act as a priest between the Christian and the Lord today. The apostle Paul wrote, "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

We realize that under the Old Testament law priests offered up sacrifices for their sins and the sins of the people, but Christ made one sacrifice, HIMSELF, for our sins. "And there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:23-25). Since Christ lives to make intercession for us, and there can be only one mediator between God and the Christian, there is no place for the work of a priest to whom confession is made or through whom one may pray to God.

I John 1, verse 9, says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Christians confess their sins to God (not a priest) and God forgives. Under the Old Testament the people of Israel confessed to God (1 Kings 8:33, 34) and priests made atonement (Leviticus 5:5-13). Priests today do not make atonement by offering sacrifices. Christ is our atonement and means of reconciliation (Romans 5:9-11), and no other sacrifices are necessary. Since priests today cannot make atonement or offer sacrifices, they are not necessary to our forgiveness.

Another fallacy in the Catholic article is the reference to "the apostles and their successors." Where does the Bible say or teach that the apostles were to have successors? There is no more authority for such in the scriptures than there is for a successor of Christ on the earth today. Peter himself said that in order to qualify as an apostle of Christ one must have the knowledge "beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection" (Acts 1:22). Can any man on earth today meet that qualification? The apostle Paul affirmed the same thing that Peter said. While on the road to Damascus to persecute Christians the Lord told him, "I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you" (Acts 26:16). So Paul had to have seen the Lord in order to be an apostle, just as his fellow apostles had experienced before him. We repeat: No man on earth today can be an apostle of Christ!

And another thing is worthy of note. If the priests today are the successors of the apostles, as the article

said, then they should have the same power as the apostles of Christ had in the first century. If any man on earth today is a successor of Peter and the apostles, we would not have to confess our sins for him to be conscious of them. Read Acts 5:1-11. Here we read of a man and his wife who conspired to lie (not confess, but lie). Peter, guided by the Holy Spirit, knew of their sin without them admitting it. If men were in Peter's office and had his power today, they would know the sins of the flock without their confession. Therefore, we would like to "ask the man who goes there," WHY DO YOU GO?

Their use of John 20:21-23 is a perversion of what the Lord meant. In the first place, the apostles had power which no man has on earth today. But even then, they forgave sins by teaching people "how forgiveness must be obtained." For example, when people asked Peter and the other apostles what to do, or how to obtain remission of their sins, they were told to "Repent, and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). Were they then and there exercising the power which Christ gave them and doing the work which he authorized and commanded them to do? Yes. Where do we read of anyone coming to the apostles, confessing sins, and being forgiven by them without obedience to the commands of the gospel? We don't. Or where do we read of Christians confessing sins to a priest? We don't. Christians confess their sins to God, and pray for forgiveness through (in the name of) Jesus Christ, their High Priest and Mediator.

Yes, truly, "It is God, not man, who determines how forgiveness must be obtained."

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SOCIAL DRINKING

One does not attempt to change the things with which he is satisfied. This statement is a truism finding application to our personal life and surroundings as well as to our culture generally. We often hear, perhaps without understanding, "the Christian is in the world but not of the world." This statement generally intends complement to a life set on a heavenly plane rather than on the earthly. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, not on things of the earth. For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1-3).

The lofty code of ethics and morals, the way of life with the Christian, originates not on earth with man but in heaven with God. The true child of God can be satisfied with and comfortable in surroundings and culture resulting from submission to the way of the God. When circumstances, not of the Christians' making or choosing, those that are worldly and sinful, or at best questionable, surround and confine the faithful child of God, such will invariably make for discomfort and uneasiness. Certainly one who has pitched his life upon the heavenly plane would be uneasy and fearful of creating circumstances that are of the world rather than of heaven, of Christ. Surely the Christian would have no part or lot in the popular "happy-hour" wherein one is expected to unwind after the day of work is done, either as a drop-in observer or as a participant, regularly or occasionally. I trust most of our readers are conversant with the reference "happy hour" as it relates to the practice of stopping for an occasional cocktail or alcoholic drink in the local lounge or bar after work. Reason being, the Christian is sufficiently uncomfortable in this kind of setting and circumstance to avoid it, to say the least of it. Valuing his image and influence the faithful would surely flee every possibility that might tarnish or mar, or in even the remotest way reflect upon the name of the Christ he wears. While we recognize many things of a similar nature we wish more particularly to address the use of beverage alcohol in this writing. Not, mind you, in the habitual way which produces drunkenness but the occasional way commonly referred to as social drinking.

The question of social drinking, whether at home, in other private or public circumstances, has taken on greater prominence and proportions in later years. The history of God's people has generally reflected an intolerance of beverage alcohol demanding abstinence in any

circumstance other than medical. Not so today as our society turns more to social drinking as acceptable. Whatever restraint and opposition characterized of the past has disappeared. Social drinking is endorsed to the point that members of the church engage in it and more and more are asking "What is wrong with it?" as they attempt justification in some form or another. Maybe the attempt at justification is at first hypothetical as the situation is posed like this: "Can a man drink one beer at home and not sin?" "What about wine for special occasions? On and on it goes in the same vein in an effort to justify a questionable or sinful practice by placing the burden of judgment and indictment upon one unwilling to accept its use due to scriptural understanding and respect. The accuser, rather than the user, is charged with the burden of proof, just like the sectarian charges when his error is called into account. The demand is, "Where does the Bible condemn it?"

Admittedly, pressures of business and society have contributed to the problem even with many disciples. Some choose to stay on the fringe of social drinking, or as I prefer the reference, occasional drinking, reservedly arguing and practicing private use in home while attempting to distinguish this from social drinking. Others publicly admit and endorse all such. Still others take a lenient attitude which is intolerant of any open rebuke via teaching and certainly is intolerant of any corrective discipline in the matter among brethren.

We need to appreciate the need for being aloof from our culture and surroundings because of righteousness rather than being overwhelmed by it. Change attitudes and practices rather than conform to the questionable and sinful. Dare to be different! Is the use of beverage alcohol right or wrong in any circumstance or situation? I unhesitatingly answer that it is wrong. Medication alone when prescribed, administered and taken properly is precluded. Maybe we could see this issue clearly if we put it in the form of this question. **Is social drinking, occasional drinking, right or wrong?** We are seeing cultural influence affect a noticeable change in the lives of brethren causing in many areas an attitude and practice of worldliness which is destroying the purity and distinctiveness of God's people.

There is no case to be made for the intoxicating wine of today from the Bible. To the contrary, in the nine Hebrew and four Greek words referring to intoxicating beverage in the Bible not a single instance of use in any one of the thirteen is with God's approval. What kind of influence toward Christ can one have upon a neighbor when he learns you take an occasional drink? Try inviting him to dinner, serve him a choice wine and talk to him about becoming a Christian while you sip it. Where has even a single drink ever produced good of a lasting nature?

An aged "mountaineer" preacher friend of mine in the discussion of this issue offered this homespun assessment. "There is about as much difference in a dram drinker and a drunkard as there is between a big hog and a pig." I can relate to that, can't you? Obviously, the illustration sets forth the difference as being only in matter of size and not in fact. Maybe we need to change

our terminology as previously suggested, to more accurately denote this and begin to talk about the occasional drink, and or drinker, and the habitual drinker and or drunk. That after all is the fact of the matter. Now, isn't it? Paul warned, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:21). Within the same context he adds that the sanctity which preserves blameless unto the coming of our Lord demands it.

We need to quit kidding ourselves about drinking and some other things and recognize that such worldliness is a major deterrent to growth and purity of the church and unity of believers even within the church. If we cannot discern good and evil we need to be more fully taught so that we can readily do so. Apply Paul's statement, "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14). Once we take care of any teaching deficiency which obviously exists, we will need to muster a little courage and conviction so that we can all be what we ought to be, Christians, in the world but not of the world. God help us!

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"PROVOKE NOT..."

As reflected in my earlier article there are relatively few New Testament admonitions directed specifically to Christians as **parents**. The Holy Spirit, however, need not say something a dozen times for it to be true. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath" (Eph. 6:4) occurs only one time in the entire New Testament. Likewise, "Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged," (Col. 3:21) is found only once. Truly these admonitions may be considered God's "no, no's" for fathers (and mothers) and both deal with such child sensitivities that to disregard either of them is to produce emotional wreckage in the child and heartbreak for the parent.

Obviously a child may become enangered without a parental provocation and just as readily discouragement may stem from persons other than parents or even from conditions of the child's own making. The fact remains, however, that both wrath and discouragement of a child may find their course in the speech or silence and/or actions or inaction of a parent. That a parent may be responsible for either provocation should put every father and mother on constant guard lest either or both may be a major cause for the development of those traits in their own flesh and blood offspring.

Since being a Christian is an around-the-clock responsibility, parents cannot have time for any unguarded moments of thoughtless attention involving their children. A misplaced word or deed may be the spark that provides a temper tantrum or a needed word unspoken or a deed undone may be the raindrop direly needed to build confidence in a child tending to bashfulness or withdrawal from society.

The ultimate effect of repeated provocation to wrath is rebellion against the provoker. The fact that God warns fathers against provoking their children is the best reason imaginable for parents to study carefully the disposition of their children and learn from what they observe in them not to "provoke them to wrath."

In Ephesians 6:4, the Greek work for "provoke" means "to irritate beyond measure" (Young's *Analytical Concordance of the Bible*, p. 783); Thayer says it means "to rouse to wrath," "exasperate." In Col. 3:21, "to stir up; excite; stimulate."—Thayer.

In his *Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, pp. 115, 116 more than fifty years ago Charles Eerdman wrote the following regarding "provoking" a child:

"The word denotes not only the coming of irritation and exasperation by parental exactions and demands, but, farther, the awaken-ing of anger by treatment that is harsh and oppressive and unfair. This is not to say that a father is never to allow a child to have his own way, or must permit a child to do wrong for fear of arousing its anger. Nothing could be more unkind than to let a child believe that by an exhibition of temper it can secure anything it may desire. This is the abdication of parental authority. This is to make a child the constant victim of self-indulgence and caprice. What the exhortation does forbid is such unfair treatment, such cruel demands, such a selfish insistence upon authority, as to awaken in the heart of a child a rankling sense of injustice." William Barclay declares that "there are three ways in which we can do injustice to our children." He then observes:

"(1) We can forget that things do change, that the customs of one generation are not the customs of another. Elinor Mordaunt tells how once she stopped her little daughter from doing something by saying, "I was never allowed to do that when I was your age." And the child answered, "But you must remember, mother, that you were then, and I'm now." Parents can do infinite damage by forgetting that times change and customs alter.

"(2) We can exercise such a control that that very control is an insult to our own up-bringing of our children. To keep a child too long in leading-strings is simply to say that we do not trust him, and to say that we do not trust him, is simply to say that we have no confidence in the way in which we ourselves have trained him. It is better to make the mistake of too much trust than of too much control.

"(3) We can forget the duty of encouragement. Luther's father was very strict, too strict, strict to the point of cruelty. Luther used to say: "Spare the rod and spoil the child—that is true; but beside the rod keep an apple to give him when he has done well." Benjamin West tells how he became a painter. One day his mother went out leaving him in charge of his little sister Sally. In his mother's absence he discovered some bottles of coloured ink and began to paint Sally's portrait. In the doing so he made a very considerable mess of things with ink blots all over. His mother came back. She saw the mess, but she said nothing. She picked up the piece of paper and saw the drawing. "Why," she said, "it's Sally!" and she stopped and kissed him. Ever after Benjamin West used

to say: "My mother's kiss made me a painter." Encouragement did more than rebuke could ever do. Anna Buchan tells how her grandmother had a favorite phrase even when she was very old: "Never daunt on youth."

As Paul sees it, children must honour their parents; but parents must never discourage their children. Barclay, *Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, pp. 211, 212.

BREAD OF LIFE

"I am the bread of life... so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." Jno. 6:35, 57.

Herschel E. Patton
7637 Fleming Hills Dr. S.W.
Huntsville, Ala. 35802



BABYLON, NOT YET FALLEN

The fall of "Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" is predicted and described in Revelation 17 and 18. The saints of God are assured of her destruction and told to rejoice over her "for God hath avenged you on her" (18:20). She is pictured as a great harlot and the ancient wicked city of Babylon, involving the rulers of nations along with their subjects, all venting their anger against the Christians who refused and opposed their worldly and sensuous ways. "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth" (18:24).

The assured doom of Babylon, the Beast, and Great Dragon in the latter chapters of Revelation, along with the ultimate victory of the saints and their reward, was to give Christians comfort, assurance, and strength to endure unto the end. They would, in the end, be victorious and rewarded with eternal life in heaven. But until Christ comes and these enemies are destroyed and cast into the lake of fire, Christians must continue to endure harassment, physical, economic, and emotional persecution, even unto death... martyrdom.

In America Today

Some seemingly think that in America, with our Constitution guaranteeing religious freedom and where pride is taken in calling ourselves a Christian Nation, Babylon the great has already fallen. Such, however, is not the case. Such thinking reveals deception or wishful thinking.

For the past few decades America has been becoming more and more worldly, sensual, indecent, unmoral, vulgar, and ungodly. This is the result of Atheistic, Communistic, and Humanistic philosophy pervading the minds of Americans through our schools, the media, and even churches. All of these philosophies dethrone God, spiritual influences, and moral concepts, putting

in their place the belief that whatever pleases man-gives him satisfaction—is right.

Already, this philosophy has invaded the judges, courts, and law-makers of America to the extent that any reference in text books to a creator or creation as a theory of origin (though there is more scientific evidence for creation than there is for evolution) is illegal; a preacher being invited to a school chapel assembly to conduct a devotional or speak on spiritual matters is out; even some one uttering a spontaneous prayer at some school function is declared illegal; An officer who shoots a criminal in the act of committing a crime or fleeing from a crime is a greater criminal than the one shot; capital punishment is as great a crime as the murders committed. In all these things, the philosophy says the human rights of the infidel, criminal, and murderer are violated. Actually, it is evidence of Babylon's presence in our day.

A Recent Example

Just recently the press carried a story that illustrated this very vividly, and should strike terror to the heart of every Bible believing and spiritually minded person. A woman who was a member of the Collinsville church of Christ, near Tulsa, Oklahoma was guilty of fornication and after repeated exhortations and warnings on the part of the elders that failed to bring repentance, was publicly withdrawn from in accordance with Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-11; 2 Thess. 3:6,14-15. The paper reported that the woman resigned from the congregation in anticipation of the sanctions, but that the letter of withdrawal was ready anyhow. The woman sued the elders of the church for invasion of privacy and intentional infliction of emotional distress. Her lawyer, Thomas Frasier is quoted as saying "It doesn't matter if she was fornicating up and down the street, it doesn't give the church the right to stick their noses in." In his closing arguments to the jury, Frasier said "I demand the right, on behalf of Marion Guinn, to lead her life the way she chooses to lead her life... He was a single man. She was a single lady, and this is America."

The jury of seven men and five women "quickly agreed that the church had violated Ms Guinn's rights" and awarded her \$390,000. Some jurors wanted to award her much more. The case, of course, will be appealed.

Here is a clear example of Humanism vs God and the Bible (The Babylon of Rev. 17-18), "drunken with the blood of saints", manifested in our day. Believing and following the Bible is a crime, punishable by a heavy fine; at another time, maybe imprisonment or even death.

While the Humanistic minds are trained to reject every controlling force in their life (Parents, Schools, Law, Church, God) except Self, the spiritually minded actually desire and seek Christianity as a directing force in their private lives. It is in this area that Christianity (religion) operates. The gospel of Christ has to do with the "inner man" and teaches, influences, warns, and directs the one embracing it in every area of his private and public life. Citizens of this spiritual kingdom have

accepted the Lord and His Word as the directing force in forming or dissolving a marriage, in rearing children, in conducting business, in State matters, in worship, in manner of life-involving speech, dress, and actions. Discipline through a local congregation is part of the system. No one is forced to enter against his will. Every citizen is such voluntarily. . . "from the heart. . . willingly". Upon entering, one asks for the discipline as much as the prayers, fellowship, teaching and worship that is involved. Discipline is no more invasion of privacy than other teaching and actions that may be abrasive to a carnally minded one.

The fact that Ms Guinn resigned from the Collinsville congregation in view of the pending action did not loose the elders from their responsibility to "mark"—that others may fear, and urge other members to "withdraw—have no company with", that she might be "shamed" to repentance. To escape the discipline for her fornication, she should have withdrawn (quit the church) before she decided to engage in fornication.

That trial jury that convicted the elders of the Collinsville church of "Invasion of privacy" and purposely "inflicting emotional and mental stress" actually declared that practicing what the Bible enjoins is a crime.

Such a concept could bring on a rash of legal suits from many others who have been "withdrawn from", or in the denominational world, "banished"—"excommunicated", "turned out of the church"!

Is It A Crime?

Is it really a crime (illegal) for people to carry out Scripturally required actions (their faith) in America? Infidels say it is a crime for one to lead a voluntary, spontaneous, prayer, or conduct a devotional, at a school function, for it violates their right, and their children's, to not hear or observe it. Their sentiment, even this day, sits in our Federal Courts. I wonder how long it will be before a church building in a prominent place, with a bulletin board in front, will be offensive to infidel's children who have to pass by and see such a thing, and the Courts are petitioned to have it removed?

Have I really committed a crime in preaching from the pulpit, or from house to house, Matt. 19:1-9 and other passages on fornication, if such causes one to leave an adulterous union, so that the other one involved could sue me for "alienation of affections and invasion of privacy, or inflicting great emotional distress? Indeed, Babylon, the great harlot, is not yet fallen. She is still set on destroying the concept of God and His Word in America, persecuting and penalizing its exponents, and soon may once again be "drunk on the blood of saints".

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ALL OF THE TRUTH
ON "ALL"

A. C. Grider

Rt. 4, 1671 Bill St.
Shepherdsville, KY 40165



In studying the word of God, or any other book for that matter, we should be careful to know the meaning of the words we read and use. We understand that words may have different meanings when used, depending on the context. For instance, The word "all" may be used (and often is used) to denote absolutely every thing or every body. If we don't know that we will be hopelessly confused as to the meaning of several expressions. For instance:

In Gal. 6:10 the Bible says do good unto "all men." That means we should do good unto everybody without exception. I challenge anybody to deny that everybody is embraced in the word ALL. But in 1 Cor. 9:13 we have the expression "all men" used. But the word here does NOT mean everybody without exception. I challenge anybody to say it does. The context shows that SAINTS is the subject being discussed. (See verse 1.)

If 1 Cor. 9:13 doesn't mean everybody without exception (neither Woods nor Totty, nor McCaghren, nor Highers would say it did) then it means that church benevolence is limited. But if church benevolence is limited, how are we going to find out just who the church can help? We must consider the context of the subject at hand.

The context involves a collection (distribution) which was expressly **raised for saints** (1 Cor. 16:1-3; Rom. 15:26). It was **sent to saints** (1 Cor. 16:3; Rom. 15:26). It was **received by saints** (Rom. 15:31). And it **supplied the want of saints** (2 Cor. 9:12). There is not a hint in the New Testament of money being raised for anyone other than saints, being sent to anyone other than saints, being received by anyone other than saints, or supply-ing the want of anyone other than saints. If so, **where is it?**

I say church benevolence is limited to **saints**. I further say it is limited to **faithful** saints. I further say it is limited to poor faithful saints. If it isn't limited to saints, then it is for saints and non-saints. Who wants to say it is for non-saints and cite a passage that says so? If it isn't for faithful saints, then it is for faithful and **un-faithful** saints as well as for non-saints. Who says so? Cite me a verse. If it isn't limited to poor faithful saints, then it is for poor faithful saints and also for rich **un-faithful saints**." Who can believe that?

Is church benevolence limited? I say it is! To whom is it limited? I say to faithful saints. I believe we should always be able to cite chapter and verse for what we believe. I can cite chapter and verse for church benevo-

lence to saints. For twenty-five years I have called upon my liberal brethren to cite a single verse of scripture for church support of those who are not saints. They have not come up with a verse yet. Thus they are somewhat like the little girl who was called upon to define the word faith. Said she: "It is trying to believe something you know isn't so." If God hasn't sent these brethren strong delusion that they might believe a lie that they all might be damned (2 Thes. 2:11-12), why don't they produce at least a single verse that says the church should help non-saints?

TOWARD MORE EFFECTIVE TEACHING

Wayne Galloway

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Nicholasville, KY 40356

Since the great commission our primary objective, as disciples of Christ, has been to preach the gospel. Such questions as, "How can I be more effective in teaching the gospel?" should be of special interest to all of us. The purpose of this article is to call attention to some things that will prove helpful in teaching the lost.

Be Converted Yourself

An individual who is not truly converted himself is going to have difficulty in being motivated to teach others. As he attempts to do so he will not be very effective. A teacher of the gospel must live a life that exemplifies Christianity morally and spiritually.

Paul condemned the Gentiles for their sins in Romans 1. In chapter 2 he condemned the Jews, who claimed to be teachers of the law, for practicing things they condemned in the Gentiles. Paul said the name of God was blasphemed because of them. The "Christian" who teaches one thing and practices another causes the name of God to be blasphemed.

The teacher of the gospel must be spiritually minded. True spirituality is not characteristic of the "Oozing Christian." An "Oozing Christian" is one who wears his religion on his sleeve. True spirituality is not a sort of syrupy attitude which goes around saying "Praise the Lord" all the time.

The faith of the spiritually minded man is more than an "Environmental Faith." It is deeper than what can be produced by one's surroundings. Second generation Christians are specially vulnerable to this kind of faith. Their environment has produced within them a semblance of Christianity. But it consists in outward formality only and is not genuine.

The spiritually minded man has a genuine desire to please God from the heart. He is totally committed to Christ. He is willing to sacrifice, to spend and be spent in God's service. He is not like the young doctor who volunteered to go overseas to serve God, but prayed not to go to Africa. His spirituality is meaningful to him. If your spirituality is not meaningful to you how do you

ever expect to make it meaningful to someone else? Perhaps you need to sit down and write out the reasons why you are a Christian. Are you a Christian because you appreciate the compassion that God has had on you? If so, develop this same appreciation in others and see them obey the gospel.

The man who is truly converted will have a genuine interest in those who are lost. He will not be motivated by a desire for the congregation to grow so that he can say "Look what I have done." Whatever we may do is only with God's help and he is the one who should receive the glory. We must be motivated by a love for the lost. If our motives are not right the man who is lost will sense it and close us and the gospel out. Young people convert those they want to marry because they love them and take a personal interest in their spiritual lives.

Seven Principles for Action (John 4)

1) *Contact others socially (4:1-7a)*. I am afraid that many of us limit our circle of friends to those who are already Christians or limit our association to our immediate family and do not have any friends. If we do not know any non-Christians how can we introduce them to Christ? It is good to be careful not to be influenced by others to do evil, but Jesus associated with tax-gatherers and sinners and explained his actions by saying, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick."

2) *Establish a common interest (4:7-8)*. Most likely this common interest will be something physical, flower gardening, children, etc. Jesus' common interest with the Samaritan woman was water. More often than not we would like to skip over this preliminary step and get on with the proclamation of the gospel, but our success will be greater if we establish a mutual interest first and then make a transition from the common interest to spiritual matters.

3) *Stimulate interest (4:9-15)*. Merely saying something, anything, may stimulate interest. The fact that Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman was unusual. The joy of our lives should spark interest in others. A discussion of world events might lead you to ask, "What do you think is wrong with the world?" After listening to what our friend thinks we might ask, "How do you think religion enters into this situation?"

4) *Don't go too far too fast (4:13-19)*. Jesus did not immediately introduce himself to the Samaritan woman as the Christ. I once watched my Dad walk up behind a bird sitting on a clothes line post and take hold of its tail feathers. The lesson I learned was that the accomplishment of some goals takes patience. Be careful about being too eager.

5) *Don't be harsh in your condemnation (4:16-18)*. Do not encourage sin, but be careful with your condemnations. In conversations with non-Christians they may talk of "the signs of the times" and explain that the end is near for the earthly reign of Christ. But this is probably not a good time for an hour sermon entitled "The Evils of Premillennialism."

6) *Stick with the main issue (4:20-26)*. The Samaritan

woman, upon learning that Jesus was a prophet, immediately brought up a controversial issue—where ought men to worship, Jerusalem or Mt. Gerizim? Jesus answered her question and brought her back to the main issue, namely the Messiahship. I have had many people try to divert attention away from their need to obey the gospel by bringing up questions on mechanical instruments in worship, the role of women in the church, etc. Having the right answers on these questions will not help me if I refuse to accept Christ and be baptized.

7) *Direct confrontation (4:26)*. We must finally bring the non-Christian to the point that he realizes he must make a decision. Jesus confronted the Samaritan woman with the fact that he was the Messiah. She must either accept him or reject him. We should be equally clear in our teaching. Those that we teach must realize that a decision must be made either to accept Christ or reject him.

Targeting Our Efforts

In order to be most effective in teaching the gospel we need to know where to spend the majority of our time and efforts. We are to teach the gospel to all the world. Great wisdom should be used in the accomplishment of this task. Statistics indicate that 70-90% of all conversions come from friends and relatives of Christians. The use of the media accounts for only .001%. The preacher for only 3-5%. All other means fall into the 1-4% bracket.

This does not mean that we should abandon our work with newspapers, radio and television. What it does mean is that members must be impressed with having their friends and relatives read our newspaper articles, listen to our radio programs and watch our television programs.

Note the many references to household conversions in the N.T. Let us place our emphasis upon teaching our friends and relatives the gospel. Let preachers, elders and Bible class teachers impress the congregation with the fact that the individual Christian working among his family and friends is the key to the growth of God's kingdom.

Conclusion

"How can you be more effective in teaching the lost?" Be converted yourself. Put into use the seven principles Jesus used. Center your efforts on your friends and relatives.

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IN NEW BUILDING

DAVID BEATTY, P.O. Box 293, Swansboro, NC 28584—This is to inform readers of STS that the church in Swansboro, NC is now meeting in a new building built primarily by members of the congregation. We are located at the intersection of Seaboston St. and W. Shore Dr. with highway 24. We invite all traveling in eastern North Carolina to stop and worship with us.

ROYAL HEIGHTS LECTURESHIP

CHARLES G. CALDWELL, JR., Franklin, Tennessee—The Royal Heights church located Highway 96 exit of I-65 at Franklin, Tennessee will conduct a lectureship July 22-26 on the theme: "Christ In You, The Hope of Glory." Three speakers will be featured: Ward Hogland, Colly Caldwell and Ed Harrell. Other gospel preachers will teach day classes. Rooms (not meals) will be furnished for out-of-town visitors in private homes. If you prefer a motel room, we will be glad to make reservations for you. There are two nationally known motels within walking distance of the building. We suggest you make reservations early. Franklin is just 20 miles south of Nashville where the summer months invite many tourists to the area. Why not spend some of your vacation with us. It will be a rewarding experience.

BEN PUTERBAUGH, 2269 34th Ave., Longview, WA 98632—After four good years in Casey, Illinois we have moved to Longview, Washington. Gale Towles will begin work in Casey June 1st of this year. The congregation is sound and zealous and should continue to grow.

Now we are set for the task of preaching the gospel in Longview. This is virgin territory. We are working with a small group of Christians, and as far as I know, this is the first sound work in the Longview-Kelso area where there is a population of about 75,000. We meet presently in the Lone Oak Grange Hall which is adequate for now for auditorium and classroom space. We number 25 and can presently provide \$700 a month in support. We are therefore short on support and lack some on our moving expenses. If you can help we would be grateful and will provide a detailed accounting of needs and funds. We also need contacts you may have in the area. Lloyd Barker, L. A. Stauffer, Harold Trimble, Bill Fain and Keith Burnett all know me well enough to give you an evaluation of my character and work. Our phone number is (206) 523-5360.

BOND ISSUE FOR BUILDING IN KILLEN, ALABAMA

JAMES B. THIGPEN, Brookhill Church of Christ, P.O. Box 208, Killen, AL 35645—In June 1983, six families established a new congregation in the Killen area 10 miles east of Florence. We currently meet in an apartment building with an average attendance of 30, with pulpit preaching by our members and other faithful preachers in our county and in Florence. We have acquired an excellent location and have the property ready for building. Due to high interest rates, we have chosen to use a Bond Issue to finance the cost of the building and furnishings. Our building will seat 180 with 8 classrooms, nursery and study. The bond issue is for \$126,000. Our own members purchased \$40,000 of that amount and other bonds have been sold to date.

Contact us for information about remaining bonds. Also, for information about us you may contact: Harold Comer of Florence (phones: 205-766-0403 or 766-9252); Johnny Richardson of Florence (phone 205-764-7611); or Olin Kem of Sheffield (phones: 205-381-2870 or 391-1497).

ALL DAY MEETING

JOHN W. PITMAN, 2730 Inca Lane, Winston-Salem, NC 27103—There will be an all day meeting on Saturday, July 21, 1984. There will be four speakers during the day. The time will be from 10-12 A.M. and 2-4 P.M. Brethren from out of town are welcome. We meet at the corner of S. Main and W. Wright Sts. Phone: (919) 768-9069 or 998-4002. Then July 22-25, Charlie Graham of Dayton, Ohio will be in a meeting here. The Winston-Salem area offers many opportunities for those wanting to relocate or retire. The small church would be glad to have the added help. My total support now is \$725 a month which is far from adequate these days.

PREACHER WANTS TO RELOCATE

STANTON SEE, 101 E. Pinecrest, McMinnville, TN 37110—After three and a half years with the West End church in McMinnville, I have decided to make a change. I would be interested in talking with churches who are looking for a preacher to work with them. References can be given. Contact me at the above address or phone (615) 473-8159.

PREACHERS NEEDED

UHRICHSVILLE, OHIO—The small church here is seeking a faith-ful preacher to work in this area. We can provide partial support. For more information call (614) 254-4066 or (216) 364-3090, or write to: Church of Christ, 638 Parrish St., Uhrichsville, OH 44683.

VERNON, ALABAMA—The Lamar church in Vernon need a full time gospel preacher to begin work immediately. The church is small with lots of potential and can furnish partial support. Please call or write Thomas H. Bobo, Rt. 2, Vernon, AL (205) 695-9646; or O. Y. Smith, Vernon, AL (205) 695-9547.

CROSSVILLE, TENNESSEE—The church at 127 South, Crossville, TN is looking for a preacher. Contact Riley Norris (615) 484-2089, or write Route 8 Box 559, Crossville, TN 38555.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI—The church which meets at 5825 Sterline Ave., Raytown, MO 64133, is in need of a preacher to work full time with a congregation of about 30. We can supply partial support. If interested please send a resume with personal references to the church at the above address.

SHOALS, INDIANA—A full time man is needed to work with the Main St. church in Shoals, Indiana. A younger man (20-40) is preferred, but any inquiry will be seriously considered. We regret that we cannot offer much support at this time, but we can offer a challenging

work with a group of Christians that have a good attitude. Can you help us? Write to us at P.O. Box 576, Shoals, IN 47581.

LARRY HOUCHEN, 3433 Studebaker Road, Long Beach, CA 90808—After 8 years and 8 months with the fine church in Tustin, California, I began laboring with the Studebaker Road church in Long Beach on February 1. Mike Wilson will begin work at Tustin in June. The Studebaker Road congregation has stood for the truth for a number of years. Jady Copeland, Brent Lewis, J. T. Smith and Mike Hardin have labored with the congregation in past years. The congregation is served by three elders: Dick Fulbright, Rex Fuller, and Del Scott. We anticipate a fine work together. When in the area, please visit us.

EDITORIAL LEFTOVERS

In April it was my pleasure to work again with the Hebron Lane church south of Louisville, Kentucky in Bullitt County. We had a part in starting that work in 1973 and live only three miles from the building. Donald Townsley began work there in January, 1984. The church is overseen by four good elders and they are blessed by one of the most impressive looking crop of young people you will find any-where. They fill about 1/2 of one side of the auditorium (down at front), come with Bibles and note pads and act like they came to learn. None of them are on the back seats. One young man was baptized.

Also in April, I worked with Harry Pickup, Jr., in a lectureship at Riverdale, Maryland (Washington D.C. area) where our older son, Wilson, preaches. The meeting was well attended, the enthusiasm high and the singing very good with the direction of leaders from Annandale, Virginia, Glen Bumie, Maryland and Riverdale. Harry was at his best, and I tried the best I could. The church at Riverdale is overseen by four very able elders. It was an added treat to be with our grandchildren and our younger son and his wife who also worship at Riverdale.

The following week, I was at Beaver Dam, Kentucky where Mark Moseley is doing such good work. The church is alive and growing. We had very good attendance and interest. Mark was well prepared for his first debate right after the meeting with a Baptist.

The last week of April Bobbie and I had the delight of hearing our son, Wilson, in a meeting at Expressway in Louisville. If there is any joy greater than seeing your children serving the Lord faithfully, then I have not discovered it in this world. I thank the Lord for elders who realize that young men can preach and who are willing to give them such opportunities. We certainly did not mind "keeping the preacher" and could barely stand to have our grandchildren with us for this week also! What a fringe benefit they are!

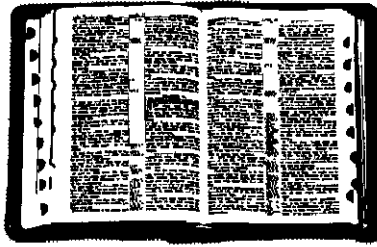
IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	351
RESTORATIONS	121

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" — John 5:39.



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



DESTINY OF THE CROSSROADS SYSTEM

The Crossroads religious operation has been climbing toward its summit in popularity and influence for the past few years, but now due to several factors we may see a decline in that which has been acclaimed as the most zealous church in evangelism in the southeast. The smoke rings will stay up just so long, then they will vanish. Any religious system based upon the philosophy of an emotional high of sensational thrills and rituals is destined to melt into the cesspool of denominational doctrines and works of men that have long ago been cast aside. The theological and religious systems of men have risen and fallen throughout the ages, and they will continue to do so. This is no less true of the Crossroads system.

The question naturally arises: What is the destiny of the Crossroads church of Christ and the philosophy espoused by it?

Someone will say, Crossroads is just another congregation of "churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16) doing a great work, and you are jealous.

No, that is not true. Crossroads is no more the church of Christ than the Christian Church is. It has far too much organization; it has the wrong gospel; it is engaged in the wrong work for the church; its worship is not in truth; its authority is not from Christ; and it seeks the wrong goals. It is another denomination in every sense of the word.

The Crossroads system actually had its beginning in 1967 from the design and work of Charles "Chuck" Lucas who moved from Miami, Florida to become

"Campus Minister" at 14th Street church of Christ. A well defined and smoothly operating organization was well on its way by 1978 when the name was changed to "Crossroads" because of its philosophy. From there it has developed a vast network of well trained "campus ministers" who are taught to infiltrate churches in whatever area they go and try to convert members to the Crossroads movement by perverting the word of God. They are skilled in this work.

At the most Lucas has been working on Crossroads seventeen years: from 1967, when he moved to Gainesville, until this present time. But from the time it was named "Crossroads" (1978) to the present time has been six years. Crossroads continues to spread its dangerous influence through propaganda over a larger area, but the disciples are getting so far from the truth that in many instances they do not resemble churches of Christ at all. Now the Christian Church is not hurting churches of Christ by their doctrine and influence. There was a time when it did, but it got so far from the truth that it no longer poses a threat of any kind to the church.

I am certainly not saying nor implying that Crossroads is about dead. To the contrary. The power already generated by the fervent zeal of Chuck Lucas, the elders and the leading personnel, plus the momentum and popularity of the movement, will keep it afloat for some time. I am saying, however, that the very nature of the system makes it destined to change and decay.

It does not take a prophet to predict that Crossroads will do much damage to the faith in many parts of the country before it runs the course. Already plans are made for Lucas to infect the churches in the Philippines with his insidious "soul-talks" and "prayer-partner" type evangelism which he developed from Robert E. Coleman's *THE MASTER PLAN OF EVANGELISM*. Other activities and training of personnel continue in many sections of the country and in Gainesville, Florida. We do not predict the immediate demise of this dangerous operation, but it will go the way of all the works of men because of its nature.

The difference between a religious movement such as Crossroads and the Lord's church, as it was in New Testament days, is the latter is organized with a simple local organization of "all the saints" with "the bishops

and deacons," nothing more. This is what the scriptures teach (Philippians 1:1). Contrast that with the "directors," "ministers," "leaders," "prayer-partners," and other official people who head "campus ministry," "forum," "seminars," Christian Family, Service," "Tape Ministry," "Crossroads Singers," "soul-talks," "confess and prayer sessions" and a dozen other such operations. The "Director of Social Services," for example, is both an office and a function unknown to the New Testament. All these must continue to change as the needs and demands change. But the spiritual need and function of the New Testament church remain constant through time; there is no need for change in anything. It will never pass away because it does not change! It is "a kingdom which cannot be moved," (Hebrews 12:28); built upon the foundation that cannot be shaken (Matthew 16:16-18; Ephesians 2:19-22).

Since most of the characteristics unique to Crossroads are based upon material and carnal values, there must be a constant change to keep up with changing values and to hold the appeal of its followers. There is no stopping. The more added the further away from the truth Crossroads goes. Such interests as the emphasis upon secular business, financial interests, entertainment, recreation, observance of religious and other holidays and education must keep changing both in organization and operation to stay alive. Every business man knows that. When an organization is tied to these interests, that organization is forced to change with the timely values. That is why Crossroads will not continue as it is.

The Crossroads concept of "bigness" is so constructed as to produce just so much momentum in the rapid growth for which it has become so famous. After that something else must be provided if the operation is to even come near its present and past record.

One reason why Crossroads will change in another generation is its almost exclusive appeal to the young and their needs. I am by no means opposed to giving attention to young people; to the contrary, I very strongly urge it. But it is not right to build programs of the church around youth and ignore others, and then call upon the young to provide the funds and zeal to promote the programs developed by the creator. The Crossroads system draws its fuel to feed the sizzling zeal of the founder and director, Chuck Lucas, from the young on campus of University of Florida primarily. When the zeal of these youth cools down, something new and different must be added. For that reason you can expect Crossroads to change over the next decade and it will keep changing. That is the course of denominations of this type. Just read history!

When the students go home, and when they reflect upon what the Bible teaches about the matters that they have been taught, they will either look for something more stable or they will return to what they were before Crossroads found them.

Human needs and wants change with seasons and generations. Since the Crossroads system is largely based upon the social Gospel, their programs to meet the social, emotional, physical and financial needs of the

(Continued on Page 4)

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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MARKS OF A STABLE CHURCH

Paul rejoiced to learn of the steadfastness of the faith of the church at Colosse (Col. 2:5) and charged them to be "rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith" (Col. 2:7). "The faith" is that body of teaching which came from the coronated Christ by means of the Holy Spirit who guided his ambassadors, the apostles (Jno. 16:7-14; Eph. 3:2-6; 1 Cor. 2:9-16).

"Rooted" in him suggests the support of a great tree with its vast root system. The Psalmist described the blessed man who meditates day and night in God's law. "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psa. 1:3). "Built up" in him changes the figure to the realm of construction in which properly laid foundations are essential to buildings which endure. Paul said he laid the foundation in preaching Christ (1 Cor. 3:10-11). "And (ye) are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2:20).

Notice that they were both rooted and built up "in him." It is interesting in Colossians 2 to observe how many things are said to be "in him." Of Christ it is said "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (v. 3). He is the beginning point for true understanding and practical application. Paul challenged them to walk "in him" (v. 6). This required a continuing pattern of life. "In him" dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (v. 9). Deity was fully manifested in his bodily form. This was to the end that we might be "complete in him" (v. 10).

Threats to Their Stability

The church at Colosse was threatened by several systems of thought all of which were antagonistic to spiritual stability and its resultant growth. First, he dealt with philosophy (v. 8). World views which come down from human tradition are vain and useless. In nature they demonstrate "rudiments of the world" which are "not after Christ." The word "rudiments" was sometimes used for astrology and its attempt to read human fate in the stars. Then it was used for a file of soldiers. It also took on the notion of the A B C's of a philosophy, the basic elements of a system. It is my conviction that Paul here dealt with early Gnosticism which was later to have such devastating effect in unsettling those who were influenced by it. In this context Paul cut deeply

into the pride of those who subscribed to any such notion by contrasting this system to the fullness of knowledge and understanding we have in Christ. Since all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ and we are "complete" in him, then such a system as he warns against was most elementary and devoid of any real meaning when placed in contrast. They were of a different order, "vain", unsatisfying and actually were snares to catch them and rob them of their prize in Christ.

There was the threat of **Judaism** (v. 11-17). As Christians they had attained to a circumcision of the heart by being baptized into Christ in which act there was an operation of god which cut off sin and brought them forgiveness. The law was nailed to the cross, Christ had triumphed over death and now they were not to be judged regarding diet laws, annual, monthly or weekly observances which belonged to a system of shadows, now that the reality had come in Christ.

They were threatened by **mysticism** (v. 18-19). The appeal to boasted angelic visits, privy knowledge to secret things unrevealed to common people has always intrigued some. It yet does. Paul branded it as false and warned lest they be "beguiled" by it. If Christ fully supplies all spiritual nourishment in his body, then there is nothing left for this pretentious system to provide.

Asceticism was another threat (v. 20-23). Here was a system of human commandments of what to touch and taste and what not to touch and taste which operated on the assumption that there is some spiritual efficacy in punishing the body. Paul described such as "will worship" and said this "neglecting of the body" was without real honor. History has revealed many ascetics through the years. This is the spirit which produces monasteries and promotes the notion of penance.

As the church at Colosse faced these threats to stability, even so we are endangered by the same things and those of a similar order. Sectarianism of all sorts, secular humanism, materialism, astrology, immorality—these and more are modern threats to the purity of the lives of God's people and have a devastating effect on the stability of congregations.

Marks of a Stable Church

In the same chapter which dealt with specific threats to their stability, Paul also laid down principles which, if followed, would assure their stability as well as that of any congregation today willing to listen and practice what he said.

First, he said "that their hearts might be comforted" (v. 2). That means they were to be of courageous hearts. The forces of Satan are strong and well organized. It takes courage to be different, to shine light into darkness, insist on purity of character in a world intoxicated with lust, and to maintain doctrinal soundness before a world of false teachers.

There can be no stability without **unity**. They were to be "knit together in love" (v. 2). One reason the Jerusalem church grew so rapidly was because they were of one accord. There must be a common determination to

stand for the truth and a deep sense of concern for one another which recognizes the needs of babes in Christ and which draws upon the strength of the seasoned Christian. Feuding, fussing and fighting are not rooted in Christ.

A stable church is a **well taught** church. Paul said "unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding" (v. 2). Much of the feuding which occurs in local churches is directly attributable to the fact that for years there has been no balanced diet in the teaching, either in the pulpit, or the Bible classes, or both. What passes for Bible study in some places is a joke, and not a very funny one. Too many elders give too little time and effort to planning wisely for the whole truth to be taught to the flock. There are parts of the Bible which always are skipped. Teachers arise in too many places ill-prepared. Some think that if they can get everyone to "discussing" then that is great teaching. That all depends. If the "discussion" is from those who have seriously studied and who have something to say on the subject, as opposed to those who like to hear themselves talk when they have absolutely nothing to say, then that is one thing. Much of what passes for "discussion" is nothing more than a pooling of the ignorance. Compounding this problem is the fact that some teachers are not well enough informed to put out the brush fires that often start, and who leave serious matters hanging in the air.

Stable churches are **resistant to error**. They are aware that a false teacher might "beguile you with enticing words" (v. 4). They are willing to "try the spirits whether they are of God" (1 Jno. 4:1). They also stand ready to "mark them which cause offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" and realize that such teachers "by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:17-18).

Stable churches follow a divine order. Paul said "joying and beholding your order" (v. 5). The word here means that which is drawn up in order. It is used in 1 Cor. 14:40 in contrast to confusion in the assembly. Militarily, the term was used to describe a solid phalanx of soldiers, a bulwark of strength. There is a harmony between due arrangement, order and steadfastness in the faith. You can't have one without the other. The haphazard, hit-or-miss operation of some churches indicates their instability.

Stable churches are **steadfast in faith** in Christ (v. 5). "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). Improper worship, inactivity in evangelism, edification or benevolence, lack of discipline, all reflect a lack of faith in Christ.

Stable churches are **grateful** churches. "Abounding therein with thanksgiving" (v. 7). God has blessed us all far beyond what we deserved. We do not hesitate to **ask** but we are often slow to **thank**.

Stable churches find their **sufficiency in Christ**. "And ye are complete in him" (v. 10). We do not heed to update the gospel of Christ to make it relevant. It is forever relevant. We do not need to augment the gospel with fun, food and frolic. It is already powerful to save just as it is. We do not need to reorganize the church to

facilitate its work. God gave us elders, deacons, evangelists, teachers and all other saints so that each one may supply nourishment to the body thereby causing it to be increased in love.

How well does the congregation where you worship compare with this check-list of marks of stability from Colossians 2:1-10? Paul said that God proposes "to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel" (Col. 1:22-23). These are unstable times, but we are a part of a kingdom "which cannot be moved" (Heb. 12:27).

* * * * *

ABOUT OUR AUGUST SPECIAL

Once more we remind our readers of our special in August dealing with translations, and especially the New International Version. Donnie V. Rader and his father Dorris V. Rader have done excellent work on this translation which is being increasingly used by members of the church. There are some serious flaws in this translation as well as in some of the other modern speech translations. Some are substituting what they consider easy reading for accuracy in translation. The result is that more and more are becoming Biblically unlearned while thinking they are studying the Bible. Along with the material on the NIV by the Raders, there will also be articles by the editor and by H.E. Phillips, former editor, on translations. Extra copies may be ordered for \$40 a hundred, \$25 for fifty. Why not order a bundle and see that each member where you worship receives a copy. You will be doing them a favor. You may order these from: SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES, P.O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109-0069.

(Continued from Page 1)

members, as well as non-members, will have to continually change, together with the organizations to provide the programs. It has developed additional operations and the organizations by which to function, and gradually got into almost every social, domestic, financial, educational and entertainment area a religious operation could get into.

Crossroads relies upon "Total Commitment" as a major tool of discipline on every level. It is built upon a "Total Commitment" of its converts to the system and its leaders. I want it fully understood that I find no fault with the "Total Commitment" idea; I firmly believe it is required in the New Testament. It is like love: there is no question but that God requires man to love, but not to love just ANYTHING and EVERYTHING! The Holy Spirit teaches us to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world..." (1 John 2:15). As Christ, we must love righteousness, but hate iniquity (Hebrews 1:9; 1 Corinthians 13:6). We are not to love money, but we are to love our enemies (1 Timothy 6:9,10; Matthew 5:43-45). We are taught to love some things and hate other things.

With regard to "Total Commitment" we are to be

totally committed to Christ and his word without reservation, but we are not to be committed to any of the commandments and works of men. The names, ideas, schemes, doctrines, works and persons of men are not to receive any commitment from us, total or otherwise, when it is spiritually related.

A coerced psychological inducement to total obedience to the will of man or a select group of men who command an organization is far from "Total Commitment" to Christ. Whether by use of fear, shame or guilt, people are brought into subjection to a system; or if by drugs, hypnosis or peer pressure, the result of the "Total Commitment" exercise is exactly the same. In time it will give way because it is not based upon a foundation that is enduring. Only the deep faith in the person of Jesus Christ and his word will give the stability for a **TOTAL COMMITMENT!**

Such an operation as Crossroads must have discipline, and strict discipline. The "prayer-partner" function and the "soul-talk" group provide the spy network and the rigid control of the mind and life of every new convert to bring them into submission. This method is effective in keeping "Total Commitment" through intimidation, guilt and fear from senior prayer-partners and soul-talk leaders. They also offer a Catholic hierarchical method of indoctrination through this procedure. This is why Crossroads fell into so much disfavor with so many parents of new converts. Such rigid discipline and required dedication in a system such as Crossroads requires continual supervision and control to keep it alive and well. But the very structure of such a system will not continue unchanged for long.

Recently I was in Akron, Ohio in a meeting and I went through Grace Cathedral and listened to a woman explain the phenomenal growth of the work of Ernest Angley since 1955 when he began in a tent. At one time Rex Humbard was far ahead of Ernest Angley in radio and TV popularity as well as financial power, but now Ernest Angley has purchased Humbard's big church. That is what the guide told me as she took me through the beautiful and expensive plant Angley owns and controls in Akron. She told me Humbard kept his restaurant, which was connected to his religious organization. I asked if Angley and Humbard would join forces. She said, No. I inquired what the building would be used for, and she told me it would be used for making TV commercials for Angley's services and for duplicating his video and audio tapes for broadcast stations.

My point in reciting this is: What happened to Humbard? A few years ago most of his followers would have thought he would never lose his place, but he has. In time the same thing will happen to Ernest Angley. History tells us that this is the course of such movements.

Among "churches of Christ" Highland church in Abilene, Texas and the Herald of Truth stand out as examples. Those who are old enough to remember the power of that church in the mid 1950's when it had 12 elders, 21 deacons, over 300 teachers and 3 preachers. Over one thousand churches across the land sent regular contributions money to Highland to spend on the Herald of

Truth Radio and TV programs. This was an operation that required millions per year. Most people thought it would never die. It is now a much smaller, very liberal group. The men who are alive now and worked with the Herald of Truth oppose the ultra-liberalism of that church now as well as what is left of the Herald of Truth. The big unscriptural programs like the Herald of Truth usually last for a relatively short time.

Crossroads would disappear if those involved in its operation learned the truth, repented and came to obedience to the authority of Christ. It would lose every single characteristic that now identifies it as **CROSSROADS**. However, as long as it maintains these characteristics and engages in its present functions, it will remain a stranger to the Word of God. My prayer is that some, if not all, will come out from among them and be separate. It takes more than talking about truth to be saved; each of us must **OBEY** it from the heart.

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REFLECTIONS ON LIFE

*Wilson Adams*6434 Auburn Av.
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"It is better to go to a house of mourning than to a house of feasting, Because that is the end of every man, and the living takes it to heart" (Ecclesiastes 7:2).

I was extremely apprehensive about the trip, being uncertain of the reaction that the young man would have. We were going to the Wall—the 494 foot V-shaped wall containing the names of the 58,000 American servicemen killed in Vietnam. I had been there before. However, this visit was special, for out of those 58,000 names so carefully enisled in the polished granite one name, to this young person at least, would be more memorable than all the others—the name of his dad. It was his first trip to the Wall.

We parked our car just a few feet from the Potomac River. As an Eastern jet thundered directly overhead I pointed out the 14th Street Bridge and the approximate place where several people lost their lives in an air disaster just two years prior. We walked on, briefly turning our attention to the home of Robert E. Lee which gracefully sits atop a hill overlooking Arlington Cemetery, as we continued toward the Lincoln Memorial. There we paused momentarily, commemorating the great achievements of our 16th President who succeeded in piecing together the broken fragments of our once shattered nation. And there, just a few hundred yards to the northeast was the Memorial Wall.

I went on ahead as my friend lingered behind to find the name from the alphabetized directory. I searched until there on panel 25E, line 104 was found the reason for our trip. As he approached I wondered about his thoughts and reactions. I have seen both young and old lean against the giant wall and weep in uncontrollable sobs. I have read notes of affection scribbled by a young wife and left attached to the name of a dead husband. I have observed fellows in their forties wearing worn out fatigues staring teary-eyed as they thought about a buddy, a friend, a name on the wall. So naturally I watched with emotion as he drew near and as I pointed out the name that meant everything to him.

This is not a political statement nor is it intended to be a reflection of my own feelings toward the Vietnam campaign. Rather, it is a simple statement about life and about how we often take it for granted. At least I know I sometimes do.

Sometimes I get real busy, in fact, too busy. Do you have that problem? I'm often so engrossed in my daily labors (which never seem to be finished) that I don't have time to "stop and smell the roses," to enjoy the

good things of God and to take into account the many and varied blessings that He has so graciously bestowed upon me. That's too busy.

Folks, there never was anybody any busier than Jesus. There never was anybody sent on a more important mission than was He. There never was anyone who had more to do in less time than the Master. Yet, how many times did our Lord take the time to bend down and talk with the little ones, thus showing His affection for children? Once He even rebuked His followers for implying that the youngsters were burdensome, by saying, **"Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these** (Matt. 19:14). And obviously Jesus enjoyed the scenery of nature that He Himself had created. He often would leave the urban city centers and the crowds that were constantly pressing near to Him, hoping to see another miracle or possibly hear another grand declaration of truth from the lips of the Master Teacher, and escape for a few hours of quiet solitude on the Sea or in the mountains where He could be alone with the Father. He never got too busy to do that. And... he never was so overly preoccupied that He didn't have time for His friends. The hours our Lord spent at Bethany with good friends and good food must have been some of the rich-est in His short stay here below. Little things meant a lot to Jesus. He took nothing for granted. What a lesson for us.

Solomon well said, **"Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting; to eat, to drink and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun during the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward"** (Ecc. 5:18). Solomon's advice is to never become so busy that we haven't the time to enjoy the good things in life. "Count your many blessings . . . name them one by one. . ." Try sometime to catalogue your blessings. Such is but an exercise in futility, an impossible task for God has given us so much. Just the blessing of life itself—of being alive, of living, of being created in His image and in possession of an eternal soul that will live on even when this body wears out is an immeasurable gift. Let us never become so busy that we take life for granted or fail in our appreciation by not living it to the fullest. And may we always be aware of the fact that the quality life, the rich life, the abundant life begins with Jesus Christ.

I watched as he approached. He stared silently at the name savoring the moment and reflecting upon that which only he knows. And, then, a smile broke through—a smile of pride for a father he barely remembered and a good feeling of honor for a man his country appreciated. We took a few pictures then turned and walked away.

As we walked along in silence I couldn't help but think about the blessing and opportunities that God has so bountifully bestowed upon me and to reflect momentarily that as great as it is to live here—much more advantageous and enjoyable it will be to live with Him in the hereafter. I hope and pray that I never get too busy in living that I forget what life is all about. I'm trying hard not to. That day helped.

PHILIPPINES, '84

P. J. Casebolt
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The title of this article is neither exciting nor exotic, but I trust it will make for easy reference on the part of those who may be interested in the subject. The reader should not be bored with too much material on the subject, for thus far I am the only American preacher to make such a report. I know that there are brethren who are interested in the Lord's work everywhere, and some are especially concerned about the work in the Philippines.

I had no intentions whatever of going to the Philippines this year, but due to urgent requests on the part of some Filipino brethren, along with similar requests from American sources, I suddenly found myself getting ready to go about the middle of February. Anyone remotely acquainted with a preaching trip to the Philippine Islands knows that it generally takes several months to finalize plans for such a venture. Within about six weeks, I not only obtained a passport and visa, but someone lost them, I acquired new ones, had my plane reservations, and was on my way without even time to receive answers from the letters and telegrams which I had sent to Filipino brethren. In spite of such hastily made plans, I was able to accomplish far more than I expected. Credit is due those congregations who instantly came to my support, including Cedar Avenue in Moundsville, as well as my family, Connie and Wilson Adams, brethren Tibayan and Carino in the Philippines, and others, including my travel agency.

I mention these things by way of introduction for two reasons: (1) some American brethren may wonder why they weren't notified of my plans, and (2) some Filipino brethren may wonder why they did not have advance notice of my coming. For the most part, everyone has been more than considerate when they learned of the circumstances affecting my trip.

No other American brethren accompanied me, and while I would not recommend this procedure for all, it had its advantages in my particular case. Some plans had to be made or changed while on the go, and I had no one to worry about except myself. Sometimes I traveled alone, even in the Islands, but most of the time some Filipino brethren were with me, I was confident the Lord was with me, and I knew that hundreds of prayers were being offered on my behalf on both sides of the ocean. With such assurance, I could not feel completely alone, at least not for long.

The Church in the Philippines—An Appraisal

I left home on April 5, and returned May 17. I was

able to preach in thirty-two different locations, and travel some 3500 miles in the Philippines. I traveled by air, boat, bus, taxi, jeep, jeepney, tricycle, motorcycle, and when some of those vehicles on land had flat tires or ran out of fuel, I walked several miles. I was able to preach about sixty-four sermons, hold half as many "question and answer" sessions, preach three times on the radio, make a tape of songs for brethren to learn, and conduct one class in the rudiments of music. Thirty-one souls were baptized, mostly due to the efforts of Filipino preachers. My travels took me to Mindanao, Negroes, Panay (Iloilo), Mindoro and Luzon.

These things are mentioned for the benefit of any American brethren who may wish to inquire concerning the work in a particular place, and to show that any observations I may make, or conclusions reached, are not based on a brief tourist-like trip, or on hearsay information from some limited source. This was my third trip to the Philippines over a period of forty years, and I think I have a pretty good grasp of the situation there.

On the Island of Mindanao, the premillennial problem has done considerable damage, and the advocates of that doctrine are working their way north into the Visayas, and have their eyes on Luzon. By traveling among many congregations in a short time, I was able to obtain and dispense information that the brethren in some areas would not have obtained for months. The false teachers are just as active in their efforts to promote division and dissension, and I consider the need of providing faithful Filipino preachers with sufficient means to counteract these false teachers as the number one priority in that country. Many good preachers have lost either all or part of their support, have had to resort to secular work where available, and are being hindered in their desire and efforts to effectively offset those problems affecting the church.

At this point, let me emphasize the fact that **every problem** of a doctrinal nature had its origin in the United States, and has been introduced into the Philippine Islands by American preachers. Problems concerning the second coming of Christ, the Lord's supper, the covering, and liberalism have all arisen from the efforts of American preachers who seem to have no concern for the cause of Christ. And besides all this, Chuck Lucas, of Gainesville, Florida, renowned for his promotion of the Crossroads philosophy, was due in Davao about May 21. "For wheresoever the carcass is..."

The Economy

Several pages could be written on this subject, but I will spare the editor and the reader. I read article after article from politicians and recognized financial authorities, and I talked personally with brethren, taxi drivers, waiters, farmers, school teachers, and pump boat pilots. All were in agreement on one thing: the economy of the Philippines is in the worst condition ever in the history of that nation. Not a few experts predict that if the peso is devalued much further, that the entire economy of the country will collapse, and possibly trigger a loss of faith "in peaceful means of promoting our democracy."

The bottom line here is that while the American dollar is still strong, those Filipino preachers receiving it for their support are still going to face some hungry brethren in need of rice and other necessary commodities, as well as an economy that almost defies description. I paid P. 530 for a hotel room in Manila, and P. 180 for a comparable room in Davao. Yet, the same newspaper which cost P. 1.25 in Manila, cost P. 3.00 in Davao. How much should a Filipino preacher receive for his support? Some unmarried ones living at home in Mindanao (in the provinces), might exist on twenty-five dollars a month, while those with families in the larger cities of Mindanao or Luzon could easily use three hundred dollars per month. I would not be afraid to give some Filipino preachers five hundred dollars per month, and some don't deserve one dollar (just like some American preachers). It seems that our efforts to economize in the support of Filipino preachers has hurt the good ones, but not the bad eggs. Just as the criminal always seems to find a gun to perpetrate his robbery, so the unprincipled preacher finds a way to deceive brethren, while the one with principle becomes the innocent victim of circumstances.

The Political Climate

While the Filipinos approach politics with uncommon zeal, just as they do many other things, even they concede that the events surrounding the death of Mr. Aquino last year hurt their image. Several tourists cancelled their plans to visit the Philippines, and two American preachers did likewise. That is why I went. And, I would be the first to concede that at that time, faced with the circumstances which prevailed, they probably did the right thing.

Not a few were concerned with my safety, but knowing the customs of the Filipinos, and the desire of some reporters and editors (both Filipino and American), to capitalize on prospective headlines, I decided the risk was not nearly as great as the opportunity which came my way. Geographically, I know my way around the Philippines better than most, and several Filipinos will attest to the accuracy of this statement. I knew where most of the rebel bands were active, and put a lot of faith in the advice of concerned Filipino brethren. I changed my routes a couple of times when my better judgment told me to, and my decisions proved to be correct. By using my best judgment, the advice of Filipino brethren, and the prayers of concerned saints, I seemed to be in the right place at the right time. I also had confidence in the Lord whom I was trying to serve, and would not even enter Miami, Florida, without Him.

I know that the political situation in the Philippines could fluctuate any day, but in all fairness to the cause of Christ and the brethren there, I would not for one minute discourage other preachers from going, and would return tomorrow without any hesitancy whatever. I want no praise for one of the greatest opportunities of my life, thank my brethren, and give God the glory.

Building Better Families

James R. Cope

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"BUT NURTURE THEM..."

"The whole training and education of children (which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment.") These are words used by Joseph Henry Thayer, author of the great Greek-English Lexicon, to define the Greek *paideia* translated "nurture" in Ephesians 6:4 where Apostle Paul commands, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."

There can be little doubt that the apostle laid the primary nurturing of children in the lap of fathers-fathers who are Christians. This admonition is in complete harmony with Proverbs 22:6 and Deuteronomy 6:6-9. Notice in the latter text the details **regarding repetition and insistence of constancy**: "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates."

Who would dare say that modern Christians have less obligation to their children regarding moral and spiritual revelation and regulation than did the parents in ancient Israel? The Lord lays the responsibility of "nurturing" children on those who bring them into the world. He charged neither civil government nor the church with this peculiar and personal duty. Whatever other responsibilities devolve upon parents who profess to love God, the one emphasized here is that of "nurturing" children "in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." The chief point in "nurturing" is **instruction or training**. "Admonish" means "to put into mind." The mind is the child's and the **admonishing** is the **parent's!** Every facet of the child's conscience belongs to the Lord. Truly both child and parent need to be constantly aware that "in Him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Not for one moment of one's accountability is he ever removed from responsibility "for we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be

good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). Neither parents nor children are exceptions to this rule.

Thayer's definition of *paideia*, i.e., of "nurture", prescribes the area of involvement—the **mind** and **morals** of the child. The cultivation prescribed is two-fold—education and training. Thayer's methodology is four-fold—commands, admonitions, reproof and punishment.

To **educate objectively** is to cause the mind to respond to intended stimuli. The result produced in the responsive mind is called learning. When words, objects, pictures and other impressive stimulants strike the mind impressions are formed and memory responds by storing or retaining the impressions made. Observable evidence of memory's role in moral and spiritual education is the "feedback" given by the words and deeds of the person stimulated by words and deeds of the ultimate stimulator (God). In the situation before us the parents are teachers or stimulators of the child's mind as they use the word of God. The ultimate desired effect is the moral and spiritual response of the child to the will of God in the child's own words and deeds. In a very real sense parents become God's aids in reaching the mind and moral nature of the child. Whatever commands, admonitions, reproof and punishment are used by parents in cultivating the mind and morals of the child should be so directed to the child's conscience that he ultimately understands his parents are God's conductors of his will to and for the child's knowledge and understanding of that will for his own moral and spiritual welfare.

The perfect illustration of the perfect child is the person of Jesus Christ who "advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk. 2:52). Viewed from any point Jesus is the ideal of balanced personality, for in him is the perfection of all mental, physical, spiritual and social qualities.

As reflected earlier Thayer's definition of *paideia* (nurture) involved four methods—commands, admonitions, reproof and punishment—by which a child's mind and morals are cultivated. I believe that there is one aspect or method of "nurturing" which should embrace all of these four and without which a child will seldom, if ever, develop the character which truly partakes of that of his Creator and Savior. This facet of nurturing by the word **encouragement**.

Certainly no child can develop without commandments (orders, instructions) as to what is expected of him or her. These must be unmistakably clear and the basic reason is found in the order given in Ephesians 6:1—"Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." When a command is obeyed "in the Lord" in the sense of this text, it simply means that anything the parent commands the child positively or negatively that harmonizes with God's will for that parent to require of the child, the child is to do it as if the order were directly spoken by God. God has never given an order which was not designed for the good of the person commanded for "his commandments are not grievous" (1 Jno. 5:3). So it must be with parental commands.

The scriptures abound in **admonitions**. To admonish

is simply "to put in mind." It is a sort of "**underscoring**" of what is commanded, an emphasizing of an order or expectation. "**Reproving**" may carry the thought of convincing i.e., "bringing acceptable evidence" or it may mean "convicting, i.e., "to tell a fault" or bring such proof as to point up or cause an awareness of guilt or erroneous action (Jno. 8:9, 46, Tit. 1:9; Acts 18:28). Punishment involves the execution of righteous wrath upon an evil doer. Probably the word "chasten" would serve better the thought of inflicting mental or corporal pain than punishment. Infliction of a penalty may convey a proper idea also. Consider Proverbs 13:24; 22:15; 23:13,14. Heb. 12:4-11.

No method of "nurturing" has more telling and far-reaching effects than "**encouraging**" of a child. The word "strength," which translates from the Greek *dunamis* (power), or "strength," from the Greek *endunamo* (strengthened) as reflected in the statement, "I can do all things in him that strengthened me" (Phil. 4:13), should be motivating thoughts for parents to convey to their children. Remembering the promise of Jesus, "Lo, I am with you always" undoubtedly was a major influence to lift the spirits of discouraged disciples at times and "I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5; Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:5) should serve parents well as they seek to build confidence in their discouraged children at many of life's crossroads when they are ready to surrender their ideals. Where, father and mother, would you now be if somebody—maybe a teacher, a friend, or your own parent—had not "stood by you" and strengthened you in your darkest hour? **Don't fail to encourage your own child!** He or she can be a winner, not a loser, because your love for him or her says, "You have it in you my child. God will help you succeed. I love you and will be praying for you!"

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by

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BROTHER CHARLES HOLT AND REPENTANCE

"Repentance" is an interesting word. It means, a change of will that results in a reformation of life. In fact, both John the Baptist and Paul taught that we are to "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance." (Luke 3:8; Acts 26:20).

An alarming trend has come to my attention with regard to the above statement. Does time take care of sins without repentance? In recent weeks, brother Charles A. Holt has published a booklet entitled, "Is Baptism Essential To Salvation?" It is my understanding from those who have read the booklet that it includes excellent material. I am certainly not opposed to having excellent material on any Bible subject. In fact, I welcome it. However, I am amazed that brethren are not only commending brother Holt's booklet, but they are also commending brother Holt and leaving the impression that he is a faithful gospel preacher. **But where are the fruits of repentance?**

One brother, who is the publisher of one of the subscription periodicals among us said, "It so happens that Charles Holt is a long-time friend of mine... I am happy to see this work from Charles and am hopeful that there will be more of similar quality from his able pen in time to come."

I too would like to see more from brother Holt's pen. For example:

1. I would like to see an article from brother Holt telling us whether or not he has changed his views on what the Bible teaches about the "elder" question. Does he still believe, as he stated in the **Sentinel of Truth**, a paper of which he was the editor in the late 60's, that there is no such thing as the "office" of an elder, but that they are just the "older people" in the congregation?

2. I would like to see an article from brother Holt telling us whether or not he has changed his views on whether the local congregation is a functional unit. During his days as editor of the **Sentinel of Truth**, he took the position that the individual Christian is the largest "functional unit" taught in the Bible. Does he still hold this view?

3. I would like to see an article from brother Holt telling us whether or not he has changed his views about attending and teaching a class at the Brainard church of Christ, an institutional church in Chattanooga, Tenn. I was recently in a debate with brother Roy Deaver, and brother Deaver is under the impression that brother Holt no longer holds the same views that I do, and that

brother Holt once did, with regard to limited benevolence and the church support of institutional orphan home questions. And, in connection with this, it hasn't been that long since at least two false teachers, brother Leslie G. Thomas and Olin Hicks were asked to come and preach a series of lessons at the congregation where brother Holt now preaches. No wonder brother Deaver thought what he did.

4. I would like to see an article from brother Holt telling whether or not he has tried to make amend for dividing the church in Wichita Falls and Lufkin, Texas over his "no elder" "no local congregation as a functional entity" theory?

Brethren, I am not saying that a person has to be "cleared" with me before he is accepted as a faithful brother. However, I do think that before he is commended to the brotherhood as a faithful brother in the Lord, that brethren would like to know where the "fruits worthy of repentance" are after that person has preached false doctrine and churches have divided over it; when one has embraced and been a part of a congregation that is as liberal as the Brainard church in Chattanooga is; and when he has more recently had fellowship where he preaches, with false teachers. To my knowledge, there has been no correction of a single one of these things. If there has been and I am not aware of it, my apologies to brother Holt. I would, however, like to see the evidence. If there is none, where is repentance, and how can brethren commend brother Holt as a faithful gospel preacher?

(Editor's note: Before any of our readers get set to pounce on brother Smith for what he has written here, you might as well include this editor along with him in any such effort, for I believe what brother Smith has said needed to be said. I might add that I would like to see something from the pen of Charles Holt repudiating the Ketcherside movement since he has been a fellow-traveler and has appeared on some of the "unity fo-rums" around the country. I would also like to see some-thing from him expressing repentance for the bitter attacks he made against godly elders and faithful gos-pel preachers on the pages of SENTINEL OF TRUTH which he edited beginning in 1965. If any man ever dipped his pen more deeply in bitterness before writing than he did in those days, then I have not discovered it. For instance, he wrote:

"In recent years I have come to realize that, generally speaking, preachers (and I mean the 'full-time brand') are about the most suspicious, jealous, envious, backbit-ing, gossiping, unfair, and of ten-times the most vicious and malicious group among us! They are many times just plain nosy, busy-bodies, and meddling trouble-makers in the affairs of other congregations and in other people's business." (SENTINEL OF TRUTH, January, 1966, page 29),

This was said in a journal which complained that brethren had emphasized the "letter of the law" to the neglect of the "spirit" of it. Notice that Charles Holt did not say that these unholy traits were characteristic of "some" brethren, but he was "generally speaking." If you think he was hard on preachers, you should have

read what he was saying in that paper about elders. If one word of repentance has come from him regarding these unwarranted charges against preachers and elders, to say nothing of his false teaching about the church having no functional entity, then I have not seen it.

I, too, have read his book on baptism. It is well done. But while I can commend the material in that book, I cannot share the feeling of some these days who shower commendations upon him and who want to reopen pulpits to a man who has done such damage to the cause of the Lord and who has said or done nothing to correct it. The passage of time does not mitigate the seriousness of these offenses, nor is it a substitute for repentance.— CWA)

WHY THEY QUIT DEFENDING THEIR DOCTRINE (NO. 1)

A. C. Grider

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I have debated a number of my liberal brethren on Sponsoring Churches and benevolence among non-saints. They all decided that they had had enough of debating. Guy N. Woods and Alan Highers quit after only one debate. H. C. McCaghren quit after two encounters. Only W. L. Totty continued to try his hand in debate. Why? Why did they all decide to simply stop trying to defend what they were teaching? The reason is simple. It was not because I was smart. It was because I exposed their complete and one hundred percent lack of support for their propositions. The average person is still not aware that they lack even a semblance of support for their teachings. I will give you some examples:

Example 1. Thomas B. Warren wrote on "Sponsoring Churches." He is a prolific scripture quoter. He cited SEVENTY SIX verses of scripture to prove that one church could send money to another church to preach. HIS scriptures follow: Matt. 5:16; 28:18-20; Mark 12:29-31; 16:15-16; Acts 2:42; 11:27-30; 15:22-32; 20:7; 11:22-24; Rom. 15:25-31; 1 Cor. 13:1-3; 8-10; 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:1-15; 8:9, 24; 11:8, 13; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:13; 5:14,19; Phil. 2:13, 15-16; 4:15; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 13:7,17; Jas. 1:27; 1 Pet. 5:2; 2 John 9.

Just look at that array of scriptures! Surely he has proved that a church may send money to another church to preach the gospel! He has cited SEVENTY-SIX verses of scripture. But out of this great list of verses ONLY FIVE refer to churches doing evangelistic work. They are: Acts 11:22-24 where the church sent a man; Acts 15:22-32 where the church sent some men; 1

Cor. 11:8 where the church paid Paul; Phil. 4:15 where the church paid Paul; and 1 Tim. 3:15 where the church is the support of the truth. So, look again. Not one hint in any or all of the scriptures that HE used says anything that is a forty second cousin to a sponsoring church. Yet none of our liberal brethren ever questioned or ever doubted that he proved his point. But the same goes for all the rest of these brethren. They NEVER prove a thing by the scriptures THEY cite.

Example 2. Ben Taylor wrote a tract on "Potter Orphan Home, what it is." He set out to prove that the church could support an orphan home and cited the following scriptures. Acts 9:36, 42; 11:27-30; 1 Cor. 14:33; 14:40; 16:1; 16:15; 1 Tim. 5:16; Jas. 1:27. This is all he cited. FOURTEEN verses were used to prove that the church could support an orphan home. But lets look at these scriptures. ONLY ONE of them is talking about orphans and it neither mentions the church nor an orphan home. Read it in Jas. 1:27. TWO other verses have to do with church benevolence, but LOOK at THEM! Acts 11:27-30 has to do with church support of BRETHREN and the other one, 1 Tim. 5:16 has to do with church support of a WIDOW INDEED. So, Taylor's tract is a complete wash-out. Not a syllable in any of the verses that remotely touch the idea of church support of orphan homes. Now, I could go on, and perhaps I will in another issue of this paper, citing other men who have tried their hand in support of our liberal brethren, but all have drawn a blank. They CANT FIND SCRIPTURE for what they are doing. So they have about quit trying to defend such.



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EXPOSITION: TEXT and CONTEXT

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GOD HAS BEEN EXPELLED

America had a birthday recently. On July 4th, she was 207 years old, a relatively young nation as compared to other countries. It was in 1776 that the English colonies in America adopted the Declaration of Independence, declaring the colonies to be free and independent states.

The founders of our nation were very religious people. God was an intricate part of every facet of life, such as home, business, community and government. Though they did not want a State religion like they had experienced in European countries, they had no intention of divorcing God or religion from the new established government. Their aim was to separate Church and State—not separate God and State.

To the Colonists, God was near and an ever present help in time of trouble. "When the Continental Congress, faced with great problems and difficulties, knew not which way to turn, Benjamin Franklin called the members of the Congress to fall upon their knees and pray. . . . The picture of Moses was upon the first coin that was made in America, and today we still have on our money the grand old words, 'In God We Trust' " (*Simple Sermons for Special Days and Occasions*, Herschel Ford, p. 95).

Things Have Changed

But things are changing today. God has been expelled from our school system, prayer has been banned from our classrooms and atheism and humanism have been permitted to take their place. All of this has been done under the guise of academic freedom. Some academic freedom! The American people have been duped by the secular, humanistic, atheistic forces that are at work in this land. The ACLU (these letters stand for the American Civil Liberties Union, but the letters would better characterize the organization as the Anti-Christian Lunacy Union) has been leading the fight of these diabolical elements. The ACLU is the legal arm of the humanistic movement.

We are told that to have God and voluntary prayer in our state-supported schools is a violation of the First Amendment. This is a strange interpretation of the First Amendment in light of the religious convictions and practices of those who framed the Constitution and the religious inclinations of the general populace at that time. Can you envision our forefathers legislating laws that forbade prayer to God simply because it was a

government institution or was subsidized by federal money? How we have drifted. It is time for God-fearing people to let their voices be heard loud and clear or the Satanic forces are going to take over with hardly "firing a shot."

The First Amendment

Let us observe what the First Amendment actually says. We quote as follows:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

You will note that there shall be NO "prohibiting the free exercise" of religion. It seems to me when God, the Bible and prayer are censored from our schools, the First Amendment is clearly violated.

An article in *Educational Research Analysts*, Longview, Texas, stated, "The men who introduced the First Amendment wanted to prevent the establishment of a state church and protect the freedom of religion. They wanted Bible and prayer in government and public life. On September 25, 1789, the day the First Amendment was submitted in the U.S. House of Representatives, the House voted to establish an official Day of Prayer. They also voted for the re-enactment of the Ordinance of the Northwest Territories which included the statement: 'Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged.' "

The article points out that the U.S. House of Representatives 33rd Congress (1853) made a resolution maintaining that the U.S. is "dependent . . . upon Almighty God" and "the great vital and conservative element in our system is the belief of our people in the pure doctrines and divine truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ" and that "there can be no substitute for Christianity — that was the religion of the founders of the Republic and they expected to remain the religion of the descendants."

The article also states that in 1892, "the U.S. Supreme Court made a ruling very similar to the House of Representatives' resolution. The U.S. Supreme Court also ruled the United States a Christian nation in 1952 and 1961."

The article concluded, "Could not schools which fail to reflect that historic consensus be considered negligent? Could schools not be considered delinquent if they do not help communicate the national identity that we are 'one nation under God' and that 'In God we trust'? . . . Thus, leaving God and the Bible out of classrooms is indoctrinating students with a nontheistic religion, be it called secularism, atheism, or humanism. By distorting the meaning of the First Amendment, schools discriminate against the vast majority of Americans in favor of a tiny minority" (From *Pulpit Helps*, July, 1983).

Not Separation of God and State

Writing under the heading of Church and State, Tim LaHaye comments, "One of the chief reasons for the apathy of so many Christians today, particularly ministers, is a misunderstanding of an important concept: separation of church and state. By no stretch of the imagination was that doctrine ever meant to separate government from God. But if the church withdraws from all government involvement, that is exactly what will result" (*The Battle for the Mind*, p. 11).

LaHaye said in another one of his books, and quite accurately, I might add, "Our forefathers did not want government to establish a religion in this country, as European governments did in creating state churches. But in spite of our commitment to 'separation of church and state,' we have permitted the government to establish the state religion of humanism in our public schools and exclusively teach its religious beliefs to our children.

".... The Bible, prayer, and use of school facilities for church activities have been expelled from school. Now *academic freedom* means that humanists and other atheists are free to teach their atheistic beliefs, but Christians may not teach theirs. Consequently atheism has become the official doctrine of public education" (*The Battle for the Family*, p. 91).

There was an interesting article that appeared in *Temple Times*, East Point, Georgia, May 31, 1981 and reproduced in *Pulpit Helps*, July, 1983. It was entitled, "One Nation Under God." The article was written to show that our forefathers, as well as the framers of the Constitution, never intended a separation of God and State. We copy the following quotations from the article:

1620—The Mayflower Compact. "In the name of God, Amen, Having undertaken for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian faith ... do ... solemnly and mutually in the presence of God covenant and combine ourselves together

1643—Constitution of the New England Confederation. "Whereas we all come into these parts of America with one and the same end and aim, namely to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and to enjoy the Liberties of the Gospel in purity with peace."

1681—William Penn. "If you are not governed by God, you will be ruled by tyrants."

1776—Declaration of Independence. Declaration of Independence. "... the laws of Nature and of Nature's God . . . that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights ... appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions... with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence. . . ."

1787—Benjamin Franklin. "Here is my creed. I believe in one God, the creator of the Universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped."

1787 —Alexander Hamilton. Soon after the Constitutional Convention: "For my own part, I sincerely esteem it a system which without the finger of God, never could have been suggested and agreed upon by such a diversity of interests."

1789—George Washington, Thanksgiving Day Proclamation. "Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection, aid and favors. . . . Now, therefore, do I assign and recommended Thursday, the 26th day of November next... that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks...."

1820—Daniel Webster in Plymouth, Massachusetts. "... more than all, a government and a country were to commence, with the very first foundations laid under the divine lights of the Christian religion... Who would wish that his country's existence had otherwise begun?" "Let us not forget the religious character of our origin."

1863—Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address. "... that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

July 4, 1913—Woodrow Wilson. "Here is the nation God has builded by our hands."

June 14, 1954—Pledge of Allegiance. Words "under God" adopted by Congress.

We can see that from the very inception of this great land of ours, a religious spirit has permeated its political, social and educational institutions. Only in recent years have there been efforts to divorce our government-operated institutions and government-subsidized institutions from God. Amazingly, these anti-God forces have been quite successful. Someone said in essence that in order for evil to succeed, good people only have to remain silent. And silent most of us have remained while wickedness has been actively at work. There are fewer than 300,000 hard-core humanists in this country but we have let them take control.

Louisiana State Senator Bill Keith wrote, "Experts who study the religion of secular humanism estimate that there are fewer than 300,000 hard-core humanists in this country. But millions believe in some of the tenets of humanism and tens of millions are being influenced by their religion every day.

"Though limited in numbers, their influence is far-reaching and permeates every facet of society. For instance, they:

Control public education in America today.

Wield a strong influence on the news media.

Influence most all textbooks used in our public schools.

Dominate many areas of state and federal government, particularly the programs governmental bodies carry out.

"Their humanistic doctrines are flooding this country today. It has a terrifying impact on the people in general and school children in particular" (*Scopes II, the Great Debate*, p. 57).

What Can We DO?

In order to get America back to where she used to be and save her from moral bankruptcy, what can we, as Christians and American citizens, do? Tim LaHaye sug-

gests 12 things we can do. Of course, two or three of his suggestions would have to be evaluated in light of biblical principles and then a judgment made.

LaHaye's suggestions are: (1) Pray for the governmental officials at all levels. (2) Continue sharing your faith. Convert people to Christ and get man back to God. (3) Continue to show your concern and compassion for humanism's victims. (4) Promote the national drive to register Christians. (5) Volunteer to help in the campaign of pro-moral candidates. (6) Work vigorously to expose amoral candidates and incumbents. (7) Become informed and enlighten your friends and neighbors, (8) Consider running for public office. (9) Join local, state, and national pro-moral organizations. (10) Speak out and write vigorously on moral issues. (11) Contribute to good, pro-moral causes, and (12) Assist other pro-moral organizations (*The Battle for the Mind*, —, 225-237). Mr. LaHaye finishes his book by saying, "Millions of Americans are waking up to the fact that we are facing a moral crises" (sic). We sure do need a moral and spiritual awakening in America. May God hasten the day!

May America learn before it is too late that "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).

A CASE FOR JESUS

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Tomah, WI 54660

No individual in history has suffered more attacks on his authenticity than Jesus Christ. The prevailing opinions today concerning Jesus primarily fall into two categories. First, we have those who claim Jesus never lived but was a myth concocted in the minds of the first century writers. Next we have the rather large group of pseudo-believers who admit that Jesus really lived, but was nothing more than a mere man. This latter group of detractors readily admits that Jesus was "a great moral teacher and leader of men", but place him in the same category with other greats of history such as Buddha, Mohammed or Gandhi.

The falsity and inconsistencies in these two arguments are blatant. First of all, even the unbelieving secular historians testify that Jesus was a real live, eating, thinking, walking, character of history. For example, the famous historian and skeptic H.G. Wells said concerning Jesus, "Here was a man. This part of the tale could not have been invented." (2) Therefore, one who claims Jesus really never lived will be made out mighty foolish by running counter to accepted historical evidence. Furthermore, not only do historians and skeptics admit the existence of Jesus, they also testify to his greatness. The historian Will Durant made the following conclusion about Jesus: "That a few simple men in one generation have invented so powerful and appealing a personality, so lofty an ethic and so inspiring a vision of human brotherhood, would be a miracle far more incredible than any recorded in the Gospels." (1) Whether they realize it or not, those who admit that Jesus really lived and that he was a great man are simultaneously admitting that the New Testament is a reliable historical document. Why? Because the extrabiblical historians contemporary with Jesus never recorded the many deeds and events of his life. Therefore, the New Testament is the only place one can go to find out why and what made Jesus great. To admit the existence and greatness of Jesus Christ, while denying the veracity of the New Testament, is a hopeless contradiction. The greatness of Jesus and the reliability of the New Testament stand or fall together. There is no middle ground.

Therefore when we honestly deal with the gospel accounts of Jesus we must ask ourselves: 1) Are those the attitudes and actions of a natural man? 2) Would a Jewish impostor posing as Christ have reacted in a similar manner?; or 3) Would a self-deluded lunatic exhibit the same character and attitudes displayed by Jesus? I respectfully submit that when one examines the evidence he must answer no to all these questions

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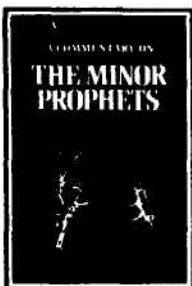
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and conclude as the centurion in Mk. 15:39, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

Let us further investigate some of the unnatural attitudes of Jesus.

1. Jesus lacked any hint of worldly ambition. A certain amount of worldly ambition can be found in almost everyone. Undoubtedly some of us have more than others; however, nearly everyone in some way strives to make his mark in this world. Jesus on the other hand was much different. He lacked completely many of the marks normally associated with ambition. He never went to college, never wrote a book, never held public office, never led an army, never owned a business, never amassed a fortune. In fact, he never even owned his own home (Mt. 8:20). Even when one came to him that could have financially helped his cause greatly, Jesus turned him away by requiring conditions many rich people cannot accept (Mk. 10:17-22). When men sought to make him an earthly king he refused and "... departed again to a mountain by himself alone" (Jn. 6:15). Instead of cultivating the support of those in positions of influence Jesus rebuked the prominent and associated with the poor and sinners (Lk. 15:1-2). Would a Jewish fake or a lunatic shun the rich and elite or refuse the coronation of the masses?

2. Jesus was a fearless teacher who never expressed doubt on any subject. When the chief priests sent officers to seize Jesus they failed their mission due to amazement over his teachings. In answering for their failure they could only offer the excuse, "No man ever spoke like this man!" (Jn. 7:46), Jesus did not apologize for his revolutionary teaching nor did he burden his audience with lengthy explanations or philosophical arguments (Mt. 5:32; 19:9). Instead "... he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes" (Mt. 7:29).

Jesus never failed to speak out even though much of his teaching was guaranteed to bring persecution. For instance, the Jews looked with great pride upon the temple and Jerusalem as the holy city of God and center of their hopes for physical kingdom. Yet Jesus explicitly foretold the destruction of both at the hands of the Gentiles (Mt. 24:2; Lk. 21:20-24). He snuffed out all hopes of a Jewish world empire by proclaiming, "My kingdom is not of this world" (Jn. 18:36). Would not a Jewish impostor have capitalized on the misconceptions of his potential followers? Would a lunatic have the mental acumen to teach such sublime, profound truth? What would a mere man have to gain by condemning the sects, traditions, and hypocrisy of the Jew-ish elite (Mt. 23)?

3. Jesus was entirely free of prejudice or hatred. Through the years the Jewish people became a prejudiced lot. However Jesus completely ignored the prevailing prejudices of the day. His attitude astounded the woman at the well, "How is it that you, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman" (Jn. 4:9)? Why the fuss? Because as John matter-of-factly records, "For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans." Certainly a pretender would have used prevailing prejudices to generate support. Men throughout the ages have fueled the fires of prejudice in their quest for

power. But not so with Jesus, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26-28).

4. Jesus' character was entirely free of malice or egotism. Is his statement as he hung dying on the cross that of an impostor or lunatic whose earthly plans had been thwarted (Lk. 23:34)? Can you name one act of selfishness on Jesus' part ever recorded in the gospels? Jesus spent his entire life in service and sacrifice to others. His very own words betray his humble character, "... the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:28). If Jesus were a mere man, impostor or lunatic would he have given someone else the credit for all the great ideas he taught or deeds he performed (Jn. 5:30; 7:16; 8:28)?

Therefore my fellow brethren rest assured that after all the attacks have been launched, after all the philosophical and theological debates are held, the character and authenticity of Jesus Christ remains untarnished. Jesus still stands as the Messiah, the Son of God, the saviour of the world and the giver of eternal life. Only an illogical mind that no longer wants to "... retain God in their knowledge." (Rom. 1:28) will unswervingly affirm that Jesus never lived or was merely one of history's great men.

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CORRECTION

In the May, 1984 issue on page 99, I said "We believe that, regardless of what some have said, the best and safest translations of the Bible are still the King James Version and the American Standard Version. These are based on the Textus Receptus. . . ."

It is the King James Version which is based on what is known as the Textus Receptus. It was a careless mistake on my part. —Editor

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NEW CONGREGATION

W. W. LAYTON, 546 C Hartnell St., Monterey, CA—This congregation began April 1. This is the first time a sound work has existed on the Monterey peninsula. We meet on Sundays at 9:30 and 10:30 A.M. and at 6 P.M. and on Thursdays for Bible study at 7 P.M. Phone (408) 394-8743.

IN NEW BUILDING

G. MARK NATIONS, P. O. Box 401, Spruce Pine, NC 28777—In November the church here began meeting in a new building on McHone Road in Spruce Pine. The members here did almost all of the construction. Everett Hardin of Johnson City, Tennessee held our first gospel meeting in the facility. Harold Dowdy is to be here in October. The church here began with a few Christians meeting in private homes. Attendance now is about 40,30 of which are members. I have worked here for four years, partly supporting myself in a secular job the first two years but now fully supported for full-time work. We now have a 30 minute radio program on Sunday afternoons. Spruce Pine is the only congregation in a three county area. This is great place to live or vacation. When you are traveling in the Blue Ridge Mountains, visit with us. If you have relatives or friends in Mitchell, Yancey, Avery or McDowell Counties contact me and I will visit them. Phone (704) 765-6215.

BACK TO MAINE

BRUCE HUDSON, P. O. Box 56, Milbridge, Maine 04658—Ralph Smart, Sr. and I have made plans to engage in a special work together. We both are ready to preach the gospel together to the east of Maine. This would include a few towns between Milbridge, Maine and the Canadian border. We would then proceed to work in various places in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island of Canada. These regions have been untouched with the gospel and to have the "seed" planted and watered there. We plan to reside in Milbridge, Maine where we labored before. This is the closest church to the New Brunswick border. The opportunities are great and numerous, as we already have many contacts in various places. Perhaps someone read-

ing this may have friends or relatives living in these areas. Please contact us about them. Write me at the above address or call (207) 546-7450 or 483-2242.

IN NEW BUILDING

KENT ELLIS, 9955 Neuens Rd., Houston, Texas 77080—After meeting for 4 years at the Creative Care Children's School, 9709 Long Point, Houston, TX, the Gessner Area church has purchased land and built a building at 9955 Neuens Road at Witte Road. Both of these locations are in the Spring Branch area of west-central Houston. This is the only congregation we are aware of in this area bounded by I-10 on the south, Highway 290 on the north, Loop 610 on the east, and Highway 6 on the west. There are an estimated 100,000 people in this area.

We will henceforth be known as the Spring Woods church of Christ. The elders are George Willis, Bob Perkins, and Kent Ellis. The deacons are W. J. Stephenson, Nill Roberts and Kyle Willis. The preacher is Kent Ellis. The new meeting place may be reached by driving north on Gessner from I-10 to the 3rd stop light. This is Neuens Road. Turn right to the corner of Neuens Road and Witte Road. Please visit with us when in this area and place us on your mailing list. Phone (713) 932-1219.

CRAIG MEYER, 55 Barrett Rd., Suite 634, Berea, Ohio 44017—After two and a half years with the church in Wooster, Ohio, I began work September 2, 1983 with the church in Berea, Ohio. This city of 20,000 is in the Cleveland, Ohio area, the eleventh largest metropolitan region in the U.S. This work began in 1955 as former members of the Lorain Avenue congregation began the new work with the "blessings" of Lorain; Ave. They met for a time in the Fine Arts Building, then in an old Lutheran building and ultimately in our new building. Since 1955, Ellis Webb, Olin Kern, Bob Nichols, Paul Kelsey, Bill Echols, Ralph Givens, Elvis Bozarth, and the beloved Luther Blackmon have preached here. We are at peace. Two have been baptized since moving here. Our meeting house is located at 24430 Nobottom Road just outside the city limits. We are the closest sound church to

Cleveland-Hopkins International Airport (3 miles south of it). If you need transportation to worship, please call. We have the cheapest taxi service in town! If you have friends, relatives we might contact, please let us know.

RODOLFO BERDINI, Via Giuseppe Perego, 58-H, 00144 Rome, Italy—In March I had the pleasure of preaching in northeastern Italy at Udine, where our son-in-law, Stefano Corazza preaches, and at Trieste where our son Gianni is the preacher. March 29-31, we had a special meeting in Aprilia in which Gianni Berdini preached. We advertised with big posters on public walls in town and distributed 8,000 personal invitation cards from door to door. We had 10 non-members present every night and also the comfort of the presence of many brethren of the Aprilia church, we continue personal work from door to door. It is not easy work. Prejudice and fear are often on the faces and in the words of those who open their doors. On April 15 two were baptized into Christ after our morning worship. It has been a great joy for us all here.

NARCISO S. ROMIO, 1010-C Tayabas, Tondo, Manila, Philippines—Gregorio Valerio is now working with me at Tayabas, Tondo, Manila. He is a Certified Public Accountant with a job in a government office. He is also graduating in law next year. He was previously with the liberals. His wife is a high school teacher. Besides our labor here on Sundays and mid-week, we also meet appointments at the request of brethren in Taytay, Rizal, Novaliches, Quezon City, Mandaluyong and sometimes in San Narciso, Zambales. Our labor is blessed with 8 souls baptized this year (report dated April 30). I express my great gratitude to concerned saints in the U.S. for their part and interest in the Lord's work here.

PREACHERS NEEDED

SCIOTOVILLE, OHIO—The Harding Avenue church in Scioto, Ohio (Portsmouth area) is looking for a preacher to work with us. We have 100 plus members and are self supporting. Write to: Box 223 Route 2, Scioto, OH 45662, or call: Earl Gampp, (614) 776-6155 or Bill Holbrook (614) 776-6059.

PISCATAWAY, NEW JERSEY—We would desire someone mature and well grounded in the truth to come work with us. At present, we are able to provide \$1,000 a month support. For more details, please call Richard Pflaum at (201) 359-1928.

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

Preaching in the Tar-Heel State. Late May found me preaching in Concord, North Carolina where Ralph Walker is doing good work. North Carolina is special to me. This was the home state of both my parents who grew up in the eastern North Carolina rural community known now as Pike Road, located about 14 miles from Plymouth. It was at Pike Road that I preached my first sermon when 15 years of age. Newport, North Carolina was the place where I held my first gospel meeting in 1950. My father moved to Hopewell, Virginia in the early 1920's to find work (but mainly to pursue my mother who had

moved there with her mother to run a boarding house). There they stayed and there I was born and reared.

The church at Concord (about 20 miles north of Charlotte) has about 75 in Sunday morning attendance. We reached 92 the last night of the meeting. During the week I was able to see preachers from Concord, Charlotte, Asheville, Spruce Pine, Cary, Sanford, Newton, Chapel Hill, Lincolnton, Dallas and a couple of other places I can't recall, plus one preacher from Virginia. Unless I have been misinformed I saw all the preachers in the state except four or five. There is much to do in the Carolinas and too few to help do it.

Why I Don't Go To the Kentucky Derby—In traveling around the country, I have met a number of people (including some brethren) who register surprise that I have not attended a single Kentucky Derby since moving to Kentucky in 1970. Well, I don't bet on horses and don't feel all that comfortable where that is being done. More than that, I respect the Lord and the gospel more than to place myself deliberately in that environment. An article in the Louisville Courier-Journal, May 4, 1984 summed it up. "The familiar giant flower planters—where naked drunks, male and female, often have brutalized each other playing 'king of the mountain'—have been removed from the infield this year at the request of police, Jewell (deputy police chief) said. And he said enforcement efforts also will be beefed up near the rest-rooms, another area where crime and violence were common last year. Despite the heavy police presence and the stricter enforcement philosophy, Jewell said, officials expect to encounter the usual problems. But hey, it's May. And what would the infield be without cut feet, indecent exposure to sun, drug deals, overdoses, drunkenness, vomiting, illegal card games and shell games, pickpockets, fist fights, lost people and general human degradation?" Any more questions?

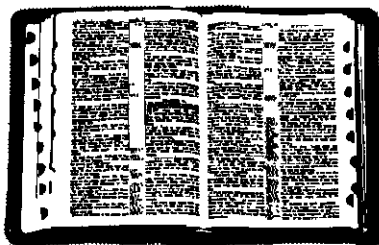
PAUL CASEBOLT back from Philippines—We are thankful that Paul Casebolt, of Moundsville, West Virginia, has safely returned after a six-weeks preaching trip to the Philippines where he worked with brethren on several islands. Be sure to read his article in this issue. This was his second preaching trip to that nation. His knowledge, experience and good judgment were of great benefit to the brethren there and already we have heard from several places he visited expressing great appreciation for his visit. It looks like the brethren in that land are snake-bit. In addition to increasing political tension, violence and frustrating economic conditions, the brethren have to contend with liberalism, Premillennialism (especially rampant in Mindanao), the one-cup doctrine and now Chuck Lucas and Cross-roads doctrine. What else? In spite of all that, it is refreshing to know that there are still many good men and faithful churches which have not lost their bearings amid these swirling conflicts.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	350
RESTORATIONS	152
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

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 XXV

AUGUST 1984

NUMBER 8

Special Edition

REVIEW OF

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

THINK ON
THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
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The original words used by the Holy Spirit in revealing the word of God to mankind were spoken in ancient or "Biblical" Hebrew. The universal language of man was confounded and various tongues and dialects came into being from the time of the tower of Babel, 1775 years after creation (Genesis 11:6-9). The descendants of Shem developed the Semitic language from which came the language known as "Hebrew," and it was in this language that the first revelation from God was made.

When the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob received that law at Sinai, it was revealed in the Hebrew language. Afterward the laws and statutes were also received in the Hebrew tongue.

After the reign of Saul, David and Solomon, the nation of Israel was divided into ten tribes to the north, under the rule of Jeroboam, and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin known as "Judah" under the rule of Rehoboam. Nineteen kings ruled for 254 years over Israel, which ended in Assyrian captivity. During this captivity the nation of Israel lost its identity as a separate people. Their language took the characteristics of the Assyrians, and later developed a mixed dialect spoken in Samaria during the time of Christ.

Nineteen kings ruled Judah in Jerusalem from Rehoboam to Zedekiah for a period of 390 years. This period ended in Babylonian captivity (606 B. C. to 536 B.C.), a period of seventy years. Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah returned with a decree from Cyrus to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and the temple worship. They returned to Jerusalem with a mixture of dialects of the Chaldeans, but the Hebrew was used in the worship.

About three centuries before Christ, Alexander the Great had conquered the known world. The Greek influence, especially the Greek language, had permeated most of the world around Palestine. Nearly two centuries before Christ, the Roman Empire began its rise to power, and the Latin language was growing because of the influence of Rome, but the Greek language was still universally spoken when Christ was born. This explains why Pilate had the sign put above the cross of Christ in three languages: **Hebrew, Greek and Latin** (John 19:20).

The Greek language of Christ's day is no longer a living language. By that I mean it does not change; it is not used by any people today as a common language. In the good providence of God His eternal word is locked into a language that will not be modified in any way by any people as time goes by. We may glean the kernels of truth from the words of a "dead" language frozen in time for all eternity.

The Basis Of A Translation

The earliest translation of any part of the Bible was the Old Testament Hebrew, from 284 B. C. to 132 B. C. when it was translated into the Greek from Hebrew. Seventy of the best Hebrew scholars were commissioned to make a translation of the Hebrew scriptures into the Greek language. This was known as the Septuagint, a Latin term for "seventy." It was also known as the Alexandrian Version because it was made near Alexandria.

Some standard text of the original language of the Bible had to be established as a basis to aid in making translations into other languages. This standard text was the product of the science we call **TEXTUAL CRITICISM**. By accumulating all the evidence from the ancient manuscripts, previous translations from the original tongue, and from quotations of early Christian writers, an accurate and complete text of the Bible can be obtained.

The formation of a standard Greek text of the New Testament began early in the 16th century. The first began in Complutum, Spain in 1514, but was not published until 1522. Several followed as new manuscripts were discovered.

B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, two professors at Cambridge University, worked 28 years on their work for a Greek text of the New Testament, and completed it May 17, 1881. Their work is one of the most accurate and accepted standard Greek texts known. Not one acceptable Greek text published since Westcott and Hort Text has materially differed from it.

Why Do We Need A Translation?

Most people know only their native tongue, and without a translation of the Greek and Hebrew into that tongue, they would not be able to read the word of God. Very few today among the common people can speak the language which the apostles and Christ spoke.

Literally the word **translation** is from two words: trans which means "across," and fere which means "to bear; carry." The word **translation** means "to carry across." In reference to the scriptures it means to take the meaning of each word in the original language and carry it across into another language **EXACTLY!**

Words are means of conveying thoughts from one mind to another. In the case of inspired writings it is the mind of God being conveyed to man. Each word spoken by the Holy Spirit is given for a purpose. That exact word must be carried across in another language or we do not have the word of God, but the word of men.

Some speak of "revision" of a certain translation. Just what is the difference between a "translation" and a "revision"? A translation is that which carries across from the original language of the Holy Spirit into another by a "word-by-word" transfer of substance. A "revision" differs in that it is a **SECOND** edition after the same pattern, but containing such changes as are necessary to correct the first. A revision is the same tongue as the translation which it revises.

That is **NOT** a revision which intends to update, change doctrine, delete material, add new substance arbitrarily, all in the interest of **CHANGES** for whatever purpose. This is equal to a **PARAPHRASE**.

Some Guidelines For A Translation

It is important to know how translations are made in order to determine whether they are accurate and reliable or not.

Some basic rules must be followed to provide an accurate translation from one language to another. There are three main rules:

1. Words by any writer have but one meaning in each

Searching The Scriptures

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text at the time they were written. We are not interested in what the words may mean **NOW**. When an inspired man used a single word in a given text, he had one meaning and only one. The job of the translator is to know exactly what the word meant at that time in that text.

2. Languages do not have the same form of expressions. The order of subject, predicate, and other parts of a sentence may have to be rearranged in order to make sense in the tongue into which the scriptures are being translated. Translators must bring across the word-for-word meaning while retaining the English form of sentence structure.

3. The tense of a verb, the case and person of a noun in the original must be carried over into the tongue into which the translation is being made. No changes in the person, case or tense of the word, because some of the arguments made by Christ and the apostles depended upon number, case or tense.

When should a translation be made? Many translations have been made that served no purpose at all but to enhance the bank account of the translator or stuff his ego. A translation should be made only:

1. When there is no complete translation of the word of God in that language. Such was the case when men came to America and found the Indians without the Bible in their language. They needed a translation.

2. When a translation is outdated because of the change in that language, and the people do not understand the translation they have. A living language changes in that new words are added, and other words are losing their meaning. After a few generations a living language may change so much that the old translation does not express the original in the common tongue of that day. They need a new translation or a "revision" of their old translation.

3. When a translation in some tongue is not an accurate one. It has happened that some theological system has kept a true translation from coming to a people for generations, and in such cases those people need a translation.

Who should make a translation?

Some translations have been made by individuals upon their own authority. Some have been made by the decrees of kings and emperors. Some have been made by ecclesiastical organizations. Some have been improvements over former ones, and some have been far inferior.

No translation should be made from a translation. That was the mistake of many translations before the King James Version. The Latin Vulgate served as a basis for most of those translations, and it was a translation itself. All translations should be made from the original language of the inspired men.

Why do we have a number of translations in the English language? It is confusing to many people, and some reasonable explanation must be made. At least four explanations may be given:

1. A living language undergoes continual change from generation to generation. Certain English words in my lifetime have completely lost their meaning, and others have come into existence because of inventions and new ideas. A hundred years ago the English language did not have the words to express many of the medical terms used today, the electronic devices and their functions, forms of transportation that we have and many games and forms of recreation. But the fact that a new translation is made will not automatically eliminate the old one from use. Consequently, we would have two translations in use at the same time.

2. Some words have no meaning in current usage of English. Several words in the King James Version are derived from the Latin which were used in the Latin versions. The word **Calvary** is from the Latin "Calvaria." The Greek is "the place called the skull" (Luke 23:33). Many such corrections need to be made.

3. Translations made for commercial value. Unfortunately many translations are made for capital gain. The variations and changes are unnecessary and often erroneous. The average reader has no knowledge of Greek,

or at the most, very little. These changes for commercial purposes are confusing to him. Such translations are usually copyrighted to keep others from using their terminology. Most modern versions are of this type.

4. Translations for the purpose of supporting theological and doctrinal views. Some denominations have gone to considerable trouble and expense because it seems the only way to secure their cause. These will all perish as impure and faulty attempts at translating the word of God.

The Bible is a "best seller" every year, and every new translation that can hold the market for a few years is a sure winner financially for some publisher. These are hard, cold facts with which we must reckon as we consider the examination of any translation.

BOOKS ON INSPIRATION

Thy Word is Truth: Some Thoughts on the Biblical Doctrine of Inspiration By *Edward J. Young*. This excellent defense of the conservative interpretation of the inspiration of Scripture (and its corollary, belief in the infallibility of the written Word) is not a technical treatise, but is written in a popular style designed to acquaint the intelligent Christian with the Biblical doctrine of the inspiration. Paper. (Ee)

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Editorial

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THE NEED FOR RELIABLE TRANSLATIONS

The Bible claims to be the revelation of God's mind for the guidance of man. The Old Testament writers repeatedly stated that the "word of the Lord" came unto them. We read of "the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord" (Jer. 7:1). In the book of Exodus alone, the claim is made 161 times that "God spake these words." The whole nation of Israel was witness to the fact that God spoke to Moses in preparation for the giving of the law. That account plus what God gave to Moses on the mount was written in a book and read periodically to the entire nation. See Exo. 24: 4, 7; Deut. 31:9-12 and Deut. 17:18-20.

Not only did the prophets claim inspiration from the Lord, they also recognized the works of other prophets as inspired. Daniel consulted Jeremiah's prophecy about the duration of the captivity (Dan. 9:2). Zechariah considered what "former prophets" had written (Zech. 7:12). New Testament writers also affirmed the divine origin of the Old Testament. Peter said "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:19-21). Peter said "the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David" spake concerning Judas (Acts 1:16).

Paul spoke of the Old Testament which Timothy had known from a child, plus the sacred writings of his day as "inspired of God" and "profitable" to completely furnish the man of God to every good work (2 Tim. 3:14-17). Peter said that what "brother Paul" wrote constituted "scripture" and warned that the unstable "wrest" what he said "as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:16). Paul argued that the Holy Spirit chose the words he used. "Which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. 2:13).

The Original Languages

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament in Koine Greek. There are a few sections in the Old Testament in Aramaic and some words in the New Testament are preserved in that language. The Old Testament was translated into Greek about 200 B. C. in what was called The Septuagint. This was the text used by Jesus and his apostles thus placing their approval upon it.

But readers of this paper, with very few exceptions, are not conversant with Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek. We are dependent on reliable translations into English for

our understanding of what God said.

Abundant Textual Evidence

We do not have the original documents. It is our contention that these original documents were inspired of God and that no error was contained in them. But if we do not have the original documents now, how can we know that we really have the text of what God said? It is important to understand that we have a great abundance of textual sources from which to establish this.

There are now over 5,000 Greek manuscripts ranging from small fragments to whole books, to the whole Bible. In 1902 the German scholar Von Soden catalogued 2,328 New Testament manuscripts, 40 of which contained in whole or in part all books of the New Testament. 1,716 contained certain portions of the gospels, 581 were of Acts, 628 of Paul's epistles and 219 of the book of Revelation. The earlier of them were uncials (written in capital letters without punctuation) and 100 of them were before the 4th century. The three most important uncial manuscripts are the Vaticanus and Sinaitic from the 4th century A. D. and the Alexandrian from the 5th century. The latter is the principle text on which the King James Version rested. I have personally seen all three of these manuscripts. The Vaticanus is in the Vatican Library in Rome and the Sinaitic and Alexandrian are both in the British Museum in London. Since the days of Von Soden other significant manuscripts have been found, all confirming the text on which most English versions rest.

In addition to the vast array of manuscripts, scholars also have at their disposal numerous versions (translations of the New Testament into other languages). The Syriac, for instance, is dated about 400 but is a copy of a translation made into Syriac about 150, within 50 years of the apostolic age. Tatian's Diatessaron dates to 170 and the Old Syriac Version dates from the 2nd century. We also have Coptic (Egyptian) versions which go back to about 200 A. D. There are also Latin versions, chief of which was Jerome's Vulgate in the latter part of the 4th century. By translating from these languages back into Koine Greek, the scholars can determine what was the text underlying these versions.

In addition to manuscripts and versions, we have the added evidence of the Patristic writings. These were the works of influential Christians in the first 300 years after Christ. Some of their writings were in Greek and some in Latin and consisted of letters written to churches or individuals dealing with spiritual issues of the times. As they wrote in defense of the faith and against heresies of one kind or another, they quoted freely from the New Testament to support their affirmations and contentions. With the exception of a very few verses, all of the New Testament is quoted by these men as scripture. Their works are now contained in 10 large volumes called THE ANTE-NICENE FATHERS. Several years ago I personally checked these works for quotations from the books of Philippians, Colossians, Titus and Philemon. Others in the same class I was taking were assigned the rest of the New Testament. Between all of us working on the project, we were able to find all of the New Testament quoted or cited with the

exception of a very few verses. What does that prove? It proves that they recognized the same New Testament scriptures which we have now and that they considered them authoritative in settling religious issues.

History of English Translations

The first English translation was by John Wyclif in 1382. He worked from the Latin Vulgate rather than the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. Since this was before the invention of printing, copies were expensive and difficult to obtain, although it still reached the people of England and was opposed by the Catholic Church. The next important translation in English was in 1526 by William Tyndale. It was the first English translation to come directly from the Hebrew and Greek texts and also the first to be printed.

The most popular English translation was the King James Version of 1611, so named because it was commissioned by King James. Forty-eight Greek and Hebrew scholars were chosen and divided into six working groups. Each group was assigned selected books to translate and the work of each company was sent to and reviewed by the others. For over 350 years it has been the household Bible for the English speaking world. It is the author's opinion that the English language reached its zenith in fulness of expression, dignity and grace in the time of Shakespeare and has decayed since that time. In spite of all the criticism which some have heaped upon the King James Version, the expanding array of textual evidences make it look better all the time. It is a fact that some words and phrases are archaic now. This author still prefers it, has always preached from it and thinks the explanation of archaisms a minor problem in teaching people the word of God. The New King James Version has preserved the form and dignity of the earlier work while eliminating the obsolete language.

The American Standard Version of 1901 (and its English counterpart of 1888) was done by 101 of the finest scholars of the time, both British and American. Its language is still not out of date though it is getting difficult to find this translation. Those who have published modern versions have justified their work by insisting that both the King James and the American Standard Versions are too mechanically exact. While intended as a slur, such a charge in reality stands as a compliment to these versions. We need to know exactly what God said. In efforts to make the text flow more smoothly and to produce better "literature", some of the newer versions have omitted whole phrases which appeared in the text in the original and have often become commentators on the text instead of translators. What the text means is a matter of commentary. That is not the proper business of translators. They must give us in our language what the text says.

The New American Standard Version leaves much to be desired. While it made a serious effort to give an exact translation on verb tenses, it has been careless in many instances and those who insist on using it need to exercise caution.

Caution Needed

The market has been flooded in recent years with new versions and paraphrases. We have had the Revised Standard Version, the New English Bible, Good News For Modern Man, The Living Bible Paraphrase, the New International Version, the Reader's Digest Condensed Bible and a host of others. While there may be some value in comparing readings in these, it is dangerous to limit your Bible study to one of the newer efforts which have not followed the safer guidelines of the King James and American Standard Versions. Both of those were serious efforts to put into English just exactly what the equivalent words said in Hebrew and Greek. When it was necessary to supply a word, or several words to complete a sentence, these translators indicated such by the use of italics. Modern speech efforts have taken great liberties with the text without any indication that they have done so. The danger of this is that we are going to have a generation of Biblical illiterates who do not know the word of God at all.

In my travels over the country in the last few years, I have seen many come to Bible class and other services with all kinds of excuses for translations. I have heard some of these used for readings in the worship assembly and at the Lord's Table that were so far-fetched it was difficult to tell what passage they were actually reading. Some preachers, elders and Bible class teachers who have not done their homework, have, with all good intentions, encouraged Christians to purchase and use versions which are not reliable. We need to have the good judgment to know the difference between what is a good translation and what is simply a successful, money-making scheme to sell books!

This issue of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES is designed to alert readers especially concerning the New International Version which is being used more and more these days and increasingly by Christians. We believe Dorris V. Rader of Tullahoma, Tennessee and his son, Donnie V. Rader of Louisville, Kentucky have done their work well and we are grateful to them. Dorris Radar has preached the gospel for at least 35 years. His work has always been true to the book and his manner of life beyond reproach. He is a careful student. Donnie Rader is a young man of great ability and sterling character who works now with the Manslick Road church in Louisville. If you appreciate their work, or even if you disagree with what they said, they would be pleased to hear from you.

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**THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION
(OR PSEUDO-VERSION)**



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Solomon said, "of making many books there is no end" (Ecc. 12:12). This was not said as a flat condemnation of making many books. New translations are appearing so rapidly that we may also observe that "of making new translations there is no end." They have been coming off the press at an average of one new version, or revision per year since 1881 (**The New Testament Student and Bible Translation**, p. 127). Neither is this said as a flat condemnation of new translations. However, even a novice must know that all the new translations cannot be the true word of God since conflicting doctrines can be "proven" depending on the particular translation one chooses for his Bible.

Imagine the confusion in a Bible class if you had about six or eight different modern versions. Suppose the teacher assigns each student to read and make a short talk on some favorite passage. One student, using the Living Bible Paraphrased, selects 2 Tim. 4:1-2 which teaches that when Christ comes it will be "to set up His kingdom." He elaborates on the establishment of the kingdom at the second coming of Christ. He clinches it from the same "Bible" by reading Isa. 2:2-4. "For in those days the world will be ruled from Jerusalem. The Lord will settle international disputes; all nations will convert their weapons of war to implements of peace. Then at last all wars will stop and all military training will end." He had read it all from his "Bible." Then another student, using the Amplified Bible walks to the podium and takes his text from Eph. 5:19. His text speaks of "offering praise with voices [and instruments]." From his Bible he urges that we all fully praise our God, not just with voice but with instruments as well. When the third speaker walks to the stand he is carrying Today's English Version as his Bible. He reads from Acts 2:1-4 how that it was "all believers" who received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He shows how all believers spoke in other languages as the Spirit enabled them. Now let us just suppose that the final speaker brings his Cotton Patch Version and reads of Paul's defence before the council in Acts 23. In his "Bible" he reads that Paul seeing that part of them were Unitarians and part were Baptists took sides with "the Baptists" and confessed that he was himself a "Baptist, the son of a Baptist." He urges that we also be imitators

of Paul who was himself a Baptist. Surely, things would be quite interesting in class that day. We'd like to see some of the defenders of these modern versions unravel the ball of yarn that day!

Has it reached the point that one can have the translation of his choice just like many believe that one can have the church of his choice? One who believes in the doctrine of grace only would find comfort in the New English Bible (Rom. 3:24). If one believes the doctrine of faith only, he would delight in Today's English Version (Good News For Modern Man) (Rom. 1:17; 3:27-28) or the Living Bible Paraphrased (Rom. 4:12). If one was in sympathy with the doctrine of Premillennialism, he would like the Living Bible Paraphrased (2 Tim 4:1). If one had rather observe the Lord's supper on Saturday than Sunday, the Good News Bible (Acts 2:0:7) or the New English Bible (Acts 20:7) would certainly give some comfort. If you like the use of instrumental music in worship, the Amplified Bible (Eph. 5:19) would "justify" it. If one liked the doctrines of John Calvin, he would certainly rejoice in the Living Bible Paraphrased (Psa. 51:5; Eph. 2:3,8; Rom. 8:3) or the Amplified Bible (Eph. 2:3). If you want to believe that Peter is the "rock" of Matt. 16:18, then you will like the New English Bible and the New Testament in Modern English (Phillips). If one would like to hold to the old law as being effective today, he would like the New English Bible which says that Jesus didn't come to abolish the law (Matt. 5:17). Our Pentecostal friends will no doubt be pleased with the Good News Bible as it would indicate that Holy Spirit Baptism is for all believers (Acts 2:1). If you wanted to doubt the fact that Jesus is Deity, then a number of translations could be found to support that thought. For example, The New World Translation (John 1:1) and the Revised Standard Version (John 3:16). It has even got to the point that if one likes cursing and gutter language you can have a Bible that uses such terms. One might be shocked to read the Good News For Modern Man (Acts 8:20) or the Living Bible Paraphrased (1 Sam. 20:30; Gen. 19:5; 2 Sam. 11:4; John 9:34).

The real problems in this area are not something which we have just imagined. We have discussed this with knowledgeable men among both "conservative"

and "liberal" brethren. Many of these pseudo-versions are a direct challenge to fundamental truths which have been held dear throughout the entire history of the Lord's church. We are witnessing a new and bold thrust at undermining the faith with denominational dogmas, as the latter gradually make their way within the lids of the Bible by way of paraphrases, deletions, insertions, mistranslations, footnotes and commentaries within the text. Denominational creeds are subtle and dangerous even when they exist under their own banner. But they are infinitely more insidious when they are slipped in under the pretext of "translations" and palmed off as being actually the word of God. The devil, you remember, operates as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).

Aid To The Atheist

Lest some think, after reading this article, that we have overstated the case and cried "wolf" where no wolf exists, let us cite you what the American Association for Advancement of Atheism had to say in one of their annual meetings about matters of this kind. "They are saving the ship of Christianity by throwing the cargo overboard . . . the virgin birth, atonement, and the resurrection. How long will men sail the sea in an empty ship? They will go ashore and enjoy life with the Atheists. We welcome the aid of the modernists and pledge them our fullest cooperation in ridding the world of any serious acceptance of Christian theology." (As quoted by A. G. Hobbs, *Contending for the Faith*, April 1983, p. 7).

What Are We Saying?

Before someone misunderstands, let us state in simple terms what we are saying. But first it may help to state what we are not saying. We are not saying that the KJV is the only acceptable translation. We are not saying that the KJV, ASV or the NKJV are flawless. We are not saying that there is any inspired translation. We are not saying that it is wrong for the Bible to be translated into modern speech. We are not saying that there is no need for revision and new translations. Neither are we saying that it is wrong to use modern translations for comparative study.

However we are saying that the New International Version (NIV) and many other modern translations are perversions (pseudo-versions) rather than versions. We are saying that the NIV and many others are mistranslations. They are not the word of God. Hence the NIV and many others should not be used as one's main study Bible.

Principles For Choosing A Translation

One problem that we find is that many people choose a translation on the wrong basis. The problem is that they don't know how to go about determining which translations are good and which are not. Many people pull a new translation off the shelf and throw it open at any verse and read a few lines to see if it is very readable and understandable. If it is much easier to understand than the KJV or the ASV they buy it and use it. However this assumes that most translations are good and accurate and thus the one easiest understood is the

best. While we need to be concerned about simple and understandable English, we must not overlook the need for an accurate translation. What good would a translation do us if it is clear and understandable, but not accurate? What do we want with a translation that teaches error in simple terms? To illustrate the point, would you rather someone tell you a lie (in simple and understandable terms) or tell you the truth (in understandable yet not so simple terms)?

Obviously there is more to determining which translations are good and bad than just checking to see if they are clear and understandable. Let us consider some important principles that we should use in examining a translation. (1) Realize that no translation is inspired. (2) Is this the work of one man or a group of men? (3) Who were the translators? Were they qualified to do this work? (4) Have verses or parts of verses been omitted? (5) Is it a paraphrase or a commentary? (6) Has the truth been lost in the process of obtaining clear and understandable English? (7) Is it an accurate translation? (8) Check some principle verses that are so often mistranslated. Check what you find in the translation you are examining with the same verse in the ASV, KJV or the NKJV. (The translators of a number of the new versions are on record acknowledging the accuracy and reliability of these versions.) Check such verses as Psa. 51:5; Isa. 7:14; John 3:16 ("begotten" sometimes left out); Matt. 5:17 (if translated "abolish" then we have Jesus not coming to do what Paul said he did in Eph. 2:15); Luke 1:3; Mark 16:9-20 Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1-3; Matt. 16:18; Jas. 2:24; Rom. 1:16-17; 3:27-8; etc. This is just a beginning of the list of passages that are so often mistranslated.

Questions For The Reader

1. Do you want to use a translation that has many perverted and mistranslated passages?
2. If we could show that the NIV is not an accurate translation, would you continue to use it?
3. If we could show that the NIV is a pseudo-version (a perversion) teaching doctrinal error, would you continue to use it? If so, why?
4. Do you believe that all translations are acceptable?

A Dangerous Translation

The NIV, along with several other translations, is a danger to the body of Christ. This translation is far more dangerous to members of the Lord's church than the more far out translations like the Good News, Reader's Digest and Cotton Patch Versions. Because the NIV is a little more subtle than these just mentioned, it is more dangerous. To illustrate, if a Baptist preacher teaches his doctrine of Calvinism, he will not influence as many Christians as a "gospel" preacher would who occasionally throws out some Calvinistic thoughts. We have long known and warned that a little error interwoven with a considerable amount of truth is best suited to infiltrate the hearts of men and women.

A translator need not mistranslate every passage in order to accomplish an unholy goal. A word or two here

and a passage will much better accomplish the Destroyer's goals.

Someone may say that the translation is good for the most part. It is only a small portion that is not accurate. Yes, but it is that small portion that is dangerous. It is that "small" portion that we are concerned about. Take for example the d-Con mouse-prufe. It has 99.946% inert ingredients. It is the 0.054% active ingredient that kills. You see, a small portion can be dangerous. Suppose you have a plate of food that has one drop of poison in it. Most of what you would eat would be good. It is that small portion that is dangerous.

One of the greatest dangers with the NIV and several other translations is the fact that some members of the church are buying these translations for their children. Some adults may say that they know the difference when there is a mistranslation (which is not a justification for using a pseudo-version), but do the children? Are the parents going to be able to show them all of the verses that have been mistranslated? Can you imagine giving your children a Bible and then pointing out several verses to them which they are not to believe?

The Need For A Study Of The NIV

We have noticed within the last year or two that more and more members of the church are picking up the NIV and using it for their Bible. In nearly every congregation where we have been in the last year or so there has been someone (in some cases several) who was using the NIV. This version seems to be selling well. In response to our inquiry, Baker House informed us in February 1984, that the NIV is "currently the best seller" with them. In fact, one of the men who helped produce the NIV said, "The response of the public to the NIV is overwhelming; about ten million copies have already been sold" (J. C. Wenger in a letter to Donnie Rader on January 14, 1984). Thus it behooves the people of God to examine this version to see if it is accurate and acceptable.

"But, A Member Of The Church Of Christ Helped In Translating It"

— Church of Christ — "This was to help safeguard the translation from "sectarian bias." This has caused some members of the church to assume that it is good translation on the basis that some member of the church was connected with it.

Frankly, it doesn't matter who was connected with producing the NIV—it is still a bad translation. It really doesn't matter if there were a hundred members of the church on the translation committee. If it is a pseudo-version, a mistranslation, it remains a pseudo-version or mistranslation no matter who had part in it!

Some, however are impressed with this fact. They think it just has to be a good translation since some brother had part in it. Yet, what influence do you think one member of the church would have on a committee of 115?

The member of the Church of Christ was Jack P. Lewis, professor at Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, TN. Our purpose here is not to get the low-down on Jack Lewis, but suffice it to say that his

association with the NIV doesn't impress us one bit with him or the translation. We are not surprised at his participation in producing the NIV and wouldn't be surprised at his participation in any similar project. Actually, he is the same Jack P. Lewis who tried to defend the RSV a few years ago. (cf. Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Contending for the Faith*, April 1983, p. 2).

As far as we have been able to learn, Lewis had nothing to do with the actual translating. He only served in an advisory capacity. And then, his work was only in the Old Testament.

However, Lewis has received a considerable amount of rebuke from brethren for his association with the NIV. Would that he had done as H. Leo Boles did when he was invited to have part in the work on the RSV. After going to one meeting, Boles washed his hands of the ordeal.

A Conglomerate Of Error In The NIV

1. **Original Sin**—The NIV teaches that little babies are sinful from the time they are conceived. "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Psa. 51:5). This is Calvinism to the core! It originated first in the mind of Augustine. Denominational preachers have taught that little babies are born totally depraved, wholly inclined to evil, and could not think a good thought or do a good deed. Out of this teaching grew numerous other false doctrines: direct operation of the Holy Spirit to convict and convert helpless sinners, a denial that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and predestination. And now the NIV says that the foundation of all these other false doctrines is right. It teaches David was sinful from his conception. The word of God teaches no such doctrine! The KJV, ASV and the NKJV have David saying, "in sin did my mother conceive me." There is a big difference in being conceived in sin and in being conceived with sin in him. Today, there have been instances in which medical doctors have allowed mothers to give birth to their babies in the water. But this is a lot different from giving birth to a baby with water in the baby! The NIV is clearly in error. This is a case of denominational creeds creeping into the text. It is inexcusable that it should happen. It is even so that brethren who ought to know better should try to look the other way and say nothing. If this were the only case of error we could point to, it would be enough to reject it as a reliable translation. But there is much more.

2. **Luke Not Inspired**—The NIV, to say the least, makes inferences against and cast doubts upon the inspiration of Luke who wrote approximately one-fifth of the New Testament. It has his writings being produced as a result of his **investigations** rather than his inspiration. The NIV says, "Since, I myself have carefully investigated everything . . ." (Lk. 1:3). The KJV and NKJV read that he had "perfect understanding of all things..."

3. **Church Built On Peter**—The NIV teaches by means of the footnotes that the church was built upon Peter. "And I tell you that you are Peter," and on this

rock I will build my church . . ." (Matt. 16:18). Then when you look at the footnote (b) it says, "Peter means rock." Now read the text supplying "rock" for Peter. Truly an ecumenical Bible! The Catholics will like that. The word rendered "Peter" and word rendered "rock" are not the same in the original language and it is a perversion and distortion to leave the implication that they are and that Peter is the foundation of the church. Paul taught that there is but one foundation on which the church can be built and that is Christ (1 Cor. 3:11).

4. **Peter Had Two Fathers**—According to the NIV, Peter had one more father than the rest of us. He had two fathers. In Matt. 16:17 Peter is correctly referred to as "Simon, son of Jonah" as does the KJV, ASV and NKJV. But the NIV has Jesus addressing him at least four times as "Simon, the son of John" in the following passages: John 1:42; 21:15,16,17. Did he have two fathers, or is the NIV just not reliable?

5. **Confused On The Prophets**—The first of Mark in the NIV begins like this: "The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (emphasis ours). So, it is simply the gospel about Jesus Christ! Then the NIV says in verse 2, "it is written in Isaiah the prophet." but then instead of quoting Isaiah it quotes Malachi 3:1. The text says that it is a quotation from Isaiah while the footnote indicates Malachi. Confusion!

6. **To Abolish Or Not To Abolish?**—In Matt. 5:17 the NIV has Jesus saying, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law ..." But then in Eph. 2:15 they have Paul declaring that Christ did this very thing. Hear Paul, "For he himself is our peace who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations" (emphasis ours). Why this confusion when the KJV, ASV and the NKJV rendered the two different Greek verbs with two different English words, "destroy" and "abolish." In fact these three translations never translate the Greek term *kata-luo* as abolish. The 267 scholars behind these three translations testify that it does not mean abolish in Matt. 5:17. To say the least, the NIV has unnecessarily involved the scriptures in a conflict.

7. **Jesus Needed Purifying**—In Luke 2:22, the KJV, ASV and the NKJV in reference to Mary, speak of "the days of her purification" in accordance with the law of Moses. The NIV reads, "when the time of their purification according to the law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem ____" (emphasis ours). Did Jesus need purifying? The NIV teaches that he did. If so, how did he come to need purification? Was he born a sinner? We have always been under the impression that Jesus was always sinless. This being true, He never at any time needed purifying. Did the translators just slip up here or did they not regard Him as the sinless Son of God? We may well wonder about this in view of the way they have carelessly and recklessly handled some key passages dealing with Jesus as the "only begotten son of God." In John 1:14 they omit the word "begotten" and render it "one and only" Son. They do the same with John 3:16, omitting again the word "begotten." This is surely without scholarly justifi-

fication since the Greek term "monogenes" clearly means "only begotten." Mono means one or only. The other part of the word, genes means begotten. They chose to give a double translation to the first syllable of the word, "one and only" and then to just skip over the latter syllable in the word altogether. Someone says, "Well what difference, it still conveys the idea that he was the only Son." It is difference in reverencing divine truth and in gradually cutting away at the vitals of things most fundamental and basic. It is doctrinally in error on that very point. And it doesn't take a scholar to see it.

8. **Christ Alone Has Immortality**—In 1 Tim. 6:16, the NIV declares that Christ "alone is immortal." This would mean that there is no other who is immortal. Is not our Heavenly Father immortal? Is he not a Spirit being (John 4:24)? Did not Peter affirm that man has what he called the "hidden man of the heart... which is incorruptible (1 Pet. 3:4—emphasis ours)? The KJV and the ASV translates the passage as follows: "who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man hath seen, nor can see..." This simply affirms that He has nothing mortal about Him—only immortality. This is quite different from saying He alone has immortality. And it is in harmony with the truth taught in context and elsewhere that he is reigning in Heaven, having been raised from the dead to die no more. He has, there-fore, only immortality. Materialists will like the NIV very much. In the Nichols—Bradley Debate, conducted in Rule, TX in 1906, Bradley affirmed that man is wholly mortal. Citing the Twentieth Century New Testament on this point, Bradley said, "This passage plainly says that man is wholly mortal by saying that God alone has immortality. Certainly we now have the proof of my proposition. Job says that man is mortal, and Paul says that God alone has immortality. If this is true of God, man does not have immortality" (pp. 210- 211). The NIV gives aid to the materialist.

More of the materialism in the NIV can be easily seen in reference to Acts 2: 27,31. Their rendering has both the "body" and the "Spirit" of Christ entering the **grave**. When we compare the KJV, ASV and the NKJV we learn that the body went to the grave (Matt. 27:60) while the Spirit was in hades (Luke 23:43).

9. **Sinful Nature**—Attention has already been called to the NIV's rendering of Psa. 51:5, which teaches inherited sin. Naturally, Calvinists have a different vocabulary from the Bible. They speak of man's "Adamic nature", or his "sinful nature." They speak of "inherited sin", or "inherited total depravity." Of course, we know that a thing need not be taught in the Bible for Calvin- ists to teach it. But now, with the NIV rendering of Rom. 8:3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13 as "sinful nature" instead of "flesh", they have a "Bible" from which to teach their doctrine. It suggests that "flesh" (*sarx*) is synonymous with "sinful nature."

Now, do we really have a sinful nature? If yes, did we inherit it from Adam? If we did inherit it from Adam, from whom did Adam inherit it?

The truth is that we are the offspring of God, and there is nothing sinful in and of itself about human

flesh. If there were something sinful in the flesh itself, Jesus was sinful, for he was man (1 Tim. 2:5). When God created Adam and Eve, they surely had all that belonged to human nature, and that before sin entered as a foreign element. "When Adam and Eve were first created they had all that belonged to human nature. Sin came into their lives as a foreign element. Sin is no more a part of our nature than dust in your eyes is a part of the nature of your eye. Because the desires, appetites, and passions of the flesh often lead to sin, flesh is called sinful." (R. L. Whiteside, **A New Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Saints At Rome**, p. 170.) Fleshly desires lead to sin only when gratified in an unlawful manner.

At least the following two scholars connected with the NIV are in agreement with us on the point of the correct rendering of sarx. "The word for **flesh** in the Greek is sarx. In the NIV the word **sarx** is translated flesh only thirty times out of 138 Greek uses. The next most frequent translation of the word is **sinful nature** (twenty five times). But this rendering is more of an interpretation than a translation The safest thing to do is to leave the word with its primary meaning (flesh) and relegate the discussion to the commentary rather than write sinful nature into the text. This is carrying free translation too far." (Lewis Foster, **Selecting a Translation of the Bible**, p. 70, 1978 edition). "The Greek term sarx, usually translated flesh" (Raymond Dillard, **The New Testament Student and Bible Translation**, p. 99).

Additional passages in which the same error is made in the NIV are: Rom. 7:5, 18, 25; Eph. 2:3; 1 Cor. 5:5; Gal. 5:13, 16, 17, 19, 24; 6:8; Col. 2:11, 13; 2 Pet. 2:10, 18.

10. **Premillennialism**—The doctrine of Premillennialism is that Christ will establish his kingdom at his second coming. Nearly every denomination advocates this in some form. The church was plagued with a division over Premillennialism in the 1930's. The Kingdom of Christ was in existence and people were being translated into it in Paul's day (Col. 1:13). It came with power during the lifetime of some of those who walked personally with the Lord on earth (Mark 9:1). It did come with the power and Spirit on Pentecost of Acts 2, in 33 A.D. Christ is now reigning as king and priest upon his throne (Zech. 6:12-13; Heb. 7:17-21). At his second coming, Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Cor. 15:25-26). He will not come to set up his kingdom! There are several passages in which the NIV alters and slants a reading in such a way as to accommodate the theory of Premillennialism. In Acts 3, we have recorded Peter's second sermon preached in Jerusalem. In it, as he did in the first sermon recording in Acts 2, Peter makes known the blessings which are for us in this age. He called upon the people to "repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out,..." (Acts 3:19). He then spoke of Christ, "whom the heavens must receive until the restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). He went on to show that "all the prophets from Samuel and those that followed after, as many as have spoken have likewise foretold of these

days" (v. 24). "These days" identify the "times" and "times" of vs. 18 and 21 with the blessing of this, the gospel dispensation. The whole context bears out this meaning. However, the NIV so renders the passage as to project the fulfillment of "these things" yet into the future. It says that Christ must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets." The expression, "the time comes" implies a future time, not the present dispensation. The "times of restitution of all things" are clearly shown in context to be now in process. Christ will remain in heaven until the completion of these times, or until the completion of "these days." But the NIV implies that he will remain in heaven until such begins. Again in Eph. 1:10 the NIV projects into the future the blessings with God purposed in Christ. Accordingly, the NIV says they are "to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ." We know, of course from various passages that we are now in the fulness of time. It was "in the fulness of time" that God sent His Son into the world (Gal. 4:4).

11. **Still In Miraculous Age**—In Eph. 4:11-13 Paul teaches that there would be certain miraculously endowed men in the church "till we all come in the unity of the faith, . . ." There would no longer be a need for miraculously endowed men when the faith existed as a unit. However, the NIV says that they would last "until we all reach unity in the faith . . ." If you think the brotherhood has been plagued with the charismatic movement, just wait until more NIVs are accepted by brethren!

12. **Perverts The Truth of Acts 26:28**—When Paul spoke before Agrippa in Acts 26, the context shows that Agrippa believed the prophets (v. 27). Jesus said that to believe the prophets was to believe Christ (John 5:46). Agrippa's reply to Paul as shown in the KJV, ASV and the NKJV has Agrippa almost persuaded to be a Christian. However, the NIV has Agrippa ridiculing the idea that in such a short time Paul would think to make him a Christian. "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?"

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Numerous Deletions

We have already pointed out examples of false doctrine taught by the NIV. We did not exhaust the list. This version, even according to Lewis Foster (quoted above) sometimes got into the business of interpreting rather than translating. But, it is also guilty of gross deletions from the text. This is due, in part at least to their use of a faulty Greek text (to be discussed later in this article). Dr. Everett W. Fowler in his book, **Evaluating Versions of the New Testament**, points out that there are 17 complete verses left out of the NIV and 180 portions of other verses omitted. It is also pointed out that it omits "Jesus" 38 times, "Christ" 43 times and "Lord" 35 times.

Space does not permit a complete listing of all the omissions made by the NIV. However, we need to remember the serious consequences of tampering with the word of God (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5-6; Rev. 22:18-19).

We list here just a few of the expressions omitted by the NIV.

1. John 17:21 omits "one" in Jesus' prayer for unity. This destroys the very thought of the prayer. He was praying for **unity**, not just for men to be "in us."

2. Acts 9:6 omits the question of Saul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

3. Mark 13:11 omits "Neither do ye premeditate" which shows the divine guidance of the chosen witnesses of the Lord.

4. Matt. 19:9 omits "and shall marry her which is put away doth commit adultery."

5. Matt. 5:44 omits "bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you."

6. Mark 10:24 omits "them that trust in riches." Riches are not wrong per se. It is the "trusting" in them that is condemned.

7. John 17:17 omits the expression "through thy truth." The expression shows the means of sanctification, which the NIV omits and says, "truly sanctified." That is a significant difference.

Doubts Planted In Footnotes

One of the most notable examples of doubt and deception concerns the last twelve verses of Mark 16. The NIV, while placing these verses at the end of Mark, raises misgivings about them by drawing a line after v. 8 and inserting the comment—"The two most reliable early manuscripts do not have Mark 16:9-20." The two manuscripts referred to are the Vatican and Sinaitic. There is, to put it mildly, considerable dispute concerning the NIV's appraisal that these are the two most reliable manuscripts. We simply point out that these two manuscripts also differ from each other 3,036 times in the gospels alone, and more than 7,000 times throughout the New Testament. When witnesses are in such disagreement, it would indicate something other than being "the most reliable" witnesses, (cf. Herman Koskier, **Codex B and Its Allies**, Vol. II, p. 1).

It is significant that the Vatican manuscript contains the New Testament as far as Heb. 9:14. It does not contain the remainder of Hebrews, the pastoral epistles, Revelation as well as Philemon. Looking for some foot-

note in the NIV concerning these missing books from "one of the oldest and most reliable manuscripts", we find nothing. Why the casting of doubts about the ending of Mark? Especially in view of the fact that the scribe evidently knew of the existence of these verses and left a blank space which would indicate that he was uncertain as to whether they should be inserted there or not. The only question about these verses really is where they are to be placed. Should they be ascribed to Mark, or some other inspired writer? For an excellent treatment of the subject involving these last twelve verses we suggest the book by John W. Burgon, **The Last Twelve Verses Of Mark**.

There can be no denying the fact that such footnoting and commenting does serve to plant doubts concerning what is and is not the word of God. It has been our experience in trying to reason with some who have accepted the NIV, that they are very skeptical about portions of the scriptures being inspired, where they find these footnotes. One young man, quite zealous, but deficient in knowledge and judgement stated frankly that "yes, I would certainly hold doubts about the inspiration of passages when I learn that they are not found in some of the older manuscripts." This is the very point we are making. The NIV plants doubts by repeatedly placing in the footnotes "not found in some manuscripts." In the case of the passage in Mark 16:9-20, the verses are found in several hundred manuscripts and copies. "With the exception of the two uncial MSS. which have just been named (Codex B and Aleph—DVR) there is not one Codex in existence, uncial or cursive,—(and we are acquainted with, at least eighteen other uncials, and about six hundred cursive Copies of this Gospel),—which leaves out the last twelve verses of S. Mark." (John W. Burgon, **ibid**, p. 149).

Another glaring example of sowing distrust and doubt about the word of God is their deletion of Matt. 18:11, with the footnote that there is not enough evidence to include it in the text. The truth is that the verse is "attested to by every known cursive **except three**." (John W. Burgon, **The Revision Revised**, p. 92). But this is not all. A. G. Hobbs cites Robert W. Flanigan as saying that "eight major and fifteen minor manuscripts include this important verse." (Contending for the Faith, March 1983, p. 6). It can be seen that the NIV does not hesitate to relegate to a mere footnote passages which have overwhelming testimony in their favor.

Again in Matt. 18:15 the key words, "against thee" while being retained in the text of the NIV, are footnoted to say "some manuscripts do not have, **against you**." Again this would cast doubts as to whether this instruction involves a sin against one personally or just sin period. Does the verse then teach that any sin one commits, requires the steps outlined there? The NIV leaves one in doubt, if he puts any stock in their so-called translation. J. W. McGarvey suggests that it should be rendered, "if thy brother sin against thee." He further points out that "this rule of procedure is given only for cases of personal offense, where one individual has sinned against another." (**Commentary on Matthew**

and Mark, pp. 158-159).

We mention only one more out of a great number of such omissions and footnoting. Luke 22:43-44, "And there appeared an angel unto him, strengthening him. And being in agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." The NIV has a footnote saying, "Some early manuscripts do not have verses 43 and 44." Well, this makes one wonder if they should be accepted or not.

"Our Lord's agony and bloody sweat; first mentioned by Justin Martyr (A.D. 150), is found **set down in every manuscript in the world except four**. It is duly exhibited by every known Version. It is recognized by upwards of forty famous Fathers writing without concert in remote parts of ancient Christendom. Whether therefore antiquity,—Variety of testimony,—respectability of witnesses,—or Number,—is considered, the evidence in favor of S. Luke xxii. 43, 44 is simply overwhelming." (John W. Burgon, *ibid*, (p. 340).

Surely enough evidence has been presented for the thoughtful reader to be convinced that the NIV is not a trustworthy and accurate translation of the word of God. If you want to strengthen one's faith and confidence in the word of God, do not recommend to him the NIV.

Type of Translation

The type of translating that the scholars behind the NIV did shows that they had a different concept than the men who produced the KJV, ASV and the NKJV. All three of these were intended to be precise and literal translations. These men had a better concept of the job of the translators.

Let us consider what the job of the translator is. (1) Philip Schaff, Chairman of the Committee for the ASV, said, "In one word, the revision is to give, in idiomatic English, the nearest possible equivalent for the original Word of God as it came from the inspired organs of the Holy Spirit" (**Bible Revision**, p. 16). (2) R. C. Trench, scholar and author, stated, "Clearly the office of the translator is to put the reader of the translation on the same vantage-ground of the reader of the original. . . . Inspiration is not limited to the Hebrew and Greek words first communicated to men . . . it lives in whatever words are a faithful representation of these words. . . the translation must be a perfectly reproduced adequate counterpart of the original and the copy. When words fall short of this adequacy . . . when divergence exist between the copy and the original, the copy is less inspired, and to the extent of the divergence it is not inspired at all" (Trench on Bible Revision as quoted by Foy E. Wallace, Jr. in **A Review of the New Versions**, pp. 44-45). (3) Francis R. Steele, one of the scholars associated with the NIV, said, "A translation should convey as much of the original text in as few words as possible, yet preserve the original atmosphere and emphasis. The translator should strive for the nearest approximation in words, concepts, and cadence. He should scrupulously avoid adding words or ideas not demanded by the text. His job is not to expand or to explain, but to translate and preserve the spirit and force of the original—even, if need be, at the expense of

modern colloquialisms—so long as the resultant translation is intelligible" (**The New Testament Student and Bible Translation**, Vol. 4, p. 69).

The NIV is not that kind of translation and doesn't even claim to be. In the Preface of the NIV we read, "At the same time, they have striven for more than a word-for-word translation" (p. viii). The New York International Bible Society, which financially sponsored the translation project, has published a booklet entitled **The Story of The New International Version**. In this booklet we find them describing the different methods of translation. There is "**the concordant** one, which ranges from literalism to the comparative freedom of the King James Version. . . . the **paraphrastic** one, in which the translator restates the gist of the text in his own words; and the method of **equivalence**, in which the translator seeks to understand as fully as possible what the biblical writers had to say . . . and then tries to find its closest equivalent in contemporary usage. In its more advanced form this is spoken of as **dynamic equivalence**, in which the translator seeks to express the meaning as the biblical writers would if they were writing in English today" (p. 13—emphasis ours). Then they tell us what the NIV translators did. "As for the NIV, its method is an eclectic one with the emphasis for the most part on a flexible use of concordance and equivalence, but with a minimum of literalism, paraphrase, or outright dynamic equivalence. In other words, the NIV stands on middle ground—by no means the easiest position to occupy" (p. 13).

Raymond Dillard, one of the scholars behind the NIV, has stated his concept of translation, "It must be recognized, however, that every Bible translation, from the very first word, is interpretation; the mere selection of equivalents in the most literal of all translations is still interpretation" (**The New Testament Student and Bible Translation**, Vol. 4, p. 97). "Yet it is impossible to escape interpretation in translation work" (p. 114). "Interpretation on the part of the preacher and the translator in any event is inescapable" (p. 114). Dillard defends idiomatic (as opposed to literal) translation.

We wrote to the translators and scholars who produced the NIV and asked them some questions about verbal inspiration. In their responses they said some things that reveal a little about their concept of translation. (1) Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. said, "Of course, the fact the Scriptures are verbally inspired does not mean that a 'literal,' word-for-word translation is demanded." (2) Roger Nicole wrote, "When a translation is made, a word for word rendering often does not make a clear sense in the new language, and the translators therefore have an obligation to seek to convey in the new language the precise message expressed in the original. They desire to do this without adding to or detracting from the original contents. Some people feel that the best way of doing this is to attempt to have a text which remains as close to the original wording as is at all manageable, even though this may mean that the translation will be awkward or sometimes obscure. The translators of the NIV wanted whenever possible to reproduce the language of the original Scripture but

desired also in all cases to produce a text that would read fluently in modern American English, such as would be readily understandable by an average high school graduate. Some people feel that in doing so they have moved too far in the direction of paraphrasing rather than translating the Scriptures. Personally I seldom feel that they have fallen into this defect." (3) Mark Hillmer stated, "Every translation is only an approximation. Or, as it is said, 'To read any document in translation is like kissing through a veil.' ___ But every translation tries to—and most do—reproduce the original sense." (4) Thomas E. McComiskey said, "He must decide whether he will adapt the philosophy of dynamic equivalency or whether he will attempt to reflect each word in Hebrew with an equivalent word in English. Either way, the verbal inspiration of the original is not affected."

Let us consider some of the observations that others who have written about the NIV have made about their approach to translation.

1. Jack P. Lewis—"The NIV has attempted to steer a middle course between the excessive literalness of the NASB on the one hand and the excessive paraphrase of Phillips, the NEB and Taylor on the other. Loyalty to the text has been defined in terms of a compromise between the Dynamic Equivalence principle and literalness, rather than in terms of Lightfoot's translation rule which stated, 'the same English words to represent the same Greek words' and 'as far as possible in the same order'" (**The English Bible/From KJV to NIV**, p. 320).

2. Sakae Kubo and Walter Specht—"But must the translator preserve the form of the original to convey the meaning? Those who answer in the affirmative produce what is known as a 'formal' translator. On the contrary, those who maintain that what a translator should do is to grasp the meaning of the original and express that meaning in the natural form of the receptor language produce what is known as a dynamic translation ... The NIV is a middle-of-the-road version in which a high degree of 'formal correspondence' is combined with renderings that are 'dynamically equivalent'" (*So Many Versions?*, p. 259).

3. Iain Murray—"And while the New International Version is distinguished from the RSV and the NEB by the thoroughness of the evangelical commitment of its translators, regretfully it still appears to be the case that the NIV has been influenced by the principle of a 'freer translation' with a consequent lessening of absolute accuracy. G. Duncan Lowe writes: 'The NIV does tend to expand beyond a simple translation into the realm of interpretation, when that is not at all really necessary . . . Although this habit may be innocent and plausible enough as practised in the NIV, the serious student of the English Bible may feel that his mind is being made up for him instead of his being presented with the most faithful mirror of the original text (consonant with good English usage) so that he may draw his own conclusions'" (**The New Testament Student and Bible Translation**, pp. 132-133).

The NIV's approach to translation is that of para-

phrase or commentary. It is not a translation. It doesn't even claim to be!

Based On A Faulty Greek Text

Some of the errors and omissions we have noted can be accounted for on the basis of a faulty Greek text used. While we do not claim to be scholars or experts in the field of textual criticism, we do believe that we can point out some errors in the kind of text that the translators used. To say the least, we can give some quotes from men who are scholars in that field. We realize that reading quotations about the difference in Greek texts is not the most interesting reading. However, we ask the reader to bear with this section of material, for we believe that it contains some things that need to be said. One of the basic differences between translations is the kind of Greek text that the translators used. Much of the discussion that we hear and read today over translations is a textual discussion.

"The Greek text used in translating the New Testament was an eclectic one" (Preface of NIV, p. ix). This is the kind of text that the RSV, NEB and most other modern translations are based upon. "By 'eclectic' they mean in fact free choice among readings" (Wilbur N. Pickering, **The Identity of the New Testament Text**, p. 24). This means that the Greek text they used wasn't based upon the majority of the manuscripts as was the text used for the KJV and the NKJV. Rather, the eclectic text is based in a number of places upon the reading of very few manuscripts. Pickering stated, "It ignores the over 5,000 Greek MSS now extant, . . . Therefore the choice between the variants ultimately depends upon guesswork" (*Ibid*, p. 25).

The Greek text used was a Westcott—Hort (non-byzantine) type of text. "Basically, the Westcott—Hort text represented a wholesale rejection of mass authorities and an acknowledged dependence on the Sinaitic and Vatican Manuscripts, particularly the Vatican" (Neil R. Lightfoot, **How We Got The Bible**, p. 63). These two manuscripts are supposed to be the oldest of the extant manuscripts. It is assumed that oldest means they are the best, but "oldest and best do not necessarily go hand in hand" (David Otis Fuller, **Which Bible?**, p. 2). Speaking of these two MSS, John W. Burgon said, As for the origin of these two curiosities, it can perforce only be divined from their contents. That they exhibit fabricated Texts is demonstrable. No amount of honest **copying**,—persevered in for any number of centuries,— could by possibility have resulted in two such documents. Separated from one another in actual date by 50, perhaps by 100 years, they must needs have branched off from a common ancestor, and straightway become exposed continuously to fresh depraving influences" (**Revision Revised**, p. 318). Edward F. Hills, who wrote the introduction to Dean Burgon's **The Last Twelve Verses of Mark**, said, "Thus the fact that **B** and **Aleph** (the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts—DVR) are so old is a point against them, not something in their favor. It shows that the Church rejected them and did not read them" (p. 23). A number of witnesses could be given that suggest

that the Westcott—Hort type of text is not an accurate test. (1) The Trinitarian Bible Society, 217 Kingston Road, London SW19 3NN, England (an organization of conservative Bible scholars whose efforts go back to the early 1800's with the stated purpose of giving the widest possible circulation of the inspired word of God) said of the NIV, "The text underlying the NIV is not the best documented text, for in many passages, it has the support of only a small minority of manuscripts." (2) The 119 scholars and editors of the NKJV stated that one reason that they chose the Textus Receptus is that "The tendency of recent revisers has been to remove words and phrases from the text of the scripture, based on critical studies of the most recently discovered extant manuscripts" (History of the King James Bible—found in back of the NKJV). (3) Dr. Frank Logsdon (who wrote the preface of the NASV—which was based on the same type of text) saw the errors of this type of Greek text and repented saying, "The NIV is not now the true word of God, and it will never be regardless of the revisions it undergoes as long as it is based on faulty and inaccurate manuscripts" (as quoted by A. G. Hobbs, **Contending for the Faith**, Oct. 1982, p. 4).

The differences between the Westcott—Hort type of text and the Majority text (Textus Receptus) are not minor and insignificant. They are serious. The differences in many passages concern statements that have to do with the Deity of Christ. One prime example of this is 1 Tim. 3:16 where "God" was changed to "He." More than just minor omissions will be found in the Westcott—Hort type of text. Nestles text omits 31 whole verses and 191 portions of verses. The Bible Society text omits 17 entire verses and 185 parts of verses.

"This is not to blindly endorse the Received Text in the event that it does contain error. But I do suggest that the Westcott and Hort Text contains far more erroneous renderings than does the Textus Receptus" (Luther W. Martin, **Truth Magazine**, Vol. XXIV, p. 293).

"All Versions Have Weaknesses"

Defenders of the modern versions are heard to say, "no version is without flaws or weaknesses. There is no inspired translation." This is readily granted. The question however, is whether the shortcomings and weaknesses are of the same kind in all the versions. We believe that fairness and honesty in addressing this question, will reveal that there are vast differences in the type of weaknesses found in the KJV and ASV with those found in the NIV, RSV, LBP, NEB, and other modern speech translations. Now, bear in mind that it is not the "modern speech" that is objected to. It is the false doctrine which is often taught by the modern speech versions.

We believe that the advice given in the Open Forum at Florida College, Feb., 1984, by brethren Clinton Hamilton and Melvin Curry is good concerning modern versions. Bro. Hamilton advised, "Always read either the King James or American Standard so you know what was in the original text. Pick up these others for any elaboration or understanding you may get. But don't use them as the basic text from which you under-

stand the will of God." Bro. Curry's advice was "don't mess with" the modern translators that "jimmy with the text and don't tell you what they are doing."

Below you will find outlined in chart some of the basic differences between the KJV, ASV and the NIV. We simply ask that you consider them and honestly ask yourself the question, "are these shortcomings all of the same type?"

An Appeal

1. **To all Christians**—We appeal to all Christians to study the matters of translations. Be careful in choosing a translation. Don't use the NIV or any other pseudo-version as your main study Bible. Use either the KJV (1611), the ASV (1901) or the NKJV (1982).

2. **To preachers**—We appeal to every man who claims to be a gospel preacher to carefully study the translation issues. Warn brethren about the dangers of using such perversions. Take this material, outline it and preach it. Brethren, we have a responsibility to refute the error taught in the translations just as we do to refute error taught in the creeds of men.

3. **To elders**—We appeal to elders to take note of the translations the members of the church are using. Elders need to watch what the flock is consuming. "What one does privately is his own business, but what is done in the services of the church is the responsibility of its elders, and God will not hold us guiltless who permit and tolerate the pseudo-versions as a source of incipient error" (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., **A Review of The New Versions**, p. 222).

We would that all elders would see the New International Version for what it really is—a real threat to the church of our Lord!

4. **To bookstore dealers**—We appeal to those who operate bookstores among brethren to be very careful about what Bibles and translations they recommend to their customers. We would grant that any bookstore has the right to sell the NIV and any other version available just like they have a right to sell the Book of Mormon and the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. However it is another matter when brethren who sell these translations recommend the NIV to other brethren or for churches to put them in their pews. These brethren likewise have a right to sell the Reader's Digest Condensed Bible, but quite frankly we would become mighty concerned if these brethren began to recommend it for individuals and churches to use.

Is It Nothing To You?

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by" (Lam. 1:12)? Brethren, does all of this mean nothing to you? Are you not bothered to see the word of God mutilated—perverted and mistranslated. Does that not upset you a little bit? Not only are we bothered by this, but we are bothered no little when we see brethren who are not bothered at such perversion.

Let us all continue to be set for the defense of the gospel (Phil. 1:17).

"All Versions Have Shortcomings"

(SAY DEFENDERS OF MODERN VERSIONS)

QUESTION: ARE THE "SHORTCOMINGS" ALL OF THE SAME TYPE ?

KJV - ASV



Modern Sp. Ver.

"TOO MECHANICALLY EXACT"

"LITERAL WORD FOR WORD TRANSLATION"

"FOLLOWS THE ORDER OF GREEK WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE"

SOME ARCHAIC WORDS

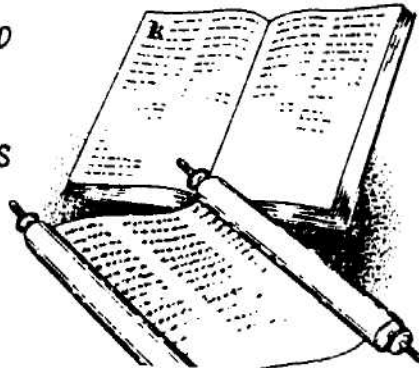
SPELLING

SYNTAX

VERB TENSE - (Which often is readily determined in context.)

"BORN OF GOD" WHERE "BEGOTTEN" IS MORE TECHNICALLY CORRECT.

"EASTER" FOR "PASSOVER"



RANK FALSE DOCTRINE

"SINFUL NATURE IN MAN"

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

BABIES ARE SINNERS

"FAITH ONLY" SALVATION

PREMILLENNIALISM

DENIAL OF DEITY

ERROR ON BAPTISM

DENIAL OF VIRGIN BIRTH

LORD'S SUPPER - SATURDAY

CHURCH BUILT ON PETER

JESUS NEEDED PURIFYING

CHRIST DID NOT COME TO ABOLISH THE LAW

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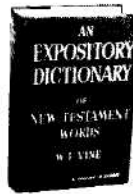
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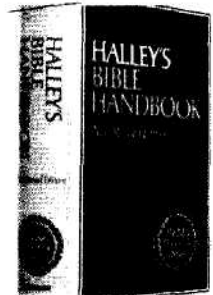
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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

Send all News Items to: *Connie W. Adams, P.O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109*

THAYER STREET LECTURES

ELDERS, Church of Christ, 640 Thayer Street, Akron, Ohio 44310—We have set Sept. 17-20 for our fall lecture program. We invite you to arrange your schedule so as to be present with us during this period. Subjects and speakers follow: Difficult Passages—discussed by Lewis Willis, Aubrey Belue and Bill Feist; Religions of the World—Islam— Hiram Hutto; Situations Christians Face—Dale Smelser; Mountains of the Bible—J. B. Patton, Rick Hubartt, John Gibson. Morris Norman will speak each night (Mon., Tues. and Thurs.) on Worldliness. Congregational singing nightly led by Wayne Walker.

CHECK IT OUT!

P. J. CASEBOLT, 2803 4th St., Moundsville, WV 26041—A more complete report of my 1984 trip to the Philippines will appear under another heading, but many (like myself), sometimes read the News Column first. There are still many Filipino preachers worthy of support, and needing support, but a word of caution is in order. Just because you receive a letter from some Filipino preacher stating that he has attended a certain meeting conducted by an American preacher, or has had his picture taken with an American preacher, don't jump to the conclusion that the American preacher automati-

cally endorses that brother for support. *Check it out* before you act. Also, as I have emphasized before, be cautious about sending large lump sums at one time, and register your letter. I would advise folding your check in the letter, or stapling the check to the letter. A separate letter may even be wise in some cases, giving the number and amount of the check, and asking for a confirmation of its receipt. A little extra expense or inconvenience may be worth it, when protecting a larger investment.

JAMES H. DEASON, 1200 Nashville Hwy., Columbia, TN 38401—In the last three years the Jackson Heights church has seen 52 bap-tized into Christ and 41 have repented of sins and been restored to their first love. Considering those who have moved away, passed away and fallen away, this still reflects an attendance increase of about 40. We presently average around 270 on Sunday mornings. Three good men serve as elders. They are: Rufus Clifford, Jr., Reedy Nicholson and Myron Thomas. We are also served by eight deacons. The work of these men has produced the fruit of an active, thriving congregation living at peace as we work to spread the gospel. In this time I have engaged in two debates and moderated for two more. I am to meet Jerry Hayes, a Oneness Pentecostal, in Nashville (July 16-20) on the subject of Godhead. These debates have accomplished good in the community and among brethren. The church here conducts a daily call-in radio program, an active program of home Bible studies, a gospel meeting and a vacation Bible school each year, as well as a planned program of Bible study for our members. We mail a monthly eight-page bulletin called SEARCH to all who want it. All of this keeps us busy. If you are in our area, come by and visit with us. Our building is easily and conveniently located off I-65 about 40 miles south of Nashville.

NEW CONGREGATION

TOLEDO BEND, LOUISIANA—A new congregation began here three years ago with one family. Now we have an average attendance of 20 on Lord's day. Since this is a vacation resort area, our attendance is larger during vacation times. We have moved our meeting place out on the highway and growth potential looks promising. We are 200 yards south of the intersection of Highway 6 West and Highway 191 South, 12 miles west of Many, Louisiana. If you know someone in this area we may contact please let us know. Contact Andrew A. Addison, 2743 Nolan Trace, Leesville, LA 71446. Phone (318) 239-3005.

ROGER HILLIS, R.R. 4, Olney, Illinois 62450—Several months ago the Olney church began a weekly newspaper column in the Olney Daily Mail. The response has been extremely good. Two couples from the Olney church, at their own expense, decided to print the articles in the nearby Sumner, IL weekly newspaper. The response there was even greater. The articles were in question and answer format and dealt with such questions as: Is it right for women to be preachers? Are the 10 Commandments still binding today? What about tithing? What about calling preachers "Reverend"? Why do the wicked pros-

per?

Due to the public response in Sumner, the elders of the church in Olney decided to rent the local Rotarian club building, announcements were put in the newspaper and over 100 personal letters were written to area residents. Then the Saturday before the meeting, members from Olney went door to door handing out printed announcements. I did the preaching and the meeting ran for three days. Sermon topics were: What is our Religious Standard?, Two Great Covenants, and The Bible Basis for Unity. In addition to members who came from Olney, we had 24 visitors, all of whom have been contacted since the meeting. Some were not interested in home Bible studies but others have shown greater interest and we are still working with them. We continue to pray that the seed sown will produce fruit.

FROM OTHER LANDS

RODY C. GUMPAD, Tanza, Tuguegarao, Cagayan 1101. Philippines—I am happy to inform you of our meeting May 23-27 in which Diosdado P. Menor of Calapan, Mindoro preached. Though he is an elderly man, his work was effective among us. 23 precious souls obeyed the gospel. We hope to have him here with us again in August. Brother Gady Castres led singing. He knows well the rules of music and taught us in the mornings how to sing better. We learned much from him. Two of the 23 baptized were preachers, one from a Pentecostal Church and one from a Christian Church. Some of these baptized are from different municipalities and they are inviting us to come to their places to preach the gospel.

RAY VOTAW, Box 801, Springs 1560, Republic of South Africa—Among the Pedi people one custom is to consider all young people as not accountable until marriage. This works havoc in teaching young people the truth that they might early in life become Christians. During April I began a series of lessons among them on the "states of man" in time and eternity. As I expected, questions came thick and fast in talking about the transition from innocence to accountability. After many rather heated sessions the "penny finally dropped." Since that time there have been about 20 baptisms of older teenagers among these people. They are relishing this new found truth and the young people have achieved very needed elevated status—real people.

A recent sortie into northern Lebowa resulted in 18 baptisms. Since that has been a liberal stronghold, the news spread on the bush telegraph that the "Chief of Anti-Christ's" was coming. This dubious notoriety brought good crowds from several villages which had been dominated by the liberals — Five family men from the local township of Natalspuit were baptized. Brethren Cass and Lovell of Natal and Leslie Maydell of Pretoria aided in this effort.

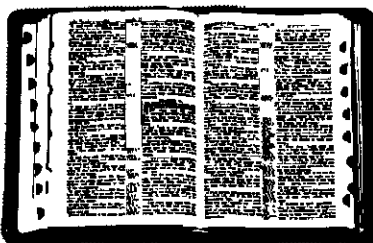
IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	278
RESTORATIONS	91

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor;

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 XXV

SEPTEMBER, 1984

NUMBER 9

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



EYES TO SEE AND EARS TO HEAR BUT NOT UNDERSTAND!

"I cannot understand why people do not accept baptism as a condition for the remission of sins; it is so plainly taught in the scriptures."

This statement has been made many times in reference to those who have heard the gospel, but do not understand that they must be buried in water for the remission of their sins before they can claim salvation. They say they do not "see" it that way and it seems to prove that whatever one honestly "sees" is all right in the religious and moral realms. Friend, it is simply a matter of not seeing and hearing even though we have eyes with which to see and ears with which to hear. The truth is there whether we see it or not, it does not change because of our attitude toward it.

The mind is a great mystery. It is far too complicated for man to unravel all its mysteries and to try to explain all its complex operations. Two aspects of the mind are important at this point: the nature and need for CONVICTION, and the reason for and importance of ATTITUDE. Conviction and attitude go together and they are both dependent upon SEEING and HEARING for understanding and changes, good or bad.

Jesus spoke of the heart and its function in Matthew 13:13-15: "... because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's

heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Isaiah spoke of the people of Israel and said, "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (Isaiah 6:10). Even though Jesus did many miracles, yet the Jews did not believe on him, and John referred to this passage in Isaiah and applied it to them (John 12:39,40). They had the revelation but did not accept it. Paul also referred to this prophecy in Isaiah when he spoke by the Spirit to the chief Jews in Rome, of whom some believed and some believed not (Acts 28:24-27).

The eyes can only see what is there to see, and the ears can only hear what is spoken. Some see not and hear not because no revelation was given to them. Jesus said, "many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them" (Matthew 13:17). These prophets and righteous men did not see because God had not given it to them. But the Jews had been given testimony and proof of the divine nature of Christ and they would not see it.

Notice that the Lord said he would heal those who would be CONVERTED. In order for one to be converted, he must UNDERSTAND with the heart. No man can be healed (saved from his sins) unless he is converted (changed), and no man can be converted unless he understands with his heart (believes). But the passage also teaches that in order for one to understand with the heart, he must HEAR with the ears and SEE with the eyes. This is his way of perceiving truth which enables him to believe and repent. One closes his eyes and stops his ears when he refuses to receive the testimony of truth into his heart.

Why Some Do Not See Truth

Some cannot see the truth because they cannot see the "self-problem" that blinds them to the truth. Jesus taught a lesson about various kinds of people who are

lost. He said a son obtained his portion of the inheritance from his father and went into a far country. There he wasted his substance in riotous living until he found himself in dire want and none would give to him. "And when he came to himself . . ." Not until he "came to himself" did he "see" his real condition in life, the fact and nature of his sin, his real need, and what he should do about it. No doubt others could have seen this in him, but he could not "see" it! That is the sad predicament of those so enmeshed in their corrupt manner of life that they cannot and will not SEE their "self-problem" and therefore they will listen to nothing that relates to it.

But some never see their own need **because of their hate for another**. Hate is a condition of the heart which blinds the individual. Hate is a self-imposed imprisonment of the person because he cannot control the mind and life of the one whom he hates, of whom he is envious and jealous. The word of God plainly teaches the sinfulness of hating, and tells us to even love our enemies and not hate them (Matthew 6:43, 44). 1 John 3:15 says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (4:20).

Hate is one of the greatest curses to the human spirit, a scourge to the mental and emotional man. It is the absence of love; the very opposite of God. Attached to it are feelings of guilt and shame. It impairs reason and judgment and brings words and deeds of iniquity. Hate enslaves the person who possesses it. It robs one of a contented and peaceful life here and eternal life after death.

The Jews hated Jesus with such a passion that they did not realize how much of their own laws they transgressed in trying to eliminate him from the earth. The elder son in the lesson of Luke 15:25-32 so hated his brother and his father that he would not hear what the servants said about his brother coming home, nor his father's appeal to him. He never even looked at his own life and the blessings he had. He only saw the object of his hate and what he saw he perverted to feed his hate to a greater intensity. How sad and miserable are the lives of those who cannot see the truth of any proposition because of their hate.

The riches and the cares of this world have so occupied the lives and hearts of millions that they will never "see" the truth about their own weakness and their own needs in this life. Many cannot see because of the narrow channel they have given for free investigation.

Jesus taught that some will hear the word of God, but "the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Matthew 13:22). Their present problems with this world blind them to the true riches and blessings in the Lord. Love for money is the cause of many evils. Those who "will be rich" fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition (1 Timothy 6:9, 19). (Continued on Page

4)

Searching The Scriptures

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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"AND SET THE TABLE WITH LOVE"

I used to sing an old country song called "Po' Folks" in which there was a line about what we did when times were hard and we would "pull up our chairs and set the table with love." As I write this I am on the back porch at the old home place in Chesterfield County, Virginia where I grew up. I was four years old when we moved here forty-nine years ago. The woods between the house and the Appomattox River have been stripped by a timber company but the memories of a boy who rambled and played there are forever vivid.

The house started out as a small four room structure built of rough lumber by my father and his brother. Near the beginning of World War II it was widened and a second floor added making it a good-sized farm house. My earliest recollections here were during hard times for our country. My father lost his job and by sheer determination and back-breaking toil, coupled with an economy in management which defies understanding, kept us warmed and fed.

A grand American institution was celebrated here every day. It was called "supper time." We all sat down together, thanked God for our blessings, ate whatever we had without complaining, and then the best time of all came. We sat there and talked as a family. Well, the children mostly listened to accounts of events at work that day, or something related to the church and its work, or some humorous incident from my father, or mother, or grandmother. It was around the supper table that the reasons were explained as to why we needed to leave the Christian Church and take our stand with a small band of others who had agonized over the creeping liberalism of that denomination. Those family talks were serious and made deep impressions upon my eleven year old mind. I think it was there that I learned what I have preached many times about the importance of walking in the old paths and speaking as the oracles of God. It was at the supper table that I was impressed with the simple truth that it is better to be right with God than popular with others.

It is a mistake to live in the past. But in our quest for progress there are some things we have sacrificed at a heavy price. Working mothers, houses with a television set in every bedroom and the living room or den, the separate pursuits of each family member—these and more, have destroyed the family "supper time." We did not have the finest china, crystal or silverware. The food

would not have made the menu in some fashionable dinner house, but at this house in what was then the backwoods of southeastern Virginia, we "set the table with love."

The love which radiated in this place touched not only my life and that of my brother Wiley, sister Glenda, grandmother, and aunt Beulah, but expanded after the children all left to include a long succession of troubled children and young people who came here as foster children. The first two were sisters, the younger 6 and the older 9. They came with all their earthly possessions in a paper sack. The older one remained here until she was 15. The younger one lived here until she finished high school, worked for awhile in Hopewell and then married at the age of 23. Others stayed for shorter times, but they all want to come back to see "Grandma and Grandpa" as they call my parents. Two days ago, one of them came and brought a friend. She wanted to go upstairs where her room had been. She recounted to her friend things she remembered about this place.

Yesterday a car pulled in the yard and a young woman came bounding to the back porch. Her name is Lisa and she came here when she was four and stayed three years until her parents got back together. She has stayed in touch through the years. She also wanted to go all through the house and stir up memories. She brought with her, her own child to introduce to "Grandma and Grandpa." It was a touching sight to see her sit down on the floor, Indian style, in front of my mother, hold her hand, stare deeply into her face and tell her about her life in California. She recalled things she remembered, asked about pets long since dead, fretted because the woods were gone behind the house, reminisced about playing around the well covering and in the garage. Before she left she said "Grandma, I still remember a lot of the things you taught me."

Yesterday I read a thank you letter from another one of those who came here when there was nowhere else to go and found the same love. He comes often to check on "Grandma and Grandpa" and see if he can do something for them. His letter was touching. It made me cry.

I do not even know how many have lived in this house at one time or another and who have shared that table with love. But they came here sad, confused, lonely, frightened and some angry. Here they learned discipline, responsibility, trust and love. They learned about the Lord and his love. They were treated as a part of a family. And they all want to come back to see and touch things which helped them make some sense out of shattered hopes and dreams.

In contrast, please read the interview which Ken Green had on his television program in Huntsville, Alabama recently with Jack Holt, who was reared at Childhaven in Cullman, Alabama. The issue of church support for private institutions ought to be settled on scriptural grounds. More often than not, the argument has been slanted more to the emotion than to reason. But I have never thought we should allow erring brethren the luxury of assuming that the emotional argument is all theirs. It is not. I believe I can touch the hearts of people more deeply about the plight of the

homeless than any advocate of institutional care ever thought of doing. Indeed, "God setteth the solitary in families" (Psa. 68:6). All who have passed through these doors at 2501 Bermuda Ave, Chester, Virginia have one thing in common. We all sat at the same table at supper time. And it was always "set with love." Whatever happens to us, nothing can change that.

● *****

● **EVELYN PUCKETT AT REST**

We have just received word that Evelyn Puckett, beloved widow of the late and lamented Franklin T. Puckett, has changed worlds after a long and painful struggle with cancer. Funeral services were conducted July 30 in Florence, Alabama. She was a model of all that a wife, mother and godly woman should be. The Pucketts touched many lives for good over their lifetime, including this editor and wife. She was lovingly cared for by her daughter, Editha, and her husband, Olin Kern, faithful gospel preacher of Sheffield, Alabama. She will be greatly missed, though we all rejoice that she is now at rest. Our loving sympathy to all the family.

(Continued from Page 2)

Jesus spoke a parable about a certain rich man who prospered greatly. He took great care to provide for his wealth, and then said to himself: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." (Luke 12:19). This is precisely what millions are now doing. They are blinded to the real values of life. They do not see the problems that really count. They ignore the opportunities that come once in a lifetime. All this because they are blinded by their riches or the desire to be rich in this world.

But God said to this rich man: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Luke 12:20). Nothing will blind one so quickly and so completely as the wealth that one must consider dividing or giving up to be right with God and man. No blindfold is so black as that moral restraint and scriptural restriction to an action or word that would bring wealth to the covetous person. Prostitution, gambling, robbery, and sale of dope and alcohol all continue on the increase by those who are absolutely blinded to the physical, moral and spiritual destruction done to the human race. How do we account for it? The explanation is the love of money blinds men to the truth. They can see but they will not see.

Many get so **involved in the affairs of others** and develop such an unnatural concern for their business that they become blind to the consequences of their own course. The process becomes worse by the fact that such involvement is almost always uninvited and unwanted, and when time comes to try to back out of it or become divorced from the situation, they can never see

their own mistakes and will not see and hear the facts of the situation. Whatever is said is always applied in the wrong way.

Christ appeared to Peter and John, with some other apostles, the third time after his resurrection, and ate with them. He asked Peter three times if he loved him, and then as he told Peter by what manner of death he would glorify God, Peter was so concerned with the matter of what would happen to John that he seemed to be little impressed by what would happen to him. Peter asked, "And what shall this man do?"

The Lord told him it was none of his business: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me" (John 21:18:22).

Hardness and Prejudice Make One Blind

Hardness of heart is a condition that blinds the mind because it will not allow information, true or false, to come into the heart. A hard heart may be produced by a number of things, but usually it is the result of continuing in sin even though the sin is known. "Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness" (Hebrews 3:8). "But exhort one another daily, While it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13).

Prejudice is a sickness of the heart that causes blindness, and is very difficult to overcome. Prejudice is that condition that determines a conclusion before and without all the evidence. It is a belief or disbelief based upon bias and opinion and not supported by all the facts, sometimes none of the facts. It closes the eyes that could see, but will not, and closes the ears that can hear, but will not. One will never be fair judge of his own course in life. He can never render justice, mercy and love to another, and he will never be able to work the righteousness of God because he will be ignorant of it. He will be blinded by his prejudice.

It is important to each of us to use our eyes and ears to see and hear what the Lord has made known to us if we expect to be blessed by Him. We must be informed with regard to the facts in the lives of others if we are to deal with them as the Lord teaches us to do. We must be willing to see ourselves as we really are if we are to be able to correct our lives so that we can go to heaven when time is no more for us. May God help us to do so.

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THE CHILDHAVEN AFFAIR

The Huntsville Times, Friday, April 20, 1984 reported: "A Cullman County (Alabama) grand jury indicted three people after an investigation into complaints of child abuse at the Childhaven Child Home, a Church of Christ facility.

"Two Cullman men were arrested Thursday on the indictments, 55-year-old J. D. Alexander on charges of second-degree sodomy, and 27-year-old John Symonds on charges of child abuse." (The third person was not identified in this release.)

"The grand jury acted after the Department of Pen-sions and Security investigated complaints of harsh and humiliating punishment by staff members of the home.

"Seven employees were fired after the department probe. Its child home licensing supervisor, Virginia Gorman, said then that the agency was satisfied with the home's corrective action."

Apparently the grand jury was not satisfied, how-ever, for the article goes on to report:

"But in its report the grand jury recommended that all cottage parents, social workers and top administra-tive people be replaced within 90 days.

"The report also recommended that children in the home have access to social workers; be allowed to at-tend outside activities, school activities and the church of their choice, and that siblings of the same sex be housed together.

"Harris said the grand jury recommended that if the changes aren't made within 90 days, the home should lose its license.

"Director Marlin Howard of the home could not be reached for comment."

News releases within the past few days (6-11-84) have revealed that Alexander pleaded guilty to the charge of second-degree sodomy and was sentenced to seven years in prison. The other indictments were dismissed by the judge because "s" was left off the end of the names of the defendants. Those cases have been returned to the grand jury. The indictments involved child abuse and torture.

When I read this report, I recalled an article that had been written by Jack Holt, Jr. (no relation to another gospel preacher by the same name) which appeared in The Gospel Anchor, October, 1983. Brother Holt had described under the title, "Victims of Institutionalism",

some of the experiences he had gone through in the ten years he spent at Childhaven. I called Brother Holt at his home in Corpus Christi, Texas where he now lives and preaches and asked him if he would consent to an interview via long distance on our call-in telecast in Huntsville. He graciously consented.

With his permission I have transcribed the interview and Brother Adams has kindly agreed to publish it. I believe the readers will be shocked, yet benefited by this material:

Ken: Jack, can you hear me okay?

Jack: Yes, I can.

Ken: Tell, us something about yourself and your association with the Childhaven Orphan's Home.

Jack: I spent ten years at Childhaven between 1963 and 1972. I think the very first thing that I would say in relationship to the charges that are being brought up is that the problems at Childhaven are nothing new. They have been going on since the time that I was there. So little children have been facing this kind of abuse, both mental and physical abuse, for all of these years at Childhaven. So I think this is important to point out and to remember. In relationship to my personal experiences at Childhaven, I can testify to personal cases of physical abuse and what I would now term mental abuse as well. I think the physical and mental abuse, not only of myself but of my brothers and sisters and others that I have kept track of since I left Childhaven, has continued to bear many bad fruits in our lives after we left Childhaven. I have suffered severe bouts of depression which I believe are related to my years at Childhaven. Beyond that, because of the situation of group living or group, institutional care, it's very hard to teach children how to have a proper perspective of what family life is. Therefore, in forming my own family, this has presented a great deal of problems to me in that area. I think basically what I would say is that abuse of this kind is certainly a very real possibility in these types of homes and more and more we're seeing the civil government as they move away from this type of care to what they consider to be better types of care, such as the foster home. While, of course, there's still the danger of this kind of abuse happening, it happens much less frequently in those kinds of arrangements for caring for children.

Ken: Okay, an argument is often made that the orphan home is simply the home restored. Here is a child who has lost his home and this institution is the home restored and that the church has as great an obligation of supporting that institution, the home restored, as it has to support a destitute family who are members of the church. I infer, from what you said, that you wouldn't quite go along with this concept of the institution being the home restored.

Jack: No sir. It restores, perhaps we might say, the

physical aspects of life. It can adequately provide food and clothing, but in no way can it substitute for the personal attention that a mother and father or a family situation can provide. When you're caring for a mass amount of children, you have a situation that is tantamount, perhaps comparable rather to the military situation, where a great deal of regimentation, a great deal of that sort of an attitude has to prevail just for order to be maintained, and therefore, there's a lack of emotional support that young children need; the personal attention that they need; the family closeness that they need; all of these things are missing from the institutional scene.

Ken: Now, you say you spent ten years at Childhaven Orphan's Home. Were you in any other institutional homes or foster homes?

Jack: No, I was not.

Ken: You had brothers and sisters who were also there. How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Jack: I had one sister and two brothers who were at the home at the same time I was. I left a year earlier than they did. They were there during the time that I was there and, of course, I can see just from what they have told me that they had experienced many of the same things I did. I think one of the sad things about institutional care is that even when they take a family group, such as my own (they took all of us together into the institution) it has been thought wise by the institutions to separate family units like this and put the children in these family units into different cottages. And therefore, one finds himself in the predicament of growing up with brothers and sisters, being able to see them from afar, but having no personal relationship with them. And I think that this is a tragic failing of the orphan home system for caring.

Ken: How did you wind up there at Childhaven? What was the family situation? Perhaps the tragedy that caused you and your brothers and sisters to be placed into the home? Jack: This is something interesting. It's really a mis-term to call these homes orphan homes in the first place. From my own personal experience, I only knew one, what I would call a true orphan. That is a person whose parents had died or that type of situation. In my case, my father was an alcoholic and he beat my mother and they ended up having a divorce and our grandparents gained custody of the children. The divorce process and the beatings my mother took from my father caused her to have a mental break-down. And while in the care of my grandparents, my grandfather died and my grandmother was left unable to support us on her own. She was a member of a large liberal group there in the Muscle Shoals area. Apparently their thinking was that in order to care for orphans they

should be placed into the institutional type setting and that is where we ended up.

Ken: Ok. You mentioned a moment ago having observed abuse and I think you experienced abuse, could you be a bit more specific as far as the kind of abuse you observed and experienced?

Jack: Well, the major abuse that I experienced myself was simply beatings. Now of course, we believe strongly in discipline. But I'm talking about, for example, a razor strap being applied to one's back and buttocks approximately 130 times on occasions. I can remember mornings, for example, when I woke up in the morning, and the oozing from my wounds from the strap on my back and buttocks stuck to the sheet. It's kind of equal to pulling a band-aid off of a fresh wound, getting out of bed in the morning after being beaten like that. The beatings generally were held in the cottage public area. And on many occasions we were assembled to witness them. I suppose there is a warning mechanism to keep us in line so to speak. And so this was the most common type of abuse. Children being forced to do things which were against their will, beyond the normal things that parents need to have their children do: Standing in places and spots for hours at a time and punishment that involved physical labor for 14 to 16 hours a day and these types of things also were involved.

Ken: Was this type of abuse something that all of those connected with the Homes were knowledgeable of, or was it only a few of those in authority administering this extreme punishment to the children?

Jack: No. In my case I can just simply say that our house-parents would usually, in a case that they felt like merited severe discipline, contact the superintendent who would then administer the discipline himself, or would oversee the case and have the house-parents administer the discipline, depending on what he thought was wise. No, it was like I said. They gathered us many times in common areas so that this discipline could be witnessed, and many times there was 4 or 5 members of the staff present. I think it was a well-known thing among all members of the staff.

Ken: We often hear these institutions referred to as non-profit, which they are from a legal standpoint. And yet all of them that I have known anything about own vast quantities of land and farms. They receive contributions, not only from churches, but also from state and federal government. They receive annuities and contributions from individuals as well as large amounts of inheritance from people. How non-profit are they in your view?

Jack: Well, of course I was rather young while I was at the home and not as aware of the dealings of

the world financially. We were not trained very well as far as financial aspects. Looking back, I do remember Childhaven had vast holdings of land in Cullman County. We had a tremendous amount of forest area and pasture land and this sort of thing. Of course, all I can say otherwise is that I have heard rumors that their holdings exceed the 5 million dollar level in just real estate alone. I don't know how to substantiate that. That is just what was told to me when I inquired one time about it. But, I think that for the level of care that we received in the home there would be a question in my mind as to where some of those funds went. As for our care, we were provided with food and clothing and the necessities, but there certainly were never the frills that seemed to justify the amount of money, or to balance with the amount of money coming in. But as I say, I was young at that time and as far as being able to discern where money went at specific times I couldn't say.

Ken: Yes, we understand that. This article that we just read pointed out that not only was there physical abuse in the most recent charges, but also one man was indicted on second degree charges of sodomy. So this would indicate that sexual abuse was taking place. This kind of thing has been in the news quite often here lately, in regard to some of the preschool nurseries in California and Minneapolis. Did you also observe this kind of abuse taking place when you were in Childhaven?

Jack: Well, as far as on myself, I was never sexually abused by a member of the administration. My sister was, and that was substantiated before she left. And several of the individuals at the home while I was there talked among each other and there were always the persistent rumors that the administration was involved. Homosexuality at the home, I can verify, was a very serious problem. The moral atmosphere among the children was not very good and I would just hasten to say that I think that is a result of the fact that when children were not given the proper kind of love they should receive from the family, in their own immature way they turned to each other seeking something they had never known. It is unfortunate that in some cases, that this turned into an immoral type of activity. One thing that I might point out to your audience, perhaps they don't know the difference between first and second degree sodomy. First degree sodomy would involve sodomy between an individual 16 years or older with an individual 12 years and under. While second degree sodomy involves relations between an individual 16 years or older with someone between the ages 12 and 16.

Ken: I didn't know that either, so that is some interesting information. Jack, did you have no re-

course whatsoever as a young boy there at Childhaven. Was there no one you could go to and talk to about your situation? How did you cope with this problem?

Jack: Well, the sad thing about this was that we were just simply not believed. It was not that the children did not speak out, even though we were certainly fearful of punishment that would come as a result of speaking out. I myself, upon occasion, spoke to visiting relatives about it and just simply was not believed. They had no idea that "Christians" would do such a thing. Another interesting event that occurred to me on one occasion: I was dressing out for gym at school and it was not too long after I had received a very severe beating. The gym coach noticed the bruises and welts on my body and called me in and asked me about them, and got angry about them. And then just a few days later he came to me and apologized and said that he had tried to do something and that he had just simply been blocked. He could do nothing, and he wished that he could. And so I would urge people to listen to their young people. Certainly some young people may fabricate stories. But at least investigate them. Look into them, because sometimes young people do tell the truth.

Ken: When you left the institution did the institution leave you? Were you able to cope after you left the institution?

Jack: Well, it was a long and hard trail to cope with. For about five years after I left the institution, my life was in a turmoil, trying to deal with the emotional and mental scars that were left from the institution. As I mentioned earlier in the program I had severe problems in the past dealing with depression. I think in the past three years I have overcome that problem in my life. But there were also problems when I began my own family unit, just simply knowing how to give affection, appreciation, love to my wife and, in turn, to my children. Having no training in a real family situation, it has been an eye-opener to learn that children can be happy in their youth, and can grow up without abuse, and still be disciplined properly.

Ken: What about others who have left the Home? Have you kept up with any of them and how do they generally fare? Do they turn out to be good citizens on a higher average or a lower average than the general population?

Jack: Of course, I don't know them all but of the ones that I have kept up with, the general rule is, almost without exception, that they turn out not to be very good additions to society. I know of several, but I've kept up with one who has several illegitimate children, another that I have kept up with is in prison, another that I have kept up with is just simply so emotionally distraught that he has attempted suicide and is

dealing with many mental problems. There are many others that I could relate, but generally speaking, the rule is, that it is very difficult if not almost impossible in some cases to overcome the terrible emotional trauma that this institutional care can put one through.

Ken: You are now preaching the gospel in Corpus Christi, Texas. You have a wife and two children, and seem to be, with my limited association with you over the telephone, well-adjusted. To what or to whom do you give credit for this?

Jack: Well, ultimately, to the Lord, but I think He did it through my wife.

Ken: Through your wife? OK.

Jack: She taught me how to love properly, to give affection, to have a proper attitude in the family. After spending some time with her I began also to seek the Lord, and then through reading and studying my Bible, I came to understand that you have to separate sometimes the individuals from what they claim to be. I for a long time held a grudge against the church. Of course, the Home never told us about the issues involved in this, but I held the church responsible because of its support of the Home. But through time I came to accept the fact that people can do the opposite of what they profess in their religion. Therefore I came to the Lord. But it was much later after coming to the Lord that I learned there was even an issue over these sorts of things.

Ken: You stand opposed in principle to the church support of such institutions and I would infer that you have a scriptural basis for that as well as your own emotional experiences. Would you care to just briefly share some of that with us?

Jack: Yes, of course, scripturally speaking, I think the problem of institutional care, the church supporting and maintaining institutions, is very clear-cut. It just simply comes down to where is your "Thus saith the Lord" for the church to build and maintain these institutions. The Bible has a clear pattern outlined for the care of the needy. The family is the first recourse. Then the church may help the needy saints. There is just a very clear pattern in the scriptures on this matter. I have dealt with this issue primarily from the scriptural point of view. But I have also found a great deal of effectiveness in dealing with those who would like to justify the Homes of the basis of expediency. I have for a good many years argued very vigorously against the idea that these homes are even expedient. For example, here in Texas, the state has closed down all of its state supported institutional homes, because it believes that this is simply not the best way to care for children. It has gone entirely to other systems of care. And I have argued very vigorously therefore, not only from the scriptural basis, but also trying to get brethren to see that in no way should they

accept the fact without some more investigation, that these homes are even expedient or a good way to take care of the needy. And I would that brethren who support these homes on that basis would spend some time investigating that. How do you know it is expedient? What tells you that? What method of reasoning did you use to arrive at that conclusion? Investigate, question it. See whether or not it really is as expedient as you have been lead to believe it is.

Ken: One other question. What other alternatives would you suggest? You have children of your own now. If tragedy should strike, and you and your wife should be taken and your children be left behind, what desire would you have so far as the care they would receive?

Jack: Well, the Bible says a man ought to provide for his own household. I happen to believe that that involves as much as possible making provisions for them after he does leave this earth, perhaps unexpectedly. One step that my wife and I have taken is to draw up a will and to designate a family within the church who is willing to accept that responsibility, to designate them as the legal guardians of our children in the event that my wife and I should die at the same moment. I think that the family or the foster or adoptive process is always a better answer than institutional care. And I would urge Christians who do not have family members who are also Christians, to look within the church for worthy individuals who have proven themselves able to raise children, to discuss it with them, to see if they are willing to take that responsibility in the event of your death, and then through the legal means of a will, to appoint them as guardians of your children and trustees over what funds or properties you may leave behind, that they may use them to care for your children. I think that these are good alternatives. I think they are part of the commandment that Paul gives us that a man ought to provide for his own household. I just think that includes providing in the event he should die, as much as it is possible to provide for that event.

Ken: OK Jack. We certainly appreciate your being willing to be on the telecast this evening and I have enjoyed the interview with you. We'll send you a copy of the audio tape of this program. Would you have anything else you would like to say before we hang up?

Jack: The only other thing that I would say, I would like to just simply urge individuals not to blame the church for this matter. The church could take a terrible beating, just by association here. We need to understand that the individual and the church are separate in some cases. When an individual acts, that does not mean the church approves of it. I heard in the article that this was a Church of Christ Orphan's Home. Well,

"it ain't no such thing." Separate the church from the home. There is a big segment of brethren who believe as I do, who have believed since the 1950's that these things are unscriptural. They do not support them. And I would just simply urge people, don't blame the church for this. The blame for this problem needs to be laid at the feet of some individuals who perhaps, well-intentioned, and perhaps over-zealous in their desire to do a good deed, have gone beyond the scriptural limit to do that. Just lay the blame at the proper place. The church is not to blame for this.

Ken: We certainly thank you Jack. And we'll look forward to meeting you sometime in the future. Good night.

Jack: Thank you a lot Ken.

**EXPOSITION:
TEXT and
CONTEXT**

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FRUITBEARING CHRISTIANS

Christians are, metaphorically speaking, branches— branches in Christ. Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (John 15:5). A branch is to bear fruit. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (John 15:2). Hence, Christians, like branches, are to bear fruit.

Jesus said the kingdom of God would be taken from the Jews and "given to a nation bringing forth fruit thereof" (Matt. 21:43). This nation is the New Testament church, composed of Christians. Paul said we are married to Christ "that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4).

The fruit that God wants us to bear is the following:

(1) *Winning others to Christ.* Paul wrote to the brethren at Rome, "that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you. . . . that I might have some fruit, among you also, even as other Gentiles" (Rom. 1:13). A branch bears fruit after its own kind. For example, a branch on a grapevine bears grapes. In like manner, a Christian bears fruit after its kind, that is, other Christians.

Christians are to be soul-winners. Solomon said, "he that winneth souls is wise;; (Prov. 11:30). "Winneth" means "to take," as a hunter who tracks down his prey. Christians must pursue the lost and win them to Christ. Jesus compared soul-winning to fishing. "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17). He also said the soul-winner is a harvester. "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).

May we all go forth bearing precious seed, coming again with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us (Psa. 126:6).

(2) *Holiness of life.* "But now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Rom. 6:22). Holiness is the fruit of a victory over sin, a life transformed by the power of the gospel. It is a life that is beautiful in character, molded after the image of Christ.

Holiness is to the inner man what health is to the outer man. The person who eats properly, exercises regularly and gets the right amount of rest will generally be healthy. The Christian who abides in Christ, transforming himself from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18) will increase the fruit of holiness in his life.

Let us, therefore, "cleanse ourselves from all filthy-

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ness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). We must make a complete break with the world, drawing the line of demarcation deep and wide (2 Cor. 6:14-8), yielding the members of our bodies servants to righteousness unto holiness (Rom. 6:18).

(3) *Fruit of the Spirit.* "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23). "Fruit" here is singular, showing the unity and harmony of these traits.

The fruit of the Spirit is not something that springs out of our old nature, amended, educated and refined, but fruit that is produced by the Holy Spirit in our lives through faith.

We can divide the fruit of the Spirit into three triads: (a) relationship to God (love, joy and peace), (b) relationship to our fellowman (longsuffering, gentleness and goodness), and (c) relationship to ourselves (faith, meekness and temperance).

Christians must walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16), live in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25) and be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). How the church needs Christians who are under the influence and control of the Holy Spirit.

(4) *Good works.* Paul wrote, "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work" (Col. 1:10). Good works have been appointed by God in which we are to walk. Paul wrote, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). A Christian should be overflowing in the good works of soul-winning, helping the widows and orphans, the sick, the hungry, the poor, and encouraging the weak and timid, etc. (James 1:27; Matt. 25:34-40; I John 3:17-18; I Thess. 5:14).

We need to look for opportunities to do good works in our homes, jobs, schools, communities or wherever we may find ourselves in the activities of life.

(5) *Sharing our possessions.* The contribution for the poor saints in Jerusalem from Macedonia and Achaia is called a "fruit." Paul said, "When therefore I have performed this, and I have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain" (Rom. 15:28).

One of the characteristics of the early Christians was their sharing with other Christians who were destitute and in need. The brethren at Jerusalem "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need" (Acts 2:45). Not a single person among them lacked for the necessities and sustenance of life (Acts 4:34-37).

The great care that the early Christians showed toward each other prompted the unbelievers to say, "How they loved one another." No child of God should ever be in want when there are fellow-Christians to supply his needs. May we be fruit-bearers in sharing.

(6) *Fruit of our lips.* "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15).

God accepts praise from our lips by way of songs, prayers and confession that reflect love, devotion and sincerity. As God's children we should offer to Him glory and honor and power for God created all things for His pleasure (Rev. 4:11).

In conclusion, let us realize that God did not create us, nor did Jesus die for us, that we might go through life just *getting*. God created us and Jesus redeemed us that we might invest our lives *giving*. Let us live and enjoy an abundant life of fruit-bearing!

Restoration Footnotes

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"THE OBJECT CONTEMPLATED"

When Barton W. Stone began publishing the *Christian Messenger* in the fall of 1826, he wrote an untitled editorial to introduce "the object contemplated in this work." In it he summarized the state of "the religion of Heaven," which he believed "for centuries past, has fallen far below the excellency and glory of primitive Christianity." He then said: "The man, who honestly investigates the cause of this declension, and points the proper way of reformation, must certainly be engaged in a work, pleasing to God, and profitable to man. This is our design; and to accomplish this desirable end, shall our best exertions be enlisted and engaged." (*Christian Messenger*, Vol. 1, p. 1.)

Stone did not attempt this work alone, but sought the help of faithful brethren. "That these exertions may be better calculated to effect the object contemplated," he said, "we invite and solicit the aid of qualified brethren, who feel as we do, an ardent desire for the restoration and glory of the ancient religion of Christ—the religion of love, peace, and union on earth." (Ibid.)

Further commenting on his objective, in view of the prevailing conditions, he wrote: "That there are errors in the doctrines, as well as in the lives and practices of the various religious denominations now living, I presume, no Protestant will deny. Their various, jarring creeds—their bitter strife and uncharitable opposition to one another—their multiplied divisions and disunion among themselves—their pride and worldly spirit—their death and cold formality—these are undeniable evidences of the melancholy fact. To have these errors corrected and removed from the church; and to have truth restored in her heavenly, captivating robes, unadorned with the tinsel of human wisdom, are certainly the pious wishes of every honest Christian. Therefore,

unappalled at the dangerous attempt, not discouraged at the attendant difficulties, we will boldly, though humbly, advance to the work." (Ibid.)

From these plain words, some things are quite clear. 1. Stone believed that the various sects of the religious world had departed from the standard established by Christ. 2. He wanted to correct and remove the errors that existed in contemporary religion. 3. He looked toward "the restoration and glory of the ancient religion of Christ." 4. While unity was stressed, he desired unity based on the removal of error and the return to apostolic truth.

Stone proposed that the Bible alone, "the only infallible rule," be the standard by which all things in religion are measured. He promised his readers that "by this rule we will honestly try the various, jarring doctrines and spirits, which have done so much mischief in the world, for so many centuries back." He further promised that when error is found, "we shall be compelled by our benevolence for man, and love of truth, to expose it to view." While at the same time, he would "endeavor to exhibit the doctrine of the Bible, unsullied by the unhallowed touch of man's wisdom." (Ibid. p. 2)

In carrying out "the object contemplated" for the **Messenger** during the relatively short time of its existence, Stone made some mistakes; but he never lost sight of his twofold objective: to expose error and to advance truth. He strove with difficulty and persecution until the end of his life to achieve this purpose. As a result, the **Messenger** struck a happy balance between the might be called the negative and positive aspects of Christianity.

One of the last articles Stone wrote for publication, written when he believed that his death might precede its appearance, warned his brethren to watch and pray "that the fate of Israel of old may not be ours." He feared, not without reason, that his brethren might become "so captivated by the doctrines, forms, popularity, and respectability of the sects around us, that we may try to accommodate the truth of God to their prejudices in order to gain their favor, and eventually to enlist them on our side, and join in our mighty union." He reminded the brethren that, "We had to combat for every inch of ground we possessed, and for every fortress we gained." "our first union," he continued, "was on (Bible) ground; and sectarianism first received its deadly wound from this weapon, and by no other will it die the death, if its death is to be effected by moral means." (Ibid, 1844, p. 116-117.)

What all papers that claim to be anchored in "the Bible alone" need is neither a positive nor a negative policy per se. But what is needed, **most of all**, is editorial resolution to judge all things by the divine standard and to let it settle the matter of positive and negative emphasis. If "the whole counsel of God" is proclaimed, the negative cannot be suppressed or minimized for the sake of accentuating the positive. "Reprove, rebuke, and exhort" are heaven's order. If we ignore it for the sake of expediency, it will be to our eternal peril; but if we heed it for the sake of truth, it will be our eternal joy.

"Whoever will gratify himself by too much preaching

against evil, or too much preaching in favor of good without mentioning the evil side, makes a mistake which will work ruin here and hereafter." (Daniel Sommer, Biography, p. 188).

The Mystery of Iniquity

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THE POPE HEALS A DOCTOR WHO WAS NOT SICK!

As I write this, Pope John Paul II has just completed another of his famous world tours, this time to Asia and the South Pacific. As usual, the microphones, cameras and typewriters of the news media were in hot pursuit.

Some interesting things happened on this recent trip, and we wish to mention some of them in this article, along with an interesting incident that happened in Rome.

I imagine the headline caught your attention, didn't it? Well, an article by AP, published May 3, 1984, was headed, "Not a miracle, simply a case of etiquette." It said:

A Roman Catholic doctor on a visit to the Vatican astonished nuns and other pilgrims when he climbed out of a wheelchair after being blessed by Pope John II, he said yesterday.

"I heard someone say, 'It must be a miracle,' but it wasn't—only an embarrassment," said Dr. Jan Lavric, an able-bodied general practitioner from Yorkshire in northern England.

"Lavric said he went to Rome with a group of disabled people last month. After he sat down in the wheelchair, the only seat in the Vatican's audience chamber, a Swiss guard unexpectedly began wheeling him forward.

"I tried to stop him, but he told me, 'Don't exert yourself.' What would you do? I couldn't jump up and run away, that would have made things worse," he said.

"After he kissed the Pope's hand and was wheeled away by the guard, he stood up and folded the chair and carried it off. Lavric said, I must say they were all very surprised."

May we suggest, kindly but frankly, that the doctor's "miraculous" healing was as genuine as any of the "healings" among Catholics and Pentecostals. Can you imagine what Oral Roberts would have claimed from such an instant "healing"? The pope, like all fake healers, did not know whether the man was really lame, nor whether or not he was healed. And why were they "all very surprised" to see a lame man walk after being blessed by the pope? The answer must be that they don't ever see that.

The Pope Was "Shot"

In Seoul, South Korea, on the same trip, there was much anxiety and excitement among the police when a man fired a toy pistol at the pope. The report in the papers was headed, "Unstable man fires toy pistol at pope." The first thought that came to mind was to write an article and head it "A Fake Shot With a Fake." Now wait a minute before you react in anger. The word "fake" is defined by Webster: "To work upon in some special way, especially so as to impart a false character or appearance to." If that doesn't fit both the pope and pistol we don't know what would. The pistol was an imitation of a real gun and in the same sense that the pope is the vicar of Christ!

But we didn't write the article under that heading because we feared that someone would misunderstand and accuse us of sarcasm.

More Evidence of Idolatry

A report of the pope's stop in New Guinea said: "Mount Hagen reverberated with drumbeats and traditional tribal chants from nearly 200,000 natives. Hundreds of painted warriors and bare-breasted dancers cheered John Paul along the 4 1/2 mile motorcade route and at the Mass site, a golf course.

"Several groups of tribesmen from remote villages dragged 30-foot crosses through the rugged countryside for papal blessings. They will drag the crosses back home and erect them in their villages."

Imagine those poor ignorant people dragging 30-foot crosses for the pope to bless! Then they took them back to the village to worship. Catholics have made the cross the most common manifestation of idolatry on earth! The Israelites with the golden calf were no worse. In fact, the principle is the same whether it be a cross, sign of the cross, crucifix, or statue of some "saint." It is all idolatry!

The Tour Ends

An article published May 13 tells of the pope's return to Rome, completing his 21st foreign tour in about five years. When asked about his worldwide pilgrimages, he said, "The pope should be a pastor. He should travel. He should visit. He should be with the people."

He doesn't know what a scriptural pastor is. He could not meet the scriptural qualifications! Read them in First Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:5-9. (The terms, bishop, pastor, elder, overseer, etc. are used interchangeably in the New Testament.) In the early church, and with the Lord's approval, there was a plurality of bishops or pastors in each congregation (Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5). That was before the beginning of the great apostasy which led to the office of the pope—a universal bishop.

(Note: We hope to turn our attention to some studies of Catholic doctrines and the teaching of the Bible, but since Catholicism is so much in the news these days we feel that it is profitable to cover their activities and the travels of the pope. And with one article each month, we can't begin to keep up with that. In our next article, we plan to discuss the "crying statue" of Chicago.)

Building Better Families

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PARENTAL BLINDNESS

One of the truly great obstacles to parental nurturing of children "in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" is parental blindness—blindness to their own shortcomings as parents—such as inconsistencies between their own precepts and practices, disagreements between themselves, injustices to the child, indulgences of the child's whims, indifferences to the child's real needs and, too often, just plain stupidity wherein reason is displaced by parental emotionalism or by ignorance of one child's peculiar differences from another child.

When a child says, "My greatest problem is my parents," it is probably too late to re-bridge the chasm of separation. Three basic causes for such an observation are (1) **over-attentiveness** or "hovering" which Webster defines as "figuratively to be in a state of irresolution" or "wavering, vacillating"; (2) **indifference** which implies lack of interest or feeling; and (3) **domineering** which means "to rule with insolence or arbitrary sway; to be overbearing."

Here we call more detailed attention to some parental "blind spots."

1. **Parental Inconsistencies.** This area of the parent-child relationship may be viewed from two different stances—(a) Inconsistencies between what parents say and do in their own lives which involves right and wrong and which the child comes to identify properly as sheer parental hypocrisy and (b) inconsistencies between their own practices as parents and intolerance of the same practices by their children. To illustrate the former, when a parent insists that the child "provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17) yet talks of how he short-changed the government in tax payments, it is reasonable for the child to conclude that the parent is basically dishonest. In another instance, the child might feel comfortable in stealing from its mother's purse or cheating on a school examination. In either event the child is influenced to evil by observable parental inconsistency. A parent cannot point out evil by word, violate that teaching in practice, and then expect his child to be honest.

Another inconsistency in parenthood is that of one parent showing partiality toward one child and the other parent being partial to another. Such causes each child to gravitate toward the parent who shows him or her the more favorable attention designed to bring each

child closer to the parent favoring him or her. The story of Jacob's partiality to Joseph (Gen. 37:3-36) and Isaac's and Rebekah's favoritism toward Esau and Jacob respectively (Gen. 25:28; 27:1-45) illustrate this point. Wise indeed are the parents who see the natural differences among their children yet never allow this detection to make distinctions which provoke resentment by their children toward either or both of their parents.

2. Parental Disagreement over Child Treatment. Children are individualists as any thoughtful observer knows. This is the basis for all parents to have specific rules regarding "right and wrong" involving moral and spiritual matters (character behavior) but flexibility toward each child's peculiar personality qualities of sensitivity, stubbornness, pliability, etc. When parents disagree over disciplinary procedure their judgmental differences should be settled apart from the presence of all the children as well as the child involved. Day-to-day permissions, prohibitions and punishments should be thoughtfully and prayerfully handled. Noticeable discord between parents may create uncertainty, confusion and even distrust in the child regarding its own favor or security with one or both parents. It is here that disloyalty and favoritism toward one parent over the other is generated in a child's mind. Resulting remarks from a child to a parent may loosen an already shaky marriage, particularly if the child favors the parent whose words and deeds tend to encourage the child's desires. Parents should recognize that "in union there is strength" for both them as husband and wife as well as in the eyes and hearts of their children.

3. Parental injustice. This may occur when a parent punishes a child in anger. The child may well conclude that the parent is its enemy rather than its friend. Wrath begets wrath and this may be the very point in the admonition of Ephesians 6:4 ("Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath") and Colossians 3:21 ("Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged").

4. Parental indulgences. A false concept of what true Bible love (Greek agape) is and does often leads a parent to allow a child to run rampant in its personal likes and dislikes. When parents disregard restrictions of a child's whims which become character traits, the child is on the road to rebellion and contempt for parental, civil and spiritual authority. The Old Testament case of Eli's sons who "made themselves vile and he restrained them not" (I Sam. 3:13) vividly illustrates the result of parental indulgence. The parents who wink at the "cute ways" of a developing child when those ways are tinged with rebellious and evil overtones will one day reap the bitter harvest of their own stupidity. Punishment of a child should never be an end within itself but a means of nurturing the child into a balanced moral and spiritual life-style. Enforced love, expressed in penalties for misconduct when begun early, develops respect for parents and for God's will. See Hebrews 12:5-11.

5. Parental indifference. This may occur in various facets of the developing child's life. Besides concern for misbehavior, observant parents will recognize a need

for understanding and responding to the child's needs. A truly concerned parent will seek to determine what causes a child to respond both positively and negatively to various stimuli. Some parents seem to be completely oblivious to what "turns on" and "turns off" their children mentally, emotionally and physically. Moral and spiritual values should be impressed as soon as a child's sense of right and wrong manifests itself. Alert parents will be aware of their responses to good and evil situations and will seize every opportunity to encourage the right while discouraging the wrong. Indifference toward or deliberate ignoring of a child's tendencies to respond sympathetically to moral and immoral situations is to allow weeds to grow where flowers should be budding and blooming in young lives.

No two children are exactly alike in every detail, not even "identical twins"! Indifference to the fact that each child differs from another can bring heartbreak to the parents who seek to stuff all of their children into the same mold. An elderly woman once said to me: "I raised my two boys exactly alike. One turned out to be as fine a son as any mother could want. The other was just as sorry as the other was good. How do you explain that, preacher? I responded: "You answered your own question, sister, when you said that you "raised them exactly alike." You simply can't make a square peg fit a round hole and boys are often dissimilar pegs." To be ignorant of or indifferent to this fact of life in the sober role of parenthood can be chaotic to the parents' emotions and disastrous to a child's life. Concerned parents will never be indifferent toward tendencies of good and evil in a child's words and deeds.

SERMON BOOKS

God Hath Spoken by Irvn Lee. The writings of Irvn Lee have been among the most popular of those writings published by brethren. His *Good Homes In A Wicked World* and *Preaching In A Changing World* have enjoyed good circulation. We anticipate the same with his book of sermons entitled *God Hath Spoken*. 192 pages.

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SCIENTIFIC OBJECTIVITY?

Jerry F. Bassett
3583 Elwing St.
Eugene, OR 97401

A brother, who serves as a superintendent of schools in a community near Eugene, Oregon, recently showed me a booklet published by the National Academy of Sciences entitled "SCIENCE AND CREATIONISM, A View from the National Academy of Sciences." It is being sent to public school officials throughout the country in an effort to have consideration of creation as a plausible explanation for the origin of life totally excluded from the science classroom, and to persuade these officials to allow study of evolution only. Following are a few points quoted from this publication, and some observations by this writer for your consideration. It is left to you to decide just how "scientific" the NAS is in its view and propagandizing of evolution.

Before proceeding to the content of this booklet, let it be noted that even its title is prejudicial. "SCIENCE AND CREATION . . ." implies that the conflict is between these two schools of thought. From what follows in the content of the booklet, this title also assumes that evolution is a scientific fact in opposition to the Bible's account of divine creation. Neither of these implications is true.

The conflict is not between science and the Bible's account of the origin of life by an eternal, living God. Science has proved, and the Bible has always stated the fact of biogenesis, that life arises only from life, and that life invariably reproduces after its own kind.

As for the assumption that evolution is a scientific fact, let it be noted that the evolutionist's house rests upon two pillars. First, evolution assumes biogenesis, life originating from non-living matter (spontaneous generation). Second, it assumes that all of the various forms of life which now exist evolved from a common ancestor. Both of these assumptions are contradictions of scientific facts. They are pillars of sand.

Quotes From the NAS

1. To establish the basis of scientific consideration the NAS states, "Science encompasses a large body of evidence collected by repeated observations and experiments" (p. 8). This is true. So we ask the NAS to offer just one observation of, or an experiment demonstrating, the origin of life from nonliving matter (spontaneous generation) or of the development of all the various forms of life from a common ancestor.

2. Without bothering to offer even one valid observation or experimental demonstration of the transition of one form of life into another, the NAS says, "... there have been so many discoveries of intermediate forms between fish and amphibians, between amphibians and reptiles, between reptiles and mammals, and even along

the primate line of descent that it is often difficult to identify categorically the line to which a particular genus or species belongs" (p. 16). Again, "The 'missing links' that troubled Darwin and his followers are no longer missing. Today, not one but many such connecting links, intermediate between various branches of the primate family tree, have been found as fossils" (p. 23). These statements are more than unproved assertions, they are just plain false. Notice the following quote from Dr. G. Ledyard Stebbins, himself an evolutionist and professor of genetics at the University of California at Davis. "... No transitional forms are known between any of the major phyla of animals or plants" (PROCESSES OF EVOLUTION, 1966 ed., p. 144).

3. "Similarly, human and other mammalian embryos pass through a stage during which they have unmistakable but useless grooves similar to gill slits found in fishes—evidence that they and the other vertebrates shared remote ancestors that respired with the air of gills" (p. 20).

This is a statement based on false argument that mammal embryos begin life in the womb as protozoans and pass through all the stages of its assumed evolutionary history, including that of a fish with gill slits. The fact is these grooves in the embryo are not gill slits, and never have anything to do with respiration at all. What is more, they are not "useless." They have to do with the formation of the alimentary canal which is essential to nutrition. Harry Rimmer wrote, "I am scarcely able to conclude which is the graver charge to make against the teacher who clings to this outrageous falsehood, ignorance or lack of integrity!" (THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION AND THE FACTS OF SCIENCE, p. 60).

Incidentally, while the NAS is still trying to "snow" people with the argument in 1984. Rimmer's book was written in 1954, and was based on information available to the scientific community long before that. As Rimmer said, "outrageous"!

4. Finally, "For those who are studying aspects of the origin of life, the question no longer seems to be whether life could have originated by chemical processes involving non-biological components but, rather, what pathway might have followed" (p. 25).

This simply says that the evolutionist believes life arose by spontaneous generation from nonliving ("non-biological") matter. But anyone with even the most superficial knowledge of biology knows that spontaneous generation is a now exploded medieval fantasy, and that the science of biology has demonstrated that life comes only from life. This is also to say that for all of his arrogant claim to being a scientist, the evolutionist is in fact only a philosopher working from the preconceived supposition that there is no God so that life must have originated by itself, the fact of biogenesis notwithstanding.

Sauce For the Goose ...

The NAS states, "No body of beliefs that has its origin in doctrinal material rather than scientific observation should be admissible as science in any science

classroom" (p. 26). If this is applied to creationism, then let it be applied equally to the unobserved, undemonstrated doctrine of spontaneous generation. But this would remove from the classroom evolution's most basic assumption without which it cannot even get off the ground, much less fly. For this reason you are not likely to see this rule applied to spontaneous generation by such people as those who wrote and published this NAS booklet. It seems to me this hardly measures up to all that we have been hearing about the cool, unbiased objectivity which should characterize the truth-seeking scientist of the Twentieth Century.

(Those who may wish to read this NAS booklet for themselves can order it from: National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20418. Price, \$4.00. J.F.B.)

**INSTITUTIONALISM
CALLS FOR
MORE INSTITUTIONS**

A. C. Grider

Rt. 4, 1671 Bill St.
Shepherdsville, KY 40165



A little girl at school was called upon to give a definition of FAITH. She wrestled with the idea for awhile and then wrote: "Faith is trying to believe something you know isn't so." I sometimes think that is exactly the kind of faith possessed by many of our liberal brethren. We have been telling them all along that they were supporting the idea that the church could support human institutions. They have denied it saying that no other institution was involved in the matter of church support of orphan homes.

1. Charter—Schults-Lewis Children's Home and School says:

"The name of this corporation shall be Schults-Lewis Children's Home and School.

"The purpose for which it is formed is as follows: To build, operate and maintain an orphan home or homes in Porter County, Indiana or elsewhere wherever the Board of Directors so desire."

(Note: **Something** (and it isn't the church) builds, operates and maintains an orphan home or homes.) Is this "something" a human or a divine organization?

2. Charter—Mt. Dora Home and School says:

"The principal office and place of business shall be at Mt. Dora, Lake County, Florida. And in other such place, or places within the state as may be provided by the Corporation or its trustees."

Note: What is the Corporation that will operate out of Mt. Dora and at other places within the state? Is it a divine institution or is the church supporting a HUMAN organization.

3. Charter: Potter Orphan Home and School says:

"The nature of the business proposed to be transacted, promoted and carried on by said corporation shall be the operation and maintenance of a charitable institution to be used as a home and school for orphan white children of both sexes."

Note: I am not sure just how many institutions we have here. There is the corporation AND the charitable institution AND the home. I don't believe ALL THREE of them are divine! There must be something about this set-up that is HUMAN!

Ben F. Taylor wrote a tract called "Potter Orphan Home, What Is IT?" He said,

"It (that's one thing) allows the home (that's another thing) it provides to make the appeal to the hearts of Christians. (Page 3)

"It is an institution having for its only purpose to furnish a home and the care of destitute orphans. (Page 7).

"The Potter Orphan Home and School is an institution, or call it an organization if you wish, to furnish a home and care for destitute orphans." (Page 12).

Our liberal brethren got into church support of these things without a thought of what they were getting into. When called upon for a scripture to support their actions that "went everywhere" except to the Bible for their defense. Some said there was no organization involved. This was silly as the foregoing points out. Others said these institutions were human and that, since the church could support them it could support the schools—also human institutions. Then along came Woods and others saying the orphan homes are DIVINE organizations. This was the silliest of all of the arguments and it was short lived. But the fact remains that the church is limited to supporting SAINTS and should not consider a contribution to an orphan home whether or not it is human or divine, or whether or not it is a corporation (which it is) or an institution (which it is) or an organization (which it is).

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IN NEW BUILDING

LAWRENCE F. Smith, 1231 Mulberry St., Ennis, Texas 75119—The church in Ennis, Texas moved into its new building in December, 1983. The address is 1231 Mulberry St. (corner of Mulberry and Rumbo) off I-45 South. Our phone is 214-875-6670. We are a small group. Our preacher is Gary Box. If you know of Christians or have other friends who live the area (including Corsicana, Waxahachie, Ferris) you would like for us to contact, please let us know. When traveling this way, please stop and worship with us.

NEW CONGREGATION

WILLARD P. ALLEN, Box 166, RFD 2, Taberg, NY 13471—A new congregation began meeting in my home near Taberg, New York on January 29, 1984. We have been residents of this area since 1970 when we moved here from Gulfport, MS. For several years attempts were made to start a work in this area during which time we drove 72 miles (one way) to worship with brethren in South New Berlin, NY. Plans are being finalized now to secure a rented building as a meeting place. During the summer we have planned extensive efforts to reach honest hearts in Rome, Utica and surrounding areas. A fall meeting is also being planned. We welcome all to worship with us who might have opportunity to relocate to or visit in this area. We are also looking for a stable, faithful preacher to come over and help us. If you are coming to Griffiss AFB or central upstate New York and we can assist you, please call upon me at 315-336-5569 or Capt. Jimmy Glover at 315-339-4958. Our mailing address is: Oneida County Church of Christ, P.O. Box 200, Lee Center, NY 13363.

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23 solid oak pews, 14 feet long, 1 solid oak pulpit, 1 solid oak communion table. \$2,500. Contact Denny Diehl at 918-314-4793.

NEW BUILDING, NAME AND ADDRESS

HAROLD T. BLAIN, 2405 Oakview Circle, Tupelo, MS 38801—We are happy to announce that after many long hours of diligent effort by many of the brethren here, we finally have a lovely and spacious new meeting place. We were formerly known as the Elvis Presley Dr. church of Christ, but now as the Northeast church of Christ. Our address is 1118 Hamm St., Tupelo, MS 38801. We are one block west of our old location. Worship with us when you can.

NEW WORK BEGINS

JAMES H. BAKER, JR., P.O. Box 44012, Philadelphia, PA 19144—On July 1, 1984 a new congregation began meeting at the YMCA in downtown Philadelphia. I came to Philadelphia from Miami, Florida where I spent 6 years. It has not been easy making this start and it is a long, hard road ahead of us. Anyone who might want to move to Philly and help with this work is welcome. Also, if any readers know of people

in the area we should contact, please let us know. We ask for your prayers that the work will grow.

TO GERMANY TO PREACH

DAVID L. DRENNEN, Rt. 4, Box 658, Somerville, AL 35670—I plan to depart for Europe to preach the gospel August 17, 1984. I worked with the church in Bremen, Germany for 2 1/2 years while in the service. I saw the desperate need for truth, not only there but on the other side of the Iron Curtain. I have been in the states since January and have kept in touch with several contacts with whom I worked before return-ing to the states. In the Germanic speaking countries there are 75 million souls. In the Soviet and East Block countries there are 400 million people. In many parts of the East Block people have no Bibles and believers are harassed and persecuted by the government, some being imprisoned in labor camps. At this writing I have only a small portion of the needed support raised. I intend to go regardless for the need is great. I need a minimum of \$1200 a month. I speak German and am learning Russia. I am willing to go anywhere for the Lord to preach the truth, am willing to risk my life for the Lord's service and believe that "Go Ye" means "Go Me"! References: Guy McDaniels (205-83-6753); Jerry Henderson (205-875-493); Horace Huggins (601-482-7020); Steve Calvert (205-53-5946) and Hearls Calvert (205-269-4128).

NEW CONGREGATION BEGINS

J. T. SMITH, P.O. Box 698, Lake Jackson, TX 77566—A faithful church began meeting on June 17 in Mayo, Florida. There had been problems there over the institutional question for some time. Otis Jordan preached there for about 6 years, but was finally forced out by the liberal element.

Some time after he left, the institutional brethren got all the male members, children included, they could round up and brought them into a business meeting in order to employ John Arnold, a liberal preacher, on a part-time basis with the understanding that if a "sound" preacher could be found that he would be employed on a full-time basis. Shortly after this happened, I was asked to come there last February to speak in a gospel meeting. I preached a number of lessons on institutionalism, but to no avail. In fact, not only would they not listen, many of them would not even speak to me as they left the building each night.

Finally, the first of May, the institutional brethren decided they had enough "votes" in a business meeting, after brother Arnold's son was identified with them, to hire Arnold on a full-time basis, which they did. And, since those staying were in majority, they kept the building and about \$17,000 which was in the treasury. Faithful brethren have gone out from them and are now meeting in Mayo with C.K. Prentice preaching for them. If you have plans to be in that area and wish to encourage these brethren, call Harlie Lynch, Hal Lynch or Pete

Sullivan for any information you need.

CHARLES BOSH ART, 7350 Mcardle Rd. No. 12, Corpus, Christi, TX 78412—After six years of pleasant association with the fine 84th Street congregation in Oklahoma City, I have moved to work with the Parkway church in Corpus Christi, Texas. While we have looked forward to our move, we have left behind one of the finest congregations anywhere. Bob Craig and Tom Holland serve this church as elders and do their work with conscientiousness, standing for truth in teaching and righteousness in life. 84th Street has an energetic group of deacons and a strong atmosphere of membership development. Phil Arnold of Tulare, California is moving to work with them. When in Corpus Christi, worship with us at 3737 Brawner Parkway.

STEVE GOFF, P.O. Box 1622, Sandy, Utah 84091—Since last report we have had one baptism, five restorations and people from four families have placed membership with us in Salt Lake City. We now have members from 15 families: 25 Christians with 31 children and non-Christian spouses. Attendance now runs over 50 and was 58 recently. During our meeting in March, with brethren from Kaysville and other places attending, we had a high of 73. Al Payne, of Richardson, Texas held our meeting. His wife, Genevieve, taught a class for women each morning of the week. We have much to do to edify and strengthen new members.

The work in Kaysville continues to go well with Joe Price preaching there. They have grown and are having attendance in the mid 40's. Mason French is leaving the work in Ogden to move to Arkansas and will be followed by Homer Walker who comes to Utah from Wisconsin. Ralph Williams of Albany, Oregon will preach in our October meeting in Salt Lake City.

DEBATE IN INDIANAPOLIS

WAYNE GREESON, Indianapolis, Indiana has signed propositions for a debate with Ted Clarke of the Green Valley church of Christ in Noblesville, Indiana to be conducted October 11-13. There will be one session Thursday and Friday nights each, with one session Saturday afternoon and another in the evening. Each evening session will begin at 7:30 with the Saturday afternoon session beginning at 1:30. The first two evenings will be conducted at the building of the Eastside congregation, 10055 East 25th Street, Indianapolis. The Saturday sessions will be conducted at the building of the Green Valley congregation, 19005 Cumberland Road, Noblesville, Indiana. Propositions concern congregational benevolent responsibilities. For further information you may contact Wayne Greeson (317-773-8097).

FROM FOREIGN FIELDS

CARLOS CAPELLI, Buenos Aires, Argentina reports one baptism and two restorations in Jose C. Paz congregation and four baptisms in Boulogne. In January, 1985, along with Fernando Venegas from Mendoza, I will visit and preach in Bogota, Columbia and the Dominican Republic.

ANTONIA JUMAS-AS, Metro Manila, Philippines—As a result of being given a gospel tract and comparing it with the scriptures and further studies, I obeyed the gospel in November, 1983. Later my wife and some neighbors were baptized and we meet as a congregation in my home in front of Kapitbahayan water tank in Metro Manila. We have been assisted in our work by brethren Nartiso Romio, Rene Andaca and Greg Valerio. We are planning a house to house preaching together in this neighborhood and are in need of tracts to hand out.

PREACHERS NEEDED

JONESBORO, TENNESSEE—We are in need of a preacher for full time work. Our attendance runs 70-80. This city of about 10,000 is the oldest city in Tennessee. We are self-supporting and have a home for a preacher if needed. Call Dallas Hensley (615-257-6502).

AKRON, OHIO—The Southeast church in Akron, Ohio needs a full time preacher. We are able to provide full support with a house and utilities. We need a man with some experience. Those interested should contact Robert L. Bills, 798 E. Archwood Ave., Akron, OH 44306, or call 216-724-8041, or 216-724-4681.

LAKE BUTLER, FLORIDA—The Danville church located 25 miles N.E. of Gainesville, Florida is looking for a full time man to work with us. We have our own building with attendance of about 30. We can supply partial support of \$1,000 a month. If interested, contact Danville Church of Christ, Rt. 2, Box 796, Lake Butler, FL 32054. Or you may call Charles Blackwelder (904-496-3859); Leonard Bivins (904-496-2198); or Jim Haltam (904-496-2589).

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

A LITTLE BOY AT THE JEFFERSON MEMORIAL

Recently, our older son took some relatives to visit the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. While they were wandering around, Wilson sat down on a step with his little boy, Dale (our grandson, not quite 3 years of age). Dale decided to break out in song. Clearly it rang and bounced off the walls of the national monument "Oh the B-I-B-L-E, Yes, that's the book for me, I'll stand alone on the Word of God, the B-I-B-L-E." People started to gather around and listen. One woman said, "Why, I used to sing that when I was a child." Personally, I think that little blond-headed boy gave visitors something even more profound to think about than the utterances of Jefferson.

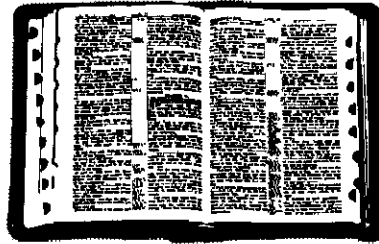
It reminds me of what Paul Tillich, theologian, said when asked "What is the most profound thought you ever had?" His response was: "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so."

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	315
RESTORATIONS	104
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

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 XXV

OCTOBER, 1984

NUMBER 10

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD

The world of unbelief has one great impossible task to overcome before it can take a second step in destroying the life and work of Jesus Christ. That first problem for atheists and modernists of every class and degree is the deity of Jesus Christ. He is either God or he is an impostor. Since the atheist, agnostic and modernist charge that Christ is not divine, it falls their responsibility to prove the charge "beyond reasonable doubt." The defense is ready with undeniable evidence.

The first thing one would have to do in denying the evidence of the defense is to discredit the Bible, and through the centuries man has utterly failed to do this. The word of God lives and abides while generation after generation has passed away after trying to destroy this indestructible Book.

The denial of the deity of Christ must center upon the fact that he is the Son of God. One must believe in his Sonship to be saved (John 3:16; 8:24; 20:30; Romans 10:9,10; 1 John 4:15). If it can be established that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God, then he is divine and modernism in every form goes down in total defeat.

1. PROPHECY—Prophecy was spoken hundreds of years before Christ was born concerning his birth, life, death and resurrection. It began with the promise of the seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15. A promise to bless all nations in the seed of Abraham was made in Genesis 12:3; 22:18; to Isaac in Genesis 21:12; and continued to the close of the Old Testament. Someone has said there are 332 direct prophecies made and fulfilled concerning Christ. It would be impossible for this number of state-

ments to be made of a person hundreds of years before he was born and not one of them fail to come to pass unless God guided the prophets concerning His Son. Again and again in the New Testament it is said: "that it might be fulfilled" concerning something said of Christ in the Old Testament. It all goes on to include the present reign of Christ at the right hand of God. Modernism cannot successfully explain away prophecy as it relates to Christ as the Son of God.

2. THE VIRGIN BIRTH—Among the prophecies concerning Christ is that in Isaiah 7:14 which said the sign given would be that a child was to be born of a virgin. Luke 1:26-35 and Matthew 1:18-23 make Isaiah 7:14 apply to Christ.

Jesus asked his enemies, the Pharisees, what they thought of Christ and "whose son is he?" and they answered, "The son of David" (Matthew 22:41-46). He then asked how David called him Lord as he spoke by the Spirit. Do you know how they answered Christ? "**And no man was able to answer him a word.**" If he were not divine why did they not answer him?

3. TESTIMONY THAT HE WAS THE SON OF GOD—Various ones in the New Testament plainly called Christ the Son of God. God Himself did (Hebrews 1:1, 5; Matthew 3:17; 17:5). John the Baptist did (John 1:33). The apostles who had seen, heard and handled him testified that he was the Son of God (John 6:69; Matthew 16:16; Acts 9:20). The devils declared him to be the Son of God (Matthew 8:29). Jesus said himself that he was the Son of God (John 9:35-37; 4:26).

Discounting the proof of prophecy and the virgin birth, how would one go about setting aside the testimony of all these witnesses? What procedure of cross-examination would one employ to discredit all the witnesses to the fact that Christ is the Son of God?

4. THE MIRACLES—It is easy to simply say that these miracles did not happen as they are recorded in the New Testament. But explain why the enemies of Christ did not expose him while he lived and they were present when he did these mighty works? These miracles served to bear witness that he came from God and was the Son of God (John 10:24, 25; 3:2; 5:36).

When Peter and John healed the lame man at the gate to the temple "in the name of Jesus Christ," it created

quite a stir among the people. Many believed, but the priests and chief rulers with the high priests, Sadducees and Pharisees laid hands on them and put them in prison until the next day. Now, when they tried to discredit this work and beheld the "man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it" (Acts 4:14). Verse 16 says: "What shall we do to these men, for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it." But along comes a modernist and denies it all with a single statement; no proof at all! These who were there could not deny it!

5. THE RESURRECTION—Christ was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection (Romans 1:4). God raised him from the dead (Acts 2:32; Romans 10:9,10), and God would not have raised an impostor. The resurrection of Christ is one fact that cannot be disputed, and it declares him to be the Son of God.

The evidence can be enlarged in every area listed above, and other areas of proof can be given, but these are sufficient to give an irrefutable argument for the deity of Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God. That fact is the foundation to all authority in spiritual and religious matters today, and it will be overriding factor in the judgment of God. Our salvation from sins rests upon the fact that Christ is the Son of God. Our eternal destiny depends upon the fact that he is the Son of God.

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Editorial

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A SHORT COURSE IN PREMILLENNIALISM

The subject of this article is intimidating to many. Many could not possibly spell it, some cannot pronounce it and many have not the faintest notion what it involves. Yet, a large portion of religious society is caught up in this "ism" in one way or another.

What Is It?

The prefix "pre" means before. "Millennium" means one thousand years. "Ism" means that a doctrine has been crystallized around the idea that we are living before the 1,000 years. The whole idea begins with a misunderstanding of Rev. 20:1-6 where the victory scene is painted for the souls martyred for the cause of Christ in the first century. There God assured them that Satan's allies would be defeated and their cause would triumph. That grand assurance was symbolized by Satan being bound "for a thousand years."

Many teach that Christ will come in the clouds, catch up the righteous with him in what they call "the rapture" and that while they are in that state, great tribulation will take place here on earth. Some associate that with the "battle of Armageddon", the re-gathering of the Jews to Palestine and related things. Then, after all the conflict is over and the earth has been cleansed, Jesus will come with his saints back to the earth, set up headquarters in Jerusalem and reign there for a literal 1,000 years. At the end of that time, the wicked dead will be raised, the general judgment will take place and the wicked and righteous will be separated for eternity. The worst thing wrong with the whole theory is that it just is not so! The word of God does not teach it.

Events of the Second Coming Rule It Out

(1) Matt. 25:1-13 teaches us that when the master of the house returns, the door will be shut. **The time of preparation** will be over. Premillennialists want to leave the door cracked open wide enough to give the unbelieving Jews another chance. This violates the principle that "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10: 34-35).

(2) His coming will be the **end of the world**. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:10). This passage deals with "the promise of his coming (verse 4) and that also concerns the facts that the

world is "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment" (Verse 7). This passage is sufficient reason to argue that the Lord will not set foot on this earth again, for at his coming it will be burned up and every element in it will melt with fervent heat. He left in clouds, will come in clouds, we will meet him in the clouds, and this earth will be no more. Whatever the "new heavens and earth" will be, they will not be this present order as we know it. This earth, including Palestine and Jerusalem, is going out of business at his coming and that thwarts the whole scheme.

(3) At his coming all the **dead will be raised**. Jesus said "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jno. 5:28-29). Note that the same "hour" the righteous come forth from their graves is the same "hour" when the wicked rise from their graves. There is no 1,000 years in between. But what about 1 Thes. 4:13-18? Well what about it? There Paul answered a question which the brethren asked about the righteous dead as opposed to the righteous living at the time the Lord comes. They did not ask about the wicked dead and he did not deal with that. But Jesus did in John 5:28-29!

(4) At his coming the **judgment** will occur. Matt. 25:31-46 shows that when he comes he will sit on the throne of his glory and will separate the wicked from the righteous. Note the order of the passage. He comes in glory, then he shall sit upon his throne, before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them. This leaves no room for a thousand years between his coming and the judgment.

(5) When he comes he shall **deliver up the kingdom to the Father**. "But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. **Then cometh the end**, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:23-24). He shall not take up rule when he comes, he shall deliver it to the Father. He shall put it down. If you can tell the difference in "take it up" and "put it down" then you know what is wrong with Premillennial-ism. This agrees with the prophetic vision of Daniel who foresaw the coronation of Christ. He said, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14). Daniel said that in his vision it was when this one "like the Son of man" came to the Ancient of Days that there was given him "dominion, glory and a kingdom." Premillennial folks argue that he will take up his kingdom and begin to reign when he comes from the Ancient of days. Whether you ever learn to spell the word, or even pronounce it, you can refute Premillennialism if you know the difference

between to and from.

What Harm Is It?

But is not this just an innocent theory? What harm does it do? It does great harm. The consequences of denying the present existence of the kingdom of Christ are serious.

(1) In Jno. 3:5 Jesus taught that the new birth puts one into the kingdom. But if the kingdom is not in existence, then none are in it, and if none are in it, then none are "born again." Premillennialism robs us of the new birth.

(2) Matt. 18:3 teaches that conversion puts one into the kingdom. But if the kingdom is not in existence, then none are in it, and if none are in it, then none are now converted, nor can they be. This would make evangelism useless. Premillennialism militates against evangelism. Oh yes, they preach. But for what? To convert men? That will put them in the kingdom and you can't have that with no kingdom to put them into.

(3) Col. 1:13 teaches that those outside the kingdom are "under the power of darkness" and therefore lost. If the kingdom is not in existence, then all the world is lost under the power of darkness, including every premillennialist, and will remain so until the "millennium" commences.

(4) Luke 22:29-30 teaches that the Lord's Supper was to be eaten in the kingdom. Notice he set his "table" that they might eat and drink "at my table in my kingdom." If the kingdom is not now in existence, then nobody on earth has a right to eat the Lord's Supper and every premillennialist on earth who does so is guilty of presumptuous sin when he eats it. If we do not have the kingdom in existence now, then we can't have a table, converts, or anything else in what does not exist. It won't do to argue that the church is the "vestibule" of the kingdom. Jesus said nothing about putting his table "in the vestibule." He said it would be "in the kingdom." If the kingdom is not here yet, then we are deprived of the right to eat and drink at his table in his kingdom. Do you still think this is just a harmless speculation?

(5) Zech. 6:13 says, in prophesying about the Messiah, "and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne." The same time he sits and rules on his throne is the same time he serves as priest. Since we offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God by him who is declared to be our high priest, then he is either sitting as king and priest now or else we act presumptuously when we pray, and present our bodies a living sacrifice acceptable to God by him. Is he our high priest now? If so, then he is king now. If he is not king now, then neither is he priest now and we are robbed of prayer through him. Innocent theory? No, far from it.

Premillennialism is a grave error which perverts prophesy, makes God unfaithful to his word, robs us of the new birth, conversion, holds us in the power of darkness, denies us the right to eat the Lord's Supper and bereaves us of our high priest when we pray. Such a system is gravely in error. We must continue to oppose it with all our might.

• * * * * *

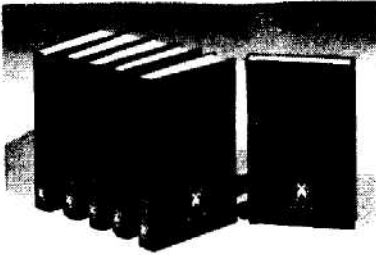
• **FLOYD THOMPSON CHANGES WORLDS**

It is with personal sadness that we take note of the death on Sunday, August 26, of Floyd Thompson of Santa Ana, California. This brother preached the gospel for over 45 years and was known and respected throughout the nation. He worked for many years with the Fairview church in Garden Grove, California. He was a source of stability and godly influence not only in southern California but wherever he preached. He was a great encouragement to young preachers. A large crowd was present to pay final respects and to hear the gospel preached. My own associations with him were limited but always pleasant and profitable. His name and influence for good is virtually a legend in the west. He helped to plan the August Fairview Lectures which closed two days before his death to cancer. I was one of the speakers (along with Paul Earnhart) and my five morning sermons dealing with shepherds and sheep were suggested by him as were the evening sermons by Paul Earnhart.

The passing of such men leaves a void in the ranks of gospel preachers. Younger men must lift the torch and carry it forward without faltering. Our deepest love and concern is expressed for his beloved wife, Ruth Thompson who also provides a most worthy example to teach the young women. If you wish to drop her a note of encouragement, her address is 429 Eastside Ave., Santa Ana, California 92701.

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WE HAVE BECOME STOIC

One of the chief characteristics of the ancient Stoics (Acts 17:18) was *ataraxia* which is a word meaning "freedom from emotions." The word, "Stoic," itself, means "not easily excited; unmoved by joy or grief." The Stoics strove to master their feelings in order that they would not be affected by any event, even personal tragedies in their lives. They presumed that peace could only be realized by total indifference or apathy toward all things. Their personalities, therefore, were cold and lifeless.

In over-reacting to emotionalism, some of us have taken on the spirit of stoicism. This is obvious as reflected in the atmosphere of our worship in many places. In every act of worship there is a dispirited participation. No feeling is reflected! From beginning to end it is bland, stereotyped and formal, with the environment of a morgue. Worship should be a joyous occasion where the spirit is lifted up and the heart is satisfied. Like David, we should be able to say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psa. 122:1).

Look at the typical, lethargic church in the exercise of its worship. There is a call to order by the song-leader announcing the number of a song. There is no introduction to worship, but simply, "number 200" ringing out through the auditorium. Again, you might hear, "number 2-0-0, number 200," as people begin to settle down.

Stoical Singing

The leader stands like a statue, head buried in the songbook, dragging along with the pitch an octave too high, and, a song that has been worn out by over-exposure. The singing is atrocious! But they finally work their way through the first song and the second one goes about the same way, except this time the song may be off key and way too low. After the singing of two songs (this has been the routine for 20 years), it is time to stand for prayer.

The third song has an "Amen" at the close of it, but no, you cannot sing that as it would show some emotion to say, "Amen," or it is too sectarian. I do not know what we are going to do with all of the "Amens" in the Bible. Well, anyway, the song is finished and the leader retreats to the back of the auditorium where he sits till the invitation hymn, and when that is ready, he makes his way up the aisle with a fifteen-second lull between the time the preacher stops and the song begins.

Brethren, song-leaders can make or break a service. How rich and uplifting is the worship when there is good singing—songs that warm the heart and brighten our hope. We need to use the best we have and train those who are inexperienced. But for some reason brethren will put anybody up to lead singing, frequently dressed in untidy clothes, and we wonder why people are getting turned off and quitting the church.

In a gospel meeting, brethren feel compelled to use a different song-leader each night, and some of them are not ready to conduct the singing. Brethren will send hundreds of miles for a preacher, spending 700 to 800 dollars for the meeting, and then greatly hinder it by not having the best man available to lead the singing. Preachers of years past brought song-leaders with them. They had great singing. Some places would be wise in bringing in a song-leader for gospel meetings and have a songfest each night for 25 or 30 minutes before preaching. What great meetings we would have if such were done.

Another thing, look at our faces when we sing. Some of us have a countenance that resembles a Missouri mule—long and forlorn. Certainly, there are sad songs, but many songs have a message of salvation and joy. Why cannot we reflect in our faces and actions such wonderful words? Is this another sign of stoicism?

Stoical Prayers

Sometimes prayers are uttered in rote—just empty sayings. Jesus had somewhat to say about vain repetition (Matt. 6:7). Spontaneity is lacking! The phrases used are the same expressions over and over. We need to ask, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Lk. 11:1). The model prayer of Jesus (Matt. 6:9-15) serves as an excellent foundation and guideline for prayer. We all could profit by studying the prayers of Paul (Phil. 1:9-11; Col 1:9-12) and pray in like-manner.

The brother leading the prayer should speak loudly enough to be heard by the entire assembly and when he finishes, there should be some "Amens." Paul said an "Amen" is in order at the giving of thanks, providing we understand what the brother said (I Cor. 14:16). We generally understand what is spoken but the "Amens" are rather scarce. Most of the time there is just the "Amen" of the brother leading the prayer. Again, an indication of stoicism. We might ought to do like the black brother in a white congregation when he closed his prayer. He said, "Now, let us all say, 'Amen.'" There was an overwhelming response.

Stoical Observance of the Lord's Supper

In the observance of the Lord's Supper, nothing is said, whatsoever to focus our minds upon the suffering and death of our Lord. At a given moment in the worship, perhaps after the third song, or after the invitation song, men come from all directions and line up at the table. A brother, without any explanation, begins giving thanks, and the bread is passed among the worshipers. The fruit of the vine is treated in the same manner. After the Lord's Supper is concluded, they grab the collection plates, also without explanation, and start down the aisles. By habit the members know what

is happening in sequence, but the visitors learn as it takes place and are somewhat unprepared.

Brethren, the greatness of Jesus and His unspeakable love demonstrated at Calvary deserves more from us than a hurry-up, frigid and petrified appearance at the Lord's Table. How refreshing to hear a brother give a brief talk that shows a feeling of gratitude for Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf. Then, when the Supper is finished and the contribution is ready to be taken, someone can talk about the privilege of giving and what God has done for us in a material way.

Stoical Preaching

Preaching, with not a few, has become "talks." There is not much preaching to it. The audience is asleep in about five minutes from a monotone and maybe a topic that is as irrelevant as the Pony Express. Preachers need to put some punch, "fire" and enthusiasm in their sermons instead of trying to act like a Harvard theologian. We are preaching to common people with every day common problems, hence, we need to gear our preaching to their common needs, and preach with all the vim and vitality we can "muster-up."

Have you noticed how gospel preachers are introduced, anymore? It might go something like this: "After singing of this song, George will bring us the lesson." With such exuberant (?) introduction, dull singing, and perhaps a stereotyped prayer and ritualistic communion, the audience is practically comatose by the time the preacher is ready to preach. May I add, what has happened to the affectionate designation, "brother?" Too, has the word, "sermon," become obsolete, or the expression, "preach to us," antiquated?

From the pulpit the preacher many times sees stonefaces, zombies, who sit emotionless. There is no response, no Amens, no nodding of heads, no expression of approval when the truth is preached. We have become too austere! Hearing Christ preached should excite us with jubilation and joy. It will show on those who are elated. It cannot be concealed.

Stoical Announcements

Finally, we do not want to overlook the announcements. They generally come at the end of the service. They are so abrupt without any continuity of worship. There is no mention how good it was to have been in the service, the blessings enjoyed, the sermon preached, etc., but far removed from the events that transpired, the brother starts with reading cold, hard facts. Warmth is missing.

The announcer proceeds to the sick and announces that "Bob Jones had surgery and is in room 240 at the local hospital." Brother Jones may be in critical condition, but there is no statement of concern, or request for prayers on his behalf. No feeling is expressed to his faithful family in the audience. This should not be. Some of us have gotten to the place where we cannot show emotions, shed tears of joy or sorrow and offer sympathy. Brethren, we MUST change!

On the other hand, thank God for vibrant churches and vigorous Christians who can sing "Sweet By and By" with tears of happiness, who pray with fervency,

who are touched with gratitude, and express it, every time the Lord's Supper is eaten and who appreciate gospel preaching and show it.

Those who have drifted into lethargy and coldness, need to be revived. Give us live, active, caring, Spirit-filled (Eph. 5:18) churches and Christians everywhere as we endeavor to serve the Lord in a world of sin.

The Mystery of Iniquity

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CATHOLICISM AND IDOLATRY

God has always forbidden idolatry, yet it is one of the oldest and most common practices on earth. Man has a propensity toward worshipping that which he can make, feel, see and serve. It seems difficult for him to appreciate or relate to a God that is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent—the true God of heaven.

The first two of the ten commandments deal with idolatry. God said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God. . ." (Exodus 20:3-5.) God meant what He said!

The passages of scripture dealing with idolatry are too numerous for us to mention in this study. We shall expect the reader to do some reading from the Bible.

In Psalm 115, we are given a vivid description of idols that are "the work of men's hands." The inspired writer says, "They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they but they see not (nor can they cry, E.B.): They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like them; so is every one that trusteth in them."

In Isaiah 44:10 we read, "Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing?" Remember now that an idol is profitable for nothing—any idol any place and any time! Then in verses 13 through 20 we have an interesting and incredible scene. The writer discusses a man who goes to the forest and cuts down a tree. With one part of it he kindles a fire to warm himself. With another part of the tree he kindles a fire to bake his food. We have all seen or experienced these uses of wood. But the use of the third part of the tree is difficult for us to understand. With that he

makes a god, a graven image, which he worships and calls on for deliverance. Remember that the idol is made of the same tree which was used for heating and cooking. It is hard for normal people to see any sense in that, isn't it? But wait now. Before you reject and criticize such a stupid practice, consider a more recent one.



Associated Press

Photograph shows alleged tears on statue's chin

This picture appeared in many of the nation's newspapers in June of this year, along with an article by the Associated Press from Chicago, headed, "Catholics Investigate Crying Statue." We quote from the article:

"A statue of the Virgin Mary that worshipers claim sheds tears has prompted an investigation by the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, as hundreds of the devout and the curious flock to the church.

"The investigation to determine whether there is a natural cause for the reported phenomenon at St. John of God Catholic Church began Friday at the request of Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, the archdiocese announced.

"The Rev. Ron Lewinski, head of the arch-diocesan office of divine worship said the Catholic Church is 'extremely cautious' in trying to determine the cause of such events and that it is 'extremely rare' for them to be declared miracles.

"The church isn't saying it's impossible. But before you present anything or anyone as an object of devotion, you better make sure it's worthy,' he said. Only the Vatican has the power to pronounce an event a miracle, he said.

"The statute was delivered to the church May 12 after having been carved in Italy. It depicts the Virgin Mary adorned with three carved roses.

"Thousands of people visited the church to see the figure, and at least one person said he saw it weep.

"The tear came down her cheek from her right eye,' said Richard Sopys of Chicago. 'You can't explain it, but it was there.'

" 'She's crying because she wants peace, and the world is full of sinners,' said Catherine Metlow. 'I believe in her if she cries or not.' "

That good lady really has the power of perception. Not only can she see the statue cry, but she can tell what it is thinking about! And in answer to Lewinski we ask: How can "anything or anyone" ever be a worthy object of our devotion?

The Catholic Church allows things like this to be reported through the years. One television network report observed that the contributions to that congregation had increased considerably following the report. But what we don't understand is how thousands of sensible people can believe that a piece of wood can cry! Could the same wood cry if it has been for fire wood or stove wood? Then why would it have the power to cry by being carved into a statute? It would have to be because God has given it life and approval, but we thought He had said, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." How could He approve that which He has forbidden?

We do not believe the report—not a word of it!

Catholicism is a system of idolatry. Go around any of their buildings—schools, hospitals, church buildings—and you will see statues everywhere. You even see them in their automobiles. Does any automobile insurance company believe that they have the power to prevent accidents?

They sometimes argue that they do not worship the statues. But do they believe that they have any power or spiritual or miraculous significance? If they do not so believe, then why have them? What good are they? And if they do worship or reverence them in any way and to any degree, they are guilty of idolatry.

When you see thousands of people march by that cold, dead, dumb statue and believe that they see it crying, you can understand why it is so difficult to teach them that it is wrong to sprinkle water on a baby, count beads, call men by such titles as "Father," believe in the infallibility of the pope, and many like things. They believe what they have been taught to believe and want to believe, "if she cries or not."

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (I John 5:21). Why? "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."

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ATTITUDE AND CONTINUAL CLEANSING

QUESTION: Does 1 John 1:7 teach continual cleansing of sins of ignorance for the Christian whose attitude of heart is right? I recently heard a preacher offer 2 Tim. 1:18 as proof of such forgiveness as saying that this verse shows that we, like Onesiphorus, will stand in judgment guilty of sins of which we are not aware and for which we will need the mercy of the Lord "in that day"—EP

ANSWER: 1 John 1:7 reads as follows:

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

2 Tim. 1:18 should be read in the light of its context:

"The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well" (2 Tim. 1:16-18).

From my study of the Bible, I have found only two laws of pardon—one for the alien and one for the saint. Both involve more than the right attitude of heart. For the alien the law is hear, believe, repent, and be baptized (Rom. 10:17; Mk. 16; 15,16; Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:27; 2:38). For the saint the law is repent, confess, and pray (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9).

I stand amazed at the somewhat desperate efforts of some to find a third law of pardon—one for the saint who sins ignorantly. Obviously, one cannot repent of some sin of which he is not aware, i.e., he has no knowledge that such is sin. He may have knowledge that certain things are sin and be conscious of guilt in such matters without recalling the particular time, place, circumstances—even the number of times the sin was committed—still, the knowledge he has enables him to repent. However, the one who sins not knowing that what he does is sin cannot repent nor confess his sin as per the requirement of 1 Jno. 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to

cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It should be observed that this verse is in the context of 1 Jno. 1:7 and accordingly is part of "walking in the Tight." This requires more than "the right attitude of heart."

Furthermore, there is a contradiction in the position set forth in the question submitted by the querist. If, in this life, one is continually cleansed of sins of ignorance on the basis of the right attitude of heart, he will not need mercy in the day of judgment for another cleaning of the same sins. One making this argument should make up his mind as to whether he is cleansed by mercy in this life or in the day of judgment—one does not prove the other.

Besides all this, the "mercy" of 2 Tim. 1:18 has no reference to forgiveness of sins "in that day." If so, the Catholic doctrine of praying for the dead is established. Yet, gospel preachers have refuted this doctrine of Catholicism through the years by pointing out that there is no proof that Onesiphorus was dead at the time Paul wrote. Paul's mention of the household of Onesiphorus and not Onesiphorus personally was done possibly because Onesiphorus was away from home and Paul knew it, or possibly Onesiphorus was dead, or possibly because of other reasons one might give, none of which can be established necessarily. Furthermore, the Scriptures teach that forgiveness of sins must take place in this life. The reward is based on "deeds done in the body" (2 Cor. 5:10). There was no hope for the rich man or his brothers beyond this life (Lk. 16:19-31). However, if "mercy" refers to the forgiveness of sins "in that day," then praying for the dead is very much in order (according to this example) because all will have died before standing in judgment (Heb. 9:27).

To what does the word "mercy" refer? Concerning this phrase in question, Adam Clark says, "It is probably only a Hebraism for, God grant that he may here be so saved by Divine grace, that in the great day he may receive the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

I am persuaded that the word "mercy" refers to the eternal reward, the basis of which is the mercy of the Lord and not our own merit. It is not uncommon for both "grace" and "mercy" to be used in such a way as to include particulars not mentioned specifically. This makes "mercy" a metonymical expression whereby the basis of the reward is put for the reward itself. Even if "mercy" refers to forgiveness of sins "in that day," it is used by metonymy—"mercy," the basis of forgiveness, being put for the forgiveness itself. There is Scripture for the former, none for the latter.

Please Renew Promptly

TRENDS IN TRANSLATIONS

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For some time I have considered writing an article on the subject of modern translations, or versions, of the Bible. I have procrastinated for a couple of reasons. First, I hoped that the activity in this field was a fad which may excite the world, but not affect the church adversely. Second, when I saw that the church was being influenced by these literary efforts, I hoped that someone better qualified than I would give attention to this blight. While some may be doing so, I think more needs to be said, so I will address the subject in a general way.

Trends

Anyone, with a reasonable amount of experience, knowledge, and perception, can recognize a trend, whether that trend be in politics, the environment, or religion. We have seen trends in discipline, marriage, dress codes, and in many other areas. In religion we have seen the trend away from spiritual emphasis, toward man's social and material well-being. Not much else was to be expected from religions which were conceived in the minds of uninspired men, and which have been perpetuated by the doctrines and commandments of men (Mt. 15:8-14). But, some trends have adversely affected the Lord's people, from Old Testament times until now.

There have always been those who did not think it proper to criticize a doctrine or a practice while it was in the trend stage, i.e., before it was full-grown, or before it bore fruit. Yet, others recognized the dangerous trends which began to surface in many areas, and properly sounded the trumpet of warning (Jer. 6:17), in spite of such labels as "antis" and "watchdogs of orthodoxy." The Bible teaches that everything brings forth after its own kind (Gen. 1:11ff; Jas. 3:11, 12), and Jesus said, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Mt. 7:20). I don't have to wait until a coconut hits me on the head before telling myself not to stand under a coconut tree during a wind storm!

The Translations

Again, I will leave the detailed examination of these pseudo translations, or versions, to others. But, any man, "whose eyes are opened" (Num. 24:3), can see problems and dangers resulting from the emphasis some have placed on these modern versions.

There may be at least two reasons for the popularity of new versions, and I strongly suspicion that there may be a third reason on the part of those who use such

versions. First, any publisher is going to sell as many of his Bibles as he can. Those who manufacture shirts and ties are not going to be satisfied if you are satisfied with your present shirt and tie. They will change the style of the shirt collar, or the tie, so you will be persuaded to buy new ones, and also a tie pin to match. The publisher of Bibles is likewise going to try to sell you a new Bible. If your old King James or American Standard translation is still in good condition (and some Bibles don't suffer from much wear), you are not a very good prospect for a new Bible. So, the publisher has to convince you that a new "version" is just the thing you need.

Second, there may be some subversive efforts on the part of atheists, agnostics, evolutionists, or other enemies of the Bible to alter the true text of the Bible. And, I know that some religious groups have produced versions which are more favorable to their own peculiar doctrines and practices.

While the aforementioned reasons may account for the production of said versions, I cannot account for the use of such versions in the church, unless a third reason for the popularity of such versions is considered, namely, the desire to impress others, or "be in style." I would like to think that many are sincerely seeking a more understandable text, as far as the teaching of the Bible is concerned, but I cannot reconcile this position with the facts.

The Results

Most preachers and teachers in the church will agree that thousands have learned, taught, and preached the truth from the King James and American Standard texts of the Bible. I'm not saying that these are the only faithful translations of the Bible, but their popularity in the past is unquestioned. And, while some may prefer the latter over the former, my observation is that the King James Version is going to be around for many years to come. I keep a copy of the American Standard and Revised Standard Versions on my desk for easy reference, and sometimes refer to them in my preaching. But, I learned to quote from the King James, and any attempt to change at this stage of the game would only confuse me and the audience as well. Which fact brings up another matter.

What is the result (fruits), of the emphasis given to these modern versions? Can preachers preach better? Do people understand better? I have seen young preachers attempt to read or quote from several of these new versions, and some cannot get one verse read or quoted correctly. The result is a mixture of several different versions, and both they and the audience appear to be confused. "How is it then brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Cor. 14:26, KJV). Let me suggest also that when a preacher thinks it necessary to refer to different versions, even those about which there is no controversy, let those in the audience, both members and non-members know what you are doing. Otherwise, after the audience has recovered from its initial surprise, you may get one yourself!

Brethren, we have some able and knowledgeable young preachers in the Lord's church today—let us not neutralize that condition by an Ashdodian attempt to "intrude into unseen things and new gimmicks, vainly infatuated by worldly knowledge and efforts to be profound" (Mixture of KJV, PJC, on Col. 2:18).

BREAD OF LIFE

"I am the bread of life. . . so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." Jno. 6:35, 57.

Herschel E. Patton

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RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

In the 5/19/84 Huntsville Times, there was a column by Michael J. McManus entitled "Are Religion Leaders Intolerant Of Other Faiths?". The Article deals with the complaint that religious people are at each other's throat all over the world. The religious conflicts in the Middle East, Ireland, and the Iraq-Iran War are listed as examples of religious conflict behind political and military clashes. Because of this, many have concluded that religion, rather than being "Bread of Life" is "Bread of Destruction".

Robert Muller, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations, when asked "Why has religion had such negative impact?", said "Each religion is so convinced that it has the ultimate truth, that they are willing to die for that truth."

Muller is interested in affecting some kind of union or tolerance between the religions of the world and has drafted a 10 point "Declaration Of The Oneness For The Human Family" that will be the centerpiece for dialogue by leaders of the world's six great religions; Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism, at a "Spiritual Summit" in New York and at the United Nations this Fall, beginning on Oct. 7. It is stated that these religion leaders at this Spiritual Summit will see if they can agree with the 10 principles set forth in Muller's Declaration.

Before looking at these ten principles which are thought to present a basis for peaceful coexistence of religions, let us look into the real cause for conflict.

Basis For Religious Conflict

Muller suggested the cause is that "each religion is convinced that it has the ultimate truth and they are willing to die for it". The dying here is not just giving up one's life for his faith, but causing others to die who oppose or refuse to accept this faith. This has always been a characteristic of human religions.

The first murder was the result of a religious conflict.

Cain substituted his own chosen sacrifice instead of the God-ordained one offered by his brother, Abel. When Cain's human way was rejected and he saw his brother accepted, he rose up against his brother and slew him (Gen. 4). Human wisdom (knowledge) "puffeth up" (1 Cor. 8:1) and leads to pride, envy, and strife. Human religions have never placed great value on life. Many require human sacrifices or the mutilation of the body.

True religion comes only from God. His truth has ever demanded respect for life. The command of Gen. 9:6 "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man", was to emphasize the value and worth of man. Other creations of God could be killed and consumed by man (Gen. 9:3), but not so with him who was made in the image of God. Shedding man's blood, in Hebrew, is "murder", and God does decree the death penalty to be administered by man for the murderer. Executing the murderer is killing, but not murder. God is not promoting His Cause in this, but simply assures those who would rise up against a brother and murder, in violation of God's will do so at the price of their own life.

The command in the Decalogue, "Thou shalt not kill" is literally "Thou shalt do no murder". Such has always been forbidden under the penalty of death. Under the New Covenant, the execution of the murderer has been put in the hand of civil powers (Rom. 13:4; Acts 25:11). Violence and conflict have never been the result of men following God's Will. Conflict arises when men forsake God and promote their own way, or godless men rise up against the righteous because they refuse "to run with them to the same excess of riot".

In the New Covenant, Jesus even forbids hate and malice in the heart that leads to murder (1 Jno. 3:15). When one who claims to be a Christian harbors and purposes in his heart evil, even violence, for another, he has already abandoned the cause of truth and right and may become an instigator and promoter of conflict. It is not the cause of truth that promotes the violence, but the abandonment of it, or the jealousy of truth haters.

The religious conflicts, past and present, that people point to as evidence of religion being the cause of strife, only embrace false or apostate religion and not that which is of God. The "Inquisition" of Catholic history was the result of apostasy within that system, not the practice of Christianity.

The only conflict that comes as a result of Christianity is the suffering and persecution of Christians, with no retaliation, at the hands of Christ rejectors. This is the kind of violence Jesus anticipated as the result of His coming, and the revelation of truth. He said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). He did not use the carnal sword to establish his cause for "when he suffered, he threatened not. . ." (1 Pet. 2:23). "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isa. 53:7). When Peter, a chosen apostle, sought to defend his Lord with the carnal sword, Jesus rebuked him and said, "Put up again thy sword into his

place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52).

The apostle Paul said of promoting Christianity "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4-5). Jesus forewarned his apostles, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord, If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me" (John 15:18-21).

The conflict that arises from the preaching of "truth" (Christianity) is mental, emotional, and domestic: carnal opposition from Christ rejectors and haters of truth. This, however, is lessened every time a mind is captured and Drought to the obedience of Christ.

It is not Christianity, the only God-revealed religion today, that promotes carnal resistance and retaliation; that promotes it's cause by violence to others: that leads protest marches with rock and bottle throwing and police clashes: that preaches civil disobedience: that harms people and property when they think wrong is being done.

The Only Remedy

Religious conflict exists only through human religions and apostate systems. There is no way to eliminate this through human Councils, made up of human beings filled with pride and jealousy. The only solution is complete abandonment of human systems and submission to the divine. Knowing this, God planned and divinely revealed Christianity, the only system capable of bringing about "peace on earth and good will among men". Realization of this will never be universal, but will characterize those who truly allow Christ to reign within their hearts; who become citizens of His spiritual Kingdom.

(An article to follow will look at Muller's 10 principles which he thinks presents a basis for coexistence and peace for people with different religions).

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It is always a sad thing to report on one who at one time has stood for truth and right but has now departed from teaching that truth; especially a fellow gospel preacher. However, be that as it may, we deem it necessary because of Romans 16:17, and because of conscience, to warn brethren about brother Darwin Chandler.

In October 1983, brother Darwin Chandler was informed by the elders of the House Street congregation in Alvin, Texas that his services as the local preacher would no longer be required. This was soon after the elders had asked Wayne Partain to come and preach on the "grace-fellowship doctrine" that is being taught by Carl Ketcherside, Arnold Hardin, R. L. Kilpatrick and others. Brother Chandler, according to the elders at House Street, had been preaching some of this "grace-fellowship doctrine" making a distinction in "gospel" and "doctrine" which the Bible does not make. It is also interesting to note that after brother Chandler was "fired" (his terminology) he told another gospel preacher that he called no less than Arnold Hardin to see if brother Hardin could help him find some support.

Brother Chandler is now preaching for the Jackson Street congregation, a liberal congregation, in Alvin. On March 25, 1984, brother Chandler preached a lesson entitled "How Did I Get Here?" in which he explains, in his own words, how he arrived where he now is.

In this article, we want to allow Darwin, in his own words, not only to tell you how he got where he now is, but also to tell you, in his own words, what he now believes. And, according to his own statements, he is where he is because, in our understanding of the Bible, he now teaches error on the Holy Spirit, and the worship and work of the church. In fact, we believe his statements are so far from the truth that only a brief explanation will be necessary on our part. We believe you will recognize immediately just how far from truth he had gone, and therefore we are simply going to quote from his speech and allow him to explain why he is where he is.

Led By The Holy Spirit

Brother Chandler tells of his seeking wisdom that he might know what the Lord would have him know, and as you will observe, no sectarian preacher could have given better testimony. Brother Chandler said, "I had believed for a considerable time, and preached, what the Bible says about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but I had never practiced it. I had never brought it out to any practical application in my life. So, for the first time on that trip home (from Odessa, TX JTS) in the fall of 1982

I said, 'Father, I believe you have given the Holy Spirit to dwell in your people for the sake of helping them to understand the scriptures, through whom you give them this wisdom if they ask, and I don't know how you do it, I don't care. All I want is this wisdom. Will you help me through the Holy Spirit? And brethren, for the first time in my life, in the fall of 1982, some things began to fit together.'

Nature Of The Church

"I learned in my studies of the nature of the church that the church is nothing more or less than the sum total of all those who have been immersed into Christ. That's all it is. That has staggering import as it relates to what we call the work of the church. Because, you see, if the church is simply the sum total of those who have been immersed into Christ, that means that the work of the church is anything that God gave as a special obligation to his people."

"... Well that immediately raised the question about the false distinction we have made for years between collective work and individual work; or individual work and local work. We would say, 'well God has given certain things to individual Christians to do, and He's given certain things to the local collective body to do, and they don't always match.' Now then, you know what I'm going to say every time I hear that? My good friend and brother will you just open the Bible and show me where that distinction is made at least just one time. (How about I Tim. 5:16 and Matt. 18:15-17, H.O.W.) You know where that came from? I didn't think you did. I don't either, even though I preached it for years. Somebody made it up. Somebody just plucked it out of the air. They said, oh, what the individual can do is not the same things as what the church can do. There's a difference between the work of the individual Christian and the work of the collective body. And I guess nobody ever said, 'prove it from the scriptures. Show that God makes that kind of distinction.' So what we did was take an opinion about that and divide the brotherhood over it. The Bible doesn't make any such distinction as that. Absolutely not. What God gave every Christian to do can be done by every Christian. Doesn't that make sense? How incredibly sensible that is. What God gave every Christian to do can be done by every Christian. And so, that makes orphan homes supported by the church legitimate because they can be supported by individual Christians. No distinction. Somebody made up the distinction and divided brethren over it. But it is not a distinction of the Bible.

"Also, there is the legitimacy of cooperative efforts. And that makes fellowship meals together legitimate. If we can meet, several families in our homes and several families on church property, or several families anywhere to eat together, we can do it as a whole body of people. They did it in Acts the second chapter, didn't they? I'll tell you something else, if we want to do it as a part of a worship service we can do it. Now I don't know how you feel about that, but you need to read I Cor. 11 and realize that what they were doing was having a worship service and either in close proximity to it or as a

part of it, they were eating a fellowship meal, and what Paul was doing was saying you've made such a mess of this thing that when it comes time in this process that you're gathered together as a church, read that, 'When ye are come together in the church' he says there are some problems here. Part of it was the way they were corrupting the fellowship meal. They had come together in the church to do that. Ask me now, ask me, 'Chandler, why couldn't you see that all those years?' Because I was blinded by legalism, that's why. I'd been told something different all my life. All I could see was what I'd been told. Somebody put those blinders on me, and I had no peripheral vision. The simple fact is, God did not tell us what to do with the money we collected in the church treasury. You don't think that's right? Well, consider the fact that in the first place in the New Testament you cannot read of a church treasury as such. Doesn't mean it's wrong. But try to read that if you like. Go on a hunting trip through the New Testament. It's scriptural, good, logical. The fact is, the only collection we can ever read about was taken up essentially by Paul and his cohorts to relieve the needy saints. Never took a collection for anything else that you can read about. What that means to me is, God doesn't much care about how we get the money. He just wanted us to get enough to do His Will. Get it how you want to, get it where you want to, and accomplish His will with it. And along with the fact that God did not tell us what to do with the money we collect, we can use it as our spiritual leaders direct. That's one reason why we have elders. To give us the wisdom, to give us some guidance in these areas where God has not specified.

"Not only that, but God did not restrict the method of doing our work, so we have an option. If we want to do it all by ourselves, we can do that. If we want to cooperate with another church, we can do that because God hasn't said how. He said here is what I want you to do. He didn't say how. He left it up to us under the leadership of spiritual men.

"I don't know how much you have thought about it brethren, but the basic difference between us and the non-cooperative brethren is that we disagree on methods of doing God's will, and they have made their method a matter of faith, and refused us as apostates because we've forsaken what they call the pattern, even though God says not one solitary syllable regarding the how of doing his will. They've found a pattern somewhere, yes. I preached the pattern. Before God I couldn't tell you what it is now. I used to know—used to think I did. They've found a pattern somewhere. Couldn't read it. It's all based on human devices, human explanations; arguments based on inferences etc. and they took those opinions and made them matters of faith and divided the body of Christ."

Well there you have it, brethren. Read it and weep—weep for one who has turned from the truth and who now ridicules those truths he once preached, and who like those of yesteryear have used these time worn arguments to try to "prop up" the missionary society, etc. May we all pray that brother Chandler sees the error of his way and returns before it is too late.

Building Better Families

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PARENTAL STUPIDITY

In more recent articles on parental responsibilities we have dealt with some implications of the Biblical statement. "Nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." In our last we pointed out that parental disagreement on proper disciplinary procedure may result in the ultimate breakdown of discipline and may even destroy a marriage. We also dealt with the effects produced by the five "IV of parental blindness—inconsistency, incompatibility, injustice, indulgence and indifference.

Several years ago I wrote Solving Family Problems, a booklet now out of print, in which I delineated seventeen points of "parental stupidity wherein reason is displaced by emotions, ignorance, or dullness of discernment." Practically all of these statements are positive. I bid my readers, particularly parents whose children are yet at home, to reflect upon these observations. In fact, if your children are yet with you, it would be well to copy or clip this out and place it where you can read it daily. If you are a grandparent, why not send these observations to your son and/or daughter?

Ponderable Points for Parents

1. True love always works for the child's ultimate welfare, not its temporary pleasure.
2. An act of a child which mars his character is incomparable to one which disturbs a parent's convenience or personal pleasure. Consider a child's lying, stealing, etc., along with parents' desire to golf, fish, party or even sleep.
3. A failure to punish a child after warning is (at least could be) a warning to parents that they will ultimately be punished by that same child.
4. Failure to teach a child self-reliance and initiative is to exchange strength for weakness, sturdiness for instability, independence for insecurity, bravery for cowardice and faith for doubt. It is to confuse rights with responsibilities and make hippies out of potential heroes.
5. Overdoing a child's accomplishments in his presence and to others is as destructive as failure to take note of his achievements at proper time and occasion. One "is as bad as the other if not worse!"
6. Failure to recognize the various stages of a child's

physical and social development and adjust "nurture" accordingly is to create a freak for the child's would-be buddies to ridicule, a misfit for family friends to pity and to produce a most embarrassing situation to explain!

7. Every "no-no" and every "yes-yes" should be prompted by love and each must find its explanation to the child by a parent who makes the child understand that he/she as a parent is amenable to God for his treatment of his child as is the child amenable to God for its treatment of the parent.
8. A child mature enough to ask an intelligent question is mature enough rightly to expect and receive an intelligent answer.
9. The child who is taught to pray that his parents may "nurture" him in the chastening and admonition of the Lord is learning the meaning of wisdom. "A wise son maketh a glad father."
10. Parental companionship with a child is the surest guarantee of child companionship with parents as the shadows lengthen.
11. The child who does not learn right from wrong from his parents will probably learn wrong through his associates.
12. Learning by earning is good for the head, heart and pocket-book. By failure to learn to earn one learns to be a dead-beat or a thief or both.
13. The child not allowed to entertain his friends at home will be entertained by them away from home and to his parents' great sorrow.
14. He who does not learn that he is to requite his parents misses a fundamental law of God. See 1 Tim. 5:4.
15. Parental disagreements in a child's presence creates confusion and distrust in the child and sets the stage for the child to use one parent against the other.
16. The child who learns truthfulness and honesty, dependability in responsibility, modesty and courtesy is building that "good name" which "is rather to be chosen than great riches" and the "loving favor" which is more valuable "than silver and gold" (Prov. 22:1).
17. Four steps guarantee absolute failure for parents: the wrong example, a lack of correction, a breakdown in communication, and no teaching of God's word.

NOTE: Parents stupid enough to overlook these perils make "F" on their report card and justly deserve the grade they receive.

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THE CHANGING SCENE

I am writing this in late August. Even now there is a hint of fall in the air. Fall is our favorite time of year. There is something grand about fall. Is it because there is such beautiful maturity all around us in nature? The countryside is filled with evidence that summer is past, crops are being harvested. Soon the pumpkins, shocks of corn, stacks of hay and changing color in the leaves will appear and we will have a lavishly colorful interlude before winter is upon us.

Life is kind of like that, you know. There is first the energetic forces of spring, the prime of summer, the harvest of fall, and the inevitable winter. This is a new kind of time for us. For the first time in thirty-two years we will not be preparing a child for public school or college. Now that will take quite some adjustment on our part. Although it was always a lot of hurry-scurry and always expensive to try to get the "bargains" on clothes and supplies, it nevertheless became a part of us and our life-style. Now it must change and we must fill it in with other things, events, and activities.

Nostalgia is a hard thing to handle some times. Yet in reminiscing we have a tendency to think mostly of the good things and of the good times. Surely there has been the other kind but who wants to think about that? There are so many things to be thankful for that to dwell on the other side of the matter would seem most ungrateful.

My father-in-law once said that the happiest times are when our children are around our feet. I believe he was correct. Then is when we have our greatest opportunity to mold them and shape them into vessels of honor fit and meet for the Master's use. So many parents are letting this wonderful time pass them by. When both parents work and the children are farmed out to sitters or day care centers, there is a strain on everything. Great and wonderful times and phases take place during these early years. They will soon pass us by and be gone forever.

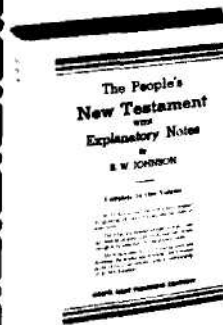
Looking back it is evident that our best times were not when we had the most money and "things". The best times were an assortment of little things. Trips to the Tampa airport on Saturday afternoon, cashing in gas coupons for free rides at the Super-test park, a ride on the causeway to Clearwater, trips to Virginia from wherever we happened to be living, fishing on the pier at Morehead City, cozy winter nights in West Virginia

while nature clothed the beautiful hills with a blanket of snow, picking and singing together, the new pup Jet, the black and white kitten we named Sputnik, going to gospel meetings here and there, trips back to Virginia at Thanksgiving to be with grandparents and parents, the Pennsylvania fairs and horse shows, Bryan's famous ice cream cones, teaching the kids how to drive (we also prayed a lot at such times), wonderful family gatherings at Christmas, our trip to Niagara Falls—all these and so many more rush into our thoughts now. Many of you who will read this will certainly relate and can substitute your own situation into the context. Surely there are a good many who know full well what this time of life is and what it brings about in our thinking.

Now is a time of transition for us and many others. The empty house will be full only on rare occasions and at special times. It is a time to re-evaluate, take stock and get ready for a new run in a different way. **We have not been this way before** as brother Homer Hailey emphasized in talking about the periods of our lives. In regarding it in this way we find the prospects both exciting and exhilarating.

My advice to those who are newly married and those who are starting their families is this. Make the most of your children while you can. All too soon that period of your life will pass and you will be back, the two of you, in an empty house. Yet, it need not be quite so empty if you have prepared a reservoir of beautiful memories to fill it. In that span of time hopefully you will have formed such a close relationship as man and wife that you can turn to each other. Then you can face the future hand in hand as one. This is God's arrangement. This is the changing scene!

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1. A mother died in Kentucky leaving five children. The word spread and within three days they had enough requests to adopt eighty-seven children.

2. A feature article in the Nashville Tennessean February 21, 1954 said there were ten couples registered for each child that was available for adoption in this country.

3. The Courier-Journal in Louisville, Kentucky on March 12, 1956 said one million families are asking for babies with only ninety thousand available.

4. George DeHoff agreed some years ago to put every child in the Tennessee Orphan Home in a good Christian family within thirty days. The Home refused to give him the permission. Many people today would still make the same proposition to Tennessee Orphan Home.

5. The Courier-Journal in Louisville, Kentucky announced April 8, 1956 that an eleven year old boy had run away from home. The report said 200 calls came in wanting to help with MANY requests to adopt the boy.

6. In a Texas town recently a baby was abandoned and the report said the switchboard was swamped with requests to adopt the baby.

7. In Longview, Texas February, 1965 two boys were abandoned and the paper said 120 calls came in in eight hours with other calls continuing to come in the following morning from people wanting to help these boys.

8. On January 10, 1963 a baby was abandoned on the door steps of a church in Birmingham, Alabama. They received more than 100 offers to adopt the baby.

9. A few years ago a twelve year old boy was lodged in jail in Georgia and the report said they had calls from all over the nation with many offering to adopt the boy.

10. The Orlando Sentinel reported on March 19, 1966 that a teen-age girl had been rejected by her family and that SIXTY families wanted to adopt her "sight unseen."

11. The Arkansas Gazette reported on November 24, 1962 that officials at St. Edwards Hospital received more than 100 inquiries to adopt an abandoned baby.

12. Less than two years ago Brother Connie Adams came to Huntsville, Alabama to conduct a meeting at Chapman Acres where I was preaching. He announced one night that he knew of two children who were available for adoption. Two families responded that night. But within the hour word came that they were already adopted.

As the judge said, out in Texas, "We need an orphan home like we need a hole in the head." And as I would say to our liberal brethren, "You need a scripture for what you are doing, if you would go to heaven when you die."

**"IT TURNETH ITSELF AS CLAY
OF A SEAL"—JOB. 38:14**

**Luther W. Martin
707 Salem Ave.
Rolla, MO 65401**

"Have you ever in your life commanded the morning, And caused the dawn to know its place; That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, And the wicked be shaken out of it? It is changed like clay under the seal; And they stand forth like a garment." (Job 38:12-14, New American Standard Version.)

"It turneth itself as clay of a seal." (Robert Young's Translation.)

"It is turned as clay to the seale." (King James Version, 1611 Edition.)

"It is turned as clay to the seal." (John Campbell's Edition, 1857.)

The use of moist clay and a seal or signet ring, was a basic means of "signing" or authenticating as genuine the message contained on a clay tablet in ancient times. The wet clay was inscribed with the message, and then the ruler or law-making official, would impress his ring into the wet clay; the clay tablet would then be turned or rotated, so that the signet ring's design made a pattern of concentric circles, which was specifically related to the shape of the stone of the signet ring.

Thus, Job was comparing the stationary position of the sun, to that of the signet ring; while the earth turns under the sun, like the clay tablet was rotated under the seal. However, for many, many centuries after the time of Job, the ancient peoples thought of the sun as rotating about the earth. They thought of the earth as the center of the universe . . . the 'geocentric' theory.

Most of our modern English versions fail to note the Hebrew word that really carries the thought of "changed by turning". Job thought of each day-break, as the beginning position of the turning of the clay under the seal. By rotating the clay to the point of beginning, you were repeating the daily change of the earth, through turning _____ in relation to the sun.

I urge students of the Scripture to go over the 38th Chapter of Job "with a fine toothed comb", and see just how many hidden predictions and prophecies are contained in that one Chapter, that make reference to the many scientific discoveries concerning the earth and the universe, that man has stumbled across in later centuries.

Only the Inspiration of Heaven could have dictated the contents of that Chapter, as well as the rest of Holy Scripture.

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

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TRUMAN SMITH, 115 West "F" Street, La Porte, TX 77571—Pat and I have now moved to La Porte, Texas after serving five years with the church in Henderson, Texas. All readers of this paper, please make note of our new address above. We are optimistic about our work with the Broadway church. Clarence Johnson laboured with this church for 9 years, but has recently moved to work with the church of Exton, Pennsylvania. Every indication is that the work will go forward. La Porte is located a few miles east of Houston and just south of Bay-town. Our building is at 704 South Broadway. We meet on Sunday for Bible study at 10 A.M., worship at 10:50 A.M. and evening worship at 6:30 P.M. Wednesday evening classes are at 7:30. When in the area, please stop in and visit with us.

WARNING

L. A. STAUFFER, 1716 Dover Trace Dr., Fenton, MO 63026—Brethren should be warned against extending benevolent help to David Abbott (his wife and brother-in-law), an unworthy brother who is contacting churches in the midwest (St. Louis and Kansas City). Brethren may contact me or Don Moore for full information. My phone numbers are (314) 225-5898 or 821-4910 and brother Moore's are (314) 849-1081 or 842-1612. He seems to be contacting conservative churches.

JERREL STURDY, 512 N. 10th Street, Ponca City, Oklahoma 74601—I am in need of the following books, should any reader have them and be willing to sell them: Autobiography of Daniel Sommer by William Wallace; Humble-Garrett Debate on the located preacher and Bible colleges; Introduction To the Scriptures by Thomas H. Home. This five volume set was reprinted by Baker Book House in 1970. My phone number is (405) 765-8593.

GENE TAYLOR, 3575 Picket Court, Tallahassee, FL 32301—The first Sunday in July I began working with the Westside church in Tallahassee. Since 1977 I have been working in southwestern Indiana, first in Evansville and for the last three and a half years in Mt. Vernon. The Southwind church in Mt. Vernon engaged in studies with the institutional church in Mt. Vernon which resulted in three families leaving that group and placing membership with Southwind. Included in that number is Jeff Adkins who had been their preacher. The Southwind church, seeing his desire to renounce error and preach truth, now supports him in the work of an evangelist. They are to be commended for giving this young preacher the opportunity to grow

and mature. He is a young man of conviction and ability.

I look forward to a profitable and pleasant association with the brethren at Westside. Our building is located at 2150 Belle Vue Way in Tallahassee. Service times on Sunday are 9:30 A.M.; 10:30 A.M. and 6 P.M. Wednesday nights at 7:30. When visiting in northwest Florida, or attending Florida State University, or if you have a son or daughter going there, please contact us. We will provide information and transportation to service for those needing it. Our phone number is (904) 576-4010.

FERRELL JENKINS, 9211 Hollyridge PL, Temple Terrace, FL 33617—After fifteen years of teaching Bible at Florida College, I have resigned to begin full-time preaching with the Carrollwood church of Christ, 13345 Casey Road, Tampa. I am already in my third year of work at Carrollwood. The church has an attendance of about 100, a good teaching program, and two fine elders. Opportunities abound due to the tremendous influx of young families into the Tampa work area. The brethren here agreed for me to continue with some meetings each year and to conduct my tours. For 1985 I have planned a Bible Lands tour to include the seven churches of Revelation, an area that I personally visited this year, and a tour of Scandinavia. About fifteen of my publications are available from Religious Supply Center. I have discontinued personal distribution of them. Taped sermons are available from The Spoken Word, P.O. Box 127, Greenville, IN 47124. Address me at my residence.

PREACHERS NEEDED

LAKE BUTLER, FLORIDA—The Danville church, located in Union County near Lake Butler, about 25 miles north of Gainesville, Florida needs a preacher to work with us. We have about 30 in attendance and our building is paid for. The church has been in existence for about five years. We would prefer someone with experience and able to do personal work. He would need some outside support since we can supply about \$1000 per month. Contact us at Rt. 2, Box 796, Lake Butler, FL 32054 or call one of the following: Charles Blackwelder (904) 496-3859; Leonard Bivins (904) 496-2198; Roger Blackwelder (904) 496-3515.

GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN—Since Jim Smelser has moved to work with the church in Glen Elyn, Illinois, the church in Green Bay needs a full-time preacher. The congregation is small, with about 30 members, and can provide partial support. The church is sound and willing to work. Those interested may write the church at 1621 Hillcrest Dr., Green Bay, Wisconsin 54304, or call Keith Bucklew at (414) 497-4651.

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE—The Bell Road church located in south Nashville is looking for an evangelist to work with us. We have approximately 80 members and are self supporting. We desire a mature family man who is well grounded in the truth. Please send resume to 1608 Bell Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37212. Cal (615) 833-4928.

PULPIT FURNITURE NEEDED

The church in Bridgeview, Illinois is trying to secure a used pulpit and matching communion table. Blond wood coloring is desired, possibly oak. If you have such furniture for sale or exchange, please contact Ray Madrigal at (312) 563-1819 or Lee Bolden at (312) 598-5760.

URGENT NEED

D. D. ISONG UYO, faithful preacher for many years in Lagos, Nigeria, passed away on August 30 at Norton's Hospital in Louisville, Kentucky where he had been a patient for seven weeks or more. He had cancer which destroyed his vocal cords and was sent here in the hope that he could get care not available in Nigeria. Nigerian brethren provided his plane fare to this country. He appeared to be making good progress until he suffered a stroke. Leslie Diestelkamp, Paul Earnhart and others who worked with him in Nigeria, speak highly of this brother. His death represents a great loss to the work in Nigeria. Brother Diestelkamp was here with him when he had his first surgery and many Louisville area brethren visited with him. The cost of his care here is enormous. It is likely that the hospital and Doctors will discount the bill considerably, but even with that it will come to \$50-\$60,000. Dale Proffitt, 3302 Tara Ct., LaGrange, KY 40031 (phone 502-241-4029), a member at LaGrange and a vice president of a local bank, has agreed to act in his behalf. He tells me that about \$25,000 has been received to date, mostly as a result of appeals sent out by Leslie Diestelkamp. If you would like to help or need information about the matter please contact Dale Proffitt.

* * * * *

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

"SIR, WE WOULD SEE JESUS."—Paul Earnhart and I were recently on the Fairview Lectures in Garden Grove, California where Floyd Thompson preached for so many years. Every time we arose to speak, the statement which heads this paragraph greeted us as we laid our Bibles on the pulpit stand. It was neatly stenciled on a piece of wood and affixed to the stand right below the microphone. It is a most appropriate sentiment for all men who preach.

FRINGE BENEFITS.—One thing not always considered in arriving at what would be adequate compensation for a preacher, is the "fringe benefits" common to the wage earner in the industrial world. But there are other fringe benefits. One of the fringes in my work is getting to spend some time with other gospel preachers with whom I work during meetings, or those in that area who come to visit and discuss the things of God. My life has been greatly enriched by being in the homes of devout Christians across this land. In August I was able to

work with Jack Nunn at Ridgeway, Virginia, Jim Price and Steve Goff in Kaysville and Salt Lake City, Utah and Ken Dart in Garden Grove, California. One of the richest fringes I have had in a long time was getting to hear Paul Earnhart preach 10 times in one week and added to that, staying at the same house where he stayed. His series on "True Spirituality" was rich indeed, and his evening series on "Seeking the Lost" was faith building and challenging.

We have our problems and disappointments, major issues and minor skirmishes, but it refreshes me to know there are a host of good brethren across this land who are simply trying to serve the Lord in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation and who want to go to heaven more than anything else. Among them are fanners, miners, teachers, bankers, factory workers, real estate agents, business owners and hourly wage earners. They share their meals, homes and hearts with those of us who preach the gospel. They work all day, rush home, eat quickly, change clothes and rush off to hear the gospel preached. They bring their neighbors, friends and relatives to hear the word of God. Their children get tired, have homework, ball games and other interests, but they are there when you arise to speak. They are refreshing Christians. What would we do without them?

* * * * *

GOD'S TAPESTRY

Every year about this time. Throughout the regions of our clime, Where'er a tree or shrub is found In quiet corners of our town In hidden nooks and countryside In forests thick and meadows wide,

God works a golden tapestry Which He displays for all to see. He works a little gold and brown Then scatters flaming orange around; A hint of russet here and there Then brilliant scarlet everywhere.

The pattern changes day by day As deep blue skies are changed to gray. And when His needlework is done He pulls the threads out one by one Till soon this glorious work of art Is swallowed up in winter's dark.

—Betty Tope

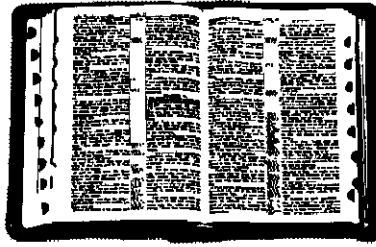
NN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	308
RESTORATIONS	121

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

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 XXV

NOVEMBER, 1984 NUMBER 11

Things Most
Certainly
Believed

Julian R. Snell
4724 E. Manslick Road
Louisville, Kentucky 40219



PREACHERS AND PREACHING

In the interest of better relationship and understanding between preachers and congregations, even at the risk of being charged with grinding a personal axe, some things are herein offered which have needed saying a long time. The relationship formed between preachers and congregations should be the most lofty of those established among men. In fact it should epitomize the finest of human qualities such as trust, compassion, concern, friendliness, love and all other such admirable and desirable aspects of wholesome human relationships. The degree to which these are present within a given relationship lends itself to success or failure, growth or decline. Only as each determines to make the relationship of the best quality can it be so.

Let us look at this aspect. A preacher is invited to move into a new community and do the work of evangelist. Superficial investigation is made of the necessities, housing, schools, civic and social atmosphere, and the like. Being acquainted with few, if any, it is likely this has to be done via any available means and for the most part it is a stumbling blindly. The preacher then uproots his life and the life of his family, ties are broken, familiar patterns and comfortable life style is interrupted for the new and untried. When viewed from this standpoint the only people likely to be affected are the preacher and his. Members of the congregation have undergone no upheaval. They do not have to start over in giving some root and stability to life at the material and physical level. Let us not forget the need for emotional re-establishment essential to the well being of children

especially, but adults as well. In fact, the congregation has to adjust to only one family, become acquainted with and accept them, befriend or remain aloof, while for the preacher and his there are many, all of which are expecting immediate acceptance at face value. For them, one name to learn, the preacher and his have to learn many and so, on and on and on.

Then there is the thinking on the part of some that the preacher is not a permanent fixture, he will need to soon move on and so we don't worry about his becoming too comfortable and secure. Some even talk about a year to year relationship between the church and the preacher. Borrowed that from the sectarians, I guess, their practice being to assign a preacher for a year at a time to a place. This results in a situation where the preacher is held at arm's length, he is never allowed to become really close, be a part. Someone has said in the corporate field, "Its lonely at the top", a point well taken. But why does it have to be? Recognizing the possibility of fault on both sides, with the preacher and the congregation, either or both, surely is half the problem at least. Can't we work on it and make the relationship more stable?

There is no doubt that preachers will continue moving and congregations will basically remain the same. Yet there is continuing hope that better relationships can be established. Treatment of younger preachers will go a long way toward encouraging them and stabilizing their decision to preach, making them glad they did. In some cases a re-evaluation of relationships will certainly work for the better and enhance growth and progress. Sadly, there are some congregations which do not deserve to have one laboring in word and deed among them due to their ungodly treatment of preachers and unsupportive attitude. To levy such an indictment of necessity, if we are to be honest, requires admitting that some preachers do not deserve a congregation with whom to live and labor. Presuming a work of truth, kindness one to another is the point we seek to establish. In all, "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32).

I have found most younger preachers are reluctant to express themselves in these tender areas, there was a time when I was too. However, problems must be ad-

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(See instruction on reverse)

(Continued from Page 1)

dressed, shortcomings corrected that things of faith may become stronger. To acknowledge failure and disappointments in brethren, even expect treatment that is not what it ought to be, is not necessarily cynical. It is to admit the strength of the fleshly and the need to overcome. Most preachers will not be discouraged to the point of despair, even when brethren fail them so miserably. Why? They have determined to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. Their trust is ultimately in God, he is faithful. Like the old preacher once said, admittedly unappreciated by me at the time, "I don't have too much confidence in the brethren, but in the Lord I trust implicitly". It is with that kind of trust one is resolved to preach the word and we encourage all others with any such inclination or aspiration to do likewise. The end is not yet.

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Editorial

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RECEPTION OF OUR AUGUST SPECIAL ISSUE

The reception given our August special issue on the New International Version surpassed all expectations. To date, 9,500 copies have been sold. Our second printing of 2,500 copies was sold out before we received it from the printer. At present we have no plans to reprint it. Orders came from Alaska to Florida and from Virginia to California and points all in between. The material was prepared and sent forth for the benefit of ordinary folks, and "the common people" heard us gladly.

As expected, we received some criticism in private letters and several articles were received reviewing the material. Most of these made about the same points as those dealt with in the article in this issue by Dudley R. Spears. I decided that brother Spears had done as well as any of the others and better than most in stating objections to the article by Dorris and Donnie Rader and that he had written in a good spirit. We think the response to his article from the Raders is gracious and reflects the attitude which Christians should manifest when they are under fire. Please read carefully what each has to say in this issue. If brother Spears feels the need to make an additional response he may do so. The same courtesy is offered to the Raders. Beyond that, we will put the matter to rest and move on to other things.

I must comment on the nature of some of the reviews we received. Some were written from intellectual pinnacles with the writers talking down to us. Some imputed dishonest motives to us. Some were scornful of our "ignorance." All of the reviews of this nature were also very hostile to the King James Version and the Textus Receptus and some were as critical of the American Standard Version. Several writers vigorously defended the "dynamic equivalence" approach in translation. Some either stated or implied that the task of knowing exactly what was in the original is so difficult that no present text adequately does that. If that is so, then we really do not have access to the mind of God in this age. I think we have struck a very sensitive nerve here and have brought to light a dangerous spirit which bears watching in the future.

PRICE INCREASE IN JANUARY

We regret the necessity to increase our subscription rate to \$9 a year effective January 1, 1985. The last

increase in the price of our subscription was in January, 1979. We meant to make an increase in rates in January, 1983 but held off because of the recession then upon us, thinking it would impose a hardship on some of our readers. Since the last subscription rate increase our printing costs have increased by 28% and we have had several increases in postal costs and face another postal increase in 1985. Other monthly subscription papers have been higher-priced than STS for quite some time. While we regret the need for this decision, we also respect the realities that face us. We believe our readers will clearly understand the problem and respond accordingly.

Our new club rate will be \$7.50 each in clubs of four or more sent at one time. Our bundle rate will be 12 for \$6 and 24 for \$12. Group subscriptions will be 12 for \$6 and 24 for \$12.

ON TEXTUAL VARIATIONS

The following is quoted from INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA, Volume V, page 2955: "Dr. Ezra Abbott was accustomed to remark that 'about nineteen-twentieths of the variations have so little support that, although there are various readings, no one would think of them as rival readings, and nineteenth-twentieths of the remainder are of so little importance that their adoption or rejection would cause no appreciable difference in the sense of the passages in which they occur,' Dr. Hort's view was that 'upon about one word in eight, various readings exist supported by sufficient evidence to bid us pause and look at it; about one word in sixty has various readings upon it supported by such evidence as to render our decision nice and difficult, but that so many variations are trivial that only about one word in every thousand has upon it substantial variation supported by such evidence as to call out the efforts of the critic in deciding between the readings.' The oft-repeated dictum of Bentley is still valid that 'the real text of the sacred writings is competently exact, nor is one article of faith or moral precept either perverted or lost, choose as awkwardly as you will, choose the worst by design, out of the whole lump of readings.'"

Peter said the word of God is incorruptible seed, "which liveth and abideth forever." He further said "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:23-25). It is by the word of the gospel that both Jew and Gentile are to be saved, if saved at all (Rom. 1:16). We must all be very careful lest we make loose statements which encourage doubt rather than faith in the inspired word of God. The salvation of souls is at stake. Every issue of doctrine and practice, every moral precept, hinges upon having at hand in our language translations which are reliable. Frankly, I am suspicious of the work of those who preface their translations with the complaint that such translations as the King James Version and the American Version are "too mechanically exact." If language means anything, that means that those who so complain do not intend to be

"too mechanically exact" in their work. That does pose a threat to doctrine and morals.

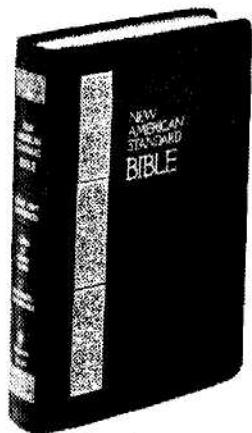
CORRECTION

In the August, 1984 special issue of *Searching The Scriptures*, the last paragraph of section: "The Basis Of A Translation," I made the statement: "Their work is one of the most accurate and accepted standard Greek texts known. Not one acceptable Greek text published since Westcott and Hort Text has materially differed from it." Westcott and Hort Greek Text does not enjoy such a position. This is not an accurate statement. I retract it completely.

I violated one of my own rules in writing. I did not check the source material before sending it to the press. Thirty years ago I had done the research for some lessons on the origin of the Bible and some modern translations. From these notes I made the above statement.

H.E. Phillips

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A RESPONSE TO CRITICISM OF THE NIV

Dudley Ross Spears
Alvaton, KY

This response is submitted in the interest of truth, correctness and fairness. It is prompted by an article entitled, "The New International Version (or Pseudo-Version)" co-authored by Dorris and Donnie Rader. It is not submitted with either personal feelings against the authors or with wholesale endorsement of the New International Version Bible (NIV). There is simply too much misleading and erroneous information given to allow it to pass without notice. The end of the critical article smacks of pleading for an imprimatur or nihil obstat to be placed on the King James Version (KJV) and the American Standard Version (ASV). I am sure neither the authors nor the editor of *Searching the Scriptures* intends for that to be the case, however.

The article to which this response is directed had some excellent observations regarding the translation of certain words that appear in the NIV. The objection to the bias that seems to lie beneath the translation of such terms as "sinful nature" is legitimate. Beyond that, however, much that is offered by brethren Raders is simply untrue. Please consider a few of them in the spirit in which this response is submitted. My only interest is in truth, correctness and fairness.

A criticism is offered against the NIV's translation of Luke 1:3. The critics allege that the NIV casts doubt on Luke's inspiration because it is translated, "I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning." Elsewhere in the article the ASV is commended as a translation that when read will assure the reader what was in the original text. (They quoted Clinton Hamilton to this effect and endorsed his statement.) Look at the translation given in the ASV. It says, "having traced all things accurately from the first." What is the difference in meaning? If the NIV casts doubt on Luke's inspiration, so does the ASV. They endorse the latter and reject the former and they both say the same thing.

Objection is registered to the NIV's translation of a passage identifying Simon Peter. They claim that the NIV makes Peter the son of two fathers. True, the NIV says in Matt. 16:17 that Peter was the "son of Jonah. In John 1:42 it says he was the son of John. But look at the recommended ASV. In Matt. 16:17 the ASV says, "Simon, Bar-Jonah" (Bar meaning "son") and in John 1:42, the ASV says, "Simon son of John." If the NIV makes Peter the son of two different fathers, why does not the ASV do the same? Why is one criticized in this passage and the other recommended?

An even greater blunder was made in criticizing the NIV's rendition of Luke 2:22. They say that the NIV

makes it appear as if Jesus needed purification, but that the KJV, the ASV and the New King James Version (NKJV) show it was only Mary who needed purification. They object because they say the NIV uses "their" and the others use "her." Either my ASV Testament is a misprint or faulty, or they haven't done their work as well as brother Adams thinks they have. My ASV says, "And when the days of their (my emp. DRS) purification ..." Again, the ASV has what the NIV has, but the NIV is criticized and the ASV is endorsed.

The authors rightly warn about the serious consequence of tampering with the word of God. Yet, their remarks about Acts 9:6 are not at all congruous with that sentiment. They claim that the NIV perverts the truth on Acts 9:6 due to the omission of the part that reads, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do." They conclude someone tampers with the word of God by omitting this. The truth of the matter is that there is no Greek text which includes it. It is a translation from Latin back into Greek, likely added by Desiderius Erasmus around 1515 A.D. Consult any textual manual and you will see this. A book advertised on the back of Searching the Scriptures as "The most up-to-date information about newly discovered manuscripts of the New Testament," says:

"Even in other parts of the New Testament Erasmus occasionally introduced into his Greek text material taken from the Latin Vulgate. Thus is Acts ix. 6, the question which Paul asks at the time of his conversion on the Damascus road, 'And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?', was frankly interpolated by Erasmus from the Latin Vulgate. This addition, which is found in no Greek manuscript at this passage (though it appears in the parallel account of Acts xxii. 10), became part of the Textus Receptus, from which the King James version was made in 1611."

(The Text of the New Testament, Metzger, B. p. 100) And there is even more, for the ASV also omits the question Saul is supposed to have asked. If the NIV is at fault, why is not the ASV? Here is a case where the evidence seems to show that the question is an addition to the text rather than a deletion. Which version tampers with the word of God?

The translation of Acts 26:28 is criticized as "perverting the truth," Because the authors of the criticism think the passage teaches that Agrippa was "almost persuaded to be a Christian," and because the NIV says, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?", the NIV is in error. Again, they accuse the ASV of teaching something different from the NIV, but read the ASV. "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian." That could have as easily been a question, or an expression of surprise, or even disgust, as it could have been a simple statement. There are no punctuation marks in the Greek texts available to us. If Agrippa were indeed on the verge of obeying the Gospel, why did Paul not proceed further to persuade him? (2 Cor. 5:11). Brother

J.W. McGarvey has the obvious truth on the matter. He wrote:

"The remark shows that Agrippa saw very clearly the aim of the apostle. It is to his credit, being a Herod, that he did not take offense at an obvious attempt of the kind. It was evidently embarrassing to him; but while he turned it off in this cool manner, he evidently regarded Paul with a respect far beyond that ever entertained for an apostle by any of his successors." (New Commentary on Acts, p. 258).

Brother McGarvey also noted in a footnote that the translation of "almost" in the KJV is in error. McGarvey used the ASV as the standard translation in his commentary. If the NIV perverts the truth, so does the ASV. But the NIV is rejected and the ASV recommended.

Just about all the comments about the footnotes in the NIV can be made about the ASV and NKJV. These notes merely mention the presence or absence of certain words, phrases or passages from certain manuscripts. The manuscripts we have are copies of other manuscripts and some of them are translations of the Latin Vulgate. The absence of a word or a passage from one of the available manuscripts does not argue its absence or presence in the original autograph, the actual letters and writings of inspired men. Please read again Connie Adams' remarks about quotation from the patristic writers, older versions and other textual materials. All of this material must be considered in determining the Greek text of the New Testament.

The charge is made that the NIV is based on a "faulty text" of the original language. One is made to wonder if the authors of the criticism know which Greek text is without fault. If they do, I (for one) would really like to know about it. A blunder is made that indicates that more work needs to be done on textual matters. They equate the "Majority text" with the "Textus Receptus." (See their article, p. 182, 2nd par.) The Majority Text is not the same as the Textus Receptus. The Majority Text is much more. It is also inaccurate to say that the KJV was translated out of the Textus Receptus. As a matter of historical record, the Textus Receptus came to its current form in 1633. It got the title from the preface of the text from the Latin expression, "**Texturn ergo habes nunc ab omnibus receptum.**" That means, "You have, thus, a text now received by all." Some twenty years after the KJV was published, the Textus Receptus was finalized. For a full story, we must consider this man named Erasmus a bit more.

In 1502, a Catholic Cardinal named Gonzalez Ximenes de Cisneros, later known simply as Cardinal Ximenes, prepared a polyglot (many tongued) Bible. He had the New Testament prepared in Latin and Greek. In 1515 he had it all ready for publication but could not get endorsement from the Catholic Church. He died before endorsement and approval came. In the mean time, some scholars in Switzerland learned of his work. A publisher named Froben planned to publish it. He secured the services of Desiderius Erasmus of Rotter-

dam, Holland. In seven months, Erasmus got a Greek Text together of the New Testament. When he came to Revelation, he could find no Greek text that was complete. So, he went to the old Latin Vulgate, translated the missing text from Latin back to Greek (along with Acts 9:6) and had his Greek text.

With the use of the Erasmus text, the Beza text, the Latin Vulgate, and other available manuscripts, the forty-eight translators of the KJV began their work. They selected the best possible textual materials and used them all in their translation. This was the eclectic method. The charge was made against the NIV that it is based on an eclectic text. The same is true with the KJV and ASV. Incidentally, the Erasmus text was slightly modified by two scholars named Stephanus and Elzivir to be part of the Textus Receptus. This became the basis of the KJV and Martin Luther's German translation. To criticize the NIV as having been translated from a faulty text by the eclectic method and not say the same about the KJV is unreasonable and wrong.

Eclectic means selecting the best from all available sources. That is what was done when the ASV was translated. It was done by the NKJV scholars. In fact, that is what the Majority Text is—an eclectic text. The haphazard way in which the KJV text was formulated cannot happen today. Many more manuscripts have been located in the interim time period from 1607 to the present. There is not a better system of selecting a more accurate text. If anything is true, the Majority text, and the Westcott-Hort text are based on much more accurate research than was possible in the 1500-1600 period of time. But again, which is the text that today exists without faults?

Brother Clinton Hamilton is quoted as saying, "Always read either the King James or American Standard so you know what was in the original." Brother Hamilton may have made that statement, but from the view this writer has had of him over thirty years, it sure doesn't sound like the Clinton Hamilton I know. But even if he said it, it is not true. I believe he would want to define some things in that sentence. It is not possible by reading any version to be sure of what was in the original. We believe the truth, based on what information is available. In fact, it is a matter of faith. A God powerful enough to reveal Himself, is equally competent to preserve what He reveals (1 Pet. 1:25). Our faith should not be in some translation, some version of the Bible, but in an infallible God (1 Cor. 2:5). There are too many weaknesses in any work of fallible man to think otherwise.

If one can read the KJV and realize that when Luke reports the intention of Herod to keep Peter in jail until "after Easter," and recognize here an obvious error—yet endorse the KJV—surely the same thing could be done with any translation. The fact is, that even though there are variations in many translations, the same message of truth prevails. This is not to endorse the wide use of the NIV. These few comments have been made solely in the interest in correcting some errors. If there are errors in this response, like the Raders, I

would also appreciate hearing from the readers of this paper.

A REPLY TO DUDLEY ROSS SPEARS

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Elsewhere in this issue you will find an article by Dudley Ross Spears in response to our material on the New International Version which appeared in the August special issue. Please read his article before reading this one.

We certainly cannot object to someone criticizing our material, since we recognize that we are subject to making mistakes as well as anyone else. This gives us an opportunity to reconsider some points and recognize our weaknesses. We have no disposition to simply win a point or justify a stand simply because we have taken it.

Let it be understood that we were not trying to speak for the brotherhood. Nor were we speaking for Searching The Scriptures. We were simply speaking for ourselves. Each reader has the responsibility to weigh the evidence and accept or reject the points accordingly.

Don't Overlook The Main Point

Let us appeal to the readers of this paper that you not overlook the main thrust of our article. It was to alert readers to some real dangers in the NIV. Even with some legitimate objections made by brother Spears (and he does have some), our material as a whole still stands. Where we believe that brother Spears is right, we do not hesitate to say so. Where we believe he is wrong, we will do the same. Even if our brother should be right in every criticism that he made, the reader should not conclude that the NIV is then a good translation. The reader will recall that we exposed the NIV on original sin, Premillennialism, "sinful nature" and other fundamental points. Brother Spears' article is surely not to be taken to justify these.

We Were Not Reviewing The ASV

Brother Spears repeatedly asked why we criticized the NIV and recommended the ASV when the latter has some of the same renderings as the former. The article was not reviewing the ASV. The translation under examination was the NIV. Although the influence of Westcott and Hort is seen in the ASV, it is not flavored with Calvinism, Premillennialism and other sectarian biases as is the NIV.

Spears Has Recommended The NIV

Though our brother says, "It is not submitted . . . with wholesale endorsement of the New International Version Bible (NIV)" and "This is not to endorse the wide use of the NIV", this does not mean that he hasn't recommended it as a good translation. It seems that he

places the NIV equal with the ASV and equal with or above the KJV.

Brother Spears has given the NIV his approval in time past. In the January 31, 1980 issue of Truth Magazine he listed the NIV as one of the translations that he recommended "because they are reliable in translation (as far as my limited knowledge of the original languages go)." He further said that one could read these without fearing they are "some ridiculous perversion of God's word." He classifies some translations as "completely unreliable and need exposure as outright error." He does not put the NIV in this class. However, in all fairness to brother Spears, he does object to the NIV's rendering of "sinful nature" in the same article.

Imprimatur Or Nihil Obstat Placed On The KJV And ASV?

Brother Spears claimed that "The end of the critical article smacks of pleading for an imprimatur or nihil obstat to be placed on the King James Version (KJV) and the American Standard Version (ASV)." That is simply not true. We in fact urged brethren to use other translations for comparative study. We said, "Neither are we saying that it is wrong to use modern translations for comparative study" (Special Edition, p. 175). We did say that "the NIV and many others should not be used as one's main study Bible" (ibid. pp. 175, 182).

Was brother Spears seeking to put an "imprimatur or nihil obstat" on the NKJV, NASB, TBV and the NIV when he recommended them as reliable translations (Truth Magazine, January 31, 1980)?

Then he says, "I am sure neither the authors nor the editor of Searching the Scriptures intends for that to be the case, however." Well, if brother Spears could see that, why does he not give others the credit for seeing it also? We feel that the average reader could see that as well as he did.

Errors, Deletions And Footnotes

With further study of Luke 1:3 we realize that our use of it against the NIV was weak and invalid. Concerning Peter having two fathers there appears to be a difference in the Greek texts as noted in the New King James Version footnote on John 1:42. The ASV does footnote an explanation of the apparent difficulty here. On neither of these alone would we have built a case against the NIV. Brother Spears is right in saying that this is not a legitimate argument against the NIV.

Concerning Luke 2:22 the question was whether this should be rendered "her" or "their" purification. We were in error in listing the ASV as agreeing with the KJV and NKJV in rendering this "her." One possible explanation of this problem offered by some brethren has been that this passage could have reference to "ceremonial cleansing" and not any moral cleansing. In this they may be correct.

We merely listed Acts 9:6 among several deletions in the NIV. This involved Saul's question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Brother Spears quotes Bruce Metzger as saying that the question in the verse was not found in any Greek manuscript "at this passage."

This may be true. However, there is no disputing that the question was asked at this point in the narrative as a parallel passage shows (Acts 22:10). If indeed it isn't in any Greek manuscript at this verse, then there is no problem with it being omitted at this verse.

We respectfully disagree with brother Spears concerning Acts 26:28. He suggested that there is no difference in the NIV and the ASV regarding this verse. He quoted the NIV, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" Then he quotes the ASV, "With but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Christian." Surely he can see the difference in a statement and a question. We ask you to go back and consider our argument based on the context itself.

Brother Spears observed that he feels that J.W. McGarvey "has the obvious truth on the matter." Then he quotes brother McGarvey to support his view. However, we contend that nothing can make the truth more "obvious" than the context in this case.

The reviewer of this material apparently missed our point with regard to the footnoting. We were not objecting merely to a footnote. What we do object to is the way the NIV seeks to evaluate the manuscripts as it does in the footnote of Mark 16:9-20, "The two most reliable early manuscripts do not have Mark 16:9-20." Please read again our section on footnotes.

Greek Text

Our brother says that "The Majority Text is not the same as the Textus Receptus." We are well aware that there are some differences in these texts. However they are the same type of texts. The Textus Receptus was the majority text at the time of the KJV.

Brother Spears said, "It is also inaccurate to say that the KJV was translated out of the Textus Receptus." He has already quoted Bruce Metzger as saying, "... Textus Receptus, from which the King James version was made in 1611." Not only that, but brother Spears said himself that the Textus Receptus was behind the KJV and the NKJV. Hear him, "The same Greek text from which the King James Version of 1611 was translated was used for the NKJV. Thus, the continuing debate over the 'Textus Receptus' and the Westcott-Hort Text, will be preserved, at least in part, by the presence of the NKJV" (Truth Magazine, January 31, 1980). To get technical about it, it could be said that the KJV was translated from the same family of manuscripts out of which the Textus Receptus was finalized.

When we mentioned that the NIV was based upon an "eclectic text" we had reference to the fact that the underlying text was based primarily upon two manuscripts as opposed to the majority of manuscripts behind the KJV and NKJV. Notice our quotations from Wilbur Pickering and Neil R. Lightfoot. In this sense it is certainly incorrect to say that the KJV was based on an eclectic text.

Brother Spears also observed that "The haphazard way in which the KJV text was formulated cannot happen today." We think that this is another example of a careless statement. No explanation or examples were given.

He asked us if we knew what text was without fault. We never claimed that there was any text without fault. We gave this quote, "This is not to blindly endorse the Received Text in the event that it does contain error. But I do suggest that the Westcott and Hort Text contains far more erroneous renderings than does the Textus Receptus" (Luther W. Martin, Truth Magazine, Vol. VVIV, p. 293). One may or may not agree with his appraisal of the matter, but that is what we had reference to by "a faulty Greek text."

His Closing Remarks

In his last two paragraphs, brother Spears makes some very interesting statements. Concerning our quotations from brother Clinton Hamilton, brother Spears raises some doubts as to our accuracy in this matter. We feel that rather than raise such doubts in the minds of the readers brother Spears should have availed himself of tapes of the Open Forum. In this way he could have been sure. Let it be understood that we did not quote either brother Hamilton or brother Curry as an indication of their endorsement of our article, but rather of our endorsement of statements we used from them. If he doesn't endorse their statement, let him take that up with them.

A rather shocking statement of his is that, "It is not possible by reading any version to be sure of what was in the original." This is truly a disturbing situation to be in, if this indeed be the case. We are left to flounder in a sea of doubt! Brother Spears goes on to observe that it is a matter "of faith" and that a God powerful enough to reveal himself, is equally competent to preserve what he reveals (1 Pet. 1:25). We agree with this last statement. But if we can't be sure about any version, just where is his word preserved? This is going to make a lot of people wonder, brother Spears! We understand that faith comes by hearing the word of God, but if it is not possible to be sure by reading any version that we have the original, we wonder how we could have faith? Truly, some of these statements give an uncertain sound. What about a person that doesn't know the Greek language? Can we be sure about the plan of salvation, worship of the church from the versions we have?

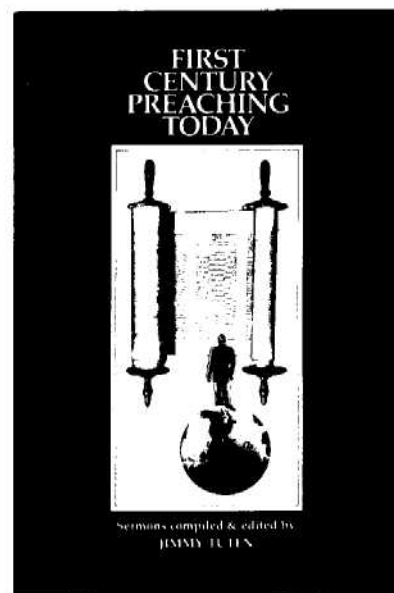
We read and reread with amazement his statement in the last paragraph concerning "Easter" which is an obvious error in the KJV. He says that if anyone can endorse the KJV with this error "surely the same thing could be done with any translation." We find it hard to believe that he thought that statement through. Would this work with the New World Translation?

He affirms that the same message of truth prevails despite the many variations in many translations. Yet he says, "This is not to endorse the wide use of the NIV." We wonder why not, if the same message of truth is there? Does he think that a translation conveys the same message of truth when the translators (to quote Spears on the NIV) "flavored their translation with their Calvinistic backgrounds" (**Guardian of Truth**, June 17, 1982)?

Again we appeal to the readers to consider that our main objective was to simply alert the readers to some

dangers and problems with the NIV. We have had no reluctance to acknowledge points wherein we felt brother Spears had just criticism of our original article. At the same time we felt that in his response that he made some careless and misleading statements. It was our duty to point these out as it was his duty regarding ours. As he has indicated, this is not a matter of personal victory for anyone.

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SIGNPOSTS AND YARDSTICKS

Several years ago the Louisville and Jefferson County (Kentucky) Youth Commission published the material below *Our Youth and their Parents*. For fathers and mothers of developing children, I consider these two sections of that publication as timely as any I have seen anywhere outside the Bible. Most heartily I commend it to readers of this column.

These signposts present the gruesomely dangerous line "that separates normal teen frustrations from a set course pointing directly to a wasted future."

Signposts of Delinquency

(Watch for these in your family)

- A. Extreme faddist appearance and dress.
- B. Constant rudeness and disobedience
- C. Habitual lying.
- D. Cruelty to animals.
- E. Persistent truancy.
- F. Continual unexplained hours of activity.
- G. Repeated vandalism.
- H. Theft.
- I. Possession of illegal weapons. J. Use of intoxicants or drugs.

Family Understanding Yardstick

- A. The National Association of Mental Health has listed ten basic needs of youth—criteria necessary to support the healthy growth of a young person through his transition years between childhood and manhood.
 1. ACCEPTANCE—Every young person needs to believe his parents like him for himself; that they like him all the time and not only when he acts according to their ideals of the way a child should act; that they always accept him, though they may not always approve of the things he does.
 2. CONTROL—Youth needs to know that there are limits to what he is permitted to do and that his parents will hold him to those limits; he must be taught self-control to avoid hurting himself and others when he feels jealous or angry.
 3. FAITH—Youth needs a set of moral standards to live by, a belief in human values, kindness, courage, honesty, generosity and justice.
 4. GUIDANCE—Youth needs to have friendly

help in learning how to behave toward persons and things; grown-ups around him should show by example how to get along with others.

5. INDEPENDENCE—Youth needs to know his parents have confidence in him and will help him develop his ability to do good things for himself and others.
6. LOVE—Youth needs to know his parents love him, and enjoy him; that he matters to someone and that there are people around him who care what happens to him.
7. PRAISE—Every young person needs approval. Youth, like adults, need a "pat on the back" for something good they have accomplished. It is not small; it is important to youth.
8. PROTECTION—Youth needs to know his parents want him safe from harm; that they will help him when he feels a strange or frightening situation.
9. RECOGNITION—Every young person needs to be recognized for what he is inside and outside the home. Consider him in planning a new home, buying furniture, a new car, or going on a vacation.
10. SECURITY—Youth needs to know his home is a place of safety; that his parents will be around in time of need, and that he does belong to, and is an important member of the family.

B. How do you measure up?

1. Does he know that he has a special place as an important member of your family which no one else could ever fill; can he rely on you always liking him for himself even when you don't like some of the things he does?
2. Does he understand the necessity of discipline and that you will hold him to certain determined limits; has he been helped to develop self-control in all of his personal relationships?
3. Have you shown him by example the importance of honesty, kindness, courage, generosity and justice; does he understand the value of moral standards and their significance in his everyday life?
4. Has he been given guidance for making some choices of responsible action outside the home under conflicting pressures; does he respect the rights of others in normal daily relationships?
5. Have you helped him understand that increased independence carries with it increased responsibility; does he believe that you trust him to do right within the limits of his experience?
6. Does your child know that you love and want him; does he believe in his heart that he truly matters to you and that you care what happens to him?
7. Do you praise his efforts so that he enjoys the challenge of new projects that prove his worthiness to his family and community; do you help him accept his failures as well as his successes and encourage him to investigate new experi-

- ences within the boundaries of good judgment?
8. Does he know that your concern for his safety comes from your love for him; that you will help him always as he takes new steps?
 9. Do you always consider him in planning activities and making important decisions that will affect the family; does he feel free to express his ideas and contribute to discussions?
 10. Is he sure that you are concerned for his safety and understand the many influences that can affect him outside your home? Does he know you will always protect him in time of crisis? Most parents cannot answer an unqualified "yes" to all of these yardstick questions, but all parents should be aware of the great responsibility inherent in these questions.

SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

P. J. Casebolt

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SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

The apostle Paul did not think that the gospel system was so complicated that only the wise, the mighty, and the noble could understand it (1 Cor. 1:26). His main concern was that people would not be satisfied with "the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3). Subtlety, subversion, and semantics are not needed to tell the gospel story.

Some may avoid the characteristic of simplicity, thinking there is no beauty to be found in it; that no wisdom can be attributed to those who employ it. On the contrary, true beauty is not enhanced by superfluous trimmings, and wisdom is not found in a multitude of words (Pr. 10:19). Consider the wisdom of Solomon expressed in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Notice the simple language of the New Testament in general, and the plain teaching of Christ in particular. The nearer we stay to the oracles of God in our writing and in our speaking, the better off we will be, along with our readers and hearers.

From time to time I may be writing under this heading in order to help some out of the maze of human philosophy into the light of the glorious gospel of Christ. And, at the same time, encourage those who are in that light to be content with "the simplicity that is in Christ," and "be not moved away from the hope of the gospel" (Col. 1:23).

What Must I Do ... To Sin?

The question often encountered by preachers in the

first century was "What must I do to be saved?" Those who asked the question realized their lost condition, and those who answered the question had a ready answer (Acts 2:37, 38; 16:30, 31). Every gospel preacher must consider the possibility that such a question may be asked, and be ready with the right answer.

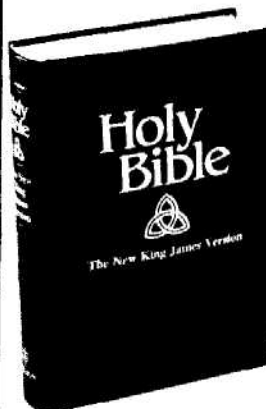
It has almost gotten to the place where we not only have to supply the answer to this thought-provoking question, but we also have to supply the question! Not many seem to be asking it these days, but maybe there is a reason.

Someone, somewhere, has tried to excuse or justify every sin listed under the "works, of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19-21). Satan has been successful with his subtlety in having sin classified as a "sickness," so that those who practice such things are not responsible for their actions. The moral standards of the Bible have been lowered to fit the standards of a community, or of a nation. "Split personalities" are the excuses offered by some lawyers and psychiatrists to explain the lawless conduct of their clients or patients. (I have often wondered what would happen if someone walked into the courtroom, shot one of these "split personality" freaks, and then defended himself on the grounds that he didn't shoot the "personality" that died, but one of the other nine?)

Anyway, it appears to me that we are going to have to convince people that there is still such a thing as sin, before we can tell them about salvation. The way some have it fixed now, it is almost impossible to sin, even if we try.

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MORE ON RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

A previous article on this theme dealt with the cause and only remedy for religious conflict. Because of religious political and military clashes (Middle East, Ireland, Iraq-Iran War, and past history) some have concluded that all organized religion is evil: is bread of destruction rather than "bread of Life".

This fall, there is to be a "Spiritual Summit" of religion leaders in New York and before the United Nations, at which time Robert Miller, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations, will present a 10 point Declaration which he hopes will be a basis for peaceful coexistence of differing world religions.

This article examines this 10 point Declaration, with some observations.

Muller's Ten Principles

1. "The oneness of the human family, irrespective of color, sex, creed, nation."

This has ever been a fact of divinely revealed religion, clearly recognized and set forth in Christianity. (Acts 17:24-31; Isa. 2:2; Mark 16:15-16). Converting people to Christ (Christianity) will lessen the number who are not impressed with this fact.

2. "The harmonious place of the individual person in the total order of things, as a unique entity of divine origin, with physical, mental, moral and spiritual aspirations, and with a basic relationship to the universe and eternity."

When people accept and believe the Word of Truth (Bible), they will realize the value and worth of each individual and that God plans for and deals with each. (Acts 17:26-28; Jno. 3:16; 1 Cor. 12:12-26; Rev. 20:12-13). Teaching the New Testament will produce this conviction.

3. "The importance of spiritual exercises, meditation, prayer, contemplation and the inner search as links between human life and the universe."

What is said here seems to be a matter of human beings on this universe crying out for, and to, a higher being. These spiritual exercises do not link human beings to the universe, crying out for, and to, a higher being. These spiritual exercises do not link human beings to the universe, but shows that all human beings on the universe are linked to a common need . . . some one higher than man. Christianity not only reveals this supreme being, but points the way to a relationship

with him that remains meaningful and rewarding through the above mentioned spiritual exercises. (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19; Heb. 10:23-25; 1 Thes. 5:17; Phil. 4:6-7; 2 Cor. 13:5). To impress hearts with the need for this, "preach the word".

4. "The existence of an incipient conscience and heart of humanity, which speaks for what is good and against what is bad for the human family; which advocates and fosters understanding, cooperation and altruism instead of division, struggle and indifference."

This is simply a matter of seeking the good of others rather than self. Jesus exemplified this (Rom. 15:3; Phil. 2:5-8) and taught that all should so act. (Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 8:9,11-13; 10:24; Phil. 2:3). If this characteristic is good for the human family, then the human family needs Christianity, for this is where it is learned and practiced.

5. "The value of dedicated service to others, with a compassionate response to human suffering, with special attention to the oppressed and the poor, the handicapped and the elderly, the rejected and the lonely."

No one who has ever lived exemplified more compassionate service to others, particularly to the poor, rejected, and down-trodden, than Jesus, (Matt. 9:36; 15:32; Lk. 10:33-37; Heb. 4:15; 5:2), "leaving us an example that we should follow his steps" (1 Pet. 2:21). He demands such service on the part of those who are his (Jas. 1:27; 2:14-16; Gal. 6:9-10). Sowing the seed of Christianity (gospel), when rooted in honest and good hearts, will result in this characteristic among men.

6. "The duty to give thanks and express gratitude for the abundance of life". This is something that Christianity enjoins. (Eph. 5:20; Acts 17:24-25). Preaching the gospel of Christ is the way to promote this among men.

7. "The need for ecumenical agencies and world religious organizations to foster dialogue and collaborative arrangements, and to bring the resources and inspirations of the religions to bear upon the solution of world problems."

I do not believe this is a need, or even good, but would simply be an exercise in futility. It would be bringing into existence a force to exercise pressure on political systems. I believe in the separation of church and state.

One reason for much of the conflict and violence is religion's effort to put civil powers under their feet. The only way religion can be a force in calming religious political conflicts is for the gospel of Christ (Christianity) to be planted in the hearts of the people so that this truth is not only accepted but practiced.

An agency or organization such as is suggested would only be another human instrument that causes conflict. The problem these 10 principles deal with can never be solved by human ecumenical agencies and their actions. There is only one thing that can be effective—the spread of Christianity — "Preach the Word."

8. "A rejection of violence as contrary to the sanctity and uniqueness of the and a total acceptance of the precept: "Thou shall not kill" " (do not murder(H.P.))

This is a demand of Christianity, the acceptance of

which will even exterminate the hate, jealousy of ill-will that results in physical violence. The spread of Christianity among all nations is the thing that will be effective in lessening religious political strife, not the action of ecumenical agencies and organizations of men.

9. "An affirmation of the law of love and compassion as the great transcending force which alone can break the nemesis of war and establish a planet of peace."

Christianity is a manifestation of such love, and following it's principles will lead to peace. In fact, Christ, the very embodiment of truth, came as the divine remedy for man's inhumanity to man: to provide "peace on earth, good will toward men."

10. "The evolutionary task of human life and society to move through the eternal stream of time towards interdependence, communion, and an ever-expanding realization of Divinity."

This principle seems to affirm the need for men, during time on earth, realizing they are dependent upon each other and must, therefore, commune and cooperate, for such is the plan and aim of Divinity (God). No declaration of man, some "Spiritual Summit", or human conference can ever affect this principle: only true Christianity can... preaching the gospel of Christ.

Conclusion

There is no way that men, by compromise and coercion, can unite the various religions, true and false, so that peaceful coexistence will result. It is not in man to devise and affect such.

God has devised and presented the only system that will result in peace. It is Christianity. It involves the eradication of all that is human and false, "pulling down strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God," not with "carnal weapons", but by capturing the thoughts of men, "bringing them to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

Human religions are believed to be divine by the establishers and adherents of them, and they will fight carnally to defend and establish their faith. This has always been, and always will be, a characteristic of what is human in its origin and nature.

Christianity, which is divine in origin and nature, on the other hand, will zealously press for the establishment of truth in the hearts of men through preaching and teaching, suffering various persecutions—even death—from those who love and zealously pursue human ways, without retaliation in kind.

What is needed to solve the problem is not "Spiritual Summits", dialogue, compromise, and national organizations, but a zealous evangelization of the world for Christ. The "victory that overcomes the world" is faith ... in Christ (1 Jno. 5:4). Nine of Muller's principles are principles of Christianity. If leaders of world religions can agree on these, it simply shows that Christianity is obvious truth. Only principle No. 7 is a human principle and, if followed, would result in one more organized religious force that would foster pride, resentment, and violence.

"AUSTRALIA 84"

Phil Morr
P.O. Box 233
Westland, MI 48185

In May of 1974 my family and I returned to Detroit after preaching in Sydney, Australia for five years. On April 16, 1984 my wife Pat and I flew from Detroit to San Francisco in time to catch our 9:00 p.m. flight to Melbourne via Honolulu and Sydney arriving at 11:00 Wednesday morning, Melbourne time. That very evening we met with the brethren in Boronia for their mid-week Bible study. It was a good feeling to be back in Australia after so many years.

Two days after our arrival in Australia I had opportunity to speak on an annual lectureship along with nine Australian brethren of exceptional ability in the Scriptures. Brethren from eight congregations were present for the four days of preaching. Time was allowed for discussing the use of the 'Jesus the Way' correspondence course which is geared for mass distribution. The Australian brethren are accustomed to 'letter-boxing' from house to house, therefore the course was well received. To date I know of three congregations now distributing the course. In Sydney the Merrylands and Miranda congregations are putting out 50,000 each and the Bundaberg congregation in Queensland is putting out 15,000. This same course has proven to be effective in London and Detroit and hopefully Australia will be equally fruitful.

The weekend after the lectureship I preached at Heidelberg in Melbourne and also Geelong before going on to Launceston, Tasmania for one week. The Launceston congregation is very active and continues to bear good fruit while 'growing in grace and knowledge.' Plans are being made for extensive distribution of the course for the entire city of Launceston with a population over 100,000 within the next year.

Upon our return to Melbourne, Pat and I drove to Sydney via Wagga Wagga, which amounts to a 600 mile trip. The brethren in Wagga continue to do well and I am happy to report that Harold Blyth was able to come thru a two year drought with all of his animals and 3,000 acre farm doing reasonably well, but he says he was thrilled to hear the rain on his 'tin roof' in the middle of the night. In Sydney the Miranda and Merrylands congregations are doing well with some new young families along with the older ones. Two men who are retired, Harry Henderson and Stan Holyoak are given to 'bringing the lesson' and also personal evangelism. They both understand what it is all about.

One of the highlights in Sydney was being able to carry on a conversation in English with Jaime and Maria Ducaud of Santiago, Chile and Mariana (Jaku) Newton of Catania, Sicily. They arrived one year before

our departure speaking only Spanish and Italian and our conversations were mostly sign language. I nearly jumped thru the phone when I first heard them speak in an 'intelligent language!' Jaime is now leading singing and doing some preaching in English. What a thrill.

We then flew to Auckland, New Zealand where we spent two days with the Kirkham family whom we had known while living in London, England. We were able to get a closer look at the work on hand and it appears that an 'open door' exists. Is there a family or two who would be willing to make a commitment to move there in the near future? May I insert a plea for each of us to give personal consideration concerning the command to 'Go into ALL the world,' preaching the gospel to every creature. Why not stop by the international travel agent near you and check on application for temporary or permanent visas rather than 'tourist?' There is much to be done in the rest of the world—souls are groping in darkness.

On to Bundaberg, Queensland to be met by Roily McDowell and also Harry Wyer who work together in the preaching for a substantial congregation in that town snuggled in the midst of sugarcane. Doorknocking is a synonym with assembling in that place!

Time went quickly and on May 31st., our anniversary, Pat and I left Sydney on our return to Detroit to be greeted by our family at 9:00 in the morning after crossing the 'international date line' which gave us a 48 hour anniversary. How's that for stretching it out? After traveling 25,000 air miles in 6 weeks, it was good to be home.

Some Observations:

Being in touch with the work in Australia since 1969 I can see many positive signs of growth in some congregations, however the major source of encouragement rests in the growth and development in some of the men as while most of them hold down full time jobs to provide for their families along with carrying on the work of the gospel. There is some incredible talent there and they are to be commended for their diligent and hard work for the Lord. There are 15 to 20 men with real strength who are giving loyal service to the 'King of kings' throughout the country.

The congregations in Australia seem to understand evangelism and many are continually going out to 'ring out the message,' as we so often sing about in our worship services.

May I add my appreciation to the brethren at 77th St. in Birmingham, AL for their willingness to share in this trip by providing my travel expenses making this trip possible. This good congregation, along with many other congregations, continues to support the preaching of the gospel throughout the whole world. May their example stir other congregations on to even more support for 'foreign evangelism.'

I am thankful to God that I could "Go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing" (Acts 16:36). Some disappointments were found, but these were offset by the obvious signs of many being "Strong

in the grace . . . men able to teach others . . . enduring hardships... that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:1-10).

Using Great Plainness of Speech

J. T. Smith

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DOES GOD LOOSE BOTH THE INNOCENT AND THE GUILTY?

The question of whether God looses the innocent person who "puts away" his spouse for fornication, was discussed in our last lesson. It appears to me that Christ was very explicit in showing that the "exception" given in Matthew 5:32; 19:9 looses the innocent party and that he/she is free to remarry.

One of the pitfalls I want to warn about early in this lesson is confusion of terms. Many make the mistake of equating:

Married = Bound
Divorced — Loosed

Neither of the above is equal.

Let's define these terms again. The original word for "bound" is **deo** and is defined by Mr. Thayer, when referring to the relationship that can exist between people as in Romans 7:2, "To bind, i.e. put under obligation sc. of law, duty, etc... to be bound to one... of a wife" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, Pae 131, # 2b). Others want to use another definition given by Thayer as used in Mark 15:7; "To bind, to fasten with chains, to throw into chains" (Ibid. P. 131). The reason for wanting to use this definition instead of the first, will become obvious.

Since, as some reason, the word "bound" can mean "fasten with chains," (the latter definition in the above paragraph) when an innocent party "puts away" an adulterous spouse for fornication, thus severing the "bond" for the innocent mate who does the putting away, the "bond" is also broken for the "guilty party." They reason that when the chain is broken, both are released. However, as we have already observed from the above definitions, the word "bound," does not mean "to fasten with chains when it refers to people relationships. It means to "put under obligation, namely, to wit, of law."

It should be obvious that one can be "married" and not "bound," or "bound" and not "married." For example in Matthew 19:9, the innocent party (the one doing the "putting away") is loosed from any obligation to the guilty party, if he so desires; but it is obvious that the

guilty party is still under obligation (bound to the law of her husband, Romans 7:2-3; I Corinthians 7:39). This is obvious because whosoever marries the guilty party is an adulterer.

As we observe Mark 6:17-18, in the case of Herod and Herodias, we see two people who are "married," for that is what the text says, but they are not "bound." John the Baptist told Herod that it was an unlawful marriage for she was still his brother Phillip's wife.

Some have tried to show that the reason for John's indictment of their marriage was that Herod had violated the Law of Moses by having his brother Phillip's wife. However, neither Herod, Herodias, nor Phillip were Jews; hence, they were not subject to the Law of Moses. They were in violation of the law that Jesus said God put in effect in the beginning—one man for one woman for life (Matthew 19:4-6). Thus the word "married" refers to relationship, and "bound" refers to obligation; "marriage" does not equal "bond."

Four Positions On "Bound"

8

1. "BOUND" AND SCRIPTURALLY MARRIED — MATT. 19:5
2. "BOUND" AND UNMARRIED — I COR. 7:10-11
3. ONE MATE "BOUND" WHILE BEING UNSCRIPTURALLY MARRIED TO ANOTHER — MARK 6:17-18; ROM. 7:2-3
4. ONE MATE "BOUND" THOUGH UNMARRIED WHILE THE OTHER MATE IS FREE — MATT. 19:9



REMEMBER, "BOUND" MEANS "OBLIGATION, NAMELY TO LAW"

THAYER, PAGE 131, # 2b

From the chart above I want us to look at four positions in the Scriptures on the word "bound." First, there is one who is "bound" in a scriptural marriage (Matthew 19:5). Second, there is one who is "bound" but separated (I Corinthians 7:10-11). Third, one mate may be "bound" while being unscripturally married to another (Mark 6:17-18; Romans 7:2-3). Fourth, one mate may be "bound" though unmarried while the other mate is free (Matthew 19:9).

God's law has always imposed both **obligations** and **restraints** on those who are capable of doing His Will. Man is obligated to do all that God requires and is also restrained from going beyond what God has authorized. This is clearly shown from the passages listed on the next chart. These two requirements also apply to marriage. God "joins" (the word translated "joins" literally means, "yoked together," see Nestle's Interlinear) a man and woman (Matthew 19:4-6), they are obligated to leave father and mother and cleave to one another, God's law also restrains them from sexual relations with another, cf. Romans 7:2-3.



10 God's Law

"Joins" (Yokes Together)

Matt. 19:4-6



The situation depicted on our next chart shows that one may be **loosed** while the other is still "joined," or "yoked." The reasoning behind this is that Jesus said if one "puts away" his mate **FOR fornication**, then the innocent one (the one doing the "putting away") is loosed, that is, he does not commit adultery when he remarries (Matthew 19:9). Thus he has been released by God from the marriage law. Having been released by God from both the obligations and restraints and having complied with the laws of the land, he may therefore contract a new marriage with one who has the right, according to God's Law, to be married. He is thus "bound" by God to another woman.

You will observe that Paul said in Romans 7:2-3 that when the husband dies, the wife is "loosed," not just from her husband, but "... she is loosed **from the law of her husband**" (Romans 7:2b).

Now, back to the question of whether it is possible for a person to be "bound" and "loosed" at the same time. It is, if one is referring to the Bible word deo, "bound." "No," someone says, "that is impossible." Notice the next chart which illustrates this very point.

God's Law

"Joins" (Yokes Together)

Matt. 19:4-6



Matt. 19:9 Leave & Cleave et. al.

RESTRAINS
From Sexual Relations
With Another Rom.7:2-3

12 Law

OBLIGATES & RESTRAINS



We have here a thief who has been arrested. Whether he is handcuffed or not, he is **obligated** by law to go where the officer goes, and he is **restrained** from going anywhere the officer does not go. But we see another scene when he appears before the judge. The officer is not in the scene. Is the thief free to go? No! Even though he may be released from the officer, he is still "bound by the law" to remain in the court room until the judge pronounces sentence; thus he is both **loosed** and **bound**. He is "loosed" from the officer while still "bound" by the law. And so it is with the persons that we have under consideration in Matthew 19:9.

If One Is "Loosed," Both Must Be

"But," someone says, "it still seems to me that if one is loosed, then both should be loosed." All of us might wish it could be that way; however, if that were the case, the one who committed sin would benefit from the sin he/she had committed as much as the one who is innocent. That has never been God's way. Such a situation would place the person who is "put away" because of sin (adultery) in a better position in God's sight than the one who "put away" for "burning the bread." Let me illustrate.

Position # 1: Tom "puts away" Mary for fornication. According to the above position (that the guilty party is also free to remarry) Mary could remarry without sin because Tom has been "loosed" by God. Position # 2: Again, Tom puts Mary away for burning the bread. According to the above position, Mary could not remarry. Hence if position # 1 is true, a premium would be placed on sin, because the one who tore up his/her home by sin (fornication) would be able to remarry without sin, whereas the one who has "put away" because of something not sinful could not remarry. As I have shown on the following chart, this position is absurd.

13 Opponent's Position Reduced To An Absurdity!

IF ONE IS PUT AWAY FOR SOME CAUSE OTHER THAN FORNICATION, WHEN THAT PERSON REMARRIES HE COMMITS ADULTERY.

MY OPPONENT AGREES — I AGREE!

BUT

IF ONE IS PUT AWAY FOR FORNICATION, WHEN THAT PERSON REMARRIES HE DOES NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

MY OPPONENT AGREES — I DISAGREE!

One Reason For Disagreeing!

GOD SAID HE WOULD JUDGE ADULTERERS (HEB.13:4). BUT ACCORDING TO MY OPPONENT'S POSITION, GOD JUDGES THE "BREAD BURNER" GUILTY AND THE FORNICATOR INNOCENT. THUS GOD'S CONSEQUENCES ARE MUCH GREATER FOR THE "BREAD BURNER" THAN FOR THE "FORNICATOR"!

THIS IS ABSURD!

"Yes," one replies, "but are they not divorced? Why then do they both not have the right to be remarried?" Now you can see why at the beginning of this lesson I set forth the fact that "divorced" does not equal "loosed." Even though, according to the laws of the land, they are married again, marriage does not mean they are bound; for as we have observed in this lesson, one may be "married" and not bound.

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FRY ROAD LECTURES

The Fry Road church of Christ, 2510 Fry Road, Houston, Items will conduct a lectureship November 11-14, 1984. The morning theme will be: "Ancient Enemies in Modern Dress." The evening theme will be: "Victory Over the World Through Faith." Jerry Fite, Robert Turner and Robert Harkrider will each speak three times. There will be sing-ing from 7-7:30 nightly. We extend to all a cordial invitation to come and study with us these vital themes. Should you need a place to stay let us know and we will try to make provisions for you.

DALE AND JUDY HENDRICKS, P.O. Box 472, Nederland, TX 77627—Seven months ago, over \$10,000 in medical bills before us, we sat wondering and praying. Praying for help, strength, and guidance and wondering how we could ever meet such obligations. A bankrupt insurance company, threatening phone calls, collection agencies, and attorneys had become discouraging realities in our life. Today, August 31, 1984 all medical bills have been paid in full and again we sit wondering and praying. Prayers of thanksgiving unto our God for his wonderful, caring family of which we are a part; and wondering how to adequately express the heartfelt appreciation and love that we feel toward you all. We received almost \$10,000 in less than five months along with encouraging cards, letters and phone calls from all over the country.

In an age of such prosperity, when individual Christians (for the most part) enjoy a degree of self-sufficiency in relation to brethren; the beautiful concepts of loving liberality among brethren as witnessed in 2 Cor. 8 and 9 are seldom experienced first hand. Judy and I have truly been strengthened and are better Christians today for having experi-enced the active manifestation of your love and concern. We thank each of you! Special thanks to Dee Bowman for making available to you the details of our situation and to the editors of each periodical through which the information was dispersed.

WAYNE S. WALKER, 5170 Chippewa Rd., Medina, OH 44256—The work in Medina is doing well. We have baptized 6 so far this year and have had a family of 4 place membership. Average Sunday morning attendance is over 50 and average contribution is near \$400. We are at peace and are beginning a building program. We had a spring meeting with Lewis Willis, a summer lectureship with different speakers with subjects aimed at our young people, and a fall meeting with Fred Shewmaker. Our present building is located at 6205 Wadsworth Rd., on state Hwy. 57 a mile south of town. Stop and visit with us.

RICHARD C. SIMS, P.O. Box 539, Gatesville, TX 76528—On June 25 my family and I moved to work with the new sound church in Gatesville, Texas. In July I held a gospel meeting here and spoke on authority and the organization and work of the church. We had visitors from the community at every service. On Sunday following the meeting an older couple came out of the liberal church in town and identified with us. We continue to have visitors and are encouraged. Since the church is small, I must raise my support to work here. We moved here with only \$500 promised monthly support and some of that may be short lived. Thanks to several onetime contributions from churches and individuals, we were able to make ends meet through July and August. I have a temporary job through September 22. In October we will be \$1700 short on monthly support. In 11 years of

preaching in 4 states, I have never preached anywhere where people are as willing to discuss the Bible and attend gospel meetings as in Gatesville. If you are able to help support gospel preaching, won't you please consider helping us in the work in Gatesville? My phone num-ber is (817) 865-6965.

JON QUINN, 2616 Macklin Rd., Flint, MI 48504—The church at Flint has asked Ronald Killebrew to come and work with us and he has agreed to come as soon as he can raise the needed support. Ron will enable us to work more effectively in the black community. 60% of our contacts through "Dial A Bible Moment" are black. Other doors of opportunity are opening for us in the black community. Brother Killebrew is ready to leave his secular job and begin full-time preaching here. Since we moved to Flint we have had 9 baptisms, 4 to repent and place membership and 5 to place membership besides. Seven have come from institutional backgrounds. We have withdrawn from some, and some have moved away. We are soon losing a mature family. But we are setting up about 20 correspondence courses each month as well as several face-to-face studies. When he comes he will be the seventh faithful full time preacher in our state. The local church can help him with \$150 a month and he will need help for the rest. Please give brother Killebrew your consideration.

DEBATE IN JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

EVERETT HARDIN, 2428 Lakeview Dr., Johnson City, TN 37601—Larry Hafley will meet Hulon Myre of the United Pentecostal Church in debate Nov. 12,14,15,16 in Johnson City, Tennessee. Sessions will be at 7:30 each evening. Propositions involve the baptism of the Holy Spirit and miracles. The debate will be conducted in the Seeger Chapel on the campus of Milligan College, located on State Highway 67.

A PREACHER'S WIFE AND 30 YEARS IN AFRICA

(Editor's note: the following is lifted from a report from Ray Votaw, who with his wife, Thena, has spent 30 years now in South Africa preaching. It says much about the spirit that motivates such godly people to carry the gospel to distant lands and about the quality of a marriage which serves as a worthy example in a time when so many marriages are in so much trouble. CWA)

RAY VOTAW, Box 801, Springs 1560, South Africa—She was barely in her twenties—this strong yet gentle country girl—when she bundled up our two babies to accompany me half way around the world so I could preach Christ. So many times through the years I have been asked, "What did Thena think of going to South Africa?" Shamefully I have had to confess—"I don't know because I don't recall asking." But you see, it's always been that way with us. She has so completely given herself over to being one with my plans that contrary notions have never surfaced. (Let me hasten to say, however, that this quiet confidence, love and trust have guided me out of much "wrong-headed-ness".) So what fitting tribute can I possibly pay to such selfless devotion? Truly she loved and loves the Lord. Thank God she also loved and loves me. Now, back to the cubic zirconium necklace. We remember at our house two anniversaries—our wedding and our ar-rival in South Africa. August 2 marks our 30th year in South Africa. That little necklace was just a very token way of saying to her "I remember." Though the stone in this necklace is an imitation—my Thena is the genuine article.

RODY GUMPAD, Tanza, Tuguegarao, Cagayan 1101, Philippines—I am happy to inform you of our 17 days of preaching in Cagayan Valley (northern Luzon) with Diosdado Menor. Brother Menor and I spoke at each service. In spite of the strong Typhoon "Maring", God blessed our efforts and 38 were baptized into Christ. Pentecostal leaders at one place tried to persuade the Mayor to revoke our permit to preach. He refused to yield to their pressure and five were baptized there, including one elder from that Pentecostal group. We were at Aparri, Cagayan when typhoon "Maring" arrived. In two days, rain showered the inside of the small house where we were accommodated, but we kept preaching to those who came. Five were baptized there, one a 72 year old man who was an elder in a Pentecostal group. Typhoon "Maring" was followed by typhoon "Nitang". Thousands are homeless and many are reported dead. Farm animals and crops are destroyed. Water was one meter deep in the kitchen of the house we are renting. The work in northeast Luzon is growing wider and wider with new congregations being established. Please pray for us. We will have a lecture-ship October 15-20 with Diosdado P. Menor, Gady Castres, Victorio Tibayan, Sr. and Isabelo Macusi, Jr.

REID BRASWELL, 417 Clayton St., Brundidge, AL 36010—We are scheduled to leave January 11, 1985 to resume our work in Manizales, Columbia. The Columbian consulate assures me that the visa will be granted provided I can show proof of support. Since my wife is Columbian I am eligible for a resident visa. I need to have \$1,500 a month support and still lack much of that. Can you help? For references contact Royce Chandler (who has much personal knowledge of the Columbian work), 3891 Bunnel Rd., Lebanon, OH 45036, phone (513) 398-1768; or Jimmy Tuten, 7911 Country Dr., Mobile, AL, phone (205) 633-6769.

JAMES SHEAR TO REVIVE WORK IN MILLEGEVILLE, GEORGIA

J. WILEY ADAMS, 103 Ridgeland Dr., Warner Robins, GA 31093—James Shear, who presently preaches for the Hardies Chapel church near Gordon, Georgia, is planning to revive the work in Milledgeville, Georgia which was started many years ago by the late Jack Frost, Sr. They have an adequate building on highway 49 as you enter town from Macon. The building needs a new roof and some classroom repairs. It is brick construction and seats 175-200. The work has dwindled due to a lack of teaching and a full time program of work. Milledgeville is the past capitol of Georgia, is the home of Georgia College, a military academy, a women's prison, a major state mental hospital, and a resort area near Lake Sinclair. Baldwin County has about 40,000 residents. The whole state of Georgia is a vast mission field. It is the largest state east of the Mississippi. Brother Shear already knows the area and many people in Milledgeville. He has a personality for meeting people which just won't stop. He is enthusiastic about this work and eager to work with this group of about a dozen people. He needs to raise adequate support for this work. You may contact him at P.O. Box 409, Gordon, GA 31031. Please help if you can. He would like to begin there in January, 1985.

PREACHERS NEEDED

RICHLANDS, VIRGINIA—The church here needs a preacher to work with us in this southwestern part of Virginia. The church is small but we can supply partial support. Contact Billy Sword, Box 190, Richlands, VA 24641. Phone (703) 963-9687.

WILDERSVILLE, TENNESSEE—The Expressway church in Wildersville is looking for a full time preacher. We are located just off I-40 east of Jackson. For further information please contact L.G. Lewis at (901) 968-7772; or Steve Wilkinson at (901) 968-5083.

LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA—The church in this central Virginia city needs a full time preacher. This congregation is small in number (18) but big in love for the Lord and his work. Only partial support is available. Those interested may contact Larry Powell at (804) 237-3445 or John Malloy at (804) 237-2015. We meet at 1203 Westridge Cir., in Lynchburg.

MULVANE, KANSAS—The congregation in Mulvane is looking for a preacher. We are self supporting and furnish a house. If interested, contact Sam Walker at (316) 777-4259 or Ed Boyd at (316) 777-1054. Our mailing address is: Box 88, Mulvane, KS 67110.

REPORT FROM ITALY

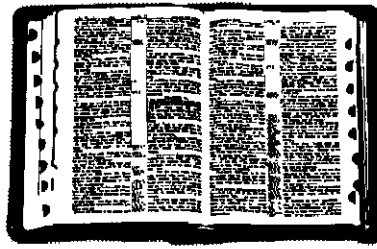
STEFANO CORAZZA, Via Tagliamento 912, 33100—Udine, Italy—Our work in Udine is making progress. In recent months we have baptized three. During the year we had two gospel meetings for which we distributed 10,000 invitation cards and placed 400 big posters on city walls. One of our converts came through one of the meetings. Each month we deliver from house to house our own bulletin. From this we have seven good contacts who now take our 24 lesson Bible correspondence course. We have started an effort in Gorizia, 40 miles from Udine. This is a city of 50,000 people. We are distributing 20,000 invitation cards. Gianni Berdini of Trieste will also help in this work. Next year we will have a gospel meeting here. We also have opportunity to preach in Milan, the important metropolis in the northwest of Italy. We have some contacts there now through a column written by Gianni Berdini in SENTIERI DIRITTI. A man and his wife, plus three others have been meeting in a home for sometime after separating from liberal brethren over doctrinal matters. They have shown some interest and we will see what is the situation. The liberal work in that area grows worse and worse. The gate is widely open by now! We thank brethren for their encouragement in our work. Our door is open to you. We hope someday to meet some of you, to share personally our precious and unique love and faith and fellowship. "They of Italy salute you."

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	259
RESTORATIONS	115
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

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 XXV

DECEMBER, 1984

NUMBER 12

HAVE YOU NOT READ?"

Frank Himmel

72315th Ave. W.
Palmetto, FL33561



When some Pharisees came to Jesus testing Him with the question of whether it was lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause, He answered with a question of His own: "Have you not read . . .?" (Mt. 19:3, 4). His response is thought-provoking. I bid you think with me about its implications.

1. **The Scriptures ought to be read.** The Living Bible paraphrases Jesus' question, "Don't you read the Scrip-tures?" that is an appropriate response to many ques-tions being asked.

Few Jews had copies of the Scriptures. But they heard them often, since Scripture reading was a prominent part of worship in the synagogue. It was also part of the worship of the early Christians. The first "beatitude" in the book of Revelation reads, "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy" (1:3).

The practice of having a Bible reading in public assemblies seems to be on the decline. That is a trend that ought to be reversed. Such readings can be effective with just a little preparation. Likely many of us could improve our reading ability with some practice. Paul told Timothy, "Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture" (I Tim. 4:13). Though "public" has been added by the translators, it seems to be the correct sense.

Private reading of Scripture is also needed. Reading schedules, such as the ones found in the helps in some Bibles, tend to place more emphasis on volume read than understanding the content; but at least they have the merit of establishing the routine of Bible reading.

Spend some time with the Book every day. It is God speaking to you.

Preachers, we are not all guiltless here. I find myself spending far more time reading what others have said about the Bible than reading the text itself. I suspect others do to. Perhaps this is where so many erroneous notions creep in.

2. **The Scriptures are authentic.** Jesus recommended reading the Scriptures because He knew their origin. Peter put it this way; "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Pet. 1: 20, 21). Jesus knew nothing of higher criticism, redactors, compilers, etc. He never referred to the Old Testament as a book of myths and legends. In fact, it is interesting to note that two of the Old Testament narratives that most frequently come under attack—the creation account and the story of Jonah—were both used by our Lord in His teaching.

3. **The Scriptures can be understood.** The divorce question was a major issue in Jesus' day. The controversy centered around the "indecent" of Dt. 24:1. Shammai took a conservative view; Hillel, a liberal one. Perhaps these Pharisees were trying to get Jesus to line up with one or the other of those rabbis. But His ques-tion was, "Have you not read?"

The tendency to let others do our thinking for us is all too common. It is easy to run to our favorite preacher and accept what he says on a certain subject as "gospel"; it is also dangerous. God revealed His will in such a way that all of us have the opportunity to understand it. "For we write nothing else to you than what you read and understand" (2 Cor. 1: 13). See also Eph. 3:3, 4. Make your own investigation into truth. "The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God" (Rom. 15:22).

Jesus never attributed religious differences to a matter of "interpretation" or "understanding the Scriptures differently." He did tell the Sadducees, "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, (Mt. 22: 29). He accused those two disciples on the road to Emmaus of being "foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk. 22:45). Mis-

understanding and not believing are problems with man, not with the Bible. Our Lord simply challenges us, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" (Lk. 10:26).

4. **The Scriptures are practical.** The Pharisees' question in our text was, "Is it [divorce] lawful?" Jesus answered, "Have you not read?" In other words, "If you were familiar with the Scriptures, your question would be answered." The Bible is the revelation of the mind of God. It is the only source to which we can go to find the answer to the question, "Is it lawful?" Some men (and women) in our day claim to be revealing the mind of God, but Jude affirmed the faith "was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). We must go to the Book to find God's will.

The Scriptures are practical for other things. Jesus found them useful in repelling temptation (Mt. 4:1-11). He also said they proved His claim to deity (Jn. 5:39). Paul noted that the things written in earlier times encourage us (Rom. 15:4). They also warn us. One could sum up the practical benefits of the Scriptures by saying they equip us for every good work (2 Tim. 3:17).

5. **The Scriptures must be kept.** When asked about the lawfulness of divorce, Jesus appealed to the pattern for marriage. "And He answered and said, Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.' Consequently they are no more two, but one flesh.' What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate" (Mt. 19:4-6). I think He was **saying there was too much quibbling about divorce and not enough emphasis on God's plan for marriage.** Is there not a lesson here that some of us need?

The force of Jesus' argument was that God's pattern, as revealed in Scripture, must be adhered to. He did not consider these commands out of date, though they were thousands of years old. He did not look at these things as minor infractions which God would overlook. The Son of God did not determine truth through sympathy for "innocent victims." He upheld the word of God. "It is written."

Notice these statements: "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:17-19). "For I tell you, that this which is written must be fulfilled..." (Lk. 22:37). "...the Scripture cannot be broken" (Jn. 10:35).

You and I will face the words of Jesus at the judgment (Jn. 12:48). Why not face them now so He will not say then, "Have you not read?"

Searching The Scriptures

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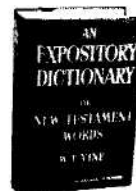
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Editorial

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EDITORIAL STEW

As is my custom in the December issue, I shall write several short items which are unrelated and trust the readers will find something of interest.

THANKS FOR A JOB WELL DONE

In this issue be sure to read the column "Answers For Our Hope" by Marshall E. Patton. This is the last time this column will appear in *SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES*. For twenty-five years, since the first issue of the paper in January, 1960, brother Patton has faithfully handled one of the most difficult assignments which any writer ever faces. Fielding questions over a wide range of subject matter requires knowledge of the word of God, practical judgment, insight into current trends of thought, patience, courage and a sense of humor. The first ten years of the paper's history found many questions having to do with the institutional controversy. In a time when tempers were short, when brethren were being alienated from each other and when sincere brethren were looking for honest answers, brother Patton charted a course in his responses which was sane, courteous and careful. I have never known a writer who tried as hard to anticipate every possible objection to a position and then close all the gaps, as he has done.

All have not agreed with every answer he has given, nor would they have done so had another written this column. It is the editor's settled conviction that the able work of Marshall Patton has added greatly to the stature of the paper over these years and has caused readers to realize that the paper was not about to run off on some tangent. The first twenty years of his column in this paper is now in hard back book under the same title as his column, "Answers For Our Hope." It is indexed both by subject and scriptures discussed and is a very useful addition to any Christian's library. You may order it from Religious Supply Center. It sells for \$17.45.

Since this column heading has been so identified with the name of Marshall E. Patton, and since the book by that title stands identified with him, we have decided to choose another name for our question and answer column. Beginning in January, 1985 our question and answer column will be entitled "What Saith the Scriptures?" and will be written by Weldon E. Warnock, long-time writer for this paper. We will have more to say about brother Warnock in our January, 1985 edition

along with his first article under that heading.

It is with mixed feelings that we see brother Patton lay down this assignment. Our feelings are relieved somewhat by the fact that he plans to continue to write under a different heading. He has told me for sometime that he wanted to do some writing on some things which would not normally be allowed under the format he has been using. So then, with gratitude for a job well done and with eager expectations for other efforts from the pen of one so rich in knowledge, wisdom and experience, we close a significant chapter in the history of this paper. I feel certain that many of our readers will want to take a moment and send brother Patton a note of thanks for the help he has given to all of us for a quarter of a century.

* * * * *

HEART TRANSPLANT FOR DAVID JOY

David Joy of Paden City, West Virginia successfully underwent heart transplant surgery recently (October 6) and at this time is making a good recovery. David teaches school at Paden City but also preaches for the good church at Fly, Ohio. He is an exceptionally capable preacher. He is only 31, married to the former Patty Casebolt (daughter of well-known Ohio Valley preacher, Paul Casebolt). They have three children. So far as I know this is the first case of such surgery with a member of the church, certainly with a gospel preacher. Fortunately, he has good insurance. Even so, for the rest of his life he will be on very expensive medication to fight the possibility of rejection. His spirits are good, his faith is strong and his family and brethren have offered the greatest support possible. Be sure to see the item in our *NEWSLETTER REPORTS* from Julian R. Snell. A trust fund has been set up at the Paden City Bank to help his family with expenses which insurance will not be able to cover.

LOSING MY SHIRT(S)

For years I have heard of people "losing their shirt" on some venture which did not meet expectations. Every preacher has had the experience of "losing his shirt" in a meeting where it cost him more to go than he received in compensation. Last week, while staying with a good sister in Beaver Dam, Kentucky during a meeting with the Antioch church in Ohio County, I lost all my shirts at once. This good sister was to have a garage sale in cooperation with her daughter and two daughters-in-law. A son-in-law had sent a number of shirts for the sale and they were stored in the closet in my room where I also hung my suits and shirts for meeting. One morning I opened the closet to get a shirt and they were ALL gone! I learned soon that they had been taken to the house where the sale was to start the next day, and that all of them had a price tag put on them and were ready for business. I rescued them before it was too late. I have tried to figure out why this could have happened and have decided it might have been that the good sister was still rattled from having kept Rodney Miller two weeks before I got there!

All of which goes to show that preaching is by no means dull. I have had my tooth brush used to brush a German Shepherd puppies' teeth, had a brother to wear a pair of my trousers to services, preached in the Philippines in areas where there was military conflict between the army and Muslim insurgents and where the house was guarded day and night by 14 armed soldiers for our protection and where gunfire was heard over the city every night. I have been threatened by irate relatives over baptizing some of their kin, have had enough "hot letters" to last a whole generation, and have been lied about by folks who ought to have known better. That all goes with the territory. Yet, none of it is even close to the experiences of the apostle Paul. Read 2 Cor. 11:23-33.

PRICE INCREASE

As announced last month, beginning, January, 1985 all single subscriptions for STS will be \$9 a year. This is the first subscription rate increase since January, 1979 and is long over due. We have absorbed several increases in printing costs during the last five years as well as significant increases in our mailing costs. We don't want to do it, but we have to. We don't want to go out of business just yet. Thanks for your understanding.

RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER

In various parts of the nation, I continue to hear kind remarks about the friendly and prompt service of Religious Supply Center in Louisville. Several have commented that they feel as if they have talked to kinfolks after calling to place an order. Their volume of business is growing. And why should it not, with David Key ably managing it, his wife Phyllis, and office workers Marie Ricks and Mary Catherine Threlkel assisting customers in their friendly and efficient way? We rejoice in their growth.

Once again, we remind our readers that the paper and the book store are two entirely separate businesses. The book store is a client of the paper, purchasing advertising space each month. We do not accept advertising from other book stores or publishers since it is our feeling that with their contracted ad space, plus the church ads, any additional advertising space each month would leave too little space for teaching articles. If you have business with the book store, please DO NOT SEND IT TO THE PAPER. That will only delay your business. If you have business with the paper, please DO NOT SEND IT TO THE BOOK STORE. That will also delay your business.

WINTER STUDIES

While the meetings from March-November each year are enjoyable, I always look forward to being home without interruption during December, January and February for the classes and extra studies we have at Expressway in Louisville. This winter I will teach

classes on "Developing True Spirituality", Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon, "The Threat of Secular Humanism", and 2 Corinthians. While these studies are aimed at our local work and its needs, we always invite any to attend who can do so. Besides the prospect of that, I have a good supply of wood for the fireplace and anticipate some time to sit by and ponder while the blasts of Canadian air chill the bone and snow covers the landscape. There is nothing more therapeutic for me while the snow quietly blankets the ground outside, than to watch the tongues of fire leap and dance in the fireplace. Ah, to be home with Bobbie and Nana and the warm fireplace.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

This issue in your hand brings to a close a quarter of a century of service to the readers of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES. Much has happened in those years. But we are still as determined as ever to walk in the old paths, seek the good way, search the Scriptures, speak as the oracles of God and oppose error with all our might. Both H. E. Phillips, who edited the paper for over 13 years, and the present editor have tried to keep the paper on a safe and sane course without letting it get over-balanced on any one subject. That does not mean that we have not devoted considerable space to subjects we deemed of great importance, but we have not allowed the paper to become a one-issue journal. We have tried not to allow pettiness a hearing and have refused space to grind personal axes. We offer no apology for being both negative and positive. As we begin our twenty-sixth year we do so with an awareness that there are serious issues confronting the people of God, together with great opportunities to advance the cause of truth.

The good this paper has done over the last twenty-five years could not have been accomplished without the efforts of the good men who have faithfully written the articles which have appeared here. It would be remiss not to publicly express gratitude again to H. E. Phillips for his years of faithful service as editor and for his continuing friendship and counsel to the present editor. We also thank our readers, some of whom have been with us from day one, and many of whom have encouraged friends to subscribe. We still need your help and hope you will stay with us.

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ANSWERS

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A WELCOME CHANGE

During the twenty five years I have written for this column I have suggested to the editors (formerly H. E. Phillips and currently Connie W. Adams) that a change in the writer would be good for the paper and for our readers. Their judgment, however, differed from mine and at their insistence I have continued. Recently, I again mentioned this change to Brother Adams. He agreed to select another writer for "Answers For Our Hope," if I would agree to continue writing for the paper. This I have agreed to do, under another heading, of course.

The new writer may have good reason to select a new caption for his question and answer column. I selected "Answers For Our Hope" years ago when the paper began. The first twenty years of this column have since been put in book form bearing that title. However, this caption has so long been a part of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES, I personally would like to see it continue.

For me this is a welcome change. It will afford me more freedom to write on subjects of my own choosing. It has been next to impossible for me to do this and at the same time maintain this column with any measure of regularity. Too, I find that some questions continue to reappear, and I find myself referring the querist to former articles instead of writing anew on the subject. While another writer may well give the same answer, the different approach, style, and personality would provide a freshness for the column that would be beneficial to all.

During these years I have tried to be fair, objective, and considerate. All three are most urgently needed in dealing with controversial matters. It is easy to make quick reply without giving due consideration. Unless one takes the time to study an issue well enough to be able to put himself in the position of an opponent and see the issue from his point of view, he will misrepresent him. All teachers would do well to ponder this point.

Writing this column has demanded a world of personal correspondence in addition to what has appeared in the paper. I apologize for not being equal to keeping abreast of all such.

I understand that Brother Weldon E. Warnock has been selected for this job. He and I are personal friends of long standing. We have worked in close association with each other numerous times through the years. I hold him in the highest esteem and commend him as one

worthy of confidence. He is no stranger to the readers of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES. His writings of the past give reason for high expectations, renewed interest, and a quality of spiritual guidance for this column commensurate with the high standards of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES throughout the years of its existence. May God richly bless him in this new field of labor.

I look forward to seeing you periodically in another column in this paper in the future.

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NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE PREACHING

Robert H. Farrish
805—D North Alamo
Refugio, TX 78387

Do you, sometimes, wonder just what some persons mean by what they say or write? I suspect that this is an experience common to all of us. Much of the misunderstanding currently flourishing in our society stems from the ambiguous use of terms to express ideas, convictions, purposes etc. Misunderstanding due to ambiguity is frequently present among members of the church.

Negative and Positive

The expressions, "negative preaching" and "positive preaching", have been reduced, by ambiguity, to a deplorable state. This being true, the wise speaker will avoid using this combination of words except in those instances where he has time and space to precisely define his use of the expression. Some favor positive preaching and deplore negative preaching. What do we mean by the terms? What says Webster?

POSITIVE: "Definitely or formally laid down or expressed; admitting of no doubt—definite, decisive, absolute ___ not relative or comparative confident, certain ___ affirmative... concrete, sure..." These and like words paint the picture of "positive". It is certainly granted by anyone who knows what the Lord requires of teachers and preachers of the gospel, that these words used to describe the preaching of gospel preachers, are in agreement with the Lord's requirements. There is nothing here however, that minimizes the importance of "negative" preaching.

NEGATIVE: "Expressing, implying, or containing a negation. Or, a negative answer: opposed to affirmative. That side of a question which denies or refuses—to refuse assent to—to pronounce against—to disprove—contradict, deny".

The definition of these terms should make it clear that the two go together. Both negative and positive preaching is required by the Scriptures. Negative preaching, i.e., preaching calling for "rejecting", "denying", "refusing", "refuting" etc., must complement positive preaching.

God, through Amos, calls for "hate". He demanded that Israel "hate the evil, and love the good ___" (Amos 5:15). I classify "hate" as negative and "love" as positive. The negative must accompany the positive. None can love the good without hating the evil. Some healthy hate is sorely needed in our day. God's order has been reversed in modern society, where perhaps the majority hate the good and love the evil. There are things to hate

as well as things to love. If we love the sinner, then we will hate his or her sin.

The prominent place of negative preaching is evident in the Lord's commission to Jeremiah. "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:10). Two figures, farming and carpentry, are used in this passage to show the kind of preaching God requires. Note the negatives, "Root out", "pull down", "destroy and throw down". This commission has four negative actions described and two positives. The wise carpenter tears down the old decayed structures before he begins building and the successful farmer clears the land, before he plants the seed. The negative precedes the positive.

What is meant by negative preaching? Some have identified the "Thou shalt not's" of the Old Testament as negative. They have pointed out that we are not under a lot of "shalt not's", but rather are under the positive gospel. The gospel, according to this theory, doesn't deal with negatives, but with positives. The truth of the matter is that the New Testament abounds in "Thou shalt Not's".

Paul charged Timothy and all gospel preachers to "preach the word". But what is involved? What is it to "preach the word? The answer is, "Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and teaching" (2 Timothy 4:2). Two of the distributives (reprove and rebuke) are to be classified as negatives, while one (exhort) is positive. The sinner needs to be reprov'd, i.e., convicted of guilt of sin; it is also necessary to "rebuke" or "chide" for sinful conduct. Both these negatives are placed before the positive. "Call to action" is the idea in the word, "exhort". There is no need to "call to action" until awareness exists of the lack in one's life.

The idea expressed by the words, "Thou shalt not", abounds in the New Testament as well as in the Old Testament. There are many passages in the New Testament whose language requires precisely the same thing as the words, "Thou shalt not". These are all negatives; they "**deny**", "**prohibit**" or "**refute**". These underscored words are all given as synonyms of "negative" in **Websters Third New International Dictionary**.

One negative, which is ignored by many Christians, is, "Not forsaking our own assembling together as the custom of some is . . ." "Not forsaking" is just as negative as "Thou shalt not". What is the difference in the meaning of "Not forsaking the assembling" and in the meaning of "Thou shalt not forsake the assembling"?

The last three chapters of Ephesians are devoted largely to a setting forth of both "negative" AND "positive" actions, which must characterize the "faith unto the saving of the soul". Study carefully Ephesians 4:17—5:15 and note the negatives—the "Thou shalt not's". Ephesians 4:17 ".... that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk...." Does anyone imagine that thou shalt not walk as the Gentiles walk is any more negative than "that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles walk?" The "old man" must be put away before the "new man" can be put on (Ephesians 4:22-24). Ephe-

sians 4:28, "Steal no more" is certainly equal to "Thou shalt not steal." Steal no more (negative), but rather labor (positive). Read on through the rest of the book of Ephesians noting the order, the negatives appear right along with the positives.

The grace of God teaches us to "deny" ungodliness and worldly lust (Titus 2:12). Grace "prohibits". Each in Jude's time, there were those who resented being "fenced in" by the truth. They turned the grace of God into lasciviousness (Jude 4). The prohibitions of the grace of God must be respected. No one can live soberly, righteously and godly and fail to deny ungodliness and worldly lust.

An emphatic "NO" is heaven's prescription for every situation where the devil tempts one to do wrong. The positive "YES", not only by word, but by deed as well, is the only thing that will please God as a response to truth and right. "NO" in clear emphatic word and deed must be the response to sin and error.

Building Better Families

James R. Cope
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SOME ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PARENTAL DISCIPLINE

"Nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4) is God's abiding order and challenge to every Christian parent. As mathematically we understand that "the whole is equal to the sum of its parts," so disciplinary we understand that nurture of the child involves the total actions God wants parents to take to meet his good pleasure. We may later recognize that our parental foresight has not been perfect but there are some principles which we cannot overlook if we are to be reasonably successful in the rearing of our children. To some of these we here invite attention.

1. **Every Christian parent must be willing to accept parental responsibility.** None has a right to be wrong in this regard. None has the right before God to disregard this obligation which God prescribes. No rational person can justify bringing children into the world while ignoring God's command regarding parental nurturing of those children. Every moral person understands that he has an obligation to discharge his commitment to his employer, to his government, to his spouse, to his neighbor. Why should a parent feel no obligation to do whatever is right toward his/her own offspring? Even lower animals provide for their own!

2. **Every Christian parent who successfully disci-**

plines his own child must first discipline himself. The ancient proverb declares, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Sad indeed is the situation when in his heart a child says of the parent, "What you are speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say!" A parent may control the physical body of the child by force but the child's spirit he cannot control without the child's consent. No father or mother who is not self-disciplined can effectively discipline the child.

3. **Parents must be united on disciplinary procedure.** Each parent who succeeds as a disciplinarian of children must have a triple agreement: (1) agreement with God, (2) agreement with the other parent and (3) agreement with the child. The primary thrust of Amos 3:3—"Can two walk together except they be agreed?"—has to do with Israel's rejection of God's will which Israel has agreed to honor. God would not continue to "walk with", i.e., to bless, Israel if Israel would not respect God. In marriage both husband and wife are to honor God's will toward them as "one". Parents, therefore, must love and respect each other and be agreed on proper discipline for the child. When properly handled, then, the child will conform to the unified discipline of the parents. Nothing can create greater turmoil and ultimate havoc in the parent-child relationship than parental disagreement over child treatment. It is a rare situation when a child does not become either a rebel or emotionally unstable when parents disagree on disciplinary procedure and practice.

4. **Parents must think maturely but understand immaturity.** For a parent to think that a child reasons and understands as an adult is sheer stupidity. Apostle Paul said, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things" (1 Cor. 13:11). Paul never forgot that he was once a child with childish thoughts, emotions, speech and actions! Some parents never remember or else conveniently forget the immaturities of childhood. This is a big reason for many developing children thinking of one or both parents as tyrants. It also explains why many children are overwhelmingly anxious to escape such an environment at the earliest opportunity. The respected, loved and effective parent is always the one who remembers what it means to think, feel, speak and act as a child.

O, fathers and mothers, hear me! It is our God-given duty to take our children's minds and hearts, even as we take their hands to guide them through a milling crowd, up a stairs, on across a heavily trafficked roadway. Moment by moment, hour by hour, day by day, week by week and year by year it is with pity, patience, persistence, and prayer without ceasing that we bring them through the perilous stumbling stones of ignorance, innocence, and immaturity to the high road of knowledge and understanding—the highway, yea, the mountaintop of maturity. Dear Father, let me never forget where I would be without a father and mother who cared when I needed the care that only a devoted father and mother can give!

A BRIEF STATEMENT IN REPLY . . .

Dudley Ross Spears
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It is indeed refreshing to engage in this type of exchange and also to see such frank honesty on the part of brethren Dorris and Donnie Rader. I hope to be as frankly honest in this reply.

I would like to retract the observation I made regarding the appearance of a **nihil obstat** or **imprimatur** in the article to which I responded. That was based on some of the recommendations near the end of their article, and it really served no good purpose. I tried to convey my confidence that neither of the authors of the article nor the editor of **Searching the Scriptures** intended such.

The difference we have seems to fall into the category of understanding facts rather than what is factual. The misinformation given regarding the text is cleared up. I would only urge the readers of these exchanges to read once more my efforts to explain what I meant by the statement that it is impossible to know for sure about the original text by reading any version of the Bible. We could debate that for ages, I suppose, with little or no advantage. Versions are not inspired of God and all of them are infected with human fallibility. That was the only point I wanted to make.

I do firmly believe the word of God is fully inspired and that we have it complete today. When it is transmitted through fallible men it is subject to the errors that creep in. With more and more ancient documents being uncovered we are able to check and re-check manuscripts and in so doing learn that any variant or omission is usually very insignificant. I do not have a perfect yard stick. I have a copy of one that, through manufacturing processes, may not be identical to the one kept in the National Bureau of Standards in Washington, D.C. But, I have no reluctance to use what I have as a reliable means of measurement. I have no original copy of the Bible. I have a copy of a copy, but also have no reluctance in using it as a reliable means for spiritual measurements. My confidence is in the author of it.

The quotation from me out of **Truth Magazine** is probably worthy of some comment. I said that the translators of the NIV, "flavored their translation with their Calvinistic backgrounds." I believe that is true in a number of cases. Not only must I recognize it in the NIV, but in any version of the Bible. The KJV has long been criticized for the same thing. The reader is urged to consider the criticisms of Calvinistic influence in the following instances.

1. Acts 2:47—"The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." The KJV translation fits the Calvinistic view that God determined who

"should be saved" and then added them to the church. E. H. Plumptre criticized their work, saying, "The verse takes its place among the few passages in which the translators have, perhaps, been influenced by a Calvinistic bias." The ASV and NIV both correct this to, "the Lord added to them (their number, NIV) day by day (daily NIV) those who were being saved."

2. Acts 3:19—"Repent and be converted." The KJV uses a passive form here in translation from a Greek verb that is active in the original. The ASV and the NIV both correct this. The KJV and NKJV suggest that the sinner is passive in turning to the Lord—a Calvinistic view.
3. Gal. 5:17—" . . . and the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, for these are contrary the one to the other: that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The KJV suggests that a sinner is totally unable to do what is right—a Calvinistic concept. The NKJV changes it to, "so that you do not do the things that you wish." The NIV does the same. There is no textual basis for translating "cannot do" in this passage.
4. Heb. 6:6—"and if they shall fall away." There is no "if" in any Greek text. Brother Milligan observed, "Nevertheless, our translators followed Beza, who, without any authority from ancient MSS., hath inserted the word si (if), . . ." Both the NIV and NKJV follow the KJV and the ASV corrects it to "and then fell away." But, if Calvinism is seen in the addition of "if", then the KJV is guilty.

My personal view is that the KJV translators were somewhat Calvinistic in these four instances. This does not discredit the entire KJV of the Bible. Understanding such matters in the KJV demands that we do the same with any version of the Bible. I know of no version of the Bible that is beyond criticism in some respect, including the KJV and the ASV. Selecting a right translation is not easy, and I have no quick and easy formula by which to recommend one. I try to read as many as I regard to be the work of men who publicly commit themselves to faith in the fully inspired word of God which is an inerrant and infallible supernatural revelation from God.

With these things said, I again say I admire brethren Dorris and Donnie Rader and hope nothing has been done to damage our relationship in Christ and that readers of these exchanges will not assume that difference makes us enemies.

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A SHORT REPLY TO BROTHER SPEARS

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Donnie V. Rader
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We appreciate very much the kind way that brother Spears has treated us in this exchange. When such discussions are conducted in a brotherly fashion it is certainly wholesome and refreshing.

We must observe that brother Spears didn't deny all of the points that we made in the November issue. Rather, it seems that he has shifted gears on us. Our discussion concerned the NIV. That was the subject of the August Special Edition. Most of what was said in the November issue concerned the NIV. Yet now brother Spears turns to talk about the weakness of the KJV.

We agreed in our first article that there is some weakness in the KJV. We would not try to defend the KJV as a flawless translation. Though these four points that brother Spears mentions are examples of weaknesses in the KJV, they are not really parallel with Psa. 51:5 (NIV) teaching that David was born in sin or passages that translate *sarx* as "sinful nature." We have never noticed that brethren who used the KJV in debate with the Calvinists ever had any problem. However, you can imagine the problems you would have using the NIV.

1. **Acts 2:47**—Brother Spears claims that the KJV rendering to this verse teaches that God chose who should be saved then added them to the church. It is true that there is no textual justification for "should be." It is certainly better translated in the ASV and NKJV. While it is incorrect, we fail to see that it blatantly teaches Calvinism like the NIV does.

2. **Acts 3:19**—Brother Spears is correct in pointing out that "be converted" is passive in the KJV, but it is active in the original. This teaches Calvinism, he says, because the sinner is passive in turning to the Lord.

While we grant him the point that this should be active as in the ASV, we fail to see where this lends a hand to the Calvinist. Just because there is something passive in the sinner turning to the Lord that doesn't suggest Calvinism. The sinner is commanded to "be baptized" (Acts 2:38), that is in the passive voice. We fail to see Calvinism in that.

3. **Gal. 5:17**—Our brother says that the KJV suggests that the sinner is totally unable to do what is right. We would agree that there is no textual basis for "cannot do" and that the NKJV better translates it.

However, even with this word "cannot" it doesn't necessarily suggest an impossibility (cf. Exo. 19:23; Mark 11:33).


4. **Heb. 6:6**—It is true that there is no justification for the word "if" being inserted into the text. Again, we fail to see that this implies Calvinism. Even with the word "if" in our KJV it teaches the possibility of apostasy. "If" doesn't deny the possibility of that happening, but

shows that when it does then it is impossible to renew them to repentance.

The word "if" does not suggest that what follows is untrue or impossible. When brother Spears says, "But, if Calvinism is seen in the addition of 'if', then the KJV is guilty" we are not to conclude that he does not believe it is guilty, for he had already said that there was "Calvinistic influence in the following instances."

Again we appreciate the kind way that brother Spears has treated us. We consider him a friend, not an enemy. We also appreciate brother Adams allowing us the space for our original article and this exchange.

May God bless us all as we continue to study the matters of text and translation.



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"NUFF SAID"

Gospel preachers are afraid of lions! A man of God commanded a fellow prophet, "By the word of Jehovah, smite me." But the man refused to smite him and as soon as he departed, a lion slew him (1 Kg 20:35-36). Now, in dread of lions, many gospel preachers (men of God) are ready to smite their fellows. Yes, sometimes the fellow does "ask for it." However, our fear of lions is so great that we do not always wait to see if it is "by the word of Jehovah;" we cut away. And, herein lies a great irony for this haste wrought by a fear of lions causes us to become "roaring lions seeking whom we may devour (1 Pet 5:8; cf. Mt 16:23).

Oh, yes, I know I am not the one who should write these things, but who among us can claim the purity to "cast the first stone" in the matter? Frankly, I dug a deep foxhole and grabbed a helmet before picking up this stone.

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GOD'S SILENCE

Juven Lee

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Many problems have arisen among brethren because of a failure to realize the significance and meaning of God's silence on many matters. The matter is not so complicated. We all need just to sit down and do a little thinking about how to deal with God's silence.

The Lord has many secrets. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29). Moses said this to the generation to whom the law was given, but this principle still is brought over into the New Testament. We are not to add to His word or go beyond the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11; Rev. 22:18, 19). We do not know when Christ will return for the final judgment (Matt. 24:36-51; 2 Pet. 3:10-14). Very many preachers in our materialistic world today are spending much time talking and writing about this secret of God. The public seems to be willing to provide millions of dollars to provide television and radio time and enormous salaries for these men to reveal secrets or to deceive millions of people. All this is worse than useless. It is sinful. The preachers should teach the revealed word of God.

The Lord wants us to know "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). He wants us to be furnished completely to every good work (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). The public shows very little interest in what God does say, but very much interest in His secrets. People say, "One way is as good as another." They resent those who talk of the one body, one faith, and one baptism (Eph. 4:1-6). They become ecstatic over the sensational speculation of the deceivers. This is amazing and regrettable.

When the instrument of music, societies, and the social gospel were being introduced in the last century some capable preachers cancelled their influence for good by saying, "My Lord made no comment on these things, so I cannot." It would have been a different story if they boldly proclaimed that the Lord was silent on these things that affect the organization, work, and worship of the church, therefore they are unscriptural. They could not be added by faith that comes by hearing the word of God. The Lord left these things out of His plans for the church. His silence condemns them. Adding one unauthorized thing leads ultimately to many additions and to complete apostasy. Adding one unscriptural item to the work and worship is a giant step

back toward denominationalism. With the passing of time we can see what it has done.

Two or three decades ago brethren again went out into the realm of God's silence with stubbornness and arrogance. Any who tried to warn them were called fanatics, antis, and trouble makers and were bitterly rejected. Again there were giant steps back to denominationalism. Some who have gone on ahead have reached classic liberalism. Men misused silence of the scriptures when they said, "Where does the Bible say that it is wrong to have sponsoring churches?" We were asking where is the scripture for these central agents, gymnasiums, and other things that are without the backing of a single passage of scripture.

Division, shame, and apostasy came again as in the last century. There were no new arguments. The same things were said pro and con about institutionalism and the social gospel. The last effects are the same. May we not suppose that Satan will use these same tricks on the church in the twenty-first century? There are already many among us who are not very concerned about the differences.

The Lord is silent on hundreds of things that do not pertain to the organization, work, or worship of His people. These matters do not pertain to life and godliness. Brethren have fussed and almost fought over the place of baptizing and over the matter of tablecloths over and under the containers for the bread and fruit of the vine. Before baptisteries were common, we baptized in muddy ponds, cold spring water, and in creeks the banks of which were covered with bushes and weeds. When pools of water were provided inside near dressing rooms there were those who objected. The inconvenient places were not more scriptural. The Lord is silent on these things that do not involve His will or change the action He commanded.

When humble Christians provided rough tables on which to spread the Lord's Supper, cloths made them look better. When houses had open windows and no screens, it was appropriate for cloths to be over the fruit of the vine and the bread. When these cloths were no longer needed, they could not be removed because of brethren who had put their custom on par with the Lord's will. God is silent on these matters because they do not concern Him. We today may have as much reverence as those who baptized in the creek and used tablecloths for the Lord's Supper. Men should not make laws concerning expedients when the Lord did not.

Some seem to think that there must be a scriptural example for a thing to be approved. The approved example is not the only way the Lord teaches. Some things are commanded and some things are necessarily inferred. We are to teach, but how? We may teach publicly and privately. We may use object lessons as did our Master. We may write as did Luke and Paul even though our writings are not inspired. We may use chalk board, charts, or projectors. There is as much scriptural authority for a flannel board or projector as for a chalk board but many who would permit the latter would object to the former. The Lord is silent on matters of expedients. They are not the same as additions. Having

a heater, lights, or songbooks is not the same as using an organ. The first things expedite the carrying out of the command to sing; the last adds another kind of music. Can you see the difference in using a light bulb and in using an organ when we worship?

There are those who object to too many things and others who tolerate too many things because they do not understand how to use the silence of the scriptures. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord" (Isa. 1:18).

CALLING OUR HUSBANDS, "LORD"

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"In like manner, ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands" (1 Pet. 3:1).

I have come to the sad conclusion that few women in the world even know HOW to practice this command, much less actually do it. The tides of the times, the dictates of society, and many husbands' abuse of their headship, have not only corrupted the original role of the woman, but have tempted even the righteous woman to find imaginary loopholes to escape her duties. Satan has blinded us, as he blinded Eve, into thinking that there is at least one command we need not obey—"Wives, be in subjection." We need to remind ourselves that just as Eve died spiritually the day she took a measly bite of fruit, so we also will die spiritually for disobeying God in even this one area. So, where does one go to find out how to be in subjection? Using the same restoration principle Josiah and Hezekiah used, one goes back to the original pattern (2 Kg. 22-23; 2 Chron. 29-31). And Peter tells us who to look to: "...aforetime the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands; as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord..." (1 Pet. 3:5-6).

Immediately comes the question, "Do I have to address my husband as "Lord," or perhaps, "Sir"? Notice that in the instance Peter speaks of, Sarah is not speaking TO Abraham (Gen. 18:12). Rather, she is speaking OF Abraham—to herself! How often do we have to guard our tongues in the presence of those of whom, at other times, we speak ill? As Jesus so often said to the Pharisees, take care of the inside and the outside will take care of itself (Mt. 23:25-26).

How do you think of your husband? Do you laugh at him behind his back? Do you obey cheerlessly, then stew about it all day long? Do you often whine, "He never does anything my way?" Do you resent the rule God has given him over you? You may as well resent God (1 Sam 8:4-8).

Now, how do you speak of him to others? Do you complain to the neighborhood kaffeeklatsch (the ones you hope to convert by your godly example)? Do you advertise his weaknesses and failures (Prov. 14:1)? Do you defy him or put him down in front of the children? Do you find it necessary to correct every little mistake he makes (No, honey, it's 38 miles, not forty)?

If you are honest with yourself, you can possibly see several areas where you need to improve. It is not easy. A woman cannot get into Heaven on her husband's coat-tails. God expects her to have her own faith, convictions, and responsibilities (Phil. 2:12). He expects her to be strong (Prov. 31:25). So how can a person like that find submission easy?

It helps to know where the difficulties lie. It began with Eve in the Garden. Before the fall, man had work—tending the garden—but after the fall, work became harder (Gen. 2:15, 3:17-19). Before the fall, woman was capable of child-bearing but after the fall, it became more difficult (Gen. 1:27-28; 3:16). Before the fall, woman was subject to man—she was made second in the role of helper—but after the fall, subjection became a major source of temptation (Gen. 2:20; 1 Tim. 2:13). Notice the parallel wording of Gen. 3:16 and 4:7:

Woman's desire is unto her husband, but he rules over her. Sin would desire to rule over Cain, but God commanded HIM to rule over it. The parallel follows that the woman would desire to rule over her husband, but he would rule over her. Therefore, part of woman's curse was that subjection became a struggle. It takes strength of character and enormous self-discipline to be a woman in subjection. The libber, who puts down the submissive woman, is the weak one, giving in to her own selfish desires without even a fight.

Another difficulty we face is that men in general do not deserve subjection "as unto the Lord." They are only mortals with their own faults and weaknesses, and Satan does his best to remind us of them. But God has never made any law of subjection depend on what the other deserves. We are to be subject to rulers—that was written to Christians under a ruthless tyranny (1 Pet 2:13). We are to be subject to one another even though we each have "our own burdens" to bear (Eph. 5:21). We are to be subject to masters (employers), even "to the froward," and "in like manner wives be in subjection..." (1 Pet. 2:18, 3:1). I doubt there are more than a handful of husbands anywhere who truly deserve the kind of loving devotion and subjection God intends a wife to give her husband. But there are probably not many more who get it either.

Then there are the individual husbands themselves who cause the difficulties, the slob, the sorry providers, the insecure tyrants, the workaholics, the robots, the insensitive ingrates, not to mention the ones who just do not think. A lot of husbands excel in verbal abuse. If the places I have been are any indication, such abuse occurs every Sunday and Wednesday night in every churchyard in the world, not to mention what happens in private. (We will not mention physical abuse, but I wish some faithful gospel preacher would

write at length on the subject. Like all other forms of ungodliness, this, too, has "crept privily" into the church. The Christian needs to know her scriptural options in such cases.) And there are the husbands who believe subjection means his wife can never express a difference of opinion. He tells his side and then closes the subject, "Lets not argue," or "That is enough." Yet, not a one of them will claim to be better than the Lord, and even he allowed a woman to reason with him and to change his mind (Mk. 7:26-30). Would that more husbands "followed his steps" in the treatment of their own wives, whom they claim to "love as their own selves" (1 Pet 2:21; Eph. 5:33). A husband needs to remember that he can help his wife be in subjection, and when he does not, he is in the unenviable position of causing his SISTER to stumble (Rom. 14:13; Lk. 17:1-2).

But wives, while it is true that a loving husband can make subjection easier, it is only wishing to think we will ever have the problem licked—"take heed. . . ." (1 Cor. 10:12). And it is only rationalization to blame it on our husbands. God never commanded them to keep us in subjection. He told us wives to have enough self-discipline (temperance) to keep ourselves in subjection, and promised there would never be more than we could bear (1 Cor. 10:13). And, somehow, I cannot believe that sharing hell with the husband one insists is at fault will make it more bearable.

MAINE MEN

Fred A. Shewmaker
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West Lafayette, Ohio 43845

WHO ARE THEY? HOW DO THEY FARE? WHAT MAY OTHERS DO TO ASSIST THEM?

They are the Lord's Maine men. They are ministers of the gospel in the State of Maine. Their preaching of the WORD OF TRUTH is in hard places. Let me introduce them to you:

Brother Ralph C. Smart (P.O. Box 109, Harrington, Me. 04463) has been a Maine man for more years than the others. At present he is discussing the possibility of assisting the church at Scarborough for a time, while the local preacher recovers his health. Brother Smart is in need of \$350.00 per month additional support.

Brother James C. Jones (P.O. Box 348, Standish, Me. 04084) became a Maine man about 15 years ago, when he brought his wife and family to the State and started the church which meets at Scarborough. He has acquired most of his support by teaching school. How-

ever, at this time his health prevents him from preaching and other active participation in the work. The Scarborough church is small (23 were present on Sunday morning, Sept. 30th). Brother Marcus Dixon, who lives near Brunswick (about 40 miles away), teaches the adult classes.

Brother Troy Adams (P.O. Box 506, Ellsworth, Me. 04605), who preaches at Ellsworth, was not present, on Monday, October first, when my wife and I had lunch with other Maine men and their wives at Searsport. Brother Adams has been a Maine man for several years and it was a disappointment not to see him and become better acquainted with him, while we were in the State.

Brother Rea Pennock (P.O. Box 303, Pittsfield, Me. 04967) has been a Maine man about 5 years. He told me, "I am the only one who receives adequate support." However, the meeting house at Pittsfield burned on Friday, September 28th, and brother Pennock's books were smoke and water damaged. The building was insured, but I doubt that all losses were covered; such is usually the case.

Brother Bruce Hudson (P.O. Box 56, Milbridge, Me. 04658) is the youngest of the Maine men. Bruce preached at Milbridge four years, then moved out of the State. After being away a couple of years, he has returned to preach at Milbridge. During the season, he and his wife, Vicki, raked blueberries to supplement his support. That source of income has ended and he is in great need of additional support. The other Maine men highly respect this young man and his family.

Brother Herb Brasswell (Box 162, Dexter, Me. 04930) became a Maine man about 2 years ago, when he began working with the church at Dexter. He brings enthusiasm to the work. He needs an additional \$200.00 per month support.

There is sadness among the Maine men. On July 22nd the preacher at Bangor resigned and defected, to "the 'institutional' church in Brewer." Some members of the Bangor church followed him. I was asked: "Do you know of a preacher who would be interested in the work at Bangor?" However, those who asked were not members of the Bangor church. It is expected that this would be a difficult work. It would seem that a mature man with settled convictions, who can be firm, yet patient and gentle, is needed by Bangor (church of Christ, 516 Union St., Bangor, Me. 04401).

YOU MAY BE ABLE TO ASSIST THE MAINE MEN:

If you are an elder, ask your fellow elders to consider supporting one of the Maine men. They are making personal sacrifices to preach the glorious gospel and are worthy of your fellowship in that gospel.

If you are not an elder, bring the needs of the Maine men to the attention of the elders of the church with which you are identified.

If you are a member of a church without elders, inform the brethren there of the needs of the Maine men and ask them to consider entering into fellowship with them.

It is my prayer that the Lord will open the hearts of brethren all over America to the needs of the Maine men

and that faithful local churches will begin providing them with adequate support. This is my only motive for submitting this report.

SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

P. J. Casebolt

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TEA BAGS AND THE GOSPEL

The city of Manila is to the Philippines much like Jerusalem was to Judaea—it is difficult to enter the country without visiting the city. And, much inter-island travel in the Philippine Archipelago finds the traveler going in and out of Manila. I never did have any trouble understanding that "Judaea" in Acts 11:29 meant just that—Judaea. Some brethren try to prove that since Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem on this journey (Acts 12:25), that the relief for the Judaeans brethren was placed under the oversight of the Jerusalem elders. Such a conclusion not only contradicts other passages which treat on the subject of congregational autonomy (Acts 14:23, 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2), but is in no way demanded by the inspired account of the benevolence sent from Antioch to Judaea.

In the first place, Paul and Barnabas wanted to take John (Mark), with them on the return trip, so had to pass through the city of Jerusalem to get him (Acts 12:12). Besides, Jerusalem was in Judaea, and would share in any benevolence sent to Judaea. In the second place, after one has visited the Philippines via the city of Manila, the Bible account of this journey in Acts 11-12 is even more understandable. And in the third place, the Holy Spirit told it the way it actually happened, and we should leave it that way.

In my 1984 travels through the Philippine Islands, I found myself entering and leaving Manila at least five separate times. Each time I stayed at the Bay View Plaza Hotel. The waiters and waitresses in the coffee shop soon learned that I drank tea instead of coffee, and that I would make three cups of tea from one tea bag. When I left Manila for the last time, I bought an extra tea bag which had the hotel logo on it, and told the staff I would think of them when I returned to the states and brewed myself a cup of tea from that tea bag.

A few weeks later, I was camping in a remote mountain valley of West Virginia, and decided to use my "Manila" tea bag. As I squeezed every moment of enjoyment I could get from that much-traveled tea bag, I noticed in fine print on the tag that it had been manufactured by a prominent company in another country.

Then the thought struck me, "If a tea bag can travel that far in a few week's time, and end up in some secluded place thousands of miles from its origin, why couldn't the gospel?" Well, of course, the gospel has done exactly that.

I do not believe that the adjective great when applied to the gospel commission is overly descriptive. Originally, the Lord gave this commission to eleven apostles (Mk. 16:14-20), and told them to "go into all the world" (v. 15). The fact that Matthias increased their number to twelve a few days later doesn't change the magnitude of their task. Yet, in about thirty years time, the task had been completed.

Of course the twelve did not personally visit every "creature," but those taught by them helped in the task (Acts 8:4). We can accomplish the same task anytime we are ready. The case of the traveling tea bag proves it.

SEEING THE INVISIBLE

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Romans 1:20 and 2 Corinthians 4:18 talk of invisible things being clearly seen and looking at things which are not seen. These are some of those paradoxical statements, of which there are many, in the New Testament. How could the invisible be "clearly seen?" Of what value would be staring out into space "looking at things which are not seen?" Literally, these statements would be self-contradictory and unbelievable. Therefore the lesson to us must be one of spiritual application with "seeing" having a special meaning. By looking at one thing, we can see, that is, perceive something else. Picking a wild-flower which grows in abundance along Texas country lanes, that would normally be considered a weed, when taken apart and its intricate, complex formation considered, God and his everlasting power and divinity can be as clearly seen as if we were looking at him with the natural eye. Only a fool could fail to see this, and such was the conclusion of the Psalmist who said, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalms 14:1).

This is equally true when we contemplate God's providential care and gracious provisions for the salvation of His creatures who will favorably respond to His compassionate plea to forsake Satan's domain. Jehovah made such a choice for man long before man's need and even before He made the man for whom the plan was intended. 1 Corinthians 2:7 puts it like this: "We speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory." The same writer declares in 2 Timothy 1:9, that "God saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ

Jesus before times eternal. . ." The apostle Paul says again that he lived "in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, **promised before times eternal**" (Titus 1:2) We are informed in 1 Pet. 1:18-20, that Christ as a lamb without spot and blemish redeemed us with his precious blood, and this was "fore known indeed before the foundation of the world." Even the church was an evidence of the manifold wisdom of God, "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:10,11). The footnotes list some of these statements as "ages," "long ages ago," etc. but there is one scripture that tells us how long ago God chose these things. "Even as he chose us in **him before the foundation of the world ...**" (Eph. 1:4). This Greek phrase literally translated is "before the throwing down of the world." Before God stretched out his hand and said, "Let the world exist," and then threw it down as the footstool of His feet, He had already formulated plans and made the choice for man's salvation.

What human mind or understanding could have conceived of such arrangement, even as a contingency? "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor?" (Romans 11:33-35). When we read Inspiration's revelation of God's infinite wisdom and purpose for man's redemption, we are seeing the unseen. The invisible things of him rise up before us and are clearly seen!

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

A. C. Grider
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Shepherdsville, KY 40165



A few years ago I debated W. L. Totty for two nights at his home congregation in Indianapolis, Indiana. The proposition was on the questionable side and gave some of my brethren fits. We will not go into the circumstances of why I signed such a proposition. I think I can justify the signing of it. But in my first speech in Indianapolis, I spoke as follows: "What is the issue? Let there be no misunderstanding. Let there be no misrepresentation. Let there be light! Let all understand what the issue between us is.

1. The issue is NOT shall we feed children. There is NO question here. This is not the issue. I believe we should feed children. I will affirm in public debate that we should feed children.

2. The issue is NOT shall children be fed from funds from the church treasury. I believe they may be so fed.

3. The issue is NOT will we go to hell for feeding children. I don't believe we will. On the contrary, I believe we may go to hell if we do NOT feed children.

What, then, is the real issue? What is the question in dispute? What is the contention? We will never be able to find the answer until we understand the question.

1. First of all there is the question of the limit or the unlimit to church benevolence. Is the church limited in the scriptures in benevolent work? I believe it is.

2. Secondly there is the matter of going beyond the doctrine of Christ. Is there a transgression of the doctrine of Christ in what we are doing?

3. Thirdly there is the question of incarcerating children in institutions which is contrary to nature and to God's word.

4. Fourthly there is the sinfully extravagant waste of money in the operation of this human machinery.

5. And fifth and more important there are the many divided churches all over the country over this thing.

I charge that there is a violation of several scriptures by this congregation in making contributions to these human societies. 2 John 9 warns against "Going onward and not abiding in the doctrine of Christ." This congregation is doing this on two counts. They are helping non-saints and they are helping human societies. 1 Cor. 4:6 warns against "going beyond" what is written. This congregation is doing this very thing in the two situations I have mentioned. According to Rev. 22:18 this congregation is "Adding to God's Word" in the incidents I have mentioned.

Now if they are not going onward" and if they are not "going beyond" and if they are not "adding to his word" let them present a scripture, any scripture that permits the church to help non-saints and that permits the church to assist a human society. I say they can't do it."

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

Send all News Items to: Connie W. Adams, P.O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109

REPORT ON DAVID JOY

Julian R. Snell, 632 Montclair Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601—David Joy of Paden City, West Virginia underwent successful heart transplant surgery in Pittsburgh, PA on Saturday, October 6. His prognosis is good and his recuperation is on schedule. For several weeks he had been hospitalized, first at Paden City, then Wheeling and finally transferred to Pittsburgh where diagnosis confirmed an infected heart with the only prospect for a normally active life depending upon heart transplant. David teaches school in Paden City and preaches at Fly, Ohio. Insurance relieves a great part of the medical expense but extensive personal expenses on the part of his good wife Patty (Paul Casebolt's daughter) due to attending him during the several weeks confinement, travel to and from the hospital along with remaining medical and hospital costs has been considerable. This fine family needs our help. A trust fund has been set up in the name: David Joy, at Paden City Bank, Paden City, WV 26159.

This information is offered not at the request of the Joy family, rather, love and concern for this good brother, awareness of his needs, prompts this sharing with the confidence that lovers of the gospel will readily respond. Why not send a check today?

TO NEW LOCATION

JACK HOBBY, Box 8207—A, Orlando, FL 32856—After more than thirty years in one location, the Holden Heights congregation will be moving into a new building at a different location. We hope to be fully settled in at the new location by January 1, 1985. We will vacate our present building October 30, 1984. We will continue to meet during the interim at a temporary meeting place. We can be reached by phone at the following numbers: 851-8031 (new building site); my home, 855-2670. Our new address will be 3940 South Bumby. The mailing address will remain the same (P.O. Box 8207-A, 32856). As Holden Heights becomes South Bumby, we say to our brethren, "Thanks for having come our way in the past. Continue to be with us as you can and will in the future."

DIFFERENCES RESOLVED IN MISSISSIPPI

HUEY HARTSELL, P.O. Box 55, Mt. Olive, AL 35117—I am happy to report a reconciliation between the brethren of the Meeks St. church in Corinth, Mississippi and the Central congregation in nearby Farmington. On August 26 men of both churches met and fully resolved

their differences. It was my privilege to serve as moderator of the meeting. During their discussion wrongs of attitude and action were confessed, and forgiveness was sought and granted. We thank God for the brotherly love and fine attitudes manifested by all. These brethren want Christians everywhere to know that they are now working together to advance the Lord's cause in the area. They will continue to meet as separate congregations, but will henceforth support and encourage one another as brethren should. The faithful preachers of these churches (Roy Fudge of Meeks St. and Eric George of Central) were most helpful in bringing about this amending of differences. Let us "love one another from the heart fervently" (1 Pet. 1:22).

SURVEY TRIP INTO EASTERN CANADA

BRUCE HUDSON, P.O. Box 56, Milbridge, Maine 04658—Recently, Ralph Smart, Sr. and I made a trip through Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Canada to assess opportunities for preaching the gospel in those areas. In Kentville, N.S. we met the preacher for the congregation which numbers about 35. In 1980 the elders of the Central church in Cleburne, Texas "assumed the oversight" of this congregation, contrary to the teaching of 1 Pet. 5:2 which says elders are to "feed the flock of God which is among you." There is a group meeting in Halifax but we were unable to locate anyone. A group meets in Mill Village, N.S. We were warmly received in the home of Jessie Sinclair and her sister of whom I had heard through my parents in Florida. Jessie has friends in the West Bradenton, Florida church. We also met John Mackey and wife. He preaches for the church in Mill Village, but also has a secular business in Halifax. There is a church in Truro but we could not locate any of the members. We understand that the preacher and half the members there think it is scriptural to use the instrument, though they do not use it.

A congregation meets in River John but they use the instrument. At present they have no one to preach there. They only have about a dozen who meet on Sunday morning. Since the organist died they have nobody to play the organ. They have students who come from Maritime Christian College on Prince Edward Island and speak for them now and then. They bring their guitars. We learned that there are a number of congregations on Prince Edward Island which use the instrument, many influenced by the college mentioned earlier. We hope later to visit that island and see the situation. The lady with

whom we met at River John agreed that the church could just sing as the New Testament teaches without the instrument and that if some of us would like to come and preach they would leave it off.

In Moncton, New Brunswick we met with one of the two preachers for a discussion. We were told that the gospel was not having any effect on the people so they have introduced a course by Landon Saunders called "Feeling Good About Yourself." What a contrast to Rom. 1:16 where we learn that the gospel is God's power to save. In Fredericton, N.B. we found the house where three Christians faith-fully continue to worship God—a widow and her two daughters. They had not seen other Christians in two years and were happy to see us. They spoke with disfavor of the practices of churches in Moncton, Halifax and Kentville. We agreed to come back and preach once or twice a month for them. On the last day of our trip, at McAdam, N.B. we crossed the border and stopped by the meeting houses at Lambert Lake and Danforth. In Danforth there are three families meeting and they have put up a small building. Passing from there we saw a seemingly empty church building. It was quite small and had no sign out front. I asked the woman across the street about it and she did not think it had been used in a long time. We think we can gain the use of it to preach and plan to go back and do some door knocking in that area and perhaps try to conduct a meeting. We saw a family of Christians in Princeton and also in the next town, Woodland, there is a family of Christians recently moved there. We are going to try to do some work in this area outside of Calais. We only need some expense money for traveling and plan to do all we can to spread the gospel into the areas we visited. We plan to use a Bible correspondence course. Pray for our efforts.

(Editor's note: Both Bruce Hudson and Ralph Smart, Sr. are in need of additional support. Bruce Hudson is a godly young man with a wife and two children. This is his second time to work in Maine. He and his wife both raked blueberries to help with their support, but that season is over. Bruce's parents are faithful members of the church in Palmetto, Florida which congregation helps in his support. He preached awhile in Frankfort, KY and I had occasion to spend some time with him. He is worthy. Also, Ralph Smart, Sr. is a native of the state of Maine and an older and experienced preacher. He has done much hard work in that state for many years. He recently lost \$350 a month support and has not been able to replace it. It is very difficult to find men who are willing to go into that area to live and preach and the least the rest can do is to try to supply what is needed for those who do. Can anybody out there help? Both men live in Milbridge and will be using that as a working base. They may be contacted at the address given at the beginning of this item.)

CHOICE L. BRYANT, 1508 Geraldine Lane, Arlington, TX 76010—It has been erroneously reported that I have decided to retire from preaching and singing-school work. I have made no such decision. The truth is, I am as available for gospel meetings and/or singing schools

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as I have ever been. My health is still good after 50 years of doing the work. Should any desire my services, contact me at the above address or call (817) 640-8354.

WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON

H. L. Bruce, 3301 Sequoia, Amarillo, TX 79107—September 12-19 the Dumas Dr. church in Amarillo supported me in a meeting with the church at 7th and Willow in Walla Walla, Washington, the church there has less than twenty members in a city of about 25,000. The city is a stronghold for Adventists, Mormons, Catholics and others. Liberal brethren have about 100. Conservative brethren, while few in number have a strong determination, but they need help! They need a good sound preacher with outside support—one who is determined, persistent and not easily discouraged and who will knock doors and conduct private and public Bible studies. Anyone interested in this work should contact: Spencer C. Talley, 1505 Pleasant, Walla Walla, WA 99362; or Jeff Hawthorne, Rt. 4, Box 175, Milton Freewater, Oregon 97862. Currently, brethren from Pasco, Washington are help-ing with the preaching.

CARLOS CAPELLI, Casilla #83, 1665 Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina—In September I made a preaching trip to Chile. At LaFlorida, Chile three were baptized during the gospel meeting. We baptized in the river by car light. Two of these days we had serious political disturbances because of the bad economic conditions. There was no bus service after 6 P.M. and this hindered some from the meetings. I also preached at 10 de Julio St. in Santiago. This is a strong and faithful church. I preached in Quillota where the church is made up of 13 members. I also spoke to a small congregation meeting in a home in Olmue, near the Valparaiso port. Then I preached at Serrano St. in Quillota where Roberto Perez is the preacher. This is the oldest church in this area, started by brother Perez. I also preached in Quilpue church which was started by Efrain Perez. One was recently baptized in Los Andes church where Nestor Sanchez preaches. Upon my return to Argentina, at Boulogne four brethren who had gone after false teaching came to repentance, confessed wrongs and were re stored. I also learned that two were recently baptized in San Cristobal.

A NEED REPORT

GREG GWIN, 26 Wheeling Dr., Jackson, TN 38305— I write this in behalf of Lee and Bonnie Forsythe of Dyersburg, Tennessee. Lee preaches for the Northside church there. Last fall the Forsythes had a child born with a serious heart defect. The infant lived about 7 weeks, most of which time was spent in different hospitals. As you can imagine, huge expenses were incurred. The total of all bills was about \$56,000, of which Lee's insurance covered only about \$42,000. He has been able to pay another \$2,000 on his own but still owes about \$12,000. I wonder if you might mention the Forsythes in your paper. I am sure they would be grateful for any help to prevent this debt hanging over them for several years. Their address is: 815 North view Cove, Dyersburg, TN 38024. Thanks for any help.

ROBERT W. TRASK, Sr., P.O. Box 1505, Chiefland, FL 32626—The church in Cedar Key has recently been uplifted by a gospel meeting with these speakers: Roy Whitworth, Olin Hastings, Buddy Johnson, David Halter, Harry Payne, Sr. and Jerry Eubanks. The theme was "The Church." Much good was done. I have begun a secular business to help myself be self-supporting but it will take about a year before that can be done. In the meantime, should any wish to help I would be grateful. For reference contact the preacher in Chiefland, Florida. He is Jerry Eubanks and may be reached at (904) 493-2811.

PREACHER NEEDED

WAIPAHU, HAWAII—The Leeward church in Waipahu needs a full time preacher. We are able to give \$1,000 a month toward salary. However, Hawaii's cost of living is about 15% above the national average which means an additional \$1,000 (or more) is needed. A modest house and utilities are provided. Consider too, that the moving cost will be substantial (about \$5,000). We prefer a mature man who is able to mix well with the various races and cultures that make up these islands. The congregation consists of local Filipinos and a good number of military personnel. Attendance on Lord's Day is about 80. For further information, contact us at the above address or call (808) 671-0239; 455-7259; 696-7153.