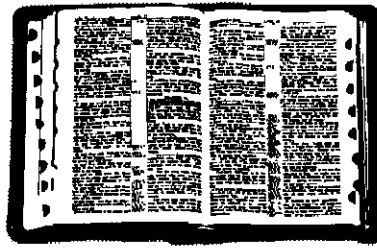


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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

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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

Volume 25 DECEMBER, 1984 Number 12

Published Monthly at
BROOKS, KENTUCKY

Second Class Postage Paid at Brooks, Kentucky
and at an Additional Mailing Office
USPS-487-440

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Office of Publication
52 Yearling Drive
Brooks, Kentucky 40109
Phone (502) 957-2257

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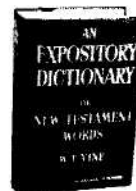
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Editorial

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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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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
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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 reproved, 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
301 Green Castle
Temple Terrace, FL 33617



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: "... aforesaid 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 to \$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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West Columbia, TX 77486

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
Rt. 4, 1671 Bill St.
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.