

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



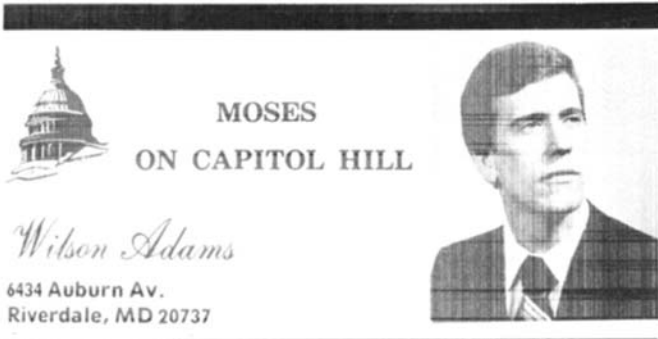
"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" — Acts 17:11

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XXVI

JANUARY 1985

NUMBER 1



... and was in every sense a LEADER!

Is there ever a character like Moses in all of history? A man who went to the mountain and saw the backside of God. A man who witnessed the fingers of Jehovah cutting out the ten commandments. A man who communed with God concerning the laws for man. And a man who set forth the principles upon which every good law has since been predicated. And, yet, a humble man— "*Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth*" (Num. 12: 3). Fittingly, Jehovah wrote the final epitaph on the life of Moses in Deuteronomy 34: 10—

Since then no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.

Recently I had occasion to be in the gallery of the House of Representatives in the United States Capitol. The proceedings on the floor were rather uneventful and my eyes wandered a bit making a mental note here and there on articles of interest in the historic chamber. One thing that arrested my attention (and curiosity) were the twenty three portraits encircling the room. According to the Capitol architectural staff, these represent the people who played a "noted part in the evolution of American law." There, cut out in white marble, were the likenesses of greats like Cicero, Seneca and Caesar of Rome, King Hammurabi of Babylon, Napoleon of France and American statesmen Jefferson and Mason. And there, about halfway on the back wall was Moses. The influence of Moses upon American law and order is easily recognized. Our nation was founded upon biblical principles of the Old Testament and our government of law was based upon a reverence for God and respect for one's fellow man which emanated from biblical teaching. The civil laws of Moses' law formed the basis for our laws and Constitution. Dr. Harold O. J. Brown underscored that fact when he wrote in **The Reconstruction of the Republic:** (pg. 19)

... the Bible has had a tremendous formative influence on people and institutions even when it has not been accepted as the authoritative Word of God. It is perfectly correct to say that a substantial measure of American

One of my favorite characters in all of the Bible is Moses. His story is one of the most intriguing, inspiring and moving in all of history. For forty years he was an Egyptian, the adopted grandson of Pharaoh. For the next forty years he played the part of an Arabian shepherd-boy and for the final forty he became known as the great Israelite lawgiver and leader. Few men stand his equal.

- He was a man of *fear* as he contemplated his God-assigned task to deliver his people from Egyptian slavery.
- He was a man of *courage* as he accepted the challenge and triumphantly preached and proved Jehovah's power in Pharaoh's courts.
- He was a man of *wisdom* who chose to associate with God rather than align himself with the treasures and temptations of Egypt.
- He was a man of *righteous anger* as he observed the religious rebellion and thankless disposition of the Jews toward Jehovah.
- He was a man of *meekness* who learned the meaning of "strength under control."
- He was a man of *mistakes* who had to pay a price for his sin of weakness—he would stay behind while his kinsmen journeyed over Jordan.
- He was a man of *youthful vitality* who never lost his vigor and enthusiasm even in his old age (Num. 34: 7).
- He was a man who *loved God* to the day he died—

culture, attitudes, literary style, even language and laws and political institutions is biblical in origin and inspiration. ... the basic source of values in American society is biblical.

Most of these "values" can be traced directly back to Moses. God has always had a certain code of ethics and values that He legislated in order for man to get along with man. In fact, six of the ten commandments, that Moses delivered to Israel, refer to man's relationship with man:

- Thou shalt not steal*
- Thou shalt not bear false witness*
- Thou shalt not murder*
- Thou shalt not commit adultery*
- Thou shalt not covet*
- Honor your Father and Mother*

As long as this simple code of civil morality is followed the result will always be the same—a morally safe and sane society. And it was that code upon which our great nation was founded.

Few men are as widely respected and remembered as the great Jewish lawgiver named Moses. Few men have had so great an influence upon our nation as he. The next time you're in Washington, D. C., go to the Capitol and visit the House of Representatives. Look for Moses. He's there and he's one of the reasons we are here.

A GIFT FOR ALL SEASONS

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES makes a fine gift at any season of the year. If you have been personally helped by reading it, then think of your children who have left home for college, military service, or marriage and jobs away from home. You would do them a favor to start them on wholesome reading material from faithful servants of God. How about it? Would that be worth \$9 a year to you? Write Us: P. O. Box 69
Brooks, KY 40109

BOUND VOLUMES—STS

- Vol. 9-10—\$9.50
(Plus postage)
- Vol. 19-20—\$12.00
(Plus postage)
- Vol. 21-22—\$12.00
(Plus postage)
- Vol. 23-24—\$12.00
(Plus postage)
- Order From—STS
P.O. Box 69
Brooks, KY 40109

Searching The Scriptures

Volume 26 JANUARY, 1985 Number 1

Published Monthly at
BROOKS, KENTUCKY

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

CONNIE W. ADAMS, Editor

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

\$9 per year in advance

Club rate:

\$7.50 per year for 4 or more

Bundles to one address.

12 for \$ 6.00
24 for \$12.00

Group subscriptions:

12 for \$ 6.00 per month
24 for \$12.00 per month

Address subscriptions and manuscripts to Connie W. Adams, P.O. Box 69, Brooks, Kentucky 40109-0069.

Address supply orders to Religious Supply Center, Inc., 4001 Preston Hwy., Louisville, Kentucky 40213. Phone (502) 366-9014 (Ky. residents), 1-800-626-5348.

POSTMASTER: Send change of address forms to P.O. Box 69, Brooks, Kentucky 40109-0069.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES BOUND VOLUME 23-24

576 pages—1982-1983—Includes series on Holy Spirit by Franklin T. Puckett; series by James R. Cope on Building Better Families; series by Rodney Miller on Nehemiah; series by H. E. Phillips on "The Box in the Vestibule"; series by Eugene Britnell on Catholicism; material by J. T. Smith on The One Container Issue, Bible Classes, Women Teachers and Premillennialism, and Much More.

\$12 (plus \$1.32 postage)

Order from STS, P.O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109

Editorial

Connie W. Adams

P.O. Box 69
Brooks, Kentucky 40109



WELDON E. WARNOCK TO WRITE QUESTION AND ANSWER COLUMN

As announced in the December issue, Marshall E. Patton, who has for twenty-five years written the column, **Answers For Our Hope**, has asked to be relieved of that assignment so that he might do some other writing for the paper. After much thought and consultation with those who have written regularly for the paper for many years, we have asked Weldon E. Warnock of Xenia, Ohio to handle this very important feature of the paper.

Brother Warnock has written a column for this paper for a number of years and our readers are already well acquainted with the products of his able pen. He brings to this effort a keen mind, a broad knowledge of the scriptures and things related thereto, practical experience in debating and radio question and answer work, a sense of fairness and a generous sprinkling of wit which promises to make his column highly readable. He has had wide experience in local preaching and in gospel meetings. He is now in his second term of work with the good Knollwood congregation between Dayton and Xenia, Ohio.

We have decided to choose another title for this column and have agreed to call it "**What Saith The Scripture?**" His first column under this heading appears in this issue. We hope to have this feature in nearly every issue of the paper. Readers may send questions to: Weldon E. Warnock, 1021 Welford Dr., Xenia, Ohio 45385.

Again, we thank Marshall E. Patton for his excellent work for the past twenty-five years. We are grateful to brother Warnock for his willingness to take on such a demanding writing assignment.

•••••

WHO MOVED?

The winds of merger are blowing again. The week of August 7-9, 1984 found 100 preachers from churches of Christ and conservative Christian Churches gathered in Joplin, Missouri to work for harmony. The desire for unity among those who profess to follow the Lord is commendable. The platform upon which such unity may be realized has always been the sticking point. In the past, several such efforts have been made, all with-out success. The Murch-Witty meetings ended in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1939 after H. Leo Boles laid it on the line. The medicine was too strong for those with a

taste for compromise. In the late 1960's and early 1970's two more meetings took place for similar reasons. The first was in Memphis, Tennessee and the last one was in St. Louis, Missouri. I wrote a series of three articles in TRUTH MAGAZINE dealing with those meetings, entitled "The Fading Fear and the Spirit of St. Louis."

The meeting in Joplin was arranged by Alan Cloyd, editor of RESTORATION LEADERSHIP QUARTERLY and Don DeWelt, publisher of ONE BODY. Each man chose fifty men from each side. Of those representing churches of Christ, all were of the liberal variety, with most of them considerably bent in that direction. Of significance was the omission of some you would have expected to have been invited.

LIFELINE and the CHRISTIAN STANDARD, both connected with the conservative Christian Churches, were gleeful about the meeting in Joplin. After all such deliberations are over, the basic question still has to be addressed: Where do the scriptures authorize the use of instrumental music in public worship? What is the proper approach to the silence of the scriptures? Is it permissive or prohibitive? How can there be unity until these issues are properly resolved?

Is there any indication that those in the conservative Christian Churches are ready to give up their instruments? I have seen no such indication. In fact, the CHRISTIAN STANDARD of November 25, 1984, contains an article entitled "Celebrate!" which has with it a picture of a youth band with guitar, drums, bass and keyboard. The gist of the article is that worship periods have become too stereotyped and make no allowance "for the diversity of age, culture, and experience which exists in our congregations." The article goes on to recommend a "Sunday Night Live" worship period every other week designed for teens and young adults. "A theme is chosen for each service and then developed through the use of a variety of art forms and media, including music, films, drama, pantomime, panel discussion, and slide programs." Now I can see how some of the liberal brethren would have no problem with this, with the possible exception of the use of instrumental music, though I doubt that some would object to that.

Really, brethren, who has moved? Is it not true that those in conservative Christian Churches see that among our more liberal-minded brethren, many of the things they do are accepted and practiced? Make no mistake about it. Those in the Christian Churches are no nearer to giving up their instrumental music than they ever were. If there is to be unity, then someone has to move. They have not, nor are there any indications that they intend to do so. The issue between us has always been Bible authority. The Christian Churches have their instrumental music without a single vestige of scriptural authority. They have other practices just as unauthorized. Now, some of our liberal brethren have many of the same things, also without divine authority. With some of them, failure to use the instrument is only a quaint tradition. They will be able to accept it in time.

Meanwhile, some of us have not moved. It is not that we prefer division to unity. It is not that we are just

hard-headed and illiterate. We are simply committed to the proposition that we must not go beyond the things that are written (1 Cor. 4: 6). We have nothing to give up, except our integrity and that is not for sale. We can smile at each other and be urbane. We can decide to pour warm syrup all over ourselves. When we are through with all of that, the fundamental question remains: Where is the scripture? Until someone is prepared to show that to us, all the meetings in Indianapolis, Memphis, St. Louis or Joplin will be useless.

INCOME TAX LAW FOR MINISTERS AND RELIGIOUS WORKERS

**1985 Edition for
Preparing 1984 Tax Returns**

by B. J. Worth

This book is designed to give the minister and religious worker in a compact nutshell all he must know so as to not overpay Uncle Sam.

This concise handbook will enable preachers and other paid church workers to avoid frustration and save time and money.


Here is sound advice based on years of research and experience in preparing and in auditing the tax returns of church workers. Also includes tax information for paid church workers serving overseas, Form 4361, Social Security, and estimated tax.

This tax guide explains:

- Where to report income
- What is salary and professional income
- Who qualifies for a housing allowance
- What the housing allowance exclusion means
- What is meant by "official designation"
- How to officially designate the preacher's housing allowance
- How to record professional expenses

64 pages \$3.95

Order from: Religious Supply Center



Please Renew Promptly

WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

(Rom. 4:3)

Send all questions to:

Weldon E. Warnock

1021 Welford Dr.
Xenia, OH 45385



(After many years as the writer of ⁺ his question and answer column, brother Marshall E. Patton has asked to be relieved of these duties so that he might have more flexibility to write on other topics of his own choosing. Brother Adams has asked me to take up this task.

As I begin, at this time, not to take brother Patton's place, for that cannot be done, but to continue this work, I do so with great humility, realizing there are few among us who can match the superior knowledge of brother Patton. Nevertheless, I will try in the very best way that I can to continue the high quality standard of study and work that brother Patton has maintained throughout the years of this column.)

WHAT IS THE ROCK?

QUESTION: "In Matt. 16: 18 Jesus said, "That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. " What or who is the rock? Could the rock be Peter since Jesus spoke in Aramaic and there was only one word in Aramaic for rock, 'KEPHA, ' the equivalent of which is 'PETROS' (Peter' and 'PETRA' in the Greek? Several commentaries take this position. **ANSWER:** Three views are held as to the interpretation of "this rock" in the passage. (1) That Christ himself is the Rock on which the church was to be built. (2) That Peter's confession (v. 16) that Jesus is the Son of God is the Rock. (3) That Peter is the rock.

The first view is supported by scriptures that state that Jesus is the foundation. "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation" (Isa. 28: 16). "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3: 11). There is no question that Jesus is the foundation of the church, but the issue is whether Mt. 16: 18 teaches that fact. We must keep in mind that Mt. 16: 18-19 is highly figurative and under the imagery of a city that depicts the church, Jesus is the builder of the city—not the foundation. In the same imagery, one person does not serve as different symbols. Hence, Jesus is not the foundation in the text.

In the second view the context lends strong support to its validity. Peter had just confessed, "thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (v. 16). On "this rock, " this truth, Jesus said he would build His church. In the INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL COMMENTARY, Willoughby Allen wrote, "the PETRA is equivalent to the object of APEKALUPSE (did reveal) in v. 17. 'Flesh and blood did not reveal it, ' i. e. the Messiahship

and the divine Sonship of Christ. 'Upon this rock of revealed truth I will build my church. ' The play upon PETROS and PETRA means you have given expression to a revealed truth, and your name PETROS suggests a metaphorical name for it. It shall be the PETRA, or rock upon which the Church shall stand' " (GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW, 176). This view is what I believe to be the proper and correct interpretation of the passage.

J. W. McGarvey said, "the rock... can be no other than the truth which Peter had just confessed concerning Jesus" (COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW AND MARK, p. 145). R. C. H. Lenski stated, "she (church) rests on the reality which Peter confessed, namely on Jesus, 'the Christ, the Son of the living God' " (ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL, p. 626). R. C. Foster said, "it seems to make a clear picture to hold that the divine truth Peter affirmed is the rock" (THE MIDDLE PERIOD, p. 235).

The third view that Peter is the foundation is supported by Catholics and several Protestants, although with different connotations on the verse. Catholics claim the verse teaches Peter was given supremacy or papal authority. While Protestant scholars repudiate the Catholic claim as presumptuous and without Biblical support, they do maintain that Peter, in a sense, was the rock, the PETRA, on which the church was built.

William Hendriksen affirms that Peter was the foundation in a secondary sense, as well as the other apostles, in what he preached (Eph. 2: 20; Rev. 21: 14). In other words, the apostles laid the foundation of revealed truth. However, Mt. 16: 18 says "Peter, " not "apostles. "

Others, such as Barnes, H. A. W. Meyer, Pulpit Commentary, Vincent and Barclay, advocate that Peter was "the rock, " not in the Catholic sense, but as the first to preach to the Jews and the Gentiles, to lay the foundation, the first stone in the church upon which other disciples were built.

But since Jesus himself could not be the foundation in this figure, because he is the builder, in like manner Peter cannot be the foundation in any sense in the metaphor because he is the gatekeeper. He has the keys (v. 19). Therefore, the only plausible alternative is that the truth Peter confessed is the foundation. If Jesus were saying that Peter was to be the foundation, he would have said, "that thou art Peter, and upon you, Peter, will I build my church. "

Concerning the Aramaic, **NOBODY KNOWS** enough about the Aramaic in Jesus time to make a definite judgment. The Palestinian Aramaic of that period is not extant. We do not even know that Jesus spoke, as his primary language, Aramaic. So a dogmatic argument based on the Aramaic is presumptuous and unconvincing.

Yet, in spite of scanty information about the Aramaic, the INTERPRETER'S BIBLE states, "In Aramaic there would be no separate form to indicate the masculine gender. 'You are **KEPHA**, and on this **KEPHA** I will build" (Vol. 7, p. 451). But seemingly, there was a distinction made by Jesus in Jno. 1: 42. Jesus said to

Simon, "thou shalt be called Cephas" (**KEPHAS, not KEPHA**). Dr. Theodore H. Robinson said, "for there is only one word in Aramaic and, EXCEPT WHEN USED AS A MAN'S NAME (emphasis mine, W. E. W.), is always feminine (THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, p. 141). So, the distinction made by Matthew in PETROS and PETRA was apparently made in the Aramaic by KEPHAS and KEPHA. Therefore, if Jesus spoke in Aramaic, he would have said, "thou art **KEPHAS** (masculine gender) and upon this **KEPHA** (feminine gender) I will build my church. "

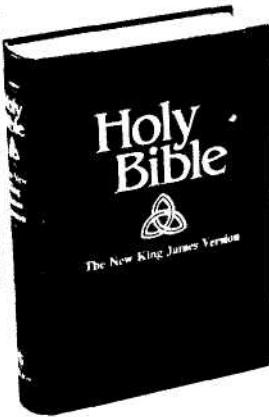
One thing is for certain, and that is that Matthew made a distinction. He recorded Jesus as saying, "thou art Peter (PETROS) and upon this rock (PETRA) I will build my church. " The Holy Spirit used the Greek, made a distinction, hence, let's be satisfied with that.

R. C. H. Lenski wrote, "We know too little about the Aramaic to assert that when Jesus spoke these words he used the same Aramaic term in both statements.... Therefore this appeal to the Aramaic substitutes some-thing unknown and hypothetical for what is fully known and insured as true on the basis of the inspired Greek of the holy writers themselves" (ibid, p. 627). Amen! William Hendriksen makes the same observation in his COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW on page 646.

For a more in-depth study of the Aramaic consult THE FINAL WEEK by R. C. Foster, pps. 334-338.

complete text

The theological integrity, majestic grandeur, and lyrical cadence of the 1611 translation is preserved in the New King James Version. Available in hardcover, genuine leather, and aniline gloss pigskin; some with thumb index. From \$12.95.



the New
King James
Version

- First major edition of the King James Version in over 200 years
- Original meaning in up-to-date language
- Modern punctuation & format
- Complete textual footnotes
- Contains every verse of the 1611 translation
- Words of Christ in red

ORDER FROM: RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER
1-800-626-5348

The Mystery of Iniquity

Eugene Britnell

P.O. Box 5624
Little Rock, Arkansas 72215



"BISHOPS IGNORE OUR SOCIETY'S REAL FOUNDATIONS"

A few weeks ago, the nation's Catholic bishops assembled for an annual conference, the key topic of which was a 120-page pastoral letter on the economy. In that letter, the bishops insist that the U. S. government work for a greater transfer of wealth to the poor. One of its authors, Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee, held a news conference to discuss the letter and denounced the "tendency to try to measure one's worth by the accumulation of luxury goods."

As I was thinking about writing an article concerning the bishops' meeting, the following article by Joe Sobran appeared in a local newspaper. He says many of the things which I had thought about, so we will consider what he says under the above heading:

"WASHINGTON—C. S. Lewis once explained why it is a mistake to expect the church to provide a political program:

The job is really on us, the laymen. The application of Christian principles, say, to trade unionism or education must come from Christian trade unionists and Christian schoolmasters: just as Christian literature comes from Christian novelists and dramatists—not from the bench of bishops getting together and trying to write plays and novels in their spare time.'

"The nation's Catholic bishops have found enough spare time to cook up an economic program. They have now served it up to the press, along with cocktails, at Washington's posh Capital Hilton Hotel.

"From the substance of the document, you might expect the bishops to camp out in Lafayette Park and offer bread and soup to the poor. But let's not complain. A few cocktails may be necessary anesthetic to anyone bent on reading the bishops' soggy prescription for the U. S. economy.

"What are these participations? It is not easy to say. The defining trait of the document is its demoralizing lack of definition. It pays lip service to private property and personal freedoms, but it cuts away at these things at every point.

"It rejects a 'statist approach' to economic matters, but it specifies no limits on the power of the state. It seeks to cover its intellectual nakedness with incessant references to 'the poor'.

"But what makes the bishops' approach 'Christian,' let alone 'the' Christian approach? The Christian is

called to renounce his own possessions, not to make a raid on those of his neighbors.

"If I give away what is mine, I make a sacrifice. If I give away what is not mine, I commit theft. Granted, the modern state is massively engaged in blurring the distinction between mine and thine; but it hardly needs or deserves the help of the bishops, who ought to be exposing the counterfeit compassion of modern statism, not abetting it.

"The modern superstate is the problem, not the solution. The bishops offer a joyless vision in which the state is to take more, and more, and more, with no definite rationale capable of limiting its rapacity. Poverty? You can see poverty in the news clip from Ethiopia, where the Marxist regime avows 'economic rights' as glibly as the bishops.

"What the famished Ethiopians really need is not food and water, but freedom—and not the false freedom of anarchy, but the concrete freedoms of civil society, in which government does indeed play an affirmative role, though not the redistributionist role favored by doctrinaire simpletons.

"The production of wealth depends heavily on culture—a Living body of moral habits such as industry, thrift and privacy. For a group of moralists, the bishops are astonishingly blind to this level of human life, a level that has been wonderfully nurtured by the Protestant culture in which the Catholic hierarchy, who seem to appreciate no realities between sin and social engineering, are far less appreciative than most Catholic laymen.

"And a culture like this one can't be taken for granted. It needs to be actively and rationally appreciated, in the full sense of 'appraised.' You don't have to Like it. You do have to realize the price of compromising or destroying it. There is no reason this country couldn't be turned into an Ethiopia.

"But the prophets of the Hilton show little awareness of the moral foundations of the society they criticize. Their very language is full of current cliché—the feminization of poverty, 'institutional priorities,' etc. — that betray their pathetic eagerness to imitate liberal fashion. Alas, it isn't even very chic. Even liberals are start-ing to criticize the failed poverty programs of the '60s. The bishops haven't heard.

"It can be exalting to worship in a church that is 500 years behind the times, sublimely indifferent to fashions outside. But it is embarrassing to belong to a church that is five years behind the times, huffing and puffing to catch up. The believer seeks anchorage in the permanent, not in mitered trendiness." (Arkansas Democrat, Nov. 18, 1984.)

On the same subject, we quote a statement from James Kilpatrick:

"The bishops assert confidently that 'everyone knows the significance of economic relationships,' but obviously this is not so. The bishops themselves seem not to have even the foggiest notion of why some are poor and some are rich. Their gentle notion is that all men are, or at least morally ought to be, substantially equal in this world's goods. The reality is that some of

God's creatures are more ambitious, more talented, more productive, more industrious and just plain luckier than others. There is respectable authority for the proposition that the poor we shall always have with us; and as **long as we preserve a free society** we shall always have the relatively rich with us also.

"Why do people work? Tell us, gentlemen. Why? I suspect the bishops have not thought this out, and this may be because bishops never have had to work in the way that others work. Priests have the greatest job security on earth; they are more secure than federal judges, crowned heads and tenured professors. The idea of working in a fiercely competitive marketplace—the idea of working to exhaustion in order to feed and clothe and house a family—is an idea the bishops know only at second hand....

"What to do about the poor? The bishops' feeble answer is to throw money at them. Our programs for, the, poor provide only 'meager' benefits; the whole welfare system is 'woefully inadequate.' Funds should be distributed without regard to whether supplicants are capable of working. While some degree of inequality may be both acceptable and desirable, the present distribution of income and wealth is so inequitable that it violates a 'minimum standard of distributive justice.' So the bishops would redistribute the wealth, taking from the productive and giving to the unproductive. Perhaps that is economic justice in the ecclesiastical view, but it looks like spinach to me."

Christians must never become oblivious to the needs of the poor. Paul said that the Lord taught it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20: 35). The early church took care of its worthy needy.

But there are things to consider. Why are people needy? What will they do with what they receive? Will they try harder to help themselves? The Bible says that we are not to help those who will not work (2 Thess. 3: 10).

The poor want a standard of living equal to that of others. By today's standards, many of us reared under conditions which would have qualified us for relief—at least food stamps. But we didn't demand so much and managed to take care of ourselves. And we never thought of asking for help while wasting money. From my observation, the vast majority of today's "poor" manage to spend a lot of money on tobacco, alcohol, and the like.

If we follow the bishops' advice and take from those who have and give it to those who have not, we will destroy individual incentive and it will be only a matter of time until everyone will be needy. Then who will help the poor?

If the Catholic bishops are so concerned about big government, why aren't they equally concerned about the religious government of which they are a part? It is the largest hierarchy on earth. And why don't they advocate the use of some of the billions of dollars owned by the Catholic Church in helping the poor?

Speaking of their meeting under such lavish circumstances to consider the plight of the poor reminds us of

an old saying about such bishops, "They never heard a harsh word or ate a bad meal."

ARROWS of
TRUTH for
denominational
error

Ward Hogland

Post Office Box 166
Greenville, Texas 75402



FORTY DOWN AND SIXTY TO GO

Any student of the Bible and history knows the church has gone into apostasy every one hundred years. Paul set his telescopic sights on the future when he said, "In the last days some shall depart from the faith, giving heed unto seducing spirits and doctrine of devils" (1 Tim. 4: 1). This departure by members of the body of Christ took place approximately one hundred years after its inception on the day of Pentecost. History makes it crystal clear that this apostasy began with the "one elder" syndrome which is a direct violation of the apostolic examples set forth in the Bible (1 Pet. 5: 1). The church was shoved into oblivion until Columbus sailed the ocean blue in fourteen ninety two.

Many people in America were fed up with both Roman Catholicism and protestant denominationalism and wanted to get back to the fountain head of Jerusalem. As a result of this assiduous attitude, they restored the New Testament church. For about one hundred years, scores of people obeyed the gospel and were added to that blood bought, spirit filled institution. After about sixty years, ominous clouds appeared on the horizon and brethren became soft in their deliberations. Their nomenclature included such things as "we need a more positive approach" or "We should not spend so much time fighting." Well, it finally happened in 1849, when a fine baby boy was born to a group called the "progressives" and they named him American Christian Missionary Society (ACMS). This episode split the body of Christ from ceiling to cellar and we lost almost all we had gained.

From Nashville and the Southland, a few brave soldiers of the cross picked up the mantle and preached the old Jerusalem gospel. We grew by leaps and bounds until about the end of World War II. It was then that we began to hear rhetoric which was incompatible with the restoration movement. It was not uncommon to hear brethren say, "We do not want any negative preaching." or "The fight over the Missionary Society is over." Others would say, "We need to get out here and baptize more people and forget about instrumental music and the ACMS." The hue and cry was to preach the gospel and let other people alone. Well, it finally happened in


the early part of the fifties when a fine bouncing baby boy was born called the "sponsoring church." This caused lots of excitement among its parents, which included a majority of members of the body of Christ. This new spiritual monstrosity, which is found on the blank page of your Bible, divided the precious body of Christ and caused it to bleed at every pore before the gazing eyes of infidels and haters of the truth. Thus, another hundred years had passed and we had lost a majority of God's people to apostasy.

Once again, a few noble soldiers of the cross tried to pick up the broken pieces and salvage out of the turmoil as many as possible. The battles raged and "name calling" became as common as the cold. We have had to fight for every inch of ground we have gained. Many congregations had to start with ten or fifteen members but have now grown to a hundred or more, but that was about forty years ago! Many like Israel of old have grown weary (see Micah 6: 3). They have grown tired of the issues. They have grown tired of negative preach-ing. They have grown tired of fighting. Kind friend, we must differentiate between fighting and wrangling. We must not let wrangling among brethren take the "fight" out of us (see Eph. 5: 11-15). I must confess that I am tired of wrangling among brethren and at times I will reluctantly confess that I grow somewhat weary of fighting the good fight of faith. However, I know this is indispensable with my salvation.

Yes, friends we have forty down and sixty to go and we are right on schedule. I marvel at what I am hearing among so called conservative brethren today. One man said, "Hogland, the fight over the issues is over." I asked him, "When did the victory take place?" Or perhaps was there a peace treaty signed that I failed to hear about." Then, the seventeen year old girl in Florida walked up and said, "Brother Hogland, that is the first time I have understood what that division was over which took place before I was born." Then, we say it is over? I recall as a seventeen year old boy that I never heard ONE sermon on what was wrong with the Missionary Society and this is what set the stage for the apostasy of the fifties. Yes, kind friend, you can mark your calendar and see if it doesn't happen in sixty years or less. I marvel that history continues to repeat itself. When will we learn? I am not a prophet or the son of a prophet, but if this and other articles could be pulled out of the archives some fifty or sixty years in the future we could all see whether or not history has repeated itself. I am saddened by what I am seeing and hearing today. Preachers and editors have all the "fight" taken out of them while trying to remove the "wrangling". Kind friend, if a preacher or editor doesn't know the difference in fighting the good fight of faith and a brotherhood wrangle he needs to go back to the drawing board of God's word. It stands as a divine postulate that when God's people stop fighting they are gone. We have become a pampered and pleasure loving people. It is not my purpose to cast aspersions on any person but since I have lived through one apostasy and about thirty-five or forty years into the next; I see signs of the last apostasy being espoused today. One does not have to be

astute to know we must teach the boys and girls what the last division was about; then tell them what caused the one before that one. When you explain it to them, they will understand and thus become a bulwark against the next apostasy. It is later than we think. Yes, forty down and sixty to go. Shall we look back with sad eyes and a broken heart that another innovation has hit the church in sixty years or less? Yes, friends the old ship of Zion is right on schedule to flounder once again on the rocks of institutionalism if we continue our course. Think about it and pray about it. Let us keep history from repeating itself the next sixty years.

For Children Only!



Rainbow Lessons
by Jane Britnell

RAINBOW LESSONS offer pre-school children a chronological study of Biblical events. They can be used in the Bible classroom, or can be adapted by parents who want to use these lessons to teach the Bible to their children at home. Teaching ideas and suggestions for reinforcing activities for both classroom and home adaptations are included in each lesson book. A full year's study (52 lessons) is in each book.

Old Testament Study \$3.75
New Testament Study \$3.75

Order From: Religious Supply Center

NEW—1984

Directory of Churches
By Bob Buchanan

Useful for travelers, students, military personnel and others.

\$3.25

Order From: Religious Supply Center

1-800-626-5348

Building Better Families

James R. Cope

301 Green Castle
Temple Terrace, FL 33617



A MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Sooner or later every preacher is requested to "perform a wedding" which, in our culture, calls for a ceremony suitable to the occasion. When I was a young preacher I was faced with the task of "doing the rites" for such occasions but could find no ceremony which suited my whims. This occasioned writing my own which, with few changes. I have used for more than forty years, including the wedding of my own children.

While yet in the classroom of different schools I have requests from younger men for help with inevitable situations they would face as preachers. One result of such requests was my reproducing for them the ceremony below. This work claims no special merit; however, a recent letter of appreciation from a young preacher, who uses and gives a copy of the ceremony to each couple whose ceremony he performs, has renewed my awareness that practically all younger preachers face the same problem which caused me to prepare this little work when "I was then where they are now. !"

It also occurs to me that many who read my "Building Better Families" column each month may profit by reflecting upon the seriousness of their marriage vows earlier made or soon to be declared before God and man. I earnestly pray that whoever reads or uses this ceremony may be edified by it. It is not copyrighted. Here it is:

MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the presence of God and of this company to join this man and this woman in the bonds of sacred marriage, an institution by God ordered, by Christ endorsed, by the Holy Spirit instructed, and declared by inspiration to be honorable in the sight of all men.

Who giveth this woman in marriage?

Fully conscious of the solemnity of this event and of the implications of the promises you are soon to make to each other, it is altogether proper that your minds and hearts be impressed and your consciences indelibly stamped with words of truth and soberness concerning Jehovah's law—that law which shall govern your lives from this day forward—as it pertains to the relationship you are soon to enter together.

The union you are about to form is not imaginary. It is real—as real as the God who instituted it, as the Christ who approved it, and as the Spirit who taught it. It is as much reality as your standing in flesh and blood

in the presence of God and this company. Likewise, this union is indissoluble save for the cause of unfaithfulness. Adultery alone gives either of you the right to put the other away for life. Light and frivolous excuses are not acceptable to Him before whom you must live and by whom you will be judged for eternity. Furthermore, this relationship is not one in which the weaker vessel is to be abused or the stronger vessel reproached. Woman has never intended to be man's slave, but his helper; nor was man intended to be woman's oppressor, but her protector. Not from man's head was she taken lest she be his ruler, nor from his feet lest she become his drudge. But from man's side was she taken that she might be his equal; from near his heart that she might be loved by him; and from under his arm that he might protect and preserve her, as along the rugged path and through the narrow vales of events they pursue their way together.

Thus they rejoice, and together they weep;
Mutually the sunshine and shadows they share;
Triumphantly they tread the wine-press of fate;
Yet learn not the scheme of despair.

(Note: call names of couple if desirable).

That immutable law of the God whom you honor by calling Him to witness the vows which you are soon to make, provides that the wife shall submit herself unto her husband as unto the Lord; that the husband shall be the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church and the savior of that spiritual body; that just as the church is subject to Christ, so shall the wife be to her husband in everything; that the husband is to love his wife, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. In like manner ought a man to love his wife as his own body, not hating his own flesh but nourishing and cherishing it, even as Christ does the church. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife and they two shall be one flesh; therefore, let the man love his wife even as himself, and let the wife reverence her husband. Thus, the marriage relationship is intimate and sacred, hallowed even to the extent that all other human relations are forsaken for the new one assumed. Man and woman never show more respect for one another than when they manifest love and devotion one to the other, nor do they show less regard for themselves and heaven's will than when they abuse this holy union either by brutality or neglect.

(Note: Ask the couple to join right hands).

(To the Man)

Do you, _____, take this woman whom you now hold by the right hand to be your lawful and wedded wife? Do you promise to love and cherish her in sickness and health, to provide for her in prosperity and adversity and, forsaking all others, cleave unto her and her alone until death you do part? (To the woman)

Do you, _____, take this man whose right hand you now hold to be your lawful and wedded husband and do by him the part of the faithful wife? Do you promise to love and honor him in sickness and in health,

in prosperity and adversity and, forsaking all others, cleave unto him alone until death you do part?

Is (are) there (a) ring(s)? (Note: Rings pass to preacher)

For generations rings have been used as tokens of pledges made in good faith and as seals of sacred vows honorably declared. In the giving and receiving of this (these) ring(s), you pledge yourselves one to the other to discharge fully and faithfully those duties and obligations which devolve upon each of you in view of the state you are now entering. Just as the circular nature of the ring symbolizes the continual nature of this sacred union you are now forming, so may the nigh indestructible nature of the precious metal out of which it is formed symbolize the everlasting quality of your devotion and love.

(To the man) Place this ring on the third finger of your bride's left hand and repeat after me...

"With this ring I thee wed, and with all my goods, I thee endow—my name to wear, my home to share, my heart in fold, my hand to hold, my life to be for thee and me, until death doth sever the tie that binds. "


(To the woman) Place this ring on the third finger of your groom's left hand and repeat after me...

"To your gracious offer I gladly respond, and, (with like token), I pledge you the loyalty of my life, the love of my heart, and the devotion of my soul, and I promise you your faithful wife ever to be while along life's path we walk together. "

And now by the authority vested in me by the sovereign state of _____ as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I pronounce you _____ and _____, husband and wife.

And we pray, our Father, that the smile of thy face, the consolation of thy peace, and the sunshine of thy love may be theirs to enjoy as they entwine their hearts, enlarge their love, and build their home, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**SIMPLICITY
IN
CHRIST**



P. J. Casebolt
2803 4th St.
Moundsville, WV 26041

BELIEVE, REPENT, AND... WHACK!

One of Webster's definitions for "plan" is: "method or scheme of action, procedure, or arrangements" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, G. & C. Merriam Co.). Since there are certain requirements that accompany salvation, it is in order to talk about a plan of salvation. I had already come to this conclusion years before I checked Webster's formal definition of the term plan. By reading Mt. 28: 19, 20 and Mk. 16: 16, one can see that there are certain things which must precede salvation, and these apply to "every creature. "

For years I have emphasized this plan of salvation in every sermon which I have preached. Some preachers in the Lord's church are announcing sermons in meetings where they preach as "containing no scripture, " and brethren are shallow enough to swallow such foolishness. I just don't see how a gospel preacher can preach a scriptural sermon without referring to some scripture, and I don't see how brethren can listen to it. How do these brethren handle the invitation of Rev. 22: 17, or do they just skip it?

Anyway, I have always "extended the invitation" in one way or another, and either at the beginning of the sermon, in the middle of it, or at the end, I not only tell people what to do in order to be saved, but I exhort them to do it. As much as in me is, I try to create a favorable environment which would encourage people to accept the Lord's invitation. I don't always accomplish this.

While we must realize that the power to save is in the gospel, we should still try to bring "into the captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10: 4). I generally make some reference to the theme of the invitation song, and urge the song leader to be ready at the proper time to avoid an unnecessary delay. I try to remove any anxiety people may have relative to the arrangements for the baptism, telling them that "all things are ready. "

But, in a recent meeting, an incident happened which has taken place in one form or another too many times in my life. I was right in the midst of reminding people what to do in order to be saved, when... WHACK!, a young mother swats one of her children. And, the swat was good enough to produce results, for the crying of the child just about drowned me out. And, what made this incident even more noticeable was that the husband was holding the child, and the mother had to reach

**SCOPES II
THE GREAT DEBATE**
by
Louisiana State Senator BILL KEITH

This is the story of the struggle to give creation-science equal opportunity with evolution-science in Louisiana classrooms by the man who authored the Balanced Treatment law passed by the state legislature. Humanism, the ACLU and the liberal press are unmasked. A must read book.

\$4.95
Order from Religious Supply Center


over another child to deliver the blow. Add to this the fact that they were seated in the first row of spectators, in the very center of the building, and you get the picture.

Now, I am a firm believer in discipline, and in order for it to be effective, it needs to be relatively timely. But, so is the invitation of the Lord important, and sometimes it needs to be administered at the right time in order to be effective. Solomon couldn't understand some things in life, and I'm way behind him.

Why is it brethren, that we consign to the center of a crowded row of people the very person which needs to respond to the invitation? And, why do some of these often end up holding someone else's baby during the invitation song? Why do people smack children, drop them on the floor, or throw a song book, right after "believe, and repent"? I give up.

THE SECURITY OF THE SAINT (I)

Ronny Milliner
10055 E. 25th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46229



SIN, THE GREAT SEPARATOR

Peter wrote of the "living hope" of "an inheritance" for the Christian which is "reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith" (1 Pet. 1: 3-5). Paul expressed his confidence of receiving this inheritance when he wrote "there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day" (2 Tim. 4: 8). John affirmed "that we may have boldness in the day of judgment" (1 Jno. 4: 17).

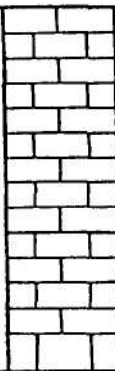
How may I have this boldness and confidence of knowing I will receive the inheritance in heaven? The question of the security of the believer has been one which has been discussed for centuries. The Calvinists have their view, the Arminians have their view, and the Catholics have their view. Our main interest should be *what has God said about this matter!* We purpose to make a study of the Scriptures on this question. In our first study we will see how that sin will destroy any relationship that we might have with God and that it will keep us out of heaven. Our second lesson will be devoted to a study of false views of security outside of the church of the Lord. Lesson three will give attention to some false views being taught by some in the church. Finally in our fourth study we plan to look at the positive side by considering some factors involved in the Christian's security. Our final lesson will be devoted to the question "How can I have daily security?"

We encourage you to study these lessons with an open

Bible and an open mind. It is our hope that with the completion of this series your faith in God and your determination for heaven will be increased.

The Chasm Of Sin

One of the fundamental principles of the Bible is that there is a separation of God from sin. Sin and God do not mix! This fact is true because of the character of God. Because God is a holy and righteous God, evil cannot dwell with Him (Psa. 5: 4-8). Because God's eyes are pure, He "cannot look on wickedness" (Hab. 1: 13). Because God is "upright, " there is "no righteousness in Him" (Psa. 92: 15). Because "God is light, " there is in Him "no darkness at all" (1 Jno. 1: 5).

GOD & SIN		
<p>"righteousness" (Psa. 5: 7-8)</p> <p>"pure eyes" (Hab. 1: 13)</p> <p>"upright" (Psa. 92: 15)</p> <p>"light" (1 Jno. 1: 5)</p>		<p>"nor shall evil dwell with You" (Psa. 5: 4-6)</p> <p>"cannot look on wickedness" (Hab. 1: 13)</p> <p>"no unrighteousness in Him" (Psa. 92: 15)</p> <p>"in Him is no darkness at all" (1 Jno. 1: 5)</p>
<p>"WHAT ACCORD HAS CHRIST WITH BELIAL?" (2 Cor. 6: 14-7: 1)</p>		

So as long as we are guilty of evil we cannot dwell with God. As long as we engage in wickedness God cannot look upon us with favor. As long as we are unrighteous we cannot be in God. And as long as we are in darkness we cannot have fellowship with God now, nor in eternity.

The Consequences Of Sin

When we commit sin, a violation of God's law, what are the results? The Bible teaches that sin will result in slavery (Rom. 6: 16-18; Jno. 8: 34), in spotting (Jas. 1: 27; 2 Pet. 2: 22), in scarring (Psa. 51: 3, 1 Tim. 1: 15), in separation from God (Isa. 59: 2; 2 Thess. 1: 7-9), in slaughter (Rom. 6: 23), in suffering (Lk. 16: 23; Rom. 2: 9), and in smouldering (Mk. 9: 47-48; Rev. 20: 12). Such a description is not a very appealing picture.

(Next Page)

Introduction To The Old Testament
by *Edward J. Young*

This classic work on the books of the Old Testament contains a discussion of the various critical theories related to the individual books, a good outline of the book, and other pertinent material written by a capable Bible scholar.

Price: \$14.95 (plus postage)

ORDER FROM: Religious Supply Center

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

IT CAUSES SLAVERY (Rom. 6:16-18, Jno. 8:34).

IT CAUSES SPOTTING (Jas. 1:27, 2 Pet. 2:22).

IT CAUSES SCARS (Psa. 51:3, 1 Tim. 1:15).

IT CAUSES SEPARATION FROM GOD (Isa. 59:2, 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

IT CAUSES SLAUGHTER (Rom. 6:23).

IT CAUSES SUFFERING (Lk. 16:23, Rom. 2:9).

IT CAUSES SMOULDERING (Mk. 9:47-48, Rev. 20:15).



But some may ask, "Do you mean to say that any kind of sin will result in such condemnation?" In answer to the question let us notice some different kinds of sin and see what the result was in each case.

What about sins of rebellion? The Hebrew writer describes some who were "once enlightened," knowing the truth of God, but they go ahead and "fall away." What's the result? He says it is "impossible... to renew them again to repentance" (Heb. 6: 4-6). In chapter 10 he speaks of one who would "sin willfully" (Heb. 10: 27). The result is a "fearful expectation of judgment" (Heb. 10: 27). So the consequences of sin do not change in the case of sins of rebellion; the result is still bad.

What about sins of weakness? The apostle Peter was a man who tried to live right. Yet in a moment of weakness ("fearing those who were of the circumcision"), he withdrew from the Gentile Christians in Antioch. Other Jews, and even Barnabas, gave into this pressure and became guilty of hypocrisy. Paul relates how he rebuked Peter openly because "he was to be blamed" (Gal. 2: 11-12). In the sixth chapter Paul writes about a brother who is "overtaken in any trespass." Vine says of this word, "the meaning is not that of detecting a person in the act, but of his being caught by the trespass, through his being off his guard." Another source says, "Paul has in view a fault into which the brother is betrayed 'unawares,' so that it is not intentionally wrong" (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. IV, p. 14). What is the condition of the brother who commits this sin of weakness? Paul says he needs to be restored (Gal. 6: 1). It is thus apparent that something has been broken. So in the case of sins of weakness the result is still condemnation.

What about sins of ignorance? Paul was a man who had been guilty of blasphemy and persecution of God's people, but he "did it ignorantly" (1 Tim. 1: 13). Was he in a lost condition and in need of forgiveness? Apparently Ananias thought so for he told the penitent Saul to "arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins" (Acts 22: 16). Jesus spoke of "blind leaders of the blind" and warned that "both will fall into a ditch" (Mt. 15: 14). He spoke of two disobedient servants in Lk. 12. One disobeyed knowingly, while the other disobeyed and

"did not know" (Lk. 12: 48). But they both were beaten. In Jas. 5: 19-20, we read of a brother who "wanders from the truth" or as Thayer defines the work "through ignorance to be led aside from the path of virtue" (p. 514). Yet this brother needs to be turned back from death. So once again, the result is the same—condemnation.

It matters not then concerning the type of sin, the consequences will be the same. Neither will the number of sins change the results. Adam and Eve were condemned for one sin (Gen. 3: 1-7). The young prophet died because of one sin (1 Ki. 13: 16-22), as did Ananias and Sapphira (Ac. 5: 1-11). Both the new convert Simon and the immoral brother at Corinth were rebuked for one sin (Ac. 8: 13-25; 1 Cor. 5: 1-13). No wonder James wrote, "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas. 2: 10).

The Cure For Sin

If this is true about sin, and we have all sinned (Rom. 3: 23), how is it possible for us to have a relationship with God? How can an impure, unholy, unrighteous sinner be with and remain with a pure, holy, and righteous God?

Let us turn to the book of 1 John to see some things John has to say in answering our question. There are three passages in 1 John where John states the purpose of his writing this short epistle. In 1: 3-4 he states his reason for writing is "that you may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" and "that your joy may be full." In 2: 1 he writes "that you may not sin." In 5: 13 he gives as his purpose for writing "that you may know that you have eternal life." I do not believe John had three different reasons for writing, but that he has one reason which is stated three different ways. We may know we "have eternal life" because we have "fellow-ship... with the Father and with His Son," and we can know we have that fellowship when we sin not, for as we have already seen sin severs us from God.

In 1 John, the author shows us how we can have "fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." A pure, holy, and righteous God is not going to have fellowship with us by *lowering* Himself to our impure, unholy, and unrighteous state. Instead, the only way we can have fellowship with a pure, holy, and righteous God is to *raise* ourselves to a pure, holy, and righteous state. Thus John exhorts us to "walk in the light AS He is in the light" (1: 7), "to walk just AS He walked" (2: 6), to purify ourselves "AS He is pure" (3: 3), and to practice "righteousness... AS He is righteous" (3: 7).

But how is it possible for me, a sinner, to become pure, holy, and righteous. John shows us two factors involved in this change. God has provided a "propitiation for our sins" (2: 2) and "an Advocate" (2: 1) so that our sins can be forgiven. But in order to become pure, holy, and righteous we have to meet God's conditions for obtaining forgiveness. John mentions one such condition in 1: 9.

HOW?		
GOD "NO DARKNESS AT ALL" (1:5)	"we confess our sins" (1:9)	MAN "WE HAVE ...SIN" (1:6,8,10)
	"we have an Advocate" (2:1)	
	"propitiation for our sins" (2:2)	

We have been taught, and rightfully so, that an alien sinner must meet the conditions God has laid down in His word in order to be saved. A survey of the cases of conversion in the book of Acts shows these conditions to be faith, repentance, confession of faith, and immersion in water.

CONDITIONS FOR THE ALIEN SINNER				
THE CASE	BELIEVE	REPENT	CONFESS	BAPTIZED
THE JEWS Ac. 2:14-41	V. 37	V. 38		VS. 38,41
THE SAMARITANS Ac. 8:5-13	VS. 12,13			VS. 12,13
THE EUNUCH Ac. 8:26-39	V. 37		V. 37	V. 38
PAUL Ac. 9:22,26	9:5	9:9	22:10	9:18, 22:16
CORNELIUS Ac. 10:11,15	10:43, 15:7-9	11:18		10:47-48
THE JAILER Ac. 16:23-34	V. 31	V. 33		V. 33
US Rom. 3:23	Heb. 11:6	Ac. 17:30	Rom. 10:9,10	1 Pet. 3:21

God also has conditions for His erring child to meet in order to receive forgiveness. A survey of the New Testament will show these conditions to be repentance, confession before men (in case of public sin), and confession in prayer to God.

CONDITIONS FOR THE ERRING CHRISTIAN			
THE CASE	REPENT	CONFESS BEFORE MEN	CONFESS TO GOD
PRODIGAL SON Lk. 15:11-24	VS. 17,20		VS. 18,21
SIMON Ac. 8:13-24	V. 22	V. 24	V. 22
EPHESIANS Ac. 19:18-19	V. 19	V. 18	
CORINTHIANS 2 Cor. 7:9	V. 9		
US	2 Cor. 7:10	Jas. 5:16	1 Joo. 1:9

When a man who is not a child of God comes to me and asks how he can be reconciled to God, I must answer, as God has directed in His word, that he must be forgiven of his sins. It is these sins which alienate him from God. When he asks how he may obtain forgiveness, I must answer with the divinely-given conditions. Do I have a right to offer a man the blessed assurance of salvation of any other basis? NO! To do so is to speak where God has not spoken (cf. 1 Pet. 4: 11).

When an erring child of God comes to me and asks how he can be secure in fellowship with God, I must answer, as God has directed in His word, that he must be forgiven of his sin. It is his sin which alienates him from God. When he asks how he may obtain forgiveness, I must answer with the divinely-given conditions. Do I have a right to offer a brother the blessed assurance of salvation on any other basis? NO! To do so is to speak where God has not spoken (cf. 1 Pet. 4: 11).

Conclusion

Let us see the terribleness of sin. Let us not excuse it, lighten its consequences, or continue in it. Let us learn to hate sin as God hates sin.

Let us also give glory to Him who has provided us with so great a salvation. Let us put sin out of our lives. Yet when we do sin, let us hasten to our Advocate through meeting the conditions God has given being thankful to obtain the forgiveness. It is in this way that we may have "fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. "

Daily Family Bible Reader
by Don Bassett

Here is a book designed for personal and for family use. One lesson is written for each day of the year. Each lesson includes: (1) a short scripture reading (2) a few pertinent comments of background and teaching; (3) three or four questions for thought and discussion. The lessons are taken from the historical books of the Old and New Testaments.

Designed to encourage regular study and meditation, this book will fill a much needed place in every family. Daily use will contribute to the spiritual level of family life.

Vol. I & II—\$7.25 Each

Order from Religious Supply Center
1-800-626-5348

RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER
WATS LINE
(All States but KY, Alaska & Hawaii)
1-800-626-5348

THIS "CHURCH OF CHRIST" IS NOT THE LORD'S!

Victorio R. Tibayan
P.O. Box SC-320, Manila
Republic of the Philippines

Those who claim that the Bible is their sole authority in religion would, without hesitation, agree that the church in the New Testament pages is the Lord's. This is even true also with those who may entertain the idea that there are other sources of authorities equal with the Holy Scriptures. As a matter of fact, we hear of divers and loud claims from many of those in the Sects and the Denominations explicitly or implicitly saying that the "Church" to which they belong "is the Church of Christ." And, this is understandable because the inspired Book speaks of groups of people banded together and serving God—as churches of Christ (Rom. 16: 16).

One such religious group is the so-called Church of Christ which originated in the Philippines. It is said to be founded by the deceased Mr. Felix Manalo and, registered with my government on July 27, 1914. This sect unabashedly claims that their founder was the fulfillment of the "ravenous bird from the east" written in Isa. 46: 11. Other passages both from the Old Testament and the New Testament are other corollary tenets which they indoctrinate among their members. According to them, Jesus established the true Church during the first century but, as predicted, it shall COMPLETELY "fall away from the faith" (I Tim. 4: 1-3) and will apostatize (II Thess. 2: 3-7), thereby losing its original identity to become what is now known as the Roman Catholic Church! (See alleged add. evidences: Acts 20: 29-30; Rev. 12.) This theory on the matter aforementioned, opportunely paves the way for them to concoct a queer system wherein Mr. Manalo was installed as "God's messenger from the east" called to establish the "Church of Christ" beginning from the Philippines. (The following passages allegedly identify Mr. Felix Manalo as that "messenger rising in the east" which is the Philippines—Rev. 7: 1-3; Isa. 43: 5-6 and, the time of fulfillment being in 1914 when World War I began—Matt. 24: 5-14; Phil. Hist. Book.)

Another deplorable error they indoctrinate among their votaries is the shameful denial of the deity of Jesus. To them, He is only human! By necessary inference, our Lord is classified as a mere Old Testament prophet compared only in the category of Moses and even with Mr. Manalo himself! The tragic system they employ in interpreting the word of God just to deny Jesus His divinity leads them to other grievous errors. This religious organization is highly CENTRALIZED. Money collected from each local church is amassed together with the other collections in one treasury and dispensed by their higher authorities. All of their so-called Ministers are trained, ordained and assigned by

the Hierarchy. On top of these, the subjects these Ministers preach on Lord's days are prepared at the Central Office, being the same throughout all the local churches on a given period. I can enumerate more "religious practices and teachings" by this organization pretending to be the "Church of Christ," which are so presumptuous! However, these will suffice to show that this "Church of Christ" is NOT THE LORD'S in the light of the oracles of God.

The church established by Jesus in A. D. 30 (not in 1914) is the Lord's. He said that, "... upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16: 18). Paul affirmed (Acts 20: 28) that the Lord purchased it with His own blood (See also: Rev. 5: 9-10). God in His wisdom so organized and equipped it that it may glorify Him "... in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever" (Eph. 3: 21) and, that it might edify and perpetuate itself (Eph. 4: 10-14; II Tim. 3: 14-17). The church which Jesus built is the fullness of Christ and the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 1: 23; 3: 10-11). As to His nature, Christ who is Lord of all things in the church is both human and divine. (John 1: 1, 14; Rom. 9: 5; Phil. 2: 6-8.) He could not have been a perfect Mediator between God and men (I Tim. 2: 5) unless He had this dual-nature. He is now both Lord and Christ since the "last days" were ushered in and, at the last day, He will present the church to the Father, unspotted and unblemished. (Acts 2: 36; Eph. 5: 27; I Cor. 15: 24-28.) It follows that the Bride of Christ must adorn herself in such manner as is acceptable to God—In this connection, we must consider the fact that the New Testament enjoins churches of Christ to be always autonomous in their relationship with each other. (I Pet. 5: 2; Titus 1: 5; Acts 14: 23; 20: 17, 28.) As mentioned before, be it always remembered that each church is perfectly equipped by God to carry out its own given work. And that, there is no authority from the inspired Scriptures for a church to tie itself up with other churches of Christ to form one big organization and, for that matter, other smaller organizations within the church!

This so-called Church of Christ purportedly established in 1914 by the will of God prides itself for having extended its work in some parts of Hawaii and the U. S. Mainland. This is through the immigration of a number of Filipinos who are members of their religious organization. But, I am certain that others were brought to their fold without having investigated diligently the claims of this "Church of Christ" especially on the matters discussed; for IF they did, I have no doubt that nothing in this world or the world itself can persuade them to accept such fantastic theories as they do teach concerning the True Church and its Founder, the Deity of Jesus our Lord and the Organizational set-up as suggested here. The preposterous claims they make on these matters argue clearly and strongly against them, that is, this "Church of Christ" which they boldly proclaim is not the Lord's!

READ YOUR BIBLE TODAY

A PORTRAIT OF THE EARLY CHURCH

David McClister
14307 Karlov Ave.
Midlothian, IL 60445

I

The New Testament is our pattern for living. Its pages reveal the will of God concerning personal godliness, church organization, our relationship with non-Christians, and a host of other subjects. The New Testament shows us, through various figures and numerous examples, how God wants us to live and work as His children.

If I may be allowed to use the imagery of a photograph album, the book of Acts preserves for us a series of snapshots of how the Christian life was lived in the first century A. D. It is the New Testament pattern in the form of historical, literary pictures. As one goes from chapter to chapter in Acts, he sees picture after picture of life in the early church. An interesting picture appears in Acts 4: 23-35. In this portrait of the early church we can see several remarkable things which we ought to have in the church today. The portrait of Acts 4: 23-35 shows the early Christians in a difficult situation: Peter and John had just been released by Jewish officials, having been threatened not to preach Christ publicly. Yet because of the marvelous features apparent in this portrait, the early church stood firm.

Prayerful

These Christians knew about the power of prayer and used it! When the world threatened them, they did not disband. They did not waste their precious time worrying about the threat of persecution (Phil. 4: 6), nor did they place their trust in their own plans, programs, or strength. Instead they gathered together to pray. They knew that God cared for their state and was receptive to their pleas, and thus they placed the matter squarely in His hands. Even if they themselves could do nothing to stop the threats of their enemies, they knew that God could and would care for His own.

Their prayer, recorded in Acts 4: 24-30, is a gem. First of all, these Christians asked for strength to do God's work (v. 29). How many times do we find ourselves asking God to do our work for us! But these Christians were not so lazy. They wanted to do God's work, and they prayed for the necessary strength. Sure, the work was difficult, and they knew it. That is why they did not try to do it on their own. The early Christians knew that they could be effective only if they relied on the strength which God supplied, not on themselves. We would all be benefited immeasurably if we would stop asking for worldly things, which only drains our strength and hinders growth (Jas. 4: 3), and start praying as the early Christians prayed.

Secondly, the early Christians realized in their prayer

that all things, including their present distress, were in accordance with God's plan (v. 24-28). They, like their Lord, had resigned themselves to accept God's will and working, and put their own desires aside. How great a lesson this is for us today! Too many times the Lord's work is hindered because of our petty jealousies and conflicting worldly desires. We ought to review what commitment to Christ really means.

God heard their prayer and answered it. Although we may not expect miraculous answers to prayer (of the kind in Acts 4: 31) today, we may still expect an answer to our prayer. Just as God indicated His support of these early Christians, so will He be on our side if we will resolve to do God's will regardless of what the world says and ask for God's help in doing it.

United

The early church was united. One of the most common features among all the portraits of early church life in Acts is the unity of the believers. That such an emphasis on unity should be apparent is no accident. God wants us to know that a church which is pleasing to Him is not ridden with strife and factions, but rather is united in peace (Eph. 4: 3).

The portrait in Acts 4: 23-35 gives great place to unity. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common" (v. 32). Their unity was not superficial, but real. It was grounded in their hearts and souls and was manifest in their attitudes toward each other. The determination and sentiment among them was one. And it is this very thing which accounts in a great measure for the immense strength of the early church. Rome fell to pieces in the first century but the church stood solid. Herein lay God's message on growth, effectiveness, and progress: it begins with unity in spirit. But where there is selfishness there is no flowering of the Lord's work.

Evangelistic

The early Christians knew that their primary work was to preach the gospel to the lost. Thus Acts 4: 33 records, "And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. " This preaching the gospel with great power was due in part to the unity of the church, but its real cause lay in the grace of God. Grace is favor. God favored and approved of the work these Christians were doing in spreading the gospel, and He blessed them in doing it. Brethren, God will bless us in the same way if we will just get engaged in that same work.

Because the early church was evangelistic, it grew. Notice that it grew, not swelled. There is a difference. Churches swell in size when there is a shifting of members to different locations, but growth only comes when there are new additions to God's family. But more specifically, the early church grew because of the essence of its evangelism: the resurrection of Christ. The first century Christians did not push human creeds or try to accommodate current social tastes. They simply laid em-

phasis upon Christ's resurrection, knowing that this is the cornerstone of Christianity and the very basis of Christian living (**Rom. 6: 4; Eph. 4: 24**).

Characterized by Love and Devotion Among Its Members

Acts 4: 34f is one of the most remarkable features of this portrait of the early church. When was the last time you saw or heard of a Christian selling his house to help another Christian financially? I am not denying that this ever happens today, but you must agree that it occurs only rarely. I know that our society is extremely affluent compared to the setting of the New Testament, and that saints in such a condition of need as in Acts 4: 34f are usually not seen as a result. But what Acts 4: 34f shows is a lack of worldliness in a willingness to help one another. The Christians of the first century freely gave up their possessions for the cause of Christ, and this was the effect of their great love and devotion to each other in the Lord. Such love is described in 1

Cor. 13, and its results are seen here. Eph. 4: 16 de-scribes these Christians perfectly.

Of course these Christians were devoted to Christ more than anything else, but their devotion to Christ caused them to love each other in a sacrificial way. They did not mind sacrificing possessions and pleasure for the benefit of brethren. And so must our attitude be today. The apostle John asked the timeless question, "But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth" (1 Jn. 3: 17f).

Conclusion

In Acts 4: 23-25 we see the church as God would have it. But the Lord's church in any locale can only be this way with the "working in due measure of each several part" (Eph. 4: 16). If the local church is to be pleasing to God, it will take each member working with this goal in mind. Let us all resolve to copy the portrait of Acts 4.

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

DON GIVENS, 13000 N. E. 84th St., Kirkland, Washington 98033— It is with sadness and sympathy for Lowell D. Williams of Kirkland, Washington that we report the death of his beloved wife, Doris. Sister Williams passed from this life Friday, November 9, 1984 while under-going heart surgery. The funeral was conducted on November 12 with over 400 present. James Puterbaugh and the writer conducted the service. Truly a great Christian lady, wife of an elder and preacher, shall be missed. She left us a supreme example of the "worthy woman." Some of you may wish to express condolences to Lowell Williams in this great loss. Address him at 13000 N. E. 84th St., Kirkland, WA 98033.

WARD HOGLAND, 1800 Hairston Ave., Conway, Arkansas 72032— Maxine and I moved to Conway the first part of August. The West Booneville church and the Northside church here in Conway are both fine congregations. Both are engaged in good programs of evangelism. I was with West Booneville church for over 7 years. Meetings for 1984 included: Myrtle Grove in Pensacola, FL; Fletcher Ave. in Tampa, FL; Case Street in Weatherford, TX; Savannah, TN; Southside in Owensboro, KY; Lanton (Columbia), TN; Bethesda, Birmingham, AL; Royal Heights in Franklin, TN; Lakeview in Hendersonville, TN; Riverside Dr. in Nashville, TN; Greenwood Rd. in Ft. Smith, AR; Paden City, WV; Mt. view, AR; Quitman, AR. When in Conway visit us at 1800 Hairston Ave.

EARL E. ROBERTSON, Rt. 4, Box 358, Tompkinsville, KY 42167— 1984 was a very full and eventful year for me in serving Christ. By invitation I was engaged in numerous gospel meetings over several states with some baptisms and, restorations. The work with the Westwood church in Glasgow continues to go well. Our radio program continues to be heard with good-will. Gospel meeting work for 1985 looks great. By the grace of God I hope to keep the many commitments filling the year. On August 15, 1984 I resigned from Guardian of Truth foundation as president and chairman of the board. I had

worked for it 22 years. We continue to live at the above address with phone numbers: (residence) 502-487-6974; (office) 502-487-5535.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

SHERREL MERCER, Edna, Texas—As a result of a building modification, the church in Edna, Texas has the following material available:

Two gas-fired heater units with blowers, one approx. 120,000 BTU, the other approx. 150,000 BTU. Air conditioner evaporators can be added above these units. Ages 10 years and 5 years respectively.

Two 5-ton air conditioner compressors, age approx. 15 years, that use type 500 refrigerant.

One 15-ton air conditioner unit, age approx. 30 years; compressors are inside aid handler; triple-unit condenser mounts outside.

One 5-ton evaporator coil suitable for duct use.

This material is immediately available at reasonable or no cost. Contract Sherrel Mercer, 512-782-E378 after 7 p. m. if interested. Items will be offered to the public after December 15, 1984.

ISMAEL RANGEL, P. O. Box 47, Raymondville, Texas 78580— After four years with the 8th and Kimball Spanish speaking church in Raymondville, my wife and I are planning to move in January, 1985 to Fort Stockton, Texas to help the work there. Fort Stockton is a bit larger than Raymondville. There is only one family with which to work. Much has to be done. The church in Raymondville which has been supplying \$250 monthly support will have to discontinue after we move. We will need to locate support for this work. I can be reached at the above address until January 1.

HARRIS J. DARK IS DEAD

We learned recently of the death of Harris J. Dark of Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Brother Dark was incapacitated the last few years of his life. For years he taught math at David Lipscomb College until a clash over his conservative convictions brought about his resignation. He then taught at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro for

a number of years. He was always a preacher of much ability. He was blessed with a brilliant mind. Some of his tracts dealing with the nature, work and organization of the church were classics. The world is better because he lived in it. We express to all the family our deepest sympathy.

KEITH E. CLAYTON, 55 East St., Bristol, VT 05443—Should any of your readers be interested, I have PULPIT COMMENTARY in good condition which I will sell for \$ 150 plus postage. You may write me at the above address or call 802-453-2593.

LARRY H. FAIN, 1105 Williams Ct, Claremore, OK 74017—I am writing for the South 88 church meeting in Claremore, Oklahoma. In the September, 1984 issue, you published a news item concerning pews for sale. Before the issue could get circulated good, brother Diehl, the listed contact, moved to California. We still have these furniture items for sale. We have 23 14 ft. long solid oak pews, with solid oak pulpit and solid oak communion table for \$2, 500. If interested, write me at the above address or call me at 918-341-7481; or call Eldon Turner at 918-341-7771.

KEN OSBORNE, 4201 Crosby Dr. #305, Knoxville, TN 37919—I am a prospective 1985 Graduate Veterinarian with 10 years "full-time" preaching experience and would like to locate with an established veterinarian who is a Christian. I would prefer to locate in an area where I could be of most benefit to local congregation(s) for fill-in preaching or teaching. References available upon request. Phone: 615-584-3427.

CARLOS CAPPELLI, Buenos Aires, Argentina—Since last report, four have been baptized in our work in Argentina. We have bought a house for the church in Jose C. Paz as a meeting place. It is old and will require much work but we had been renting a place. In the congregation in Boulogne, seven men are now able to take part in the services. In January, 1985 I plan a trip to Bogota, Columbia to visit the brethren and then plan to visit the United States. My visa has been approved. I have invitations for meetings with Spanish churches in Kerrville, Texas and also at Reagan St. in Houston, Texas.

PREACHERS NEEDED

PISCATAWAY, NEW JERSEY—The church here needs a mature, knowledgeable man to work with us as a gospel preacher. Contact Richard at 201-359-1928.

BRUNSWICK, GEORGIA—We are a small congregation currently meeting in the home of one of our members and now looking for a building to rent. We need a full time preacher to help us. Brunswick is a coastal city of over 40,000. We can help secure part of the outside support needed. Contact Bud Montero, 718 King Cotton Row, Brunswick, GA 31520. Phone 912-264-5876 (after 6: 30 p. m.)

STANLEY W. ADAMS, 2426 Tahiti Lane, Alabaster, AL 35007—I have an offset press I would like to sell and thought some of the

readers might be interested. It is 6 years old and in excellent condition. It has a platemaker, new blanket and all supplies available. Plates are good quality. This originally sold for \$3, 200. I will sell it for \$750. Call 205-663-1092.

DUDLEY ROSS SPEARS, 2081 Old Scottsville Rd., Alvaton, KY 42122—The West End church, 1609 Parkside Dr., Bowling Green, KY invites everyone to hear Johnny Stringer in a series of sermons dealing with the "Grace-Unity" issue. Dates: January 18-20. There will be a special meeting, Sunday at 3:00 P. M. and after the sermon, questions will be answered. Each night service will be at 7: 30 P. M. Anyone driving through or in our area is invited to attend.

SAFELY HOME FROM INDIA

John Humphries, Bill Beasley and Tom Moody are safely home after five weeks of preaching in India. They report successful efforts in public preaching and in various classes conducted to train preachers and teachers. Some were baptized, though their emphasis was on better preparing native brethren to work among their own **people**. Their flight left New Delhi about two hours before the assassination of Indira Ghandi. I understand things got pretty tense before they could get out of Bombay. They remained in good health during the trip and we are all thankful that they are safely back. While this was the first trip for Tom Moody, John Humphries is a veteran of many such preaching trips and so is Bill Beasley. We commend these brethren and encourage others to help where possible in gospel work anywhere in the world there is an open door.

A HEARTWARMING WEEK

R. J. Stevens was with the Expressway church in Louisville, KY in late October in a week of singing instruction. Attendance and interest exceeded expectations. The last night 334 gathered to spend an hour singing. The theme for the evening of singing was "Christ. " Those present will not soon forget the edification of that hour. Brother Stevens knows how to sing and knows how to teach others to sing. He is practical in his approach and emphasizes worship from the heart, whether we sound good to others or not. I tell brethren regularly that one reason some churches do not have meetings like we used to have is that we have grossly neglected our singing. Good singing prepares hearts to receive the gospel and fires the hearts of preachers to try and do their best. Good singing is good teaching for those present while poor singing is poor teaching. I just have to say it again: I have NEVER seen a meeting helped by trading song leaders every night, and I have seen many meetings which were badly crippled by that very practice. There are a number of brethren over the country who are capable of giving good instruction in singing. R. J. Stevens certainly helped us at Expressway. (EDITOR)

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	196
RESTORATIONS	68
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	