

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 XXVIII

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Number 1

WAKE THE WORLD
AND TELL THE
PEOPLE

Wilson Adams
891 Autumn Valley Lane
Gambrills, MD 21054



CHARIOT SCENES AT 35,000 FEET

It was late the afternoon of Thursday, September 12, 1985, when our family boarded the big Boeing jet that would take us non-stop to Orlando, Florida. The kids were caught up in the anticipation of excitement that surrounded a first trip to Disney World accompanied, no less, by the thrill of flying the friendly skies which, on that day at least, would prove to be less than cordial.

No sooner had we settled in than I noticed fear had etched itself into the face of a middle-aged woman seated to my right. It was quite apparent that she was nervous, a condition that escalated into panic as we began our push back from the gate. "Please," she said, "Can I talk to you?" "Certainly," I replied. She continued, "This is my first flight and I think I'm going to be sick..." With that, she grabbed the air sick bag which I immediately took from her while saying "There's nothing to be afraid of. . . etc., etc." (You've been there, right?)

And, so, we talked. About aviation, about her family and mine, about her trip and about the Bible. Her name was Nancy Smith. Nancy lived on Maryland's Eastern Shore and was traveling to Florida to visit relatives in the Kissimmee area. She found out that I was a preacher (which must have comforted her for I heard her say-"Thank the Lord!") traveling to Orlando to begin a gospel meeting on Sunday. I invited her to attend, drew a map, and invited her relatives, too. She thanked me for the invitation and indicated she might come if

she had the time.

The weather worsened as we neared our destination (I didn't need this!) It was apparent that central Florida was experiencing one of her typical summer thunderstorms which had, by now, decided to camp out over the Orlando airport. The flight attendants asked that the shades be pulled due to the terrific lightning that seemed to be wrapping itself around the aircraft. The turbulence was the worst I had ever experienced. Add to that my little boy's inopportune question: "HEY, DAD, ARE WE GOING TO CRASH?"-and Nancy was about to lose it all.

Thus, while the pilot was making his attempts at landing, I was making my attempts at comforting and encouraging Nancy. "Now there is absolutely nothing to be worried about. . ." (Did I really believe that?) "Nancy," I said, "If the good Lord answers our prayers and gets us down from here in one piece, you need to come to church." Without hesitation, and very emphatically, she said, "I'll be there!"

We landed safely. Nancy met her party and we met ours and I left wondering if I would ever see her again. I would.

On Sunday night I walked into the church building at Par St. and there sat Nancy and Nancy's relatives. They had all come. After the services we had a chance to speak further. "When are you going back to Baltimore," she wanted to know. "Saturday at noon," I told her. She continued, "I'm supposed to go back on Wednesday but I sure would like to wait and fly back with you." We spoke briefly and they left. I wondered once more if I would ever see her again. I would.

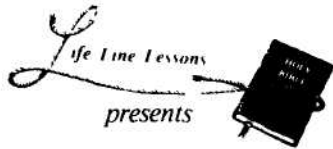
Sure enough when we arrived at the gate for the return trip, Nancy was waiting on us. We arranged our seating so we could be together and this time the weather was beautiful. We talked for two hours about God's plan for man and God's plan for her. She had questions and the Bible had answers and, so, at 35,000 feet and at 600 m.p.h. we talked. (Come to think of it, didn't Phillip do this kind of thing some 2,000 years ago in a little lower and slower chariot?)

Nancy Smith went home and so did we. I later phoned her and at her invitation my wife and I crossed the beautiful Chesapeake and drove the hundred or so miles

to her home for a further study the next week. I would like to tell you that Nancy obeyed the Gospel. She didn't (at least that night). The brethren there agreed to "follow Up" on Nancy and continue the study. At this writing I know not the outcome.

Brethren, there are opportunities for Christians to teach virtually everywhere. So often we pray, "Lord, grant me opportunities to reach and teach the lost" and then He does and we walk blindly by. Let us pray for opportunities (Col. 4:2-3), but let us also pray for wisdom (James 1:5) to enable us to seize the occasion and for courage to speak unashamedly (Rom. 1:16). WAKE THE WORLD & TELL THE PEOPLE is not a call to greater attempts at organized evangelistic outreach programs but, rather, is an appeal for Christians (you and me) to simply begin doing what we say we believe in doing-reaching and teaching the lost.

You see, there are Nancy Smiths everywhere. People who are hurting, people who are searching, people who are in sin and who need Jesus. Who else will teach them if you and I don't? Pray for opportunities yes, but pray for the wisdom and courage to seize the moment and speak the word. The Nancy Smiths will be there, you can count on it. The real question is: Will YOU be ready?



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Editorial

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PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

The completion of the walls of Jerusalem under the aggressive leadership of Nehemiah, produced a mood of thanksgiving and spiritual introspection which God's ancient people had not experienced for years. Decades had passed since the first group came back into a desolated land under Zerubbabel. Under the prodding of Haggai and Zechariah, the temple was completed and dedicated sixteen years after they laid the foundation and then left it to secure their own personal interests. Ezra led a second group out of Persia back to Judah and did much to purge the people of sin and to teach the law of God. But nothing seemed to spark genuine repentance along with their outpouring of gratitude like the rebuilding of the walls of the city.

Nehemiah 8 tells of an unusual meeting, not at the temple (near the northeast corner of the walls), but in the street before the Watergate, in the southeast corner of the city. It was really a PEOPLE meeting. The gathering was not called by Ezra, nor Nehemiah, nor the priests nor the city fathers. The PEOPLE came together and made request of Ezra, the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, and read it to them (Neh. 8:1). What followed was a protracted meeting lasting for several days and culminating in the observance of the feast of tabernacles which they had not kept since the days of Joshua (Neh. 8:17). All morning they listened as the priests and Levites read the law and "gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (Neh. 8:8). In the afternoons they celebrated, cooked good things and sent portions to those who were poor among them.

These people were, for awhile, truly people of the book. They were unhurried. From "morning til midday" they heard the law read and discussed. They took time to listen. They were not preoccupied with the "hurry up, get it over with" spirit of many pseudo-worshippers of our day.

These people of the book were attentive (Neh. 8:3). Verse 7 says "and the people stood in their place." This does not mean they occupied a standing position all that time, for verse 5 indicates that when Ezra opened the book before them "all the people stood up" which means they were seated until that time. But it does mean they sat and listened and stayed in their place. If anyone had to go out to the brook Kidron to get a drink

of water, no mention is made of it. Modern worshippers could learn from this. Too many assemblies are disturbed and listeners distracted by a continual procession of children, and sometimes adults, just wandering in and out. True people of the book come to listen and learn.

They were reverential in demeanor. When Ezra stood up before them and opened the book, the people stood while he "blessed the great God." They shared the sentiments of the prayer with becoming "amens." They lifted their hands, an oriental gesture which was an act of supplication to God the provider of all things, an expression of thanksgiving for the source of all blessings and an appeal for inspection of the hands and hearts of the worshippers. They bowed their heads and worshipped with their faces "to the ground." There was none of the gross familiarity with the Almighty which appears in much of modern worship where some do not seem to know the difference between Deity and humanity, nor respect it if they do know.

They had tender hearts which were stirred by the grandeur of the occasion. "For all the people wept, when they heard the word of the law" (verse 9). They did not supplant understanding with emotion, for they first heard and understood the words of the law. Neither did they leave their emotions at home. It was a noble occasion. It was a time for serious reflection on all God had done for them and a time to re-acquaint themselves with the law of God. They were not in captivity. They were safely in Judah. Inside the walls of Jerusalem stood the temple. Before them stood God's duly constituted priesthood reading to them from the book of the law which distinguished them from all other people. In their hearts that day, a covenant was being renewed. There are some days which tower above others—mountain peak days. Most of life is lived in the ordinary, but this day was far from ordinary. People whose hearts cannot be stirred cannot properly serve the Lord. On Pentecost, Peter's words cut them to the heart (Acts 2:37).

People of the book are people of change when they discover that they have not been observing something which the book of God plainly teaches. The feast of tabernacles was required in Deut. 16:13-17; in Num. 29:12-40 and in Lev. 23:39-43. In spite of that, they kept it only for one generation after entering Canaan. But when they saw their error, they decided to do exactly what the Lord said. That being the precise time of year for such observance, they kept the feast.

The result of all this was great joy among the people. Nehemiah and Ezra said to the people "for the joy of the Lord is your strength" (verse 10). Redeemed, worshippers of God ought to be the happiest people on earth. We ought to "rejoice evermore" with a "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

We ought now to be genuine people of the book. Our appeal ought, first, last and always, to be to the testimony of the law of God. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). Jesus asked "What is written in the law, how readest thou?" Romans 10 is a good example of the appeal to the word of God made by Paul. He said "For Moses describeth the

righteousness which is of the law" and then gave them what the word of faith (of the gospel) says (verses 5-6). In verse 8 he asked "But what saith it?" and then quoted Deut. 30:14. In verse 11, he said "For the scripture saith." In verse 13 he quoted from Joel 2:32. In verse 15 he said "as it is written" and quoted Isa. 52:7. In verse 16 he said "For Esaias saith" and quoted Isa. 53:1. There is a reference to Psa. 19:4 in verse 18. In verse 19, he wrote "First Moses saith." Then in verse 20 "But Esaias is very bold, and saith" and then gives a quote from Isa. 65:1-2. There is no doubt about it. Paul was a preacher of the book.

To the degree that preachers and teachers of the present age fill their speaking with human wisdom, pretty, catchy phrases and spiritual pabulum, to that extent they cease to be men of the book. And you can be sure they will not produce genuine people of the book. Who can deny that there is an abominable ignorance of the content of the book of God among Christians today. God's people have always been destroyed for lack of knowledge, even as they were in Hosea's day. Everywhere, the people of God need to hear exposition of scripture. While there is a need for topical preaching, there is a far greater need for effective presentation of what God said in the context in which it was first said. That needs to be followed by plain application of the truth of scripture to the needs and lives of the people.

The best preventive against apostasy is to remain people of the book.

BLACKFORD WRITES COLUMN

With this issue we begin a regular column written by Dick Blackford of Owensboro, Kentucky. Some of his material has appeared at times and it has always been excellent. He has had wide experience in preaching. For many years I have read his bulletin with interest. His writing is fresh, pointed and with a dash of wit which makes it always interesting. Above all, he is sound in the faith and his material manifests a reverence for the word of God. We welcome his column and believe our readers will profit much from what he has to say. * *

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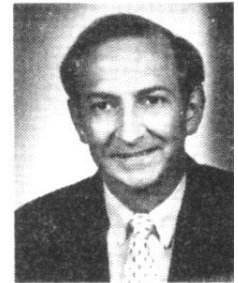
PATTON—PHILLIPS EXCHANGE

We expect to begin the exchange between Marshall E. Patton and H. E. Phillips in the February issue, one month later than originally intended. Two thirds of the work is now in my hands and the rest is expected before too long. The exchange concerns the remarriage of certain "put away" persons. Who these "certain" ones are will be clearly pointed out in the discussion itself. Watch for it.

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SINCERE WORDS

The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Ecc. 12:10)."



Dick Blackford

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Owensboro, KY 42302

WHAT WE OWE OUR READERS

I appreciate brother Adam's confidence in asking me to write for SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES. I hope that I will not disappoint him. Most of all, I accept this assignment with a great feeling of responsibility to my Creator and to those who are subscribers to this magazine. Since STS has a wider circulation than any church bulletin I have edited, the magnitude of what I write will be greatly increased for good or harm. A keen awareness of that responsibility causes me to begin by writing on my obligation. I have fallen short in times past in fulfilling my responsibility, therefore I do not hold myself up as an example. However, there are some areas I wish to set before the reader in which I will try to be responsible. Of course, all of us who write should feel a certain debt to those who take the time to read what we have written. Among those responsibilities are:

1. **TRUTH.** Obviously, this is first. It matters not with what eloquence we may be able to express ourselves. The ability to articulate is no guarantee of anything. We must not forget such men as Aaron (Ex. 4:14), Apollos (Acts 18:26), Tertullus (Acts 24:1,2), Robert Ingersoll and other great orators who had excellent command of language but erred in their message. Only the truth can make us free (Jn. 8:32). This must be a writer's first consideration for "if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Mt. 15:14).

2. **SIMPLICITY.** Though Paul wrote some things "hard to be understood," there is a "simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3) and it was "the common people who heard him gladly" (Mk. 12:37). Are we writing for the intellectuals? This may be the reason people listened and responded more readily to Christ than they do to us. A photographer once said, "I could ask you to participate in a synchronized coordination of the neophysiological reflexes with semiautomatic impulses, but it would be simpler if I just asked you to smile." An intellectual should be able to understand the simple, but not all of us can understand the complicated.

3. **EDIFICATION.** "Let all things be done unto edifying" (I Cor. 14:26). This should be uppermost in our minds under every teaching situation. We are to build up, not tear down the brethren. To edify is to promote the spiritual growth and development of the character of believers. Spiritual progress is our goal. If we give only pious platitudes, pop psychology, and suchlike, we may develop people with winsome personalities but

very little Bible knowledge. If we dwell only on issues and isms we will develop harsh, unfeeling members interested only in intellectual and academic pursuits and argumentation. Let us build up the total man.

4. **SOUND JUDGMENT.** When one puts his thoughts in writing he has no way of knowing into whose hands they may fall. Some things should not be put in writing. There is no point in deliberately placing oneself in a libelous situation. Satan does not miss an opportunity to destroy our work. We must exercise prudence. This also applies to the raising of various issues. A good question to ask is "Does this issue deserve the magnitude of attention it is getting?"

5. **BREVITY.** Preparing for a long trip, a man said, "I am just about packed. I only have to put in a guide book, a lamp, a mirror, a microscope, a telescope, a volume of poetry, a few biographies, a package of letters, a book of songs, a sword, a hammer and a set of books I have been studying." "But you can't get all that into you bag," responded his friend. "Oh yes, it doesn't take much room." With a smile he placed a Bible into the corner of his suitcase and closed the lid.

The Bible is the most concise and compact book ever written. What book deals with a wider range of topics than the Bible? The Bible records several thousand years of history. It contains geography, science, mystery, romance, poetry, biographies, adventure and touches on many other subjects.

I am not arguing for articles of a particular length. Some topics deserve more space than they are given. Others may be too long for what we had to say. It is interesting to note that it takes only about 16 minutes to repeat the Sermon on the Mount, reading aloud at normal speed. Yet it is nothing short of a masterpiece — delivered by the master teacher.

A friend of mine once remarked that too many words are wasted. His comment was that "we are drowning in a sea of words." A brother who works 8 hours per day, spends a considerable amount of time traveling to and from work, tries to fulfill the role of a husband, father, handy man, and financial wizard, does not have the same amount of time for reading that a preacher might have. I appreciate the fact that such a brother would subscribe to a paper and try to keep up on his reading and studying. I will try to do my best in consideration of him and watch the verbiage.

6. **COURTESY AND FAIRNESS.** I regret that some quit subscribing to periodicals because they often contain controversies. The daily newspaper has controversies in it but I still want to keep up with the news. Come to think of it, the Bible contains controversies.

It may be that the objection is to the manner and attitude in which a controversy is carried on. Someone once said, "Rudeness is a weak man's imitation of strength." A teacher of God's word must walk a fine line. There is a danger in our efforts to speak the truth with all boldness that we will be unkind and unloving. And there is a danger in our efforts to be kind and loving that we will compromise the truth. If during my association with STS I find myself involved in controversy, I resolve now to do my best not to belittle the one with


whom I share a disagreement by unkind personal remarks. Paul said, "only let your conversation be at it becometh the gospel..." (Phil. 1:27). This should govern our writing as well as our speaking.

Finally, consider Paul's exhortation to the preacher Timothy. "And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him unto his will" (2 Tim. 2:24-26).

CONCLUSION: This is a big order and I may have to eat some of my words. But if I fall short it will not be the fault of the goals themselves. It will be due to my own shortcomings. Pray for me.

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"NOT AFTER MAN"

THE KING'S MESSAGE: "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. .. for am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ. For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:6-12). I finally bought my own personal computer. I had used the one at work long enough that I had become dependent upon it. "Dependent" means that I am "spoiled" and do not want to go back to the old way of working. I studied a long time about which computer to buy. You see, one must select "hardware" (the machine itself) which is compatible with desired "software" (the programs which are put into the machine to enable you to do what you want to do). There are all sorts of software programs, but they will not all work on the same computer. They must be compatible with both the machine and the disk operating system (DOS) loaded into the basic memory of the unit to tell it how to run your software. I knew before I bought that NOT EVERY PROGRAM IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE SYSTEM I HAVE CHOSEN.

The Lord's "System"

When Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36), he declared that His "system" would not run the program designed by and for those whose ideology, methods, and ambitions are centered in the material "here and now" rather than in spiritual eternal life. He knew also that many who have similar ambitions for the afterlife will not be able to operate His "system" because they insert improper directions or "commands" from sources other than the "User's Manual."

From inception, the Lord's kingdom was not designed to focus on the temporal, material state of man. Prophecy pointed toward spiritual purposes, spiritual hopes, and spiritual fulfillment. The rulership of the kingdom

was to be spiritual. Messiah was to lead men back to God and save souls in spiritual citizenship in a spiritual kingdom (Acts 3:12-26; 26:22-23; 1 Peter 1:9-12). The hope was truly spiritual (Acts 26:6-7; Romans 15:4; John 5:39-40). Therefore, when Christ established the church, He brought into existence a spiritual body in fulfillment of God's spiritual promises to accomplish spiritual purposes (Luke 17:20-21; John 18:36; Romans 14:17). The nature of the church is evidenced by the spiritual quality of its head (Eph. 1:19-23), its members (John 3:1-7; 2 Cor. 5:17), its worship (John 4:23-24), its work (Eph. 4:11-16), and its rewards (1 Cor. 15:22-23; Eph. 5:27-28).

Improper Operating Commands

That certain types of "programs" will not operate on His "system," is apparent from Jesus' own statements introducing it to the public. He repudiated standard political methodology (Matt. 20:25-28). He turned down physical and/or military force as a means of carrying out His spiritual purposes (John 18:36; cf. Zech. 9:9-10). Money, physical property, and material wealth were rejected as energizers for His kingdom (Luke 9:57-58; 1 Tim 6:10). He never authorized the church to establish and/or sponsor social, political, psychological, or economic causes which were designed to promote earthly relationships or material well-being. The church is not a "social change" institution.

Application

The "Social Gospel" concept of "Christianity" was popularized by the New York, German Baptist preacher, Walter Rauschenbusch, around the turn of the century. It centers on the theme of improving society and social relationships through the "Christian experience" and "witness" (see Rauschenbusch's *Christianizing the Social Order* (1912) or *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917)). Most major denominations in America unashamedly espouse the "Social Gospel" concept. They conceive of fulfilling the kingdom mission by involvement in social and/or political causes, psychological counseling, marriage counseling, general physical benevolence and on and on. Their church sponsored "whole-life" programs include seminars for all kinds of human problems, activities for almost every interest, and psychological sermons or classes designed to deal with the human experience. Such programs, designed by men, however valuable from the perspective of the participants' social or emotional well-being, will not run on God's "system" because His "system" was created with other outcomes in mind.

We must not drift into this concept ourselves. I know it is extremely popular to appeal to people on the basis of their "human" needs. Lessons are exciting and seen as relevant when they are filled with "everybody's every day life" themes, but we must ask ourselves if much of what people want to hear is really relevant to the purposes of our worshiping and learning the Divine will. Preachers and elders may be able to build up memberships and make the work exciting by imitating denomi-

national activity, preaching sermons straight from denominational literature, and reading "how-to" books by denominational authors: but brethren, there is something terribly wrong when we think we need to go to those whom we believe to be so in error in their view of what the church is that they have no fellowships with God to find out how to carry on our work in the kingdom.

One thing we must ask ourselves is: "Why would we do this?" We must be honest in our inquiry and forthright in dealing with the consequences of our action. If our "seminar" or "activity" or "program" is to teach the Bible and comes within the bounds of work authorized by Christ, well and good. I am not saying that because a denomination does something it is necessarily unscriptural. If what we are doing is, however, designed as a tool to interest people so they will come worship with us, we have opened "a whole nother can of worms." If it is to make us popular and exciting or to please men, that is something else. Or, if what we are doing is designed to deal with some social interest, we will abandon our true purposes, put the wrong program on the "system", and come up without producing anything of value for the Lord. Such is short-sighted and counter-productive if our goal is the salvation of men and the growth of the spiritual kingdom!

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THE SILENCE OF GOD

We are supposed to have authority for all that we say or do in religion (Col. 3:17). And, Peter implies that if we cannot "speak as the oracles of God," we should keep quiet (1 Pet. 4:11). We should have the authority first, if we move by faith, for faith comes by hearing the word of God, and without that faith we cannot please God (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6).

But, some folks have no respect for what God says in His word. Others claim to have respect for what God says, *but show no respect for God's silence*. I have never been able to figure out how a person can show respect for what God says, while showing no respect for what God doesn't say. Martin Luther tried to implement this double standard, but it didn't work. In his "reformation" of Catholicism, Luther approached that task by trying to retain those practices which the Bible did not specifically forbid. But, he also rejected what God did say (in the Book of James), because it was contrary to Luther's doctrine of salvation by faith only. I maintain that no person can long have respect for what God does say, once that person manifests no respect for God's silence.

In modern times, the argument that "God didn't say not to" was best demonstrated by the efforts of digressive brethren to justify mechanical instruments of music in worship. Time has proven that lack of respect for the silence of God has led those same people to show utter disregard for what God has said in His word.

Brother Clifton Inman is about the only preacher in the Upper Ohio Valley who has even tried to defend the institutional practice among some churches of Christ, including the sponsoring church arrangement portrayed by the Herald of Truth. Even he was literally forced to use the "God didn't say not to" argument in his attempts to uphold these unscriptural and divisive practices.

Brother Inman began using his "not to" argument in the debate with Emerson Flannery in Columbus, Ohio. When brother Flannery pointed out this flaw in Cliff's argument, Cliff denied that he was using the argument. In the Willis-Inman debate at Parkersburg, W. Va., brother Inman again was forced to fall back on the old "not to" argument of the Christian Church, but caught himself, and said it was "an inadvertent statement." As late as the Adams-Inman debate at Middlebourne, W.

Va., brother Inman was still trying his best to keep from using the "God didn't say not to" argument, but his proposition demanded that he use it. It is amazing indeed that some brethren do not even have general authority for their institutional arrangements, sponsoring churches, and recreation complex, yet they insist that we come up with a specific prohibition to head off their unscriptural practices!

History proves convincingly that if man wants to do something, it makes little difference whether or not God has said not to do it. Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, and even admitted that God had told them not to do it. God told Israel not to do a lot of things, including "not's" in the Ten Commandments, but that didn't stop Israel from disobeying God. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire which the Lord "commanded not" (Lev. 10:1). Maybe they argued that if God didn't command it, then God was silent. They still died.

In the New Testament, we have been told "not" to love the world, think too highly of self, divide the body of Christ, murmur, compare ourselves among ourselves, provoke our children to wrath, and not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together. . ." (Heb. 10:25). But, people still do what God has specifically told them not to do. What makes you think that if God had specifically forbidden mechanical instruments of music in worship that those who want them would pay any attention to God? The same goes for a host of other things which God may not have specifically forbidden, but neither has He authorized these things by His spoken word.

The only time since the first century that we even came close to preaching the gospel to every creature under heaven, was when we preached and practiced the Bible principle of "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent." Not only have we digressed from this Bible battle cry, but we have also retreated from the divine mandate to be the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15).

"But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Hab. 2:20). At the opening of the seventh seal, "there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour" (Rev. 8:1). When God is silent, some people can't keep quiet five minutes, much less "half an hour". Others have more respect for funerals, hospitals, weddings, or a golfer on the green, than they do for God. Man's problem is that if he insists on talking when God is silent, he probably won't be able to hear anything when God does speak.

OVERSEEING THE FLOCK OF GOD

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Serving as an elder is a rather awesome responsibility requiring that one take the work seriously; if he doesn't view it as a spiritual work to be performed, then he should not consider accepting the position. It will be far better for him and for God's sheep needing oversight; for viewing an elder's role as a figurehead position, an honorary office, an opportunity to wield dominion over others, or a steppingstone to bigger things will lead to monumental problems among the people of the Lord, as well as that man's own condemnation by God.

Elders are pictured as overseers of the sheep in God's flock in Acts 20:28. Observe that they oversee sheep; this they do as they watch for souls (Heb. 13:17). Their primary charge is to be alert to their spiritual condition, not to plan budgets or to oversee buildings and property. These matters likewise come within their concern because elders in Acts 11:30 had oversight of financial matters, but these should never be allowed to become their principal concern. They are watchmen for souls, somewhat similar to the watchmen on the walls of ancient cities or to Ezekiel in Ezekiel 3:16-27. Others can plan budgets and care for buildings, but others lack the preparation described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 to do spiritual work. Any decisions relating to buildings or property are important only to the extent they reflect a necessary connection to the true work of watching for souls. Far too often these mundane matters become larger than they should, even to the point of almost removing spiritual matters from the minds of overseers and from the agenda of work of the local church.

In their work of watching for souls, there is much that they must find time to do. Some of the more routine matters might be delegated to deacons or to others, but they cannot delegate their work of watching for souls to anyone. This is their personal charge. If they shun it or shirk it, they must answer to the chief shepherd in the final day (1 Pet. 5:4). They probably will need some help, but their attentive concern will not cease. They will go about their work ever mindful of the potential wolves awaiting the right time to pounce on the sheep; thus, they will prayerfully watch and work. By this point in these deliberations, it is obvious that there are some prerequisites to this watching and overseeing.

1. **He must desire the work** (1 Tim. 3:1). An "office-seeking" attitude is not referred to here, but a desire to serve God and others in the capacity of an elder, to be

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used up in the service of the Lord. His motive must not be prestige, power, or money, but an opportunity for humble service (Matt. 20:26-28). His work is not the wielding of carnal authority but the demonstration of godliness in life and oversight, so that spiritually minded people follow his lead, have confidence in his wisdom, and value his decisions.

He will often have to speak words of rebuke and warning, but his desire to do this work will impel him so to speak. That same desire will be reflected in decisions that he must make with other elders and with the congregation, though they be difficult and unpleasant ones.

Such desire will yield willing and eager service, according to 1 Peter 5:2. There will be no need for constant prodding of a qualified elder to do his duty, for such will be his attitude. In this very area a man's wife or family can be a great help or hindrance, depending upon their attitude toward the importance and value of the work that he is helping to do. When they understand the nature of his work and the need for it, they will be able to appreciate him for his faith and willingness to work, as will the saints who are being overseen.

2. He must desire to lead God's people (1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Thes. 5:12). This is the nature of his rule over the people of God. The word "rule" does not suggest the assertion of tyrannical will, but the leading of a kindly father. He must sometimes act contrary to the wishes of immature children so their good might be achieved. He will consider their wishes and act according to them whenever possible, but all of his decisions must reflect his spiritual maturity. Such is the very basis for his qualifications preparing him to oversee souls. The comparison of 1 Timothy 3:4,5 indicates that his ruling in the family prepares him for taking care of God's church. Just as there will be times when the entire family will decide a matter, so there will be numerous decisions in the local church that all will have a part in. Elders who fail to consult members regarding such matters are acting unscripturally and unwisely. There will also be decisions that the father will have to make alone, as he unselfishly considers matters beyond the maturity level of the children. Local elders will seek to teach and influence the Christians to accept and follow such decisions as these that they must make for the good of souls.

Their role as spiritual leaders requires that they understand the teaching of the Scriptures and that they give ample time to planning. Godly elders will act before the pressure of the members forces them to take action; to do otherwise is to fail to lead God's sheep. They will not wait to see what others expect from them, but they themselves will lead the sheep to understand the importance of serving God and growing spiritually. They will willingly give time, patience, prayer, and courage to such work. Without such ingredients they cannot lead the sheep, but with them their spiritual-mindedness will be obvious to all.

3. He must be willing to speak to others about their souls (1 Thes. 5:12-14). He will sometimes have to warn people about their spiritual course, rebuke wayward souls, and strengthen the weak. He should frequently

speak for the edification of all. While elders might use other teachers to do some of these tasks, they themselves will not consider their work accomplished until they have personally made such endeavors. Discernment and wisdom will characterize their efforts in this field, both of which are provided for in the qualifications of elders. It is in this area that elders find Bible classes so useful. Members should participate in these classes, so that they might then heed their warnings, accept their rebuke, and otherwise learn from them for the purpose of obeying them. They obey them as teachers of the Word and watchmen for souls, not as "power-crazy autocrats."

When it becomes necessary for these men to speak to such members, they will not find it easy but they will find a way to do so for the sake of their souls. Private rebuke or warning is not easily given, but such men desire to work in this capacity for the good that can result. They must know the sheep in their individual situations (abilities, inclinations, needs, knowledge) so they can address their needs in the way most calculated to accomplish God's will. They will be watchful (not "nosey") over the daily lives of the sheep, as well as their worship habits, so they will be some of the first to detect trends in their lives. They will not wait so long before speaking with them about their concerns that such discussions become a formality serving little purpose. In courage they will speak, and yet with patience will they deal with the sheep.

4. He will understand the value of working with other elders. The plurality of men pictured leading a local church must work as a team to do good. Each one will contribute his strengths; in fact, each must do his full part if the men work together effectively. Objecting to ideas proposed by others can be helpful, but men do not help if they act only in this area. These men must learn to talk together and to act in ways that show their love for God and His people. Such love and cooperation will overcome disagreements. Brief discussions before a worship period or after one will often fail to make effective contribution to a local work. Time is needed for careful planning, discussion, and study. Their time also should be used on occasions for meetings with members to listen, to teach, and to lead. They must make themselves available for private and public meetings with the church. Just as there can be little working together by elders in the absence of their communication, so there can be little leading by elders or following by members in the absence of communication between them.

There is nothing needed more in local churches than godly elders. Every person in a local band of disciples bears some responsibility to becoming an elder or working together with elders. Parents, wives, and children can do much toward the development of elders, as can those already serving and those not yet qualified. Changes in lives might be necessary for some to qualify in the future. In all efforts to develop men along the lines set forth in the Scriptures, may we keep in mind the four principles emphasized in this present study.

**"DID LIFE BEGIN
IN CLAY"**

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There was an article in the 11-86 issue of Popular Science with the above title. The first paragraph reads "For years investigators who seek the origins of life adhered mostly to the theory that life's antecedents were organic molecules that got together fortuitously in a 'primordial soup'. Now a few scientists are postulating that life had a more solid beginning: in ordinary clay."

Well I think our pseudo-scientists have made a step in the right direction concerning where life came from. They have got it out of the "soup of the sea" and to the clay of the earth. Genesis 2:7 declares for us, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Now if these folks who have got the right place where man came from, could just get the right forces that acted upon the dust of the ground they would have it! For you see it was not "lightning or solar ultraviolet rays" that "triggered chemical reactions" but the power of Almighty Creator. It was God who took the dust of the ground and made man and gave him life.

The only reason I can think of why folks want to believe in the "soup theory" is because it alleviates their minds about being accountable creatures of God. You see there are 3 questions that our "soup friends" have not and cannot give a satisfying answer to. #1 Where did life come from? #2 Why are we here? #3 Where are we going?

I'm glad to have the word of God that reveals plainly the answers to all these questions. Actually the answer to these 3 questions can be answered to a degree without the Bible. We should be able to recognize a Creator by just looking at the world (Psa. 19:1, Acts 14:17, Rom. 1:18-20). Secondly, we should realize that we are accountable creatures, that we should be thankful (Rom. 1:21), that we have a law written in our hearts of a 'rightness' and a 'wrongness' (Rom. 2:14-15), that we have a sense of the "ought" (Lk. 8:15), that man is a worshipful being, it is his nature, for the scriptures tells us who to worship, not really to worship, per se. And in answer to the 3rd question, it is man's makeup to believe in something beyond this life, as Eccl. 3:11 from the ASV reads "also he hath set eternity in their heart". Yet as all men have a degree of light in answer to these 3 questions, we need the word of God to bring the full light (2 Tim. 1:10, Jn. 9:5).

We may stand amazed at these "soup" believers, but we are no better off than they if, in practical living and application, our faith is dead and void of works. Jas. 2:14-26 was written to those who professed to be Christians. James showed that saying we have faith will not be enough to save, if it does not have the works of obedience to perfect or complete our faith. "You see then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only" (vs. 24). Do we see it? We expect our denominational friends to see the point in reference to baptism, and rightly so. Why can we not see it in application to the word of God in our own lives? Just take a survey of the book of James and see if we live what we profess. If Jesus is our Lord then we must willingly be a slave to his commands (ch. 1:1).

If we believe in the Creator, that we are to serve him, and someday we will give an account to him and spend an eternity in heaven or hell, brethren let's live and act like it!

GOD'S PATTERN

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Patterns are an important part of our lives in many ways. When a contractor builds a house, he follows a pattern known as a "blueprint". When a mechanic repairs your car, he uses a pattern known as an auto repair manual. When a mother sews a dress for her small daughter, she follows a "dress pattern". And when your favorite cake is made, the cook followed a pattern called a "recipe".

In each case there is a standard pattern to be followed to achieve the desired results or the correct end product. The pattern must be followed or the end product will not be faithful to the original pattern and the results could be disastrous. The house not built to pattern may leak or worse, it may collapse; the car not repaired by the manual may run like a "lemon" or not run at all; the dress not made by the pattern may look more like a clown outfit; and the cake not made by the recipe could wind up unfit for the family dog.

Many people who have the common sense to recognize the need to faithfully follow patterns in their everyday lives, fail to recognize the most important pattern of all... the Bible. God has always provided a pattern for his people to serve as a guide to worship and service acceptable to him.

In the Old Testament, God led the children of Israel out of the slavery of Egypt down to the foot of Mt. Sinai. There God called Moses up the mountain and gave him a "pattern" of laws and a "pattern" for a place of worship for the Jews. As God gave Moses this divine

pattern, He also gave a warning: "According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so ye shall make it" (Ex. 25:9). And He repeated this warning: "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shown thee in the mount" (Ex. 25:40).

Following God's pattern, the Jews constructed the tabernacle, a tent, and fashioned all the articles for worship to be placed within and without the tabernacle, the brazen altar, the laver, the golden candlestick, the table of shewbread, the altar of incense and the ark of the covenant. For over 500 years the tabernacle served as the place of worship for the Jews.

Not all the Jews heeded God's warning through Moses to follow his pattern. Two priests determined to disregard God's pattern of worship and follow their own worship. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron "offered strange incense before the Lord, which he commanded then not" (Lev. 10:1). The consequences of violating God's divine order were immediate and dire, "And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (Lev. 10:2). God's drastic punishment of these two men was for our benefit to teach us to treat his pattern with respect and obedience.

When David became king of the Jews he planned to build a permanent place of worship, a temple, in the city of Jerusalem. While David was not allowed by the Lord to actually build the temple, David did make all the plans and preparations for the construction of the temple which he passed on to his son, Solomon, to complete. As David commissioned Solomon to build the temple he explained the source of the blueprints, "'All this,' said David, 'the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern'" (I Chron. 28:19). David urged Solomon to follow God's pattern in the commands of his Law as well as building his temple.

Despite God's warnings again the Jews failed to faithfully respect and keep God's pattern. Towards the end of his life Solomon drifted away from God and his commandments. Following Solomon under the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, more Jewish kings were unfaithful rather than faithful to the Lord. Because of the apostasy of the Jews, God allowed them to be taken into captivity and the temple to be destroyed.

While in captivity in Babylon, God sent a special vision of the temple to the prophet Ezekiel. In the vision Ezekiel saw a man with a measuring rod measuring God's temple and all the articles in it. Why? What was the meaning of the vision? "Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern" (Ezk. 43:10).

Just as God gave the Jews a pattern through Moses and David, He has given us a pattern of work and worship through Christ and His apostles. The Old Testament, the tabernacle and the temple were only "a copy and a shadow of heavenly things" that are now provided for us by Christ under the New Testament.

The pattern Christians have to follow is complete and sufficient. It is complete as it has "given unto us all

things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3). It is sufficient as it "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16-17).

As God warned the Jews not to violate or tamper with His pattern. He warns us also.

1. **WE MUST OBEY GOD'S PATTERN**-It is necessary to obey "that form (pattern) of doctrine which was first delivered to you" (Rom. 6:17). To fail to obey His pattern leads to sin and spiritual death (Rom. 6:18-23).

2. **WE MUST WALK BY GOD'S PATTERN**-The inspired apostles, led by the Holy Spirit are an "ensample" or pattern for us to learn from, imitate and walk after (Phil. 3:17; II Thess. 3:9).

3. **WE MUST KEEP GOD'S PATTERN**-"Hold fast the form (pattern) of sound words, which thou has heard of me..." Paul instructed (II Tim. 1:13).

4. **WE MUST MAKE ALL THINGS BY GOD'S PATTERN**-As Moses was warned to follow the pattern of God in all things, so God warns us in the New Testament ". . . for 'See,' sayeth He, 'that thou make all things according to the pattern..." (Heb. 8:5).

Will you heed the warning?

"... HOW CAN I DO THIS GREAT WICKEDNESS ...?"

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Today we are seeing the effect of an immoral society on every hand. The sins of immorality are growing among Christians at an alarming rate. Much too often we are hearing of our young ladies pregnant out of wedlock. Many of our young men are marrying because their young lady friend became pregnant. The problem is not just confined to the young. All along we hear of husbands or wives who have been unfaithful in the marriage relationship. Often the result of this unfaithfulness is divorce because of adultery. Paul describes adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness as being works of the flesh. After listing many other things that are works of the flesh. Paul then says, "they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21). We must go to the Bible to learn some practical steps that will help us arrest this growing problem.

In Genesis 39:7-15 Potiphar's wife tried to get Joseph to engage in an immoral act with her. Joseph did not yield to the temptation. In this passage there are at least four very practical steps that Joseph took in order not to sin. Let us notice the four steps that Joseph took.

"But he refused. ..." (v. 8) The first thing we need to notice is that he said "no." And to take it just a step

further, when he said "no" he meant "no." Saying "no" is not always easy because sometimes we have just not learned to control our desires and lusts, as we ought to. We must learn to "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2:11). By and large, we are not a people that like to say "no." We hear so much today about being positive in our life that we almost feel guilty saying "no." But we must learn to say "no" to sin. We do not want to become a totally negative person, but where sin is concerned we must say "no." Could it be that the most obvious is often the most overlooked?

"... How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" We must come to the understanding that when we engage in immoral acts we sin. We transgress God's law (1 John 3:4). We need to have the same understanding as did David, "I have sinned against the Lord" (1 Sam. 12:13). When the prodigal son made up his mind to go home, he realized that he had sinned against his Father and heaven (Luke 15:18). The context seems to indicate that at this time Joseph remembered all that God had done for him, and that this remembrance helped him not to sin (v. 2,9). God has done so much for us. We show our love for God as we keep His commandments (1 John 5:3).

"...He hearkened not unto her. . ." (v.10). We learn that Potiphar's wife did not make just one advance toward Joseph, but "she spake to Joseph day by day." Probably, not a day goes by but what the world entices our minds with fleshly joy, pleasure, or fun of immorality. Remember in the parable of the sower, the rocky ground was those who had received the word with joy, and later were choked with cares, riches and pleasure of this world (Luke 8:14). The pleasure this world has to offer is but for a season (Heb. 11:25). Christians who are listening to the world will "bring no fruit to perfection." It must be understood that the world is talking, and the world is opposed to God (1 John 3:15-17). Brethren, there are times when we must associate with worldly people (1 Cor. 5:10), but we must not listen to them.

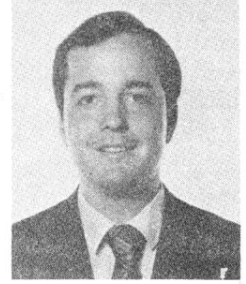
Joseph, "got him out." (v. 12) Joseph knew there was a time to leave, and he left. Could it be that far too many times we play with sin? A little look, a little flirt, a little suggestion, a little touch, we try to see just how far we can go. The next thing we know we have been caught in our playing around with sin. There comes a time when a Christian must simply leave! The words of 1 Cor. 6:18 are so very applicable here, "flee fornication..."

God's word does give us some very practical steps to take in dealing with immorality. First, say no. Second, realize that we sin against God. Third, do not listen to the world. Fourth, sometimes we just have to leave. The word practical means, "actively engaged in some course of action or occupation" (Webster). In order for God's word to help us in dealing with the temptations we face, we must put it into practice in our lives.

READ YOUR BIBLE TODAY

WHAT THE COUNCIL
OBSERVED
ABOUT PETER AND JOHN

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The first recorded gospel sermon resulted in three thousand conversions; the second resulted in two thousand more, but also in the preachers being thrown in jail. The next day those apostles, Peter and John, were arraigned before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court. Rabbinic tradition says that body of seventy dated back to Moses' day (Num. 11:16), but the first historical record of it is in the Macedonian period (c. 200 B.C.).

Be that as it may, the Sanhedrin had considerable power, and we might expect these two fishermen from Galilee to be somewhat intimidated in its presence (imagine yourself before the United States Supreme Court). It had only been about two months since Peter, under similar circumstances, had vehemently denied the Lord (Mk. 13:53ff). However, this time it was different. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, delivered a brief but pungent address. Even the Council noticed a difference. "Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John, and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were marveling, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). Consider with me what the Council observed about Peter and John.

Confidence

The confidence of Peter and John was three-fold. First, they demonstrated confidence with reference to their own position. Remember, this was the same Council that had recently put Jesus to death (with Roman approval). But if these apostles were afraid it was not evident. Jesus had earlier admonished them not to fear those who can kill the body but are unable to kill the soul (Mt. 10:28). To face death unafraid reflects confidence in one's salvation. Humility and awareness of our shortcomings prevent over-confidence on our part, but we can be assured of our standing before God. Paul said, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16). Later in the same chapter he reminds us that God is for us (v. 31). We can surely believe He has forgiven us if we have complied with His conditions. How many times did John say, "By this we know...?"

Second, Peter and John were confident in their preaching. The word rendered "confidence" or "boldness" in our text literally means "all speech." The Council observed the "all speech" of Peter and John, that is, their unreserved and explicit preaching.

They said what was needed and said it plainly. Notice especially verse 12. "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." Imagine telling the Jewish high court that the only way they could be saved was by accepting Jesus Christ, the one whom they had recently convicted of blasphemy and had crucified! Such distinctive preaching is needed today (2 Tim. 4:1-4). It is the only kind that will save.

These apostles also expressed confidence on this occasion in what could be done. The Sanhedrin decided to release them with an injunction against any further preaching about Jesus. "But Peter and John answered and said to them, 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard' " (vv. 19, 20). Their prayer later that day was, "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Thy bondservants may speak Thy word with all confidence, while Thou dost extend Thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Thy holy servant Jesus" (vv. 29, 30). A threat from the supreme court might silence the mouths of some, but not Peter and John. They were looking forward to accomplishing great things for the Lord. Would that we had that same confidence in the power of God and His word.

Uneducated and Untrained

The confidence of Peter and John arrested the Council's attention, especially because they were uneducated and untrained. The two terms used here are interesting. The first denoted "primarily, a private person in contrast to a State official, hence, a person without professional knowledge, unskilled, uneducated, unlearned;; (Vine, p. 585). Our English word "idiot" comes from it. Thayer says the second term means "illiterate," and refers to those "unversed in the learning of Jewish schools" (p. 8). It is from the same root as the English word "grammar." The Council marveled at the confidence of these "ungrammatical idiots."

Surely this example shows that formal religious training can be overemphasized. I am not opposed to education; quite the contrary. I am grateful for having had some good educational opportunities. But we err if we think a man cannot preach if he has no college degree, or has not attended one of the fine schools operated by the brethren. Such schools are not seminaries: they do not claim to be and we should not think of them as such. Every congregation ought to take a look at what opportunities it is or is not providing for the education and training of young men to preach.

Another application of this principle is in the area we call "personal work." Some seem to think such work requires a sort of "sales-pitch" or employment of a programmed approach if it is to be successful. Such is not evident in the New Testament. When the disciples were scattered from Jerusalem they went about

speaking the good news of Christ (Acts 8:4; 11:19). I doubt they had time to organize an "evangelism seminar" or "soul-saving workshop." They just talked about the gospel to those with whom they had contact. Consider some other examples of "personal work." When Andrew was introduced to Jesus he found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (Jn. 1:40, 41). How much do you suppose Andrew knew about Jesus at that point? Was he well versed in all the doctrines of Christianity? The next day another disciple, Philip, found Nathanael and announced to him the discovery of Jesus. Nathanael responded, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Was Philip prepared to answer this objection? He was not befuddled by it. He simply replied, "Come and see" (Jn. 1:45, 46). Could not we do the same? Just open the pages of God's word and examine them together with your querist, having a "Let us see" disposition. Learn with each other. Another excellent example is the Samaritan woman at the well, who led many to the Christ about whom she knew precious little (Jn. 4).

Association With Jesus

Having marveled at the confidence of these uneducated and untrained men, the Sanhedrin "began to recognize them as having been with Jesus." What led to this third observation by the members of the Council?

For one thing, the conduct of Peter and John. Their confidence before this court must have been far different than these judges were accustomed to seeing. A short time later the apostles were again arrested, miraculously released, and arrested a third time (Acts 6). Each time it was for obeying their commission from the Lord, and each time they went right back to the work upon their release. Such conduct made it clear that these were Jesus' disciples.

Our conduct, too, should lead others to observe that we are associates of Jesus. "Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desires of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. And in all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excess of dissipation, and they malign you; but they shall give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead" (1 Pet. 4:1-5). Does the world notice that you do not run with them? Could your neighbors, schoolmates, co-workers, or other associates readily identify you as Jesus' associate based on what they see from day to day?

The other identifying mark of Peter and John was their speech. They talked about Jesus. They spoke the truth. They appealed to God as their authority (v. 19). They were not unkind, but firm in their conviction. Speech reflects much about one's character and in-

terests. Does your speech echo the words of Christ living in you?

These apostles were with Jesus because He called them and they did not refuse to follow. Jesus calls us through the gospel (2 Th. 2:14). If we believe and obey that call we can have fellowship with Him, too.

GUTENBERG'S PRINTED BIBLE

Luther W. Martin
707 Salem Ave.
Rolla, MO 65401

In the early half of the fifteenth century, the only kind of printing known to the western world was xylography; i.e., wood block printing. Wood was carved and then inked, much as we use hand rubber stamps today, and that was the only printing known, until Johannes Gensfleisch invented movable type printing.

He ultimately became known as John Gutenberg. He was from a family of gold and silversmiths. His father and his uncles before him had made coins for the Archbishop-Elector in the city of Mainz. The Gensfleisch family was of the upper-middle-class, and aspired to a higher status. They had named their residence "gutenberg", which originally meant "good-mountains" in the German language. So, like many patrician families they gradually adopted the name of their dwelling.

John Gutenberg actually invented the means of making metal type for printing, devising chemically an ink of the proper consistency, and identifying a paper whose texture would be compatible with the new ink and metal-type-printing. He borrowed funds heavily in order to produce his first printed book, which was a Latin Bible, based upon Jerome's Latin Vulgate . . . except that Jerome's Vulgate did not include the added apocryphal books, that Catholicism had embraced in later centuries. The Gutenberg Latin Bible included the apocryphal books accepted by the Council of Trent a century later, and also had additional material, that even Catholicism did not accept.

Jerome's Preface To The Apocryphal Tobit

Again we remind our readers that Jerome did not accept the apocryphal books, but was ordered by some bishops to translate Tobit anyway. Please note Jerome's preface:

"Jerome, priest, to the bishops Heliodorus and Chromatius, greetings. It is to be wondered that I do not resist the importunity of your exacting request. Indeed, you demand nothing less than that I translate into the Latin idiom a book written in the language of the Chaldees, namely the

Book of Tobit which the Hebrews, eliminating from the list of Holy Scripture those books they consider to be apocryphal, have set aside. I have conformed with your desire but not with enthusiasm. For the Hebrew texts are against me and call me to account for bringing to Latin hearers something which is not in keeping with their canon...." (Vol. I. page 254, The Gutenberg Bible). Perhaps I should state that the Gutenberg Bible was composed of two large volumes, with the first volume ending with the Psalms, and the second volume beginning with Proverbs. Jerome included a preface for each of the books of the Bible which he translated into Latin. Beginning with Emperor Charlemagne, of the late eighth century and early ninth century, the Latin Vulgate was required to include Jerome's prefaces in each copy. It was still being done at the time of Gutenberg's printed Bible 1450-1455 A.D.

A Reprint of Gutenberg's Bible In 1985

In the year, 1985, a French publishing firm, has re-published the Gutenberg Bible. This Bible has been reproduced exactly like the original was printed, illuminated, and bound. Some 530 years ago, the Latin Bible was the first book to be printed in the western world with movable metal type. The pages were printed, then artists decorated these pages with various colored inks, beginning the individual books of the bible with artistic initials. After the pages were illuminated, the purchaser could have the book bound however he wished. Usually, beech-wood covers were used, and these in turn were covered with a fine quality animal skin.

The Bible that served in the year of 1985 as the original to be copied, is termed "The Mazarin Bible", inasmuch as it had long been in the library of Cardinal Jules Mazarin, in Paris. On Mazarin's death, he established through his will, a foundation that started the College of the Four Nations, which in turn was bequeathed the Cardinal's substantial library . . . in which this Gutenberg Bible was situated. So that which is termed "The Mazarin Bible" has served as the model for this exact 1985 reprint.

Jerome's Introductions and Prefaces

Almost exactly sixteen hundred years ago, Jerome translated the Hebrew and Greek Old and New Testaments into the Latin language. It was Jerome's Latin Vulgate (with some additions) that Gutenberg used as the first book to be printed. The interesting fact is, that for the first time in history, Jerome's comments which he penned as introductions and prefaces to the various books of the Bible, have in 1985, been translated from the Latin into English. This material from the pen of a noted ancient Bible scholar, is going to be most revealing, since it has formerly been hidden in the Latin language, and in Bibles that still contained Jerome's comments.

The excerpt that we copied from Jerome, earlier in this article, wherein he informed some bishops that he did not appreciate having to translate an apocryphal

book known as "Tobit"; will serve as a sample of Jerome's comments. His apparent devotion to the canonical books of the Bible is most refreshing.

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JOYNER W. ADAMS

The editor's father Joyner W. Adams of Chester, Virginia, passed from this life on December 9. He was 84. Funeral services were conducted on December 12 by Ronny Milliner and John Nosker. The next issue will carry a more extended notice from brother Nosker.

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

WAYNE S. WALKER, 5170 Chippewa Rd., Medina, OH 44256—The work in Medina continues well despite our loss of three families lately. Two have been baptized and two restored recently. Our building plans are on hold for the present. Because of zoning restrictions and other limitations, the land we own is unsuitable for our needs and we are waiting until we can sell it and buy a better lot. October 5-10 I was in a meeting in Covina, California where Alfonso Ferrer is the preacher. October 26-28 I was in a meeting in Ashland, Ohio where Arthur Wagoner is located. In 1987 I am to be with the Central church in Greenwood, SC in March, with the Rt. 3 church north of Madisonburg, OH in April; with the Lily Chapel church near Portsmouth, OH in May and with the church in Roseville, MI in October. I have time for a couple more.

CLAYTON M. ADAMS PASSES AWAY

Clayton M. Adams of Pulaski, TN passed from this life on October 20, 1986. Funeral services were held in Pulaski October 22 with burial in Marshall County, TN. Brother Adams preached for churches in Ala-

bama, Florida, Georgia and Tennessee. His last work was with the Bluff Springs congregation in Lewisburg, TN. He had resigned from the work there in July of this year due to failing health.

MRS. GLEN HUNTER, 610 S. 12th St., Paragould, AR 72450-C. E. Purdom was a faithful elder of the church at Second and Walnut in Paragould, Arkansas for many years and was know to many brethren throughout the country. He is living at the Greene Acres Nursing Home, Rt. 3, Paragould, AR 72450. Although he was declared legally blind several years ago, his mind has remained alert and he was able to attend Sunday worship services. He became ill a few months ago and is confined to the home. His 91st birthday is Feb. 18 and it would be very uplifting to him to receive a note from friends who remember him.

DENVER NIEMEIER, 10356 North State Road 267, Brownsburg, IN 46112—Again in 1987, the Traders Point church will send me out for four meetings with churches that are unable to support a preacher in such an effort. At present, I have openings for three such meetings.

During 1986, I was with the following churches in such efforts: Bicknell, IN; Old Kentucky Lake Road in Springville, TN; Paris, KY and Grant St. in Marion, IN.

TOM EDWARDS, 713 13th St., Ashland, KY 41101—The Tri-State church, which met at the Ashland Child Development Center, is now meeting at 713 13th St. in Ashland. The building accommodates us well and is in a central and convenient location. I have been preaching here for two and a half years. The men take turns preaching the last Sunday of every month and most of the members have been involved in teaching classes.

GILBERT COPELAND PASSES AWAY

JADY W. COPELAND, 2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd., Lakeland, FL.

Gilbert Copeland, beloved gospel preacher in several western and mid-western states, was born in Murfreesboro, Arkansas in August, 1909 and passed away in Anaheim, California early on the Lord's day, October 19, 1986. He was baptized into Christ at the age of 13, and after high school, attended Harding College. He soon began preaching the gospel, following his father, J. A. Copeland, in the work of the Lord. He worked with brethren in Hope, Camden, Nashville and Malvern, Arkansas as well as in Wichita Falls and Ft. Worth, Texas and in Montebello and Anaheim, California, where he lived to the time of his death. In addition to numerous meetings, he also worked for several years in Louisiana. In Anaheim, in addition to his preaching work, he served for several years as an elder until his health failed several years before his death.

Funeral services were conducted in the Anaheim building on October 22 by Otis Moyer, preacher and one of the elders, and Dennis Kilgo, son-in-law to Gilbert. Bob McCurdy, present local preacher, and Glenn Reagan spoke at the grave site. He is survived by his wife, Otsy, and three children, a number of grandchildren and eight brothers and sisters.

This writer, a brother, owes a great deal to Gilbert, having been of so much help to me in knowing how to set my priorities in life. Gilbert was a loving, caring and kind individual, yet had the ability to speak frankly, yet kindly, in teaching the truth both publicly and privately. Truly he "spoke the truth in love". Perhaps he was not known as a "big time" preacher, but traveling over the south and west, I often hear of the good work of Gilbert Copeland. "He being dead yet speaketh"—in the lives of his three faithful children, in the lives of his grandchildren, and in the lives of hundreds whom he taught and helped over a period of over half a century. May God's richest blessings be with the family.

PATRICK S. PARISH, 831 W. Pleasant Run Rd., Lancaster, TX 75146—Events of the past several years, which have been generally known among brethren, make it appropriate to publish a statement of the present condition and direction of the Pleasant Run church in Lancaster, Texas.

The confusion over grace and unity which was severe in some brethren in the Dallas-Fort Worth area had a pernicious effect on the Pleasant Run church. The eldership and the pulpit were infected with an entirely predictable effect on the membership in general. Many brethren despaired of the situation and went elsewhere. The determined and steadfast resistance of the faithful brethren who remained, and particularly of two of the elders, Eugene Sikes and Willard Brockington, finally culminated in the departure, in January of 1984, of the group caught up in this error.

There is still much to do. For years, preaching and teaching the whole counsel of God was not in vogue, and the effect of the spiritual malnutrition which is the inevitable result of such a famine continues to manifest itself from time to time. Such manifestations will diminish with the continual proclamation of truth. Willard Brockington and Eugene Sikes, the elders of the church, are providing vigorous, conscientious and knowledgeable leadership. Faithful men are filling the pulpit, both regularly and in special gospel meetings; the seed is being sown, for saints and sinners.

Are you moving to Dallas? Lancaster is a lovely community of 20,000 on the southern edge of Dallas. The congestion which threatens to turn the northern half of Dallas County into the world's largest parking lot is not a problem in Lancaster, with interstate highways on each side leading into Dallas. Pleasant Run Road is one of the main arteries and the building is right across the street from the high school.

BILLY ASHWORTH, 116 Armory Dr. Lewisburg TN 37091—After over four years of work with the Hickory Heights church in Lewisburg my wife Lois, and I will be moving to Columbia, Tennessee at the end of 1986. We have enjoyed our work here and will have many good memories of saints to add to the list we have compiled over the years of preaching Christ. This is one of the joys preachers and their wives have as a result of working in the Lord's vineyard.

Although I am discontinuing "full time located work", I plan to continue preaching the gospel of Christ which I have been doing over thirty-three and one half years. I have several meetings scheduled and look forward to more work in that area. Also, I have been contacted by churches to preach for them on a part-time basis. At the time of this writing, our plans are not finalized but I hope to be able to submit another report later to this paper when that is complete. We have purchased a home in Maury County, located on the Nashville Highway, six miles north of Columbia. We will appreciate hearing from all of our new friends who read this report. Also, I ask those who send bulletins to make a note of our new address. After January 1, please address us follows: Route 1, Box 215, Columbia, TN 38401. Phone number will be (615) 388-8355.

MICHAEL GARRISON, P.O. Box 1281, Franklin, NC 28734—We have had a very good summer in Franklin. We were blessed with many visitors. Among them were Don Brady, Melvin Curry, Keith Ward, and Harrison Beiro who brought us some good lessons. We also had meetings with Piet Joubert and Denny Freeman. We are using the Gene Tope Bible correspondence course and newspaper advertising to help reach people of this area. If you know of someone we should contact, please let us know. We are the closest faithful congregation to Western Carolina University at Cullowhee. Let us know of students there we should contact. We are about 20 miles from the campus. If in the area (a popular tourist area near the Smokey Mountains) we meet at 156 Old Murphy Rd. My phone number is (704) 369-5186.

VERNON LOVE, 310 Orange Ave., New Port Richey, FL 33552—The congregation here is now one year old and we are working to contact people of this area. Seven have signed up for the correspondence course which we advertise in the local paper. Over a year ago, one was baptized through the course and urged us to come here and start a congregation. We have 310 names of people who have bought homes that we will contact by mail. The area is growing and we need to be able to work full time. So far we have not received enough support to do so. If you are coming to Florida for the winter, why not consider our area and come help the church. We would love to have you.

FROM AROUND THE WORLD

John Humphries, Jerry Parks, Gary Johnson and Bill Beasley spent six weeks preaching in India recently. They report much progress among the churches they visited. While their main objective was to strengthen the hands of the native preachers, they still were able to baptize 150 into Christ. We expect to have a more extensive report for our readers later. We rejoice in the good these men have done.

RANDY S. REESE, SR., P.O. Box 14, Ashiya Shi, Japan 659—We have just passed the six year mark. During this time some of the accomplishments have been: the updating and reprinting of three tracts, translation of Peter Wilson's "Babes in Christ" series. Also, we have started the first congregation outside Osaka in twenty years. I have had the pleasure of teaching and baptizing four into Christ. We have worked with six congregations and have seen one restored to the church in Iwakuni due to these efforts. Also, we have started six new classes and are continuing one with the Jehovah's Witnesses. We have several new programs in the planning stages at this writing. If you know of anyone who is coming to Japan, please give them our address.

THOMAS BUNTING, Ovsttunveien 23, 5050 Nesttun, Norway—Would you mind making mention of our financial needs? I lost \$550 a month this last fall and it has not been replaced. I will be losing another \$250 a month in April, 1987. This will be a total of \$800 a month we are losing. If there are any churches that could help to replace this loss it would be greatly appreciated.

RODOLFO BERDINI, Via Giuseppe Perego, 58-H/9, 00144 Rome Italy—Last September, we had a successful preaching effort in Latina.

We secured a public hall and Roberto Tondelli preached for three nights. We distributed 10,000 invitation cards from house to house and placed many posters on public walls. Each night we had from 30-40 visitors present. Several of these showed good interest. Several took tracts offered at the entrance and several requested the Bible correspondence course in 24 lessons. It has not happened in the last several years that so many people who were not members were present. For that reason we felt compelled to repeat such an effort in October. I spoke the first night and Roberto Tondelli the second night. We had 20 visitors present. We had debates both nights with visitors who asked questions on the themes under consideration. With this encouraging interest, it has been decided to establish a new congregation in Latina. Francesco Fosci works with this congregation. We gave up five members from the church at Aprilia to help start this work.

Vincenzo Ruggiero, preacher for the Poggiomarino church, died recently of a heart attack. He was 61 years of age. I preached at the funeral services. He leaves his wife, Lina, a son, Elio, who is 18 and two married daughters. This is a great loss to the work in Italy.

On October 14, I entered my 65th year of life. Many a man retires at this age and have pensions available. This right is not conceded to me for two reasons: (1) I have no pension fund. I have never been able to pay for it. Preachers in Italy are not recognized by the State and I could not have a social security. Today, the young people seem to have more opportunities in this respect. (2) I want to contribute to work for the Lord until my death. Our thanks to those who are helping me to do this.

PREACHERS NEEDED

DEXTER, MAINE—In September, 1987, Herbert Braswell will be leaving the work at Dexter and a replacement will be needed. The

church can provide \$450 a month support with the rest having to come from other sources. We prefer a man with some preaching experience. Anyone interested may contact Ralph Hall, RFD 1, Box 121, Corinna, Maine 04928. Phone (207) 278-8801; or LeRoy Hall, RFD 1, Box 144, Etna, ME 04434. Phone (207) 269-3480.

POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK—Our preacher is moving and we are in need of a full-time man to work with us. Attendance is about 25-30. We are located about 65 miles north of New York City in the mid-Hudson Valley. If interested call Greg Roark (914) 454-7170; or Ken Boyd (914) 471-8671, or write, Southern Dutchess Church of Christ, 786 South Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

ROCKWOOD, TENNESSEE—The Highway 70 church in Rockwood needs a preacher. Those interested please write to: 507 Rockwood St., Rockwood, TN 373854 or call collect Conley Daugherty, (615) 354-1854.

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA—The North Scottsdale church, a 30 member congregation near Phoenix, is looking for a full-time preacher to further establish and strengthen the Lord's body. We currently meet in a high school with a good potential for growth in a community of over 100,000. We can supply \$425 weekly toward support. If interested, call or write: Ron Clayton, 4402 E. Pershing, Phoenix, AZ 85254. Phone (602) 953-9685.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	515
RESTORATIONS	137
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XXVIII

FEBRUARY, 1987

Number 2

DIVINE COMMUNIQUES

C. G. "Colly" Caldwell

Florida College
Temple Terrace, FL 33617



SPEAK TRUTH

THE KING'S MESSAGE: WHEREFORE, PUTTING AWAY FALSEHOOD, SPEAK YE TRUTH EACH ONE WITH HIS NEIGHBOR" (Ephesians 4:25).

At a convention in Atlanta last December, an Assistant Secretary from the United States Department of Education told of a lawyer who died and went to his eternal abode. Large, red and yellow banners were strung across the gates to welcome him. Most of his friends and all the hosts of wickedness were there. Loud music was filling the air (no doubt provided by a hard rock band playing heavy metal "music" (?) and transferred to the outer limits of the realm through a cable network similar to MTV, cgc). Satan, himself, was ready with a very special greeting. Such a massive gathering had turned out because this was a unique day! The devil stepped up to the disillusioned attorney and exclaimed, "Congratulations, you are the OLDEST man ever to be admitted to this domain." "Oh," the barrister replied with relief, "a mistake has been made, I am only fifty years old." "No," the devil replied, "we checked all your records carefully and you charged your clients for 977 years of professional services."

I am not certain how the Secretary would document this bit of data. It is obvious, however, that this professional man owed his presence as a special guest in the most populated place of souls to his response to the central moral issue of PERSONAL INTEGRITY.

Explicit and Implicit Deceit

Almost everyone who claims to have ethical stand-

ards understands that explicit falsehood is immoral. The devil is a liar and we take him as our father when we sacrifice our integrity (John 8:44). Satan induced the first human sin with lies (Gen. 3). In so doing, he deceived Eve: a) concerning the probability of escaping the consequences of sin (vs. 4); b) concerning the viability of excuses for sin (vs. 5); and c) concerning the satisfaction received from sin (vs. 6). The Bible is filled with examples of bald-faced liars who brought terrible consequences upon themselves and others.

Not all of us are so clear, however, in our thinking about **implicit falsehood**. "Implicit" falsehood is deception without actually, specifically, overtly, lying in expressed words. The word "falsehood" is translated from the Greek word pseudos. We anglicize that word as a prefix to many English words suggesting "pretended reality." Falsehood is fiction. It claims something which is not so. The key to the sinfulness of one involved in falsehood is misrepresentation and deception. This may be done implicitly without express statement:

a) We might use deceptive business tactics and maneuvers or stretch facts to gain business advantage or monetary gain;

b) We might hide the defects in what we are selling and leave a false impression for personal gain;

c) We might become careless with the facts: d.

We might spice up stories with untruth:

e) We might disregard promises and fail to fulfill our word or vows:

f) We might by some body movement (a shrug of the shoulders, a wink of the eye, or some other action) affirm that which is not true:

g) We might lie by silence hiding truth and creating deception:

h) We might make insinuations which twist truth and allow harmful rumors to be initiated or continued:

i) We might become hypocritical, allowing ourselves to deceive others and to lie to ourselves!

j) We might make untrue excuses about our conduct or lack of it, or the conduct of others.

Every Christian is responsible in all aspects of life to maintain honesty in character. He will not, for example, choose a profession which requires deception or dishonesty with any man. He will determine that he will be an

honest lawyer, or insurance man, or car salesman, or preacher. He will avoid any temptation to rationalize deceit for whatever reason. Truth is not situational. Our responsibility to maintain impeccable integrity does not depend upon the circumstances of the moment. Situation ethics must be rejected as a system of thinking which promotes the philosophy that "the end justifies the means." Peter lied to save his life (the ultimate "reason") and yet his reaction depicts the lowest type of cowardice. It will not do for a man to argue. "THIS IS JUST BUSINESS."

Secular and Religious Deceit

"Secular" here refers to all "non-religious" falsehood. Obviously, however, all lies have religious significance with regard to one's relation to God. The old prophet lied to the "man of God" about his right to spend the night at his house (1 Kings 13). Ananias and Sapphira lied to God about their money (Acts 5). Rahab lied about the spies (Joshua 2). Delilah and Samson played terrible games with the truth (Judges 16). God rendered judgment in all these cases which involved physical, material things.

Our generation is not fond of identifying religious lies. We want to give all people credit for being honest and sincere. Many are indeed sincere who nonetheless believe a LIE (cf. 2 Cor. 4:3-4). God is not as patient with error, deceitful doctrine, and ignorant followers of untruth as weak Christians and soft preachers would like to think (cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Matt. 7:15-23; 2 Thes. 2:10-12). All would be pleased if God did not care and if all that he required was naive good attitudes, but the Devil laughs and counts up the souls he will receive when he sees us accept such a deceitful concept of religion. We must get back to the study of doctrinal truth so the foundation of our faith will not rest on LIES!

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by Don Bassett

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Searching The Scriptures

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

P.O. Box 69
Brooks, Kentucky 40109



(Editor's note: The following article was written by my son, Wilson Adams, as a tribute to his grandfather and my father. I had intended to write something myself, but after seeing this article which appeared in GUIDE-POSTS, bulletin of the Wildercroft church in Riverdale, Maryland where Wilson preaches, I asked his permission to print it as my editorial for this month. We also carry in this issue an article by John L. Nosker of Richmond, Virginia which is a summary of his remarks at the funeral service. It was my father's request that brother Nosker speak at his funeral assisted by the local preacher of the Rivermont church near Hopewell, Virginia where he served as an elder for 15 years until failing health forced his resignation. Ronny Milliner assisted in the service and the grave service was conducted by Roy Diestelkamp who formerly preached at Rivermont while Daddy served as an elder. CWA)

JOYNER WILSON ADAMS 1902-1986

We called him "Grand-daddy" and we loved him very much. He had a special kind of wit and wisdom that few possess. He never had much money nor did he enjoy the advantages of education that others had, but he knew the merits of honesty, hard work and family devotion. Last Tuesday night (December 9) he was given the blessed privilege of going home to be with the Lord he loved.

While some men leave behind a monument of marble or a slab of stone, "Grand-daddy" left behind a living memorial of Jesus Christ enshrined in human hearts. All three of his children are Christians. All three married Christians. His two sons are gospel preachers and his daughter married a preacher. All nine grandchildren are Christians and three of them are preachers and one married a preacher. It is a legacy that few can match. Here was a man who understood that putting the word of God into the heart of the little child was the most important priority of life for it would be the only monument that would ever last. He succeeded where so many of us fail.

This December 23rd was to be their 63rd wedding anniversary. It was a beautiful love affair that defines description. The last several years saw our grandmother waiting on him night and day when he could no longer care for himself. Hour after hour she sat at his bedside, caressing, caring and feeding. Perhaps it was her way of thanking him for the many years he worked so hard to provide for her. Why the Lord allowed

"Grand-daddy" to linger on so long no one knows. But maybe, just maybe, it was to teach the rest of us an unforgettable lesson: that marriage is sacred and the marriage vow of "in sickness and in health" is still to be remembered even after 62 years!

Here was a man who was great because he never knew he was. He liked the simpler things in life and never was at all impressed with worldly achievement and earthly accolades. For fifteen years he served as an elder in the Lord's church — the highest honor on the face of the earth — and understood as well as any man ever has, the tender, compassionate care required of God's shepherd. He wasn't afraid to shed tears over those who had wandered away nor was he the least bit hesitant to stand firm when the enemy approached the flock. When some of his own kin were swept away by the flood of compromise that brought division to churches of Christ during the last several years, "Grand-daddy" remained entrenched in his respect for scriptural authority and dedication to the ancient order of God's religion. To him, Bible was thicker than blood and truth was more to be desired than compromise with kinfolks.

As I stood arm in arm with my father and peered one last time into the open casket, Dad said: "You know, I never felt worthy to even walk in his shadow . . ." Everyone who knew him could say the same. I just pray that I will never place a blemish on the names that he so well preserved — his own and his Lord's. And, if I had to pick one verse of Scripture to serve as a summary to his life, I would choose Micah 6:8:

"And what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

Yes, I long for the day when I can see him again. His presence in the eternal emerald city makes the prospects of heaven even sweeter.

—Wilson Adams

THE PATTON — PHILLIPS EXCHANGE

With this issue we begin the much awaited exchange of articles between Marshall E. Patton and H. E. Phillips on the right of "certain put away" persons to remarry. There will be three articles by each man, followed by a brief rebuttal by each. The discussion will extend through the April issue. These men are both careful students of the word of God. They are good friends and fellow-workers of many years. They have worked together as writers for this paper since it began in 1960. H. E. Phillips was editor from January, 1960 until June, 1973. For twenty-five years, Marshall E. Patton wrote the question and answer column. The first twenty years of his work is now in a hardback book, ANSWERS FOR OUR HOPE, which was the title of his column in this paper.

This exchange reflects a difference between them as to the right of some "put away" people in a divorce situation to remarry. Brother Phillips does not believe that any "put away" party has a right to remarry. Brother Patton believes that only certain people in that category may remarry without sin, when adultery has


been committed against them. Both men repudiate what has been called for years "the Moyer position." Neither believes that one put away for fornication may remarry.

Circumstances in the lives of all of us sometimes make it hard for us to be completely objective touching certain issues, including this one. But we ask our readers to study this material carefully and with deep respect for the word of God. Do not settle the question by emotion, nor by reading between the lines of scripture. Let us all resolve to accept exactly what the Lord said, be as tolerant of each other as his word would allow, and accept truth wherever it may lead us.

We thank both men for their work and for their gracious attitude toward each other. Each reader will have to settle the matter in his own heart as to where the truth is found.

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**John L. Nosker
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The passing of Joyner W. Adams at his home near Hopewell, Va. on December 9, 1986, brought sadness to his loved ones, brethren and friends. However, we "sorrow not as others who have no hope." Praise be to God for hope which serves as an anchor of the soul. How thankful we are that we do have hope, not despair. The quality of the life of this patriarch in Israel provides a solid basis for our hope.

One indication of his character is the nature of his home and family. He and sister Adams had been married just a few days short of sixty-three years. Three children were born to their union: Wiley, Connie and Glenda (Mrs. Thomas Icard), all of whom survive. The children expanded the family to include nine grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

Strong indeed are the bonds of love woven into the fabric of the Adams home and family. In these days when marriages are breaking up on every hand, the love affair of Joyner and Nollie provides a beautiful object lesson on the home and family as God would have them. These two cared for each other in good times and bad, in sickness and health.

During the past several years of his declining health — chronic illness frequently interrupted by crises requiring hospitalization — the depth of Nollie's love was so beautifully demonstrated. When questioned as to how she could hold up, she replied: "He's a good man and he deserves it; I want to do everything I can for him." How lovingly she nursed him and cared for him. And tribute is also due his loving sister, Miss Beulah, who throughout his long illness provided such strong support and help to Nollie. Together they gave a full measure of devotion (and more).

The wholesome religious environment in which Joyner and Nollie reared their children continues to bear fruit in succeeding generations. Every child and grandchild who has married has a Christian spouse, and all are faithful members of the Lord's church. Both of their sons are gospel preachers as is their son-in-law, three grandsons and a grandson-in-law. That is seven preachers in the family. Son Connie is the editor of this fine religious journal which touches the lives of thousands on a regular basis.

After their own children were reared and out on their own, the Adams home became the haven for a considerable number of foster children. There these troubled waifs found love and sustenance which they had not previously known. Several of them, now adults, return from time to time to express their gratitude for the wonderful experience they had in this Christian home.

Some were at the funeral home to mingle their tears with those of the family.

A review of brother Adams' life brings into focus the depth of his spirituality. He grew up against a conservative background, and throughout his life he has respected the authority of the word of God. He has always opposed deviation from the revealed will of God in the practice of Christians, either individually or collectively as the church.

When the truth came into conflict with error, Joyner Adams could be counted upon to take a stand for the truth, even if some of his associates were compromising with error. There were important crossroads in his life when he did just that. Doing so meant taking a different position from some who had been near and dear to him; but, the Lord and his will was dearer to him than what any man might think of him. When a decision was to be made, he wanted to be on the Lord's side. He stood with those who defended the word of God without addition or subtraction.

The friendship of this writer with the Adamses dates back forty-three years. As a lonely, homesick serviceman during World War II, they were among those who extended a warm welcome to him. He was only one of many servicemen who passed through Fort Lee and were the recipients of the warmth of their love and hospitality.

Brother Adams' passing brings to mind the language of David upon the death of Abner (2 Samuel 3:38): "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" Yes, a prince and a great man has gone from us. A prince and a great man! He was not a great political figure. While a success in life, he did not amass a vast financial empire. He was not a great orator or a renowned entertainer. Why then princely and great? Because he was a Christian — a faithful, consecrated, humble and courageous Christian. A virtuous Christian.

Joyner's personality was adorned with humility which can best be described by the words of 1 Peter 3:4: "a meek and quiet spirit." He never sought preeminence over others; he was self-effacing almost to a fault. He became a Christian many years ago. He was a faithful member of the Rivermont church (near Hopewell). Brother Adams served as an elder of that flock until failing health forced him to give up the responsibilities of that office.

Attending worship took first place with him. He attended as long as he as able, and undoubtedly was present many times when one of lesser faith would have given in to health problems and remained comfortably at home.

Like Paul of old, he kept the faith, ran the race and finished the course. We usurp not the role of judge, but we have every reason to believe that our beloved brother has now gone on into the expanded horizon of eternal life.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

PATTON—PHILLIPS DEBATE

Marshall E. Patton

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FIRST AFFIRMATIVE

By Marshall E. Patton

RESOLVED: The Scriptures teach that the innocent person (free of fornication) who has been put away without God's or his/her approval and against whom adultery has been committed may remarry.

For the sake of brevity, which the space allotted for this exchange demands, I will leave it to our editor to properly introduce and solicit the proper attitude toward this study.

I would like for our readers to know that Brother Phillips and I are personal friends of long standing; we each hold the other in high esteem and feel deep brotherly affection for one another. We engage in this debate for the sake of determining truth, exposing error, and ultimately the saving of souls. Neither of us questions the sincerity, integrity, or objectivity of the other.

The Issue

Both Brother Phillips and I believe that there are some put away persons who may not remarry. I affirm that there is a certain put away person who may remarry and the proposition is worded so as to help identify this certain person. Brother Phillips believes that no put away person may remarry, hence, the issue between us.

Definition of Terms

As the affirmative, it falls my lot to define the terms in the proposition.

By "the Scriptures" I mean the sixty six books of the Bible. By "teach" I mean by direct statement, approved example, or necessary inference. By "the innocent person" I mean one free of fornication as stated in parenthesis in the proposition. By "put away" I mean the breaking of the personal commitment made to one's spouse when God joined them in marriage. I do believe that while not an essential part of either the marriage or the putting away, when and wherever civil authority prevails and civil action is required, one must be subject to "the powers that be" (Rom. 13:1). In such cases the civil action becomes a divinely authorized means to the end. By "without God's approval" I mean without divine authorization. God approves only one putting away, namely, the put away fornicator (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). While God hates putting away (Mai. 2:16), in the interest of justice and for the protection of the innocent, He has authorized the putting away of the guilty party.

Since God approves the putting away of the guilty

party, and since the putting away of the person in our proposition is "without God's approval," it follows that the guilty party is excluded from this proposition. Neither I nor Brother Phillips believe that the put away fornicator may marry another.

Also, by "without God's approval" I mean a putting away that takes place by human authority and in violation of the law of God. A clearer distinction between these two putting aways will be made later in this article.

By "without... his/her approval" I mean without any desire, intent, or action on his/her part in relation to the putting away. If the put away person desired the divorce, had any intention of bringing it about, or indulged any action, orally or otherwise, that would mark him/her as a participant in the putting away, such a person is excluded from this proposition. I make no defense of such a person in remarriage. My reasons are based upon Matt. 5:32: "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

This verse teaches that there is only one cause for putting away one's spouse, namely, "fornication." When a husband puts away his wife for some cause other than fornication, he does so without divine authority, violates the law of God, and causes her to commit adultery when she remarries. Any participant in the putting away, to any degree, shares in the guilt that follows.

Furthermore, this expression "without . . . his/her approval" excludes from this proposition those who would play "the waiting game." By "the waiting game" I mean what is generally understood by that expression, namely, where husband and wife mutually agree to divorce with a view to waiting until the other commits fornication thinking that he/she is then free to remarry. **The mutual agreement makes each an active participant in the putting away.** Such action is without divine authority, is in violation of the law of God, and is the cause of the adultery that follows regardless of which one commits it. I want it clearly understood that such persons are excluded from the proposition which I affirm. I make no effort to justify such persons in remarriage.

The last statement in the proposition, "and against whom adultery has been committed may remarry" is, I think, self-explanatory. If Brother Phillips thinks further clarification is pertinent to this study, I shall be happy to honor his request.

Matthew 5:32

"But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matt. 5:32). Understanding this verse, what is in it and what is not in it, is essential to understanding the truth on the issue under study. This verse shows that there are two putting aways: 1) The putting away of the one

guilty of fornication (authorized in the exception clause). This putting away may be done by divine authority and, hence, with God's approval. 2) The putting away for some cause other than fornication. This putting away is done by human authority and, hence, without God's approval.

Furthermore, this latter putting away is futile so far as breaking the bond formed by God when He joined them in marriage. That such action is vain (so far as breaking God's bond is concerned) is evident from the fact that when the thus put away person marries again he/she commits adultery (v. 32b). There is another verse that makes this even more clear and conclusive: "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her" (Mk. 10:11). Notice especially the expression "committeth adultery against her," i.e., against her that is put away. Obviously, God's bond is still intact, otherwise the adultery would not be against "her."

All men need to learn that marriage approved of God involves a joining that takes place in heaven—not just on earth. Any loosening from this divine covenant must take place in heaven. Until this is done the heavenly bond continues intact, regardless of what is done on earth. Man may break his commitment in marriage, go back on his word, fail to honor the covenant he made, dismiss his wife, and in this sense put away his spouse, but all such action (save for the cause of fornication) is futile so far as having any effect on the heavenly bond is concerned. There the bond remains intact, untouched—unaffected!

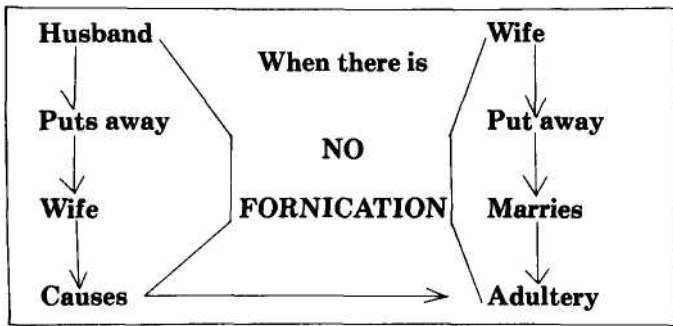
Who Is In Matthew 5:32

It must also be observed that the husband in this verse who puts away his wife is innocent of fornication, otherwise an adulterer may put away his wife when she commits fornication against him. Surely, we are agreed that only the innocent may do that. The wife in this verse who has been put away (not the one in the exception clause) is innocent of fornication, otherwise the putting away could not be the cause of her becoming an adulteress—she would already be one. **THEREFORE**, Matt. 5:32b which says, "Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" **CANNOT** refer to just ANY divorced person, but rather only to "her" who was divorced when there was no fornication involved. One simply cannot get out of a verse more than there is in it.

The put away "her" of verse 32b has for its antecedent the put away wife of 32a. This "her" was put away **when no fornication was involved**. In fact, there is no fornication in this picture—not until the "whosoever" comes into view. This means that the innocent put away person of our proposition who has fornication committed against her simply is not in verse 32b. To so apply the verse is to misapply God's word. The following chart (No. 1) illustrates the truth of this verse:

READ YOUR BIBLE TODAY

Matthew 5:32—Chart No. 1



The husband who puts away his wife when no fornication is involved causes her to commit adultery when she remarries. The put away wife who remarries when no fornication is involved commits adultery.

Therefore it follows that the b part of verse 32 cannot negate the divinely authorized putting away in the exception clause. Fornication is the cause of that putting away. Verse 32b relates only to one put away for some cause other than fornication. Verse 32b, therefore, cannot negate the divine prerogative in the exception clause, i.e., the right to put away one's guilty mate—not even if the one who puts away has already been put away by human authority against his/her will. The divine prerogative still stands untouched and unaffected. The exception clause and verse 32b are unrelated! To say otherwise is to say that human authority takes precedence over divine authority.

It is this divinely authorized putting away that supports my proposition. This putting away is implied in my proposition and is necessary to the remarrying affirmed therein. Matt. 19:9 expands the exception clause to not only authorize the putting away of the guilty but also to authorize remarriage. When these two verses are considered together, we have full proof of the proposition affirmed.

It would be folly to say that the putting away action already taken by human authority negates this divine prerogative. Such would demand the following conclusions:

1. Human action by human authority and in violation of the law of God can negate that which is divinely authorized.
2. Human authority supersedes divine authority.
3. It would set aside Acts 5:29 which says "We ought to obey God rather than men."

I say, respectfully, that I see no way to escape these conclusions unless one accepts the proposition affirmed in this debate.

Matthew 19:9

"And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

Limited space precludes a careful analysis and study of this passage in this article. However, I promise such, along with other related verses, in my second affirma-

tive. The following brief yet pertinent and vital points must suffice for this article.

Matt 19:9, like Matt. 5:32, shows that there are two putting aways—one is done by divine authority, and the other is done by human authority. Concerning the former, this verse teaches that Whosoever shall put away his wife for the cause of fornication and shall marry another commits no adultery. Notice the word "Whosoever." This is an all inclusive term and includes everybody, unless an exception can be shown. We have already noted the following exceptions to the "Whosoever" in this verse when applied to the divinely authorized putting away:

1. The put away fornicator. He/she has already been put away by divine authority which putting away had effect in heaven. Furthermore, he/she is not innocent, which the "whosoever" in this instance demands.

2. The verse itself shows that the one who puts away for some cause other than fornication is excluded from the "whosoever" when applied to the divinely authorized putting away. All such commit adultery when they remarry.

3. We have also shown that those who play the "waiting game," as defined in this article, are excluded. Such become an active participant in a putting away for some cause other than fornication. Again, adultery results when they remarry.

Now unless Brother Phillips can find another exception in the Scriptures—one that excludes the person of our proposition from the "Whosoever" when applied to the divinely authorized putting away, my proposition stands! I insist that the "Whosoever" in this verse in relation to the divinely authorized putting away includes the person in the proposition I have affirmed. I not, Why not? Brother Phillips is obligated to answer this question. If he finds a verse which he thinks excludes the person of our proposition from this "Whosoever," then I shall show that such fails the objective or I will surrender the debate.

Let all remember that as the negative in this discussion, it is the responsibility of Brother Phillips to follow the affirmative material which I have submitted and negate it.

I am not pleading for sympathy, but for objectivity when I say, remember that while you will have an immediate reply to what I have written, you will have to wait one whole month before reading my reply to what Brother Phillips may write. I urge all to remain calm, to honestly and objectively study the material written, and to patiently wait until all evidence is in.

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DON'T FORGET TO PRAY!

PATTON—PHILLIPS DEBATE

H. E. Phillips
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Lutz, FL 33549

**FIRST NEGATIVE**

By H. E. Phillips

Divorce and remarriage is a growing menace upon society, and particularly in the church. It is making havoc of many congregations where it has not been opposed from the pulpit and in classes. The problem has been compounded by infiltrating the eldership, deacons, teachers and preachers. Because of its influence upon the family and the church, I must oppose what I believe is error on the subject.

I do not believe a put away (divorced) person may remarry without sin. Brother Patton believes certain put away persons may remarry, thus this discussion.

Let me fully concur with Brother Patton in his introductory remarks of his first affirmative. I have expressed publicly and privately my personal affection and high esteem for Brother Patton. I regard him as a Christian and a gentlemen of the highest level. There is no doubt in my heart that he loves the Lord and his word.

The Issue

I agree with Brother Patton's statement of our difference and the point of issue between us on the divorced person who may or may not remarry.

Definition of Terms

I accept most of the definition of terms in the proposition. I have some question about the qualifying expression, "without God's or his/her approval." By the expression "without God's approval" Brother Patton says he means without divine authority: a divorce for other than fornication. By "without.. his/her approval" Brother Patton says he means, "without any desire, intent, or action on his/her part in relation to the putting away." He uses this to mean that the put away person resisted the divorce, did not mutually agree to the divorce. Where is an exceptional clause that releases a put away person from the statements in Matthew 5:32, 19:9; Mark 10:11 and Luke 16:18, and permits him/her to marry another?

He did not even prove this in his first affirmation. For even though it was without God's approval, she was nevertheless PUT AWAY, and whosoever marries one who has been put away commits adultery, according to every passage that discusses the subject.

Under the heading, **MATTHEW 5:32**, He says there are TWO putting aways: 1) Putting away of the guilty

party for fornication, and 2) Putting away for some cause other than fornication. The first is by divine authority, and the second is by human authority.

The Bible speaks about one who is put away "for fornication" and one who is put away with no fornication involved (Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18). But actually, Brother Patton gives a **THIRD** putting away: one where both parties mutually agree to the divorce. There is no explanation from God as to what the circumstances were regarding those who are put away when there is no fornication involved. Brother Patton explains that there may be a putting away where both participants are in agreement with the putting away. He affirms that such a situation does not fit his proposition and he "makes no defense of such a person in remarriage." But where does Brother Patton find such an explanation in God's word?

The last statement in the proposition says, "... and against whom adultery has been committed may remarry." This particular statement is so expressed as to try to use Mark 10:11 to justify Brother Patton's second putting away. More about this later.

Matthew 5:32

Brother Patton makes Matthew 5:32 vital to this issue. He points out that there are two putting aways found in the passage. One, for fornication, and one, not for fornication.

The second putting away involves Brother Patton's person who has been put away against her will. The reason I know this is because the husband's putting her away caused her, when she remarried as per Brother Patton's chart, to commit adultery. If it had been the person who had been put away by Brother Patton's "mutual agreement," he would not have caused her to commit adultery, she would have been the cause of it herself. His explanation of this passage also shows that if the wife "cannot contain" and remarries **BEFORE** the husband marries, that both she and the "whosoever" who marries her commit adultery. Hence, even though Brother Patton denies the "waiting game," it is clearly set forth here in his explanation of this passage. She cannot marry **UNTIL** he marries. She must wait until he commits adultery against her so that (according to his argument) she may **THEN** put him away and remarry. If this is not the "waiting game," I do not know what it is.

Brother Patton makes a point from Mark 10:11 with the statement: "Notice especially the expression 'commiteth adultery against her,' i.e., against her that is put away. Obviously, God's bond is still intact, otherwise the adultery would not be against 'her.'" His argument is: Because Mark says that the one who puts away his wife and marries another commits adultery **AGAINST HER**, that this is the put away person of his proposition, who was put away against her will, who may **NOW** put away her former husband and remarry because she has had adultery committed against her.

Brother Patton assumes that the one who has adultery committed "against her" is the first wife. This is by no means certain. All evidence does not agree that the "her" is the wife. Some commentaries say the "her" is

the woman who is number two wife,

According to the rules of English grammar, the antecedent of a pronoun is the closest noun to it which would be "woman" (understood.) You will note that the text says, "... and marry another..." (woman understood). Thus the antecedent of "her" would be "woman" (wife number two).

There is not a single syllable uttered in Mark 10:11 about the put away person remarrying.

All fornication is "against" all those those involved, whether married or not. Of course, the wife is sinned against, but so is the other woman. Fornication (adultery) is a sin **AGAINST** one's own body (1 Corinthians 6:18). It likewise is a sin **against** the person with whom that one commits adultery. Mark 10:11 has two wives: the one who is bound in heaven by God, and the second wife to whom he has no right (Matthew 14:3,4). His adultery is equally **against** both of them, because his body belongs exclusively to his first wife and he sins **against** her if he gives himself to another; and he sins against the second by committing adultery with her because he has no right to her body (1 Corinthians 7:2-4). "Against" has no particular significance to just one person in this context.

Brother Patton must produce proof that the "her" in Mark 10:11 refers only to the wife who was put away, and not to the woman also whom he marries after putting her away.

Who Is In Matthew 5:32

In his explanation of "Who Is In Matthew 5:32," Brother Patton denies that the one put away for fornication is included in the "b" part of the passage. Brother Patton has already stated that there are TWO putting aways in 5:32a. Thus the one in the "b" part of the passage would have to include one of the "put away" ones in the "a" part. In addition, Brother Patton needs to consider that the Holy Spirit in the "b" part of the passage is emphasizing the one who is marrying put away person, rather than the one who has been put away.

However, if we grant everything that Brother Patton says about Matthew 5:32, this really has nothing to do with the person of his proposition, for he has already admitted that the one who is put away "for fornication" cannot remarry. He is looking for a person who has been put away who CAN remarry. Up to this point in time, he has not found her.

Now Brother Patton rightly states that Matthew 5:32b does not negate the right of the exception clause of 5:32a. He says they are unrelated. Matthew 5:32b is not even talking about the one who does the putting away, which the exception clause sets forth. It is talking about the one who has been put away. What Brother Patton needs to find is where one who has been put away with no fornication involved and who has remarried without committing sin. This he has not done! He says, "When these two verses (Matthew 5:32 and 19:9) are considered together, we have full proof of the proposition affirmed." Read both passages carefully and see if this is the case. Where in either of these passages is

there a mention of anyone who has been put away remarrying without committing sin? It simply is not found. **Yet that is the very thing Brother Patton is trying to prove.**

He makes a big play about the fact that civil law cannot supersede God's Law. I know of no one who thinks it can. If they do, they are wrong.

Look at 5:32b for a moment. Brother Patton said there were two putting aways: 1) the putting away for fornication, 2) the one for any cause other than fornication. Now the "whosoever" who comes along and marries either one is guilty of adultery. The first, because she is an adulteress and when he marries her he commits adultery. The second, because she still is bound by God to her husband and when the "whosoever" marries her he commits adultery. I see absolutely no freedom for either of them to marry by God's approval. The verse says: "AND WHOEVER SHALL MARRY HER THAT IS DIVORCED COMMITTETH ADULTERY." There are no exceptions in Matthew 5:32b.

Brother Patton says that there is no fornication in this picture—not until the "whosoever" comes into view. But that "whosoever" is a part of the picture. When he comes into view that is when the adultery begins, and that is exactly what the verse teaches, no more and no less. When that "whosoever" marries that put away one in Matthew 5:32b, he "committeth adultery." Period!

Now Brother Patton links together Matthew 5:32b and Mark 10:11 for his conclusion that "Verse 32b, therefore, cannot negate the divine prerogative in the exceptional clause, i.e., the right to put away one's guilty mate—not even if the one who puts away has already been put away by human authority against his/her will. The divine prerogative still stands untouched and unaffected."

He concludes: "It is this divinely authorized putting away that supports my proposition . . . This putting away is implied in my proposition and is necessary to the remarrying affirmed therein."

Now we know that Brother Patton believes in the "waiting game." Deny it if he wishes, and he does, his proposition demands the "waiting" until the one who put her away remarries. There is no escape from this conclusion according to his arguments from Matthew 5:32, Mark 10:11 and Matthew 19:9.

Patton's Chart No. 1

Matthew 5:32

The problem with Brother Patton's Chart No. 1 on Matthew 5:32 is that no one is free to marry another because no adultery is involved, and he said unless one commits fornication, no one is free to marry again. His chart does not prove any one free to marry without sin, and that is what he is trying to prove. Where is the proof that a put away person may remarry? Divine authority says in every verse touching the subject, "Whosoever marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery." With me that is final! That put away person in Matthew 5:32b commits adultery when she marries again. The Lord said so!

Matthew 19:9

Two putting aways, one by divine authority and one by human authority. He argues that the "whosoever" in this verse is all inclusive and includes everybody. He also noted the following exceptions to the "whosoever" when applied to the divinely authorized putting away:

1. The put away fornicator. He/she is not innocent.
2. The verse shows that the one put away for some other cause is excluded from the "whosoever." These commit adultery when they remarry.
3. Those who play the waiting game cannot remarry without sin.

CONCLUSION: "Now, unless Brother Phillips can find another exception in the Scriptures one that excludes the person of our proposition from the "Whosoever" when applied to the divinely authorized putting away, my proposition stands! I insist that the "Whosoever" in this verse in relation to the divinely authorized putting away includes the person in the proposition I have affirmed. If not, Why not? Brother Phillips is obligated to answer this question."

Brother Patton is so carried away with his "Whosoever" that he finds him/her everywhere. "Whosoever" refers to the person doing the putting away. If he puts away for the cause of fornication, he may remarry, otherwise, he sins if he marries again. The only other "Whosoever" is the one who marries **the put away person**. In every case that "whosoever" **commits adultery when he marries the put away person**. There is no exception!

Until Brother Patton finds a "Whosoever" who can marry again (except the "whosoever" who puts away his spouse for the CAUSE of fornication), he has not proved his proposition.

I, as Brother Patton, urge calm and honest, objective study of this material in the light of God's eternal word. The discussion is not over until all the material is in.

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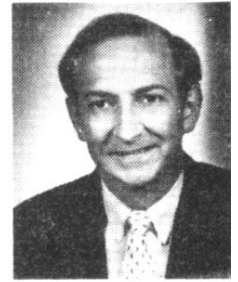
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The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Ecc. 12:10)."



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BROTHERHOOD PAPERS

I was five years old when my parents obeyed the gospel. Since then I do not recall a time when we did not have gospel papers around the house. Before I could read I remember seeing my mother look at those papers before going to bed. For the most part my memory of the papers is a good one. There are several topics on which I would not have learned the truth had it not been for them.

I have also seen the papers abused. From the days of the "yellow tag of quarantine" imposed on non-institutional brethren by the editor of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE in 1953 to this present time, I have witnessed harm done by various publications. But the papers are inanimate objects. They are lifeless tools that become extensions of those who publish them. I would be no more in favor of dispensing with the printed page because it is abused than I would favor abolishing soap and eggs just because they are abused on Halloween.

Nevertheless, we must recognize the power of papers for good or bad. The pen is mightier than the sword. Caution must be exercised toward their misuse and encouragement should be given when they are used to build up the cause of Christ.

Disadvantages of Brotherhood Papers

By "brotherhood papers" I mean publications that are sent across the brotherhood, not published by any congregation and usually have a subscription price (though not always). They may be published by an individual, a bookstore, a college, or a foundation.

1. PAPERS MAY BECOME A "VOICE" FOR THE BROTHERHOOD. The Catholics have their popes, the Protestants have their presidents, but what does the church of Christ have? In the absence of any organizational structure for the universal church, papers have often fulfilled a role which they ought not. We mentioned the quarantine of 1953. Those were some of the darkest days for brotherhood publications. No paper should be so powerful. But the Advocate spoke... and it was so. A brotherhood divided that might have been able to find its bearings if the lines of communication had been kept open. That publication was given a nickname deserved only by the Bible. It was called "the Old Reliable."

Papers sometimes develop the power to determine what the brotherhood issues should be. Like the prophets of old, a local preacher must be a watchman. But he must not become a puppet for a paper. Reams

may be published on some topic that has no bearing on a local congregation. There may not be anyone for miles who holds the views discussed. Rather than stirring the congregation over a matter unheard of or would not be inclined toward, a preacher would be better off to deal with the more pressing and important matters that face a local church. There is no "official voice" for the brotherhood today. No editor or group of writers should have such grandiose ambitions.

2. **PAPERS CAN DISCOURAGE NEW CONVERTS AND THOSE WHO MIGHT OBEY THE GOSPEL.** New converts have had their fires put out and potential Christians have been turned off by endless and numberless controversies that were handled carelessly. I know, because they have told me. They need to know that being a Christian is joyous but will also involve some conflict. If the papers are to be around in the future, they will be read and supported by the new converts of today. Consideration for balance and the needs of *all* Christians should be given by editors, unless it has been made clear that a paper is designed to deal only with certain subjects. Even then, thought should be given to the manner in which it is done.

"Now all the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing" (Acts 17:21). Newspapers often try to out-scoop each other to see which can be the first to break a story. Papers among brethren have been abused in this way by constant reporting of the worst news that can be dug up in the brotherhood. This is not said to stifle needed warnings, but a steady diet of it can kill one's joy in the kingdom. No editor should be pressured into feeling that he must be an authority on every issue. I have heard Connie Adams say "What I know about that subject I could write on a postage stamp." A pitfall for all of us is to spend all of our time in trying to settle brotherhood issues to the neglect of one's local work.

3. **A PARADOX WHICH PAPERS FACE.** Due to power of papers that may be widely read, there is the ability to ruin a man's influence with whom there is disagreement. Papers may be justified in exposing certain men and they may not be justified. Generally, one man is no match to a brotherhood publication. However, this cuts in both directions. The paradox is in the fact that many people are always for the underdog. A paper may end up the villain if it appears that a powerful paper has attacked a lone individual.

Advantages of Brotherhood Papers

1. **THEY CAN HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SCRIPTURES.** I was 800 miles from home attending a college operated by institutional brethren when the institutional controversy was reaching its peak. Had it not been for the papers I was receiving I could easily have lost my bearings. The papers kept me searching, studying and discussing those subjects until truth emerged bright and clear. Aside from helping me solve issues, articles have caused me to make soul-searching examinations of my personal life to see if I was really what I ought to be. I didn't always like what I saw, but

it has helped me. All of this, not to mention some of the good sermon material I have gotten from the papers. I have never had those benefits from my daily newspaper, TV Guide, TIME Magazine, etc. Brethren should weigh these benefits when they spend money on reading material.

2. **THEY CAN OFFER ENCOURAGEMENT.** Not only can the articles give you a needed push but news items about the progress of the gospel in other places can give you added incentive to greater dedication. Concerning the Thessalonians Paul said, "For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not speak anything" (1 Thes. 1:8). Similar statements are made about the church at Philippi. Such news was an encouragement to Paul. Efforts to preach the gospel on foreign soil or in remote areas in our country are always encouraging. It shows the spread of the gospel.

3. **THEY SUPPLY HELPFUL INFORMATION.** Meetings, lectureships, and debate announcements are often carried in the periodicals, enabling one to learn of events and make plans to attend which he otherwise might not have known about.

4. **THEY HELP CHRISTIANS WHEN TRAVELING.** A list of services, phone numbers, and preachers are often carried in the papers. This helps us arrange to assemble with God's family when traveling to other sections of the country.

5. **THEY WARN OF ERROR.** This should not be thought contradictory to things said under "disadvantages." We need warning against error. Elders and preachers will need to decide how much time should be spent and whether certain errors pose a threat to a particular congregation. If good judgment is not used, a preacher may soon be looked on as the little boy who cried "wolf."

CONCLUSION: Obviously, I believe the advantages outweigh the disadvantages by far. We would be better Christians if we would spend more time reading good literature. But there are Bible principles that should govern all of us who write—"Let all things be done unto edifying" and "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:26, 40).

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STATE OF RIGHTEOUS DEAD

QUESTION: *Do the spirits of the righteous go directly to heaven at death or are they confined to Hades until the resurrection?*

ANSWER: It is my persuasion that righteous spirits go directly to heaven immediately after death. There are several passages that seem to suggest this.

Paul wrote, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23). There is no intermediate place between earth and heaven, namely, Hades, indicated in this text. After Paul's departure (death) he would be with Christ in heaven. In 2 Cor. 5:6 we read, "... knowing that whilst we are home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." The implication is that if we are absent from the Lord while alive on earth in the flesh, then we will be present with the Lord when we are not in the fleshly body or alive on earth. Verse 8 states, "... willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." Again, no indication of the Hadean realm.

Prior to being stoned to death, Stephen saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God. In the last moments of his earthly life this faithful martyr prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:54-60). When Jesus received his spirit, He would have had to receive it into heaven because that is where Jesus was.

The apostle John, in his heavenly vision, caught a glimpse of the throne of God, and he beheld a great multitude BEFORE THE THRONE who had come out of great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:9-17). This multitude is the triumphant church in heaven while the 144,000 (Rev. 7:1-8) is the militant church on earth, spiritual Israel, still suffering from trials and tribulation.

Before the ascension of Christ back to heaven whereby the atonement was made for sins, all of God's faithful people were held in hades, that is, in Paradise in the Hadean realm. When the beggar, Lazarus, died, he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom (Lk. 16:22), a figurative expression denoting "blessedness." To be in Abraham's bosom was to be where Abraham was, namely, safe, secure and happy in the unseen world (Sheol in the Hebrew; Hades in the Greek).

Jesus told the penitent thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk. 23:43). This is where Jesus went in the interim between His death and resurrection,

and this is where the thief went after he died. Peter on Pentecost, quoting David (Psa. 16:10), said that Jesus' soul would not be left in hell (Hades, ASV and not Gehenna or the eternal abode of the wicked). Hence, Jesus and the thief went to Paradise in the Hadean world.

But after Jesus made atonement for sins, the way was cleared for man to come into the very, immediate presence of God. Before the glorification of Jesus, there was no absolute remission of sins. We read, "And ever priest standeth daily ministering and offering often-times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins" (Heb. 10:11). The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. Man retained his conscience of sins (Heb. 10:1-4). Hence, until man's sins were covered by the blood of Christ (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:15), and his debt cancelled, he could not enter heaven or the holy of holies. Jesus preceded us into heaven, a forerunner, going before us to prepare the way for God's people to enter, both Old and New Testament' saints (cf Heb. 6:19-20).

Jesus opened the new and living way to heaven. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. 10:19-20).

Of course, the wicked would still be confined to the Hadean abode, to a place of torment (Lk. 16:23), until the general resurrection. Subsequently, they will be cast into hell, *gehenna*, the place of eternal fire (Matt. 25:41; Mk. 9:43-48). The righteous will dwell with God, clothed with their glorified, immortal bodies, through eternity.

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THE WAY TO PRAY (PART 2)

We must be reminded that when the disciples pleaded, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1), they were wanting to be shown the way to do it. Thus Jesus showed them when he said, "After this manner therefore pray ye" (Matt. 6:9).

In our last article in this column we began noticing the way God wants us to approach him in prayer. We considered the characteristics of prayer or how we are to pray. We also examined the elements of prayer which are mentioned in 1 Tim. 2:1. There are four found in this text, two of which were considered in our last article. Let us briefly review those and look at the other components in the text.

Elements (What)

1. **Supplication.** This refers to asking a need, an entreaty. Clarke says this refers to a request for the averting of evil.

2. **Prayers.** This refers to any discourse with God (petitions, praise, thanksgiving, et. al.). Clarke says this refers to a request for the obtaining of good.

3. **Intercessions.** This is a plea to God on behalf of others. There can be no doubt that we have a responsibility to pray for other people. And if we are going to do that, we need to do more than just say "we pray for all whom it is our duty to pray for." We quickly utter that expression and think that fulfills our responsibility. We need to be a little more specific. It seems that the Lord prayed for certain individuals, calling them by name (e.g., Peter-Luke 22:32). The apostle Paul did the same thing. Carefully consider some passages that illustrate that he didn't just pray for his "brethren everywhere," but he remembered particular ones (1 Cor. 1:4; Eph. 1:15,16; Phil. 1:3-5; Col. 1:3-9; 1 Thess. 1:2-3, 3:10-13; 2 Thess. 1:3,11-12; 2:13-15).

We should pray for our brethren that they may grow and develop (Phil. 1:9; Col. 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 1:11; Col. 4:12; Eph. 6:18). When they have sinned or are in need they need our prayers (Jas. 5:16; 2 Thess. 3:1; 1 Jno. 5:16; Acts 8:18-24).

Even our enemies should be included in our prayers (Matt. 5:44-46; Acts 7:60; Luke 23:34). It just may be that with a little praying for them that they may soon become our friends and even children of God.

The rulers of the nation and other parts of the world need our prayers (1 Tim. 2:2). They have a tremendous responsibility which tells us they could use some help.

Anyone who has just the slightest knowledge of the book of Daniel will remember that God rules in the kingdoms of men. Thus our prayers can make a difference in how God uses certain men and certain kingdoms. We ought to pray for peace and that the leaders will make the decisions that are best for the people and the spreading of the gospel of Christ. This doesn't mean that we have to endorse their political policies if we pray for them. It does simply mean that a whole lot more good would be accomplished if we would do less complaining and a lot more praying!

Let's also pray for **alien sinners**. Paul's "heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel" was "that they might be saved" (Rom. 10:1). This does not mean that we should pray that God would save them in their sins, but that they will hear and have a heart to obey. It just may be that we would baptize a few more if we started praying for them.

The **sick and afflicted** desire our prayer on their behalf knowing that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick" and that the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:15-16).

As **elders** try to lead the flock of God and **preachers** attempt to instruct and exhort the same they all need the prayers of the saints (2 Thess. 3:1-2; Heb. 13:18).

Let's not only think about our own wants and needs in prayer but do more thinking about others and their needs (Phil. 2:4).

4. **Thanksgiving.** This is expressing thanks to God for the blessings of life, including both physical and spiritual (Col. 3:17; Phil. 4:6).

We have so much for which to be thankful. Have you ever just sat down and made a list of as many blessings as you could contemplate? If you haven't, I suggest you do it and "it will surprise you what the Lord hath done." If we ever get to the point that we realize how blessed we are, from that point on our prayers will be filled with thanksgiving.

We ought to thank God for the protection and care through the day and night, our food (Matt. 15:36; Luke 24:30; Acts 27:35), clothing, shelter, reasonable health and strength, our automobiles, furniture, money, modern conveniences which are so often taken for granted (e.g. hot water, heating and air conditioning, electric lights, appliances such as washers, dryers and stoves, televisions, radios and easy methods of travel), friends, parents, mates, children and other family members, the sacrifice of the Son of God, the remission of sins, the hope of heaven, the privilege of prayer, the Bible, elders, deacons, fellow Christians (1 Cor. 1:4; Phil. 1:3-5; 1 Thess. 1:2) and the opportunity and freedom to worship. Even our troubles could be included in thanksgiving knowing that they help develop patience and mature us. The little boy was thankful for his glasses for then the boys wouldn't fight him and the girls wouldn't kiss him. Matthew Henry thanked God when he was robbed—that they didn't take his life and that they stole from him and not he from them. Yes, there are some things that we need, but are not so pleasant (e.g. glasses, false teeth and medication). We should thank God for these as well.

In fact, we can and should thank God for everything that is good (Jas. 1:17; Phil. 4:6).

Time (When)

1. **Make Time.** Prayer is not a thing that we will do only if we have a little extra time. We must make the time! We have time to do just about anything we want to do. You see, our real problem is wanting to pray. Jesus planned time to be alone with God (Mark 1:35). We have made our lives so busy that we do not always make time. In the mornings we are too busy getting ready for school or work. The day is packed full of appointments and things to do. Then in the evening we are too tired from the day's activities and another day passes without properly approaching God in prayer.

Someone made a survey some time ago that revealed that the average Christian spends five minutes a day in prayer. Actually, our busy schedules ought to cause us to spend more time in prayer rather than less. Martin Luther once said, "I have so much to do today that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer."

2. **Daily.** We need to establish some regular times for prayer (Psa. 55:16-17). It seems that Daniel had done that (Dan. 6:10). I'm told that millions of Moslems pray five times a day. Could we not plan some time every day to speak to the true God?"

3. **When alert.** Whatever time we choose to pray we should pick a time when we are most alert. Trying to pray when we are our tiredness doesn't always work. Have you ever fallen asleep praying?"

4. **Always.** This doesn't mean that we must spend every minute of every day in prayer, but it does mean that we must continually be prayerful. Jesus taught that men "ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1; cf. 1 Thess. 5:17).

May we all try to find a quiet solitary place (Mark 1:35) that is free from distractions and there pour out our hearts to God in prayer.

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Governor George Wallace gave a noteworthy response to the hue and cry over the overcrowded population of our prisons. He said, "Their victims don't have much room in their graves either."

That side of affairs seems to be virtually ignored.

Our crowded prisons, however, are presenting many problems of monumental proportions.

Daniel W. Van Ness, in an article in Eternity, April 1985, reported that four hundred and fifty-four thousand men and women are in American prisons today. He observes: "If such a group were the population of a city we might be talking about Atlanta or Pittsburgh.. if it were a nation it would be more populous than 23 of the countries that belong to the United Nations."

This number has more than doubled in the last decade and is increasing 15 times faster than the general population.

In most every state, efforts are being made to find or raise the money to build more prisons. In the meanwhile extreme measures are being utilized to remedy the situation. In some places, early release programs have turned extremely dangerous offenders loose on the public.

What Our Incarceration System Costs

The average American prison costs over \$15,400 per year to support. It's been observed that this is more than it costs for room, board, and tuition, to send someone to Harvard.

This ongoing expense does not include the price society must pay to relieve families of offenders while providing for the daily needs of the prisoners, however substandard such provisions may be.

Neither does it include the initial expense of constructing these so-called correctional facilities. It costs between \$60,000 and \$80,000 per bed to build the average prison today.

Do Prisons Work?

Only in recent times have prisons been used as a form of punishment. Prisons throughout most of history were used only to hold someone prior to trial.

If the accused was found not guilty, he was released. If he was found guilty, he was then punished, either by death, or beating, branding, banishment, or other methods.

Under the Old Testament law, an offender was stoned to death if he was guilty of certain transgressions (Exo-

dus 21:12-17). The penalty for other offenses was restitution (Exodus 21: 19f; 22:1f). The only thing that resembled a prison system was the cities of refuge to which a person could flee to await a fair trial. Observe that he was responsible for his own living expenses.

Van Ness writes: "The concept of penitentiaries as a form of punishment began in 1790 in the U.S. . . . A small group of Quakers persuaded the city of Philadelphia to convert part of the Walnut Street Jail from a place of detention before trial to a place where convicted offenders could be separated from their criminal environments, given a Bible and counsel from a minister and the warden, and brought to repentance—hence the term penitentiary.

"Though the 'Pennsylvania System,' as it came to be called, failed in its aims, the use of prisons as punishment and rehabilitation spread through the young country.

"What had this done to the Mosaic Law principles of responsibility and restoration? It changed the meaning of both. Responsibility came to mean the offender's accountability for violating the laws of the state (rather than his responsibility for violating the rights of his victim, K.G.). Restoration came to mean not restoring the victim's loss, but rehabilitating the offender."

Since 1790, those in authority have evolved through many phases of attempts to rehabilitate criminals. None of them has worked. The FBI reports that 74 percent of those released from prison are re-arrested within four years. Chief Justice Warren Burger observed that no business could survive with this kind of failure rate.

The Logical Alternative

Is it not obvious that in this matter also, the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men?

The course we have pursued has proved itself to be absurd and unworkable in very way.

Most folks who respect God's word have cried out long and loud for capital punishment against dangerous offenders. Such people are "worthy of death." God so directs.

Those guilty of non-violent offenses, and this includes 50 percent of the prisoners in America, should not be kept up at tax-payer expense. They should be made to work and make restitution to their victims. They should be sentenced to some community service for governmental or charitable agencies.

Perhaps public flogging would serve a useful purpose in some cases. One thing for sure. Something must be done. Offenders must be required to accept responsibility for the consequences of their acts. As Van Ness suggested, "Perhaps then we will be closer to fulfilling the meaning of criminal justice."

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SPENDING THE LORD'S MONEY

When we talk about "spending the Lord's money" it is generally understood that we have reference to that money which is laid by in store upon the first day of the week, and contained in a common treasury (1 Cor. 16:1, 2). But, while we may be agreed on this point, that unanimity seems to disappear when it comes to spending that money, and at what time it ceases to be the "Lord's money."

The priorities of some brethren seem to be inconsistent with the very term which they seem to emphasize so much. If it is indeed "the Lord's money," does not the Lord have any instructions as to its use? I'm persuaded that some brethren cannot forget the fact that this money once belonged to them (was in their power), and want to keep it in sight as long as possible.

Being a good steward of any money, and certainly the Lord's, is a trait to be desired and admired. It is commonly agreed by those who establish scriptural authority by direct command, approved example, or by necessary inference, that the church treasury may be used for preaching the gospel, edifying the church, and relieving needy saints. And, if we are required to assemble, that we have authority for a place to assemble, including not only the place itself, but any necessary maintenance within or without. In fact, good stewardship would require that we take care of that which has been purchased by "the Lord's money."

Nowhere is this inconsistent use of the church treasury more apparent than in the area of supporting the gospel. In the Lord's sight, no greater use can be made of the church treasury than that of preaching the gospel, yet some brethren inadvertently hinder the very thing they attempt to do.

It seems that the main criterion for some in the spending of the Lord's money is to make certain that the preacher doesn't get too much of it. No expense is spared in buying choice lots, erecting a fine building, and paving the parking lot. Attention is often given to classrooms, or the "educational wing" of the building, which would come under the heading of edification. So far, so good.

In fact, nothing much is said about giving a goodly portion of the Lord's money to some sectarian or worldly contractor, and no effort is made to follow up that money once it is spent to make sure such persons spend the "Lord's money according to our guidelines. It may in fact be the Lord's money one hour, and the

Devil's the next. Neither does that recipient of "church money" contribute a portion of his wages back into the treasury of the church, the way a preacher does.

But, it seems that when it comes to supporting a gospel preacher, at least some brethren (but not all), are obsessed with what they consider to be a divine mandate to keep the preacher from getting his share, or more than his share of the Lord's money. They go into great detail itemizing and publishing every dollar spent on the preacher, but just lump everything else under the general heading of benevolence, maintenance, supplies, or miscellaneous. If any error is to be made in overspending the Lord's money, it seems that the place to make it is in the support of the gospel.

Why will congregations deny their present preacher (granting that he is faithful and able), a decent salary, benefits, or a modest increase in either, but spend thousands of dollars in moving expenses to replace him with two or three successive preachers? (Not to mention the fact that some other congregation will have to pay mov-

ing expenses for the preacher they let go). Or, the present preacher can't get reasonable or needed repairs made to the property where he lives, but the congregation will meet any request the new preacher makes, including a new house and increased salary. I cannot understand such reasoning, or "spending of the Lord's money," and I doubt if the Lord can understand it either.

Another thing which has always perplexed me is that some smaller congregations, with limited financial resources, put many larger congregations to shame when it comes to supporting the preaching of the gospel. I have known some congregations which spent ninety-five percent of the Lord's money on preaching the gospel, either at home or elsewhere. May their tribe increase.

Yes, brethren, it is a sobering responsibility to be involved in spending the Lord's money, but spend it we must. The Lord surely doesn't want to find it here when he returns.

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

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LALO ENRIQUEZ, 3011 Allen Rd., Bakersfield, CA 93312—After two and a half years of construction, doing most of the work ourselves, we are now finally worshipping in our new facility. We celebrated with a gospel meeting with Peter J. Wilson. In the past two and a half years we have had about 60 baptisms and several have been restored to faithfulness with some families moving into the area. We have tried during this period of construction to maintain strict discipline, an active home Bible study program and have encouraged members to care for each other. Our membership is now about 160. Dee Bowman is to be here in May for a meeting. Brent Willey, formerly of Susanville, C A, is now working with us.

JAMES H. SHEWMAKER, P. O. Box 283, Grinnell, IA— I have recently begun work with the brethren in Grinnell. There are about 23 in Sunday morning attendance. Iowa has seven congregations supporting sound doctrine. I need to raise some outside support. If you are able to help, please write me. I am also available for gospel meetings. If you know anyone in south central Iowa who may be receptive to the truth, let me know and they will be contacted.

FROM FOREIGN FIELDS

EFRAIN F. PEREZ, Casilla 1317, Valparaiso, Chile, South America— In November three were baptized into Christ after home Bible studies. Brethren at Quilpue congregation are zealous, united and committed to the truth. They are trying to reach non-Christians in the community. Attendance runs from 32 to 38.

PAUL WILLIAMS, 18 Fairlie Rd., Eshowe, 3815 South Africa— Five fine young people were baptized in Eshowe since my September report. One man is a school teacher. One 19 year old boy lost his job when his employer heard that he was going to the church of Christ. A 17 year old girl is having trouble with her father and with some school teachers because she has become a Christian. It seems that every person baptized can tell a story of persecution. The church sent David Ngonyama to Jozini and Inqwavuma, and he baptized five in Jozini. David Hurst is having a hard time raising support, in part because brethren have been turned off about South Africa because of the

sensational TV saturation coverage of the past few months. If you can help him please contact him. The brethren in Johannesburg want him, are going to help on his support and can really profit from his coming. The opportunities are great in Johannesburg and in African rural areas. Please help!

INDIA REPORT

JERRY PARKS, 4437 S. 6th St., Louisville, KY 40214—On October 13 John Humphries and I met Bill Beasley and Gary Johnsen (both from Arizona) in New York and the four of us traveled to India where we spent the next six weeks working together in the gospel.

Arriving in India is like going back 300 years in time. It is a paradox of modern civilization trying to find a foothold in an ancient civilization that refuses to give way. On the crowded streets of Hyderabad you might find a Mercedes Benz trying to pass a cart pulled by two oxen. Because of backward conditions, there is much that would be distasteful to westerners. In addition to the extreme poverty, there is the heat and humidity, the noise and filthy stench of raw sewage along side of the streets. But you soon forget this when you see the opportunities to work with and teach some of the most receptive and gracious people in all the world. They may not have much but they will share it with you. They are hard working and for the most part, happy and contented. City people are being influenced more and more by movies and television whereas village people are pretty much isolated from all this.

At Hyderabad, we split up to cover more territory and double our teaching opportunities. Preachers from hundreds of miles around came to study with us at the house of T. George Fred. Bill and I stayed in Hyderabad for a week while John and Gary left for a week of preaching 200 miles northeast of Hyderabad. We conducted classes from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. each day. In the evening we went into the homes of various members to teach all who came. We baptized 8 from the classes there.

John and Gary met great success in Yelandu and Kottuguttum. Local preachers had done much preparatory work and these combined efforts resulted in 136 being baptized on this trip. Because of methods used by liberals in this area, brethren had grown to expect Americans

to build not only meeting places but also schools and orphan homes. Much time was spent dealing with these issues.

Following that week, John and I, along with T. George Fred, his wife and youngest son and a driver left on a 400 mile trip southeast of Hyderabad. In addition to classes in the home of a lawyer, we had opportunity to address one of the groups with which a man was working who was trying to find the truth. Our message was warmly received and other study efforts will be made by brethren in that area.

We visited some villages of "untouchables", being the first white people in one village. At Julapalem village we taught adults and children for hours at a time. We lived in their midst a week and I fell in love with the people and the children. After the rain subsided, we preached in other villages during the day and returned to Julapalem for evening services. After Sunday morning service we walked about 3 miles to the Krishna River where 6 people were baptized.

While we were there Bill and Gary traveled north by railroad to the town of Kozipet. There they worked with Vinaya Kumar, a school teacher, who took time off to work with them.

Thanks to the generosity of many brethren in the USA, we were able to purchase 551 Bibles to distribute to "daily wage" people. These are poor people who make only enough per day to buy rice for their families. In addition to these Telegu Bibles, we distributed 2,000 of a first principle outline "Learn What Your Bible Teaches." T. George Fred had translated this also into Telegu. Two members from Expressway in Louisville worked on the layout and printing. People were so eager for it that we had 4,000 more copies printed at Hyderabad. Bill Beasley worked with Vinaya Kumar who translated L. A. Mott's tract "What Is The Church of Christ" into Telegu. They had 10,000 copies printed and distribution was made as we traveled from place to place.

All total, we traveled about 20,000 miles by air and between 1500 and 2000 miles within the country by car, bus, train, auto rickshaw,

bicycle rickshaw, boat, ox cart and many miles of walking. We had good health during the trip and rejoice in the good done. We thank all who made it possible for us to go. The rising threat of Communism makes me wonder how much longer this door of opportunity will be open. That makes these trips all the more urgent. Indian preachers need much teaching to be grounded in the faith so that the work will continue even if the door is closed for us to travel to India to teach.

Lord willing, I plan to travel to India again. I feel compelled by the gospel after seeing such tremendous opportunity. Until I can return, it will seem like a fire burning within me. Remember the good brethren in India in your prayers.

PREACHERS NEEDED

JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE—This self-supporting congregation of about 85 in upper east Tennessee needs a full time preacher in a town of 50,000. Everett Hardin, who was here for several years, has moved to Fletcher Avenue in Tampa, Florida. If interested, contact Olie Williamson, P. O. Box 38, Greeneville, TN 37744. Phone (615) 639-7212 or 638-6172.

PREACHER AVAILABLE

I know of a preacher, 34 years of age and with 11 years of experience, who is interested in making a move in 1987. I would be happy to put you in contact with him. You may write to me — DON POTTS, 417 East Groesbeck, Lufkin, TX 75901 or call (409) 632-1800

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	217
RESTORATIONS	66

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

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VOLUME XXVIII MARCH, 1987 u

Number 3

SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

P. J. Casebolt

P.O. Box 1487
Chiefland, FL 32626



"THEY HAVE TAKEN AWAY"

When the angels asked Mary why she was weeping, she said, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him" (Jno. 20:13). Mary was right about the absence of the Lord's body, though she was confused as to why the body was missing.

However, we have learned that there are those who will take away the Lord, and everything which pertains to Him. Jesus said, "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge ..." (Lk. 11:52). The New Testament of the Lord contains twenty-seven books, but by the time some people get thru with it, there is nothing left. They take away the virgin birth of the Lord, His second coming, and all else in between.

There are those who claim that the first four books of the New Testament are not a part of the New Testament, but try to assign them to the law of Moses. If this be true, then we have about 400 years between the book of Malachi, and the four books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Jesus apparently thought He had covered the Old Testament pretty thoroughly when He made reference to the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms (Lk. 24:44).

Many great lessons are taught in these four books, lessons which are not to be found in the Old Testament (cf. Matt. 5:17ff). The Hebrew writer speaks of that "so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb. 2:3). A distinction is clearly made between "the word spoken by angels" and this great

salvation spoken by the Lord (v. 2). We must also remember that the first four books of the New Testament were not written at the time Christ spoke, but rather His words were brought to the remembrance of inspired men some thirty years later.

But why this attempt to take away these four books? Generally, there is but one reason—to neutralize the teaching of Christ on the subject of divorce and re-marriage (Mt. 19:9). In order to get rid of this one verse, not only must the rest of the Book of Matthew be eliminated, but the following three books get the axe as well.

Some approach the Book of Revelation, knowing full well that it contains symbolic and figurative language. But, by the time they have finished this book, they interpret it so as to take away plain teaching contained in the other twenty-six books of the New Testament (as well as some rather plain prophecies in the Old Testament). With all due respect to this great book called Revelation, I fear some "let the tail wag the dog" when they give precedence to symbolic language instead of plain statements concerning Christ, His kingdom, and His second coming.

For instance, there are those among us who teach that Christ came the second time in A.D. 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem, and we have been in "heaven" since that time. But, these same ones try to explain away sorrow, pain, and death, just as others do the teachings of Christ in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Others try to place the things of Revelation 21-22 in the church age, thus inheriting the same problem as those who claim we are in heaven now, i.e., how to explain the presence of tears, sorrow, pain, death, and sin (Rev. 21:4, 27). Then, the tree of life is no longer in heaven (22:2,14), and we are back where we were when Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden, and away from the tree of life. Then, the language of 2 Pet. 3 doesn't mean what we thought it did before we got to Rev. 21:1, and maybe we can forget what we learned in other books about the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of "the just and unjust" at the judgment.

The point of this article is, that some have reversed the principle which many denominational preachers follow. The Lord nailed the entire law of Moses to His

cross (2 Cor. 3; Col. 2), but some want to retain the sabbath, some the burning of incense, some instrumental music, and others the idea of infant membership. By the time all get through taking what they want (or don't like), out of the New Testament, there isn't much left. Some take out the resurrection, some the judgment, some heaven, some hell, some the life and teaching of Christ, and some the second coming of Christ.

About all this leaves is the account of Saul of Tarsus persecuting the church, which church isn't essential to salvation anyway according to some. "They have taken away" until there isn't much left to take away. The next generation of these latter-day, penknife-wielding Jehoiakims aren't going to like that (Jer. 36:23). There's nothing left to cut out.

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Editorial

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"MOTHER IS NOT HOME"

Over and over this statement is made by young children and teenagers across America to their peers, or to family friends who call. "Mother isn't home." Well then, where is she? She is at the office, or the plant, out of town at a sales meeting or to a business conference. Or, she is out with the girls to bowl, or play softball. And why not? Have we not all seen the perfume commercial in which a fashionably dressed young woman comes slinking into the house, swinging her purse on her wrist and singing in a sultry voice "I can bring home the bacon, Fry it up in a pan, And never let you forget you're a man." All this super woman lacks is a cape over her shoulder with a streak of lightning emblazoned on it. But such is the image of the successful, modern woman.

Now, let's get it straight. Some women never marry and some who do probably should not have done so. They have to support themselves. There are financial crises which arise in families which demand that the wife and mother do something to keep the family afloat. Widows must survive. Wives and mothers with sick or disabled husbands have to do something. What they need is understanding and support-not censure. It will not be easy for them, nor for their children.

But Paul taught that the older women should teach certain things to the younger women, and instructed Titus, a gospel preacher, to include these things in his preaching. Hear him out: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: That aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2:1-5). "Keepers at home", Paul said. Exactly what does that mean? Let's look at some other translations for help.

"workers at home" (New American Standard Version and ASV)

"homemakers" (New King James Version)
"domestic" (Revised Standard Version) "busy at home" (New International Version) Do you get the picture? Here is the most challenging

career which any married women ever considered. It is at once challenging, frustrating, rewarding, fulfilling, exhausting. It provides support for a husband and guidance for children. It demands time, patience and effort. It is the cement which holds family life in place. Not only have the foundations of family life cracked and crumbled, we have very little cement left to hold the bricks together

"Mother isn't home." Somebody has convinced her that unless she competes in the job market she will never really find out who she is. She must find self-expression and self-fulfillment. She must contribute something of her talents to the world or it will surely deteriorate. And so we educate our daughters to plan for business careers. We must prepare them to escape the mundane, humdrum, boring, unfulfilling, dreary existence of being a "mere" wife and mother and homemaker. Ask a class of junior high or high school girls about their future plans and listen to what they say. How many of them REALLY dream of being good wives and mothers?

We have all heard the reasons why mother is not at home. She can add greatly to the financial security of the family. They can ail have better housing, better clothes, better cars, better trips. What we have not considered is that we shall also have disappointed husbands, neglected children and frustrated women. "It will teach the children to be more independent." Come on! It will leave them alone when they need you. They will learn that you are really too tired or too busy to really listen when they need to tell you of their disappointments or hurts, or their hopes and ambitions. They will find somebody to listen but, after it is too late, you will not always like their choice. You will not have time to talk with them about Jesus and the apostles and the early Christians and how they applied truth to the real situations of daily existence. There will be buttonless shirts, skirts and jeans. There will be unstitched seams and hems. There will be unkept houses and you will become more and more reluctant to have company.

Showing hospitality to friends and strangers will become a virtual impossibility. You will be too tired, or not have time to "guide the house" (1 Tim. 5:14); or to "bring up children", "lodge strangers", "wash the saints feet", "relieve the afflicted" and "diligently follow every good work" (1 Tim. 5:10). You cannot find time to be "full of good works and almsdeeds" and make "coats and garments" for the poor as did Dorcas (Acts 9:36-41). When will you and your husband ever find time to "expound the way of the Lord more accurately" to an Apollos, or anyone else, as did Aquila and his wife Priscilla (Acts 18:24-26)? How will you be able to "labor in the Lord" as did Tryphena and Tryphosa (Rom. 16:1-2)? The "homemaker" is the foundation of hospitality. How can you ever find time to help your husband demonstrate this qualification of an elder? He cannot do it without you.

Many of the things just mentioned impact directly or indirectly on soul winning efforts, or the lack of them. Home studies go begging because life is too hectic to bother with them. Home chores which used to be done

in the daytime have to be done at night now. Who has the time or inclination to invite folks in for Bible study? Several years ago, while living in Atlanta, I had home studies several mornings a week with ladies who gathered in the homes of Christians after the children left for school. That resulted in a number obeying the gospel. But now, husband leaves for work, children go to school and wife? Well, she leaves, too. She must not be bored and she MUST find herself and be fulfilled! It is her duty! She must make a statement and be part of a movement to forever halt injustice and stop chauvinism in its tracks!

Something is wrong here, folks. We must get back to what the Bible teaches. Families are falling apart for want of it and churches are suffering in the aftershocks. Young people would be well advised to discuss this area fully before marrying and come to a meeting of the minds as to what the Bible teaches and the roles to be *filled by each partner*. Children must be taught at home, in Bible classes and from the pulpit what Paul told Titus to preach as a part of "sound doctrine." Preachers, are you telling older and younger women what Paul said to tell them about being "homemakers"? Would you "catch it" from the women where you preach if you did, or worse yet, from your wife when she gets you home?

Sisters, if you want a career which will help stabilize the basic unit of all ordered society, make your husband a better man, give your children guidance for life, set a worthy example for your children, grandchildren and neighbors, develop leadership qualities in your husband which will help the church and provide a better climate in which to enhance the work of soul winning, then I strongly recommend to you the challenge of being a good wife and mother who is "discreet, chaste" and a "keeper at home."

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HE WILL DO SOMETHING BETTER

The contrasting views of prayer of two fictional characters struck me as being very typical. I suspect they reflect the beliefs of their respective creators.

Mark Twain's Huck is occasionally quoted as representative of a pragmatic interpretation of this matter of prayer.

"Miss Watson she took me in the closet and prayed, but nothing come of it. She told me to pray every day, and whatever I asked for I would get it. But it warn't so. I tried it. Once I got a fish-line, but no hooks. It warn't any good to be without hooks. I tried for the hooks three or four times, but somehow I couldn't make it work. By and by, one day, I asked Miss Watson to try for me, but she said I was a fool. She never told me why, and I couldn't make it out no way."

"I set down one time back in the woods, and had a long think about it. I says to myself; if a body can get anything they pray for why don't Deacon Winn get back the money he lost on pork? Why can't the widow get back her silver snuff-box that was stole? Why can't Miss Watson fat up? No, says I to myself, there ain't nothing in it." (Adventures of Huckleberry Finn).

Surely we can all experience with Huck Finn. We have prayed for fish-lines and snuff-boxes too.

And we have prayed for sound health and have seen sickness. We've prayed for success and have suffered failure. Haven't we all thought it, even if we haven't said it? "There ain't nothing in it!"

Just what did the Lord mean anyway when He said, **"Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them"** (Mark 11:22-24).

Johanna Spyri's "grandmother" expressed a quite different point of view to the child, Heidi, in another classic from the world of literature. Heidi said:

"It is of no use, God does not listen. . . and I can understand that when there are so many, many people in Frankfurt praying to him every evening that He cannot attend to them all, and He certainly has not heard what I said to Him."

"And why are you so sure of that, Heidi?"

"Because I have prayed for the same thing every day

for weeks, and yet God has not done what I asked."

"You are wrong, Heidi; you must not think of Him like that. God is a good father to us all, and knows better than we do what is good for us. If we ask Him for something that is not good for us, He does not give it, but something better still, if only we will continue to pray earnestly and do not run away and lose our trust in Him. God did not think what you have been praying for was good for you just now; but be sure He heard you, for He can hear and see every one at the same time, because He is God and not a human being like you and me. And because He thought it was better for you not to have at once what you wanted, He said to Himself: Yes, Heidi shall have what she asks for, but not until the right time comes, so that she may be quite happy. If I do what she wants now, and then one day she sees that it would have been better for her not to have had her own way, she will cry and say, 'If only God had not given me what I asked for, it is not so good as I expected!'"

Later in the story, Heidi exclaims:

"... everything is happier now than it has ever been in our lives before!" and she sang and skipped along... but all at once she grew quiet and said, 'If God had let me come at once, as I prayed, then everything would have been different, I should only have had a little bread to bring to grandmother, and I should not have been able to read, which is such a comfort to her; but God has arranged it all so much better than I knew how to; Oh, how glad I am that God did not let me have at once all I prayed and wept for... God, I am sure, is going to do something better still.'"

I can relate to this too. A number of times I have thanked God for unanswered prayers.

It's a good line to remember: "God, I am sure, is going to do something better still."

The Lord is able to give thee much more than this... (2 Chron. 25:9).

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. 3:20,21).

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SECOND AFFIRMATIVE

By Marshall E. Patton

PROPOSITION: The Scriptures teach that the innocent person (free of fornication) who has been put away without God's or his/her approval and against whom adultery has been committed may remarry.

I appreciate the fine spirit in which Brother Phillips has made reply to my first affirmative. His first paragraph expresses my sentiments exactly, relative to this debate.

There are some things in his reply that demand attention on my part. After noticing these, I shall proceed with further affirmative material.

The Put Away "Her"

In spite of all the proof given in my first affirmative (including my chart) showing that Matt. 5:32b refers to a particular "her," Brother Phillips repeatedly asserts (without proof) that it refers to ANY put away person. The put away "her" of v 32b has had no fornication committed against her. The woman of our proposition has. The two women are different and the situations are different! Why, then, persist in applying a portion of Scripture to a person who is not even in it in the first place?

Furthermore, it matters not where the emphasis is placed—on the put away one or on the person marrying the put away one—both commit adultery when no fornication is involved before the remarriage.

You ask, "Where is an exception clause that releases a put away person from the statements in Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11 and Luke 16:18, and permits him/her to marry another?" If you mean by "a put away person" one who was put away by human authority, in violation of the will of God, and, hence, without God's approval (which is the one this debate is about), then the answer is in the exception clauses of Matt. 5:32 and 19:9. If not, Why not? Your only answer so far—and the only possible answer that can be given is that such is "a put away person" not specifically mentioned in the exception clauses. Certainly not! The "whosoever" is generic enough to include such as per my argument in my first affirmative. Such putting away is by HUMAN AUTHORITY and is FUTILE! Even you have admitted twice in your reply article that the bond in heaven remains unbroken. If action by human authority can set aside the divine prerogative in this instance, then you need to answer the question: How many more divine

prerogatives can be set aside by human authority? I know you admitted that such was wrong in your first negative, but, Elwood, you need to show escape from this consequence. It follows necessarily from your position. Remember, the only reason, according to your position, that the innocent person against whom fornication has been committed cannot exercise the divine right that God gave (to put away and remarry) is because someone made a human law contrary to it and acted upon it, making the person of our proposition the victim of such action. Thus, human law supersedes divine law! You said I made a great play on this in my first article. If you mean, I placed great emphasis on it, indeed, I did. Furthermore, we are not through with it yet. I cannot accept a position that demands such a consequence.

Furthermore, your reply to my argument on the word "Whosoever" in relation to the exception clause in Matt. 5:32; 19:9 does not answer the argument. You distinguished between the "whosoever" in relation to the exception clause and the "whosoever" in the b part of these verses, but you did not exclude the person of our proposition from the former "whosoever." It does not answer the argument to say that such is a put away person. Remember, this putting away is futile! According to your own admission, the bond in heaven remains. Therefore, it has no bearing on the divine prerogative. Otherwise, human law supersedes divine law!

A Third Putting Away

You accuse me of affirming a third putting away. No, just because there is "mutual agreement" to divorce does not alter the fact of putting away No. 2, namely, when no fornication is involved. Even you admit "There is no explanation from God as to what the circumstances were regarding those put away when there is no fornication involved." Then why exclude the circumstance of "mutual agreement" and make it a third putting away?

Concerning the "mutual agreement" argument that excludes such from our proposition, you ask for an explanation in God's word. I gave it in my first affirmative in the next sentence following the one you quoted, saying, "My reasons are based upon Matt. 5:32." Then follows my explanation which you overlooked. Please read it again.

Under the heading "Matthew 5:32" in reply to my affirmation of two putting aways, you say, "The second putting away involves brother Patton's person who has been put away against her will. The reason I know this is because the husband's putting her away caused her, when she remarried as per brother Patton's chart, to commit adultery." No, Brother Phillips, "brother Patton's person who has been put away against her will" and against whom adultery has been committed is not in my chart. The one in my chart and in Matt. 5:32b has had no fornication committed against her—the one in our proposition has. You also missed the point on what you call "brother Patton's 'mutual agreement.'" Elwood, if they mutually agree to the putting away when no fornication is involved, BOTH share in the guilt of

adultery that follows regardless of which one commits it.

The Waiting Game

Brother Phillips accuses me of endorsing the "waiting game" even though I denied it. I still deny it AS DEFINED in my definition of terms. I defined it according to its normal usage in relation to the subject of Divorce and Remarriage. Brother Phillips has brought up a situation altogether different. There are a number of situations, according to his use of the expression, that might be called the "waiting game." Of course, the woman of my proposition must wait until fornication is committed against her before remarriage. So must every woman who is bound in heaven to a husband, including both my wife and Brother Phillips' wife. However, none of these have in view remarriage. Neither does the person of my proposition. He/she is praying, hoping, and trying for reconciliation. Brother Phillips is obligated to deal with the one defined in our proposition.

Mark 10:11

Brother Phillips tries to tell our readers that my argument is based upon Mark 10:11. In so doing he puts words in my mouth which I never used and attributes an argument to me that I never made. I did not argue that the person of my proposition is in this verse; that "because she has had adultery committed against her" that she "may now put away her former husband and remarry."

The only argument I made based upon Mark 10:11 was with a view to corroborating my argument based upon Matt. 5:32, namely, that the putting away therein (except for fornication) was futile! Since the marrying of another in Mark 10:11 was "against her," i.e., the one put away, it shows that the bond in heaven is yet intact, untouched, and unaffected! This was my argument. Brother Phillips has admitted that the bond remains unbroken, so regardless of what this verse teaches from the view point of grammar, we both agree on the point I made—the bond in heaven remains intact.

However, his lesson in grammar and his conclusion are in error. His rule of grammar is true, except when there is an obvious exception. In Mark 10:11 the obvious exception is found in the word "against" on which he bases his argument. Since the sin was adultery, there is no way it could be **against** the second wife; it would be with her. Brother Phillips's own words accommodate this point: "and he sins **against** the second by committing adultery WITH (Emp.—MEP) her." Thus, according to Brother Phillips, while he sinned against the second wife, he committed adultery with her. Thus, the adultery was with the second and against the first..

Who is in Matthew 5:32

Under this heading Brother Phillips continues to press me for "a person who has been put away who can remarry." This overlooks my argument that the innocent put away person of our proposition who has had fornication committed against her is in the exception clauses of Matt. 5:32; 19:9 and has the divine right to put away the guilty spouse and marry another. Remem-

ber, to deny this divine right to such a person on the grounds of her being a put away person overlooks the fact that such putting away is futile and dethrones divine authority and enthrones human authority.

In the paragraph that begins with "Look at 5:32 for a moment," Brother Phillips sets forth my position exactly, and I appreciate his admission: "she still is bound by God to her husband." Notice, however, that in the verse quoted it is "her" that is divorced and not just any divorced person.

I am in full agreement with his next paragraph also. Notice again, however, that when he says, "When that 'whosoever' marries that put away one in Matt. 5:32b, he 'committeth adultery.' Period," that our agreement involves "that put away one in Matt. 5:32b"—not any put away one.

Patton's Chart No. 1—Matthew 5:32

What Brother Phillips says about my chart is true—it proves that "no adultery is involved" and "no one is free to marry again." What he says about what I was trying to prove by the chart is wrong! I was trying to prove that the person of our proposition is not in Matt. 5:32 because adultery is involved against her. I agree with his statement: "THAT (Emp.—MEP) put away person (not any put away person—MEP) in Matthew 5:32 commits adultery when she marries again. The Lord said so!" I say, amen!

I believe this covers everything in Brother Phillips' reply that demands attention from me. If I have overlooked something, he may call my attention to it, and I will deal with it forthrightly.

Now, we must look at more affirmative material.

Matthew 19:9

"And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

Like Matt. 5:32, understanding this verse, what is in it and what is not in it, is essential to understanding the truth on the issue under study. The issue in this study hinges on the meaning given to the conjunction "and" translated from the Greek work "kai." The word itself admits of two possible meanings or views. Its meaning in any given instance must be determined in the light of its context and all else that is revealed. The two views are obvious from the definition of the Greek word "kai" which is translated "and."

"It serves as a copulative i.e. to connect... single words or terms... clauses and sentences... whole narratives and expositions... It marks something added to what has already been said, OR (Emp.—MEP) that of which something already said holds good; accordingly it takes on the nature of an adverb, also,... likewise" (Henry Thayer, Greek English Lexicon, pp 315, 316).

We need to see these two views contrasted.

POSITION NUMBER ONE: If the "and" (Gr. "kai") be understood according to part a of the definition, i.e.,

"It marks something added to what has already been said," then it means that the events of the verse follow in sequence and the b part of verse 9 happens after the events of part a. This would make verse 9b apply to ANY put away wife or person—even if she be innocent and her husband has committed adultery against her. This represents the position Brother Phillips has affirmed throughout this discussion.

POSITION NUMBER TWO: This view affirms that the meaning of "and" (Gr. "kai") is as defined in the b part of the definition, i.e., "as an adverb. . . likewise." This makes the b part of verse 9 just like the situation in the a part of the verse. Hence it follows that since the husband in 9a who put away his wife and married another **when no fornication was involved**, before his re-marriage, committed adultery, **LIKEWISE** the put away wife who marries when no fornication was involved, before her remarriage, commits adultery. This would make verse 9b apply not to ANY put away person, but only to "her" who was put away when no fornication was involved before her remarriage.

Look at the two positions contrasted in the following charts:

Chart No. 2

"AND" (Gr. "Kai") = "ADDED" (After or Sequential)

V 9a	Matt. 19:9	V 9b
HUSBAND PUTS AWAY	"AND" (Afterwards)	WIFE PUT AWAY
MARRIES		MARRIES
ADULTERY		ADULTERY (Against her)

Chart No. 3

"AND" (Gr. "Kai") = "LIKEWISE"

V 9a	Matt. 19:9	V 9b
HUSBAND PUTS AWAY	"AND" (Likewise)	WIFE PUT AWAY
MARRIES		MARRIES
ADULTERY		NO FORNICATION (Before remarriage)

Chart No. 2 shows that ANY put away wife or husband who marries again—even when adultery has been committed against her/him commits adultery.

Chart No. 3 shows that the put away person who marries again when no fornication is involved before remarriage commits adultery. This eliminates from 9b the person of our proposition against whom adultery

has been committed.

Which of the two positions is true? If position No. 1 is correct, then 1) It makes Jesus teach something different from the same statement in Matt. 5:32b—and that without evidence. 2) It subjugates divine law to human law and away goes the divine principle of Acts 5:29. If position No. 2 is correct, then 1) We have harmony between Matt. 5:32b and Matt. 19:9b. 2) We have harmony with all else and we eliminate all problems of No. 1. I affirm that the consequences of the two positions demand that we accept No. 2.

The rule of harmony would lead to the conclusion that Luke 16:18b teaches the same thing. Look at all three b parts of these verses: Matt. 5:32b, "and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Matt. 19:9b, "and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." Lk. 16:18b, "and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."

I insist that the person of my proposition is not in the b part of these verses. To so apply them is to misapply. I insist that the person of my proposition is in the exceptional clauses of Matt. 5:32 and 19:9; that this person may exercise the divine right given by Christ to put away the guilty spouse and marry another regardless of what men on earth may do and all human law to the contrary.

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PATTON—PHILLIPS DEBATE

H. E. Phillips
P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



SECOND NEGATIVE

By H. E. Phillips

I appreciate the fine attitude brother Patton has shown in his second affirmative. I now wish to pay respects to his reply to mine and then to his second affirmative.

Patton's Position Clarified

The first thing I think ought to be done is to try to clarify what I believe brother Patton is defending. If we cannot understand what he is defending, then we obviously cannot find a scriptural solution to it. If the following is not his position, he will correct me.

I understand brother Patton's position to be as follows: Two people are married and bound by God. The husband decides to divorce the wife, with no fornication involved. The wife begs the husband not to get the divorce. Her pleading is to no avail, he gets the divorce anyway. At a later time (the length of time would have no bearing on the situation) the husband remarries, thereby committing adultery. After the adultery and/or remarriage, the wife may now (because the putting away was against her will and God's will) put him away for fornication and remarry with the approval of God. This is the woman of his proposition.

Brother Patton and I agree on what Matthew 19:9a actually says. But we disagree on 19:9b because of his exceptional clause. "And whosoever shall marry her that is put away (except it **was without her approval and if her husband commits adultery or remarries**) commits adultery."

By implication brother Patton has placed an exceptional clause in the passage that is not actually in it. The "her" in brother Patton's proposition is not in this verse. Yet he makes this "her" who is put away against her will and whose husband has committed adultery or remarried an element that is necessary to prove his point. He admits that she cannot remarry before he commits adultery. I asked before, and I ask again, Where is the exceptional clause that releases a "put away woman" from the adultery of Matthew 5:32b, 19:9b; Luke 16:18b who has been put away when no fornication was involved, with or without her will?

The Put Away "Her"

Brother Patton has created another problem for himself. He has reduced the number of putting aways to ONE: the one for fornication, which is by divine authority. He says the other putting away is FUTILE! It is

NOT really a putting away because it is by human authority.

I want to look very closely at Matthew 5:32b and see what is IN it and what is NOT IN it. "... and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." What is IN this clause? Two persons: "whosoever"—anyone, everyone, and "her that is divorced"—anyone, everyone who is divorced. When they marry they commit adultery, and there is no exception. What is NOT IN this clause? No persons other than the "whosoever" and "her that is divorced." There is no way you can get any thing else in Matthew 5:32b and deal justly with the passage.

Two women are not in the verse; only the wife of the "whosoever" who puts her away. This one woman may be in a dozen different situations, but so may the man who put her away. One may imagine that the wife is in a situation of not being guilty of adultery and draw wide conclusions. But two women are NOT IN Matthew 5:32a.

What Do the Scriptures Mean By Put Away?

Brother Patton defined "put away" in his first affirmative as: "By 'put away' I mean the breaking of the personal commitment made to one's spouse when God joined them in marriage." Later he said of Matthew 5:32, "This verse shows that there are two putting aways," and he said of the second: "This putting away is done by human authority and, hence, without God's approval."

Brother Patton seems to think that the difference between putting away for fornication and for every other cause is resolved by saying that the latter "was put away by human authority." The thing that seems to elude him is the fact that all marriages and all divorces may involve human authority. He is equating "marriage" with which man is involved with "bond" which only God can make.

Marriage consists of a covenant between a man and woman: an agreement, commitment, and a relationship to fulfill the duties and obligations enjoined upon both of them by their covenant to each other. It also has a divine element. When they vow and pledge themselves to each other for life, God joins this man and woman together with a yoke that can be broken only by God. Those whom God has joined together are "one flesh" (Matthew 19:5; Genesis 2:24). At death God releases that bond of marriage (Romans 7:2,3; I Corinthians 7:39). If one of those joined by God commits fornication, the other may put that fornicator away, and God releases the innocent person from that yoke, to be married to another eligible person. The guilty fornicator is still bound to that yoke and may not remarry. All who are bound by that yoke, whether put away for fornication, or for any reason, may not remarry.

This commitment and joint responsibility may be forsaken. When the commitment is broken, the relationship is dissolved. This is defined in Matthew 5:31 as "Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement." Further explanation of this is

given in Deuteronomy 24:1, where Moses said that it meant "... then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house." One may break that mutual contract and covenant and expel the other from that relationship. When this happens the **marriage is broken**. Whoever initiates the termination of the marriage "puts away" the other. He/she dismisses the spouse from the relationship. Whether approved by God or by the one put away makes no difference, the marriage **is terminated**; it no longer exists! How can one talk about TERMINATING a relationship that has already been TERMINATED?

However, that yoke which God placed upon them is not released. Only God can do that, and He does it at death, and when the marriage is terminated for the cause of fornication; that is, when the putting away, the dismissing of the spouse, takes place because he/she committed fornication, not sometime after the marriage is terminated.

Brother Patton equates the putting away with God releasing the yoke, but a marriage can be terminated by divorce and the yoke by God still be binding

It is possible for a man and woman to make a covenant with each other to live as man and wife, and not be joined by God. The Bible calls this relationship "marriage" (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18). The Bible clearly teaches that one may be married and not "joined" by God, or he may be "joined" by God and not be married. Romans 7:2,3 teaches that a woman may be married to one man and bound to another. She is called an adulteress when she does. I Corinthians 7:10,11 teaches that a woman may be **unmarried** and still bound to her husband. If she is UNMARRIED, she is not married. A woman may be married to one man, but yoked to another (Matthew 14:3,4).

The Waiting Game

Brother Patton says, "Brother Phillips accuses me of denying the 'waiting game' even though I denied it. I still deny it AS DEFINED in my definition of terms."

Please read his definition of terms in his first affirmative. He said he made no defense of the one who desired the divorce in remarriage. "By 'without. . . his/her approval' I mean without any desire, intent, or action on his/her part in relation to the putting away. . ."

"Furthermore, this expression 'without. . . his/her approval' excludes from this proposition those who would play 'the waiting game.'" Read his definition of "the waiting game." He said, "I want it clearly understood that such persons are excluded from the proposition which I affirm. I make no effort to justify such persons in remarriage."

But after denying the waiting game, he says, "Of course, the woman of my proposition MUST WAIT UNTIL FORNICATION IS COMMITTED AGAINST HER BEFORE REMARRIAGE (emp. mine—HEP). . . however, none of these have in view remarriage. Neither does the person of my proposition. He/she is praying, hoping, and trying for reconciliation."

There is not a chance that brother Patton can escape the consequences of his position. He advocates "the waiting game" in the woman of his proposition, even with his definition of terms. He uses the phrase "without. . . his/her approval" to get to the "mutual agreement" and then rejects this as the person of his proposition. That is not what the scriptures teach by direct statement, approved example or necessary inference.

But how does one know if she resisted the putting away? Are we going to allow thousands of divorces and remarriages to rest upon the statement of the put away that he/she resisted and prayed for reconciliation?

Mark 10:11

Brother Patton says I put words in his mouth and attribute to him an argument he did not make. I ask him if he repudiates the words I put in his mouth, or does he believe what I said his position is?

I insist that I am correct about the rules of English grammar. The antecedent of a pronoun is the closest noun to it, which, in this passage, is "woman" understood. My case for "adultery against" the second wife is stronger than" your argument for the first wife. You have by no means proved this point; you have simply asserted it.

The Greek epi that is translated "against" in the King James Version is translated "with" in **Nestle's Interlinear**. Nigel Turner in the **Bible Translator** of October, 1956, page 152 says of Mark's use of epi in this context: "i.e. unto or with. . . ." Your point on "against" is not conclusive in establishing your case.

The Meaning Of "And" (KAI)

I checked 35 translations in my library on Matthew 19:9 for a translation of **kai** by an English word other than "and." In not one translation did the words "ALSO" or "LIKEWISE" appear either in the text or footnotes. That ought to tell us something about what the word kai meant to all the scholars who translated the Greek by the English "and."

Brother Patton says that understanding Matthew 19:9, what is in it and what is not in it, is essential to understanding the truth on the issue under study. "The issue in this study HINGES (emp. mine-HEP) on the meaning given to the conjunction 'and' translated from the Greek work 'kai.'" He says the word admits of two possible views from Thayer's definition, namely, as a copulative and as an adverb. He assigns to me the first meaning and he takes the second.

There is not one word in the "b" clauses of Matthew 5:32; 19:9 and Luke 16:18 to show any area for any exceptions to the plain statement that "whosoever marieth her that is put away committeth adultery."

Brother Patton has failed to prove his proposition by the scriptures. He has only presented assertions, claims, unnecessary inferences, and misapplied scriptures to establish a position that cannot be proved by the word of God. Brother Patton's whole proposition rests upon an **imagined situation** and not upon scripture.

GO BACK TO THE "SHORT" MEETINGS?

Tom Moody
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From time to time the editor of STS shares with readers timely and wise advice concerning successful gospel meetings. He is certainly qualified to offer such advice, and I am always edified and enlightened by the information provided, and often entertained by the anecdotal manner in which it is presented.

In recent months brother Adams has made the observation that gospel meetings often are more effective if they go through Sunday rather than end on Friday, and if an exceptionally good song leader is invited in to direct the singing.

In view of these suggestions, it was thought that both editor and readers might be interested in the view point of the late Marion Davis concerning meetings. Marion Davis was publisher and editor of TRUTH IN LOVE, a monthly journal. He was a well known song leader back in the days when it was in vogue to bring in a song leader as well as a preacher for meetings. Brother Davis led singing throughout the nation in meetings with such men as Foy Wallace and Roy Cogdill. It was his considered opinion that "shorter" meetings are better. Here is what brother Davis wrote (emphasis is mine, TM):

SHORT MEETINGS BETTER

It has been my pleasure to lead the singing in many gospel meetings in the past twenty years. I have seen long ones and short ones. In the long ones I have always observed that the second week you have to begin your meeting all over again and it usually takes until Thursday to get the interest back where it was the Second Sunday night. Of course, the reason for this is that the members get tired and just 'lay out' for a rest. They (some of them) are just not going to attend every service in a long drawn out affair. **The short meeting from Sunday to Sunday** is well attended. The members know that it is only to be a week and they must not miss a service. The week passes, great crowds attend, a great meeting is had and everybody is happy. No one worn to a frazzle, and the preacher and singer can go home for a short visit with their loved ones before going on to the next meeting. Any preacher that cannot tell people what to do to be saved in an eight-day meeting should be publishing song books or

plowing cotton. Yes, give me two short meetings each year instead of one long one.

Marion Davis

TRUTH IN LOVE, July, 1947

Perhaps this is good advice from brother Davis! Our meetings just might be more effective if we were to return to the "short", eight day. Sunday to Sunday meetings!

WHEN DOES A BOY BECOME A MAN?

David Pratte
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In his article of September, 1986, bro. Weldon Warnock affirmed that a woman may teach a class that includes young baptized males. I wish to present a different view. (I suggest the readers re-read his article now).

I am not certain that it is unquestionably sinful for a woman to teach young baptized males, but I and others consider the practice to be so doubtful that it causes serious problems of conscience (Rom. 14:23). Situations I have witnessed make me concerned that churches may fail to respect the consciences of sincere, faithful Christians in this matter.

I consider the evidence offered in the 9/86 article to be inconclusive, at best. I will present additional evidence. Yet I hold absolutely no ill will for bro. Warnock, and I will try to speak in a spirit of brotherly kindness.

The Lexicons

We are told that lexicons prove that "'man' in I Tim. 2:12 excludes boys," and so women may teach classes of baptized 10-12-year-old males. Several lexicons were quoted, but what was not made clear was that all the lexicons—Thayer, Vine, Arndt [Gingrich, and the **Analytical Greek Lexicon**—all are giving **alternative** definitions for "man" (ANER). **Different definitions apply in different passages**, depending on context.

While ANER sometimes refers to a mature male, as distinct from a young male, this meaning actually applies only in a **minority** of instances. **Not one of the lexicons cited actually lists I Tim. 2:12 as an instance where this meaning applies!** Often ANER simply designates a distinction in gender—male as opposed to female, without regard to maturity. In fact, Thayer and Vine both list I Tim. 2:12 as an instance of this latter meaning—in this passage, ANER simply means male as distinct from female, according to the very lexicons cited!

I grant that women may teach small boys, and that a degree of maturity is required before a male must not be taught by a woman. My point is simply that the lexi-

cons do not resolve the issue of when a male becomes mature enough that a woman ought not to teach him. We must be given better evidence than this.

Jesus as a "Child"

The 9/86 article states that Luke 2:43 calls Jesus a "child" when He was 12, so a 12-year-old can not be a "man," and women can teach them in class.

But Gen. 21:14-16 calls Ishmael a "child" when he was about 15 years old (Gen. 16:16; 21:5,8ff). Gen. 37:2ff; 42:22 says Joseph was a "child" when he was 17 years old. In Jer. 1:6, Jeremiah called himself a "child" when God called him to begin his public ministry as a prophet. (Note also Acts 4:27,30 in the KJV).

How many of us would have a clear conscience knowing we had women teaching baptized males who are 15 or 17-years-old, or who had begun their public ministry of preaching? Who would object if some of us affirmed that we should put these young men in a class taught by a man? Very few, yet the Bible calls some such people "children," just as it does Jesus. How do you prove women can teach 12-year-olds, but not 15 or 17-year-olds?

These passages illustrate the fact that maturity comes by degrees. A person can be a "child" regarding some responsibilities and some relationships, and still be a "man" regarding other responsibilities and relationships. Jesus' case simply does not answer the question of when a woman can no longer teach a young man.

10-12-Year-Olds Called "Men"

The 9/86 article claims there is "no scriptural basis" for believing that 10-12-year-old males fit the definition of "men" (ANER). But I would like to nominate a few Scriptures to fill this office!

Consider these passages about conversion: "... believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of **men** [ANER] and women" (Acts 5:14). Samaritans believed and "were baptized, both **men** [ANER] and women" (Acts 8:12). Many Bereans believed, "women... and of men [ANER] not a few" (Acts 17:12). Rom. 4:7,8 pronounces a blessing on "the **man**" [ANER] whose sins are forgiven.

Who is prepared to argue that the above passages exclude baptized 10-12-year-old males? Actually, the Bible consistently refers to males old enough to be baptized as "men." Where does the Bible talk about baptizing "boys"? If we agree that 10-12-year-old males may be baptized, are we not therefore admitting that they are "men" who fit the definition of ANER? If not, then by what scriptural authority do we baptize them?

I Cor. 11:14 says, "... if a **man** [ANER] have long hair, it is a shame unto him." Are we wrong to apply this to 10-12-year-old males because "they are boys and not men"?

I Tim. 2:8 says, "I will therefore that **men** [ANER] pray every where. . ." Most congregations allow baptized 10-12-year-old males to lead prayer, lead singing, or speak. I personally did all these at those ages, including preaching publicly when I was 12. Was this wrong? If not, then are we not admitting that these males

should be classed as "men" with regard to church activities, and they should be given places of leadership which women are not allowed to have? Why is it then, that just four verses later, in I Tim. 2:12, we want to call them "boys," deny they are "men," and make them subject to women in the Bible classes?

Interestingly, when we encourage these males to participate in worship, we call them "our young **men**," but when we want women to teach them, we deny they are "men" and insist they are "boys"! Why the switch? If women did teach them, when prayer is led in the class, who would lead the prayer: the woman or the baptized males?

We could consider other verses, but surely we can see that 10-12-year-old baptized males can be considered "men." I grant that, in some senses they are not yet mature "men." Maturity comes gradually. One may be a "man" in some senses and not in others. This is why the issue is so difficult. But it seems to be a safe and reasonable conclusion that, if one is mature enough to **accept the responsibility of spiritual manhood** (be baptized, lead in worship, etc.), then the church should treat him as a man in our spiritual relationship to him. If so, then it would be safe to conclude that women should not teach over such males in our classes.

Conclusion

This is a difficult issue. I do not claim I can answer all the questions. But why not choose a course that is unquestionably safe and that violates no one's conscience? Those who say women may teach young baptized males, surely cannot prove women must teach them. We all agree there is no error if men teach them. Most congregations have men teaching 12 or 13 year olds and up, anyway. So we are only talking about a difference of 2 or 3 years. Why not let the 10-12 year old baptized males be taught by men? Then there is no doubt we are right and no ones conscience is offended.

The only real objection raised to this in the 9/86 article is that it may be a disservice to the young men to put them in a class of older students. This is all based on human reasoning, not scriptural argument. Bible classes currently often group together students of 2 or 3 year's age difference. If a young man is baptized earlier than his peers, chances are he is able to handle more advanced material anyway. I was often placed with older students, for various reasons. It never hurt me, and often helped me. If parents feel strongly that this should not be done with their son, there is still another solution: Put a man teacher in the younger class!

We are discussing a case that affects only a few people for only a few years at most. The matter can be easily resolved if brethren are willing to be peaceable. Some have a problem of conscience here, others see it simply as a "matter of judgment." Let us follow things that make for peace (Rom. 14:19). Let those who have problems of conscience not condemn others to hell, and let those who view it as a matter of judgment not insist on arrangements that violate others' consciences.

I do not seek a lengthy exchange about this. I simply want readers to know there is reason to consider a

different view. If bro. Warnock chooses to reply, I will probably not respond. Let the readers not conclude that I cannot respond, but let them simply re-read what I have written.

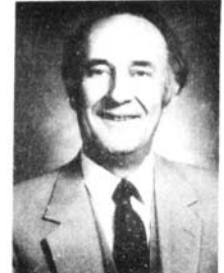
WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

(Rom. 4:3)

Send all questions to:

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BOYS, MEN AND WOMEN TEACHERS

Brother David Pratte argues in another article in this issue of STS that a baptized 10-year-old boy falls within the definition of man (aner) in I Tim. 2:12. He states, "Why is it then... in I Tim. 2:12 we want to call them 'boys,' deny they are 'men,' and make them subject to women in the Bible classes?" However, in his introductory remarks he says, "I am not certain that it is unquestionably *sinful* for a woman to teach young baptized males, but I and others consider the practice to be so doubtful that it causes serious problems of conscience (Rom. 14:23)."

Now, my brother, if a 10-year old baptized boy is included in "man" in I Tim. 2:12, there is no uncertainty about the matter; it is **UNQUESTIONABLY SINFUL** for a woman to teach such a boy in a Bible class. Brother Pratte's approach to this issue is rather strange. He goes to great length to try to make a boy a man, while at the same time believing that a woman teaching this boy is not sinful. Why the bother, if it does not make any difference?

Arbitrarily, brother Pratte makes the boy that he says comes within the category of "man," a baptized one. Why are not unbaptized boys also in I Tim. 2:12 if baptized boys are included? By what rule and whose rule does he differentiate between the two? This is a peculiar exegesis of Scripture. Actually, brother Pratte must oppose, to be consistent, a woman teaching ALL boys, even 4 and 5 year olds, because they are men, in one sense, too. Thayer gives one definition of *aner* as, "any male person, a man" (p. 45). In this generic sense, a 4 year old boy, being a male person, is a man. Paul said a woman was not to teach over a man (any male person, according to brother Pratte's logic). Therefore, a woman may not teach boys of any age (or men), period!

The passages brother Pratte introduced in the book of Acts about "men" (aner) obeying the gospel prove more than he is ready to accept. All of them were men before they obeyed. They were first men, and then they believed, were baptized and added to the Lord. So, if the passages teach 10 to 12 year old males were men when they were baptized, they also teach the 10 to 12 year old

males were men who were not baptized. Therefore, brother Pratte's position condemns ALL WOMEN who teach boys 10-12 years old, whether baptized or unbaptized, and all churches that allow it, because Paul said, "I permit not a woman to teach over a man" (Any male, per Pratte's logic). It is obvious that boys are not included in I Tim. 2:12.

He wants to know about long hair in I Cor. 11:14 and if it would apply to a 10-12 year old boy because it says, "man" (aner)? Well, let me ask him a question: Is "man" in v. 14 just the Christian, or any man? Too, is it applicable to a 6 year old boy? Watch it brother Pratte or you are going to force yourself into the "no-women-teachers" camp. After all, Paul wrote in I Cor. 11:3 that "the head (aner) of the woman is man," and since "man" in v. 14 could be a 10 year old, then a woman could not teach even a primary class because she would be usurping authority over little Johnny, Billy, Ricky, and all the other rambunctious "men" in the class.

Concerning I Tim. 2:8 that "men (aner) pray every where," brother Pratte suggests this verse includes baptized boys (10-12 years of age) because they lead prayer, too. His point is that if baptized boys are men in v. 8, then baptized boys are included in "man" in v. 12. But we need to remember, *aner* can also mean, "any male person" (Thayer). Youthful male Christians may lead prayer, lead singing and make talks in public worship, but that does not make any one of them a man, that is, "A male person of full age and stature, as opposed to a child or female" (*The Greek Analytical Lexicon*, p. 29).

In I Tim. 2:12 "man" is used in antithesis of woman, the woman who is teaching. This is the woman who adorns herself in modest apparel with shamefacedness and sobriety and manifests a life worthy of one who professes holiness (vv. 9-10). This is the woman who shall be saved in childbearing if faithful to the Lord. Hence, this is the woman of full age and stature as opposed to a child. The man, spoken of in contrast with this kind of woman, would also be a mature, adult male as opposed to a child.

It would have been interesting if brother Pratte had told us when a child becomes a man. He cited Old Testament Scriptures to prove that some were still children while 15 and 17 years old. When did they become men? If a woman is teaching a class of children that are 10-12 years of age, are the boys in the class men or children? If they are children, do they become men when they are 14, 15, 17 or 21? But according to the consequences of brother Pratte's position, the age makes no difference, anyway, because all males are men, so a woman may not teach pre-schoolers where boys are. Brethren, good judgment and common sense must prevail as to what class a woman may teach and not teach.

As to the matter of conscience, it is not a problem for most of us. I have seen few brethren who opposed women teaching boys who had been baptized. But since when is conscience to regulate church functions? Romans 14:23 applies to individual activities. Read the chapter in context. By brother Pratte's reasoning we could not have anything that some brother objected to

on the basis of his conscience. We could not have literature, communion cups, women teachers, Bible classes, baptistries, invitation songs, pitch pipes, etc., if a brother's conscience was violated. What a mess we would be in! One brother could kill every good work or lawful practice and the church would be held as "spiritual hostages" to the warped thinking of one misguided brother.

No, I cannot prove that women MUST teach a class wherein is a baptized boy, but neither can brother Pratte prove that a MAN MUST teach it, either. So, it is a matter of judgment, and why should human opinion be imposed upon the church of God? We have enough homemade rules, already, that are hindering the progress of God's people. We certainly do not need any more.

My 9/86 brief article in STS was not intended to explore in depth the usage of the word "child" or "man" in the Bible, but to simply show that a boy 10-12 years of age does not become a man by being baptized. I realize that a child is sometimes called a man, i.e., he is a male. Sometimes "child" means "youth" (Jer. 1:6). Isaiah speaks of a man 100 years old as a child (65:20). John wrote in Revelation of the woman bringing forth the "man child" (12:5). The word for "man" in Rev. 12:5 is *arsen*, not *aner*, and means "male." However, it denotes exactly one of the definitions of *aner*, "any male person, a man." Hence, a newborn baby boy is also a man.

Women can also be classified under man (*aner*) in a few places in the New Testament, according to Thayer (p. 45). Compare Lk. 11:31; Rom. 4:8; Jas. 1:8, 12, 20, 23.

It becomes clear that "man" in I Tim. 2:12 does not encompass every meaning of the word, or else women may not teach women, or teach where newborn male infants are present. It is misconstruing the passage to make it applicable to boys that are just 10-12 years old, even though they have been baptized.

I appreciate the good spirit in which brother Pratte has written, and I trust this exchange will be profitable to all who read it.

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**A TRIBUTE TO
BILLY J. JAMES
A HUSBAND, FATHER
CHRISTIAN, PREACHER, ELDER**

**Bruce James
2309 Kipling
Baytown, Texas 77520**

On Sunday morning, December 28, 1986, at age 55, Billy J. James slipped peacefully into that rest remaining for God's people (Heb. 4:9). He had been seriously ill for several days and had fought a hard battle with cancer until finally being overcome. He had fought another battle with cancer fifteen years before, and, with God's help, won. Many times I think of how God answered good King Hezekiah's prayer and how He answered for Bill.

Each time I face the grim fact of death, I realize more than ever that "this world is not my home, I'm just passing through". But I want to do more than think of death at this time. I want to pay tribute to my uncle, brother and true friend, Billy J. James, with the hope that his example will help us all to see more clearly and true meaning of life.

Bill was a good husband and father. He loved and cared about his family deeply. He gave them everything he knew to give, especially the knowledge and example to do what's right. Many homes lack that kind of consideration today. Bill saw the need and he filled it.

Bill taught me how to love the truth by standing up for it. He began preaching in 1955 on the south side of Chicago where a handful of courageous people of God began the task of establishing a faithful church in that area in an old store front. It wasn't anything for our worship to be disrupted by hollering in the doors, banging on the windows, and even rotten tomatoes or eggs thrown in the windows. This did not stop the church from growing. In fact, it helped all of us in our stand. It wasn't too long after that, that Bill got the opportunity to preach at 410 S. Michigan in Chicago. As he continued to study he was given the opportunity to move to Burbank, Illinois where he labored from 1960 to 1963. From there he and Flossie, his first wife, moved to Beaver Dam, Kentucky. In 1966, they moved to Louisville, where he worked with the West End and Eastside church. While at Eastside, he was asked to work with the good church in Paragould, Arkansas at 2nd and Walnut. He worked with the church there for eight years at which time, 1976, he was given the opportunity to move to Grenada, Mississippi. In 1980, he was asked to serve as one of the elders of that local church, an evidence of the high esteem the brethren had for him there. There he stayed until his death. For 31 years preached the gospel, fought error, stood for and with

Jesus Christ. You would never find Bill on the sidelines. He was always studying, asking questions, discussing the truth with "whosoever will". He had a keen mind and used it properly. He had no use for fence-straddlers because they have never helped the cause of Christ. While in the hospital at Memphis, He told me of his love for my dad and mom and that he didn't ever want me to quit preaching the word. He had set the example on being one that "finished the course".

Bill taught me how to face hardships without becoming bitter or soured on the world. His first bout with cancer was while in Paragould, Ark. The doctors didn't give him much hope to live but he faced the odds and, with the help of God and family, he overcame them. During this time, his first wife, Flossie (who was the reason he became a Christian) developed complications with her heart from an early childhood disease, and after a series of strokes over a period of 18 months, passed from this life at the age of 40. On that Wednesday evening, after making preparations for her funeral, left for the church building to teach the Wednesday Bible class. Bill, with the help of his daughters, Sharon and Denise, and his son, Billy, continued on. While in a Gospel meeting in Illinois, he met Kathy Boyle, the daughter of Carmel and Marcine, one of the elders of the church. Kathy and Bill married in 1975 and had two children: Stacy (10) and Adam(6). They loved one another deeply and their goals were the same. In the summer of 1986, tumors on the brain and lung were discovered. While going through the difficult treatments of chemotherapy he received a letter from his insurance company canceling his policy. Being one who was more than concerned with paying his debts, this seemed to have a devastating effect on his ever recovering, and finally he passed away. But even in death there were no ugly scars on his soul. He knew how to take the bitter with the sweet, how to adjust in difficult circumstances. He was a man of character. In fact, the greatest tribute that I could ever pay to Bill, is in simply saying he was a good man at home, in the church and in the community. He was a leader, not a follower, except of Jesus Christ. Funeral services were held in Paragould, Ark. and his body was laid to rest in Kennett, Missouri. There was also a memorial service held in Grenada MS. NOTE: Bill's wife, Kathy, is left with a \$12,000 medical bill, not to speak of the needs of the family for the future. The church in Grenada has shown a supreme example of love and benevolence to them continuing their support. Other brethren have sent help in their relief. If you can help in any way, she can be contacted thru the elders at the following address: Church of Christ, 175 Van Dorn St., Grenada, MS 38901.

READ YOUR BIBLE TODAY

"BE OF GOOD CHEER"

Guthrie Dean
2900 Kendall Ave.
Ft. Smith, Ark.

INTRODUCTION: The gospel (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-8) is good news. If we would but show more joy, love, kindness, and consideration toward others; perhaps we would convert more sinners to Christ through our teaching. There are four points I would like to call to our attention in this article.

I. "BE OF GOOD CHEER, THY SINS BE FORGIVEN" (Mat. 9:2). This makes all the difference between you and the child of the devil. You are a saved saint; he is a lost sinner. You have occasion of rejoicing. All the blessings of abundant life, and joys of the world to come are reserved for those who have been forgiven. Salvation brought cheer to the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8, as he rose up from baptism and went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:38-39). Salvation made the jailor and his household rejoice greatly (Acts 16:33-34). If we stay close to the Lord, the joy of salvation will grow. If we drift away from our first-love; we need to pray along with David, "restore unto me the joy of thy salvation" (Psalm 51:12).

II. "BE OF GOOD CHEER. IT IS I. BE NOT AFRAID" (Mark 6:50). There's the reason the child of

God has inward joy; He has the abiding presence of Christ, through the indwelling of Christ's Spirit. ("And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" Gal. 4:6). If we are true to our commitment to Him, He will be true to His commitment to us. "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5). And again, "lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Mat. 28:20).

III. "BE OF GOOD CHEER: I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD" (John 16:33). We become heart-sick, very discouraged and blue, when we look at all the sin in the world about us. But we can have no part with the world. We can pray for it, we can preach the gospel to it, but we cannot become a part of it. By the help of Christ we, too, have overcome the world. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). And, why so? "Because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Be of good cheer. Help comes from Him.

IV. "BE OF GOOD CHEER FOR I BELIEVE GOD, THAT IT SHALL BE EVEN AS IT WAS TOLD ME" (Acts 27:25). This was Paul's admonition to those lost at sea in a tumultuous storm. God had promised them deliverance; and Paul believed, and asked all with him to be of good cheer. What a faith! What a great example for us today. When we are in the midst of tempest and confusion; let us lift up our hearts in prayer to God. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). BE OF GOOD CHEER. This can often preach a better sermon to others than words.

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

WHIT SASSER, 4610 Stein Ave., Apt. B, Madison, WI 53704—On January 4, 1987 three families banded together as a church belonging to Christ here in Madison, Wisconsin. We intend to be a congregation of the Lord's people in everything, submitting to his leadership and following the divine pattern. We number nine, including children, but hope for a bountiful harvest of souls from our efforts as God gives increase. We welcome visitors to meet with us. We meet in my home presently at the above address on Sundays at 9:30 A.M. for Bible study and 10:30 A.M. for worship. In the afternoons we have devotionals at various homes. We meet on Wednesday nights at my home for Bible study.

COLLEGE PARK MEETING

COLLEGE PARK CHURCH OF CHRIST, 701 Centennial Blvd., Richardson, TX 75081—April 5-10, 1987 will find us engaged in a gospel meeting with R. J. Stevens, Ed Harrell and Dee Bowman. The theme will be "He Lifted Me." Brother Stevens will open the series with "He Lifted Me By Grace Through Faith" and then will lead congregational singing each night from 7:00 to 7:30. Ed Harrell will speak on the following themes: "He Lifted Me To Forgiveness"; "To Freedom and Life"; "From Materialism and Worldliness"; "To Humility and Service"; "From Aimlessness and Confusion"; "To Assurance

and Hope". Dee Bowman will address the following themes: "He Lifted Me In Love"; "From Bondage and Death"; "To Spirituality and Godliness"; "From Pride and Selfishness"; "To Purpose and Commitment"; "From Doubt and Despair."

MIKE O'NEAL, 9705 Rail Rd., Midwest City, OK 73130—An effort is being made to establish a faithful work in Stillwater, OK. To the best of my knowledge there is no faithful congregation within sixty miles of this city of 35,000. Besides the residents, there is an enrollment of over 20,000 students who attend Oklahoma State University which is located in Stillwater. There are some sound brethren in the area who are prepared to support such a work. We are trying to make contact with people in or around the Stillwater area who might be interested. We need your help in locating these people, whether students at OSU or residents. Send any information to me at the above address or to: Virgil McIntire, 2318 N. Park, Stillwater, OK 74075.

TIM J. GRISSOM, 2044 Claxton Dr., Winston-Salem, NC 27107—The church here is at peace and consists of 25 Christians. There are 15 children and others who frequently attend for an average of about 40. We have 10 men who actively participate in the work. Most of them will deliver a lesson, lead singing and teach classes. We have some

talented women who teach younger children and carry out other aspects of their role in the church. We have made a number of contacts through a Dial-A-Bible Message. We have a personal visitation program. Much time and effort has gone into improving our Bible classes. We now have a systematic study of the Bible on all age levels. We would appreciate information from readers of this paper about relatives or friends in this area whom we might contact. Contact me at the above address or call (919) 784-7507; or you may call Charles Alexander (998-4002) or Wally Hayes (760-2510). We are located on South Main at Wright St. in Winston-Salem. See our ad in this paper for schedule of services.

WAYNE S. WALKER, 5170 Chippewa Rd., Medina, OH 44256—From March 22-27 I will be in a gospel meeting with the Central church, 1018 E. 72 Bypass, Greenwood, SC. We encourage Christians in western SC to support these fine brethren.

SOLID OAK BENCHES

CHURCH OF CHRIST, 2455 N. Courtenay Parkway, Merritt Island, FL 32952—We have 15 benches at 13 feet and one at 10 feet. These are in very good condition. We will sell them at \$12 per foot. Perhaps some Florida or Georgia congregation could utilize them. Call (305) 452-8822.

MYRTLE WILLIAMS, P.O. Box 656, Summerland Key, FL 33042—For 10 years my home at 1609 Patricia St. in Key West, FL was used as a meeting place for the Lower Keys church. Because of transfers out of town and death of the membership, I find myself the only member left. I now live in Big Pine Key, 40 miles from Key West and because of failing health, can no longer make the trip to Key West. Please contact me if you know of any members who want to follow the New Testament pattern and who live in the lower Florida Keys. It is a terrible thing not to have other Christians with which to meet on the first day of the week to break bread, sing praises to the Lord, pray together, study his word and contribute of our means. Please pray that souls living in this area will be called by the gospel. In Big Pine Key, FL my phone number is (305) 872-9721.

FROM FOREIGN FIELDS

WEST GERMANY-STEVE WALLACE, Box 7257, APO NY, 09012—The work in West Germany goes well. I am in my fourth year with efforts centered mainly in Ramstein (Kaiserslautern area), although I have also worked with congregations in Stuttgart, Karlsruhe and, presently on a once-a-month basis in Frankfurt. These churches are made up mostly of American military personnel and their families. In Ramstein our efforts include correspondence courses which are mailed to all known military base housing areas within a forty-mile radius and advertised in the base paper, and Bible studies with contacts thus made and through our normal social contacts. We advertise services in the base paper. Contact with brethren from institutional backgrounds is continual. This has resulted in many studies and a good number have studied their way out of error as a result. Some who leave here after their service is completed may consider full time preaching. With that in mind we have had classes on "How To Study the Bible," "Topical Studies," and "Sermon Preparation." Results have been good. The Ramstein congregation averages 25-35 in attendance while Frankfort has 10-15. Yet, it is worth noting that 90% of my support comes from these two small churches. This speaks well for them.

After being here for over three years I have observed some things I'd like to pass on. (1) The military environment is very detrimental to the spiritual life of a Christian. By the time a young Christian has gone through basic training and has been shipped here, he usually becomes unfaithful. The spiritual fatality rate is unbelievable. Having visited young men in their barracks, I have seen firsthand the spiritual wasteland they must live in. Most of the young, single, male Christians I have known since coming here have fallen away. Parents and young people should consider this when talking about careers. (2) There are big, established institutional churches here. Some lack leadership and a family might move in and "hold back the tide of liberalism" by taking a strong stand, but many of these churches have elderships who reside here permanently. Some come and just attend. They say they don't agree with what is going on and some will send their contributions back home. If you can attend where you can't "lay by in

store", could you not just as consistently attend where you could not sing because they use the instrument? Further, this leaves the impression with the institutional brethren that matters which have divided brethren are really just matters of opinion. Then what do you do if there is no sound church? Start one! You can do it. There will be plenty for you to do. Try to find sound brethren in your area and start meeting with them. If I can be of any help, please get in touch with me.

ARGENTINA, SOUTH-AMERICA-FERNANDO VENEGAS, Casilla No. 122 C.C., 5500 Mendoza, Argentina—Since last report three more have been baptized. To God be the glory. We have other contacts who are near to the kingdom. Raul C. Caro from Valdivia, Chile preached in our last gospel meeting for this year (1986). He did good work and we were edified.

SOUTH AFRICA-RAY VOTAW, Box 801, Springs 1560, Rep. of South Africa—They were already at retirement age—Wasson and Henrietta Nicks—when they arrived in South Africa a few years ago. But they hit the tarmac running for the cause of Christ and never slowed the pace in their years here. Wasson (or, Earl as he was known by many) was an electrical engineer with the Fluor Conglomerate, based in Los Angeles, which was under contract with South Africa to build two "oil from coal" plants here. He had hardly landed when he journeyed to preach to the coloured church near here. Almost immediately he consented to teach a regular Bible class in the church here in Springs. Within a few short weeks, he began studies with native blacks in his home—and this with much disapproval in the white community of Secunda where they lived. They struggled, as Americans have, to become all things to all men in order to gain souls (1 Cor. 9:22). They faithfully traveled over 150 kms. each Sunday to be with the church here in Springs. Henrietta, being the lover of hospitality which she was, entertained numerous Christians and others in their home. Their travels in South Africa were extensive and they came to know many Christians from scores of faithful churches among all race groups in this region. Truly, their "faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything" (1 Thes. 1:8). Their liberality enabled the white church in Springs to support a young preacher in the Cape. I believe Wasson continued with assistance to this preacher as long as he lived. I do not know what many other Christians do when they are expatriated from the U.S.A. who go for secular work into

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foreign countries but I happily testify to their diligent labor of love for the Lord's kingdom while here.

But alas, my dear friend and faithful brother-Earl Wasson Hicks-left this earthly tabernacle at his home in Orange, California on October 21, 1986. Thena and I kept in close contact with both him and Henrietta by telephone and letter during his many weeks of terminal illness. We unashamedly wept many times. I wrote to Wasson as his time drew very near and told him I hoped to see him soon. I'm confident he knew what I meant. Heaven is dearer to us now and I pray God that I make that trip when "I put out to sea." To quote from somebody: "I knew him well; I knew him long; I loved him much. Now through the eye of faith I see him comforted in the bosom of Abraham." Please pray for his devoted and courageous wife, Henrietta, and his only son, Richard and his family of faithful Christians. Henrietta's address is: 1347 Greenview Dr., Orange, CA 92666. Oh, how I miss this big, lumbering and jovial saint-just knowing that he's gone. But, no groveling to you, death, and be not proud, for this one "being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11:4).

PREACHERS NEEDED

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI—The Kirkwood church in St. Louis is interested in securing the services of a young man who is interested in a work-training program. We can furnish a house, utilities, and a minimal amount of wages. The man should not be merely interested in a job. He must be interested in preaching and in an arranged and disciplined training, preaching, teaching, writing, and study program. If interested, contact L.A. Stauffer, 1716 Dover Trace Dr., Fenton, MO 63026.

MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA—A preacher is needed to work with a small congregation in southwestern Virginia. We have a population of

about 70,000 within a 15 mile radius. Attendance averages about 40 each service. We seek a man who would like a challenge to further the cause of Christ. We will work hard in helping the right person. If you plan to relocate or know of someone who is, please contact us at the following address: Church of Christ, Route 7, Box 241, Martinsville, VA 24112

PRESCOTT, ARIZONA—An 85 member congregation in Prescott, AZ seeks a full-time preacher. The church is self supporting, without elders and needs a mature man for full-time work immediately. Contact Sal Mollindo, 3 Broadmoor, Prescott, AZ 86301. Phone (602) 445-8358.

PREACHERS AVAILABLE

GLEN HACKNEY, Rt. 1, Box 61 A, Depauw, IN 47115—I would like to relocate in a 50—60 mile radius of Louisville, Kentucky. I can help support myself and have eleven years experience.

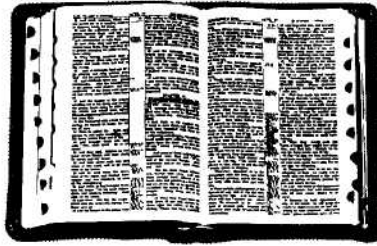
DAVID L. ODOM, 2201 Wallace Branch Road, Plant City, FL 33566—My family and I are interested in preaching full time again. I have preached for 12 years except for the last two years. I am 43 and we have 6 children. I put much effort in having home Bible studies and reaching the public with the gospel. If interested, please call me at (813) 752-7018.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	262
RESTORATIONS	51
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XXVIII

APRIL, 1987

Number 4

WAKE THE WORLD
AND TELL THE
PEOPLE

Wilson Adams
891 Autumn Valley Lane
Gambrills, MD 21054



KITCHEN TABLE CONVERSIONS

No, I'm not promoting the denominational propaganda of "salvation by faith only." We all understand that such is false doctrine and opposed by Scripture. Neither am I suggesting that we mimic the Mormons and other cultic groups and launch out on the evangelistic trail of knocking on every door in the city (personally I've never observed much success coming from random door knocking with attempts made to convert person X whom we have never seen before and who has never seen us, isn't it a little strange that we are eager to talk to people we don't know and hesitant to reach out to those we do know? Maybe I'm wrong and I'm sure there are exceptions but that's been my experience.) There must be another way. I believe there is.

I hate to say this but many churches of Jesus Christ are dying. I said "many," not all. Some are thriving and growing and making an impact in their communities with the Gospel. These brethren are on the west coast, the east coast, in the south as well as the mid-west. Geographic locations don't seem to be a help or a hindrance to brethren who have captured the zeal of New Testament Christianity. Don't tell me that people today aren't interested in what the Gospel offers. I know better. Could it be that we have said—"Times have changed. . . " "Things are different. . . " "It's not that way anymore..." so long that we have actually believed it, and thus excused our inactivity and spiritual stagnation?

Here's what I think. I think people are tired of denominational pablum that makes a mockery of God's simple arrangement. People are tired of ecclesiastical hierarchies and church synods and councils which insult human intelligence by claiming that man can't really comprehend Scripture. And people are tired of churches that offer nothing but a social atmosphere and exist solely for the benefit of those seeking entertainment and recreation, food and frolic. People are looking for a religion based on Bible, rooted in an appreciation for divine authority and filled with people who are enthused about living life (in the real world) on the mountain peak of human potential. Who else can offer them that? Pentecostalism can't, for it's pure emotionalism. Denominationalism can't, for it preaches moral ethics while ignoring basic Bible doctrines. Catholicism can't. Crossroadsism can't. Cultic groups can't. **BUT MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST CAN!** I really believe that. Do you?

We have got to find a way to get the Lord's message out of the four walls of the church building and into the hearts and homes of people who are hurting. For too long we have sat in our buildings and waited for the community to flock on in and they haven't "flocked." ("Woe are we. . . people aren't interested in the Gospel anymore. . . ") And do you know what we preachers do about it? We lambaste the brethren for their failure to do more "personal work." We criticize and complain and condemn other Christians because they aren't bringing people to services, they aren't teaching home studies and they aren't. . . (I think you get the point.) I'll lay it on the line—we preachers are part of the problem. Too many of us like to lay everything off onto the brethren but (and correct me if I'm wrong) aren't we the brethren, too? Take a good look at Matthew 23:1-4. Let's not be guilty of doing that.

On the other hand, preachers can't do it all nor should they be expected to. In fact, churches that depend only on the preacher to save the unsaved will be in for a disappointment. I've actually heard people say—"You preachers have more opportunities than anyone else. . . " I DENY THAT! Do you know how many non-Christians I deal with on a daily basis? Few! Outside of a few business contacts and neighbors the majority of

folks I deal with consistently are Christians (and believe me, I count that as a privilege and a great fringe benefit to my work). But that limits me. And that limits every preacher and that's why congregations that depend on the preacher to do all the reaching out will experience minimal growth. (I really didn't mean to get into all of that but one thought led to another and...) Back to the point Even though we preachers can't do it all, the real question is: ARE WE DOING ALL WE CAN? I'll confess that I don't measure up and I can do better. How do you see it?

Have we gotten to the place where we have forgotten how to take our Bible and sit down in a humble home and talk to folks about the Lord? I don't necessarily mean going door to door to strangers we have never seen or heard about before, I mean people we know, people who have visited our services, people who know somebody who know somebody who contacted us. ARE WE DOING ALL WE CAN IN THE ONE ON ONE SITUATION OR ARE WE ONLY ENAMORED WITH THE CROWDS OF SAMARIA? (Next time you have a moment why not go back and ponder Acts 8.)

I guess the biggest discouragement in all of this is that there is so much to do and so little time. Balancing a busy schedule, preparing lessons, writing articles, taking time off for the family-all have to be considered and all deserve quality and quantity time. We must study to meet God's approval (2 Tim. 2:15) and that takes time (it does no good to invite people to a feast when we haven't taken the time to prepare the meal!), but we must also guard against the condition of self-inflation to the point where we feel that we are too important to walk with Phillip down the Gaza road.

I'm thankful to God for men like Dick Blackford, Rodney Miller, Wayne Chappell and a host of others who have influenced my life and shown me that people can be taught and led to the Lord, that congregations can grow and that the preacher's greatest thrill is not preaching to a packed house on Lord's Day morning but, rather, experiencing the joy of a late night kitchen table, an open Bible and a favorable response to the age-old question: "What doth hinder you from being baptized?"

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Editorial

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EVENTS AT THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

The promise of the second coming of our Lord has produced many beneficial results. It offers hope to the faithful and instills fear in the ungodly. While the righteous can confidently say "Even so, Come Lord Jesus", for the wicked such a prospect is fraught with terror, for "our God is a consuming fire." It is the expectation of His coming that stimulates evangelism. We do not know when He shall come and therefore it is urgent that we be ready at all times. We must reach all we can with the gospel message "while it is day." This hope challenges us to devotion. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself" (1 John 3:3). In light of His coming Peter said "What manner of persons ought ye to be..." (2 Pet. 3:11).

While the doctrine of the second coming of Christ is such a vital part of scripture, it is a shame that false teachers have so confused the minds of people as to exactly what is to take place at His coming. Let's see if we can set the record straight.

The second coming of Christ will be **the end of the world**. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:10). In the context of that passage we learn that this deals with the "promise of his coming" (verse 4). Right now, the world is "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment" (verse 7). The "day of the Lord of verse 10 is the day that fulfills the "promise of his coming." It is the day when all that pertains to this earth will be destroyed. That plays havoc with the schedule arranged by dispensationalists who have an elaborate menu arranged for what will happen on earth **after** the second coming of Christ. They speak of his coming in different stages, of rapture, tribulation and a literal reign upon a literal throne in literal Jerusalem for a literal one thousand years. But the Bible teaches that at the second coming this earth and the works therein shall be "burned up." Jesus left in clouds, and according to angelic promise, will return in clouds (Acts 1:9-11). Paul said we will meet him "in the air" (1 Thes. 4:17).

Well, what about the "new heavens and new earth"? Whatever that will be, this present earth will not be associated with it, for this present heaven and earth

"shall be burned up." The expression "new heaven and a new earth" is used to describe a new dwelling place which God is preparing for his own. The coming of the Lord is the end (1 Cor. 1:7-8).

All the dead shall be raised at his coming. Speculators tell us there will be a thousand years between the raising of the righteous and the wicked. But Jesus said "The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jno. 5:28-29). The same "hour" the righteous come forth is the same "hour" the wicked come forth. There is no thousand year period here between the raising of the righteous and the wicked. 1 Thes. 4:13-18 does not teach it, either, for that passage only deals with the issue of the righteous dead as opposed to the living in Christ at the time of his coming. The subject of the wicked dead was not even mentioned in 1 Thes. 4.

At his coming the **kingdom will be delivered up to God**. "But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:23-24). Instead of taking up rule and authority at his second coming, Paul said he will "deliver it up to the Father." Something is dreadfully wrong with the time-table of the speculators.

His second coming will be the **end of preparation** to meet God. The parable of the wise and foolish virgins of Mt. 25:1-13 teaches that when the master returned, "the door was shut." Then the time of preparation will be ended. False teachers hold out false hope to unconverted Jews by teaching that the door will left cracked open enough for them to have another chance to get in. But the time to prepare for his return is while the master is in "the far country", not after he returns from it. That is when the door will be shut. There is no room left for a thousand years between the return and the accounting of the servants. Such teaching as we hear so frequently these days runs counter to what the Bible teaches about God's impartiality. He treats Jew and Gentile alike and offers the same gospel to both. It is wrong to teach Jewish people to glory "in the flesh."

His coming will institute the **judgment of all men**. Mt. 25:31-46 shows that when he comes he will sit on the throne of his glory and will separate the wicked from the righteous. Notice the order in the passage: he comes in glory, then he shall sit upon his throne, before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them. This passage leaves no room for a thousand years between his coming and the judgment of all men.

The first coming of Christ accomplished all God meant for it to do. His mission of salvation is complete (Eph. 1:7-10). His revelation is complete (Jude 3). His authority is now complete, he has it "all" (Mt. 28:18). His kingdom is complete. The Colossians were in it (Col. 1:13). John was in it (Rev. 1:9) It cannot be moved (Heb. 12:28). His throne is complete (Rev. 3:21). Not long

before his arrest, trials and crucifixion, Jesus prayed to his father and said "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do" (John. 17:4). Then in verse 11, he said "I am no more in the world!" Every millennialist would have to argue with the Lord on that, for they are just certain that he was mistaken about it and that he will be yet in the world for a literal 1,000 years. Their problem is that they do not understand the book of Revelation, much less the 20th chapter of that great book. They do not know the difference between literal and figurative language in the Bible. They have a false concept of the prophetic books of the Old Testament which provide the backdrop for the symbolism of the book of Revelation. Not understanding that, they seize upon the thousand years out of a passage which assures victory for the cause of Christ in the interest of martyred saints, and then based upon a view of that passage, weave an elaborate web of speculation which bends and twists the whole Bible out of shape to make it fit this notion.

The Lord is coming for the purposes stated in this article, plus a few other things the Bible teaches which space forbids our treating here. It will be to our eternal advantage to watch and pray and maintain constant readiness for the trumpet to sound and for all things temporal to end.

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THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER (Part 1)

Part of the process of learning how to pray is to understand the efficacy of prayer. Knowing that power and effectiveness teaches us to pray.

As a whole God's people today are not a praying people as they ought to be. It seems that we are not as prayerful as the saints of old. C. R. Nichol once said, "Prayer is less engaged in today, so far as we can Team, than in former ages." One reason for that may be that we have failed to realize the efficacy of prayer. Forbes Robinson observed, "a man's power in the spiritual world is measured by his prayer."

We shall consider in this article that God answers prayer and some of man's erroneous views of that. In the one to follow we shall study the providence of God.

God Answers Prayer

The Bible plainly states that fact. If we believe the Bible, we believe God answers prayer. Look carefully at a few passages. James said, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16). In the next two verses he illustrates the effectiveness in relating the case of Elijah praying for it not to rain and it didn't. Then, he prayed for rain and it did (vs. 17-18). Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you... If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him" (Matt. 7:7-11). Peter said, "the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers" (1 Pet. 3:12).

Prayer will do good. James said that prayer "availeth much" (Jas. 5:16). He didn't say that it avails to the full extent of our wishes. Nor does he say that it avails to grant the things for which we ask. Yet, the text does promise that it does much. To illustrate, when one fires a rifle it accomplishes something. He may miss the target, but the bullet still has force. It may do nothing but split open the air or dig up the ground. But, it does something. So, every prayer has power. It does something. It may miss the mark for which we aimed, but it does good.

Every prayer receives an answer. This does not mean that our prayers are answered immediately or in the way that we desire. It will be answered according to God's desire and will. The answer will either be yes, no

or wait awhile. We can be assured though that God in some way responds to the prayers of the righteous (1 Pet. 3:12).

Sometimes the answer is "no". Paul prayed three times that God would remove the "thorn in the flesh", but God's answer was "no" (2 Cor. 12:7-9). David prayed that his child wouldn't die, but he did (2 Sam. 12:15-23). We must reconcile ourselves to the fact that God does not always grant the request we make. When such is the response, that doesn't mean God didn't answer. He answered, we can be sure, but just not the way we wanted him to.

Erroneous Views That Deny That God Answers Prayer

"Prayer is merely a glorified pep-talk." Some think that the only good accomplished in prayer is that it spurs us on to greater zeal. Such a concept comes from a heart that has little or no faith in its creator. The passages noticed earlier in the article affirm that prayer does more. However, if this concept were correct, then the heathen would benefit just as much from prayer as the Christian. Likewise, prayer offered to an idol or a fence post would be just as effective.

"God can't answer without working miracles." It is possible that this concept comes as an over-reaction to Pentecostalism, thinking that since God doesn't work miracles today, he just does not work today. We put limitations on God to the point that he is to us no more than what the heathen's god is to him. How do you know God can't answer prayer without working a miracle? Could not God who was able to create the world from nothing work in his universe within the realm of natural laws?

Naturalism says that everything is predetermined and fixed. Thus, God will not change a thing. The concept says that God has now removed himself far from the world; having wound us up like clocks, he just sets back and watches us tick. This theory says that all that happens is a part of the natural course of events and that God's hand has not and will not change a thing.

Again, If we believe in God and the Bible at all we can see that this concept is erroneous.

Prayer used as an emergency device. Some only pray when they are deathly sick or some family member is ill or in some major crisis. When that prayer isn't answered as they thought it should be, they have doubts about the power of prayer. Obviously, these do not "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17).

These are a few of the modern day views that say in essence that God does not answer prayer. We, the people of God, believe otherwise.

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PATTON—PHILLIPS DEBATE

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THIRD AFFIRMATIVE By Marshall E. Patton

PROPOSITION: The Scriptures teach that the innocent person (free of fornication) who has been put away without God's or his/her approval and against whom adultery has been committed may remarry.

According to the arrangements of this debate, this article brings my part of this discussion to a close, except for a very brief rebuttal. According to the rules of honorable debate, Brother Phillips will not introduce any new material in his third negative.

In closing his last article (second negative) Brother Phillips levels some charges against me which I feel obligated to answer, not just in self defense, but also in the interest of truth and the exposition of error. I had rather he had left such judgment to the readers of this exchange. Furthermore, I had rather he had identified in particular that which would sustain his charges instead of making assertions. However, the fallacy of such charges are exposed in the brief review that follows.

Brief Review

In my first affirmative, I made an argument and gave proof that Matt. 5:32b cannot apply to ANY divorced person, but only to a particular "her." My argument involved the innocence of the husband in this verse and the innocence of the put away wife in 32a which innocence **proves** that the put away "her" of 32b was one against whom no fornication had been committed. Therefore, to apply this part of the verse to anyone else is to misapply the word of God. I even illustrated this argument with a chart, the point of which Brother Phillips completely missed and misrepresented my intended use of it, as I pointed out in my last article.

Brother Phillips, in your reply to this verse, you never touched this argument. You exposed no error. You did not even deny the innocence affirmed. Yet in spite of this proof to the contrary, you continue to apply it to "anyone—everyone" and that without making any argument to prove it. I will let our readers answer the question, Who is really guilty of "assertions"?

In my second affirmative I made an argument and gave proof that Matt. 19:9b, like Matt. 5:32b, cannot apply to ANY put away person, but only to a particular

"her." My argument involved the meaning of the Greek "kai" translated "and" which is a copulative conjunction connecting the a and b part of this verse. I gave Thayer's two possible meanings only one of which is possible in harmony with the context and all else revealed. The two possible meanings are: 1) Sequential, i.e., the b part follows in sequence—"in addition" or "after" the events of part a, and 2) Adverbial, i.e., "likewise," which means the situations of a and b part are alike. In this instance both the husband and the put away wife marry when no fornication is involved before their remarriage. My argument proved that only meaning No. 2 is possible, and, therefore, cannot be applied to the person of my proposition. I also used charts to illustrate this.

Brother Phillips, How did you answer this? You said after checking 35 translations you found not one that translated "and" so that "also" or "likewise" appear either in the text or footnotes. Of course, not! Neither do they translate it "in addition" or "afterwards" which meaning is necessary to the position you hold. The issue is not how is "kai" translated, but what is it meaning? You replied, but did not answer the argument. You exposed no wrong in the argument. Yet, in spite of proof to the contrary, you continue to assert without proof that the b part of this verse applies to "anyone—everyone." Again, I will let our readers answer the question, Who is really guilty of "assertions."?

Since you question Thayer's definition of "kai," let me give a Bible example of its adverbial use meaning "likewise." In Mark 10:11, 12 we read, "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. AND (Emp.—MEP) if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery." The word "And" which joins verses 11 and 12 is from the same Greek "kai" which joins a and b parts of Matt. 19:9. In this passage from Mark the obvious meaning is "likewise." What is true of the husband is also true of the woman and we do not need a lexicon or any other authority to see it.

In my first affirmative I made an argument and gave proof that the "Whosoever" of the exception clause of Matt. 19:9 INCLUDES the person of my proposition. If there is any word that means "anyone—everyone," here it is! The only persons EXCLUDED are those excepted by revealed truth. I pointed out three exceptions and pressed you to find one more—one that would EXCLUDE the person of my proposition. I pointed out that unless you could do this, my proposition stands! How did you reply? You said, "Until brother Patton finds a 'Whosoever' who can marry again (except the 'Whosoever' who puts away his spouse for the CAUSE of fornication), he has not proved his proposition." Brother Phillips, I do not need to find another "Whosoever." The one in the exception clause INCLUDES the person of my proposition. The innocent person of my proposition puts away his/her guilty spouse for the CAUSE of fornication. You fail to recognize the all-inclusive meaning of "Whosoever." Until you show another exception—in addition to those I named—the per-

son of my proposition is INCLUDED.

True, the "Whosoever" does not specify in particular one who was already put away by human authority and without God's approval—so What? Neither does it specify in particular all the others which it includes and the situations peculiar to each. Think what a list such would make. The word "Whosoever" covers them all. Remember, it just does not meet the issue to say that such a person has already been put away. If so, then human action contrary to God's will can take away a divine prerogative! This human authority supersedes the divine. Brother Phillips, you have not shown any escape from this consequence.

These arguments and proof given on my part are not "assertions, claims, unnecessary inferences." They are not "misapplied scripture." They are not an "imagined situation." I believe our readers can see that I have made arguments and offered proof that continues to stand.

Positions Clarified

Brother Phillips begins his second negative trying to set before our readers my position. In so doing he fails to do so fully and accurately. He attributes to me the affirmation that "At a later time (the length of time would have no bearing on the situation) the husband remarries, thereby committing adultery." He knows that I refused to sign a proposition which he submitted before the debate which affirmed that the adultery against the innocent person was committed "subsequent" to the putting away. The Lord did not specify any time frame in which this adultery must be committed against the innocent in order to remarriage. By what authority do we specify a time element? The innocent person might have had fornication committed against him/her before the guilty spouse put him/her away—WHILE he/she was praying, hoping, and trying for reconciliation. The fact that the guilty spouse beat the innocent person to the putting away does not take away the divine prerogative that previously prevailed. After all, the putting away by the guilty spouse was by human authority and without God's approval. It was FUTILE so far as breaking the marriage bond in heaven is concerned. Even Brother Phillips has admitted this. Whether the fornication is committed before or after the putting away by human authority is immaterial—the divine prerogative remains for the person of my proposition.

Now, I have corrected him, let us see if I can clarify his position. If I fail, he will correct me.

A husband who has been scripturally married to his wife comes home one day with his secretary by his side and with whom he has committed fornication and announces to his wife that he is through with her; that he thereby puts her away, and that he is going to marry his secretary. Because he was the first to say, "I put you away," his innocent wife is doomed thereafter to celibacy. Even if she, because of his fornication, rushes to the court and filed for divorce, it would be to no avail so far as her having a right to remarry is concerned. I understand that Brother Phillips believes that civil au-

thority is beside the point so far as "putting away" is concerned. Furthermore, it would make no difference if fornication were committed after he SAID, "I put you away." She became a put away person who can never remarry when he SAID, "I put you away."

Our readers know that I take sharp issue with this position. On the matter of "putting away" my position is made clear in my definition of terms given at the beginning of the debate. Further, I believe that civil authority is ordained of God for the protection of the innocent (Rom. 13:1-4) and not to victimize the innocent as per Phillips position, if his putting away were followed by civil action. I know that the innocent must sometimes suffer because of the sins of the wicked, but there is enough of this at best. My point is, Why make the innocent suffer unnecessarily? I see this as a consequence of the position of Brother Phillips.

Misrepresentations

Brother Phillips misrepresents me when he says concerning Matt. 19:9b, "By implication brother Patton has placed an exception clause in the passage that is not actually in it. The "her" in brother Patton's proposition is not in this verse (I say, amen!—MEP). Yet he makes this **'her' who is put away against her will and whose husband has committed adultery or remarried** an element that is necessary to prove his point." Brother Phillips, I have insisted throughout this debate that the person of my proposition is not in Matt. 19:9b. I have used argument after argument— even charts to this effect. I do not need an exception clause added to this part of the verse to sustain my proposition. We both should leave it AS IT IS! The "her" of 9b is one against whom no adultery has been committed. That is why I have opposed your applying this part of the verse to "anyone—everyone"—even to the person of my proposition. It is rather strange that you now admit that "The 'her' in brother Patton's proposition is not in this verse." What is even more strange is that before you complete your article, you turn right around and apply it and Matt. 5:32b, which says the same thing, to "anyone—everyone, including the person of my proposition. Now, just which time did you mean what you said?

Again, when Brother Phillips says concerning Matt. 5:32b that "No persons other than the "whosoever" and "her" that is divorced is in this passage, I agree with him. I wonder why he keeps applying it to ANOTHER person—even the one of my proposition, who, according to his own admission, is not in it!

Again, he misrepresents me when he says, "Brother Patton equates the putting away with God releasing the yoke." My point from the beginning has been that when the person of my proposition was put away that such did not effect the yoke or marriage bond in heaven.

Release Clause

Brother Phillips wants to know Where is the exception clause that releases a put away woman from the adultery of Matt. 5:32b; 19:9b; Lk. 16:18b who was put away when no fornication was involved, with or without her will? I answer, There is none. However, if this

woman was put away against her will and thereafter was praying, hoping, and trying for reconciliation until adultery was committed against her, she may then exercise the divine prerogative of Matt. 5:32a and 19:9a. These exception clauses release such a person from the adultery of the b part of these verses.

Marriage-Bond-Yoke

Brother Phillips' arbitrary use of these terms confuses the issue and involves him in contradictions and inconsistencies. Let me show how this is so.

He acknowledges that marriage approved of God involves a personal commitment, "a covenant between a man and woman," and also "a divine element"—a joining "with a yoke that can be broken only by God. . ."; that "at death God releases that bond of marriage (Romans 7:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 7:39)." Yet, he ignores and excludes this divine element in the matter of terminating the marriage. He teaches that the breaking of the personal commitment on the part of either the husband or wife totally dissolves the marriage. He says, "Where this happens the marriage is broken. . . Whether approved by God or by the one put away makes no differences, the marriage is terminated; it no longer exists!" While he recognizes the "yoke" and "bond" in heaven as continuing, it is no longer called by him a "marriage bond" which is exactly what he called it before the breaking of the personal commitment. Question, Brother Phillips: What kind of "bond" is it (the one in heaven) after the breaking of the personal commitment? If it is still a "marriage bond," then the MARRIAGE remains intact, untouched, and unaffected in heaven. If it is no longer a "marriage bond," then it has been broken by someone other than God, which contradicts your former statement. It has been touched, effected, broken, and changed into some other kind of bond—as yet we know not what kind to call it—and all of this because of human action by human authority on earth.

While this point in our discussion has come up too late for full discussion, especially in view of our limited space, I believe that much confusion can be cleared if we remember that the Bible speaks of marriage from different view-points—that of the world and that of heaven. While the Bible recognizes both and speaks accordingly, we must determine which by the context. The verses cited by Brother Phillips can be easily understood this way. For example, the "unmarried" woman who needs to be reconciled to her "husband" in 1 Cor. 7:11 is "unmarried" from the viewpoint of the world, but still married from the viewpoint of heaven—otherwise, we have an unmarried husband, which involves a contradiction of terms. Again, in Matt. 14:3,4 Herodias was married to Herod from the viewpoint of the world, but was still the "wife" of Herod's brother, Philip—hence, still married to Philip from the viewpoint of heaven, otherwise we have an unmarried wife, which involves another contradiction of terms.

I insist that human action by human authority can have no effect upon a marriage formed in heaven from God's viewpoint! Therefore, the divine prerogative

which God gives to the innocent person of my proposition stands—regardless of what is done on earth.

The Waiting Game

I answered Brother Phillips on the "waiting game" in my last article. One thing he has not done—One thing he cannot do—and that is pin on me the "waiting game" AS DEFINED in my definition of terms. This is the one he is obligated to deal with, and so far he has left it untouched. Read my former reply.

Mark 10:11

My answer to Brother Phillips' question as to whether I deny the argument attributed to me is, No. My point was that he ignored the argument I did make and tried to answer one I did not make.

Furthermore, he has missed my argument on this verse, and he has missed the point of the authorities as well—even the ones he quoted. I have known all along that the Greek "epi" can be and sometimes is translated "with." If so, the reference is always to the second wife. If it be translated "against," it of necessity refers to the first wife. The meaning of "adultery" demands this. Note the following: "The (Greek letters—MEP) at the end of ver. 11 may mean either against, to the prejudice of her (the first wife), or with her (the second). The former view is taken by leading modern exegetes, the latter by Victor Ant., Euthy., Theophy., and, among moderns, Ewals and Bleek" (THE EXPOSITOR'S GREEK TESTAMENT, Vol. 1, p. 409).

Brother Phillips made his first argument using "against" and I replied accordingly. If he wants to use the word "with," that is all right with me. The adultery would then be with the second wife, but by necessary implication it would be against the first.

May the Lord bless this debate to the establishment of truth, the exposition of error, the edification of souls, and above all to the glory of God.

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THIRD NEGATIVE

By H. E. Phillips

This is the closing article in this discussion, except for a brief rebuttal by each of us. I shall introduce no new material, but I will respond to the material already in evidence, including his third affirmative. It is not necessary that I take each statement or argument he made and examine it. Obviously, there are some things upon which we agree, some things that are repetitious, and to the rest I have already replied.

Brother Patton has formulated a doctrine which he has been trying to prove by the Scriptures, but he has failed through three efforts. He stated the issue between us in his first affirmative. He said: "I affirm that there is a certain put away person who may remarry and the proposition is worded so as to help identify this certain person. Brother Phillips believes that no put away person may remarry, hence, the issue between us." The reader needs to keep in mind that this is the issue in this debate. He holds a position destined to be popular with the public because most divorced people are seeking a way to remarry with approval. They welcome any creed that will appear to give divine sanction to divorce and remarriage. I want no part in giving false hope for remarriage to those who have been divorced for any cause.

Brief Review Reviewed

Brother Patton reaffirms that Matthew 5:32b "cannot apply to ANY divorced person, but only to a particular 'her.'" He said in his first affirmative that there are TWO putting aways in this verse: one for fornication (authorized in the exception clause), and one for some cause other than fornication. But brother Patton eliminates the putting away for other than fornication by his process of argumentation, leaving only the putting away FOR FORNICATION. That is the only one he has left in Matthew 5:32. He says: "This putting away is done by human authority and, hence, without God's approval." "Furthermore, this latter putting away is futile so far as breaking the bond formed by God when He joined them in marriage." (First Affirmative). That leaves in brother Patton's position only ONE putting away in Matthew 5:32, the one for fornication. No other is really a putting away. Please read again what I said in my second negative on this point.

Matthew 5:32 says the "whosoever" husband puts

away his wife, "saving for the cause of fornication. . . ." Brother Patton argues that this "put away" wife is not guilty of fornication, neither the husband. He says this innocent put away wife must wait until the husband commits adultery or remarries, THEN she may "put away" the husband and be free to remarry. Question: What more does the innocent wife DO in "putting away" the husband than what the husband DID when he "put away" the wife? That question is not answered by telling us what God DID. The Scriptures do not teach that God "puts away" anyone in marriage; the husband OR wife does that. God may or may not release one of them from that which He has "joined together." If this innocent husband terminated the covenant and relationship of marriage, and that is all he can do, what MORE can the innocent wife do, "who has adultery committed against her," subsequent to his putting away of the wife? There is nothing for her to put away. SHE can put away NOTHING because no marriage remains to terminate.

The issue is not resolved by saying that the first putting away was not really a "putting away." Jesus said in every case that the husband "PUT AWAY his wife," and the wife "PUT AWAY her husband" (Mark 10:11, 12). This putting away is for every cause, including fornication. The putting away of a put away person is impossible in view of the language of Jesus.

"Kai"

In this discussion, brother Patton has argued that the word "kai" in Matthew 19:9 has two meanings. He says Mr. Thayer says the first meaning is, "... It marks something added to what has already been said, OR (Emp.—MEP) that of which something already said holds good; accordingly it takes on the nature of an adverb. . . likewise" (Second Affirmative). This second definition is the way brother Patton wants to define "kai" in Matthew 19:9. But what is the difference between the construction of the sentences in Matthew 5:32 and in Matthew 19:9? The reason I ask is because he has argued in his affirmatives that the woman of Matthew 5:32b is the "wife" of Matthew 5:32 a. If he is correct, then Thayer's first definition would have to be given to "kai." Since the sentence construction is exactly the same in Matthew 19:9, what is there in the text or context of the sentences that would make Matthew 19:9 different from 5:32 except that it is necessary to brother Patton's position?

Brother Patton accuses me of questioning Thayer's definition of "kai." No, I did not question his definition. I questioned brother Patton's application of it. In his third affirmative brother Patton uses Mark 10:11-12 when the word "kai" is used according to the second definition that is given by Thayer. Why would this be true? It is because the context shows that Christ is discussing **two different parties who are doing the same thing.**

Brother Patton wants me to find one who is **EXCLUDED** from the "whosoever" of Matthew 5:32a and 19:9a besides the three he gave in his first affirmative. The fact of the matter is, his three "exclusions" boil

down to only two: 1. The put away fornicator. 2. The person put away for every cause. I do not have to find one who is **EXCLUDED** from the "whosoever" in these passages; he has to prove that his person is **INCLUDED**. It is brother Patton's position that is being examined. Let me identify the "whosoever" of these verses. The "whosoever" in part "a" of Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 DID the putting away. This does not fit brother Patton's proposition because he was not a put away person. The "whosoever" of the "b" part is the one who marries the put away person, and in every case, without exception, he commits adultery; that makes the put away woman commit adultery.

Brother Patton says if the "put away person" of his proposition can not "put away" the spouse who put him/her away after fornication is committed, "... then human action contrary to God's will can take away a divine prerogative!" That is not so! I dealt with that in my second negative when discussing the meaning of putting away. The "divine prerogative" belongs **ONLY** to that person who puts away his/her spouse **FOR THE CAUSE OF FORNICATION**. To apply this to a person already expelled from the marriage covenant and relationship for a cause other than fornication, when the marriage has been terminated, certainly rests on human authority. Brother Patton is doing just that!! It is totally false to talk about terminating a covenant-contract and relationship that has already been terminated. There is nothing to "put away" by the person who has been "put away."

Brother Patton's Emotional Appeal

I am amazed at brother Patton's appeal to sympathy and emotion by an example which represents neither his nor my views on this subject. He presents a man who comes home with his secretary with whom he had committed fornication and tells his wife he is through with her and he thereby puts her away, and that he is going to marry his secretary. Because he was the first to say, "I put you away," his innocent wife is doomed thereafter to celibacy. Brother Patton, you know full well that does not represent anything I believe and teach, and it certainly does not represent your position. The readers can read my negatives and I know I have never said or implied that "putting away" consisted only of SAYING: "I put you away." Please do not misrepresent me in that regard anymore. Why use such a prejudiced illustration if not to misrepresent me?

But using brother Patton's illustration with a slight change let us see what happens to the "innocent wife" who is "doomed thereafter to celibacy." The husband comes home without his secretary and SAYS, "I put you away." He never remarries or commits adultery. Can this poor innocent wife have any recourse? Can she ever remarry without sin? Now brother Patton, one proves as much as the other. The truth of the matter is, human situations never prove anything to be scriptural or unscriptural.

Misrepresentations

Brother Patton is mixed up about my statement on

Matthew 5:32b. I said that "No persons other than the 'whosoever' and 'her' that is divorced is in this passage." I did not apply it to ANOTHER person, the one in his proposition. I said his particular "her" is not in either Matthew 19:9 or 5:32. I did not misrepresent him.

I did not misrepresent him on his equating putting away with God releasing the yoke. This is a fact, and that is his problem in this discussion. God does not "put away" anyone in marriage, man does that.

I asked brother Patton for an exception clause in Matthew 5:32b and 19:9b and he said, "There is none." Then quit trying to find one. Where does the Bible teach that the put away woman without fornication must oppose the divorce? He affirms for her to be eligible to remarry, she must be praying, hoping, and trying for reconciliation until adultery was committed "against" her. Where does the New Testament teach this condition? Where is the passage? Is this not human authority? Of the "unmarried" woman in I Corinthians 7:11 he says she is such from the viewpoint "of the world, but still married from the viewpoint of heaven—otherwise, we have an unmarried husband, which involves a contradiction of terms." But we have an "unmarried wife" in verses 10,11. Is that a contradiction of terms? The fact of the matter is the marriage is broken if she leaves her husband. God's yoke is still there, and that is the reason she has but one course if she does not remain "unmarried," be reconciled to her husband, the man with whom she once had a marriage commitment and relationship.

The Waiting Game

Brother Patton's definition of the "waiting game" is more accommodative to his position than it is to the meaning of the words as they relate to this subject. Read his definition in his first affirmative. One must accept the consequences of his position. However he defines "the waiting game," his position demands that the put away person of his proposition must wait until the he/she who did the putting away remarries or commits adultery. That is a key element in his/her being qualified for remarriage, according to brother Patton's proposition. He can deny it all he wishes, but the fact remains his particular "her" MUST play "the waiting game" before she can remarry, and he admitted that in his second affirmative.

Mark 10:11

Brother Patton claims I ignored his argument and answered one he did not make. I will leave the reader to make that judgment. Read again my first and second negatives, he is making an arbitrary application of "against" the first wife and "with" the second wife.

But if it be conceded that the correct use of Mark 10:11 be "against" the first wife, what does it prove with regard to his woman of Matthew 5:32 b? Remember, he said that no fornication is involved in this verse. She has been put away, the marriage is dissolved and the relationship terminated. What is SHE going to "put away" even if he committed adultery?

There are only two persons in this "b" part of Matthew 5:32 and 19:9: the "whosoever" (any and every

man) and "her that is divorced." Every passage used in this debate that has the "b" part teaches the same thing, and **there are NO exception clauses.** The "whosoever" who marries the put away **person commits adultery.** That is it! The "whosoever" in these verses is any man. Without exception he/she commits adultery when **marrying** a divorced person. It is absolutely impossible for the one marrying the put away person to commit adultery without the put away person also committing adultery. That means the put away person who marries "whosoever" commits adultery with him/her without exception. Any view you take of the "b" part of Matthew 5:32; 19:9 and Luke 16:18 leaves no area for the "whosoever" who marries the put away person, and the "her" who is put away, to be free from adultery. That means neither of them is free to remarry anyone.

This closes my third negative. I have tried to be honest with brother Patton and myself. I am grateful to brother Connie Adams for the opportunity to engage in this discussion in the pages of Searching The Scriptures. I am grateful to brother Patton for his efforts and willingness to engage in this discussion. We are dealing with serious matters which have to do with the human race, with the purity and success of the church and with our eternal destiny. I am indebted to some men whose valuable material I freely used in preparing for this discussion. Among these were J. T. Smith, Maurice Barnett, Gene Frost, Donnie Rader, Jay Bowman and several others.

I pray that this discussion will help many know and obey the truth of God's word in the marriage relationship. I pray that God and his word will be glorified.

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**PATTON—PHILLIPS DEBATE
REBUTTAL
By Marshal E. Patton**

While Brother Phillips made reply to my first two affirmatives, in my judgment, he did not meet the arguments I made. I commend him for finally meeting some of my former arguments in his third negative, though such effort fails of its objective. I regret that he waited to do this until I have no opportunity to make fair and full reply—Impossible in this limited rebuttal.

I deny having formulated a doctrine, new or otherwise. I verily believe (except for cause of death) that only the innocent person who "puts away" his/her spouse for fornication may remarry! I oppose the efforts of some who would take away this DIVINE PREROGATIVE from such a one as is identified in my proposition.

If Brother Phillips will show wherein I misrepresented him in my illustration of his position, I will apologize. I am sorry he has impugned my motive. My illustration was based upon his own statements in his second negative on what terminates a marriage, e.g., "When the commitment is broken, the marriage is dissolved. .. Whoever initiates the termination of the marriage 'puts away' the other. He/she dismisses the spouse from the relationship"—Also, upon his opposition to the expression "put away by civil authority" in the proposition for debate (according to correspondence from Brother Adams prior to the debate saying that Phillips thought "civil authority" was "beside the point" in a putting away). Based upon the above, I still see no inaccuracy in my illustration. Brother Phillips, I was VERY CAREFUL to show your error in your illustration. Please do as much for me. What MORE must be done besides giving the verbal dismissal? I accept the consequences of your second illustration. I acknowledged that the innocent often suffer at the hands of the guilty, but my point was, Why cause suffering unnecessarily, as per your position?

Your NEW ARGUMENT on "kai" and the "sentence construction" of Matt. 5:32 and 19:9 is in error. In the former there are no "likewise" situations—no remarriage in the a part, only in b, and that "after" the action in a. Matt. 19:9 is DIFFERENT. As you said about Mk. 10:11,12, you have "**two different parties who are doing the same thing**"—Both remarry when no fornication is involved, hence, "likewise" situations. For reasons already given "kai" must take the meaning of "likewise" in this instance.

O yes, there is something the innocent put away wife (person) of my proposition CAN put away! She can put away the one who yet remains her husband from God's viewpoint. She CAN DO this by breaking HER personal commitment which heretofore has remained unbroken. When she DOES THIS, God breaks (releases)

the marriage bond in heaven which heretofore remained intact. This is MORE than he, by human authority and in violation of God's will, has done or can do.

It is my honest conviction that the position held by Brother Phillips and a few others has grown out of an effort to refute arguments in behalf of the put away fornicator remarrying. Until this issue became prominent, brethren in general held (most still do) the position I have affirmed. Brethren, in our efforts to oppose error let us not run past Jerusalem and knock ourselves out against the walls of Jericho. May God bless this study to His glory.

**PATTON—PHILLIPS DEBATE
REBUTTAL
By H. E. Phillips**

Our agreement called for a one page rebuttal for each of us after the third negative. It is impossible to reply to an argument in that short space. Brother Patton's rebuttal was a brief restatement of his arguments and my reply to them. I shall, therefore, make some brief observations in closing.

Brother Patton has not shown any scriptural evidence that a **put away person** may remarry under any circumstances. He has inferred it from his process of arguments and human situations, but that is not Bible proof.

He has not been able to escape "the waiting game" in order to get the person of his proposition remarried. He has vehemently denied it throughout the discussion, but he must accept that consequence or renounce his position.

He has not been able to prove that the "whosoever" of Matthew 5:32b, 19:9b and Luke 16:18b can marry the put away woman without committing adultery. That means the **put away** woman commits adultery when the "whosoever" marries her.

Brother Patton cannot find Bible proof for the conditions he claims for the innocent put away person who must be opposing the divorce, and **must** be praying, hoping, and trying for reconciliation until adultery is committed against her before she is eligible to remarry. This condition is of human authority and not divine.

In his rebuttal he appeals to the majority position as proof of right. He says my position is held by "a few others" but the majority of brethren hold the position which he affirms. What does that prove? I am not impressed by the number who hold a position. I am concerned with what the Bible teaches.

The total effort of brother Patton in his three affirmatives has been to strain out of the exception clause in Matthew 5:32a and 19:9a a person who **HAS BEEN PUT AWAY** for any cause other than fornication, and thrust him/her into the role of the one **DOING THE PUTTING AWAY** for the cause of fornication and be

free to remarry without sin. He has misused these verses in his efforts. He has made two grievous errors in his affirmatives: First, to disregard the context of the verses he used and develop a position that supports an already growing problem of adulterous marriages in the church. Second, he is opening the gates to "acceptable" divorce for literally thousands who will carry his position a little further by his own reasoning, and the congregations of God's people will be filled with second, third and even fourth marriages based upon his arguments. I must raise my voice against such a position. May God bless our efforts to a better understanding of His word.

HAROLD F. SHARP, SR. PASSES

**Keith Sharp
Rt. 1, Box 8034
Mena, AR 71953**

would triumph. I shall hold dear those few hours and remember that advice for a lifetime. I deeply treasure the confident hope of continuing that conversation in a beautiful home where we will never again part.

His family, Mrs. H. F. (Pearl) Sharp, Mr. and Mrs. H. F. "Sonny" Sharp, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Keith Sharp, eight grandchildren, two brothers and a surviving sister, thank the many hundreds of friends and brothers and sisters in Christ who have expressed their love and concern.

(I have asked Brother James W. Adams to write an obituary of Dad, and he has consented. This will follow in a few weeks.

SINCERE WORDS

The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Ecc. 12:10)."

Dick Blackford

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Owensboro, KY 42302



SHOULD SCIENTIFIC CREATION BE TAUGHT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

(This article first appeared in the "In My View" column of the MESSENGER INQUIRER, daily newspaper of Owensboro, Kentucky, on September 7, 1986).

The Messenger-Inquirer reported that some Nobel Prize winners had urged the Supreme Court to strike down the Louisiana law requiring schools to give balanced treatment of creation and evolution. Where are the wise men among us? Our time is characterized as one with an abundance of knowledge but little wisdom. Are these men aware that the father of modern evolutionary theory believed in balance? "For I am well aware that scarcely a single point is discussed in this volume on which facts cannot be adduced, often apparently leading to conclusions directly opposite to those at which I have arrived. A fair result can be obtained only by fully stating and balancing the facts and arguments on both sides of each question; . . ." (Charles Darwin, THE ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES, p. 6). It is not a matter of evolutionists having access to information not available to creationists. The same evidence from nature is available to both. The question is, which interpretation best fits the evidence.

Contrary to public misinformation, it is not against the law to teach creation science nor to criticize evolution in the classroom. It can be done without quoting the Bible, if this is such a problem. Creation scientists are asking that balance be given these two views on origins rather than championing one and censoring the other. It is true that any position on origins is ulti-

H. F. Sharp, a preacher of the gospel for approximately fifty years, passed away Sunday, February 1, 1987, after an extended illness. He departed this life while a patient in the Arkansas Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock, where he had been a patient for about three months, suffering from pneumonia and congestive heart failure. He was seventy-one years old.

He had often prayed for a peaceful hour in which to die. He passed away without struggle in his sleep while his elder son, H. F. Sharp, Jr., was at his side.

I oft heard him pray he would not live so long that he would renounce the great truths for which he had sacrificed and fought. This prayer, also, was answered affirmatively. To the very end he employed all his strength to uphold truth and fight error. His beloved wife and faithful help meet, Pearl, had to type his article for the May, 1986 special issue of The PRECEPTOR on "The Christian and Sin" because a stroke had caused his left hand to be numb. Thus, though an aged and weary warrior at the time the struggle over "neo-Calvinism" beset the Lord's church, he fought to the end.

His desire was to preach as long as he was able. The last time I was privileged to see him alive, nine days before his death, his mind was lucid, his memory clear and his knowledge of the Scriptures profound. He spent some time telling me about the sermon he planned to preach at Cedar Hill, the little, country congregation where he labored the last six years of his life, when he got out of the hospital.

That day, as he sat in his wheelchair, he spoke to me of standing for the truth and the sacrifices and heartaches that would result. But he firmly maintained truth

mately beyond the realm of science. We can produce neither the Big Bang nor the Act of Creation, since both would be past events that had no observers. However, everything since that origin is open to inquiry. It is therefore reasonable to use the methods of science to investigate whether it is reasonable to postulate a Creator.

Some object that creationism is fundamental to conservative religious views. Evolution is also a basic premise of many religions (Buddhism, Hinduism, liberal protestantism, modernist Catholicism, Reformed Judaism, Humanism, Communism, and Atheism). A 1961 Supreme Court decision (*Torcaso v. Watkins*) declared that a system of thought need not profess faith in a Creator to be considered a religion. The Humanist Manifesto plainly says that Humanism is a religion (p. 3) and that evolution is a cardinal tenet of Humanism (p. 8). Thus, it is absurd to claim that evolution is a non-religious subject. The renowned British physicist, Dr. H. S. Lipson, echoed exactly the same sentiment. He said: **"In fact, evolution became in a sense a scientific religion; almost all scientists have accepted it and many are prepared to 'bend' their observations to fit in with it,"** ("A Physicist Looks At Evolution," *In: Physics Bulletin, Vol. 31, May, 1980*).

At the time of the Scopes Trial (1925) evolutionists thought it was unfair that evolution could not be taught in the classroom. Clarence Darrow argued that it was "bigotry" to teach only one theory of origins. They liked Darrow's logic then. It is a poor rule that won't work both ways. Creationists are asking for fair treatment, not favored treatment (as evolution presently enjoys).

The Constitution does not require hostility toward belief in a Creator, as the American Civil Liberties Union seems to think. The poor logic of ACLU lawyers is astonishing! It appears they have a philosophy to spread. They have become notorious for opposing distribution of Bibles, prayer, posting of the 10 Commandments in schools while defending pornographers, the Nazi Party, homosexuals, abortionists, evolutionists, etc. They have become watchdogs for the nation's schools to make sure they don't teach anything that harmonizes with conservative religion. They say nothing when various forms of religious humanism are taught. This seems hypocritical.

Eight judges of the fifth circuit court disagree with creationism being taught. They said, **"Irrespective of whether it is fully supported by scientific evidence, the theory is a religious belief,"** (*Messenger-Inquirer*, 5/17/86). Imagine it-even if fully supported by science! For centuries the Bible has taught the necessity of blood for life (Lev. 17:14). Less than two hundred years ago men thought blood should be drained from a person when he was sick (re. George Washington, *World Book Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 21). Leeches were also used to extract "bad blood." The necessity of blood for life is now fully supported by science. Must we now take that information out of science books since the Bible (a religious document) was the first and only source that taught it for centuries? What about the fact that the earth is round and it hangs on nothing? (Isa. 40:22; Job 26:7). These

and many other pre-scientific truths will need to be removed from textbooks if we follow the judges' logic. Wisdom has departed from the wise (Rom. 1:21-23).

Neither creation nor evolution are repeatable or testable, experimentally. Both can be discussed as scientific models. Students deserve to be informed of ALL the scientific data instead of being fed only what evolutionists want them to hear. Then the students can make a fair decision. To exclude information because it corresponds with the Bible is censorship of the worst kind. It is also poor science and poor education and unfortunately, our children are the losers. To exclude such information is neither American, civil, nor liberty. On the basis of such logic our children should not be exposed to the Mayflower Compact, Patrick Henry's famous speech, the Declaration of Independence, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, the Pledge of Allegiance, etc. All of these make reference to a Creator. Tragically, subversive forces are at work to undermine these too, removing the concept of a Creator completely from the minds and literature of children.

If there is even a possibility that creation could be true (and there is!), aren't scientists supposed to be interested in truth? Have they proved there is no Creator? That is the presumption of organic evolution.

How many local teachers have had the opportunity to examine creation science textbooks? Not many, judging from the scarcity of materials in local libraries. (The public library and some Owensboro schools have allowed me to place such materials in their libraries). Many teachers, textbook writers, and librarians are simply not aware of the extensive scientific evidence that supports creation or exposes evolution.

According to a 1981 poll conducted by the Associated Press and NBC, 86 percent of the population want scientific creation taught. Only eight percent want to continue censoring scientific evidence that supports creation. Several thousand scientists now believe creation is a more accurate interpretation of the evidence. These scientists get very little press coverage. Is this censorship? There is also a growing number of evolutionists who are admitting the flaws in their theory. One can only wonder at the reluctance of evolutionists to allow the scientific evidence to speak for itself. If arguments for evolution are valid, there is no reason to fear the data presented by creation scientists.

I am not advocating Bible reading or prayer in schools, but I am saying that creation and evolution should stand or fall together. It should be to the greater benefit of everyone to be able to study and evaluate objectively all the scientific evidence and arguments for both. It is time for parents and school boards to quit being intimidated and pushed around by the ACLU and other humanists.

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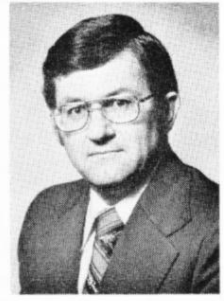
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Things Most Certainly Believed

Julian R. Snell

4724 E. Manslick Road
Louisville, Kentucky 40219



WIDOWERS

QUESTION: *You stated in a previous article on the church helping widows that the principle would also apply to widowers. 1 Tim. 5:16, as well as James 1:27 specifically states, "widows," and not "widowers." As Christians we are to help the widows but I had never thought the church was given the command to help widowers. What about this?*

ANSWER: I cannot think of a Scripture that specifically states that the church or an individual is to help a widower. But there are several passages, in principle, which so teach.

James 1:27 says nothing about "widowers," particularly, and since it is individual in scope, then by the querist's manner of reasoning, we may not help a widower on an individual basis. Actually, James 1:27 is a synecdoche, a figure of speech where the part is put for the whole. James is speaking of ALL in distress or trouble of any kind. He simply uses the visitation of the fatherless and widows in their affliction as an example of pure religion.

E. W. Bullinger states that "widows and fatherless are put for all kinds of afflicted" (*Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, p. 629). He quotes Exodus 22:21 (in addition to Jas. 1:27), "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child," and comments, "Surely it does not follow that they might afflict all others. No! one kind of class is put for all similar kinds of helpless people."

1 Tim. 5:16 states, "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged, that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." What are the children to do with their daddy since this verse obligates them to their mothers, specifically? Let him go without the necessities of life? No, no! This verse in principle also shows a responsibility we have toward our fathers and it shows the duty the church has toward widowers, as well as widows, when there are no children to help, or won't help.

In fact, the church has an obligation toward all needy saints as long as the need is there, whether young, old, single, married, widows or widowers. Cf. Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37; 6:1-4; 11:27-30; Rom. 15:26, etc.

SPECIAL PEOPLE

There is a stir of excitement within, accentuated by a quickening of the pulse and a warm inner glow that overwhelms one with the realization of being special to someone. Often it is the need to be reminded that we are special that produces the very qualities that make us so. There is a thrill attendant in being a Christian explained and realized only as we recognize that such an one is special.

Let me focus on First Peter with a brief introduction. The design of this epistle is expressed in "I have written briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand" (1 Pet. 5:12). Peter intended to accomplish three things: exhortation, testify of the true grace of God and encourage in that grace. In light of the major theme of suffering and bearing triumphantly while engulfed in trial and persecution these things are especially meaningful. Faith needed confirmation and only by patience in trial and through hope anchored in the "true grace" would that faith crystallize into the realization of how special they really were. As they are reminded of what makes them special, so are we.

In developing the theme of this article let me pose an overriding question. What makes the Christian a special person? For answer we direct our attention to some things Peter has to offer in this first chapter. Of first consideration is the fact of being "elect." The Greek "EKLEGO" meaning "choose or select" as per verse 2. The child of God is elect according to the "foreknowledge" (PROGNOSIS Gr.), the previous determination and purpose of God. It is the idea of chosen people, selected by divine will, in keeping with a purpose of God earlier formed. Paul joins with Peter to complement this picture in his statements "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will" (Eph. 1:3-5).

The word "PROGNOSIS" translated "foreknowledge" bears kinship to our prognosis which is usually in a medical connotation. Medically, our case is diagnosed, tests are run, evaluations made and we are anxious for the doctor's prognosis, his projection of what lies ahead.

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The Christian is special because, among other things, God selected him as his very own on the basis of conditions which He willed and projected well in advance of the fact. In the Ephesian quote it is said to be "according to the good pleasure of his will." The argument over whether man is the elect of God, conditionally or unconditionally, is here laid to rest. Unconditional election is false! It is according to the good pleasure of God's will. Only as man properly relates to that will is he the elect of God.

Not only is the Christian special because of being "elect" of God but even more so because of being "begotten." As a closer look is given to verse 3, focus upon the word "again." The faltering, failing faith of the disciples of our Lord in the tragic hours of his condemnation and death was revived in the full impact of his resurrection. The perceived redemption of Israel was foiled in the Messiah's death. Hope, dead, surges to new life in the resurrection of Jesus to become a living hope, hope not bound by perishable expectations or failing earthly dreams but quickened to new force and life, to "an inheritance incorruptible."

Thirdly, the Christian is special because he is "redeemed" (v. 18). Having been set free from the bondage of sin by virtue of the payment of ransom. For a parallel thought we go to the noun form of the word "ransom" found in "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). As the idea of ransom echoes throughout the gospel it becomes the revealing of the chief purpose of God, deliverance of us all from sin. The life of another, Jesus, God's own Son, instead of our own. He became satisfaction, "propitiation," for our sins. Not only from the guilt of sin but from the sinful life itself as we perceive ourselves in this special relationship, being no longer given to "vain conversation." The significance of that relationship is enhanced only as we see it bought by the most precious of all gifts, the "precious blood of Christ" (1:19). How special we are!

Verse 22 adds to the picture by identifying the Christian as one purified. Analytically, this is past action with existing results, obtained in obeying the truth. Obedience is here projected as the ground of godliness with the love of brethren the effect of it. Human agency in purification is to be noted from this verse reminiscent of "save yourselves" in Acts 2:40. The soul is purified. How? By hearing and obeying the truth out of a pure heart. How simple the process and how beautiful the results as the will of God works within us.

Then verse 23 presents the Christian within the intriguing figure of birth, "born again." This statement calls attention to common parenthood. It is the same verb as in verse 3, "begotten," and offers the highest motive for wholesome relationship circumscribed in "loving as brethren" (1 Pet. 3:8). We are children of the same father, born of the same seed. The seed by which one is born into the world is different from the seed by which we are born into the family of God. One seed is "corruptible," subject to death and decay. The other is "incorruptible," and not subject to death and decay. The term "incorruptible" describes the seed itself which "liveth," possesses life (ZONTOS). In Jesus' parable of the sower, "the seed is the word of God" (Lk. 8:11), life is resident within that seed. Verse 24 is offered as proof in the quote of Isaiah 40:6-8 that the physical passes but the word abideth forever. The physical is fragile, like grass and flowers it withers and dies. But, the life produced by the word of the Lord is eternal. How significantly this adds to the picture of the Christian as someone special.

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9). You can't get any more special than that.

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

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CECIL WILLIS, Box 15, Woodlake, TX 75865—It was my pleasure to preach in a gospel meeting January 11-16, 1987 at the Holbrook, Arizona church. It was my first gospel meeting in six years, and was immensely pleasant to me.

The Holbrook congregation may not be familiar to many brethren. Hence, I would like to introduce these brethren to you. Holbrook is located in northeast Arizona on I-40, a highway traveled by thousands of brethren annually. Let me suggest that you plan to worship with these brethren the next time you use I-40.

Holbrook is a very interesting city of 5,000 inhabitants. It is located near the large Navajo and Apache reservations. Indians tribally own nearly 20 million acres in Arizona. About 220,000 Navajos live on the reservation which stretches into two or three adjacent states. There are 166,000 Indians living in Arizona. The smaller Apache reservation

is located just south of Holbrook. The beautiful Painted Desert and Petrified Forest National Park is just east of Holbrook. It is certain that thousands of brethren each year visit these scenic locations.

The Holbrook church only has an attendance of about 30 on the Lord's Day, but they are quite active in doing the Lord's work. Brian Faulkner and his wife, Natalie, work with the Holbrook congregation. They are in the process of adopting a Navajo infant boy. About half the students in the Holbrook school are Indians. Like nearly all congregations, the Holbrook church has a few problems that they need to work through, but they are contending for the Old Paths, and are deserving of your interest and prayers.

The meeting house is located at 4th and Erie Streets. You may reach brother Faulkner at 706 N. Ave., Holbrook, AZ 86025. His phone number is (602) 524-3625. Brian is a faithful young man in his late 20's,

and is from Columbus, Ohio. I first met Natalie's parents while in Alaska for a gospel meeting in 1966 when Natalie was just four years old.

As readers of this journal know, July 23, 1986 I made a public confession of sin in my life before the church at Groveton, Texas. The editor of this journal then asked my permission to publish the statement in this paper, along with some editorial comments about me. Included in those comments was the suggestion that brethren who had known me write me a few words of encouragement.

About three hundred brethren (mostly preachers) wrote me nice letters affirming their brotherly love. Since then I have written about 300 letters in reply, but have not yet answered all of those who wrote me. Literally hundreds of other brethren have spoken similar words of encouragement to me face to face. I want all brethren to know how much their support and forgiveness meant to me.

Thanks again, brethren, for your kind, generous, magnanimous and loving remarks which you conveyed to me both orally and through letters, and in the two articles that appeared regarding my restoration to the Lord.

BILLY ASHWORTH, Route 3, Box 215, Columbia, TN 38401—On January 2, 1987, my wife Lois and I moved to our newly-purchased home in Maury County, six miles north of Columbia on U.S. Highway 31. At the same time, I began preaching for the Hillview church of Christ at Nashville, a church with which we spent five and a half years from January 1, 1968 through July 23, 1973. We are enjoying our present arrangements and being together with the saints at Hillview. We invite all who may visit in that area to attend services at Hillview. The building is located at 7471 Charlotte Pike (U.S. 70 N). It is easy to find by leaving I-40 West at Old Hickory Blvd, going about 1/4 mile to Charlotte Pike, turning left to find the building about 1/2 mile on the left side of the road. Sunday services are at 9 & 10 A.M. and 6 P.M. with Wednesday Bible study at 7:30 P.M. My phone number is (615) 388-3855.

WARD HOGLAND, 1800 Hairston Ave., Conway, AR 72032—1986 was a good year here at Northside. The Lord willing, in 1987 I will assist in meetings at Monticello, FL Jan. 20-23; Biscoe, AR Mar. 2-6; Columbia, TN (Jackson Hts.) Mar. 15-20; Eldorado, AR April 6-10; Clarksville, IN April 26-May 1; Batesville, AR May 10-15; Paragould, AR May 24-27; Houston, MS June 7-12; Lanton, TN June; Joaquin, TX July 6-10; Mountain Home, AR July 20-24; Lafayette, IN Sept. 13-17; Texarkana, AR Oct. 11-16 and Alamogordo, NM in the fall. Our meetings at Northside will be conducted April 19-24 and Oct. 25-30 with Oliver Murray and Robert Turner. Visit with us when in central Arkansas.

DEBATE IN OWENSBORO, KY

DICK BLACKFORD of Owensboro, KY (one of our column writers) met **STEVE EPLEY** of Owensboro in a debate March, 9, 10 and 12, 13. The subjects were the Godhead and Baptismal Formula and the debate was conducted in the building of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, 5691 W. 5th St. Rd. in Owensboro, KY. We are sorry we did not have this item in time to print before the debate took place.

NEW CONGREGATION IN WHITE OAK, TEXAS

DENNIS C. ABERNATHY, 205 Pinewood, Gladewater, TX 75647—This is to inform readers of this paper that a new congregation is now meeting in White Oak, Texas. We presently have 25 in attendance, with a contribution of about \$300 a week. If any readers should visit the area, we invite you to stop and visit us and worship with the church. We meet at 407 1/2 White Oak Road (just past the Post Office). Our mailing address is P.O. Box 454, White Oak, TX 75693. On Sundays we meet at 9:45 and 10:45 A.M. and 6 P.M. and at 7 P.M. on Wednesdays. We anticipate good growth here. My family and I will continue to live in Gladewater. I would like to receive your bulletin at my address given above. I am still \$800 per month short of needed wages of \$2800 per month. If any congregation or individual could help, I would appreciate hearing from you.

FROM FOREIGN FIELDS

WILFREDO B. SAMODAL, P.O. Box 5680, Iligan City 8801, Republic of the Philippines—I am glad to tell you that on January 4, 1987 3 souls obeyed the gospel and then January 11 another 2 were baptized

into Christ here in Iligan City.

I am sad to tell you that we do not have normal peace and order here. On October 17, 1986 my brother in the flesh, Rufo Samodal, was killed by rebels. Rufo was a very successful preacher for many years before he fell away in sin. I am glad to say he repented about a year before his death and served the best he could from then until he was killed. His son, my nephew, was also shot by rebels and was seriously injured in the head. His wife has a newborn infant to care for. I am left with the responsibility of meeting the hospital bills for his care and also for seeing after his family. The church here has already helped all it can.

PAUL K. WILLIAMS, P.O. Box 324, Eshowe, 3815 South Africa—One of the young people we teach each week baptized 9 at his home two weeks ago. We have 20-30 young people to teach each week. They are enthusiastic and earnest and are teaching others. Two were baptized in Eshowe, one now attending teacher's college away from here. **DAVID HURST** was not able to raise support to come to Johannesburg to preach. We are disappointed but not discouraged. (Editor's note: It is a crying shame that a brother who was willing to go to a place where the gospel is so badly needed and where the brethren already at work there successfully wanted him to come and where a local church was ready to provide partial support, could not find the necessary help from brethren in this blessed land of ours. This makes twice in recent years that the South African field has been deprived of needed workers who were ready and willing to go, but who could not for want of financial support. This is sad. Worse than that, it is shameful. The American news media fills our eyes and ears with much bad news from South Africa. But there is much good news in terms of gospel work going on there. The gospel is the cure for the ills of the world as it changes hearts and lives and fashions them into the image of Christ. Something is badly wrong here, my brethren. All too few men and their families are willing to go to such fields to labor. Why should they have such difficulty finding the help they need? CWA)

NOLI H. VILLAMOR, 315-C Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila 2806, Rep. of the Philippines—On February 4 at 5:45 A.M. a fire broke out in Tondo, Manila where several houses were burned. Among those gutted by fire was the home of Reynaldo Cruz, one of the deacons of the Tondo church. His house was also the meeting place for the church. They offered their home free of charge. Not only did the Cruz family lose their house and all their belongings and money, but the Tondo church lost its place to meet, along with 30 folding chairs, 4 long benches, wooden pulpit, blackboard, all its Tagalong songbooks, 3 electric fans and 12 Tagalong Bibles. The total loss would be not less than 95,000 pesos for brother Cruz and for the church. The immediate need would be enough to purchase materials for posts and roofings so the brethren would not be exposed to the elements in conducting services. Those who might want to help could contact: Reynaldo Cruz, 1610 F. Varona St., Tondo, Manila, Philippines.

(Editor's note: I have known Noli Villamor for 17 years. He is a faithful and able brother. For several years he published a good paper which did much good in the Philippines. Tondo is a very poor suburb of Manila and life is difficult at best for people there. I have on hand pictures of the charred remains of the home of brother Cruz and also pictures of the small congregation assembled there prior to the fire.

RANDY S. REESE, SR., P.O. Box 14, Ashiya Shi, Japan 659—The Crossroads Movement has come to Japan. In June, 1986, George Gurganus, who preached in Tokyo 35 years ago, returned as one of the deacons of the Boston Crossroads church. Along with him he brought a small group of American and Japanese workers. They have already taken control of the Yoyogihachiman church in Tokyo. In June, 1987 the Boston church plans to send a 20 person team of Japanese speaking workers to spread their false teaching among the churches here. This team will be headed by Randy McKean, brother of Kip McKean, the preacher at the Boston church. At this writing Crossroads members are already active in the streets and stores in Tokyo. They plan to plant someone in every congregation in Japan as soon as possible. Currently I am teaching two classes a week dealing with this movement. I am also writing a tract on this heresy which will be printed in Japanese in April.

I have a number of other classes in progress which are productive of good. Our financial situation has been strained because of the devaluation of the American dollar. In addition to that problem, I am losing

support in April from one congregation and in June from another in the amount of \$400. The work is making progress and we need to be able to stay with it. But we will need help to recover our financial losses. Thank you for all your prayers and help in the work here in Japan.

PREACHERS NEEDED

ANTIGO, WISCONSIN—A working congregation with 31 members needs a preacher with at least five years experience. Please send resume with references to: Church of Christ, 1427 5th Ave., Antigo, WI 54409. Additional support will be needed.

RUSTON, LOUISIANA—An experienced preacher is needed to work full time with the Hwy. 80 church in Ruston. Attendance is usually 10-15 but work is challenging. Most financial support must be raised elsewhere. Those interested may call Phillip Frizzell (318) 259-8922 or Toby Crump (318) 255-2957, or write: Church of Christ, 2902 W. California Ave., Ruston, LA 71270.

PREACHER AVAILABLE

C. DAVID ROBBINS, P.O. Box 122, Scipio, INDIANA—I am available for fill-in or regular preaching in central and southern Indiana or northern regions of Kentucky, from my home in S.E. Indiana. Over 25 years experience. Reference: Elders, 10th St. church, Columbus, IN. Call (812) 392-2833 or write me at the above address.

RECENT DEATHS

EDGAR C. WALKER passed from this life in December, 1986. He preached for many years in Kentucky, Michigan, Florida and was preaching in Tennessee at the time of his death. Much of his preaching was done in hard places with congregations which needed his strong

help. It was my privilege to know him and his wife, Ovana, for many years and to work with them in meetings at Flint, Michigan and Jamestown, Kentucky. We express our sympathy to Ovana. He will be greatly missed.

HAROLD F. SHARP passed away in February in Arkansas. Funeral services were conducted in Conway before a large audience. He was a powerful preacher of the gospel whose labors spanned many years and took him to many places. Most of his local work was done in Arkansas with a few years in central Georgia. In the critical struggle over institutionalism in the 1950's and 60's, he stood firm and helped many brethren to stand. He was an exceptional power in the pulpit. His two sons, Sonny and Keith are faithful gospel preachers. Our kindest sentiments go to his wife, Pearl, their two sons and their families. His death leaves a void that will be hard to fill.

SYLVIA WHEELER, wife of gospel preacher Tom Wheeler of Harrodsburg, Kentucky, passed away on February 16 after a short and bizarre illness. The Wheelers have done good work in many places over the years, much of it in Kentucky where he has worked with churches in Beaver Dam, Hodgenville and Harrodsburg. Sylvia was a dignified, quiet but strong support for Tom in his work. Our heartfelt sympathy is expressed to Tom and the two daughters. A new grandchild was born the day before her death.

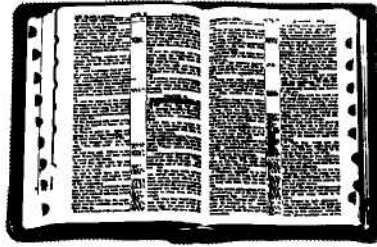
IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	148
RESTORATIONS	60

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

'DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH'

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DIVINE COMMUNIQVES

C. G. "Colly" Caldwell
Florida College
Temple Terrace, FL 33617



"THE LANGUAGE OF EACH PEOPLE"

THE DIVINE INSPIRED MESSAGE: "In those days also saw I the Jews that had married women of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jew's language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them,..." (Nehemiah 13:23-25).

Almost every semester I have one or two tremendously bright students who just love to see what they can get on the teacher. I suppose I encourage that, either by the fact that I enjoy my students and love to have fun with them, or simply by the fact that I use some humorous methods to solicit real thinking from them. This semester one of my favorite students (I have 150 favorite students) is a very rotund fellow who is extremely quick. Any of you who have known my father and grandfather understand why I am partial to heavy-set preachers. At any rate, the other day, this student commented on an experience he had last summer while preaching in Tennessee. He said that he had been called "narrow-minded" by someone who disagreed with him. I immediately responded, "Shane, I cannot understand why anyone would say that you were narrow on anything."

Don't you love to play with words? American literature was wonderfully blessed (for the most part) by the limericks of Ogden Nash and most of us enjoy a good "pun" even though almost any English teacher will

cringe calling it the "lowest form of humor." Little else is as stimulating as the superconversationalist who skillfully uses the language to guide our minds to his/her exact thoughts.

Religious Words

It is sobering to think of the impact of words. Language is intended to communicate one's mind to another. Even the mind of God has been revealed in words (cf. 1 Cor. 2:10-16). Cornelius was told to send for Peter to tell him "words, whereby thou shalt be saved" (Acts 11:14). In these matters, there is no "playing around" with words!

I suppose most of us who teach and preach have had our words abused. To unfairly quote me or to twist my words is a terrible crime against my person. We should not, therefore, be amazed that God has strong feelings about the twisting of His word (Gal. 1:6-8) or the use of terminology reflecting the wisdom of men to describe spiritual interests and goals (1 Cor. 2:4-5).

In the "communique" sent through Nehemiah to Judah, the Lord let it be known that the language of His people was not to be mixed with the language of false religionists. The people should not have allowed themselves such close association as to allow their language to be contaminated.

Every discipline has its own special vocabulary. Those of us who have not studied medicine, computer science, law, real estate, or engineering have trouble understanding the professionals who are trying to communicate important messages which affect our very lives. Denominationalism has its own language, too. I am suggesting that we learn God's language. I am also suggesting that we not cavort with sectarians picking up their language thinking it to be of little significance. Where is the saying among us: "We speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where the Bible is silent. We do Bible things in Bible ways and call Bible things by Bible names."

Current Examples

Have you heard some of our brethren talk about "witnessing" or "testifying" lately? Those are terms used by denominationalists to describe their evangelistic efforts to lead men to Christ through the exposure of their

own personal experiences. In the New Testament, those words refer, in the matter of teaching the lost, to the eye-witness testimony of those who saw the resurrected Lord and told of first-hand knowledge of His acts and teachings. Where in the New Testament are we taught to convert people by our own experiences? We need enthusiasm and joy all right, but we ought to be so filled with God's word in God's words that men understood that salvation results from obedience to God's powerful message, the Gospel, and not from subjective human experience (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:21).

I am hearing my preaching brethren talk about the Christian's "prayer-life." I think I know what they mean by that and I think I know where they got the phrase. We do not talk about our "Bible-study-life," our "Lord's-Supper-life," our "worship-life," or our "faith-life." Why has this term, "prayer-life" suddenly come into vogue among us? And what do we mean when we talk about "the enabling power" or the effective working" of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Or how about our willingness to talk about decisions by the "majority" or governance by "committees" in congregations where elders have not been appointed?

Does it make you react defensively to hear terms like these called in question? If so, justify them by the Scriptures if possible but do not simply assume their reliability to convey proper ideas. We must understand that it matters what our words suggest to those who hear them, just as it matters what we mean by them. We can say that we do not mean what others mean: but if we indicate by our terminology a false idea, we may very well promote false religion and fail to communicate the Truth.

Remember that "each people" has its own language. Like the peoples of Ashdod, Ammon, or Moab, the peoples of Calvin and Luther, or of Rome, London, Tulsa, and Nashville have their languages. We cannot afford to be naive. We must not try to be exciting, popular, sophisticated, or clever. We are trying to lead men to the Christ. We must not forget that He provided the way to do that in His own terms. It is not our job to try to improve upon it.

Searching The Scriptures

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HAILEY'S COMMENTS

By Homer Hailey

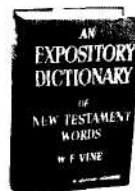
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Editorial

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THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES

Jesus often taught great lessons from commonplace occurrences. In the company of those who tilled the soil he told of a sower who went forth to sow and applied the principle to the sowing of the gospel seed in the various kinds of hearts. Near the Sea of Galilee he spoke of fishermen casting their nets into the sea and a great draught of fishes. In a land where the mustard tree spread its branches to provide nesting for birds, Jesus likened the kingdom in its beginning and spread to a grain of mustard seed reaching great proportions from such a tiny beginning. Speaking to women acquainted with the principle of yeast, he said that the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven in a measure of meal which spreads to permeate the whole.

In every case in which God and man are considered, Christ stands between and provides the only means of access to the Father. "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). He said "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (John 12:46). He said, "I am the door of the sheep" (John 10:7) Perhaps no parable of the Lord was more readily understood than that of the vine and the branches. Husbandry was a most common practice in Palestine. Here again Jesus occupied the central position. "I am the true vine" (John 15:1). The reader is urged to stop and read John 15:1-8. Many vital lessons are bound up in the account.

The Husbandman is the Father (verse 1). Christ came to do the bidding of the Father (John 12:49). Our service is to be directed to the Father as well. Paul said we should present our bodies as a "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God . . ." (Rom. 12:1). We offer up "spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto God, by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5). Too often men render service to please other men instead of the Father. Paul said our singing is to be "with grace in our hearts" and that it is "to the Lord" (Col 3:16).

2. **Christ is the true vine** (verse 1). Only in Christ, can acceptable fruit be borne unto God. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6) Paul said that in Christ men are made "new creatures" (2 Cor. 5:17). "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). The Father has blessed us with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3).

No fruit can be borne unto God unless the one bearing it is in Christ. Such attempts at fruit bearing must be lawful else the Lord will say to those who have worked "iniquity" (lawlessness), "depart from me" (Matt. 7:21-23).

3. **"Ye are the branches"** (verse 5). It is commonly held that the Lord meant that there is one great universal church (the vine) and that the various denominations are the branches. In this fashion denominationalism is thought to be not only excused but made desirable. This is the old idea that we are all headed for the same place and just traveling different roads to get there. We are all different "branches" but really on the same vine, all attached to Christ.

The truth is that individuals are the branches and not religious organizations. When Jesus said "ye are the branches" the word "ye" is to be understood in light of the context. In verse 6 Jesus said "if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch." A branch, then is a man, not a church, and certainly not a plant which the Father did not plant (Matt. 15:13). Neither this passage nor any other justifies denominationalism. Its very existence is contrary to divine wisdom. It ignores the prayer of Jesus that all who believe on him might be "one" as he and the Father are one (John 17:17-20). It further lays aside the platform of oneness taught in Eph. 4:4-6.

How does one become a branch, attached to Christ? No fruit can be borne unless one "abides" in Christ (verse 4). In verse 3 Jesus said "now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." This was addressed to the apostles and had to do with their service in the kingdom. Judas was a branch which did not bear fruit and Peter said he took his life that he might go to "his own place" (Acts 1:25), that is, the place for withered branches, gathered to be burned. And yet while Jesus addressed this to the apostles, in it he sets forth a general principle regarding bearing fruit which God will accept. He spoke of "every branch in me." From this general principle of abiding in Christ in order to bear fruit unto God, he made his special application to them. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (verse 8).

One now comes into Christ, and thus becomes a branch when he obeys from the heart the gospel (Rom. 6:17-18). He is baptized "into Christ" and thus is said to "put on Christ." One who has never put on Christ cannot be "in Christ" and not being in Christ, cannot bear fruit unto God. Many seek to do good works who are not in the vine. Jesus said a branch cannot bear fruit "of itself, except it abide in the vine (verse 4). One must now be married unto Christ that he should "bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4).

4. **Bearing fruit** is essential to remaining connected unto Christ and thus unto the Father. God's people have been redeemed from all iniquity that they might be "a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). Such are to be "careful to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful" (Titus 3:8, 14). Such are to supply in their faith the virtues or graces which will enable them to make their calling and

election sure and which will hinder them from falling (being purged as an unfruitful branch) (2 Pet. 1:5-11). Jesus spoke of the need for pruning a vine of the dead and fruitless branches. It is the persuasion of this writer that there are all too many fruitless branches now which clutter the vine, and cut back the productivity of those which do bear some fruit.

The secret of fruit bearing is bound up in the statement that the word of Christ must abide in one in order for him to bear acceptable fruit. The Hebrew writer said that unless earnest heed is given unto the words learned they will slip from us (Heb. 2:1). Failure to study the word of the Lord results in drying up on the vine and producing no fruit. Ignorance of the word is at the root of most of the heartaches that beset the church.

The one who does not bear fruit will be lost (verse 6). There is no need to try and soothe the feelings of those who have come into Christ only to fall by the wayside. 2 Pet. 2:20-22 describes their true condition before God.

When branches abide in the vine and bear good fruit then Jesus said "Herein is my Father glorified." As each branch performs the service for which it was intended, then God receives all the glory he desires. Some have developed the idea that God can only be glorified when the church spends its treasury in a given work and are heard to say "let's do it through the church, so the church can get the glory." No, no, this misses the whole point of glorifying God. It is true that when the church does that which God ordained that it should do, then honor is shown unto God who purposed the church. But when "a man" who is "a branch" in Christ bears his portion of fruit, then "herein" is the Father glorified also. Paul said "That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you" (2 Thes. 1:12). Peter said "If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ..." (1 Pet. 4:11). The Christian is told by Paul to "glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Cor. 6:20).

Let us abide in Christ and in his word and bear fruit abundantly lest we miss heaven and God be robbed of glory through his saints.

(This article which originally appeared in **Searching The Scriptures** in the February 1968 issue is being run again as brother Adams' editorial due to the fact that he is recovering from surgery on his back. He had a deteriorated disc removed from his lower spine. By the time this issue of the paper is in the mail he hopes to be back to his full schedule of meeting work and editing this paper. — Donnie V. Rader)

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THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER (Part 2) (The Providence of God)

In our last article we saw that God answers prayer. Though he may not always respond in the way we would like, he still promises to answer our prayers. In this lesson we must consider the providence of God. Prayer and providence go hand in hand. To study one is to study the other.

What Is The Providence Of God?

Providence is "the working of God through His provision in the natural and spiritual realms, and yet it is a control that violates neither the sovereignty of the human will nor the divine natural and spiritual laws" (Homer Hailey, "Providence and the Problem of Evil," Florida College Annual Lectures 1987, p. 139). Our English word "providence" comes from a greek word (pronoia) which expresses the idea of "forethought." God used forethought in creating a universe that he could control and use to his own purpose. We see the word "provide" in our word providence.

We are discussing God's non-miraculous manipulation of natural law and circumstance to accomplish his purpose. Winston Atkinson defined it as "The divine intervention in the affairs of men within the confines of natural law" (Anchor Magazine). Simply stated: providence is God working through natural means.

God Is In Control

God is personally involved in the operation of the universe now. In the midst of Paul's sermon on Mar's hill we see that (1) God gives breath to all, (2) God determines the times of the people, (3) God controls the bounds of their habitation and (4) in him we live and move (Acts 17:24-28). The same apostle affirmed that "all things consist" by Christ (Col. 1:17) and he upholds all by the word of his power (Heb. 1:3).

The praise that the Levites uttered in Neh. 9 speaks of God's providence. They recalled that God created the world and preserves it (v. 6). He created a world that he could control. That involves providence. Then, they speak of God carrying out his purpose (vs. 7-8) which demonstrates his operation in the universe. Without a doubt God rules the kingdoms of men (Dan. 4:25).

The book of Revelation gives us some assurance that God is yet in control. Jesus is said to be the prince of the kings of the earth (Rev. 4:11).

God is concerned for man. Will not the God that feeds

the fowls of the air and clothes the grass of the field not also care for us (Matt. 6:25-32)? Surely if God notices every sparrow that falls to the ground he must care something about the welfare of mankind (Matt. 10:29-31).

God has the power to answer my prayers. There is no question that God can perform what we ask. There is nothing too hard for God (Jer. 32:17). With him all things are possible (Matt. 19:26). He is able to do what we ask (Eph. 3:20) for God is the Almighty (Rev. 4:8, 11:17).

God's will can be altered. When God has in mind doing or not doing certain things, it is possible that through prayer God's mind can be changed. Abraham's plea for Sodom (Gen. 18:23-33), Moses' plea for Israel (Exo. 32:9-14) and Jonah and the Ninevites' plea for Nineveh (Jonah 3) all illustrate our point.

God doesn't do for man what he can do for himself. We need not think that we can pray for food and then sit back and do nothing and expect some result. We are told to pray for food and other necessities (Matt. 6:9-13), but we are also commanded to work to provide those things for ourselves (Eph. 4:28; 2 Thes. 3:10). We should pray for sickness, but also seek medical help. Charles Spurgeon once said, "Pray to God, but keep the hammer going."

It Is Not Necessary To Know How God Works

It is not necessary to know how God does answer prayer, but just the fact that he does. We know little about the how. However, we do know a couple of things.

God answers prayer without violating human will. I may pray for someone to obey the gospel or be restored; however, God will not cause that to happen contrary to their own desire.

God answers prayer without violating or altering natural law. To do that would be to work miracles. Rather, God controls all by natural law. Several years ago Homer Hailey gave the following illustration. God working in his creation is much like driving a car. The automobile is built upon certain principles or laws of operation. If you turn the steering wheel to the right, the car will go to the right. If turned to the left, the car goes left. If you push down on the gas pedal, the car speeds up. If you press on the brake, it will slow down and stop. When I get behind the wheel and turn the wheel this way or that way or push on the gas or press the brake, I am controlling the car within the boundaries of those laws upon which it was built. God is behind the wheel of the universe. He controls it. He does with it as he wishes. He may turn it this way or that way. But, when he does he operates within the confines of natural law.

In answering the prayer God may simply bless me with the means to obtain the things for which I ask. I may be blessed with good health so that I can work to make the money to buy food, clothing, shelter, medicine, automobiles and the like. God may use people or circumstances to my good or accomplish some purpose.

I may pray for patience; yet, it may be that God uses some trouble or problem that I face to develop that in me. I may pray for wisdom; and God may use some aged saint to impart that. He may also answer through the scriptures themselves. It may be that the answer to my problem or question has already been given in the text.

Some Things God Can Do In Answer To Our Prayers

God can give us wisdom (Jas. 1:5), heal the sick (Jas. 5:13-18), give us grace and strength to help (Heb. 4:16), send rain or sun (Matt. 5:45; Jas. 5:16-18), give us food, clothing, shelter or other necessities (Matt. 6:13,19-33) and even control life or death (Jas. 4:15).

We Don't Know

While we can be assured that God does hear and answer our prayers (1 Pet. 3:12), we must be careful about speaking of specific cases and saying that what was or was not done was an act of providence in response to our prayers. I may pray for a sick brother and he may recover. However, I do not know that God caused that. It may have happened regardless of prayer. This is not to say that people do not recover in response to prayer. God can and does heal the sick (Jas. 5:13-18). But we are warning about speaking of some specific case saying that we know that was an act of providence.

It would do us well to consider a couple of passages that address this point. Mordecai said to Esther, "who knoweth whether thou are come to the kingdom for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14, emphasis mine DVR)? Paul, speaking of Onesimus, said to Philemon, "For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever" (Philemon 15, emphasis mine DVR). Both passages indicate a firm belief in the providence of God, yet both state that we just don't know when God acts in specific cases.

Examples Of God's Providence

Though we don't know when God acts in his providence today, God has told us wherein he acted in some cases in the Bible. Everything that happened to Joseph, from his being sold by his brothers to the bringing of all Israel into Egypt, was part of God's work in carrying out his purpose (Gen. 50:20). Hannah prayed for a child and God granted her request (1 Sam. 1:10-20). Elijah prayed that it might not rain and it did not (Jas. 5:17-18; 1 Kings 17-18). God used the unfaithfulness of the Jews to bring the Gentiles to his service and that caused some jealousy among some of those Jews and thus caused them to return (Rom. 11:25-36).

Though we may not know for sure that something was a direct answer to our prayer, may we still thank and praise God for every good thing we receive (Jas. 1:17; Phil. 4:6). Let us learn to have faith in prayer; then we will become more of a praying people.

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QUESTIONS ON ASSEMBLING

One of the most serious problems facing a local congregation is the failure of the saints to assemble themselves together. So much hinges on this activity that it is difficult (if not impossible), to improve in other areas until this deficiency is corrected. We have pleaded, reasoned, shamed and cajoled to no avail. Maybe it is time to turn the situation around and insist that those who wilfully absent themselves from the assemblies of the church "give a reason of the hope" that is in them (1 Pet. 3:15).

Jesus used the reverse-question method of teaching very effectively, as did inspired writers of the New Testament (Mt. 21:24; Gal. 4:21). Since those who do assemble give reasons why they do, is it not fair for those who do not assemble to tell us why they don't? (We are not talking about excuses, for those who make excuses tacitly admit that they should be in the assemblies of the church.) To paraphrase Paul's question to the Galatians, "Tell us, ye that desire not to assemble..."

1. Is assembling a part of the duty which members of the body owe to one another, and to the Head (Rom. 12:15)?

2. Should those congregations and individuals who faithfully practice assembling together "cease and desist"?

3. Is the practice of assembling good, bad, or optional (Jas. 4:17)?

4. Should the sick, the afflicted, and those who minister to them quench their desire to be with the saints?

5. Is your knowledge and edification perfect? If so, why not come and help the weak? If not, when, where and how will you improve?

6. Are you so busy reading your Bible, visiting the sick and the lost, or attending assemblies of other congregations that you have no time left?

7. Is the building not conveniently located or uncomfortable? Is it too comfortable, or too easy to find? Would a rustic, hard-to-find building present more of a challenge?

8. Just how convenient would your work, the weather, the distance, and other factors have to be before you would attend?

9. We can't change the items of worship, but would it help to change the order of worship, or the time?

10. Would a "trick or treat" environment entice you

to attend on a regular basis (Jno. 6:26; Rom. 14:17)?

11. Would a favorite preacher or song leader influence you (1 Cor. 1:12)? If Paul, or Peter, or James, or John, or Philip, or Stephen, or Jesus were present, would you come?

12. Do you feel better or worse after assembling with the church?

13. How do you feel about attending that Big Assembly called the judgment (Mt. 25:32,33)? Do you plan to go (2 Cor. 5:10)?

14. Is there some other question which we should ask? (After all, until people give us some good reason for not assembling, about all that we can do is guess as to why they don't.)

The command not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:25), cannot be separated from the "For if we sin wilfully" of v. 26; neither can v. 26 be separated from the sobering truths of vv. 27-29. Instead of reminding you what that passage says, I'll ask another question: "How readest thou?"

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The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Ecc. 12:10)."

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WE ARE NOT SAVED BY GRACE, FAITH OR WORKS!

Most religious leaders believe man is saved by God's unmerited favor — grace. But not all agree that man is saved by faith since some "baptize" (sprinkle water on) babies to absolve them of sin. Faith involves listening (Rom. 10:17) with a view to understanding, weighing facts, examining evidence, and making decisions. Babies cannot do this. Hence, salvation without faith.

Other religious leaders teach that one is saved by faith alone and that works (obedience) have nothing to do with it. This is taught in most creed books of the major protestant denominations. Their contention is that one would be earning his salvation if any works were involved.

If it is permissible for religious leaders to teach that one can be saved without faith or without works, would it be permissible for another to teach salvation without grace? How could one consistently oppose this?

The truth is, we must take everything Christ and the apostles said on the subject of salvation and we will have God's pattern — the sum total of his will on the subject. When we examine the New Testament we learn that we are NOT saved by grace, faith, or works! You didn't read wrong.

We Are Not Saved By Grace

1. **IF IT BYPASSES FAITH.** "Without faith it is impossible to please God . . ." (Heb. 11:6) Infants are safe (Mt. 18:3-5; 19:13-15), but when they reach the point of responsibility in their lives it will be absolutely necessary for them to have faith.

2. **IF WE EXPECT IT TO IGNORE OUR UNWILLINGNESS TO REPENT AND OBEY.** Jesus tasted death for "every man" (Heb. 2:9). But "not every one" will be saved (Mt. 7:21). Contrary to religious leaders and popular opinion there is something to do! Jesus said so. No person should rest until he finds out what that "something" is! There are some conditions to be met that do not contradict the concept of grace or earn our salvation. Jesus taught that the majority would be lost (Mt. 7:13, 14). Consequently, his death alone does not automatically save everyone. But it makes salvation available when man gives a positive response to it. Man's will must change.

3. **IF WE EXPECT TO RECEIVE IT THROUGH THE LAW OF MOSES AND THE GOSPEL AT THE**

SAME TIME. The Galatians thought they could. Paul told them, "Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace (Gal. 5:4).

4. **IF WE THINK IT IS A GIFT WITH NO CONDITIONS.** If the gift of God's grace is unconditional then the wicked and righteous will be saved alike — no difference. There must be something that distinguishes the two. There is — *obedience!* Jesus is "the author of eternal salvation to all them that OBEY him" (Heb. 5:8, 9).

5. **IF WE WON'T ACCEPT ITS TEACHING.** "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, *teaching us . . .*" how to live in this present world. God's grace will avail nothing if we won't allow it to teach us what to do.

6. **IF WE ARE LOOKING FOR A LOOPHOLE.** His grace is universal but we must follow proper channels God has set out if we expect to receive its benefits. There are no shortcuts, runarounds, or loopholes.

We Are Not Saved By Faith

1. **IF IT IS BY FAITH ONLY.** The only time "faith" and "only" are coupled in Scripture it says "NOT by faith only" (Js. 2:24). We must not isolate passages that teach salvation by faith and act as if that is all God said on the subject. This is why men conclude "faith only." They are not taking all God said on the subject of salvation. There are many other passages which deal with salvation and they tell us that it is not faith alone but that there are additional requirements.

2. **IF WE DO NOT ALSO REPENT.** Since our Lord does not want any to be lost, he desires that all men come to repentance to avoid being lost (2 Pet. 3:9). Sins are not blotted out until we repent and are converted (Acts 3:19).

3. **IF IT IS NOT ACCOMPANIED BY A GENUINE CONFESSION.** Some chief rulers believed but would not confess (Jn. 12:42, 43). "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10).

4. **IF WE OMIT BAPTISM.** Since the Bible says we are "baptized into Christ" (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27), it is unthinkable that anyone would say it is unnecessary. How else are we going to get into Christ. No other verse tells us the point at which one enters a relationship with Christ. "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

We Are Not Saved By Works

1. **IF IT IS BY WORKS OF THE LAW.** "... For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16). The attempts of men today to incorporate portions of the law of Moses into their worship will not serve one iota toward pleasing God. He won't accept it.

2. **IF IT IS BY WORKS OF MEN.** Works invented by men will not save. If so, then man could boast that he climbed up his own way. "... Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:9).

3. **IF IT IS BY WORKS OF THE FLESH.** Paul gives a whole category of works of the flesh and con-

eludes by saying "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21). This needs more emphasis today as we see many denominations granting respectability to heathen practices (fornication, homosexuality), making it appear that God approves of any "loving" relationship.

Conclusion

We are saved by grace THROUGH FAITH (Eph. 2:8). We are saved by faith THAT WORKS through love (Gal. 5:6). We are saved by works if by that we mean OBEDIENCE to God. "... Ye have always *obeyed*,... *work* out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).

SYLVIA LEE WHEELER
1939-1987

Loren T. Stephens
P. O. Box 11
Lawrenceburg, KY 40342

Preachers are called upon for many things in this life, by the nature of the vocation they have chosen. On February 22, at the request of bro. Tom Wheeler, I spoke, along with Gary Fiscus, at the memorial service for Tom's dear wife, Sylvia. She had passed from this life, to await the coming of her Lord, on Thursday night, February 19, 1987. Sylvia was a friend, a wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and loved one, and especially, a Christian. She truly loved the Lord and Tom Wheeler. Her life was filled with doing good. She was quiet and reserved, yet possessed with an easy manner and enjoyed people, even some pranks now and then. Preachers were always made welcome and at home with the Wheelers, and hospitality was a way of life for Sylvia. She will be missed.

I had the privilege of knowing Sylvia, and my life is blessed in that. Many of you who read this knew her longer than I, yet I feel honored that I knew her both as a friend and fellow Christian, and that Tom asked me to participate in the memorial service.

I would like to share with you an unusual circumstance which occurred in my life that Thursday evening. I sat at the bedside of Sylvia Wheeler, with her husband Tom, his brother Frank, and their daughter and son-in-law. We sat watching the hospital equipment record the declining day of the fleshly abode of Sylvia. Her spirit had already left the body, we were watching a monitor showing an electrical response from a heart which had ceased pumping, and would not die. That continued for about five hours. During the time this was happening, Tom and I talked of memories. He mentioned some of the good times, and some of the bad times, that he and Sylvia had shared. He said, "You know, even those tough times are good memories because we shared them?" Later, he spoke softly of other

things. He said, "I have no idea of the height of her I. Q., but it was considerably more than mine. She could have been anything in this world she wanted to be, and I thank God she chose to be my wife."

As the drama of the end of her life was unfolding, daughter Cheryl, in Beaver Dam, KY., was giving birth to a beautiful baby girl. Think about that, friends.

It was said by Gary Fiscus that the writings in Proverbs and all those passages we normally refer to are fitting regarding Sylvia, yet for those who knew her best, those verses almost seem inadequate. A poem given me by a dear friend speaks it best, the author completely unknown to me, but so much the attitude of Sylvia as to suggest her to all who knew her.

MY DEATH

I obeyed His will and kept His command,
Now death beckons from yonder land.
Life has been sweet in this short space,
But how glorious to meet Him face to face.

I am crossing a river to celestial land,
the Lord is my shepherd, He holds my hand.
The promise is fulfilled, nothing to dread,
My spirit lives on, I am not dead.

The beauty of death buries the sting,
while heaven rejoices and angels sing.
The body returns to the earthly sod,
But the spirit lives on with the eternal God.

Loved ones, mourn not the passing soul;
Trials I have endured to reach this goal,
So grieve not as I leave this world of pain,
But hold His hand, we shall meet again!

Life is not over, tis a beautiful morn,
The mortal is passed, but immortality is born.
My soul on the Word has graciously fed,
Asleep in Jesus, I am not dead.

Sylvia Wheeler is gone from this life, but leaves a legacy of love and good will behind, that shall live on in the lives of her dear husband and her daughters and grandchildren, so long as the Lord tarries. Her example of the Godly woman, the loving and supportive wife, and friend to everyone she knew, and a lot she did not, stands, in testimony and tender memory. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Tom, and our prayers offered that all may see Christ living in us, as He did in Sylvia. She rests in peace from her labors.

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WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

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MARRYING "ONLY IN THE LORD"

QUESTION: *Does 1 Cor. 7:39 teach that a believing widow should marry a Christian if she remarries? I feel that it teaches a widow should marry a Christian. I could be wrong, and if I am wrong, I would be glad to change my thinking on this.*

ANSWER: 1 Cor. 7:39 says: "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." There are three major views of this passage as to what "only in the Lord" means.

1. **A believing widow may marry only a Christian.** Several commentators take this position. Albert Barnes states, "That is, only to one who is a Christian; with a proper sense of her obligations to Christ, and so as to promote his glory. The apostle supposed that could not be done if she were allowed to marry a heathen, or one of a different religion."

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown say that "only in the Lord" means, "Let her marry *only a Christian.*" E. M. Zerr wrote, "To be *in the Lord*, therefore, can mean nothing else than being in His body which is the church. A Christian widow has no right to marry a man outside of the church. The principle would logically apply to a Christian man."

2. **A temporary condition caused by the "present distress."** The saints at Corinth were undergoing persecution, brought on perhaps by oppression from the Roman government. Paul calls this "the present distress" (v. 26). In view of these adverse circumstances and difficult times, the apostle instructs the widows that if they marry, they are to marry Christians.

This regulation, some contend, was only temporary, that is, during the "present distress," (v. 26). In view of these adverse circumstances and difficult times, the apostle instructs the widows that if they marry, they are to marry Christians.

This regulation, some contend, was only temporary, that is, during the "present distress," but after this period of tribulation, the restriction, "only in the Lord," was no longer in effect, and the widow could marry whomsoever she chose. Of course, her choice would be regulated by what God said elsewhere on marriage.

E. M. Zerr makes, I think, a valid point in this connection when he said, "The present verse plainly says the wife is bound *by the law* . . . as long as her husband liveth; not as long as this 'distress' continued. Hence,

the verse involves a matter of right and wrong (not one of expediency as in the others)." His conclusion was that "only in the Lord" is law and not a temporary expediency.

3. **In harmony with or according to the will of the Lord.** This third view is what I believe the phrase, "only in the Lord," means. Paul is saying that the believing widow is to marry according to the teaching of the Lord on marriage and in harmony with Christian conduct. He did not say that her marriage partner was to be in the Lord, but that her *marriage* was to be in the Lord. There is a difference!

Thayer says "in the Lord" means, "the *Christian* aim, nature, quality of any action or virtue" (p. 211). Hence, marriage should be, according to Thayer, in harmony with Christian principles.

Several times in the New Testament, the expression "in the Lord" is found. For example, when Paul said, "Children obey your parents in the Lord" (Eph. 6:1), did he mean that children are to obey their parents only if they are members of the church? If this be true, then children would not be required to obey their parents if the parents are not Christians. In Col. 3:18, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." Does this mean that wives are to obey their husbands only if they are Christians? These passages simply state that it is the will of the Lord for children to obey their parents and wives to obey their husbands.

If the first view we listed is correct, what is the spiritual condition of the woman who marries an unbeliever? Would she have to divorce her husband? No, because 1 Cor. 7:12-13 teaches that the believing mate is not to put away the unbeliever. Someone says, "She should repent and stay with her husband." Would this be repentance? How does one repent of something while remaining in the sinful practice?

Furthermore, why is it that a widow, often a mature Christian, advanced in years and experienced in life, **MUST** marry a believer, but a teenager who is young and immature, **MAY** marry a non-Christian, lawfully speaking? This is strange reasoning. It seems to me that the teenager would need to marry a Christian far more than would an older widow. Of course, if God makes a prohibition, whether we can see the wisdom behind it or not, we must accept it, regardless. But, to my knowledge and understanding, "only in the Lord" means that the marriage is to be in keeping with the Scriptures. In conclusion, I would recommend and urge that all Christians marry faithful Christians. This is the wise course to pursue. Marrying unbelievers can cause a lot of heartaches and may cause one to leave the Lord and lose his soul.

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The apostle Paul wrote in Phil. 1:3, 5, 6; "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you... for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (KJV)

In this article I want to discuss the fellowship we can have with gospel preachers, both in domestic and foreign fields. In recent years, from what we read in the field reports of gospel preachers, we see a trend, that though it is not new, is nevertheless alarming.

In the Guardian of Truth, the Feb. 19, 1987, issue, on page 18, there is an excellent article by Reid Braswell on the work in Bogota, Columbia. After recounting some of the work accomplished, Bro. Braswell says this in the eighth paragraph: "My family and I are now back in the states due to a loss of support." (emphasis mine, LRD) Brethren, we have quit too soon! Churches should continue their support and keep good men in the field preaching the gospel "until the day of Jesus Christ." The apostle Paul in Titus 3:8 wrote that we should "maintain good works." Let's not stop them, but keep on with the support of preaching the gospel.


In Searching the Scriptures (Feb., 1987, Newsletter Reports, on page 18), we find a report from Paul Williams in South Africa. In it he says, "David Hurst is having a hard time raising support, in part because brethren have been turned off about South Africa because of the sensational TV saturation coverage of the past few months." Churches should rally to meet the needs of Bro. Hurst. The brethren in Johannesburg want him and are going to help support him. The gospel needs to be preached in South Africa and Columbia and elsewhere around the world. Internal unrest in these countries is no reason to fail to support the preaching of the gospel of our Lord. If so, we should curtail preaching the gospel in any city in America that has ever had a race or labor problem. The New Testament writers never warned against preaching the gospel in any country occupied by the Roman Empire, or for any other reason. Paul said "Preach the word ..." (2 Tim. 4:1).

Many of the reports by other gospel preachers show that there are many places here in America where brethren need support. My son-in-law, Craig Meyer, of Manchester, Tenn. and Whit Sasser are attempting to raise support to work together as a team in establishing a new work in Madison, Wisconsin. Bro. Sasser has already moved there, and I do not know if he has all of his

support. Bro. Meyer has slightly over one-half of his support raised and plans to move there at the end of May. I feel confident that these brethren will be successful in their efforts to raise enough support to begin this work in the capitol city of Wisconsin.

But brethren, a six month or one year commitment to these kinds of work is not enough! If brethren Hurst, Sasser, Meyer and others are willing to spend the best years of their lives devoted to the cause of Christ, then this dedication needs to be given the years of financial support necessary to its successful fruition. Don't quit too soon!

I was a "full-time" gospel preacher from Oct. 1966 to Dec. 1980. For the most part I worked with small churches and had to raise outside support. I was generally successful in raising the necessary support, and then a year later, one church or another would write to me and say they were going to "pave the parking lot" or "build a new building" or whatever and would discontinue my support. Then I would have to try to replace this support or get a part-time job to help support my family. I recall one church I was working with as a "full-time" preacher, I was also selling real estate part-time, was a part-time truant officer for the high school, and a substitute school bus driver, all in order to support my family. I am not complaining. I was glad to do it. But all such activities reduce the time that can be given to gospel work. We need more faithful gospel preachers who are able to devote full time to the Lord's work, both here in America, and around the world. Indeed, in most foreign countries, it would be next to impossible for an American preacher to get a part-time job, and take away employment from a native citizen of that country. We need to adequately support our men who are preaching the gospel, wherever they may be. We need to "maintain good works" and we need to remember "that he (God) which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."



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PRIORITIES

J. Mike Johnson
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"We need to put first things first." "You need to get your priorities straightened out." These are common expressions in our society. Certainly, priorities do need to be kept in mind. There are some things that are more important than others.

The Bible has a lot to say concerning priorities also. God expects the Christian to put "first things first." A Christian is to realize what is truly important. Matthew 6:33 says that we are to seek first the kingdom of God. Also, Paul admonishes that we are to "approve things that are excellent" (Phil. 1:10).

Beauty

The Bible speaks of certain ones who were "fair" or "beautiful." Some were of good character; others were not. The "daughters of men" of Genesis 6, Sarah (Gen. 12:11) and Rebekah (Gen. 24:15) were all described as being fair. Vashti, the queen of Ahasuerus, was referred to as "fair" (Est. 1:11-12). Her husband wanted to show off her beauty before a group of men at his banquet. She refused to come and ended up losing her position as queen. Esther, in the same book, took Vashti's place. She is referred to as "fair and beautiful" (2:7).

Much emphasis is placed in our society on physical beauty. Think of all the products and services that are advertised and sold in our society which are supposed to make a person more attractive. There is nothing wrong with a person wanting to look attractive. We should be concerned about our bodies and our appearance. However, it must be understood that physical beauty is not the main thing.

The main point of emphasis with the Christian should be the inner person. 1 Peter 3:3-4 reveals that the most important thing is not the outward adorning of a person. Here, as Peter addresses wives, he says that their adorning should be, "... the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Physical beauty quickly fades; character, i.e. inner beauty, can last a lifetime. There is nothing wrong with physical beauty. It is not, however, the main thing. Inner beauty is where our priorities should always be.

Preaching

There have been many polished, educated and eloquent orators of God's Word. They existed in Bible times. They have existed in more recent times and they are even present in our times. Apollos, in the New Testament, fit into this category. He is described in Acts 18:24 as "an eloquent man" and "mighty in scriptures." He was from Alexandria which was a center of Hebrew

and Greek learning. He was clearly a very effective teacher. He is mentioned for the work he did at Corinth. Many denominational preachers today have a very good manner or presentation. They obviously have great speaking ability.

It is important for preachers to present their material in a very clear way. They need to try and improve their grammar, pronunciation and presentation generally. It would probably do most preachers good to listen to themselves on tape from time to time or even more intimidating, to watch themselves on video. Also, secular education can be helpful. Eloquence is important but it is not the main thing for a preacher. Something else is more important.

The main criterion for a preacher is that he be "set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). He must have conviction and always be willing to stand for the truth. Eloquence means nothing without a desire to stand for God's Word.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:1 that he came not to the Corinthians with "excellency of speech" or "wisdom." He said, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified" (v. 2). Paul was not against excellency of speech or human wisdom. Instead, he places emphasis on the importance of God's message.

It is good for a preacher to have a good education and to be a smooth, polished and eloquent speaker. However, that is not the main thing. The main thing is to preach the truth and be willing to stand for it.

Health

We read in the Bible of people who had various physical ailments. Job would be an example from the Old Testament of a person who, at least for awhile, suffered a great deal. 2 Kings 20 tells us that King Hezekiah was sick unto death. Paul had a thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:7), and Timothy apparently had stomach problems (1 Tim. 5:23). Paul speaks of Epaphroditus as having been sick unto death. Paul had a thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. various diseases and physical problems that people had who were healed by Christ.

Physical health is very important to people. A statement often made is, "if you have your health you have everything." Much emphasis is placed on health today. Health food stores, vitamins, exercise equipment, exercise shows are still very popular. We all want to be physically healthy and there is nothing wrong with trying to be. Physical health, however, is not the main thing.

The main emphasis with people should be their spiritual health. We read of certain ones in the Bible who had spiritual ailments. The church at Laodicea thought that they were in good spiritual health but they were not. Jesus told them that they were spiritually blind (Rev. 3:18). They were unable to see spiritually. Simon may have had good physical health. However, Peter told him in Acts 8:21, "... for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." He was a man with spiritual heart trouble.

There is nothing wrong with trying to maintain or acquire good physical health. It is important to under-

stand that the main point of emphasis should be our spiritual health. A person may have good physical and spiritual health. If a person loses his physical health and continues to maintain his good spiritual health, then he continues to be healthy in the most important way.

Wealth

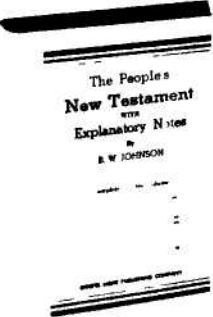
We read of quite a few wealthy people in the word of God. People such as Abraham, Job and Joseph of Arimathea are mentioned as being wealthy. There is nothing wrong with money itself. We need a certain amount of it to function in our society. Paul charges the rich in 1 Timothy 6 not to be high-minded or trust in uncertain riches and to use their wealth to accomplish good (vs. 17, 18). There may be some advantage to physical wealth, but it is not the main thing in the life of a Christian.

The main kind of wealth to have is spiritual wealth. Jesus said to the church at Smyrna, in Revelation 3:9, "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich). . . ." Smyrna, known as the suffering church, may have been physically poor, but they were spiritually rich. On the other hand, Laodicea, which was apparently physically wealthy, was described as spiritually "wretched," "miserable," "poor" and "naked" (Rev. 3:17). Smyrna had the most important kind of wealth of all. Their wealth was enduring (Mt. 6:19-21). Smyrna is sometimes called the "poor rich church" while Laodicea is called the "rich poor church."

Conclusion

We need to make sure that we always put first things first. We need to keep our priorities in order. It is important to understand which is the most important between physical vs. inner beauty; eloquence vs. standing for the truth in preaching; good physical vs. spiritual health and physical wealth vs. spiritual wealth.

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KICK OUT GOD AND HIS WORD — HIRE A COUNSELOR!

The November '86 issue of Reader's Digest carried an article by Dienne Hales, entitled "Ten Tips For A Happier Marriage." I am not writing in opposition to the article itself. Actually, some very good tips are given. It is suggested that such instruction, by counselors, can be helpful to the one in five U.S. couples whose marriage is in trouble, because former "props" to marriage have been abandoned by so many people. In other words, professional counseling replaces the abandoned props.

John Guidubalde, professor of counseling at Kent State University, is quoted as saying "So many props—religion, social, familial—have been kicked out from under marriage that marital distress has become the number one mental-health problem in this country." In view of this, the writer of the article says "But there is good news for sparring partners: marital therapy can and does help."

Basis for Rejecting Props

I believe the "kicking out of props—religious, social, familial—" is a result of humanistic influences, taught so profusely today in every area of communication. School class rooms and text books are filled with humanistic philosophy: a philosophy which declares there are no authoritative directives above the individual himself—not God, not parents (family), not society—: The satisfying development of self is the chief objective of life. Promoters of this philosophy seek to out-law from class rooms and text books any mention of such "props" to marriage as religion, God-fearing . . . Bible-believing families, and a God-Bible oriented society. This humanistic philosophy has so saturated minds that many, many, many have kicked God, family, and society out of their lives, going their merry way regardless of what these props say or think.

According to an AP release by columnist Christopher Connell (Huntsville Times 11/13/86) a special administrative task force has reported to President Reagan, in a 70 page report—"The Family: Preserving America's Future," that "the fabric of American family life has been torn by two decades of liberal social experiments, from no-fault divorce laws to permissive sex to easy availability of welfare." The task force endorses or recommends "restrictions on welfare for unmarried teenage mothers, exhorts the courts to back off rulings that undermine traditional family mores and urges the gov-

eminent to resist social engineering and lighten the tax burden on families." The report says "The family has lost too much of its authority to Courts and rule-writers, too much of its voice in education and social policy, too much of its resources to public officials at all levels."... "Our judges probably did not intend to touch off an explosion of illegitimacy when they minimized the power of the states to legislate on that subject. But it happened, and today our society wonders how to get the genie of personal indulgence back into the bottle of legal restraints." . . . "This fabric of family life has been frayed by the abrasive experiments of two liberal decades."

In society's new chosen life style, there are problems—increased marital problems—and a need for help. Having kicked out those former beliefs and principles that were such helps, all that is left is "Hire a Counselor." The Counselor often points out the very principles and actions of those abandoned props, but the counseling is often lacking in power, not being mixed with faith on the part of the counselor. He/She calls people's attention to principles and actions of truth and soundness, based upon human reasoning and experience, which does not have the power to induce response that "faith" has. Let us observe that the "Ten Tips For A Happier Marriage" in Readers Digest offers nothing that could not be gotten from the abandoned props.

The Ten Tips

1. **FOCUS ON WHAT'S GOOD.** (Not just on bad things—compliment one another—See more good things than bad about another.)

This is Bible instruction. "Love is kind... thinketh no evil . . . believeth all things" (1 Cor. 13:4-7); "... her children call her blessed; her husband praiseth her . . . many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all..." (Prov. 31:28-29); "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:1).

2. **STOP RECYCLING GRIPES.** (Complaining of same problems over and over—forget and forgive.)

The Bible has a great deal to say about holding grudges and being unwilling to repent and reconcile (Matt. 5:23-26; 18:15).

3. **GET RID OF GHOSTS.** (Things must be done the way mother/father did them—as customarily done—if not, doing something wrong.)

Getting rid of the "ghosts" of tradition and seeking a solid basis for our actions is something taught in the inspired scriptures. The Pharisees of Jesus' day, including the apostle Paul before his conversion, were "dead set" on declaring every one wrong who violated their human traditions (Mark 7:1-10; Ga. 1:13-14), but in so doing, Jesus said "ye reject the commandment of God." The word of God urges, and shows how, to distinguish between "ghosts" and a sound basis for our actions.

4. **SET RULES FOR DEFUSING ANGER.** (Anger smolders and explodes, often tearing relationships apart.)

There is no better place to go for learning the havoc anger causes and how to defuse it than God's Word

(Eph. 4:26; Psa. 37:7-9; Col. 3:8; Prov. 15:1).

5. **NEGOTIATE FOR WHAT YOU WANT.** (Practice give and take—Bargain, negotiate with one another about what is sacrificed, given to or done for one another, avoiding selfishness.)

A better hand-book or Counselor for this kind of thing can not be found than the Bible-God's Word (Lk. 14:27-33; 1 Cor. 6:7; Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 10:24).

6. **REWRITE THE SCRIPT FOR SITUATIONS YOU DON'T LIKE.** (Work out a solution by compromise or substitution, instead of brooding, bickering, or seething within)

Here, again, is an area where God's Word (Bible) and religious influences instruct and motivate.

7. **LOOK FOR THE PROBLEM BEHIND THE PROBLEM.** (The immediate problem—continual bickering, conflict in careers, lack of sexual interest, etc. may be only symptoms of other things—lack of communication, selfishness, grudge holding, neglect, etc.)

A modern counselor may effectively point out what lies behind the problem and show you what to work on, but the best help you can find for solving the problem is spiritual teaching and associations.

8. **DON'T LET SMALL THINGS LOOM LARGE.** (Uncapped tooth paste tubes, dishes in the sink, socks left on the floor may annoy and depict sloppiness or carelessness, but attributing motives to such, as showing who's boss, just to spite and aggravate, means no love for the one annoyed, will cause a major war.)

Again, the thing needed in dealing with such—patience, tolerance, respect, and forgiveness—comes from religious (Bible) instruction and influence.

9. **TAKE REGULAR "TEMPERATURE READINGS."** (Regularly spend time together, communicating—learning each other's joys, hurts, desires, gripes, hopes, dreams.)

Such action is an off-spring of Christianity and God-oriented families, demonstrating the true meaning of love.

10. **IF YOUR SPOUSE WON'T SEE A THERAPIST, GO ON YOUR OWN.** (Maybe, once you begin, the spouse will follow, because of curiosity or a desire to tell his/her side.)

Those who still hold to the prop of religion say, "If your spouse won't "go to church" with you, go on your own. Maybe he will start, out of curiosity—to see what has intrigued you . . . changed you, or because of your influence. But, of course, those who have kicked out the prop of religion have no other place to go when in trouble, except to human wisdom Counselors.

Aim

The aim of this article is to show that while Counselors may often point out matters of truth and wisdom, they are only calling attention to truths and wisdom set forth in the Bible, which the patient has previously rejected or kicked out. Some will accept the counseling because it comes as "human wisdom" instead of divine wisdom. I believe much more good can be done by urging troubled couples to return to the divine, tried, and proven props instead of seeking help from human wis-

dom Counselors who counsel from the standpoint of human wisdom and experience. Some help may be obtained, but not nearly as much, and enduring, as a return to faith in God and His Word. One is "Bread of life" and the other "bread that satisfieth little."

RESPECT IN MARRIAGE

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No marriage can happily survive without the presence of "mutual respect." Marriage vows, for the most part, do not include the word "respect" and not many books tell couples how to achieve it, yet it is essential to a successful marital union. Let us now study, "Respect in Marriage."

Francine Klagsbrun in her book "Married People: Staying Together In The Age Of Divorce," talked with 150 couples and held in-depth interviews with 85 couples who had been married 15 years or more. She reports that a majority of the people interviewed said, "I respect him or I respect her." She thought it significant too that the feeling was a "mutual feeling" by both partners. It was something freely admitted by both parties.

WHAT IS RESPECT? It is not what many people think it is. It is often mistakenly confused with another value called "admiration." I am not saying "admiration" is not important, but that it must not be mistaken for "respect." When couples undergo this exciting experience called, "falling in love," they usually "admire" each other, but this does not have the enduring nature which is found in "respect." Admiration can mean nothing more than looking up to someone for some particular reason. Perhaps, the way a child looks up to an idealized parent, is a good illustration. In the field of romance, "romantic admiration" thrives and I might say, even depends on the illusion that he or she is "absolutely perfect for me." This is not lasting in its nature, because sooner or later we have to come off the romantic cloud nine and settle down to reality and that's when the bubble bursts. Suddenly, you see this person you have married somewhat different than you had idealized. You now see some things you don't exactly like. Of course, they have been there all the time, but in the state of "romantic intoxication" you hadn't noticed.

When two people are trying to blend together in marriage they will be confronted with difference in personality, in approaches to life, and because of backgrounds, different ways of doing things. So, the new bride says, "This is not exactly what I am accustomed to and I have just lost my respect for him." Probably not. More than likely what you lost was your "fantasy of him."

YOU ARE NOW AT A CRUCIAL CROSSROAD IN

YOUR MARRIAGE. At this point, "respect" begins to develop or it doesn't. At this stage couples are likely to say and do some hateful things to one another. This, within itself, shows that respect is absent in the marriage. You can now take the destructive path of punishing your mate by trying to "mold" him or her to fit your "fantasy" or the constructive route of developing respect for each other. If the marriage is to be successful, you must take the later. The Holy Spirit directed Paul to admonish; "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband," (Ephesians 5:25,33).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESPECT. Of course, no conduct in either mate that is contrary to the will of God can be respected. This is a good reason why Christians ought to be very careful about whom they marry. But, the development of respect means accepting the worth (assuming it has worth) of the other persons point of view even though you may not wholeheartedly agree with it. You may have to sometimes "agree to disagree" or just "let the other be" for a little while. It must be recognized that "respect" is both an attitude and a style of behavior. The same is true of a "lack of respect."

A husband may love sports and we shall assume it is with some moderation. His wife can react in two ways. She can refuse to see any value in his activities, criticize, nag, and "put him down" or she can pack him a nice lunch, help him get his stuff together, kiss him good-bye and wish him well. She may say, "Our taste are quite different, but I even go with him sometimes." When our boys were young we once owned a fold-out type camper which we pulled to New Mexico and Colorado on several vacations. This was not really my wife's cup of tea. Her idea of camping out was two baths a day at the Holiday Inn. But, she never complained because she knew how much we enjoyed it. The boys and I tried to make it as comfortable for her as possible and took her into civilization occasionally. Amazingly, we all blended together and she came to enjoy it all about as much as we did. She respected us and our interest.

A wife's interest may be window shopping, reading, attending cultural events, sewing or volunteer activities. Her husband can react by making fun or putting her down. If he really respects her he will provide some time for her interest and will be as gracious as possible. Most husbands had rather go to a funeral than shoe shopping with their wives, but for the sake of her feelings he can learn to patiently tag along. (The worst part is the indecision after having looked at ten different pairs.) We may tease each other a little, but there is fondness in the jibes as we maintain a firm support for the right of the other to be himself or herself. But, in all we are showing respect.

THIS RESPECT MUST BE MUTUAL. It becomes obvious why "respect" (or the lack of it) can only be mutual in the long run. A husband or wife who is lovingly accepted is inspired to reciprocate, but when one is constantly put down he or she will, sooner or later,

strike back. When "respect" is lacking in a home the put-down is one of the chief symptoms. It actually becomes a weapon with which to destroy one's mate. It can do great psychological damage. It is an expression of contempt toward another and is a dangerous emotion. Anger can do a great deal of damage, but not nearly so much as contempt which has no sympathy, which recognizes no worth in the other person. It can do just about as much damage as I observe in "wife abuse" cases.

To some degree, "respect" is simply a regard for a certain amount of separateness. I constantly preach "togetherness" in family life, but even at that, some separateness must be respected. This is not saying, "you go your way and I will go mine." This is taking the idea too far and will pull the marriage apart. "Respect" is something that will help you understand your mate's outlook and help to make it part of your own, providing that outlook is not sinful. In a good marriage people become more like each other. The reason is, "respect" has caused them to blend into "one." It may be said that "love is blind" until respect starts taking its place in our thinking. The root meaning of the word "respect" is; "to look again." Through an undimmed and loving eye you begin to see your mate for what he really is. You can also see the potential that is there and you lend encouragement and support that it may be brought to fruition. "Respect" is the kind of love through which married couples honor and cherish what is dear, unique, and best in each other.

THE DESTRUCTION AND REBUILDING OF RESPECT. It takes time to build deep respect, but it can be tarnished quickly. Let us consider some things that destroy it and what it takes to rebuild it.

1. You can damage your mate's respect for you by, nagging, nit-picking, and put-downs. May I ask, would you want to be treated this way? You can start reversing this damage by substituting nagging with reasonable requests, nit-picking with compliments, and put-downs with build-ups.

2. You can damage your mate's respect for you by

allowing your affections to be alienated by another person. This can erode "respect" quickly because it hurts deeply. May I ask, would you want your mate's affections placed on another person? You can start rebuilding this lost respect by putting your affections back where they belong. Husbands and wives with "straying affections" sometimes try to excuse their conduct by saying, "I just can't help it." This mentality which smacks of, "the devil made me do it or God made me this way and that's just the way I am" is just seeking an excuse for sinning. You can do what you need to do IF you really want to. There is a way of escape if we want it (I Cor. 10:13).

3. You can damage your mate's respect for you by maintaining a hard, bossy, overbearing spirit. This causes the other person to turn you off in a hurry. May I ask, do you like it when others demonstrate this spirit toward you? You can start turning this around by "backing off" and "softening" your approach. You need to have a good session with the Lord's Golden Rule. "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke 6:31).

4. You can erode your mate's "respect" for you by refusing to communicate. I am not saying your mate has to be a sixteen-hour chatter-box. What I am really talking about is sharing. When we cease communicating we are essentially saying, "I don't wish to share my life with you." May I ask, do you like it when someone you love gives you the silent treatment? You can improve this situation by sharing your thoughts, ideas, and feelings again.

5. You can damage your mate's respect for you by manifesting an unforgiving spirit. There is nothing that hurts much worse than not being forgiven when you are trying to change your ways. May I ask, would it hurt you if someone refused to grant you their forgiveness? You can change this by remembering that you can't have forgiveness from God if you won't grant forgiveness to others.

No marriage can be a true success without "**MUTUAL RESPECT.**"

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

(At brother Adams' request I am preparing the news column while he is recuperating from back surgery. — Donnie V. Rader)

J. M. KENNEDY, 1604 Hyland Road, Chester, IL 62233 — I have been working with the small congregation here in Chester since August 1985. When we first moved here there were 8 members, all of whom but one were retired. We had hoped to become self-supporting. Our contribution has been about \$225 per week. We average about 20 in attendance. We have enough children coming to have a class for them. A few non-members attend. The churches in Williams and Kokomo, IN and Rogersville, AL are helping in my support. However,

our treasury is now at the point where we will have to move in June of this year unless we can get about \$600 more per month. The contribution here averages about \$25 per person. The church is at peace and stands for the truth. We have a Bible correspondence course and have filmstrips we have shown.

Unless we get sufficient support by June, I will be available to relocate. I am 58 years old, married, and have been preaching for 41 years. I will be happy to communicate with any congregation looking for a preacher at that time. My phone number is (618) 826-2880. You may contact Wm. Crowder, (618) 826-3661, or Clarence Randolph (618) 965-3174 for further information.

TRUMAN SMITH, 137 Wildwood Dr., Pineville, Louisiana 71360 — After 26 years with the South Broadway church in La Porte, TX my wife and I have now moved to Louisiana (December 1986) to work full time with the newly formed congregation in Alexandria. Alexandria is right in the middle of the state. Pineville and Alexandria are treated as practically one city. The two together have a population of about 145,000. There are two liberal churches and one premillennial church of Christ here. We are persuaded that there is much potential here for a fine New Testament church.

The Union Rd. church in Lufkin, TX is paying for radio time each week on a "Christian Broadcasting Station" here which has a rather large audience of Baptist, Assemblies of God and Pentecostals.

When we moved here the attendance was about 14. We are working with some unfaithful members in hopes that they will be restored.

England Air Force Base is located here, and if a reader knows of any service people here, please send their names to us. We are doing our best to follow up on all of the leads we get. We are temporarily meeting at the Best Western Motel, 2720 W. Mac Arthur Drive. Our services are at 9:30, 10:30 and 6:00 on Sunday and 7:00 on Wednesday. If ever in this area please come and be with us. Our phone: (318) 640-5658.

DON GIVENS, 411 Hobron Lane if 3511, Honolulu, HI 96815 — We have had four baptisms recently in the work at Waipahu. Please visit us when you are traveling in Hawaii, on the island of Oahu. The church building is 17 miles west of Waikiki where all the tourists hotels are.

Brother Guillermo of Waipahu is returning to full-time preaching. He plans to move to the island of Maui in July and establish a sound congregation. If you can help with his monthly support, contact him directly at 1283 Henokea St., Waipahu, HI 96797. His phone: (808) 671-0239.

We certainly need more teachers of the gospel on all Hawaiian islands. Currently, I am the only sound full time preacher in the Aloha State. There needs to be the planting of the seed on Kauai, the Big Island, Molokai and Maui.

BRIAN V. SULLIVAN, Box 430, Fonthill, Ontario, Canada LOS 1E0 — We are in our fourth year with the good church at Wellandport, Ontario. We are located just a few miles off the beaten path in the farmland of Niagara Peninsula. Close to 50 assemble on Sunday mornings. In the past year we saw seven responses to the gospel. All seven continue to grow and develop.

Aside from the regular preaching and teaching here we have had a busy past year. Here are some of the highlights: seven nursing home or hospital services, newspaper articles, a local bulletin with over 130 pages of teaching material and special studies (including Crossroadism, the Messianic hope and the first sixteen Psalms). Our First lesson

book entitled Ready or Not dealing with problems of teens was published by Faith and Facts Press. I held five meetings last year at Thayer Street in Akron; Glencoe, Ontario; Piscataway, NJ; Jamestown, KY and South River, Ontario. I have four meetings planned for this spring. We are busy in the Lord's work and are excited about the prospects for the future.

FROM FOREIGN FIELDS

ITALY — STEFANO CORAZZO, via Tagliamento 9/2, 33100 Udine, Italy — A young man, Andrea (21 years old), was baptized into Christ. We had studied with him for 15 months. He is a fine young man and I'm sure he will give his best in faithful service to the Lord. We hope to reach others through him.

ARGENTINA — CARLOS CAPELLI, Casilla #83, 1665 Jose, C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina — On Saturday Feb. 14, we saw seven precious souls come to Jesus. All seven were members of the Evangelical Christian Church. All of them asked to be Biblically baptized. This was during a gospel meeting in General Pico — La Pampa (about 600 km Jose C. Paz). With this a new work is under way in General Pico — La Pampa. Lord willing, I will be back there for another meeting April 15-19.

SOUTH AFRICA — PAUL K. WILLIAMS, P. O. Box 324, Eshowe, 3815 South Africa — Brother Solomon Mzolo of Greytown phoned me several months ago because he was upset concerning youth camp the black church in Edendale (Pietermaritzburg) was having. He has arranged for me to come to Greytown on March 7 to present a lesson to other preachers. Several Zulu preachers and at least one white preacher plan to attend. We have also recently baptized Felicia Nzusa (18 years old) into Christ.

CHURCHES IN NEW BUILDINGS

NEWARK, OH, — The Wallace St. church of Christ outgrew its building and purchased a building located at 28th and West Main. This building was built by a faithful few who started the Wallace St. church. In the 70's the building on Main St. was sold to the Pentecostals from whom the Wallace St. church bought the building. When in the area worship with these brethren. Their address is 987 W. Main St. Rick Hubartt is the preacher there.

MARYVILLE (SMOKEY MOUNTAIN AREA), TN — The Smokey Mountain church of Christ, 2206 Montvale Road, Maryville, TN 37801 is now meeting in their new building located two miles south of the Lamar Alexander Parkway. Maryville is only 20 miles from the Great Smokey Mountain National Park, via Towend. Services are at 9:30, 10:30 and 6:30 on Sunday and 7:30 on Wednesday. For further information call (615) 983-4222 or 984-8735 or 856-3192.

NEW EDITOR AND PUBLISHER FOR WORDS OF LIFE

For nearly 20 years James E. Cooper has edited and published a four page paper called Words Of Life. It is a subscription paper (\$8.00 per year) that is published weekly. Churches that do not publish their own bulletins have been able to purchase bundles to hand out or have the paper sent to a list of people with their advertisement printed on the back. Brother Cooper has done an excellent job both in writing and printing each issue.

With the first issue in April Glenn Seaton, 4707 Misty Valley East, Wichita Falls, TX 76310 became the editor and publisher. We are confident that the paper is in good hands.

PREACHERS NEEDED

ACWORTH, GEORGIA — This congregation of about 70 seeks the services of a full time preacher who possesses the qualifications of an elder. This body has met together for seven years and has weathered many storms. We are located about 30 miles north of Atlanta in an area experiencing a steady influx of people due to increasing land development. Full support is available. Those interested should contact Lex Barker, 2708 Valleyhill Dr., Acworth, GA 30101. Phone: (404) 972-2887.

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LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA — The congregation here is seeking a full time preacher. We are a small group (2 families), but are big in love for the Lord and are very determined to remain steadfast to him. Some support is available here, but most would have to be obtained from outside. If interested, please call Larry Powell at (804) 237-3445 or John Malloy (804 385-8275.

FREMONT, CALIFORNIA The church meeting on I Street in Fremont, CA is seeking a man to work with them. The church has a regular attendance of 50 people from the East Bay area. We are looking for someone with good personal work skills. Someone with radio experience would be a plus. The congregation is able to provide about two thirds of the support (\$400 per week) plus moving expenses. We are willing for the man to hold a part-time job to have sufficient income for this area. Those interested should send a resume to 205 I Street, Fremont, CA 94536 or call (415) 487-8708 or 792-7835.

EDITORIAL LEFTOVERS

WORKING MOTHERS AND DAY CARE FOR INFANTS

In connection with the March editorial entitled "Mother Is Not Home," a reader sent a copy of an article that appeared in the WALL STREET JOURNAL (3-3-87) entitled "Day Care for Infants Is Challenged By Research on Psychological Risks." The article states that "some researchers are warning that day care at too early an age may psychologically harm a child." To say the least, it is worthy of consideration when in 1986 50% of mothers of infants or toddlers worked as opposed to 30% just ten years before according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"The controversy focuses on children less than 18 months old who are left in a day care 20 hours a week or more. For children at that most formative age, day care can increase insecurity, the researchers say" (Wall Street article). Jay Belsky, a Pennsylvania State University psychologist has followed the research for ten years. In the 1970's he helped shape the view that day care generally benefits the child. However, in recent years he has changed his mind. He now says that infant day care undermines a child's "sense of trust, of security, of order in the world" He suggests one possibility is the stress a child undergoes in the daily separation from the mother and insufficient attention given by the parents. The article says that a 1984 study revealed that 31% of a group of 107 toddlers were judged insecure by researchers. However, when the group "was narrowed to those who had been in day care more than 20 hours a week as infants, the rate of insecurity nearly doubled, to 61.5%."

Obviously professor Belsky has his critics who have charged him with being a male chauvinist and being against the women's movement. Sounds familiar!

What's the answer to the problem? Some of Belsky's respondents from Yale, Harvard and UCLA have suggested that the answer may be to start the child in day care at an earlier age (younger than 15 months). A better solution would be for God-fearing women to read and obey such passages as Tit. 2:1-5 and 1 Tim. 5:14.

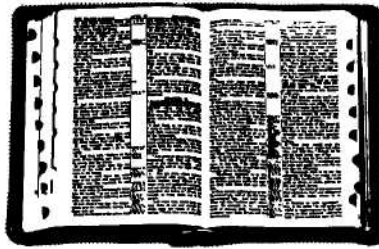
IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	140
RESTORATIONS	39
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"See,
think
they v

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are
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 XXVIII

JUNE, 1987

Number 6

THE SECURITY OF THE SAINT (5)

Ronny Milliner

2316 E. Hundred Rd.
Chester, VA 23831



JESUS AS A NEIGHBOR

Think of the neighbors you have had. You probably had some good ones and some not so good. I remember one of our neighbors when I was a young boy who was always cursing his wife at the top of his lungs. And then there were the kids who lived down the street whom we found carrying off some of my toys. But we have also had a lot of good neighbors. A retired gentleman who was always ready to sit and listen to a young boy was such a neighbor. Or there was the elderly man who taught the two young newly-weds how to garden.

Think what it would be like to have Jesus as a neighbor. He certainly would not be vulgar, or in any way guilty of some evil or harm against you. One could not find a more dependable or kind neighbor.

But as one thinks more about this idea it may be that he would not want Jesus for a neighbor. What would it be like to have Jesus living next door? What kind of neighbor would He be?

A Consulted Neighbor

There certainly would be a steady stream of people coming to Jesus. Sick people would be coming to Him for healing like the two blind men (Mt. 9:27-31) or the centurion seeking a cure for his servant (Mt. 8:5-7). Multitudes would be coming to receive food from Him (Jno. 6:24-26). There would be people coming all hours of the night to talk with Him (Jno. 3:1-2). Little children would be coming to Him (Mk. 10:13-16).

Such a flow of traffic would surely destroy the neighborhood. There would be no peace and quiet. And you

would never be able to find a parking place. Then there's the kids. They would surely be running through your flower garden. Maybe having Jesus as a neighbor would not be so good an idea.

A Controversial Neighbor

Let's face it, wherever Jesus went He was always stirring up trouble. He was constantly in a dispute with the Pharisees (Mk. 8:11). His own home town of Nazareth rejected Him not once, but twice (Lk. 4:28-30; Mt. 13:53-58). Even His own family criticized Him (Jno. 7:3-5). Some of His people said, "He is out of His mind" (Mk. 3:21). There were times when He didn't always keep the best company in the world (Lk. 7:37-38). He was always stirring people up over different things in His teaching. His disciples said He offended the Pharisees over what He said about their traditions (Mt. 15:12). His own disciples didn't seem to react very favorably with what He said about divorce and remarriage (Mt. 19:8-10).

If Jesus moved into your neighborhood, you can be sure that things would soon be stirred up. There would probably be some people in the neighborhood going around wanting folks to sign a petition to force Jesus to move. Then what would you do? You would be forced to make a decision as to whose side you would take. Maybe it would be better not to have Jesus as our neighbor.

A Church-Minded Neighbor

Have you ever had a neighbor that had a one track mind? Some folks are sports-minded, that is, they eat, sleep, and talk sports. It's all they seem to have on their mind. Others might be career-minded or devoted to some hobby. All some folks want to talk about is their illnesses.

Surely you know what Jesus would be talking about all the time. He would always want to be telling you little stories that had spiritual lessons in them, like the kingdom parables (Mt. 13). He would even take a normally physical subject and turn it into something spiritual, like He did with the Samaritan woman when He turned the conversation from a drink of water to "a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jno. 4:7-14). So anything you tried to talk to Jesus about would probably end up on some spiritual matter.

There's just so much that one can take. Right? A

Condemning Neighbor

Jesus never hesitated to show the sinner his sin. He warned the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (Mt. 11:20-24). He certainly didn't hold back from telling the Pharisees and lawyers their problems (Lk. 11:37-52). With Jesus, it was always repent or perish (Lk. 13:3).

Mark it well that you would not be able to engage in any sin and get away with it, if you had Jesus living next door. If you were not at an assembly of the church, He would be over knocking on your door. You couldn't even have a good fight with your wife for fear that He might overhear. And sunbathing in the back yard would definitely be out.

Just think of all the changes you would have to make if Jesus lived next door. Would it be worth it?

A Commanding Neighbor

Have you ever had a neighbor who was always asking something of you? Some are always wanting to borrow something. Others ask you to do this or that.

Jesus would be demanding neighbor. He might ask you to watch and pray with Him some evening (Mt. 26:38-41). Or He might want you to become a fisher of men (Mk. 1:16-17). Just to be one of His disciples is pretty demanding (Lk. 14:26-33). And there He would be always ready to remind you of what you should be doing for Him.

Conclusion

Have we become so complacent and comfortable in our communities that for Jesus to move in would cause a tremendous uproar? Would you really want Jesus as a neighbor?

While He may not be our neighbor, let's not forget that He watches us every day that we live. He knows us better than our neighbor does!

A WORTHY WOMEN

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Editorial

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CATCHING UP

No, I am not going to tell you about my operation. It did sideline me for awhile though I am making progress and able to take on some of my work. Thanks are in order to Donnie V. Rader for helping to get the May issue of the paper ready for the printer. There have been many phone calls and cards and notes expressing love and concern, all of which were deeply appreciated, especially the prayers. I am knee deep in work which needs attention but which has had to wait. I am behind on correspondence and ask for the understanding of all concerned. But I have learned that the world will go on turning whether I do or not. My classes will be taught and sermons I cannot preach will be preached by others.

I have had to take time every day to walk and regain strength in my back and legs. I walk about a mile each time and some days I have walked better than three miles. That has given me time to admire the breathtaking beauty of a Kentucky spring. I did not realize how many white, pink and red dogwoods were in my neighbors yards and around the edges of the woods in Hilbrook Farms, the subdivision where we live in Bullitt County, a few miles south of Louisville. I have listened to the birds sing, watched the grass get greener every day, stopped to admire the little brook which runs in the woods behind our house and which merges with a larger stream which winds its way through the subdivision and ultimately empties into the Salt River. Azaleas have come to full bloom before my very eyes. Just after breakfast each day there is a stillness in the spring air. Except for an occasional airplane, or the distant rumble of a freight train, there is only the refreshing quietness of the morning air. That is good for a man whose life revolves around the calendar and the clock; a man who lives with deadlines — classes to teach, meetings to hold, printers deadlines to meet, urgent letters to answer and, well, you know the story. That all sounds so important. But it is good for a man to be made to realize, if he doesn't know already, that such things CAN wait.

It has been a good time to remember such statements as, "Stand in awe, and sin not; commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah" (Psa. 4:4). Again, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psa. 46:10). Further, my spirit has been renewed in daily beholding the needlepoint of God's own tapestry so vividly stitched upon the landscape of a glorious

Kentucky spring, and I have reflected upon the truth that "even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these" (Mt. 6:29).

All this has given time to reflect on the following words which were cross-stitched by a very special lady and which are framed and hang on the wall at the top of the stairs.

"God grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can
And wisdom to know the difference."

* * * * *

HEROES

It occurs to me that the present generation has a shortage of worthy heroes. The greatest heroes of all have been faithful servants of God who, in whatever stage of the world, acted and reacted upon the stage of human history with the courage of conviction, regardless of the consequences. The Bible is full of them. Time would fail to speak of Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Jeremiah, Daniel, Esther, Nehemiah, not to mention the apostles of our Lord, and our Lord himself. Then there are the lesser mentioned heroes who stood in the gap at critical times. Their heroism far exceeded that of those whose claim to fame is how fast they can run, how far they can throw a ball, or how many records they have sold. Many heroes of such vintage from my own youthful days have long been forgotten by the present generation. Mention one of them now and your children (and certainly your grandchildren) will say "Who was that?"

It occurs to me that my generation constitutes a link to a time and to special people who were truly heroes of faith. At various intervals, either in this column, or in my EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS, I plan to recall a few such people and events which I hope will be of interest to our readers, "lest we forget."

For starters, I remember *Franklin T. Puckett*. He was a man of imposing stature. There was a dignity about his carriage and a confidence in his air that made you know you were in the presence of one who not only walked with God, but who knew whereof he spoke. I have seen him quote lengthy passages from the word of God with exactness and such expression as to fasten the words in your heart. Much of his preaching was expository. He knew the text, the immediate context and the larger context of scriptural truth touching that subject. His preaching was compellingly logical and yet impassioned. He obviously believed what he preached. Sometimes he preached a long time, by today's standards, but those who heard him understood that he had something to say and that he said it well, and came away rewarded for the time spent at the feet of this giant of the faith.

Yet, with all his dignity (he looked like a Supreme Court justice ought to look), he had time to help struggling young preachers. I lived at Newbern, Tennessee during the time he preached at the old Market Street church in Dyersburg, Tennessee (that is now Lake

Road). On various occasions I needed help with a difficult passage, or in resolving an argument on the raging issues of that time, and always knew he would help me. He would say, "Come on down and bring your Bible and we'll get off upstairs and work on it." It was always more than worth the eight mile trip. "Upstairs" he had a room with a few books and a couple of rocking chairs. What a school room that was. He would listen to what I had to say, long enough to see what the problem was and then he would start methodically examining the matter. Sometimes it took two hours, and sometimes it took nearly all day. If so, his good wife (a true heroine in her own right) would interrupt us for lunch and then we would go back to it. Precious hours they were.

But there was another side to him that some never saw. He loved to play the fiddle and was quite good at some of the old Arkansas hoe-down pieces. Once, the incongruity of the situation struck me. Here was a man dressed in a dark suit and tie, with a sparkling shoe shine, with distinguished gray hair and noble features, patting that big foot and sawing off the "Arkansas Traveler." He was as meticulous in his fiddling as in his preaching. He wanted it to be the best he could make it.

But I remember him best as the moderator of the "Open Forum" at the Florida College lectures in the critical years of the early 1950's when it seemed the kingdom was on fire and a dreadful, wrenching division was in the air as the controversy over church support of human institutions was heating up across the land. Brethren from both sides (and many who were undecided) attended those programs and many of the speeches confronted the issues involved. The "Open Forum" became an open battlefield every day. He would arise with great poise and dignity, remind all present of the seriousness of the matters at hand, and appeal for wisdom and respect. Then he would firmly remind all that he intended to keep that session under control. I can still hear him saying "I will not hesitate to ask anyone of you to take your seat, if you get out of line and do not speak and act as a Christian should." He said it like he meant it and he enforced what he said when occasion required. I thought then, "There stands a man." I still think so. We could use a few like that now. Oh yes, I remember *Franklin T. Puckett*. He is one of my heroes.

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ACOUSTICS—THE SILENT KILLER

"There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely... ", acoustic tile in the ceilings of church buildings occupied by churches of Christ. This silent killer has done more to deaden or destroy good congregational singing than most brethren realize. I hope Solomon won't mind my using a variation of a popular phrase found in Ecclesiastes (5:13, 16), if I can succeed in getting the attention of brethren who are in the process of buying, building, or remodeling a church building.

The Lord knew what He wanted to accomplish by including the singing of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" in the worship of the church (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). There are other factors which influence the quality of singing, such as carpeted floors, upholstered pews, and a general apathy on the part of some brethren toward singing. God can hear a silent prayer or song, but if we are going to "teach and admonish one another," then we need the best possible environment in which to do it.

My conclusions are based on experiences with church buildings and congregational singing over a forty-year period. I have been personally involved in building programs with congregations where I have preached, as well as visiting in scores of other buildings in congregations in gospel meetings. I have led the singing, conducted a few schools in the rudiments of music, and have supervised the construction of several commercial buildings including school and church buildings, restaurants and hospitals. When I hear brethren talking about the installation of "acoustic tile" to improve the singing, I almost relegate that term to the realm of profanity.

I have pleaded with brethren on a number of occasions not to use any more sound-deadening materials than absolutely necessary. Even the clothing worn by people tends to deaden sound in an auditorium, but we can't do much about that factor. The term "acoustic" has different meanings to different people. Brethren are generally swayed by an architect or a contractor who tells them that a certain design will "help the acoustics." In practical application, this generally means it will deaden sound. Yes, you can install elaborate public address systems which will help the speaker or a choir, but churches of Christ generally don't have the latter (at least the ones where I preach). The congregation

does not have a microphone, and the transition from a building with plastered or paneled walls and ceilings, bare floors and pews to a sound-deadened environment can be frustrating.

In new construction or remodeling, there are fire codes to be considered but there are generally alternatives which can be chosen. Most architects are either ignorant or unconcerned about the part congregational singing plays in churches of Christ. As a result, I have known brethren to end up lowering a ceiling six feet and using different materials (at considerable expense), after letting an architect convince them that the roof of their building needed to be as tall as the Greek Orthodox building next door. I helped one congregation get their building plans approved by a city commission, but strongly suggested that they eliminate the acoustic tile from the ceiling plans. They listened to the architect. Later, when the singing was so adversely affected that something had to be done, they tried to fill all those little holes in the tile with paint. This helped some, but they finally tore off all the ceiling tile (what a mess—I returned for a meeting while this project was in progress), and plastered the entire ceiling.

Good singing is essential to the well-being of preachers, visitors, and all worshipers alike. Let us make it the best that we can.

DIVINE COMMUNIQUES

C. G. "Cobby" Caldwell

Florida College
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HUSBANDS, WIVES, AND OCCUPATIONAL PLANNING

THE DIVINE MESSAGE: "THAT THEY (aged women) MAY TRAIN THE YOUNG WOMEN TO LOVE THEIR HUSBANDS, TO LOVE THEIR CHILDREN, TO BE SOBER-MINDED, CHASTE, WORKERS AT HOME, KIND, BEING IN SUBJECTION TO THEIR OWN HUSBANDS, THAT THE WORD OF GOD BE NOT BLASPHEMED" (TITUS 2:4-5).

I was recently asked to speak to a young women's organization on the subject of "Occupational Planning for Wives who are Christians." They asked me to address the issues involved in a wife's relationship when she seeks a career outside the home. I would like to share with you my comments to that group of conscientious young college women who have grown up with all the pressures imposed by American society in the 1970's and 80's.

General Principles

In all facets of life wherein we engage our interests, Christians accept principles which overrule other concerns. Several come to mind immediately when thinking about our topic:

A. Spiritual responsibilities take precedence over personal desires and self-interests (Phil. 3:7-16).

B. Loving things more than values is inconsistent with Christianity (1 John 2:15).

C. The love of money is a root of evil (1 Tim. 6:6-11).

D. Christians must learn to be content with those aspects of life which cannot be changed without compromising faith and spiritual interests (Phil. 4:11).

E. All the needs of family and loved ones must be met, including more than simply the provision of things.

Specific Roles of Husbands and Wives Dictated By Lord

In spite of affirmations made by leaders of modern women's movements, husbands are given primary responsibility for family financial provision (Gen. 3:19; 2 Thes. 3:6-12; 1 Tim. 5:8; 1 Thes. 4:9-12). On the other hand, wives are given primary responsibility for keeping the home. Women are not required to marry and have children to be Christians. If one does marry and have children, however, she must accept her proper role in the family as defined by God. Homemaking *IS* a

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career. The following Scriptures evidence God's attitude toward it:

A. "That they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober-minded, chaste, *workers at home*, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2:4-5).

The Greek word translated "workers at home" is *oikourgous* (from *oikos*, house, home; and *ouros*, a keeper or worker... deprived from *ergon*, to work). The idea relates to working for the home, taking care of the home, engaging in domestic enterprise. The wife's primary realm of operation is the household. There is a connection made by Paul in this passage between the way the wife responds to God's instructions regarding her role in the family and how others speak of the word of God.

B. "I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, *rule the household*, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling" (1 Tim. 5:14).

The Greek word translated "rule the household" is *oikodespoteo*. It means "to guide the house," or "to oversee the household." Again, there is a connection made between the woman's acceptance of her God-ordained role in the family and how others react to the word of God.

C. "But she shall be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety" (1 Tim. 2:15).

"Childbearing" is from *teknogonia*, and implies the duties of motherhood. This word is also used in 1 Timothy 5:14. There is no spiritual benefit to being able to consummate a sexual union out of which a child is conceived. On the other hand, fulfilling the role of motherhood is seen by God as important to the wife's spiritual well-being. That, of course, is viewed in light of her faithfulness to God in all things.

Some Attitudes and Actions Which Must Be Addressed

Regardless of our particular social notions, we must come to grips with the clear affirmations of these verses if we are to serve God. We cannot ignore them either theoretically or practically. Some questions must be answered:

A. *How much pressure are we putting on young women to train for out-of-home professional careers and why are we emphasizing that they must prepare to make a living"?*

There may be some legitimate reasons for parents of young women, or for the women themselves to want to be prepared to take care of themselves. They may not marry. They may be widowed. God forbid, they may marry one who will not hold their marriage sacred and find themselves divorced.

There are also, however, some very illegitimate excuses for pursuing careers. If the motive is an overwhelming need to have things, or if the motive is to satisfy certain psychological needs while wanting to be married and have children at the same time, some real soul-searching and Biblical study must take place. Or if

the desire is to prove oneself equal to men and able to do anything and go anywhere others can go, the God-ordained role of the wife must be understood and respected.

B. *How are young men dealing with the question of when to marry? How are they figuring on the ability of the mate to support the family with substantial financial compensation from a profession"!* Young men, position yourselves to support your wives before you take them as wives.

C. *How are married women with children who see a need for temporary financial help seeking to satisfy those needs? Is it absolutely necessary to go outside the home? Should not babysitting, typing, bookkeeping, sewing, cooking (cakebaking, etc.), crafts for sale, piano lessons, etc., be considered when possible so that one's "keeping the home" and "childbearing" will not be compromised?*

D. *Can we fully deal with the needs of our children when we work away from the home? They have psychological needs. When they are sick, can we care for them? When they have school activities which call for the presence of Mom, are we able to be there? They have spiritual needs. You want them to learn your values, not those of others who sit with them. You want them to sense your care and love. You want them to feel close to you. They have practical needs. Do they get their work done when not motivated by a parent who is there? Do they learn to take care of their rooms, their lives, their relationships with friends, etc., etc.*

E. *What is the impact on the husband? The male sense of worth is a delicate thing. Whether that should be or not, it is! The husband whose wife is away to work often questions his ability to support his own family. He is sensitive to the fact that he and his wife are going different directions. He feels deeply the problem of her inability to fully provide his and the children's wishes and the needs of the home. He may even be affected by the relation of her work to his. Women sometimes argue that he ought not to be as he is. If that is true, theory does not cut much ice in the divorce court when he no longer sees his wife as a wife.*

Think about what it all means to you. Is the extra money worth it all? I probably won't be your idea of the perfect, understanding male when I call your attention to these things, but please do not ignore them... FOR YOUR OWN SAKES!

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SINCERE WORDS

The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Ecc. 12:10)."

Dick Blackford

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CHARGING THE RICH

As man was leaving worship services he met an old acquaintance whom he had not seen in several years. In their brief conversation he said to his acquaintance, "I understand that you are in great danger." It was said seriously and was heard with much surprise. The friend addressed was not aware of any danger and eagerly inquired what was meant. The answer was, "I have been informed that you are getting rich."

No man can read the Bible and not be impressed by the number of scriptures that warn of the danger of riches. The young preacher was commanded "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high-minded nor have their hopes set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed" (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

General Admonitions

The negative charges of this passage are twofold: (1) *Be Not Highminded* That means don't be snobbish or smug. Don't value yourself because of your wealth. The fact that this charge is given implies that it is often a tendency of the rich to "think of themselves more highly than they ought to think." (2) *Nor Have Their Hopes Set On The Uncertainty Of Riches*. This, likewise, is recognized as a tendency or the Holy Spirit would not have mentioned it. Because there are so many things money CAN do, there is the danger of being lulled into thinking there is nothing it CANNOT do. Yet in a moment's time a sudden change in our economic system could knock the props from under all of us. The worst hurt would be the rich. Remember the stock market crash when many committed suicide? However, he who is trusting in riches when the Lord returns will be hurt even more. Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 19:24). While we might get bogged down in a hassle as to what the "needle" refers, there is one obvious truth in Jesus' teaching that must be admitted by all — *it will be hard for the rich to be saved!*

The positive charges are: (1) *Trusting God*; (2) *Do good*; (3) *Be rich in good works*; (4) *Ready to distribute*; and (5)

Willing to communicate. In a nutshell, these five positive charges are saying: "Without partiality, be ready at all times (not just seasonally) to help everyone because of your faith in God rather than possessions. You will be laying a good foundation to help you reach eternal life — you'll need it!"

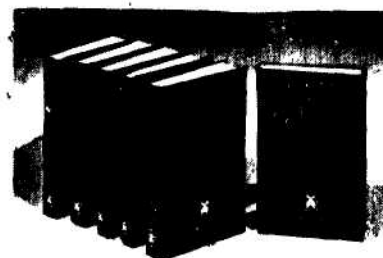
While the covetous nature of many who are rich is often deplored, let us not forget that one need not be rich to be guilty of covetousness. The same chapter warns those who have a *desire* to be rich. "But they that are *mind*ed to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil; which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. 6:9, 10). Those who are not rich but "have a mind to be" are often self-defeated. Hoping to better themselves materially, they frequently succeed in doing the opposite spiritually.

Occasionally one wonders how the love of money can be a root of all evils (footnote, ASV). Stop and think for a moment and it will dawn on you. There is hardly a sin in that great "category of sins" that cannot be connected with money. Some of the "foolish and hurtful lusts" in which the love of money can play a part are: adultery, fornication, lasciviousness, homosexuality, drunkenness, theft, jealousy, strife, revellings, idolatry, gambling, extortion, etc. Sin is expensive in more ways than one. Many have reached after riches and fallen from the faith.

Many of us are too concerned about things, Things, THINGS! "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the THINGS which he possesseth"

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OBITUARIES

EARL FLY ASLEEP IN JESUS

Earl Fly, age 63, died last Sunday morning in the Jackson-Madison County General Hospital. He had experienced health problems for a number of years, and was only recently recovering from another stroke.

Brother Fly obeyed the gospel nearly forty years ago, and from that time lived a devoted and faithful life as a Christian. Only God knows the influence for good he exerted through his preaching and writing. Although he had been physically unable to engage in active work during the last several years, he continued to do what he could to advance the cause that he loved. He was especially encouraging to young men who were devoting their lives to preaching the gospel. He had given away nearly his entire library to these young preachers during the last three years. It was always a pleasure for me to see Brother Fly in the audience when I preached. I knew that he would always have a word of encouragement or appreciation for the work I was doing. He was a faithful member of the church here, and he will be missed very much. We mourn his passing, not because of lack of hope, but because of the broken relationship in this life. We extend our deepest sympathy to sister Fly, Ann, Ron and other family members.

Gary Kerr, Jackson, Tennessee
(Editor's note: It was my privilege to know Earl Fly since 1957 when he preached at Valley Station, Kentucky while the church there experienced great growth. Nearly every bulletin carried news of one or more obeying the gospel. We were also in Orlando, Florida at the same time. He preached at Holden Heights and I worked at Pine Hills. He moderated for me in a debate with a preacher of the Church of God named Lodge. We were often together over the years in gospel work and enjoyed playing music together on many occasions. He will be missed.)

* * * * *

JAMES A. RODGERS AT REST

James A. Rodgers (age 56) departed this life, March 22, 1987, following complications from a heart transplant. He was a most faithful preacher of the gospel for over thirty years in central and southern parts of Texas. His struggle to remain on this earth awhile longer was inspirational to all who were close to him and his fine family. He was a devout defender of the cross and loved by the many who knew him. He was an independent thinker and student of God's word. However, he did not seek to be different for the sake of being controversial. He thoroughly studied a passage and did not put his trust in what someone else had said. He loved to study and compare the scriptures with the original language.

He was a dear friend who defended the truth and preached the gospel. He was ever ready to help and

advise someone so they might be more fruitful as a child of God. He served as an elder for the Southern Oaks congregation in Lake Jackson, Texas for a short time before his health failed. He also labored with churches in Brazoria County, Texas for over half of his preaching life. He was indeed a man in a "straight betwixt two." He longed to go on, and yet wanted to see his family and friends grow to serve God better.

When the family received word of the availability of a heart, they rushed to the hospital to be with him. They had some last words together and he said to them "if it works, that's great, and if it doesn't work, that's great too." As he gave the O. K. sign to his family as he was taken into the operating room, I could only reflect on his courage, wit and the peace with which he was facing death. His brave and godly wife, Bettye, was ever with him and always a help to him and the family. They have three sons, James L., Gary A., and Bryan D., who are all faithful to the Lord and have married faithful, godly women. Also one daughter, Cathy who is faithful and married to a faithful Christian also. He left behind five grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted in Lake Jackson, at the Southern Oaks building. A capacity crowd was on hand to hear the gospel of Christ presented by Jesse Jenkins with the writer assisting. Albert Jennings, James' best friend and an elder and preacher spoke also regarding lessons to be learned from the life of this godly man. Congregational singing was led by Bill Primrose, faithful saint and friend. Prayers were led by W. R. Jones and Chuck Ainsworth. Opportunity was given for any to respond to the message presented, and the service was dismissed. His earthly remains were buried in Refugio, Texas with graveside services conducted by Terry Summerlin, who reflected upon his role as a Timothy in James' life.

A husband, father, preacher, fellow saint, and beloved friend has departed this life. But, as stated at the service, "our loss is the Lord's gain." He will be sorely missed, but we live in hope of seeing him as well as other faithful of the ages, when all the saved get to heaven. I dearly loved the man and will miss having him as a member of the congregation. But we believe that his family will carry on with the same kind of strength and dedication, so that the circle will not be broken.

Stan Adams, Lake Jackson, Texas

* * * * *

WRIGHT RANDOLPH HAS GONE TO HIS REWARD

Wright Randolph was born to Henry Robert and Minnie May Randolph in the Nubia community (Taylor County), Texas on April 29, 1902 and departed this life in Greenville, Texas on February 27, 1987. In June, 1924 he was married to Myrtle Huffman of Amarillo, Texas who preceded him in death March 29, 1964. A year later Wright married Ethel Cogdill in Canoga Park, California, a sister to the beloved Roy Cogdill. Wright is survived by his wife, Ethel, a daughter, Jeanine Anthony of Pinole, California; two brothers, Layton of Van Nuys, California and Sidney of Vinita,

Oklahoma; two sisters, Opal Bockman and Fay Britt both of Wichita Falls, Texas; four grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Wright became a Christian at the age of 16 in Nubia, Texas being baptized by W. A. Schultz. Prior to 1931 he preached in various places by appointment and began full-time work in Spur, Texas and later preached in Slayton and Floydada, Texas; Clovis and Albuquerque, NM; San Bernardino, Santa Barbara (twice), San Pablo, Montebello and Canoga Park, California; Cincinnati Ohio; Deming, New Mexico; El Paso, Texas and Lake Isabella, California. Bob Bolton says, "In addition, he was often used throughout the nation in gospel meetings, and as a gospel preacher he was forceful yet humble, unique yet not peculiar, profound yet simple, and was highly loved and respected by his peers. We might not have always agreed with him, but we never for one moment doubted his conviction and faith in the divine authenticity of 'the Book'. One of his favorite passages, which was cited at his funeral, was Proverbs 23:23, 'Buy the truth and sell it not.' "

Robert A. Bolton of Richardson, Texas spoke at the funeral which was conducted at the building of the Southside church, Greenville, Texas on Sunday afternoon, March 1, 1987. Burial was in the Rose Cemetery in Hobart, Oklahoma.

Again, Bob Bolton writes, "Brother Randolph believed with all his heart that he was ready to pass over into the presence of the Lord and made it a point to impress this fact upon all. As I visited with him some 24 hours before he died, I said to him as I prepared to leave: 'Wright, if we never meet again in this life, I'll see you in heaven.' In his weakened condition, this 84 year old 'soldier of the cross' managed a faint smile and softly answered, 'O. K.!' He knew he was dying, yet faced his departure with hope."

I (JWC) personally feel it quite an honor and privilege to have been asked by Ethel to submit this report, along with Bob Bolton, concerning Wright's life and death. Wright was a Christian. He loved the truth and preached it just as he understood it. What more need be said? He was a good husband, and while I never knew him while his children were growing up, I am sure just as good a father. He was fortunate in that in his life he chose two of the finest ladies I have known as mates. Both Myrtle and Ethel along with Wright, were our dear friends, and we spent many happy and I believe profitable hours in their presence. Many hours on the golf course Wright and I have talked about a number of things, but much of the Bible, the church and the Lord. When brother Bolton writes, "We might not have always agreed with him, yet..." reminds me of situations I have told many times in succeeding years. In the company with others, people would disagree with brother Randolph on Bible topics, and yet often before long I would hear of their asking Wright what the Bible said on various topics. They respected him as a Christian and as a Bible student. He was a good writer, and the first I knew of him was through his contributions to various papers. You never doubted his faith in God and the Bible as the word of God. Yet he was not afraid to

say "I don't know." I remember on one occasion while eating a snack on the golf course, I asked him about a difficult passage, and he said in effect, "I wish I knew." I have noticed that the greatest Bible students I have ever known often said, "I don't know." That is not a mark of weakness; but a sign of honesty and candor. If one doesn't have these qualities he can never know the Lord.

Our sincere sympathy to Ethel and the rest of the family. May the Lord bless and keep you.

Robert A. Bolton
Richardson, Texas

Jady W. Copeland
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FLYING BY INSTRUMENTS

Dr. Ed Wheat in his excellent volume, "Love Life For Every Married Couple," quotes a magazine article by Gloria Okes Perkins. The article compares times of trial and emotional instability with the clouds, fog, and air turbulence an airplane pilot experiences. The answer in both cases is to "fly by the instruments."

"When there is no visual contact with the earth . . . when no horizon is in view, stability can be achieved only by depending on what those vital gyros have to say.

"What is true for pilots in the skies is just as true in another sense for believers in the difficulties of life when normal conditions of stability seem to vanish in clouds of sorrow and confusion. Sooner or later every believer will have to fly by instruments spiritually and emotionally through bad times...."

"While piloting a plane in a thick fog, a pilot cannot be sure of his direction unless he gives full attention to his instruments. When flying through a thunderstorm, the turbulence will throw him about, and the darkness within the clouds will threaten to disorient him. Sometimes he will feel as though he is going up or down or turning around. But he cannot depend on his feelings. Only the gyros can be trusted, so the pilot must hang on to the controls in the turbulence and discipline his mind to concentrate on the instruments while he flies through the storm."

I worked in Air Traffic Control in the Air Force. My specific duties were divided between the control tower and the GCA (Ground Controlled Approach) unit. In

GCA, we monitored the aircraft on radar as it made its final approach and we maintained constant radio contact.

Continuously we advised the pilot of his position and his need to correct course so many degrees left or right and so many feet up or down.

In the thick England fog, there was a lot of instrument flying. Usually the pilot would never see the runway until he was right on top of it.

I'm not sure about others, but my own life has been pretty much that way. I've had to alter my course fairly often.

There seem to be some fellows around who learned all truth early in life and have never had to correct their course left or right. I have not been so fortunate.

While listening to some tapes of Brother Homer Hailey's Bible class at Florida College of some years back, I was even more impressed by his basic honesty than his superb knowledge. In one class period he asked the students to give attention to a Scripture they had studied some weeks before.

"I now believe I taught you wrong on that," said Brother Hailey. "I was reading some commentaries last evening, and I'm convinced this writer has the truth on the passage."

I suspect that anyone who hasn't altered his course recently, is not flying by the instruments.

Whether in marriage, employment, church, work, or just life in general, the way of man is not in himself. God has provided a navigational aid and we had better keep our instrument panels in good repair.

The article by Gloria Okes Perkins continues:

"The parallel truth for the Christian in troubled times is clear. Undisciplined feelings . . . can cause a crash unless one keeps himself stabilized by the facts of the word of God... every promise in the word of God is like a gyro giving information to stabilize him in a specific situation... With daily practice one learns not to panic but to believe a specific truth from the Bible fitted for his own unique circumstances. By experience one learns not to fight his feelings, but to look away from them to the "instrument panel" of the word of God which is utterly dependable.

"One discovers that if he will just hang on in the worst of the turbulence, no matter how disrupting, his mind and heart steadied by the great truths of the word and his eyes intently fixed on God Himself, he will eventually break through rain-black clouds to soar once more in the clear, tranquil atmosphere."

The words of Proverbs 3:5,6 should be memorized and imbibed by everyone: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."*

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WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

(Rom. 4:3)

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FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLIES

QUESTION: *Can you forsake the assembly by wilfully missing it once?*

ANSWER: No, one cannot forsake the assembly by wilfully missing it one time. He has neglected the assembly, but he has not forsaken it. "Forsake" (*egkataleipo*) means "to abandon, desert" (Thayer, p. 166), to leave behind, to quit. "Neglect" implies "giving insufficient attention to something that has a claim to one's attention" (Webster). A husband might neglect his wife, but that does not mean he has abandoned her.

Paul wrote, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed into Thessalonica" (2 Tim. 4:10). Demas forsook Paul in departing from him, being no longer a companion and worker in the proclamation of the gospel. The word "forsake" in Heb. 10:25 is from the same Greek word as is found in 2 Tim. 4:10 and connotes the same idea, i.e., desertion.

In reading Heb. 10:25 to which the querist apparently alludes, we notice, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." The verse does not say, "the assembly," as though only one assembly is under consideration. Some would make the day in this passage the Lord's day assembly. However, the day, in my estimation, is not the Lord's day, nor is it the second coming of Christ. The "day" in Heb. 10:25 could be seen, i.e., there would be observable signs to indicate its approach. This fits what Jesus said concerning the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:1-35; Mk. 13:1-31; Lk. 21:5-33), and would be most applicable to the Jewish Christians living in Palestine to whom the Hebrew letter was most likely written. Therefore, the "day" is the time when Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Romans.

The verse states, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together," and this denotes, "Do not abandon, desert, the assemblies of the church; do not withdraw yourselves from the meetings of the saints of God." Some of them had already quit and perhaps had returned to the Jewish religion, or they were simply staying home, perhaps out of fear of the Jews and dread of persecution, and not attending the services. However, many persons who forsake the assemblies are not apostates, i.e., deny the Sonship of Jesus and the efficacy of His blood, but rather are backsliders who quit

servicing the Lord for other reasons than infidelity.

To hold fast our profession without wavering faith (10:23), we need the fellowship and encouragement of fellow-Christians in frequent assemblies. Hence, "And let us consider one another to provoke (stimulate) unto love and to good works" (10:24). For those who abandon the assemblies, and go so far as to apostatize from the gospel of Christ, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (10:26-27). The context of Heb. 10:25 shows, as well as the entire book, that more is involved in "forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" than merely missing one assembly of the church, or being spasmodic in attendance. Those saints, it seems to me, were being warned against defection from Christianity.

E.M. Zerr commented on "forsaking" in Heb. 10:25, "The word does not refer to those who are 'irregular in attendance' or who 'just come occasionally.'" (There are other scriptures which take care of such delinquents.) But it means those who remain away from the assemblies so long that they can no longer be considered as a part of the group" (*Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 230). Zerr does not offer any reason why some of the Jewish Christians had forsaken the assemblies.

R. C. H. Lenski said in reference to the statement, "as the manner of some is," the following, "This is more than just carelessness; it is the beginning of apostasy" (*Interpretation of Hebrews*, p. 354). Robert Milligan wrote, "The Apostle refers here, not to apostasy from the Church, as some allege, but simply to the neglect of public and social worship" (*New Testament Commentary on Hebrews*, p. 283). I disagree with Milligan for the reasons already given, and because of his comments on verse 26 where he says, "To sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth is the same as to apostatize from Christ, for which there is no forgiveness." If this is apostasy in v. 26, why is not apostasy the reason for abandonment of the assemblies in v. 25?

In conclusion, let me say that a Christian cannot justify himself in willfully missing just one service. Such action reflects a weakness of faith and a paucity of love. Obviously, a person like this needs to repent of his sin. But to call this behavior a desertion or abandonment of the assemblies of the church is farfetched. On the other hand, Heb. 10:25, and context, shows the importance and need of attending all the services of the church, even that one time the querist asks about.

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I don't want to be misunderstood in this article, please. I am not saying that every preacher needs to go to India or that every church has to have India in its budget. There are many places in the world and it is a matter of judgment as to where one wants to put forth their efforts for Christ. My point is simply that India is in the great commission of our Lord and someone must go! Those who can go should go and those who can help make it possible for them to go should do so. There is responsibility here for some and thus accountability before God.

Another reason for returning to India year after year is that the second teaching (Matt. 18:20) must not be neglected. It is not enough to teach and baptize people into Christ. We must also teach them to observe all things that the Lord has commanded. This is why it is needful to return and have Bible classes for the brethren and deal with their questions and needs. Many know almost nothing of the Bible and need a lot of very basic teaching. Many do not even have Bibles at all to study. Others can't read or write. We can't just baptize them and leave them. This is irresponsible. We will have blood on our hands (Acts 20:20, 26-27). We must continue to go to India.

Paul told Timothy (II Tim. 2:2) to teach other faithful men in order for them to teach others and so the chain goes. The gospel work in India among conservative brethren is still in its infancy. Not that many mature men there yet. We have special classes for those who preach. We tape the lessons and leave the tapes with them. We also take detailed outlines of the lessons and leave them. Tapes of good lessons by other preachers are also taken to give to the Indian brethren. These Indian preachers generally have many good Bible questions for us to deal with. They come into contact with many ideas from Hindus, Muslims, and others that need some attention and solid instruction from the Word of God. Many of these men are babes in Christ who go about on their own with little help from the village people and no financial help from the USA and

preach Christ, baptizing people. Their zeal shames us and motivates us to greater effort on our part to try harder to come to them and assist them in their growth in the grace and knowledge of Christ (II Pet. 3:18).

Some of these men have needs that we try to meet as we are able. Eye glasses so that they can read the Word of God for some, bicycles for a few so that they can get from village to village, and Bibles for those who need them. A Bible costs \$2.50. A daily wage person out in the village may earn 40 to 50 cents a day which is needed to buy rice for that day! It is not difficult for us to see then that a Bible is very difficult for them to obtain. It would cost a weeks wage with no money to buy food for that week. This is why we try to help with Bibles for the daily wage people who are Christians. These village preachers are always pleading for Bibles to give to the brethren.

The nation is unstable as far as opportunity in the gospel is concerned. We may be shut out of the country at any time. Anti-conversion bills have been hotly debated by the Indian law-makers for years. Some of the states and areas do have such and brethren that I know personally have been arrested for teaching the Bible. Some brethren from the states have been refused entry into India and others have been turned back at the airport customs (II Thess. 3:1-2). Those of us who go can only get into the country for brief visits. We usually go for four to six weeks at a time. We can only apply for a visitor or tourist visa. We cannot go and stay for an extended period of time. Even these short visits may be taken away from us at any time. I just do not know, really, one way or the other. I only know that for now the door is open to some of us and we had better go through that door or answer to God!

One very important reason to go to India is that the Indian brethren need to know that we care—that we have not taught them, baptized them, and run away to the safety and comfort of the USA. The Indian brethren are greatly encouraged by our visits. This is the way it was in the New Testament, by the way. We need to "see how they do" (Acts 15:36) as Paul did for those churches planted by his previous efforts. We need to visit and give one another comfort in the Lord (Acts 16:40; II Cor. 7:6-7,13). (Did you read these verses?) I have heard other preachers make the same point with reference to the countries in South America, the Philippines, etc. It is certainly so as far as Indian is concerned. I've been there nine times over the past ten years and I have experienced this very thing with the brethren many times.

Do be aware of the fact that false teachers from the USA and elsewhere will be happy to move in and "help" the brethren if we give place to them (Gal. 2:4, 5). We get letters that inform us that false teachers have visited the areas and brethren want to know how to deal with the doctrines. The cults are in India and the denominations have schools and hospitals there as well. To a babe in Christ, this can be terribly confusing. In a sea of Hinduism on every side, someone who believes in Christ and claims to be a Christian must be a good teacher. We know that this just isn't so. However, one

who is new in the faith and may not even have a Bible is fair game to these people. We have a great responsibility here that weighs heavily upon my heart (II Cor. 11:28). We must return to these churches and ground them in the faith.

There are various needs that cannot be dealt with "with paper and ink" (II Jno. 12) as well as they can be "face to face". Sure, we carry on a great deal of correspondence with Indian brethren. I write several letters to different people in India each week. There are questions that need to be answered, request for Bibles, bicycles, eye-glasses, etc., and other matters that need attention. However, many times I write back and say that I will sit down with you and discuss this with you face to face when, Lord willing, I see you next visit. Letters take 8 to 14 days to get to India by air mail. Sometimes letters are lost and never arrive. This has happened to important letters that caused grief. Several money orders have been lost or stolen. The mail is slow and not always reliable out in the villages

Sometimes when I answer a question, there are several other questions that come to mind. It goes on and on over a long drawn out period of time through the mail. There is no substitute for being there!

These are some of the reasons that motivate me to continue to go to India.

Arriving in India is like going back many years in time. There are ox-carts and modern automobiles on the same highway. The situation there is many times very distasteful to people from the West. The open sewers along the streets, the noise and filth, the strange food, and the backward conditions, are just a few of the matters of cultural shock that face the Westerner. However, this is more than offset by the opportunity to work with and teach some of the most receptive and gracious people that one would ever meet anywhere in the world. They have very little of this world's goods but they are willing to share with us what they do have and do everything that they possibly can do to make us as comfortable as possible. I have stayed in a mud hut with a straw roof in a village of untouchables while the family moved in with the water buffalo under a straw shelter. They simply refused to have it any other way! And they did this with joy and gratitude that we were there to teach them the Word of God. How can one's heart not be touched by people like this?

We have witnessed many times people sitting on the ground (blanket or a straw mat) for hours listening to the Bible being taught. They always ask for more and when can we return and teach them again.

Certainly there are difficulties in India. There are false brethren (II Cor. 11:26) who seek to take advantage of us and the brethren. There are Hindus and others who try to destroy the gospel work there. I could give several examples of this. These and other reasons are why I suggest that not just anyone jump on an airplane and head for India. There are pitfalls and one should go with others who have been there and know the circumstances first hand.

Those who go to India for weeks at a time surely need the full support of their families back home. The wife

and children need to know how very important the work of preaching the gospel of Christ is in India and be willing to part with the husband/daddy for those weeks. Not every family can do this and I'm not suggesting that they must. Again, however, some body has to go and if one can, others should encourage and support their efforts.

Those who want to go also need the support and understanding of the brethren as well. The brethren need to know and believe whole-heartedly the points made at the beginning of this article concerning the need for men going to India. They must be willing to carry on the local work in the absence of the preacher and not either have things pile up for his return or complain about his being away! Mature brethren must come forward here and keep things in proper perspective for the rest of the brethren. Again, some one must go; some one has to be gone from some congregation for four to six weeks. Some immature brethren think it must always be some other congregation, not theirs! If the one who wants to go to India cannot overcome this, then he probably needs to stay at home. It is a difficult situation and calls for mature judgment and understanding on the part of all (preacher, family, and brethren).

Brethren, the door is open at the present time for preaching the gospel of Christ in India. I would be happy to hear from anyone who is interested in this work. Into all the world! Phone: (502) 499-9942

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GOOD FROM BAD (Philippians 1:12-14)

**J. Mike Johnson
 P.O. Box 626
 Fultondale, AL 35068**

The book of Philippians was written by Paul while he was in prison in Rome. His trial had probably already taken place and he seems to be waiting for the verdict. It appears that he expected to be released, but was uncertain about it. Paul, no doubt, did not enjoy being imprisoned. His movement was hindered. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note his attitude in Philippians 1:12. Here he said

"Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel" (NASB)

One would have thought that Paul's imprisonment would have hindered the gospel. Instead, it did the opposite; it caused the "furtherance", (NKJV), of the gospel. How did this happen? How did bad turn into good? Paul gives us an answer in the text.

The Gospel Spread

First, in verse 13 he says, "So that my bonds in Christ are manifest; ('become as well known', NASB); in all the palace, and in all other places;". Paul's imprisonment had given him the chance to preach the gospel in Rome; it had given the gospel publicity during his trial and at other times that it would not have otherwise gotten.

Paul always seemed to make the best of whatever circumstance that he found himself in. (Note his attitude on another occasion when he was unjustly arrested-Acts 16:23ff.) What happened to Paul was very bad. An event like this would cause most people to want to "give up", especially if, like Paul, their tribulation was for doing right instead of for doing wrong. However, Paul made the best of this bad situation. He saw it as a chance to preach the gospel in other places.

Today, we must learn to make the best out of adversity. We must use it for whatever good that we can whether the problem be sickness, persecution, loss of loved ones or pain and suffering. Also, like Paul, we should take advantage of all kinds of situations to teach others.

The Influence Of Paul

The second reason that Paul gave to indicate his imprisonment had helped further the gospel is found in verse 14. This verse says, "And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear." Paul's courage inspired others to boldly proclaim God's Word. Paul's good traits "rubbed off" on others. Courage is sometimes contagious. Often, one person can stand up

in a complacent world and do what is right, and cause many others to do right also. Many people want to do what is right, but they need a leader to get them started. Paul was such a person; we can be also. However, it takes courage to do this, and sometimes a person must stand alone. Certainly all of us probably have more influence on others, for good or bad, than we realize.

Summation

Many bad things can happen to us. However, the Christian can use the tribulation to his advantage. Romans 5:3 tells us that tribulation, (generally regarded as bad), produces patience (that which we need). Tribulation can be a stumbling block or/a stepping stone. It is up to us to turn *adversary into advantage*. Paul's outlook should help us to see this clearly.

PERSONALITY CONFLICT

Fred A. Shewmaker
58305 TR 1195
West Lafayette, Ohio 43845

When a problem arises in a local church and brethren allow it to escalate into church trouble, it is frequently explained that they are having a personality conflict. Many times that is a euphemism for the prevailing of an ungodly attitude among the members.

A personality conflict cannot disrupt the peace of a local church unless sin is committed. When there are personalities in a local church, which are not naturally compatible with one another, the word of God tells us how to avoid disrupting the peace of the church. "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:2, 3). Allowing personality conflicts to disrupt peace and destroy harmony in a local church violates Ephesians 4:2, 3. Plainly, that is sin.

Ephesians 4:2, 3 is written to "the faithful in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:2). Those who are faithful to the Lord must obey Ephesians 4:2, 3 in order to continue "faithful in Christ Jesus."

If my personality clashes with the personality of brother Brown and we both obey Ephesians 4:2, 3, how could it be possible for our personality conflict to destroy the unity of the local church of which we are members?

What if one of us — what if I deal with the conflict without lowliness and meekness, am not longsuffering and forbearing with brother Brown, but instead speak out against the traits of brother Brown's personality which peave me and constantly belittle his irksome mannerisms or forms of expression? What would happen in the local church if brother Brown in lowliness and

meekness were to be longsuffering and forbearing with my constant abuse of him? How long could that situation exist within a local church before the entire membership would see that my constant abuse of brother Brown was an expression of my own ungodly attitude? It should soon become apparent that I was not obeying the teaching to live righteously (Titus 2:12).

Possibly some one is thinking, "It would not be fair for brother Brown to have to bear such abuse in silence. I readily grant that such would not be fair to brother Brown. The question is: Whence came the idea, we may live the life of a Christian without being forbearing with those who treat us unfairly? How fairly was Jesus treated by those who condemned and crucified Him? "Like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth" (Acts 2:32 & Isa. 53:7). When they crucified Him, He prayed, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Jesus did not scream, "THIS IS UNFAIR!" Jesus said, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46).

When Jesus was on earth, He warned the ungodly among the people of God of the damnation of hell. We need to sound that same warning to every brother or sister who might allow a conflict between his/her personality and another member's personality to disrupt the peace and destroy the harmony or unity of the local church.

Factionous brethren or sisters should be dealt with according to the teaching of Titus 3:10. A local church does not have to put up with bickering and backbiting among its membership.

DRAWING NEAR BEFORE WITHDRAWING

Joe Shane
1040 North St.
Columbus, IN 47203

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us" (2 Thessalonians 3:6). This is a command given every Christian when another Christian turns back to the "world." It is something that must be carried out by every member of the congregation if it is to have the impact God intended. Most Christians recognize the New Testament teaching, here and in Matthew, Romans, First Corinthians and Titus, regarding corrective discipline within the church family. But does the fact that we carry out what has come to be known as "church discipline" mean we have dealt correctly with those whom we mark? I think an important question must be asked of every Christian, "What did I do to draw nearer to that brother or sister before the situation arose calling on me to withdraw?"

Discipline must be viewed in two parts, first there must be instruction and then the withdrawal. I fear we have short circuited the first part of this process far too many times. Instruction involves the teaching that is done publicly, but it is much more! It involves getting to know one another, knowing one another's strengths and weaknesses. It means having association with each other so instruction in the Christian way is personal and on going. How can I "rejoice with them that do rejoice," or "weep with them that weep," when I have made no effort to know them?

A good test for ourselves, as to what effort we had put into making someone feel they were a part of God's family, comes when it is necessary to withdraw from that person. Now most of us would say, "I felt terrible about it." But what does "terrible" mean? I think we have the mental knowledge of their lost condition that makes us feel sad when a brother or sister returns to following Satan; but how we feel about the particular person will depend on how close we were to that person. What if a Christian was never made to feel a part of the family of God? Or, having once felt a part of the family, fell away with little or no contact from other Christians. How effective would withdrawing be on that person — it would not be effective!

Every time we "withdraw" from someone, I ask myself, "Did I do all I could?" I fear sometimes the answer is NO! Paul said, "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men." 1 Thess. 5:14.

What part did you or I have in trying to restore those from whom we have withdrawn? If we never called, visited or made an effort to restore them to faithfulness we will answer to God one day! If we made one visit and laid it on the line to them, we have not done our duty! But if we in love and concern warned, comforted and supported them in efforts (plural) to restore them to the Lord, then we have fulfilled all that God requires of us. I fear most of us fall into the group that has made little or no contact. It is unrealistic to think one can walk into another Christian's home for the first time and simply tell them to straighten up, and think you have done all that you can. Paul's words to the Thessalonians required time and effort on the part of strong Christians. It requires a sense of "family" that will only come from much time together. It requires drawing near!

I am sure "church discipline" will not have the impact God intended if we have not first made repeated efforts to warn, comfort and support a weak brother or sister. Do not think God will be pleased that we have "withdrawn" from someone we have not tried to teach. It seems that it would be impossible to Scripturally "withdraw" from someone if I had never tried to draw near to them first.

WHEN YOU MOVE—Please allow two months for change of address notices. We have a cut-off date for changes each month. *Thanks for your help.*

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

Send all News Hems to: Connie W. Adams, P.O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109

SOUTHSIDE LECTURES

The Southside church in Pasadena, Texas will have a lecture series June 1-4. DEE BOWMAN will speak on "Temptation and Sin", "Love", "The Adversary", "The Resurrection." HOMER HAILEY will speak on "The Word Became Flesh", "The Virgin Birth", "The Authoritative Word", "The King In His Kingdom." C. G. (COLLY) CALDWELL will speak on "Salvation", "Opposition", "Providence", "Praising and Glorifying God." ED HARREL will speak on "Self-Control", "Predestination", "Faith" and "Joy." Congregational singing will be led by R. J. STEVENS.

JIM WHIDDEN, 721 Morningview Dr., Thomasville, AL 36784 — We have been with the church here since October, 1983. At that time over 75% of my support had to be raised elsewhere. At the present time, we are not only fully self-supporting but have also begun a training program for new preachers. In addition the brethren have indicated an interest in making my services available for gospel meetings with congregations unable to pay for such.

CARL McMURRAY, 5019 N. W. 30th Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32601 — My family and I have been working with the Northeast church for almost 5 years now. Many positive changes have taken place and the Lord has consistently blessed the efforts of these good people. With many conversions, the building is at capacity and the church is at peace.

We are now planning to move to Omaha, Nebraska to work with the LaVista congregation there. The church in Omaha is one of only three

in the state (and one of these is just a couple of families) and as such, accurately represents the state of the Lord's church throughout the Midwest. Mike Davis, who is working with them in Omaha, will remain and we will work together with him and his family. With half a million souls in this city, there will be plenty for two men to do. Having worked with the church in Sioux City, Iowa for five years also, previous experience says that two men would be better able to deal with the discouragement of very few other Christians. We are planning to move in late May, before seasonal cost increases in shipping. The Brownsburg, Indiana church and the Jordan Park church in Huntsville, Alabama have graciously committed to most of our support and moving expenses, though we presently lack \$ 1,000 per month support and \$1,700 in moving costs. If anyone is interested in this "mission field" in our nation's heartland, we would be glad to hear from you. Also, if anyone has contacts in Omaha or stationed at Offutt Air Force Base that we could contact, we would welcome that. References will be supplied to those interested.

I have also been asked to write concerning the church in Sioux City, Iowa. Having worked there 5 years I can vouch for the fact that it is a pleasant place to live and could bring forth fruit in the Lord's vineyard. But, they do need someone to come and work with them. The area contains just under 100,000 souls. The church owns its own building in a decent part of town. The reason they are small is not fussing that has divided many southern churches. I have generally found these mid-western congregations to be very close. The area is simply difficult. It could be a blessing to them and to any man who

could come to the Midwest and put his hand to the plow here. For further information you may call or write GLENN MYER, Rt. 2, Box 101, Bancroft, NE 68004. Phone (402) 648-7697.

WILSON ADAMS, 891 Autumn Valley Lane, Gambrills, MD 21054 — The work at Wildercroft in the Washington, D. C. area continues to be extremely encouraging. Attendance runs in the 160's and we have seen 10 baptized the first three months of 1987. We pray the Lord will continue to bless us and use us in whatever way He can. Each year I receive several calls in reference to "good places" to stay in the D. C. area. There have been several new and inexpensive (at least by D. C. standards) motels built on I-95 (the Capital Beltway) at the exit for Central Avenue (MD 214). There is a Days Inn, Motel 6, Motel 8, Knight Inn, and a Red Roof Inn is also nearby. These motels are near the subway as well as being only ten minutes from our building. And, if I may add one more observation... please, Please, PLEASE when traveling to places frequented by many visitors, don't call on Sunday morning and ask for transportation to services. It's probably too late. As you make your travel plans try and make as many arrangements as you can IN ADVANCE. Brethren are generally very receptive and ready to assist those needing transportation, directions, etc., if you only give them time to do so. Have a great summer — remember that the Lord comes first no matter where you are — and visit with us if your travel plans include the nations capital.

VIVION ROAD LECTURES

The Vivion Road church, 2026 N. E. Vivion Rd., Kansas City, Missouri 64118, will have a lectureship June 22-25, 1987 with **ARDIE BROWN** presenting a series on "Positive Christianity" and "Humanism." **BOB BUCHANON** will speak on "God's Heroes" and "Lessons From Ephesians." **L. A. STAUFFER** will speak on "Lessons From The Psalms" and "Premillennialism." For information on video or audio tapes, or housing during the lectures, please write to the church at P.O. Box 28478, Kansas City, MO 64118. Phone (816)452-3684.

RAY MADRIGAL, 165 Hillington Dr., Paducah, KY 42001 — After six years of preaching in Bridgeview, Illinois, we have recently moved to Paducah in northwestern Kentucky. Our work in southwest Chicago was fruitful and rewarding. We left the Bridgeview church at peace and on a productive note. Twenty-one sinners were converted to Christ while over twenty unfaithful Christians were restored. We rejoice in God's blessings. We look forward to what God has in store for us in Paducah. If you know anybody in the Paducah area who might be receptive to the gospel, or of some neglectful Christian in need of encouragement, please let us know. Phone me at (502)554-7639.

DENNIS G. ALLAN, P.O. Box 17, Auburn, Michigan 48611 — In June, 1985 we moved to the tri-cities area of Michigan. This includes Saginaw-Bay City-Midland. The work in this area began with 9 Christians and several children meeting together in 1979 when several left a congregation in the area because of violation of the Biblical pattern. In spite of disappointments, this small group pressed on and led others to Christ. Some good families have moved to the area, others left a nearby congregation because of erroneous teaching and practice and some have been baptized into Christ. There are presently 26 members with attendance in the mid — 30's. There is much opportunity. We are thankful to God for the good done.

I would like to inform you regarding the needs of Fred and Beverly McKinney who are members here. They have done much faithful work over the years. Brother McKinney has been disabled from his preaching work the past few years because of a rare and serious combination of physical ailments. Though limited by health problems, the McKinneys have been a stable and encouraging influence here. His health has shown some improvement but it will be sometime before he can return to regular work of any kind. With the help of sister McKinney's employment, assistance from relatives and individual Christians, and small amount from here and congregations in other areas, they are managing to meet the immediate costs of food and shelter. However, these means have not been sufficient to even begin to help with over \$25,000 in medical bills which have accumulated over the past several years. Any help, on a onetime or repeated basis would help relieve faithful and deserving saints. Inquiries may be made directly to Fred McKinney, 1520 Taylor St., Bay City, MI 48708, phone (517)892-

1351, or to the writer at the address which heads this notice. My phone is (517)662-7645.

CECIL WILLIS, P.O. Box 15, Woodlake, TX 75865 — I have just returned from a preaching trip to Fairbanks, Alaska. The meeting was my seventh in Alaska. I first preached at Fairbanks in 1966, so I have had first-hand contact with the brethren there for over 20 years. The church at Fairbanks began in the early 1960's. The membership has fluctuated, usually mirroring fluctuation of the job market. With the present recession in the oil market, the congregation now is at a rather low ebb numerically. They now number 16 members. Eleven of those 16 members are under 30 years of age, and some of these have been Christians only a few months. It has been several years since the congregation has had a preacher to work with them, and they need one now. They are building a nice little meeting house. The basement portion is completed and they are meeting in it. The upper portion is roughed in, and many of the materials needed to complete that part have been purchased, and more work will be done on the building this year. They have no indebtedness on their building.

Contributions at Fairbanks run about \$200.00 weekly. Several of the members are students and have little or no income at the moment. Utilities on the building run about \$400 per month. They will be able to pay \$500 per month toward a preacher's support, which is about what it costs to rent a one-bedroom apartment in Fairbanks. It is my intention to move to Fairbanks in May. Living expenses are a little higher there than in the lower 48 states. So the brethren tell me I will need about \$2,000 per month, in addition to what the Fairbanks church can supply. If necessary, I will get a secular job in order to help them in the work. The brethren feel I can be of some help to them in the Lord's work in this city of 25,000 (with 70,000 in the marketing area).

The latest statistics (1985) show 521,000 people in Alaska distributed over an area more than twice the size of Texas. There are only four small faithful churches in the state: Anchorage, Fairbanks, Sotolna, and Barrow. Dean Crews at Anchorage is the only faithful preacher in the state. He has been trying to work a little with all four churches. But Fairbanks if 450 miles from Anchorage and Barrow is more than 1,000 miles north of Anchorage. All four of these churches would number no more than 100 saints. By comparison, Texas has more than 350 faithful churches, in an area half the size of Alaska. So there is a vast harvest field for the work of every willing Christian.

There are four large military installations in Alaska. Two of these are located at Fairbanks. There are thousands of young military men stationed there, usually for four year terms. These bases hire many thousands of civilian employees, in addition to the military assignees. There needs to be a vigorous church near these strategic centers.

If the church where you worship can consider additional preacher support, please inform them of my need in Fairbanks. Over the years, I have assisted in raising support for literally hundreds of gospel preachers. As best I can remember, this is the first time I have ever needed to raise support for myself (excepting \$100 a month for six months one time). I am willing to get a secular job to help these brethren, but doing so would hamper the amount of effort I could make in teaching the gospel. I do not mean to indicate that Fairbanks is a more needful area than some other, or that I need support more than some other brother. But it is true that Fairbanks is a needful field, and I would like to go to work there. So, if you or others whom you know could help, I would be most grateful.

FROM AFAR

ROMEO V. TORRELIZA, Burgos St. Poblacion Sur, Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur, Republic of the Philippines — As in days of old, I will rehearse what God has done with us. There was growth in all phases of our work in 1986. Ten were baptized into Christ. We distributed tracts and invitations at the town proper, at two colleges in the area and put signboards at strategic places to let people know we are here. I was invited to preach in a gospel meeting at Pakiling, Bucay, Abra in January, 1987. Four were baptized in this effort. **PAUL WILLIAMS**, P.O. Box 324, Eshowe, 3815 South Africa — We had a two weeks tent meeting in Eshowe. Each service lasted about two hours including a children's class, singing, the Jule Miller film strip, sermon and question period. Except on rainy nights the tent was comfortable full with 60-80 people. Six were baptized. The four high school teachers who were baptized while in Eshowe College of Education in 1985 scheduled a week-end meeting in their school hall March

13-15. Paddy Kendall-Ball, who works with them regularly, Michael Gumedede and I preached. The brethren were encouraged because a good number of young people attended. The question periods were profitable, and two young women in their 20's were baptized.

PREACHERS NEEDED

SUMMERVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA — The Bacon's Bridge Rd. church needs a preacher. The work started one year ago with 3-9 people but now 30-40 attend. Majority of support will have to be raised elsewhere. Contact RAY GOFF, Van Buren, Ladson, SC 29456. Phone (803)875-3842.

TUALATIN, OREGON — This congregation of 19 members began in July, 1986. We presently carry the preaching duties, but are in process of seeking a full-time preacher. Tualatin is 12 miles south of Portland on I-5 near its intersection with I-205. This is a rapidly growing area of metropolitan Portland. A new Mormon temple is being built about 4 miles from here. We are able to supply \$700 per month support. Contact Leon Fermerick (503)246-2430, 9615 S. W. 62nd Ave., Portland, OR 97219.

PREACHER NEEDED

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI — A full-time preacher is needed to work with a congregation of about 85. We are self-supporting and without elders and deacons at present. If interested, please write to the Affton Church of Christ, 6915 Weber Rd., St. Louis, MO 63123.

DEBATE

KEN GREEN, 2212 Jordan Lane, Huntsville, AL 35805 — I am to debate Hayes of the Emmanuel Church of Christ July 1, 2 and 4, 5. Hayes will affirm one person in the Godhead Monday and Tuesday in the Jordan Park building and I will affirm three persons in the God-head Thursday and Friday in their building on Drake Ave.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS 315
RESTORATIONS 62

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

'DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH'

VOLUME XXVIII

JULY, 1987

Number 7

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH

The scriptures say: "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?" (Romans 2:21, 22), The lesson in these verses is to practice what you preach.

"Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers" (Matthew 23:1-4).

The above passages from the word of God point out that we must practice what we teach and refuse to do what we teach is forbidden by God.

Doctrine is absolutely worthless if not practiced. What one has learned, however good and true it may be, does not benefit him at all unless applied. The scribes and Pharisees were condemned by the Lord for saying and not doing. In the New Testament we have the right book, or we have no guide at all in spiritual things. The apostle Paul makes it plain that no other doctrine can be preached. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said

before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8, 9).

We must practice what we learn from the gospel if we are to be blessed by God. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:22-

Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

We preach that one must know the will of God to be saved. While we preach this, many members of the church make only a token effort to learn what the Bible teaches. We insist that the following passage is to be obeyed. "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). But many avoid the opportunities to learn in Bible classes and in studying for themselves what the truth really is on a given subject. Unless we begin to practice what we teach in this matter, we will never be able to teach others the truth. We will never know it ourselves.

We preach that the gospel is the power of God to save. We cite Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:22, 23).

While we preach that the gospel is the power of God to save the sinner, we do very little to preach it. One may be close in his association with one who has never

heard the gospel of Christ, and while he preaches the truth above, he never once tries to use this power upon his friend. I wonder if such can really be convinced that he will be saved when he does not do the will of his Father in preaching the truth to those around him.

We preach loud and long that scriptural baptism makes one a new creature in Christ (Romans 6:3-6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 2:14; 3:1, 2). But how do most of us practice this? Many who have been baptized into Christ continue to live the same old sinful life that characterized them before they were obedient to the gospel. If they preach that one is a new creature, and that he ought not to continue in sin, why not practice this teaching and try to live in the "newness" of life that we preach? Why not seek the things above and not the things upon earth? Why not practice the good works, "which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10)

I will assure you of this one thing: we will never make headway in preaching the gospel to those who are lost until we begin to practice what we preach. This is a major cause for the decline in congregational membership, and so few baptized now as compared to forty years ago. Failure to practice what one preaches does not apply only to preachers, elders, deacons, teachers and their families; it applies to every Christian alike. We must do what the doctrine says if we expect to go to heaven when we die, and if we expect others to go with us.

JERRY HALE

We were saddened to learn of the death of Jerry Hale, a faithful gospel preacher. He passed away in his sleep in the early morning hours Monday May 11th in Parkersburg, W. Va. at home. He preached for the Marrtown Road church in Parkersburg. He had been with them a year and a half and had previously preached for a number of years for the Rivermont church in Chester, Va. He was sound in the faith and stood firm against all error. He was not only a fellow gospel preacher but a good friend of the family. He will be missed very much. Our sympathy goes out to his wife, two daughters and a son.

Four years ago he had undergone open heart surgery and prior to that his wife had undergone radical surgery on two occasions. The insurance was canceled several years ago leaving them without any coverage. They have done the best they could in hard circumstances. She is in need of assistance from brethren who read this and are in a position to help. Brethren, this is a worthy case. *Please help!*

Her Address is: Mrs. Jerry Hale, Dickel Estates, 8 Brown Street, Parkersburg, W. Va. 26101. Her phone number: 1-304-863-6462.

J. Wiley Adams

Searching The Scriptures

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Attitudes and Consequences in the Restoration Movement

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Editorial

Cornie W. Adams

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A CERTAIN SOUND

Luke took it in hand to write of "those things which are most surely believed among us" that his friend, Theophilus, might "know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed" (Lk. 1:1, 4). The word "certainty" suggests the idea of security or safety. To the Philippians Paul wrote "To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe" (Phil. 3:1). Here again the idea is security or that which supplies a safeguard.

Paul argued that speaking in tongues was unprofitable unless what was said was interpreted. Then he illustrated the principle by saying "And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (1 Cor. 14:7, 8). It would be disastrous on the battle field not to be able to distinguish between the trumpet sounds for "charge" and "retreat."

Paul said he preached a certified gospel (Gal. 1:11). It did not come from men but by revelation from God. Its sound was distinct. It rang with the language of heaven and not of men. It was certified by "signs, wonders and miracles" (Heb. 2:3-4), by eyewitness accounts (2 Pet. 1:16-18), and by prophecy and fulfillment (2 Pet. 1:19-21). Such a message was safe; it offered peace and security to those who accepted it. The end result of it was spiritual health. That is the import of the word "sound." Timothy was charged to "hold fast the form of sound words" (2 Tim. 1:13). Elders were to employ "sound doctrine" to "exhort and convict the gainsayers" (Tit. 1:9). Titus was told to use "sound speech, that cannot be condemned" (Tit. 2:8). The spiritual health of the hearers was directly related to the certainty of what was preached. There is no safeguard in the vagaries of human wisdom.

A Fundamental Principle

Those noble men who sought to break with denominational error and do what they could to restore the New Testament church, soon recognized the urgency of a pure speech. The Ashdodic language of the creeds and church disciplines was not suited to the preaching of the pure gospel of Christ. They knew there could be no return to the purity of faith and practice without speak-

ing "as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). "Let us speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent" they said. It was "to the law, and to the testimony" and "line upon line and precept upon precept." The apostasy had been marked by a corruption of language. Unscriptural terms had to be invented to describe unscriptural things. God's revelation has its own vocabulary, its own distinctive speech.

Lest We Forget

This paper was born in a time when uncertain sounds had gone forth from many quarters. Error was being preached and practiced touching the nature, work and organization of the church. The periodicals of the day and church bulletins in abundance reflected a changing attitude toward divine authority. Strange sounds began to be heard. For ten years, prior to the beginning of this paper, the battle raged and division ensued from one part of the nation to another. This paper was started to provide a medium for the men who wrote in it to plead for sanity and soundness in faith. Those who wrote columns in this paper were always associated with clarity of sound and purity of life. The sound was certain, distinct.

We must keep it so. The name of this paper is **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES**. Our writers have placed heavy emphasis on what the Book says. The best kind of article has always been the kind which led the readers to search the Scriptures to know the mind of the Lord. We have not worried as to whether it would be judged "positive" or "negative." We have been concerned with teaching truth. Error has been exposed because a search of the Scriptures showed no basis for what some have taught. Articles have appeared to encourage Christians in the varied areas of life. But always, the underlying appeal has been to what the word of the Lord said.

Every man who writes a column in this paper has been asked to give Bible proof for what he teaches, or not teach it. In times of controversy, where obviously pious men have honestly differed touching some point which was of general interest, we have asked for fairness in treatment of one another. We have tried not to carry vitriolic exchanges nor provide space for personal axes to be ground. We have asked writers to address their material to common men, for that is what most of us are. We have made no pretense of being a paper for those who are spiritual egg heads. Most of our readers are not even preachers. They are simply Christians who confront the world every day at work or play and who strive to serve the Lord the best they can. Some of our readers may feel that at times we have failed in some of these objectives. Maybe so. But we believe the objectives have been right and well worth accomplishing.

As time passes and older men retire from the work of writing, we must then look to younger hands to take hold of such work. Frankly, I am concerned about the uncertain sound coming from some of our young men (and a few of the older ones). This paper was not started to chase rabbits and indulge in theological guesswork. We are firmly persuaded that printers ink is a danger-

ous chemical with which to experiment. We prefer material which comes straight to the point and gives us what the Bible says. While it might be helpful at times to quote from a commentary, word study, or other work to amplify a point, it would help to remember what one simple brother remarked once when he said "the Bible shore do throw a lot of light on them commentaries."

I do not know what the future holds for me or for this paper. But I do know that I would much rather see it die in honor for giving out a certain sound, than to see it gradually become a voice of compromise and filled with unsound speech to the perverting of the hearts of the readers. I ask every man who submits material to this paper to mark well what I have said here. I do not want material from any man who feels uncomfortable with this approach. That it where we have "come from" since H. E. Phillips and James P. Miller gave this paper birth, along with the help of several other good men, and that is where we are still "coming from" now. I ask the readers to consider whether such an approach is worthy of your support. If you do not think so, then don't subscribe. If you do think so, then stay with us and help us get it into the hands of as many people as possible.

**WAKE THE WORLD
AND TELL THE
PEOPLE**

Wilson Adams
891 Autumn Valley Lane
Gambrills, MD 21054



BACK TO THE BIBLE

Nehemiah chapter 8 presents one of the greatest spiritual revivals of all time. The people of Jerusalem lived in a spiritual vacuum. They had everything (a well-ordered, well-defined, well-governed city with new homes and good jobs) but they had NOTHING! There was something missing and Nehemiah knew what it was. The master bricklayer who had rebuilt the walls was now faced with an even greater challenge — the rebuilding of HUMAN HEARTS and the motivating of people to turn toward God.

"Let's Go Back To The Bible!"

Read Nehemiah 8:1-5 (Go ahead and grab your Bible and look at it). The people gathered at the Water Gate as Ezra the priest-scribe led the way with the reading and exhortation from the Scriptures. The people stood and listened attentively for hours — this was no thirty minute air-conditioned sermon on padded pews — this was genuine appreciation for the divine communique of God!

And what was it that qualified Ezra to lead the people? It was the man's unyielding desire to teach total truth. Ezra 7:10 states:

For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances. . .

Ezra "set his heart to study the law of the Lord." Without Bible knowledge it matters not how well a man may master the art of communication or how profound his powers of verbal persuasion or how eloquent his oratory may be, for WITHOUT BIBLE KNOWLEDGE HE WILL FAIL as a teacher because he has nothing substantial to teach.

And our preaching and teaching must be substantial i.e., it must be filled with substance. There are too many public proclaimers who haven't learned that the first secret to igniting the fire of spiritual revival is to make a commitment to BIBLE study (2 Tim. 2:15). Too much of our preaching/teaching is nothing more than dusted off, warmed over, run through the same old rehash of left-overs time after time after time. That's not to say that the subject matter discussed is of little importance — it is no doubt of major importance and that is exactly why the teacher in the four and five year old class who has taught the lesson on "The Falling Walls of Jericho" twenty-seven times before, or the preacher who gives

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the oft delivered sermon on "*The Pattern For True Worship In The New Testament Church*" — both have got to give some time, attention and study and then teach it like he/she have never taught it before! In my limited opinion that is the key to successful preaching and teaching.

My wife is a great cook (she'll love me for saying that!) and being from southern California her specialty is Mexican food. Now every now and then we have some of her left overs and a few days later she may serve those enchiladas again (and believe me, I'm not complaining!). Do you know what she DOESN'T do? She doesn't take the dish straight out of the refrigerator and place it cold and lifeless on my plate. No, she adds flavoring. She seasons it. She warms it. She stirs it. Then, and only then, does she serve it piping hot and just as delicious as the very first time.

Brethren, we must preach the same old Bible themes that gospel preachers have dealt with for years. We must preach on Baptism.. We must preach on Grace... We must point out Denominational Error. . . We have got to remind the next generation that there are real Issues That Divide Churches of Christ. . . We face the God-directed duty to WARN against Sin and we must point out the dangers of Immorality and the despicability of Hell... — we must do all of that (and more!) but every time we deal with basic Bible themes and doctrines no matter how many times we have preached it before — we cannot afford to just take it out of the 'fridge and throw it cold on the plate! We must study and re-study, read and re-read and then preach it with a little flavor, fervor and fire like we did the first time.

What I am saying is that spiritual revival must begin with an enthusiastic appeal to Scripture. Look at the apostles who set the pace for the early church and lit a fire in the lives of men and women that could not be quenched. How did they do it? **THEY BURNED THE WORD OF GOD INTO THE HEARTS OF PEOPLE!** They didn't preach politics or social issues, nor did they conduct seminars on physical education, personal finances or good nutrition. They preached the GOSPEL. They stuck with SCRIPTURE. They went BACK TO THE BIBLE! — and so must we.

An Emotional Explosion

"*And all the people answered, 'A-men, A-men!' while lifting up their hands' then they bowed low and worshiped the Lord. . .*" (8:6). In verse 9 they wept aloud. And why? **THEY KNEW THEY WERE GUILTY!** They knew they had not lived up to the standard of Scripture. Ezra's sermon hit home — and hard. This was no fire-side chat, no intellectual "chalk-talk" — this was persuasive preaching (2 Cor. 5:11). The people were pricked to the heart. They were moved. It was an emotional day.

I hear a lot about positive preaching versus negative preaching as if "positiveness" and "negativeness" are always antithetical entities. Do you know that some of the best *positive* preaching I have ever heard was *negative*? (It's sort of like my folks who lived by the rule of child-raising that saw many times the *positive* effects of

negative discipline — ouch!)

Now I consider myself a pretty positive guy. And I enjoy reading after fellows like Chuck Swindol, James Dobson, Arthur Gordon, Josh McDowell and the like. I enjoy reading success stories and hearing about people who *could* when they were told they *couldn't*. I like motivational books and tapes because they make me feel good about myself and, truthfully, I've found a lot of good preaching points and applicable illustrations from their works. But there is a recognizable danger in all of this. I must keep uppermost in my mind that my favorite authors are men and women who have embraced Jesus in name only. While acknowledging Christ they blatantly refuse to preach the entire message of the Savior. Oh, they talk about His love, words of wisdom and kindness... but in their ecumenical spirit and under the disguise of "positive thinking" they refuse to take a stand in many controverted areas of the Lord's teaching. Now isn't that right? And, so, I must exercise care in whatever reading I do — whether it be the words of a Methodist commentator of ages past or a popular "religious" author of the modern day — to not allow myself to be overly influenced by the words of man to the point that I forsake the sacred truths of inspired Scripture. When I've failed in that area I've done a favor to no one.

I talk to a lot of people coming out of liberal churches of Christ. They are used to hearing positive preaching, experiencing enthusiastic worship services and hearing a lot about joy and "let's all love the Lord." But something is missing and that is a resolute appeal to the New Testament as the final authoritative guide in religion. They've heard positive preaching without substance (what good is that?) They have experienced enthusiasm based on emotions alone. **AND THEY WANT MORE!** They want enthusiasm based on Bible! They want to hear about soul winning, love and total commitment to Jesus Christ but they also want someone to tell them "why" instrumental music in corporate worship is unacceptable. They want to hear what the Bible says about *Home and Family* from a teacher who won't be a coward and run from God's law on marriage, divorce and remarriage. They want someone who will not be the least bit embarrassed to tell folks that without baptism they have no hope of heaven.

Brethren, we will never be able to **WAKE THE WORLD AND TELL THE PEOPLE** until we are able to touch the human heart... and we will never be able to touch the heart until we go back to the Bible. There must be a balance in all of this. We must have emotion and we must have truth upon which to base our emotion. We must hear topical sermons and we must hear expository ones. We must preach on Bible principles that touch people where they live and work and we must deal with issues that concern the work and worship of the Lord's church. It's a great responsibility to preach and teach the Gospel. God help me to be faithful!

DON'T FORGET TO PRAY!

ACCEPTED OF HIM

(2 Cor. 5:9)

Donnie V. Rader

4724 E. Manslick Rd.
Louisville, KY 40219



HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

Husbands are instructed to treat their wives properly that their "prayers be not hindered" (1 Pet. 3:7). Obviously there are some things that hinder our prayers. These must be recognized and overcome, for that which hinders our prayers hinders our whole service unto God. Christians are no stronger than their prayers.

An Unforgiving Spirit

Jesus taught his disciples to pray "forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). After concluding the model prayer the Lord said, "For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespass" (vs. 14-15). If we are unwilling to forgive another when he says he repents (Lk. 17:1-4) then our prayers are hindered and we stand condemned before God (cf. Matt. 18:21-25).

Wandering Attention

It is easy to let our minds begin to wander both in public and private prayers. We may start out with our attention fixed on every word of the prayer, but before we know it we are thinking about something totally unrelated to any part of the prayer. Prayer is an active thing, not passive. We can't just bow our heads while another leads us and be praying with our minds wandering about. We must watch unto prayer (1 Pet. 4:7). Our prayer must be in spirit, i.e. from the heart (John 4:24; 1 Cor. 14:15).

Continuing In Sin

We must be reminded that God doesn't hear the prayer of sinners (Isa. 59:1-2; Prov. 28:9; John 9:31). Rather, his ears are open unto the righteous (1 Pet. 3:12). However, some brethren continue in sin and at the same time continue to pray. Could it be that they really think God will hear and answer those prayers in spite of the sin? They harbor ungodly attitudes, forsake the assembling of the saints, drink socially, smoke, dress immodestly, mistreat their mate or children and live in adulterous marriages. What good do they think their prayers will do? Prayer is not a substitute for righteous living. Without repentance, prayer does not change a wicked man into a righteous one.

Our text (1 Pet. 3:7) again shows that sin hinders prayer. Peter said that God listens to the righteous (1 Pet. 3:22). John said, "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 Jno. 3:22). Someone once said, "To pray while living in wrongdoing is to spread the sail while leaving the anchor unlifted."

Lack Of Interest In Spiritual Matters

There is, without a question a lack of spirituality with some of us. Other matters occupy our time and interest. I believe that the contrast in Rom. 2 (walking after the flesh — vs — walking after the spirit) is one between those who do what is best for their flesh, pleasing the outer man and those who do what is best for the soul. Consequently those who are more interested in the outer man have filled their time and interest with sports, their job, fashion, television, entertainment, et. al. When this is done, little time is left for spiritual things. Many Christians spend little time reading the Bible and religious materials. We spend dollars upon dollars on entertainment, fashionable clothes, fine furniture, vacations, magazines, newspapers, books and television sets and spend considerably less on Bible study aids such as commentaries, concordances, Bible dictionaries, Bible encyclopedias, other tracts and journals. We think nothing of spending \$15,000 on a car, \$50,000 to \$90,000 for a good house, \$500 for a television set, but think it too much to pay anywhere from \$5.00 to \$15.00 a year to have a good religious paper, with edifying material, to be mailed into our home.

With some, spiritual things are just not the primary things in their minds. Such a one is less apt to pray as he ought.

Self Righteousness

The Pharisee in Lk. 18:9-14 was an arrogant, self-righteous person. He thought he was far superior to the lowly publican. The text clearly shows that it was the humble publican and not the Pharisee that was justified. It is easy to let ourselves become spiritually proud and think ourselves to be something when we are not (1 Cor. 10:12; Gal. 6:3). When we do, our prayers are hindered.

No Time

We have allowed our jobs and social pleasures to rob us of time and quiet hours to pray. We have made such a rat race for ourselves to live in that it is hard for some to find just a few minutes a day to stop and talk to God. We must learn to make time. If it involves getting up a little earlier, staying up a little later or quitting something we are doing, we must *make* the time. Jesus rose a great while before day so that he could go to a solitary place and pray to his Father (Mk. 1:35).

Just because you pray doesn't mean that your prayer is acceptable to god. It could be that you hinder your own prayers. Examine your life and diligently serve God "that your prayers be not hindered."

LOUIS EARL FLY CHANGES WORLD

Feb. 17, 1924 — March 15, 1987

James P. Needham
106 Foxwood Dr.
Brandon, FL 33511

It is with a sense of great personal loss that I report the death of one of the dearest friends I ever had in this life, brother Louis Earl Fly, of Jackson, TN. He died, appropriately, at church time Sunday morning, March 15, 1987, after several years of failing health. He was a gospel preacher of uncommon ability.

Early Life and Conversion to Christ

Earl was born on Feb. 17, 1924 at Stika, TN (Near Milan). He was a member of a prominent family in that community. A cousin of his became Governor of the State (Browning). Other members of his family (including his parents) were/are members of the business community in that area. He joined the Missionary Baptist church as a young man. For many years he struggled to convert his parents to Christ. His father died without becoming a Christian, but his mother, though harder against the truth than his father, and probably kept him from obeying the gospel, finally became a Christian before she died!

Earl, his wife Laverne, and Earl's brother-in-law, Orlan Hogue, and Bernice, Orlan's wife (Earl's only sister) and Dan, Orlan's brother, were all converted during a gospel meeting at Sitka, TN held by Loyce L. Pearce in 1947. They were all staunch Baptists. Someone invited Earl and Orlan, who were partners in a small garage at Sitka, to attend. They were curious, and decided to go. After hearing Loyce preach, they were pretty upset, and decided to study up on their Baptist doctrine and prove Loyce wrong. They continued to attend the meeting to get all the ammunition possible. The result was that they were converted to Christ!

Earl, Orlan Hogue, and Orlan's brother Dan, all entered Freed-Hardeman College in the fall of 1947, a few days following conversion, determined to preach the gospel. I entered Freed-Hardeman in the fall of 1948, and my friendship with all these brethren dates from that time. The Needham and Fly families particularly formed a bond of friendship that has lasted almost 40 years. Our last year in college, we lived and preached for churches that were about 5 miles apart (He at Tigrett, and I at Maury City) and commuted to Freed-Hardeman 4 days a week. We became like flesh and blood brothers.

Effectiveness as a Gospel Preacher

Earl Fly and Orlan Hogue became two of the most effective gospel preachers I have ever known. In almost 40 years of preaching I have never met any two other persons who manifested the zeal for God I saw in these

two brethren. (Orlan died as the result of a freak fall in the Post Office while living and preaching in Huntingdon, TN in 1956). Many persons were baptized as the result of their work including several in their respective families. Their work was similar to that of Paul and Barnabas; wherever they went they caused either a revival or a riot. They pulled no punches where religious error was concerned and this ruffled the feathers of a good many brethren whose businesses or jobs depended upon their having a popular religion. Thus, with some of the brethren, Orlan and Earl were not the most popular preachers, but, by far, the most effective in the area. They took a good deal of "flack," but endured it gladly and without complaint. In time, the real reason for all the complaining among the brethren in West Tennessee was manifest: a lack of scriptural conviction and the spirit of compromise. This is proven by the fact that, almost to a person, those most prominent in it are now the leaders in the liberal churches of the area.

It was my good fortune to be associated with Earl and Orlan, along with Grover Stevens in many gospel meetings in West Tennessee. The four of us labored much together in the interest of the salvation of souls. "These were the best of times and the worst of times." They were the best of times from the standpoint of finding people who would accept the truth. They were the worst of times from the standpoint of being abandoned, opposed and even persecuted by our own brethren in the face of dogged opposition from the sectarians and false teachers. There were times when bodily harm and even our lives were threatened.

A "True Yokefellow" (Phil. 4:3)

Following graduation from Freed-Hardeman, Earl and I continued to work together in the general area of W. Tennessee. We held numerous tent meetings and public debates with denominational preachers. In tent meetings he would sometimes preach and I would lead singing; and sometimes we would reverse the order. We advertised an open pulpit, and local denominational preachers were invited to occupy our pulpit and show where we were wrong. We baptized many people and started some churches in the area. We also taught Bible classes and preached one Sunday afternoon per month at the Ft. Pillar State Prison Farm at Henning, Tennessee with great opposition from the prison chaplain, a member of some Pentecostal group.

As time went by, our work took us to different parts of the country, but we continued to work together in gospel meetings in hard places. We did extensive work in the State of Iowa, traveling there by train. In the late 1950's and early '60's I lived in St. Petersburg, FL and Earl preached for a time for the Belmont Heights church in Tampa. It was good to be close again.

The Outward Man Perishes (2 Cor. 4:16)

In the late 1950's Earl's health began to fail, and his physical strength to dissipate. He was forced to become less and less active in the work, and finally did very little preaching. He suffered a good deal physically, financially, and emotionally from the frustration of not

being able to do what he loved best. He went through several surgeries, and during the last year of his earthly sojourn, he suffered 2 or 3 strokes. The last one took him to a better country.

A Soldier of the Cross

In his prime, Earl had few equals as a Bible student, pulpiteer, debater and writer. In those early years he was, at the same time, the most zealous and patient man I ever knew. It would be hard to imagine a circumstance that could have hindered him from going wherever and whenever he was needed to preach the gospel. We have spent untold hours in homes teaching the good news of Christ to both the open-minded and the obstinate. Long after I had given up on some closed-minded and unreasonable sectarian with whom we were working, Earl was still in there repeating over and over again, patiently and kindly, the same simple truths we had already repeated a dozen times! He just never gave up or ran out of patience or spoke unkindly.

With the truth he was skillful. He not only knew the truth, but he knew how to use it, and was absolutely fearless in so doing. In debates, private and public, he used it like a dagger! No person could take a false position in his presence without facing its consequences.

His Fields of Labor

Earl's work as a gospel preacher spanned almost 40 years, though as I said earlier, failing health diminished his activities for several years. He preached at the following locations: Friendship, Tigrett, Bonnicord, Medina, First Street in Lawrenceburg and Hollywood Drive (Now Old Hickory) in Jackson (Where his health forced him to retire) in Tennessee; Valley Station, KY (Louisville area, where he did one of the finest works I ever witnessed); Belmont Heights, Tampa, and Holden Heights, Orlando, in Florida. He also was very active in meeting work, public debates and writing throughout his active years.

A "True Yokefellow,"

A Friend, and a Christian

While I knew Earl Fly as a yoke-fellow in God's work, and as a friend like few men ever have, I also knew him as a Christian. I know he was not perfect, and he would be the first to admit it, and it is not my purpose here to enlarge him in death beyond what he was in life, but he had principles and traits of character that are all too lacking in many. Christ dwelt in his heart by faith (Eph. 3:17). One could not be with Earl without taking knowledge that he had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13). He was absolutely incapable of gossip and was sternly intolerant of it in others. In all the years of my very close association with him, I never heard him utter one piece of unconfirmed rumor, and I often knew of his rebuking others for repeating such, and forcing the perpetrator to face the consequences of his dastardly deed! If there was good in a person, Earl saw it and tried to build upon it. When others were criticized in his presence, he would jump to their defense if he had the facts, or express the

possibility that there had been a misunderstanding if he didn't.

Those Who Mourn His Passing

Earl leaves behind his beloved wife, Laverne, two children: Ronnie and Anne Marie, three grand children, and one great grandchild, plus a host of friends and brethren who will miss him, but who rejoice in his hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:2).

Good Bye, Old Friend, I'll See You Again

He shall ever live vividly in my memory, and I shall miss him terribly, but I shall rejoice in the blessed hope that he is better now and that one day we shall meet again and reminisce of the pleasant and profitable hours we and our families spent together on earth in the cause we all loved more than life. Good bye, old friend, I'll see you again in a better land where we'll have "a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:2).

The Departure

"The dead are like the stars by day
Withdrawn from mortal eye;
But not extinct, they hold their way
In glory through the sky.
Spirits from bondage thus set free
Vanish amidst immensity,
Where human thought, and human sight,
Fail to pursue their trackless flight."

Author unknown

A Plea

As stated in this article, Earl had financial difficulties in his later years. Being close to the family, I personally know that his widow is having a problem with all the unexpected expenses connected with his death. It would be a wonderful gesture if those of us who knew and loved Earl and his family would chip in and help Laverne over this difficult time. She does not need financial worries to add to her sorrows. All help should be sent to: Laverne Fly, 2208 N. Highland, Jackson, TN 38301. May the Lord bless you as you consider this important matter. Laverne is unaware of my efforts along this line.

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PLAYING THE GAME

I'm not an ardent sports fan. I try to maintain a casual interest in Alabama football in order to keep from being tried for high treason. But actually it did not make my day when Alabama beat Notre Dame and it did not rob me of all joy when they lost to Penn State or even to Auburn.

After all, if just really doesn't matter much who wins a ball game.

And yet, I recognize that there's a lot of drama in sports. I can see how a fellow could get caught up in an inordinate interest in the game. I think Paul was a sports fan. He made use of the olympian contests several times to illustrate spiritual truths.

I'm inclined to disagree with some critics who look upon such pastimes as symptoms of national decline. There are symptoms to be sure. But I doubt that this is one of them.

Solomon wrote that there's "time to every purpose under the heaven." Therefore there must be a time to work and a time to play.

Our forefathers wisely counseled that "all work and no play makes jack a dull boy." I don't see why it should be necessary to fit oneself for heaven that one should have to be unfit to live with here. A temperate regard for pastime and recreation is desirable.

The Game of Life

There exists many lessons of life to be drawn from the diamond, gridiron, or court. Training will tell in all of these and in the game of life. Discipline and self-control are qualities that give the edge.

And if you fumble, or strike out, or miss the free throw, no one gives a flip why. Whether you have a headache, or stayed up too late, or the sun got in your eyes, just doesn't matter to the grandstand or the bleachers. You had your chance. You blew it. The game goes on. And your explanations do not change the score.

It's the fellow who makes the touchdown who draws the crowd. Only a few close friends will be listening sympathetically to the guy with the alibi.

And if there's a weakness, its going to be discovered. The fighter with the glass jaw won't last. The slugger who can't hit the breaking ball on the inside won't make it. The game of life searches out the weakness.

The boy or girl with a weakness becomes the man or woman with a weakness. The boy who cheats in school is headed for the minors. The girl who is untruthful, or lifts a few petty items at the shopping center, is preparing for a big letdown. Unless such weaknesses are worked out they will prove one's undoing.

Being A Good Sport

Everybody appreciates a good sport, whether in basketball or life. The player who gives 110 percent, but who is considerate, and abides by the decision of the referee who had rather lose than win unfairly is admired by friend and foe alike.

There are many poor sports in life. The poor sport misrepresents his enemy. He cannot see a single good quality in him. He makes alibis and quits the game if things don't bounce his way.

He is a poor winner and a poor loser.

The good sport is a gracious winner and a good loser. He doesn't waste his time giving excuses. He accepts defeat and disappointment, setback and grief, and faces the world. He will eventually be a winner.

Do you know of a single instance when such a loser did not come back to win? If not in that game, in some other?

It's one thing to lose the game. It's another to lose your temper, or your nerve.

The Rules of the Game

Whatever the game, it is played according to the rules. No game would be worth playing or watching if the rules were disregarded.

Rules are limitations. If the runner is a tenth of a second late in reaching first, he's out. And if a worker is ten minutes late getting to work, he's late.

Rules govern us from the cradle to the grave. There's "the law of gravitation," "the golden rule," the rules of health and sanitation, traffic laws, and postal laws and regulations. If you join a club, they hand you a copy of the by-laws.

Rules.

We had best mind them. There is great reward in doing so. There are bitter consequences in violating the rules of life.

Get in the game. Play hard, but play fair. Be a good sport. Observe the rules. The great Judge is going to be extremely interested when He marks our card as to how we played the game.

"And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules" (1 Tim. 2:5).

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By ads in religious journals, by letter, by telephone, or by word of mouth comes the plea, "Preacher needed." And, as long as the demand is greater than the supply, thus shall it ever be.

Since the gospel message has been placed in "earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4:7), we have heard the plea of the Macedonian man echoed time and again (Acts 16:9). It is good that the church place proper emphasis on the preaching of the gospel, for by that method men are saved (Rom. 10:14, 15), congregations are established (Acts 11:19-26), and the church is edified (Acts 16:5).

In order for this pattern to continue, preachers may be fully supported by the church or individuals, partially supported by these sources, or he may support himself. Circumstances should determine which of these methods is most expedient, as in the case of the apostle Paul.

But, while I would neither discourage nor minimize the preaching of the gospel, I am convinced that there are situations where a preacher is needed and not wanted, or wanted and not needed. I am just as convinced that at times our methods are not very efficient, when it seems that those with the most talent and experience are where they are least needed, and those with the least talent and experience are in the most difficult places. As long as the demand for preachers exceeds the supply, we need to use our time and make our decisions as wisely as possible.

Again, without intending to dampen anyone's zeal, I think some congregations need to reconsider some of their requests. In most cases which come to my attention, the congregation looking for a preacher seems to want an experienced, able man who is adept both in the pulpit and in "personal work," and want someone else to fully support him. Even when the requesting congregation is willing to share part of the support, they still insist on a "full time" preacher, not one who is willing to help support himself at secular work. With this kind of philosophy, some of the congregations of the first century and some in our time never would have been established.

Brethren need to learn to walk before they try to run, and need to help themselves as much as possible before asking for help. There is nothing degrading about meeting in a private home, a rented room, a converted dwelling, or a modest building in a modest neighborhood.

While some brethren have made some unwise decisions' and manifested little zeal or foresight in the past, the fact remains that every new congregation is not going to start off with the finest building in the best part of town, and the best preacher in the brotherhood, with someone else paying the bill.

It appears that our effort in society to formulate programs for the needy and underprivileged has fostered a climate of perpetual, professional welfare. I wonder if this attitude has affected some in the church — those who expect a few to be faithful in work, attendance, responsibility, and financial integrity, while the rest ride along free of charge. I have also seen this spirit manifest itself among brethren of foreign lands who feel that it is their place to make request, and the place of the American brethren to meet those requests, however numerous or unreasonable they might be.

My life has been spent trying to preach the gospel where it is needed. I have always tried to encourage other preachers and congregations to be like-minded. We need congregations which are financially and doctrinally sound, so that they can assist those which are not. We need experienced, able preachers to help those younger in faith. May we all be found in the right place at the Lord's coming.

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COMMENTS ON MATTHEW 16:13-20

Luther W. Martin
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Verse 13 — *"Wow; when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He began asking His disciples, saying, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?'"*

Caesarea Philippi was a town in the northern portion of Palestine, some 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee. It was located at the foot of Mount Hermon. Herod Philip extended the town in his day, and named it after himself, to distinguish it from his father's "Caesarea" on the sea-coast. This is the northern-most region that Christ is recorded in Scripture as having traveled.

The expression "district" merely refers to the region, territory, or area around Caesarea Philippi.

Verse 14 — *"And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.' "* The disciples recount the various opinions held by the residents of the area, as to Christ's identity. John the Baptizer had been beheaded. This "haunted" Herod the Tetrarch (Matt. 14:1-2). Malachi, the last of the Old Testament Prophets, had spoken about Elijah being sent back to Israel (Mai. 4:5-6).

Verse 15 — *"He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?'"*

This is a direct and emphatic question. An answer is demanded!

Verse 16 — *"And Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God:'"*

The Gospel of Matthew is obviously written to instruct the Hebrews as to the identity of the Messiah, for whom they had looked so long (Matt. 1:16). "The Living God" was an expression used by the Jews for their God, in contrast to the pagan gods, who were considered to be 'dead gods'... "gods without power". This passage could be rendered "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the God who lives forever."

Verse 17 — *"And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjonas, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.' "* Congratulations, Simon, son of John (Jonas)! This truth concerning Me, you did not receive from a human source, but from My Heavenly Father. Obviously, Christ was pleased with Peter's confession of His Divinity. So, the word "Blessed," "happy" (as in the Beatitudes,) or even "Congratulations!"

Verse 18 — *"And I also say to you, that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it."*

The Greek word for "Peter" is *petros*, meaning a stone or pebble. So, Jesus was not telling Peter what his name was, but was stressing the size or dimension of stone which Peter's name designated. Then, the contrast was completed when Jesus continued by emphasizing, and upon *this* rock, *petra*. a ledge of rock, or "bed-rock" I will construct or build my church or kingdom. Note that Jesus was NOT promising to build His church upon Peter, but upon something far greater and more stable, *i.e.*, Christ's Divinity which Peter had just confessed. Some translators give the word "rock" a capital "R", but since the original text was in uncials... all the same size letters, then any capitals are the product of the translator's own mind, and may or may not be correct. May I suggest the following translation:

"And I also say to you, that you are a pebble, and upon this bed-rock I will build My church..."

The later part of this verse deals with two possible subjects: (1) That the powers of the Hadean world cannot conquer, prevail against, over-power or over-come His church. Or, (2) That the powers of the Hadean world will not be able to prevent Christ's resurrection. And this second view, agrees with Acts 2:24: "And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power."

It is true that Daniel and other Old Testament Prophets foretold the establishment of Christ's church, His kingdom, and that it would never be destroyed. But this passage under study, is dealing with the Divinity of Christ, and the resurrection of Christ, and stating that "the powers of the Hadean world are not strong enough to prevent Christ's triumph over death and the grave. Thus, by their failing to retain Christ in the tomb, the church would indeed be established.

Verse 19 — *"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."* The word "keys" denotes the privilege, prerogative or authority to unlock or open something that has previously been unopened. So, Peter is given the privilege of "unlocking" or releasing salvation and remission of sins to the world. He is granted the opportunity of proclaiming Christ's soul-saving gospel for the very first time to the Jews on Pentecost, and later for the first time to Gentiles at the household of Cornelius. (Acts 10th Chapter.)

Even in this modern day, we sometimes give the "Key to the City" to some visiting dignitary. Although this ceremony is a rather hollow thing, nevertheless, it is a symbolism that goes back to antiquity, wherein Kings granted "keys" to their trusted stewards and court offi-

rials. Various privileges accompanied the "giving of the keys".

Next, comes the subject of "binding and loosing", permitting or prohibiting. The way that many translations are worded, leaves the impression that Heaven gave Peter *carte blanche* or unrestricted authority, upon this occasion. As if Heaven were saying: "Peter, whatever you bind, God will subsequently ratify and also bind." Such an idea puts God in direct conflict with His Son, when Christ announced that He, Christ, possessed *ALL authority*, both in heaven and earth. (See Matt. 28:18.)

Therefore, instead of granting the Apostle the right of determining what should or should not "be bound", as the King James and other versions state: in reality, Heaven was commanding Peter to subsequently teach and bind, that which Heaven had already bound. I copy from the Nestle-Marshall Text:

... and whatever thou bindest on the earth, shall be, having been bound in the heavens, and whatever thou loosest on the earth, shall be, having been loosed in the heavens."

Thus, in harmony with Christ's having full (all) authority in these matters, Peter is assigned the task (yet a privilege) or carrying out Christ's instruction . . . *i.e.*, what Christ had bound.

Verse 20 — *"Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ."*

Christ frequently directed His disciples NOT to make known His real identity. See Matt. 8:4; 9:30; and 12:16.

Conclusion

The confession of Christ's Divinity, serves as the bed-rock foundation of his church. "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved" (Rom. 10:9). "... No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3) "... That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil 2:11).

The preceding passages establish that indeed the church of Christ is founded upon His Divinity, for no person can be added to His church, without first obeying the commands to believe in Christ as God's Son; repent of one's past sins; confess Christ before mankind (Matt. 10:32); and be baptized into Christ, for the remission of one's past sins (Acts 2:38). Certainly, Christ's Divinity is the foundation of His church.

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SOME WORD STUDIES

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Most students of the Bible are acquainted with such fine works as Vincent's "Word Studies in the New Testament," Vines' "Expository Dictionary Of New Testament Words," and Young's "Analytical Concordance to the Bible." These works aid the student in the study of the scriptures, but slavish reliance upon them must be avoided. Scholarly integrity does not always reign: sectarian bias and other unhealthy soul conditions have been known to cloud their definitions. How then can those who do not have scholarly training in Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, etc. accurately determine the meaning of words found in the Bible? Study of context, is the answer. This is a brief study of definitions by context, *i.e.* allowing the Bible to define its own terms. Some words, with no variation in spelling, have quite different meanings in different contexts.

John wrote, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15). Here children of God are commanded to love not the "world." It is further stated that if any man love the "world", the love of the Father is not in him. The same writer used the same word, "world", to describe the object of God's love: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son..." (John 3:16). Does God love that which he forbids his children to love? This certainly cannot be the case. The context in both cases defines the word.

The "world" of 1 John 2:15 is made up of the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life" (1 John 2:16). Notice John's language. He wrote that "all" that is in the "world", which Christians are forbidden to love, is lust in the three areas cited.

The "world" in John 3:16 is made up of human beings, beings capable of believing. "Whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life." This language, along with the statement of verse 18, "He that believeth on him is not judged . . ." identifies the "world" here as men and women. Christians are required to love this world; but they must not love the "world" which is in view in 1 John 2:15.

Another word which carries a different meaning in different contexts in the word "know." The context in which the word "know" is found in the Bible is our main reliance in defining the word.

The word "know" is used to "convey the thought of connection or union, as between man and woman" (Vines). This use is found in Matthew 1:25, "Knew her not till she had brought forth a son;" or again, Luke 1:34, "And Mary said unto the angel, how shall this be, seeing I know not a man." "Know" here expressed phys-

ical union; it speaks of sexual intimacy.

The same Greek word is used in other contexts which do not remotely suggest physical "connection or union." When John wrote, "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17:3), he was conveying an entirely different idea with the word "know," than that of "union between man and woman"! The same Greek word, translated "know," which is used to describe the physical union of man and woman, is here used as equivalent to life eternal. The idea clothed with the word "know" in one case in no way suggests the meaning of the word "know" in the other case. It is a dis-service to understanding to take the meaning of the word "know" drawn from one context and use it to define the word "know" in other contexts.

This same apostle wrote, "and hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him: but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected" (1 John 2:3-5). Do you "know" that you "know" God? If you are depending on emotion or feeling, you are trusting in the wrong thing for evidence. You "know" that you know, if you are obedient.

Intimacy is not the idea present in the word "know" when speaking of our connection with God. The child of God loves his heavenly Father, but is not "over-familiar" with God. He comes to the throne of grace with reverence and awe. He does not approach God with a "hello daddy!"

From 1 John 2:3 we learn that knowing God is keeping his commandments. It is also true that the Lord "knows" us when we "do" the will of God. "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you . . ." (Matthew 7:21-23). "Know" (knew) in this place conveys the idea of approval. The thought that Jesus was ignorant, not aware of their existence, or that he was unacquainted, is certainly not the thought expressed by the word "know" here.

John uses the word "know" which we are studying in the gospel of John forty-five times, while the other three gospel writers all together use it only forty-nine times. The word "world" which is considered in this lesson, is used sixty-nine times in the gospel of John but only fifteen times by all three of the other gospel writers. The study of the way John uses the words will be helpful.

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Philippians 2:4 says, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." This is a very important Bible passage. However, it is often overlooked, and is not emphasized as it should be.

Many people have a very selfish attitude today as they care only about themselves. So many people today only "LOOK OUT FOR NUMBER ONE" as the expression goes. They have no concern for anyone else but themselves.

The statement in Philippians 2:4 certainly contradicts the self-centered attitude that is so prevalent today. The NASB translates it "do not merely LOOK OUT for your OWN PERSONAL INTERESTS, but also for the INTERESTS OF OTHERS." Certainly this passage is not saying that we are to be busybodies. However, it is saying that we are not to be just interested in our own affairs, but we are to be concerned and interested in the good and welfare of other people. Christians are to care about other people and not just themselves.

A similar concept is found in Galatians 6. This text tells us that in addition to bearing our own burdens we are to bear the burdens of others. Verse 2 says, "Bear ye one another burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

In the first part of Philippians 2, Paul is trying to emphasize the importance of unity. He states various things in the text which will promote unity. Among them is the passage which we are examining. If we have concern for others, as well as ourselves, it will be much easier to be of one accord and of one mind as Paul implores in verse 2.

A proper application of this passage can help us a great deal in our daily life also. Often, when we get our minds off of our own problems, and look at the difficulties and hardships of others, our own problems seem much smaller. We are able to cope with them much better.

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Among too many professed believers in the body of Christ there is the spoken and sometimes the unspoken notion of limited church soundness. Too many think that the canon of soundness basically embraces the following: (1) the plan of salvation; (2) a scriptural name; (3) a rejection of human institutions; (4) opposition to the social gospel; and (5) the right order of worship, namely the rejection of mechanical instruments of music and the scriptural order of partaking of the Lord's Supper. All of these I heartily embrace, but I believe the soundness (wholeness) involves more than this limited use. The church of Ephesus had many commendable qualities including a stand against false apostles; hence, it took a stand against false teaching. The church at Ephesus was a fighting congregation making it a prime candidate for brotherhood "soundness." The Lord had a different view from many people on what comprises soundness. Christ chided the church for having left its first love (Revelations 2:4). Having left their first love, they were in danger of losing their identity (Revelation 2:5).

Brethren, I have been a member of the body of Christ for twenty-eight years, and during that time, I have seen only two cases of punitive church discipline. Some have never seen the first case of punitive discipline. Is it not strange that no real measures of discipline are being taken in spite of a plethora of: deserters (church quitters); divorce and unscriptural remarriage; hatred among members; social drinking; scandalous attire; rampant greed; envy and jealousy; and some elderships that are manifestly unqualified. Also, a veritable Diotrephes can be ruling with an imperious hand, and the church in most instances never gets around to dealing with this church-splitting problem for many reasons, within and without the church. Many people in the church often know that a person is acting like Diotrephes, but try to look the other way, because they don't want to get involved in helping to deal with the problem. Brethren, all of the above things involve the matter of soundness or the lack of it; moreover, all of these things challenge the authority of Christ. All of these things most surely involve the matter of doctrine.

Conclusion:

Brethren, smugness about staunchness for soundness needs to be zeroed. Congregations all over the land need to read again the account of two men who went up to pray (Luke 18:9-14).

"BLINDNESS IN PART"

Olen Holderby
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Most Bible students will recognize the title of this piece as coming from Rom. 11:25 where it is applied to the Jews of Paul's day. In this context Paul has taught that some (a remnant) of the Jews had been saved, by their obedience to the Gospel, "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Three thousand Jews became the first segment of that remnant (Acts 2:41). This number was greatly increased during the next eight or ten years Acts 5:14; 8:4; 9:31). This "blindness" was to be complete after "the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." However, it is shown that "all Israel" could be saved in the same way that the remnant was saved-by obeying the Gospel. This is brief, but will serve as an introduction to what I am about to say.

"Blindness in part" has indeed, happened to God's Israel of today (the church of the Lord). Excluding the context of Paul's statement, it could very well have been said concerning spiritual Israel of our times. I can well imagine that the same could be said of the church during any generation of its members, from its beginning until the present day. However, we cannot rework the past; we can only learn from it. RIGHT NOW needs to be our main concern. Without the concern for NOW, the FUTURE holds little promise for enlightenment. Preacher, elder, or teacher, how many do you know right where you are that cannot determine "soundness" in the faith? I am not talking about the new convert; I am talking about those members that have been members more than a little while. How many know what to look for in determining who is "sound" and who is "liberal?"

I have before me a church bulletin, sent me by a "senior saint" in another part of the country. Near the end of the bulletin is a plea to the local saints to not forget their monthly commitment to an orphan's home. This "senior saint" had penned a note beneath this plea — "They help orphan home through private contribution." What a comfort this must have been! Shout the "glad tidings!"

I here give some of the activities listed in that same bulletin, in which that congregation was to be involved during the summer: Men's breakfast at Sambo's, Skating party, Youth rally, Bus evangelism workshop, Youth devotional, Senior saints luncheon, Mid teen camp, Family camp, Pre teen camp, Men and boys campout, Jr. teen camp, Sub teen camp, and Sr. teen camp. They are to be so busy this summer making "provision

for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14), that the Lord will have to be satisfied (?) with the "left-overs." Such people really need to digest what Jesus said in Mt. 7:21-23, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

It seems to me that the impression is left, much too often, that a "sound" church is merely one that does not support an orphan home or the Herald of Truth. We need to be repeatedly warned that if we must list the items that make for "soundness" or "unsoundness", the list must be a good deal longer. Many appear to be "cut-and-dried" liberals without realizing it. The "deceitfulness of sin" has, indeed, done its work (Heb. 3:13). The proverbial "wolf in sheep's clothing," whom Jesus identifies as a "false prophet" (Mt. 7:15), has entered "in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29). But, Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice" (Jno. 10:27). It probably would do little good to plead with the group mentioned above to hear the voice of the Master; for they have long since ceased to listen; they are really on the move! But, in which direction? Complete apostasy, if not already reached, is knocking on the door — very loudly! About the only question remaining is, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Lk. 6:46).

The "senior saint" mentioned above apparently did not recognize the liberalism that was running wild in the local church there. I have personal knowledge of several such cases; and I have wondered just how gen-

eral such cases may be. In conversation with others, in various parts of the country, I have found experiences that parallel mine. The fact is, for some reason, many members of the church simply do not know how to determine "soundness" and are thus led into liberal practices. I make no effort to assign blame, but do think that such should cause alarm with us all. The problems involved with orphan homes and the Herald of Truth most certainly should be identified for what they are, to be sure. However, are we overlooking something? Are not there other things that disgrace the cause of Christ just as much? How much liberalism does it take to be liberal? Human judgment can err! Many instances could, no doubt, be explained by saying, "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; — "(Mt. 13:15). In all honesty, let us hear the question — Is this the only explanation?

"Blindness in part" has, indeed, happened to God's Israel of today. Whether the situation improves or worsens depends upon those who have the capabilities to recognize "shortcomings" and to apply the remedy of Divine truth. We can count higher than two, on the list of liberal practices. Let us strive to equip brethren to recognize liberalism, regardless of the direction from which it may come, and in spite of the insidious forms in which it may raise its ugly head. Faith comes by hearing God's Word (Rom. 10:17); that Word is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16) by the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19). Tried faith in that Word is more precious than gold (1 Pet. 1:7). Error thrives on ignorance; and I pray God that no ignorance be the result of my failure to properly proclaim His Word (1 Cor. 9:16; Acts 20:26-27). How about you?

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

MIKE BAGGETT, Rt. 3, Box 148AA, Water Valley, MS 38965 — The purpose of this letter is to let brethren know that we have left behind all liberal practices. On August 10, 1986, my wife and I made the hardest change of our lives. We decided that attempts to change a liberal-minded congregation were to no avail.

In March, 1986, I began a serious study of the issues which have divided the Lord's church for some 30 years. I put aside what I had been taught in preacher's school for some honest, open-minded study. I decided that names such as "anti" and "orphan-hater" would have no bearing on this personal study. I have been asked, "What led you into such a deep study of these issues?" My answer is that I became alarmed over sudden changes in the liberal camp. They were changing too fast for me. Large amounts of money were being spent (from church treasuries) to build expensive dining halls, camping houses and even gymnasiums to attract and keep people coming. It seemed to me that many of the liberal churches were jumping on the same bandwagon with the denominations about them. I had already left the Baptist church and was let down very much. I had to know if such practices were simply expedients or sinful. It did not take long to realize that such things were unscriptural. That led me to consider

other questions, such as church support of orphan homes and other institutions.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES aided me much in this study. For this I am thankful. Articles on institutionalism gave me meat to chew on. Other sources and individuals helped me greatly in this study. To everyone who helped, I say "thank you." A study of individual duties and church (collective) duties, proved my former position dead wrong. I had been incorrectly taught on James 1:27. Collective action was not in the verse. I had been taught that whatever an individual can do, the local church can do. Brethren, here is the root of our deceived brethren's error. God's word shows a difference in certain individual and church duties. Read carefully Matt. 18:15-17 and 1 Tim. 5:16.

It wasn't long before I realized who it was who should care for orphans and widows in general. God expects much of us as individuals. Read Matt. 25:40-46; Gal. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 5:16; James 1:26-27. This is not to teach that the local church has no benevolent work. Read Acts 6:1-8; Rom. 15:25-33; 1 Tim. 5:3-16.

Having learned the truth on these issues, I taught my wife. Then I tried to teach the congregation where I was preaching at the time. For

about two months I pressed hard on these issues. Some seemed to agree with me. After about 6 weeks, I was told to stop preaching my "perverted doctrine." Few were willing to search the scriptures or even talk sensibly about the matter. One said "these issues are best left alone." We should preach "positive" matters. My determination to continue preaching the truth led to my having to leave. Many churches and individuals helped me greatly in our move. I now preach for the Laws Hill church in north Mississippi and also work a secular job. It is great to stand in the truth and to stand with brethren who love the truth. Thanks to all who have helped me.

DAVID L. ODOM, 2727 County Line Rd., St. Joseph, MO 64504 — As of July 1, 1987, my family and I will begin working with the brethren in St. Joseph, MO in spreading the word of God. They have been without a preacher for over two years and have been taking turns with the public teaching. Since they can only supply half the needed support, I am taking a secular job in order to work with them. I have done this in the past and the Lord has always seen us through. I believe He will do so again. It would help is we could give full time to the work. Any who might consider having fellowship with us and who wish to investigate the work should call Ronald L. Goforth (816) 279-7552, or Gerald Cooksey (816) 233-3718. Concerning me, you may contact Harold Fite (713) 578-7163.

WAYNE S. WALKER, 310 Haynes St., Dayton, OH 45410 — We are moving to work with the Haynes Street church in Dayton, Ohio and look forward to our association with these fine brethren. Things continue well at Medina. Progress is being made in preparing a lot on which to build a new meeting house. Larry DeVore, one of our members, has been asked to preach regularly at Medina after we leave. He would like to find support for work full time. In March, I was in a meeting at Route 3 near Madisonburg, OH and in May with the Lily Chapel church outside Portsmouth, OH. I will be at Roseville, Michigan in October.

JADY W. COPELAND, P.O. Box 1528, Springdale, AR — Having just moved to Springdale to work with the Westside church, we are again enjoying the beauties of the Ozarks. We were with the Lakeland Hills church in Lakeland, FL for 8 years and came to love and respect the good people there. We saw a good opportunity in Springdale to work with the Lord's people who have had many problems for many years. They are now united and working and we believe the cause will prosper here. Jack Parmenter began worshipping with the church here several months ago and has helped the progress of the church greatly with his leadership, involvement in home studies and the like. He has

baptized a goodly number within the last 18 months. Mason French preached here for several months prior to Sept., 1986. Our building is just off Hwy. 71 which bypasses the main part of town. It is located at 1300 S. 45th. Springdale and Fayetteville (home of the University) have, in effect, become one city and the area is still growing. When passing through the Ozarks, visit with us.

JOE F. NELSON, 8054 Farmington Dr., Southaven, MS 38671 — I am working with the Horn Lake, Mississippi church. The church here has moved into a new meeting house in the past year (please see our advertisement in STS) and all seems to be doing well here. We hope readers of this paper will visit with us when you are traveling south from Memphis, TN on I-55. Take Horn Lake exit west to Hurt Rd., then left to Meadowbrook Drive. The building is on the corner of Foxbriar and Meadowbrook. I am available for some meeting work each year with needy congregations.

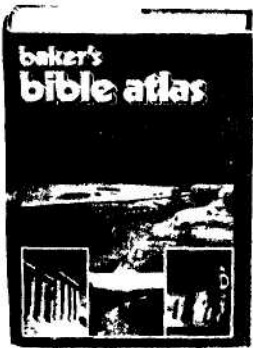
BILL PIERCE, 759 E. North St., Spencer, IN — After six years with the church here, we will be moving, in July, to Hillsboro, Ohio. This is, hopefully, our last move. I will be selling real estate and working part time with the Northside church, along with Jim Grushon. Our address will be: 226 E. Pleasant St., Hillsboro, OH 45133. Stan Caldwell will follow me in the work at Spencer. The Spencer church is a growing, active church with three fine elders.

CHARLES MURRAY, 5810 Bayou Grande Blvd. N.E., St. Petersburg, FL 33703 — The Skyview church in Pinellas Park will begin an hour long, live, call-in radio program on May 17, 1987 from 8 to 9 A.M. on Sunday mornings on WRFA, 820 on the AM dial. This is a 50,000 watt station and can be heard throughout the state and into parts of Georgia and Alabama. We will have access to two Pinellas County phone lines: 581-7800 and 581-9424. Also there is a toll-free number for Florida (outside Pinellas County) — 1-800-642-0820. There is also a toll-free national number (outside Florida) — 1-800-992-0820. We have had 14 baptisms in the last sixteen months, several restorations and a good number to place membership. There is an excellent spirit within the congregation and a willingness to work. We are excited about this new opportunity to proclaim God's word through the radio program. We invite your questions and solicit your prayers.

JAMES LYNN, P.O. Box 8, Fort Towson, OK 74735 — On March 21, 1987 we moved here to work with the Northside church. The work was discontinued in December, 1979 but restarted by several former members in July, 1986. Since that time until the present the preaching was done by several men in Oklahoma and Texas. This is a difficult area due to the number of churches which hold to the one cup and/or no Bible class doctrines and those which support various institutions from the church treasury. The church here is able to supply \$700 a month support with the rest made up by Southside church in Greenville, TX; Josey Lane church in Carrollton, TX and by individuals. We number 16 members plus 6 children. Last month attendance ranged from 27 to 44. We are averaging 21 on Wed. evenings. We are offering a Bible correspondence course. Ardie Brown of Carrollton, TX was here in a meeting May 31-June 5. We meet at the corner of West Second and Boston Streets, one block north of Hwy. 70 and 15 miles east of Hugo. If you are traveling this way, please stop and visit with us. If we may contact someone you know in this area please write us or call me at 1-405-873-9333.

IVAN VALDES, La Serena, Chile, S.A. — In March we had a gospel meeting with the theme "Catholicism vs. the Bible." We planned this to coincide with the visit of Mr. John Paul (Pope of Rome) who visited several cities in Chile, including La Serena. We passed out invitations and placed an ad in the paper. We had special studies on Catholicism from 9 A.M. to noon and then the evening Tom Holley preached. We were assisted in this effort by Fernando Venegas, Sergio Pino, Nestor Sanchez, Mark Morgan and Efrain Perez. These brethren paid their own transportation to help us. Members here cooperated with housing and food. The new brethren of Catholic origin were confirmed in the faith and we made several new contacts.

STEFANO CORAZZA AND VALERIO MARCHI, Via Tagliamento 9/2, 33100 Udine, Italy — In the last two months our work in Udine had great encouragement. We enjoyed the baptism of three souls, two



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young men and an older one. We reached them through our work of distributing invitation cards, tracts and local bulletin. We thank God for the power of his word to change the lives of sinners. In the same period we had two gospel meetings. We generally prepare these meetings through a distribution of a thousand invitation cards, plus big posters which we put on city walls. We also started an "Answering Machine" program called: "5 Minutes with the Gospel." So far we have had interesting calls but no definite contacts. We will see in the future. We continue our bulletin **CHRISTIANI OGGI** (Christians Today), eight pages of simple and short articles which have created several opportunities of preaching and then baptisms. We usually deliver 1300 copies each month by putting them in mail boxes. Thanks to all who have fellowship in our work.

PREACHERS NEEDED

SPARKS, NEVADA — The church here is seeking a family man for full time evangelistic work. No outside support will be required. Must have strong personal work abilities and be personable. Please reply with complete resume to church of Christ, 475 Queen Way, Sparks, NV 89432. If more information is needed, contact: Dennis Neely (702) 331-0919; or, Larry Demangate (702) 673-1011. **TULSA, OKLAHOMA** — This congregation of 140, which has been

meeting since 1977, and is fully self-supporting, is seeking a preacher for full time work. Contact the elders at Woodland Hills church of Christ, 9119 E. 61 St., Tulsa, OK 74133.

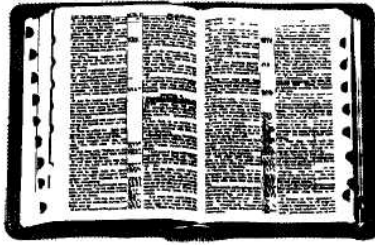
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI — The church which meets at 5825 Sterling Ave., Raytown, MO is looking for a preacher for full time work. We can supply \$300 per week support and have contacts for additional support. We are looking for a preacher who will do personal work. If interested, call (816) 625-3741 after 6:30 P.M. or send resume and personal references to the above addresses. **CHESTER, ILLINOIS** — The church which meets at 1604 Hyland Road in Chester, Illinois 62233 is in need of a preacher who is retired or one who could help get his own support. We can help some. Attendance is between 20-30 (most are retired). We are in a very hard area and it would be a challenge for a faithful man. Contact W. F. Crowder Rt. 2, Box 198, Chester, IL 62233. Phone (618) 826-3661.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	287
RESTORATIONS	75
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XXVIII

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Number 8

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



WHAT IS MAN?

"If a man die, shall he live again?" If so, where will he be? This age old question intrigues the young, haunts those in middle years and plagues the aged. When a loved one slips from time to eternity, it triggers a keen interest in death and what happens after the dreaded event. Most people assure the surviving that their loved one has "gone to heaven" and offer as proof the "good works" they did while in this life. The sensational magazines and papers give the accounts of those who claimed to have died and entered into the spirit world and then returned to tell about it. They always see their dead bodies as they leave them, and they go through a long dark tunnel toward a bright light at the end, and there they enter into the beautiful place where all their relatives, friends and even pets are waiting for them. How is it that no loved ones are ever missing in these tales? Does no one ever go to hell and return to tell about it?

All we know about our origin, why we are here, and where we are going after we leave this life, is revealed to us in the word of God. There is no way any of us could even know there is a heaven and hell except the fact that the Bible reveals it. The word of God is the only source of light to tell us what is on the other side of death.

What Is Man?

Man is composed of a body, soul and spirit. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Man has a body and spirit, and is a living

soul. The Genesis account of creation describes the bringing together of these three parts of man. "And the Lord God *formed* man of the *dust of the ground*, and *breathed* into his nostrils the *breath of life*; and man *became a living soul*" (Genesis 2:7). The physical body of man is composed of the dust of the ground. It shall return to the dust from which it came. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:19). "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken" (Genesis 3:23). "All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all return to dust again" (Ecclesiastes 3:20). "If a man die, shall he live again" (Job 14:14). "But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" (Job 14:10) "All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died" (Genesis 7:22).

The verb translated *formed* is used in the Old Testament of a potter molding the clay (Isaiah 29:16 and Jeremiah 18:4). Not only does the word of God teach that the end of the body is the dust from which it came, but our life long experience teaches us that fact. Who of us has not followed the physical remains of a loved one or friend to the city of the silent dead and there inter that body back to the earth? We need not search further for the destiny of the body at death; we know it goes to the grave.

After creating the body from the ground, God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life..." (Genesis 2:7). That is the part of man that is created in the likeness of God. The word "spirit" is from "pneuma," which primarily denotes the wind. It also means "breath." In John 3:8 Jesus used the term to signify the invisible nature of the spirit of man. W. E. Vine says it means: ". . .(c) the immaterial, invisible part of man, Luke 8:55; Acts 7:59; 1 Cor. 5:5; Jas. 2:26..." "That is what God breathed into the nostrils of man that gave him life.

Paul's lesson to the heathen on Mar's hill in Athens pointed out that all men are of one blood, and "in him we live, and move, and have our being." Then he concluded that we are the "offspring of God;" consequently, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like to material substance (Acts 17: 26-29). Furthermore, God is the

Father of spirits (Hebrew 12:9).

Somewhere in the body the spirit of man dwells until death separates the spirit from the body. "For as the body without the spirit is dead. . ." (James 2:26). "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body" (Daniel 7:15). "The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel, saith the Lord, which... formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zechariah 12:1). The spirit of man is eternal, it will never become non-existent. That spirit is destined to be a conscious being somewhere forever. One of the most frightening thoughts man could have is that he is a conscious being somewhere for eternity.

Adam was also "made a living soul" (Genesis 2:7). "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:45). "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven" (1 Corinthians 15:47). *Soul* is translated from the Hebrew *nephesh* and means a living person, the life of the body with the spirit, the animal life resulting from fusing of body and spirit.

The word "soul" is used in the Scriptures to refer to: 1) the whole person, 2) the animal life—the body and soul together, 3) the spirit of man. The context will determine which of these meaning is applicable.

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Editorial

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FOREIGN WORKERS

IN A FINANCIAL CRUNCH

For several months now, the American dollar has weakened against the currency of many other countries in the world. This has been good for trade since it makes American made products more competitive on the world market. But it has had a devastating effect on people living in those countries whose income is in American currency which must be exchanged for the local currency. Brethren in Europe, Africa and South America have been hard hit. This has especially been true in Italy where those dependent on American income have lost about 35% of their buying power.

I know of a few congregations which have taken this into account and raised the support of these men to offset this erosion of their income. Others either do not understand the problem or, if they do, are unconcerned. Add to this the fact that the cost of living (housing, food, gasoline and services) is much higher in some other countries than here, and you have the stage set for economic disaster for some of these families, some of whom are half-way around the world, and whose support is often tenuous.

We could document this with a number of specific cases of which we have personal knowledge, but I want to tell you about one in particular: Randy Reese, Sr. who labors in Ashiya Shi, Japan. Randy is married to the daughter of Bob Nichols, long-time worker in Japan. Randy and his wife, Linda, have been there for a number of years now and presently labor with two small congregations made up largely of babes in Christ. He carries a heavy load of Bible classes, including one to combat the encroachments of the Crossroads Movement in Japan. Studies both publicly and privately result in conversions periodically. The Reeses are well adjusted to the Japanese language and culture. That takes time and experience. If they were to have to come home it would take another family (assuming they could raise adequate wages) a long time to come to the point they could begin to equal the suitability of the Reeses for this work.

Over the last months, they have lost up to 52% of their buying power due to the decline of the dollar against the Japanese yen. Last winter I made an appeal to 202 congregations on behalf of the Reeses to help them relieve an immense financial dilemma. They received some "one time" help from several churches which they used to catch up some back debts generated by this very emergency. Also, one church agreed to supply them \$300

a month support (they need to raise \$1500 monthly support, in addition to what they have). But that was offset by the fact that a church which had been sending \$300 a month, terminated their support.

Let me fill you in on some hard facts of life which these folks are facing. They have four children which are enrolled in a Japanese school. It costs \$200 a month to send these four children to school. Japanese parents face the same costs, but many companies pay this for their employees as a fringe benefit. The Reeses have no such help. When I spoke by telephone with brother Reese a few weeks ago, they were then behind 4 months on their rent. The landlord was being kind and working with them, but that has to be caught up and kept current. I asked brother Reese to supply me with a list of the cost of some basic food and other supplies and he has done that. Look it over and see what it would do to your family budget, just to eat or operate a car.

Gasoline is \$4.50 a gallon. Car inspection is mandatory and costs \$329 a year. School fees are \$200 per month (\$50 per child, and they have four children in school).

Take a good look at these food costs" MEAT — beef is only for the rich (steak \$21 up). Hamburger (70% beef and 30% pork) is \$4.08 a pound. Bacon — \$7.26 a pound. Pork chops (1/4 inch thick) — \$6.51 a pound. Chicken legs (size of quail legs)—\$2.63 a pound. FISH—Salmon —\$11.45 lb.; Yellow Tail — \$9.29 lb.; Mackerel —10.07 lb.; Shrimp —\$13.81 lb. DAIRY PRODUCTS — Milk — \$5.44 a gallon; Cheese—\$11.74 a lb. STAPLES—Flour —(5 lb. bag) \$2.90; Oatmeal — (1 lb. box) \$3.76; Coffee (1 lb. can) — \$8.96; Crisco (1 lb. can) \$3.58; Sugar (5 lb. bag) —\$3.70; Rice (25 lb. bag) —\$18.51 up; Tea(100 bag box) — \$9.86; Canned Peaches (13 oz. can) — \$3.01. FRUITS AND VEGETABLES — Apples (1 med.) — \$2.07; Cantaloupe — \$8.89 each; Carrots (3 med.) — .97; Watermelon (size of a soccer ball) — \$21.58 up; Grapefruit— \$3.58 each; Green Peppers (each the size of an egg) — .70.

Brethren, it is painful for these brethren working in other countries to have to ask for additional support. They almost feel like beggars. There is a continuing problem maintaining a level of adequate monthly support. Understandable circumstances cause some churches to have to discontinue, or at least reduce, the support they send out. Every time that happens such men have to scramble to find a replacement. And that does not begin to allow for the kind of situation we have been describing here — the fluctuations of world monetary markets over which these men have absolutely no control. Yes, it is true that there have been times in the past when the dollar was very strong in international exchange and that, for a time, did benefit such men. But when such devaluations occur as we are now seeing, the effects are devastating to these families living abroad whose very survival depends on commitments from several churches in the states.

I know what it means to live in another country and depend on the punctuality (or lack of it, in some cases) of brethren in the states. I know what it is like to suddenly, without notice, lose a sizeable amount of monthly in-

come and wonder how to survive until it could be replaced. I know the same thing happens to men laboring in hard fields in this country but the problem can get pretty urgent when you have an ocean between you and help for survival.

I have been reluctant to make appeals for financial support in specific cases through this paper. I do not always know those who make such appeals nor have the opportunity to verify the needs or the worthiness of those who may be appealing. But I can say that I have not seen a time in my life when there were more worthy needs from men I do know to be faithful servants of the Lord laboring in financially deprived circumstances, than right now. Elders of churches in the Louisville area tell me the same regarding appeals they regularly receive from men both in this country and abroad, and elders in churches over the country where we visit confirm the same thing. I have chosen to write about the needs of brother Reese as one case in point. It is a critical need. That does not mean there are not others for there are. It would be impossible to give this much space to all of them. That is not the purpose of this magazine. But I hope that by highlighting this special case, those supporting brother Reese will not only continue to do so, and even increase their amount, if possible, but that others might consider helping to keep this worthy man in one of the most difficult fields of labor in the world. I also hope that attention to this case will cause Christians to give more generously and elders to have greater ability to respond favorably to good men and their families who are willing to take the gospel into needy places throughout America and around the world. Always, brethren should be careful to check references on men they do not personally know. If any readers would like to help brother Reese, or would inquire further into the matter you may address him as follows: Randy S. Reese, *St.*, P.O. Box 14, Ashiya Shi, Japan 659.

Brethren supporting men in other countries would do well to inquire periodically about inflation rates and the value of the U.S. dollar against the currency of that country. "They which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14) — including the ability to offset inflation and the shifting of currency values.

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**"FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE... "
— IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK**

"*Relationship*" is the most important word in the world—for several reasons. The first obvious one is that there is nothing that satisfies the deepest cravings of the human creature as much as a relationship with the divine Creator. As the bird was made for the air and fish to the sea, people were created to have fellowship with God. Another reason is that evangelism flows *most effectively* out of relationships—people loving people enough to share the good news of Jesus Christ with those with whom they have a rapport, a relationship on the personal level.

One of the greatest mistakes Christians make is that when it comes to teaching people concerning the need to teach others and lead the lost to Christ (i.e., the need for personal evangelism) all too often the only things emphasized are the methods, concepts, procedures and techniques. That's tragic. And . . . that's not to say that those things are not important, but it is to say that there is something more important in the process of converting a soul than the knowledge of how to turn a projector or flip a chart.

We must get back to the business of emphasizing personal evangelism that is exactly that — *PERSONAL!* It is personal because it flows out of a relationship that is personal. When we go out into the world and begin to build relationships with our fellow man we become a walking, talking, moving picture of what Christianity either is or isn't. People with whom we have relationships (our family, friends, neighbors and associates) can see us for what we really are. And what we are — in the home, in our business dealings, in our neighborhood, among our friends and relatives — may determine whether or not they accept the Gospel message. And why? Because they know if we have hypocritical tendencies or if we are genuinely sincere. They know if we are phony or the real thing. What I'm saying is this: **IF YOU ARE NOT A FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF METHOD, TECHNIQUE OR PROCEDURE YOU USE — YOU WILL FAIL!** Your daily lifestyle reveals the kind of person you really are and whether or not the message of Jesus Christ has done anything for you.

House to House the New Testament Way

I've always read Acts 5:42 and 20:20 with the notion that the Gospel went from "house to house" down the

streets and through the subdivisions of metropolitan Jerusalem and Ephesus like a nice neat little door to door census taker. I'm not so sure anymore. (For example, in 1 Tim. 5:13, I read that certain ones went from "house to house" bearing tales of gossip. Do you think they went from door to door canvassing total strangers, or do you perceive that they first sought out those whom they knew, and whom they knew would be ready to hear the latest tales from a turbo tongue?) Just how did the Gospel go from "house to house?"

1) *John 1:40-42*. Here is the case of Andrew. Verse 41 says that Andrew "found first his own brother. . ." and "brought him to Jesus" (verse 42). Andrew went and found one with whom he had an established relationship (a relative) and out of that relationship evangelism flowed.

2) *John 1:43-45*. Phillip went and found one with whom he had an established relationship (a friend) and out of that relationship evangelism flowed.

3) *John 4:28-30*. The Samaritan woman who had conversed with Jesus at the well returned to her village and found those with whom she had an established relationship (her neighbors) and out of that relationship evangelism flowed.

4) *Acts 10:24*. Cornelius had invited his "relatives and friends" to hear Peter preach the Gospel. Their reaction to his invitation was *not*—"Cornelius, you mean you are religious?" The truth is that Cornelius had already established relationships with these people and they knew of his sincerity and moral uprightness, they knew of his generosity and God-fearing disposition. As a result of those established relationships evangelism flowed once again.

5) *Mark 5:10*. Jesus healed a man. This individual out of deep gratitude implored the Lord that he might be allowed to accompany Jesus. Verse 19 states: "He did not let him, but He said to him," Go home to YOUR PEOPLE and report to THEM what great things the Lord has done for you..." (emphasis mine). Get the point?

What I am saying is that the people most likely to be influenced with the Gospel are people with whom we already have an influence! (That does make sense, right?) So often the only person we want to reach with the Gospel is the fellow we have never met and do not know. (I have yet to figure that out!) For example, we want to mail Person X a tract. We want to preach to Person X on the radio. We want to knock on the door of Person X—and there is absolutely nothing wrong with any of that! But why are we so eager to talk to Person X? Because with Person X I put absolutely NOTHING on the line! Person X doesn't know if my life is consistent with my message. Person X doesn't know if I'm really sincere. I can talk to Person X and be on my way and say: "There, I've done some personal work today"—and there is nothing personal about it!

PERSONAL evangelism occurs when we build a relationship with someone in the office, on the street, in the P.T.A., a visitor to our services, and invite them into our home and heart — invite them to see how we cope with worry . . . invite them to see how we handle reversal,

frustration and disappointment. . . invite them to see how we treat those who mistreat us... invite them to see how we respond to criticism, how we handle sickness, how we deal with death. WE INVITE THEM TO SEE JESUS LIVING IN US! Friend, that's New Testament "personal" evangelism. Don't tell me it doesn't happen. I've seen it happen time and again. It's happening all over this country — across back yards, in factory cafeterias, in school lunchrooms — AND IT CAN HAPPEN WITH YOU if you display a consistent example of Christianity in your daily life and then let evangelism flow from "house to house" as you seize the opportunities that God places in your path.

If we can't tell people with whom we have relationships about the Lord... If we can't talk to them without the reply — "You mean you're a Christian?" — than we are hypocritical and phony people. Do you know how most people are converted? Most come to be Christians because a friend, a relative, a co-worker whom they knew, trusted and respected took the time to share their faith, open their Bible and lead them to obey the Lord. The following words by James Rowe should touch us all

*When in the better land before the Bar we stand,
How deeply grieved our souls will be;
If any lost one there should cry in deep despair,
"You never mentioned Him to me,"*

*"You never mentioned Him to me,
You helped me not the light to see;
You met me day by day and knew I was astray,
You never mentioned Him to me."*

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ROOTS OF MODERN CHARISMA

Richard Ostling *of Time* says the Charismatic movement is thought to have begun in 1960 among Episcopalians in California. The 1970s saw a rash of charismatics parading as Pentecostals, Neo-Pentecostals, Charismatics, "Jesus Freaks," and such like. While many are "fundamentalist" in doctrine, any belief under the umbrella of "Christianity" may be found among them. But their common bond is belief in a mystical gift of grace (charisma) apart from the word of God, which is attended by special signs. The roots of this movement run deep into the Pentecostal, Holiness, and Methodist movements that preceded it.

Methodism. John Wesley caused a revolution in eighteenth-century England by teaching Christian perfection as a gift of grace following justification. This stood in contrast to Calvin's impossibility of perfection. Regarding the latter, Calvinists claimed the believer never overcomes sin, although guilt is not imputed to him. This dismal outlook crushed any hope that one could ever make progress toward perfection. It was against this concept that Wesley and others rebelled.

Wesley said Christ enjoins perfection, it is possible for every justified person, and it is compatible with "involuntary transgression." He saw it as the gift of God's grace that comes to the believer instantly by an intimate union with the Holy Spirit, although a long period of effort might precede it. Wesley also claimed God gives special assurance when the gift is received, but the assurance was not equally clear in all cases. His views are debatable on the latter point and murky in that he thought only a few people attain perfection and that it is compatible with some degree of sin. But his teaching contributed to the Holiness movement of the nineteenth century.

Holiness. The Holiness movement began after the Civil War as a protest against Methodist departure from Wesley's doctrine of holiness. The protesters argued strongly for holiness as a second work of grace resulting in perfection. They especially stressed the Wesleyan view that the believer may be assured of holiness by a direct spiritual experience. Between 1880 and 1900, the "holiness controversy" severely agitated the Methodists. They became dominated by wealthy men who applied business methods and refined formality to the church. Many of the poorer members were troubled that "heart-felt religion" was disappearing from Methodism.

The dissidents complained that "the second blessing" had become little more than a creedal statement without substance. But the dignified leaders prevailed. "Shoutin' Methodists" simply did not fit their plan for a more genteel religion. The holiness advocates felt uncomfortable among those who had no sympathy for their convictions and began to withdraw to form independent bodies where "holiness" could be taught and practiced. The same sort of cleavage also developed in other denominations and contributed to the Holiness movement, but Methodists gave it its impetus.

Several "holiness" denominations came into being before 1900, including the Church of God (Anderson, Ind.) in 1880 and the Nazarenes in 1894. There were also smaller groups, such as the Christian Missionary Alliance and many independent churches of similar persuasion. The members of these churches were mainly the poorer, less educated, and more emotional people who expressed their religious experiences by shouting and moving about noisily in their services.

Pentecostalism: The Pentecostals are largely a group of churches that began in the early twentieth century. They grew out of the Holiness movement and their origin is partly traced to the "Latter Rain" revivals of A.J. Tomlinson, a founder of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.) in about 1903. Some think Pentecostalism sprang from a revival movement in the Negro Holiness Church of Los Angeles in 1906. Both no doubt contributed to it.

Pentecostal beliefs come mainly from Methodist and Baptist tenets, but no single creed is accepted by all groups. However, they commonly hold a form of Wesley's doctrine that perfection consists of an "infilling with the Holy Spirit," evidenced by "speaking in tongues," like the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). Other related doctrines are miraculous divine healing, prophecy, and special revelations. Uncontrolled emotional behavior often accompanies "Holy Ghost baptism," "speaking in tongues," prayer, and other community activities.

I recall attending a 1930s Pentecostal revival in the yard of an old farmhouse in the mountains of Northwest Alabama. A small but highly vocal crowd was present and three or four "got the Holy Ghost" after pleading long at a log altar. One of these was a stout woman who fell over and rolled in the dust, literally, when she "got it." A tall woman who did washing for my mother rose straight up from the log, stretched her bony arms towards the stars, and toppled backwards like a felled tree. A teenage girl with eyes glazed in a hypnotic stare danced in a circle until she dropped limp from exhaustion. That was my first encounter with Pentecostalism, although I have had a number since, including Oral Roberts' circus tent revivals of the 1940s. And nothing resembling what occurred on Pentecost ever took place.

Charismatics. About the middle of the century, Pentecostalism took on a new look. In 1952 Rex Humbard began broadcasting it, followed by Roberts, and others. Then came television and finally "pentecostalism" could be seen in living color. The programs at first retained the trappings of old Pentecostalism, but by the 1960s a revolution had occurred. No longer confined to

small buildings by the tracks or tents in a pasture, the movement gained respect in older denominations. Roberts became a Methodist and founded a university. The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, formed in 1951 by Pentecostals, introduced "Holy Spirit baptism" to the laity of other churches and made Pentecostalism acceptable to a "higher class" of people.

But the Charismatic or Neo-Pentecostal movement is less church related, less emotional, more ostentatious and slogan oriented ("Honk if You Love Jesus"), and more cultish in form, it seems to me. Like Virginia Slim, Pentecostalism came a long way from the drab itinerant tents to the sparkling glitter of the PTL club, from poorly educated preachers to Harvard graduates and presidential candidates, from the unadorned faces of toilworn women to lavishly adorned television celebrities. Modern Pentecostals have built huge "ministries." The electronic church came into being, made up of people from all stations and faiths.

But beneath the new glitter of Holy Spirit baptism, speaking in tongues, inner revelations, fervent expressions of love for Jesus, and blurring of doctrinal lines are the same basic errors that characterized the preceding movements. Wesley's "second work of grace" resulting in holiness developed into the peculiarities of Charismatics. Whenever any people launch out into the depth of human wisdom and emotion apart from the word of God, no matter how refined the teaching and practice becomes, the truth gets trampled and error is hailed as the word of God.

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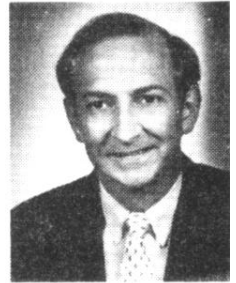
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SINCERE WORDS

The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Ecc. 12:10)."



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INDIFFERENCE: TRANQUILLIZER OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CHURCH

"Pssst! Hey, buddy. Want to be a member of a secret organization? I promise this secret is well protected and you won't have to worry about being discovered. The name of this secret order? Pssst, listen closely. It's called the church of Christ."

Indifference is causing the church of our Lord to become a secret organization. It can tranquilize, paralyze, hypnotize, and minimize all attempts to evangelize. Did you hear about the brother who was asked: "Is it really true that ignorance and indifference are the greatest threats to the church today? The fellow responded: "I don't know and I don't care."

Satan uses indifference to deceive us. He makes us think that because we are not suffering severe persecutions that he must be leaving us alone. But he can destroy just as effectively by getting us to care about other things more — the backdoor approach. It is not necessary that we be terribly immoral or false teachers. By treating worship as a ritual, going through a lifeless orthodoxy, we can honor god with our lips while our hearts are far from him (Mt. 15:8). "My, how tiresome it is" (Mai. 1:13, NASV).

Symptoms

The greatest fear we face is that of facing ourselves — individually and congregationally! Though painful, a self-examination can be a good thing. In too many cases and places the growth of Christianity has been stunted in this last quarter of the twentieth century by the plague of complacency. World population will reach 5 billion(!) in the next few months and we are not even "holding our own" in comparison. Some symptoms are:

1. *Lack Of Confidence In The Word.* We rely too much on pop psychology and have lost sight of the fact that the message of the cross is a militant gospel. We have swallowed the philosophy of "never trouble trouble until trouble troubles you." The "good news" is aggressive. The citadels of error would not be ignoring us if we were not content to have detente in religion. We are soldiers. Remember? "The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:4). Has your sword become dull and rusty from lack of use?

Israel was warned of apathy. "Behold, days are com-

ing, declares the Lord God, when I will send a famine on the land. Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the Lord. And people will stagger from sea to sea, And from the north even to the east; They will go to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, But they will not find it. . . Those who say, The calamity will not overtake or confront us. . ." (Amos 8:11,12;9:10).

2. *Riches*. "Designer labels" are a must. We are in constant "need" of more luxurious versions of something we already had while much of the world has barely enough to keep body and soul intact. What happens to those who let time slip by, busy buying and getting and thinking of themselves? "Woe to you... who lied on beds of ivory, stretch out on your couches, eat lambs, . . . calves, . . . who anoint yourselves with the best ointments ..." (Amos 6:3-8).

3. *Cares*. These often become evident at worship services. Irreverence is not usually intended but is a by-product of indifference. We *just don't think*. Talking, laughing, going in and out of the services in a cavalier manner, is more like being at a ball game than the house of God. Habitual sleeping in worship can be a physical problem. When it is caused by pursuing riches and pleasures to the point that one is not getting enough sleep, it is a spiritual problem. Cares of this world prevent any forethought in preparation for worship.

4. *Pleasures*. Minds get so cluttered with sports, movies, music, etc., that there is little time or energy for spiritual pursuits. We want our reward now! Being "lovers of pleasure" (2 Tim. 3:4) to the neglect of spiritual matters is evidence that we are lukewarm, unconcerned, and spiritually numb.

5. *Fussing And Wrangling*. Little time or effort is put forth to evangelize but there is an abundance of time and boundless energy available to carry on a fuss. It is amazing what strong convictions one can muster for some relatively insignificant matter and how little care one can have toward evangelizing the 5 billion(!) lost people in the world. We can argue eyeball to eyeball for our pet "convictions" while never conducting a home Bible study with a lost soul. This is too absurd for words. How could our thinking get so distorted? We have left undone the weightier matter.

6. *Work Of Many Left To A Few*. When a small minority accepts the bulk of responsibility and takes care of most everything that needs tending to, you have a disinterested church.

7. *Toleration Of Error And Immorality*. A brother falls into sin and hardly anyone bothers to see about him. "We know we ought to deal with it, but..." Error is subtly aggressive. It can cause indifference even by being silent (1 Cor. 5). Indifference is contagious and can permeate a congregation almost without being detected.

The Remedy

1. *"Remember Therefore Whence Thou Art Fallen"* (Rev. 2:5a). Indifference amounts to falling away, causing one to be lost. If one will look closely at his past life he can see where he went astray. By so doing he can return to the esteem and appreciation for the cause for which he once stood.

2. *"Repent And Do The First Works"* (Rev. 2:5b). One of the worst ways to treat a person is with indifference. Toward God, it demands repentance. The "first works" refer not to obeying the plan of salvation again but to the good things one was zealous in before his apostasy.

Sometimes a person who senses he has erred may desire to return but doesn't know how to rekindle that flame of extinguished love. Some think it comes by silent meditation or by a "supernatural zap" that wakes them up and restores that lost zeal. But the wisdom of our Savior says it comes by doing "the first works" — doing what they did in the first and best days of their new life. Read the Bible as they did then. Pray as they did then. Do good to those in need. Help the distressed and fallen. Try to reach a friend with the gospel. As a member of the physical body can become paralyzed through lack of use, it may also be rehabilitated by practice and doing with it what was formerly done. Remember the ardor, the zeal, and the warmth of love which once characterized us — a happy memory. This is the way to have a "faith that works through love" (Gal. 5:6).

3. *Set Goals!* (Phil. 3:13,14). Reassess your purpose for existence. Check your attitude toward the gospel. Believe it. Live it. Spread it!

4. *Evangelize* (1 Tim. 4:16). This is not a cure-all but it takes care of many problems associated with indifference. Jesus, in his originality, could see the possibility of a brotherhood beyond nationalistic lines. Likewise, you can have that "fire in the bones" which Jeremiah, Jesus, Paul and others had when you sense the urgency of the cause. Be fervent, diligent, zealous!

Conclusion

Jesus said, "I know thy works." Don't be tricked into thinking that God is like a man (Ps. 50:21) — that he is indifferent just because we are. Men can argue over how long a church can go before the Lord removes its candlestick, but there is no argument here. The Scriptures are crystal clear that an indifferent church whose members don't repent and do the first works will have its candlestick removed (Rev. 2:5c). Those indifferent in the New Testament were described as "weak", "sickly", "asleep", "fallen", "left their first love", "lukewarm," etc.

Three things need to be remembered. 1. Remember that indifference can be overcome — "He that overcometh . . ." (Rev. 2:7b). 2. Remember the reward for overcoming — "I will give to eat of the tree of life" (Rev. 2:7c). 3. Remember that judgment begins at the house of God.

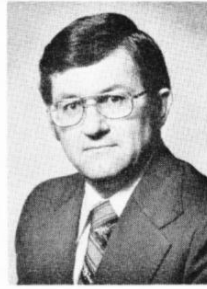
"He that hath an ear, let him hear..." (Rev. 2:7a).

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PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLESHIP

Within the 14th chapter of Luke there is quite a range of subjects in discussion. This chapter begins with the record of Jesus healing a man with dropsy. Taking note of this miraculous event there is an immediate discussion of sabbath day activities as to what is lawful, descending even to the care of livestock. This is followed by talk about invitations to supper and guests and the excuses they offered. Climax is reached with a discussion of following Christ and the demand for hating all else along with bearing our cross. Jesus then speaks of building houses and going to war as the chapter closes with emphasis being placed on good and bad salt. What conceivable connection can these subjects have? Flow within context establishes a vivid and practical application in complement to: (1) the mission of Christ, wholesale invitation to accept and follow Him; (2) the fact that many will not follow, offering varied excuses; (3) among those who accept Him there is a common attitude. Here is projected fulfillment of God's eternal purpose, redemption. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10). From these varied considerations we are able to glean some unvarying principles of true discipleship. These pose a specific challenge as we suggest our reader consider this 14th chapter of Luke.

Healing of the man with dropsy on the Sabbath precipitated a discussion with the Jewish leaders. Previously they had challenged the activities of Jesus and his disciples on the Sabbath as being unlawful. However, this time Jesus seems to beat them to the punch as he challenges them with the question "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?" Their silence seems to give at least reluctant consent. Jesus then proceeds to place them in position of thinking more of livestock than men in their affliction as he charges they would come to the aid of an ox in the ditch, yet they questioned the healing of a man.

The Pharisees and lawyers epitomized a haughty and arrogant spirit among the Jewish leaders which frequently comes under the indictment of our Lord. Here he uses a simple parable about a wedding and the guests each choosing the chief rooms, lest a more honorable guest arrive and you have to relinquish it. Take rather the lowest room that, on a space available and character manifested basis determined by the host, you may finally be asked to the chief room. The parable climaxes with "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased;

and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Lk. 14:11). Careful, we must not lose the thrust. Jesus here punctuates Jewish attitude and the effect of it as they presume the blessing of the kingdom was for just a few and that they were that few.

With the next paragraph beginning at verse 12 Jesus makes a specific application of this thrust in his observations to his host. When you make a dinner, call not just friends and the like that will in turn be able to reciprocate the invitation, rather invite those who can never repay. This provokes one at the table to present an interesting proposition. "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God" (v. 15). Within the text this statement is based upon the preceding two verses. Jesus takes this proposition, which is truth in the essence, expands upon it and illustrates it. In doing so he shows while the proposition is true not all men are interested in the blessings that result from eating bread in the kingdom of God. Those invited allow many things to interfere with their acceptance and deprive themselves of kingdom blessings.

As Jesus illustrates, he pictures those invited to a supper as making various excuses (v. 16 ff.). One had bought a piece of ground, another oxen and still another had married. Each excuse was legitimate and stands representative of what for the moment was more important than the supper to which he had been invited. In the illustration the invitation is then extended far and wide with room for others still left. Herein is framed the efforts of God toward redemption, Jew first and then Gentile. Truly the blessings of the kingdom are for all and blessed is the man that shall eat bread, the bread of life, in the kingdom of God. Let us not miss this fact in our consideration of excuses and rejection in this illustration, the choice of kingdom blessings is with the individual. Each on the basis of what is important will make the decision to accept and upon that same basis will maintain the relationship.

Jesus finally addresses the question, "Who will come after me?" (cf. 25 ff.) The group is indeed elite. Those who love God supremely, even more than family ties and perceived obligations. The issue of balance is here addressed. True discipleship results from a love of the Lord and his kingdom above everything else. Nothing momentarily or occasionally can be allowed to take precedence. Those who bear all, "his cross," synonymous with adversity and trial for the cause of Christ. This requires counting the cost, establishing the right attitude toward the price one must pay to be a disciple of Christ. Then too, there is the recognition of the price of failure or refusal to be a disciple. The list completes by noting that one who is a true disciple is engaged in building and fighting. He must know who the enemy is. Only then can the disciple know when to fight. Building does not result from fighting among ourselves. We fight a common adversary and not fellow disciples. "Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11).

Summed up, discipleship depends upon forsaking all in favor of the kingdom, its responsibilities and its

blessings. Allow nothing, or no one, to take the place of, or come between you and me, the professed disciple, and Christ and the kingdom. When such occurs we become useless, just as salt having lost its savour. Consider it well!

**SIMPLICITY
IN
CHRIST**

P. J. Casbolt

P.O. Box 1487
Chiefland, FL 32626



THE OLD JERUSALEM RING

When the Ephraimites tried to say "Shibboleth," the Gileadite ring was missing from their pronunciation (Judges 12:6). In the days of Nehemiah, the language of some of the children had the ring of Ashdod (Neh. 13:24). It is just as true that when our preaching is characterized by "good words and fair speeches" (Rom. 16:18), originating in "divers and strange doctrines" (Heb. 13:9), that the old Jerusalem ring is absent.

There are those both inside and outside the walls of Zion who would scoff at the idea of an "old Jerusalem ring." Such an attitude separates the Gileadites from the Ephraimites; the spiritual Samaritans from those whose roots are in Jerusalem.

Old Testament worship and service was sanctified by the ring of old Jerusalem; Jerusalem of Judea. Jeroboam was afraid that if his followers returned to Jerusalem, that their ears would be influenced by that old "ring" (1 KJ. 12:27). He composed another tune to fill the ears of his people.

Old Jerusalem ceased to be the exclusive place of acceptable worship (Jno. 4:21). But to deny that true worship in the true temple should have a Jerusalem ring to it is to deny the faith once delivered to the saints. Old Testament prophecies as well as the words of Jesus himself establish forever the place Jerusalem played in "repentance and remission of sins" (Isa. 2:3; Lk. 24:47).

Too many religious sounds come from Rome, Boston, Brooklyn, or Salt Lake City. Some of those echoes from Abilene, Nashville, and Gainesville (Crossroads), can be traced to the orchestras and conductors of sectarianism. Too many have inner ear problem which blocks out the old Jerusalem ring (2 Tim. 4:1-4).

Nothing fires the spirit, convicts and saves a sinner, or causes rejoicing in heaven like the old Jerusalem gospel. It has provoked those with even a trace of poetic inclination to launch into rhyme and song, demonstrated by the number of hymns or spiritual songs composed and sung by thousands. Suffer the offerings of yet another in whose ears the old Jerusalem ring grows sweeter with the years.

The Old Jerusalem Ring

When the light from Calv'ry fell
A new sound began to swell
And spread to every corner of the world;
Many since have learned to sing
Of that old Jerusalem ring
And marched beneath redemption's flag unfurled.

When the ring was fresh and new
In that message clear and true,
The words of all the prophets came to pass;
Our Morning Star was drawing near
And our way became more clear,
No longer looking through a darkened glass.

Why are men inclined to stray?
Why will they wander far away?
Why heed uncertain sounds, some strange new thing?
While God's love and time remain
May our hearts be touched again
By the sound of that old-time Jerusalem ring.

But there will come a better day
In a new land far away
Where the old Jerusalem ring is heard no more;
As it fades into the past
And we're safely home at last,
A New Jerusalem ring sounds on that shore.

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APPOINTMENT OF ELDERS

QUESTION: *In the March, 1987 issue of "The Examiner," the statement was made on page 20: "Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, Paul 'appointed elders for them' (Acts 14:23). What happened here? One thing for certain is that the language does not say that he appointed men to be elders! That is the idea we read into the passage! The appointing done to elders — those men who were already elders! Can't you see that? These elders were appointed to the work of pastor and shepherding the flock; just exactly the work I responsibility that Paul had while he was there." Would you comment on these statements?*

ANSWER: One thing that is crystal clear in Acts 14:23 is that Paul appointed elders. The text does not say he appointed elders to be something else, such as pastors or bishops, but he appointed elders. In the past six years or so President Reagan has appointed several federal judges. He did not appoint judges to be cabinet members, but he appointed men judges, to fill judicial offices. Likewise, Paul appointed men elders, to function as elders, and not elders to serve in some other capacity.

A similar statement is found in 2 Chron. 11:15 about Jeroboam's appointment of priests. The verse states, "And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made." Is this verse stating that Jeroboam appointed priests to be something else, like viceroys or governors? Certainly not! Jeroboam appointed men to be priests, to function as priests, and Paul appointed men to be elders, to function as elders.

To say, as some do, that "elder" in the New Testament is just a "senior citizen" is ludicrous. It is true that *presbuteras* (elder) does sometimes mean an older person only, such as I Tim. 5:1, but the word is also used over and over to denote "title of office, rank, authority." The word is used synonymously with bishop and pastor.

Thayer defines *presbuteras*, "a term of rank or office . . . among Christians, those who presided over the assemblies (or churches): Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2,4,6,22 . . . That they did not differ at all from the (*episkopoi*) bishops or overseers... is evident from the fact that the two words are used indiscriminately, Acts 20:17,28; Tit. 1:5, 7" (*Greek-English Lexicon*, pp. 535-6). *Vincent* states "The word is synonymous with *episkopoi*, overseers or bishops. Who are called *elders*, in speaking of Jewish communities, are called *bishops*, in

speaking of Gentile communities" (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, p. 523)

Kittel says, "*Presbuteras* in Judaism and Christianity... can be employed both as a designation of age and also as a title of office" (*Theological Diet, of the N. T.*, Vol. 6, p. 654). *Vine* states, "of rank or positions of responsibility" (*Expository Diet. of N. T. Words*, Vol. 2, p. 21).

H. B. Hackett, commenting on Acts 14:23, said, "The term is plural because each church had its college of elders ... The *elders*, or *presbyters*, in the official sense of the term, were appointed in the first churches to watch over their general discipline and welfare. With reference to that duty they were called, also, *episkopoi*, i.e. superintendants, or bishops" (*Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, p. 236).

Coneybear & Howson wrote, "Of the offices concerned with church government, the next in rank of the Apostles was the office of Overseers or Elders ... These terms are used in the New Testament as equivalent, the former (*episkopos*) denoting (as its meaning of overseer implies) the duties, the latter (*presbuteras*) the rank, of the office" (*The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 340).

J. W. McGarvey said, "Luke says, that from Miletus Paul sent to Ephesus and called the *elders* of the church. Here, according to a rule already established, *the elders* of the church must mean, NOT THE OLDER MEN, BUT THOSE CALLED ELDERS OFFICIALLY" (caps mine, wew) (*The Eldership*, p. 15) *Robert Milligan* stated, "the Elders and Bishops were officers of the same rank and order" (Scheme of Redemption, p. 321)

J. B. Lightfoot wrote, "It is a fact now generally recognized by theologians of all shades of opinion, that in the language of the New Testament the same officer in the Church is called indifferently "bishop' (*episkopos*) and 'elder' or 'presbyter' (*presbuteras*)" (*St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians*, p. 95).

In the Greek, Acts 14:23 reads, "*cheirotonesantes de autois kat' ekklesian presbuteros . . .*" Translated, it says, "And having appointed for them in every church elders . . ." Men were appointed elders, not elders appointed pastors or bishops, as the preceding translation succinctly shows.

Those who have a false doctrine to sustain and a hobby to ride, can always manage to find a Scripture to warp and twist to uphold their position, at least in their own eyes. This is exactly the case of the statement taken from *The Examiner*.

WHEN YOU MOVE—Please allow two months for change of address notices. We have a cut-off date for changes each month. *Thanks for your help.*

DON'T FORGET TO PRAY!

THE BORDEAUX NEW TESTAMENT

Luther W. Martin
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Rolla, MO 65401

Those of us who are citizens of the English-speaking world, are familiar with the history of the Bible in the English language. We have read about or have been taught concerning the early translators of God's Word into English, and how they were persecuted and even burned at the stake at the instigation of Roman Catholic authorities.

John Wickliffe (Wickliffe) only had access to an inaccurate copy of the Latin Vulgate, nevertheless, in 1380 (before the invention of printing in Europe) he translated the New Testament into English. By 1382, the entire Bible was made available in hand-written English. It required fourteen months to make a single copy and these sold for some thirty pounds. Wickliffe died in 1384, but thirty years later, Roman Catholic Council of Constance, had his body removed from his grave and burned.

The first legislation for burning "Heretics" . . . as defined by the Roman Catholic Church, was passed during the reign of King Henry IV, in 1401. Citizens of other countries experienced similar persecutions, when they sought to render the Bible into their own native language.

The People of France

Perhaps the most notorious act of violence in France was St. Bartholomew's Massacre, which began on the 24th of August, 1572. The Catholic queen, Catharine de Medici and her son, Charles IX, conspired with the Roman Catholic hierarchy to wipe out the French protestants, known as Huguenots. The massacre started in Paris with the murder of Admiral Coligni (Coligny). It soon spread throughout Paris and then to other French provinces. The slaughter continued for several months, with some 70,000 protestants being killed. The Pope ordered a medal to be struck, celebrating the event, and he proclaimed a "jubilee" throughout the Roman Catholic Church.

Twenty-six years later, in 1598, King Henry IV was instrumental in getting the Edict of Nantes passed. This legislation was designed to assist the Huguenots (and any other 'protestants') in securing equal treatment by the French Government. The Edict of Nantes remained in effect . . . on the books, so to speak . . . although its influence diminished until protestants were again subjected to annoyances and insults from their popish neighbors. Finally, in 1685, Louis XIV, at the behest of his Jesuit confessor, publicly revoked the Edict of Nantes. By this action, all former efforts of affording any

religious toleration to protestants, totally came to an end. Within two weeks after the revocation, French protestant parents were ordered to present their children to the Catholic Church for 'baptism,' or else the parents would become subject to galley-service.

The Bourdeaux New Testament —1686

Within one year after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the Huguenots were still reading the Bible and held its teachings in great esteem, contrary to the attitude of the Roman Church. Therefore, a French New Testament was published and attributed to the "Divines of the University of Louvain," Belgium. However, this volume was published in the city of Bourdeaux, France, it was designed to very explicitly teach Roman Catholic doctrines, and the Catholic Church hoped to counteract or neutralize the religious teachings of the protestants which were based upon the New Testament. Now this "Bourdeaux New Testament" was so extreme in its adulteration of God's Word, that even the Catholics reportedly became ashamed of their effort . . . and consequently, an attempt was made to gather up all copies of this Testament and destroy it.

In the 1850's, there were only four known copies of the Bourdeaux New Testament in all England: one in the library of the dean and chapter of Durham; a second owned by the Duke of Devonshire; a third in the Archbishop's library at Lambeth; and a fourth in possession of the Duke of Sussex.

In the 1820's, there were two copies of the Bourdeaux Testament in Dublin, Ireland. None have ever been reported in North America.

A Few Examples of

Roman Catholic Scripture Adulteration

1 Timothy 4:1 — "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some will separate themselves from the *Roman* faith ..." "Condemning the *sacrament* of marriage ..." (verse 3).

Acts 13:2 — "... As they offered to the Lord the *sacrifice* of the mass, and fasted ..." (The word "mass" is actually no-where in Holy Scripture.)

1 Cor. 3:15 — "... He himself shall be saved; yet so as by the fire of *purgatory*." (This inserted the word "purgatory" into the Bible.)

1 John 5:17 — "There is some sin which is not mortal, but venial..." (Here, they insert a distinction between degrees of sin! Totally UN-Scriptural!)

T. H. Horne's Introduction To The Scriptures —1856

A two volume work by Thomas Hartwell Horne, makes a brief reference to The Bourdeaux New Testament:

"A translation of the New Testament, published by the Jesuits at Bourdeaux in 1686 with the approbation and permission of the ecclesiastical authorities of the place. Of the willful alterations and falsifications introduced into this version, in order to support the peculiar dogmas of the Roman church, an account was published by bishop Kedder in 1690. It is supposed that nearly the whole of this version was bought up and destroyed, as

very few copies are known to be in existence." (Vol. II, page 45.)

Home also mentions that copies of the Bourdeaux N.T., are located in the Bodleian Library and the Christ Church College Library at Oxford.

Conclusion

That there WAS a Bourdeaux N.T., there is no question. That it contained grossly falsified passages of Scripture in order to bolster Roman Catholic doctrine has also been substantiated. I am currently corresponding with a European publishing firm that was established in 1683, hoping to be able to locate a copy of the Bourdeaux New Testament.

SUICIDE

J. Edward Nowlin
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The above word is often seen in the papers these days, and all too often with regard to teen-age children, people who have stood in the very threshold of life and could find nothing worth living for. In their inexperience and lack of knowledge the minuses of life outweighed the pluses; the thorns of life were blinding them to the roses; the failures were more powerful than the successes!

The word "suicide" comes from the Latin *sui* meaning "of oneself and from *cidium* — "a slaying." Mr. Webster says it is "An act of self-destruction by a person of sound mind and capable of measuring his moral responsibilities.

Suicide has become so common in the U. S. today that social organizations have been formed, toll-free phone numbers and "hot lines" have been established and law enforcement officers are on the alert to prevent such fatal, final conclusions. Many people have been able to prevent suicides. This writer, when as a young man driving a T-Model Ford on the way to preach on Sunday morning talked a girl out of jumping from the Walnut Street bridge into the Tennessee River at Chattanooga, and turned her over to a policeman on patrol. She said her landlady had stolen all her money and thrown her out of her room with nowhere to go. But why kill herself? We convinced her that to do so would let the woman go scott-free with the money and glad to be rid of her!

Arguments against suicide are not very plentiful in the minds of most people. What would you say? Many would say, "Don't do that! You'll go to hell." Let's take a look at the arguments made by Flavius Josephus about nineteen hundred years ago, when in the Roman-Jewish

War which led to the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70.

Josephus was the Jewish General. Vespasian's army had laid waste Galilee and broken the defenses at Jotapata, the city from which Josephus was directing the war. Vespasian offered to spare his life if he would surrender, because he admired the ingenuity with which Josephus had directed the Jewish resistance. However, the other Jewish leaders argued it would be better to commit suicide than to surrender, and threatened to kill him if he surrendered. So, Josephus assured them that he had no fear of dying, and reminded them of the many times he had risked his life against the Romans. Then he resorted to the following argumentation:

1. "...if they (the Romans) admit of mercy and would spare their enemy, how much more ought we to have mercy upon ourselves, and to spare ourselves?"
2. "For it is certainly a foolish thing to do that to ourselves which we quarrel with them for doing to us."
3. "Now he is equally a coward who will not die when he is obliged to die, and he who will die when he is not obliged so to do."
4. "But it may be said we must be slaves. And are we then in a clear state of liberty at present?"
5. "It may also be said that it is a manly act for one to kill himself. No, certainly, but a most unmanly one."
6. "... I should esteem that pilot to be an errant coward, who out of fear of a storm, should sink his ship of his own accord."
7. "Now self-murder is a crime most remote from the common nature of all animals, and an instance of impiety against God our Creator."
8. "... desire of life is a law engraven in them all; on which account we deem those that openly take it away from us to be our enemies ... And do you not think that God is very angry when a man does injury to what he hath bestowed on him?"
9. "For from him is it that we have received our being, and we ought to leave it to his disposal to take that being away from us."
10. "The bodies of all men are indeed mortal, and are created out of corruptible matter; but the soul is ever immortal, and is a portion of the divinity that inhabits our bodies."
11. "Besides, if any one destroys or abuses a *depositum* he hath received from mere man, he is esteemed a wicked and perfidious person; but then if any one cast out of his body this Divine *depositum*, can we imagine that he who is thereby affronted does not know of it?"
12. "Moreover, our law justly ordains that slaves which run away from their master shall be punished, though the masters they run away from may have been wicked masters to them. And shall we endeavor to run away from God, who is the best of all masters, and not think ourselves guilty of impiety?"
13. "Do not you know that those who depart out of this life, according to the law of nature... enjoy eternal fame; ... while souls of those whose hands have acted madly against themselves are received by the darkest place in Hades?... for which reason God hates such doings, and

the crime is punished by our most wise legislator." 14. "... our laws determine that the bodies of such as kill themselves should be exposed till the sun be set, without burial, although at the same time it be allowed by them to be lawful to bury our enemies [sooner]."

15. "The laws of other nations also enjoin such men's hands to be cut off when they are dead, which had been made use of in destroying themselves when alive,..."

16. "It is therefore, my friends, a right thing to reason justly, and not add to the calamities which men bring upon us impiety towards our Creator."

17. "However, I heartily wish the Romans may prove treacherous in this matter; for if after their offer of their right hand for security, I be slain by them, I shall die cheerfully, and carry away with me the sense of their perfidiousness, as a consolation greater then victory itself." (Flavius Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, III, 8:5)

Josephus did surrender and convinced Vespasian that he was a prophet of God and that Vespasian would become Emperor, which he soon did.

A WORD WITH YOU: PHROUREO, TO GUARD

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Greek

Twice in regard to Christians God wrote a word which, since then, has kept the same meaning for more than nineteen hundred years. Greeks now use this "military term." It is from a noun, PHROUROS, which, then and now, is used for "a guard; sentinel, sentry (Divry)." In the modern language this has several related and compounded forms with various "army" meanings. These include garrison, commander, fortress, watch, and stronghold. The related verb with letters corresponding to PHROURO (with the "E" now omitted) yet indicates, "to guard, to watch, to keep, to protect."

Figurative

Authorities on how Greek words were used at the time that the New Testament was written point out that in addition to its literal meaning this verb had figurative uses. Thayer calls each a metaphor. That is the figure of speech in which one thing or action is said to be another. He and other experts state that in Philippians 4: 7 and 1 Peter 1:5 saints are said to be "guarded by soldiers, so to speak." In the former, the "peace of God" guards the hearts and thoughts of His children in Christ Jesus. In the other it is said that Christians themselves "by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Philippians 4:7

In Verse 6 believers are urged to be anxious in noth-

ing. We are told to turn everything over to the Lord by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. The connection is then made into the thought of our text with, "And." This shows that the promises of Verse 7 depend upon our following Verse 6. We can not have one without the other. Does some Christian say, "I cannot help worrying?" The answer is, "Oh, yes you can. The good Lord wants you to believe and trust Him. Do what He tells you here."

Verse 8 emphasizes that the promise of protection is not intended to be for anyone who is altogether passive (inactive). His heart and thoughts are guarded, but the Christian himself must exert the effort to think properly. It is made clear that with the list given he must "think on these things." God helps those who help themselves. Here the peace of God guards the thoughts of those who think on the proper things, the true, the honorable, just, pure, lovely, things of good report, in which are virtue and praise. The thinking in the combination is ours; we have it to do. Then, as He promised, God will see that His peace will guard us, not only our thoughts, but also (including much more) our hearts. Jesus once promised, John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." 2 Thess. 3:16, "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways."

1 Peter 1:5

Some thoughts by scholars cast light on Peter's inspired statement. "The term (guarded) thus has a military connotation, and as used here, metaphorically suggests a band of soldiers thrown about the faithful to protect and guarantee their safety so long as they remain within the stronghold of faith! (Guy N. Woods, 1970)." Thayer states that "guard" here means "by watching and guarding *to preserve* one for the attainment of something." Others have, "*to keep* in a state of settlement or security," and "watch over."

Again the context of the thought adds much to it. The present status is in the living hope to which God in great mercy begat us again by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The desired and expected outcome is "the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." The statement that we are guarded by *the power of God* assures us that we have the best protection. There is none stronger. And there could be no greater aim or prospect for the ones guarded than, "(unto) a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." It is altogether logical and very thrilling that the next statement begins, "In it you greatly rejoice. ..."

God showed Elisha (2 Kings 6:14-17) His great military protection provided for him. It was done by the vast, fiery vision of His horses and chariots. This greatly exceeded the corresponding most powerful form of war strength known in that day. The prophet could confidently say, "They that are with us are more than they that are with them (the enemies)." Similarly now with His help God's people are fully prepared for anything which the enemy might "throw at them." Beyond understanding, but great and wonderful, is the peace of God

that guards our hearts and thoughts. What blessed assurance it is that we are guarded by the power of God.

POETS CORNER

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Soldiers of Jesus are fighting a battle
And daily we hear trumpets call. The heroes of
spirit are leading the army But the quiet
faith is the strongest of all.

Somewhere a brother is helping a brother
Who sometimes will stumble and fall.
And speakers so eloquent preach forth the warning.
But the quiet faith is the loudest of all.

Somewhere a sister is serving another
In ways that are humble and small.
The mighty in righteousness wait for grand moments
But the quiet faith is the largest of all.

The people of God cry aloud for the nobles
Who lead us to rebuild faith's wall.
The church is made stronger by each faithful worker,
And the quiet faith is the noblest of all.

CHORUS:

Lord, help us value the worth of each other
And strengthen the hands of the captains of Christ! But let
us remember the strength of your people Is seen in
the quiet and faithful of God!

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DEBATE IN LAKEWOOD, CALIFORNIA

JACK HOLT, Rt. 1, Box 409, Logansport, LA 71049 — I will debate Eusebio Lacuata August 24, 25, 27 and 28 on the benevolence question. All four nights will be in the Lakewood church building where brother Lacuata is one of the elders. I also had a two night discussion on this issue in San Antonio, Texas with Mac Deaver back in February of this year. Those who might desire cassette tapes of that debate may write me at the above address. Those who wish to do so may send me four blank tapes or \$6 to cover my expenses, but this is not necessary.

DEBATE WITH ATHEIST IN RICHMOND, VA

RONNY MILLINER, 2316 E. Hundred Rd., Chester VA 23831 — On August 20 and 21, I will meet Sidney G. Morton in a discussion on the inspiration of the Bible. The discussion will be held at John Tyler

Community College, just south of the intersection of Hwy. 1 and 10 in Chester, Virginia. This school is conveniently located at exit 6W from I-95 just south of Richmond, Virginia. We will begin at 7 P. M. each evening. After speeches by the disputants, questions will be taken from the audience. Come and participate in the discussion of this important topic.

DEBATES IN ARKANSAS

KEITH SHARP, Rt. 1, Box 8034, Mena, AR 71953 — July 20, 21, 23, 24 of this year I engaged Thomas L. West of Stamps, Arkansas in debate in the building of the Saratoga church of Christ, Saratoga, Arkansas. On Monday night brother West affirmed "The Scriptures authorize a local church of Christ to have a kitchen for the purpose of serving social meals." The second and third nights I affirmed that the "local church is limited in the work it may lawfully support from its

own treasury to worship, preaching and teaching the word of God and relieving needy saints. The last night brother West affirmed the right of churches to support from their treasuries benevolent institutions such as Southern Christian Home and others of like character.

Although brother West is an experienced preacher in his mid-forties, he has never debated before. Thus he, (I think wisely) wanted me to agree to a follow-up debate with an experienced debater. Thus, there will be another debate after this in the building of the church where brother West preaches in Stamps, Arkansas. Noel Merideth of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee will represent them at that time. That debate will be September 28, 29 and October 1 and 2, 1987. Monday night I will affirm: The Scriptures teach that a local church of Christ may contribute from its treasury to another local church of Christ only for the purpose of meeting benevolent needs among the members of the receiving church and only by sending directly to the church where the need exists." Tuesday brother Merideth will affirm: "The Scriptures authorize churches of Christ to contribute from their treasuries to benevolent institutions such as Southern Christian Home and others of like character." Friday I will affirm: The Scriptures teach that a local church of Christ is limited in the benevolent work it may support from its treasury to the relief of needy saints."

Propositions are just about finalized for an unrelated debate between brother Lewis G. Hale of Oklahoma City, OK and myself to be conducted at Russellville, AR the latter part of November. Harold Turner will moderate for me in the first two debates and A. W. Goff will moderate in the third debate.

This August my family and I will move to Lakeland, Florida to work with the Lakeland Hills Boulevard church where Jady Copeland formerly preached. My eldest son, Brent, will be preaching this summer for the church in Haileyville, Oklahoma.

THOMAS C. HICKEY, P. O. Box 1148, Hammond, IN 46320—I am concluding seven years of work with the Griffith, Indiana church on June 15th. We plan to continue living in Griffith at least until my daughter has finished high school in 1989. I am available for weekend meetings out of the area, but, for the present time, I prefer not to book longer meetings outside of the area. I am available for meetings in the Chicago area within daily driving distance of my home and for weekend appointments or for part-time, partial support arrangement with an area congregation.

Lord willing, I hope to begin doing some writing, printing and publishing of religious materials including tracts, booklets, books, study guides and correspondence course materials. I will give priority to area churches in the printing of meeting announcements, bulletins and such like.

The Griffith church is looking for a sound, mature gospel preacher to work here. I can be reached at (219) 923-5208 at home, or (219) 932-7152 at the office.

GOOD NEWS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

We recently received word that two of the most influential native preachers in the Cape Province of South Africa have renounced liberalism and taken a stand for the truth. They are Conrad Steyn and George Harris. These two men have been instrumental in establishing about 30 congregations in the Cape Province where there were only 3 small churches standing for truth and just 2 full-time preachers who were sound in the faith. For the present brethren Steyn and Harris and several members who left with them from the Riverview church in Capetown, are meeting and working with the church where Eric Reed preaches. They hope to be able to work among churches they helped to establish and teach them. This represents a major break through in that large province of South Africa. It would be encouraging to both of these men to hear from some of you. Write:

Conrad Steyn
1500 Park Road
Rosebank, Cape
Rep. of South Africa

George Harris
Box 300
Steenburg, Cape
Rep. of South Africa

For more information about these men and their work and the circumstances which brought about their change, you may write:

Ray Votaw
P. O. Box 801
Springs, Transvaal
Rep. of South Africa

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

NOTHING IN A NAME?

We understood that the Baptist Church in Little Hope, Tennessee decided against calling themselves the "Little Hope Baptist Church." Hmm.

LACK OF CONFIDENCE?

I was in a meeting with the good church at Middlebourne, West Virginia a few years ago and presented a series in day services on the book of Revelation. On the last morning I was to do an overview of chapters 20-22. The local preacher, my good friend, Ronny Milliner, led the singing that morning and just before I spoke, led "Farther Along We'll Know All About It." That tends to make a man cautious.

A GOOD FRIEND CROSSES OVER

On June 7, my good friend Marvin Scarboro of Orlando, Florida made his flight to yonders world. He was a faithful Christian and a member of the South Bumby Ave. church in Orlando. Robert Harkrider and Jack Hobby conducted funeral services before an overflow crowd. We became dear friends when we lived in Orlando and worked with the Pine Hills church where Marvin was then treasurer. For many years he personally paid for a list of subscriptions to this paper and many readers have received it through his kindness. The prospects of the world to come keep getting brighter as those dear to us make their passage to the other side. Our best wishes to his wife, Helen and son, Allen.

HARRY PICKUP, SR. — ONE OF MY HEROES

I first met Harry Pickup, Sr. when I was 13 years old. He came from Arlington, Virginia to Hopewell, Virginia to conduct a gospel meeting, the first of several during my teen years. He was one of the most interesting people I had met. He had been a boxer when a young man and was obviously a man's man. He had been a Baptist before learning the truth. He was fascinating to hear as a preacher. While his sermons addressed basic themes, his presentation was different from others. It was fresh and he had a way of saying something so you would remember it. Sometimes, just before making a statement which he knew would be controversial, he would say "Now get a good tight grip on your seat."

He did much preaching in eastern North Carolina at Pike Road and Newport. While he was perfectly at ease in a pulpit in a large city congregation, he was equally at ease in a rural community. He would wear bib overalls to the general stores, sit around with the farmers on a rainy day, play checkers with them with soda pop tops, trade stories with them, and always take advantage of the opportunity to discuss the Bible. One farmer at Newport, North Carolina (who later became one of the elders of the church) told me that "Harry Pickup nearly made me lose my crop one year. He would come to the field and I would try to get rid of him by telling him I had to do some hoeing. He would ask for a hoe and weed the row next to mine. Up and down the rows we went and before he was through, he had taught me out of the Freewill Baptist Church."

There was nothing "stuffy" about this man. He loved to pick the mandolin, and was ready to take his turn singing one of the popular ballads of the day. He was firmly committed to the truth while being totally human. I greatly admired him.

While I was a student at Florida College, he moved to Tampa to preach for the old Howard Avenue church and began to do some public relations work for the college. The Pickup home was a haven for college students, a home away from home. Sister Pickup and her dear mother, whom we all called "Nannie" just opened their big hearts and

took us all in. Among other things, they introduced us to the sheer ecstasy of chess pies. Once, brother Pickup loaned me his new Ford to take a carload of students with me down to Cortez. Driving through Bradenton, a truck stopped suddenly in front of us, and before I stopped, we had a dent in the front fender. I dreaded to see him when we got back. But he was totally unruffled and made it much easier for a frightened college boy who was afraid to tell him and fearful as to what it would cost to repair it.

He never forgot what it was like to be young and in need of a little encouragement. He arranged the first gospel meeting I ever held. He was to go to Newport, North Carolina in the summer of 1950 for another meeting but for some reason was not able to go. He saw me at school one day and asked me if I would be willing to go, provided the brethren would agree. I did not know if I knew enough to preach a whole meeting but acted as if I were an old hand at it. He wrote the brethren and asked them to let me come and they agreed. It was an experience I will never forget and it resulted in meeting invitations in New Jersey and Ohio. Older men seldom realize just how much it means to young men to be helped. Those my age should never forget

Yes indeed, Harry Pickup, Sr. is definitely one of my heroes. He is now 84 and in failing health. Sister Pickup at last account is doing

well. It is a joy to number their noble son, Harry Pickup, Jr. among my esteemed friends. He is a prince among preachers. And he ought to be, for his father is a legend in his own time, a worthy example of all that a Christian and a gospel preacher ought to be.

I have other heroes and all of them are not preachers. But we will write of them in due time. Of these it is appropriate to say "whose faith follow."

PREACHER NEEDED

KINGSPORT, TENNESSEE — The church in Kingsport is looking for a full-time evangelist to work with them as of September, 1987. The majority of support is supplied by this 30 member congregation in the expanding tri-cities area (Bristol — Kingsport—Johnson City) of upper east Tennessee. Those interested may contact: Clifton Piner, 320 Proffitt Lane, Kingsport, TN 37633.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

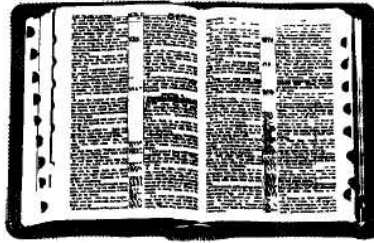
BAPTISMS 328

RESTORATIONS g4

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XXVIII

SEPTEMBER, 1987

Number 9

THINK ON
THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



WHAT IS DEATH?

Death means *separation*. The scriptures teach that one may be dead **IN** sin; which means he is separated from God, the author of life, because of his sin (Isaiah 59:2; Ephesians 2:1; John 5:25; Colossians 2:11). One can be dead **IN** sin and alive in the flesh at the same time (Like 24:15,1 Timothy 5:6).

The Bible also teaches that we can be dead **TO** sin, which means separated from sin by the blood of Christ, and our obedience to the gospel of Christ (Romans 6:2). When the body of sin is destroyed "with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ" (Colossians 2:11), we are then dead **TO** sin. The *merit* cause is the blood of Christ, and the conditional cause is our obedience to the gospel. We are then crucified (put to death) with Christ (Romans 6:2-7; Galatians 2:20-22; 5:21), and we are dead **TO** sin.

James says that the body without the spirit is dead, being alone (James 2:26). The spirit lives on but the body is without life; it is dead (Genesis 35:18; Luke 23:46). We know where the body is because we tenderly take it to the grave from which it was taken. The spirit is unseen and we do not know by experience where it goes. We learn from the word of God all we can ever know of the abode of the spirit until we ourselves make that journey.

Conditions Of The Spirit Of Man After Death

There are some places we know that the spirit does not go after death.

A. *The Spirits Are Alive After Death.* The spirit survives the body after death. Jesus taught that his Father was "... not a God of the dead, but of the living..." (Luke 20:38). Since He is not the God of the dead, but He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, therefore, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are alive even though their bodies have been dead for centuries (Matthew 22:31, 32). The spirit of man does not die with the body. The account of Lazarus and the rich man proves that after the death of the bodies the spirits live in a conscious state in the realm of comfort for one and torments for the other (Luke 16:31-46).

B. *The Spirits Are Conscious After Death.* The spirit of man does not become unconscious after death. Revelation 6:9,10 proves that not only were the disembodied souls conscious of the surroundings, but they also knew why they were killed and that their blood had not been avenged. This clearly shows that the spirit is conscious: it can feel frustration and appeal for vindication. The rich man of Luke 16:19-31 died and was buried. After his body was dead, he could see, hear, recognize, feel, speak, plead, reason, desire and remember. His spirit was alive and conscious after his body was dead and buried.

The dead body is placed in the grave (Ecclesiastes 9:10). We have no problem understanding where that part of man is. The body of Jesus went to a new tomb where no man was laid when he died (Matthew 27:57-60). This is the end of the dead body until the resurrection (Job 14:15).

Paul testifies that he knew a man (it is usually assumed that he was speaking of himself), about fourteen years before who was caught up into paradise, whether in the body or out of the body, he did not know, God knew, who heard unspeakable words, which was not lawful for man to utter (2 Corinthians 12:2-4). Paul says it is possible for one out of the body to be a conscious person.

C. *The Spirit Of Man Goes To An Intermediate State.* The spirit of man does not go out of existence after death. Jehovah's witnesses and some other materialists teach that man becomes non-existent after death. Matthew 17:3 records the event of Christ's transfiguration on the mount. Moses and Elias, who had been dead physically for hundreds of years, appeared with Christ before

Peter, James and John. They were alive and conscious. They were talking with Jesus.

D. *The Spirit Of Man Does Not Go Directly To Heaven.* Since death is the separation of the spirit and body, the spirit does not go to the tomb where the body goes.

The spirit does not go directly to heaven when it leaves the body. The scriptures speak plainly to this point; the evidence is abundant and decisive. Jesus told his disciples "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). Notice exactly what Jesus said: "I go to *prepare* a place . . ." He did not say he would remain here and prepare a place for them, or that he would go away and come again to prepare a place. "I go to prepare a *place* for you. . ." "He is now preparing that place for the redeemed. He then said, "I will *come again*, and receive you unto myself..." The wicked will not go where Jesus is when they die in their sins (John 8:21,24). Christ is in heaven now (Acts 1:26). The righteous will not go where Jesus is UNTIL he comes again. That refers to his second coming when the dead in Christ will rise first, and we who are living will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and shall be with the Lord in the clouds, and so will we ever be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

Jesus said to his disciples: "... I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Those for whom Christ went to prepare a place to be with him will not receive it UNTIL HE COMES AGAIN AND RECEIVES THEM to be with him for eternity. It follows that no one will go into heaven until after the second coming of Christ. When were the disciples to be with Christ? When he comes again to receive them unto himself to be in the place he has prepared. No other conclusion is possible in the light of these words from John 14:1-3.

Searching The Scriptures

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Editorial

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CHURCH AUTONOMY IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Last month we reported the fact that Conrad D. Steyn and George Harris of Cape Town, South Africa had broken with the liberal brethren with whom they had been associated for many years and had taken a clear stand for sound doctrine and practice. These two men and about 30 members who stood with them now constitute the Constantia church meeting in Cape Town. Ray Votaw, who worked with these men in studying the truth on the work and organization of the church, has provided detailed information as to what happened which led these men to their present position. It is a story which needs to be told. We have a younger generation on the scene these days who did not live through the crisis of division over sponsoring churches and related issues. The case in South Africa is typical of what happened in many places right here in this country during those tragic years.

Brethren Steyn and Harris were preachers working with the River View congregation in Cape Town. For many years that work had been "sponsored" by the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston, Texas. In February, 1987 some of the elders from Memorial church came to Cape Town with a drawn up "constitution" for the River View church. They said they were trying to prevent a "takeover" by the Crossroads movement, although there was no evidence of that movement at work there. The "constitution" placed "all assets of the church" "whether immovable, movable or personal" under five (5) trustees. These were vested with power of attorney. These trustees were chosen without the will of the church being expressed and they were to be a self-perpetuating body. Three of the trustees were Americans, two of them elders of the Memorial church in Houston. The other two were to be Conrad Steyn and Philip Leibbrandt, a preacher, both South Africans.

Delbert Burkhart, an elder from Memorial church, and designated by the new "constitution" as "Chairman" of the board of trustees was questioned about the issue of the River View church. He said "George said it this morning, we've had oversight of this congregation since its beginning." A brother asked him to elaborate on that a little more. Here is Burkhart's reply:

"Oversight always with congregations has meant that the church that has the oversight pretty well has the control of the physical and the things and the

preacher, we can support the preacher, I mean we send the preacher in until such time that you become strong, and have a good eldership, then oversight ceases. One eldership cannot oversee another eldership, and that's when you start interfering with autonomy of the church, is when there is an eldership and you start interfering with it." Brother Steyn then asked:

"Del, are you saying the church is only autonomous when it has an eldership?" Burkhart replied:

"Yes, as long as it has another church that is helping it financially and has ... Steyn asked:

"What happens if ten churches are helping financially?" Burkhart:

"We would have letters in our files from all those" churches giving us the complete oversight of the work."

In this meeting of February 15, 1987, the men in the meeting voted to reject this takeover by a 9 to 1 margin with one brother abstaining. In spite of this expression, later Philip Leibbrandt with the blessings of Memorial gathered what he said was 51% of the members, including some delinquent members who had not been to worship in two to three years. Memorial was prepared to go to law to force out Steyn, Harris and others who stood with them against this usurpation of the autonomy of that congregation. This resulted in 30 brethren moving out and relinquishing the property. Already the campaign is underway to discredit these men.

Both Conrad Steyn and George Harris have made clear, written statements of their present views, have acknowledged their previous errors and have stated their intention to walk in the old paths and use the rest of their lives to preach the whole counsel of God. There are many living yet in this country who can identify with the heart wrenching statement from a letter by Conrad Steyn. It follows:

"I did not sleep that Tuesday night (Feb 10). I knew it was all wrong and that this whole business was a blatant violation of God's word. In the early hours of that Wednesday morning I was sitting up in bed when my dear wife pleaded with me to lie down and get some sleep. I told her . . . 'It's wrong, it's all wrong. I can no longer go along with this sort of thing, and the violation of River View's congregational autonomy. I just can't believe those elders would do this.' I also told her that I was sure that if I opposed the Memorial elders and rejected their request, there would be trouble and they would probably withdraw that support they were giving me. My beloved Ann (and I shall always be eternally grateful to her for this) took my hands in hers and said 'My husband, Judas sold our Lord for money, we must not do the same just for the sake of money or pleasing men. My husband, do what is right and if we lose everything and have to live in a tent, I will stand by you and you will be able to live with yourself and walk tall, knowing that you did what God wants you to do. You will be standing up for the truth and what is right.' My precious wife, this lovely daughter of God, and I cried

together and talked to God about it in those early morning hours. I knew what I had to do, and prayed that the men would respond in the way God wanted them to."

In addition to Ray Votaw this information is verifiable by Doug Bauer, David Beckley, Basil Cass, Hendrik Joubert, Piet Joubert, Les Maydell, Eric Reed and Paul Williams, all of whom are faithful preachers in the work in South Africa. Having established some 25 churches in the Cape Town Province (twice the size of Texas), these two men are in a position to do much good work.

Such times are traumatic for those passing through them. But such issues are not just "much ado about nothing" for they involve scriptural authority. Peter said elders were to "tend the flock of God which is among you" (1 Pet. 5:2-3). One set of elders for one flock — that is God's plan. That is a fundamental principle of church government and it cannot be violated without displeasing God.

It might encourage these men to hear from some of you who appreciate the courage of their convictions. Here are their addresses:

Conrad D. Steyn
P.O. Box 133, Rondebosch
Cape 7700 South Africa

George Harris
P.O. Box 300, Steenberg
Cape 7947 South Africa

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CHARISMATIC BAPTISM

The primary peculiarity of the Charismatic movement centers in its views on the operation of the Holy Spirit. This is not limited to the direct operation of the Spirit in conversion, a basic fallacy of most "fundamentalist" religions. But it rests in the claim that the redeemed are baptized with the Holy Spirit, either when converted, or later as a special gift of grace.

Holy Spirit Baptism Today. The Wesleyan doctrine of the "second blessing" evolved through the Holiness and Pentecostal movements into the miraculous indwelling of the Spirit as now affirmed by Charismatics. It was an easy, and perhaps inevitable, step from the Holiness view that the "gift of the Spirit" operates within the individual directly to make him holy to the Neo-Pentecostal view that this indwelling power enables the believer to speak an ecstatic language, receive divine revelations, and perform various miracles.

Lawrence O. Richards, in **The Word Bible Handbook**, says: "The key to experimental holiness is the Holy Spirit whom God has sent into believers. It is the Spirit's presence that makes us 'saints' (literally, 'holy ones'). It is in his guidance that leads us into righteousness. It is his power that enables us to live a holy life." He further explains: "In Acts we see the impact of the Spirit who works through the men and women he baptizes and fills with power ... It is the Holy Spirit who empowers individuals for ministry today. He gives each believer a special capacity to contribute to the lives of others (1 Cor. 12:1-11). While Christians may debate how these spiritual gifts find expression today, the biblical emphasis is clear for us all: each of us is called and gifted by God to serve others for 'the common good.'"

Pentecostals, old and new, believe the miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit, coming on the believer by Holy Spirit baptism, is essential to every facet of the Christian life. They may "debate" the meaning of the spiritual gifts in the redeemed, but they are largely of one voice in proclaiming the personal indwelling of the Spirit through a charismatic baptism and in avowing its essentiality to holy living. Out of this basic error many other Charismatic delusions arise.

Holy Spirit Baptism in the New Testament. John was first to mention Holy Spirit baptism. He said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me ... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matt. 3:11). After His resurrection, Christ repeated the promise and applied it to His

apostles, saying, "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:5). This tells who would administer Holy Spirit baptism, who would receive it, and when it would come. The promise was fulfilled on Pentecost when the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke with other tongues the wonderful works of God (Acts 2:1-4, 11, 33).

In explaining this event, Peter referred to the ministry of the Spirit foretold in Joel 2:28-32, the end purpose of which is salvation. The prophecy covers the whole of the Spirit's miraculous ministry, but all the Spirit would do was not done that day. The baptism of the Holy Spirit marked the beginning of the Spirit's work in saving the lost. Joel said the Lord would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh and that began with the coming of the Spirit on Pentecost.

The apostles' baptism with the Spirit put the divine stamp of approval on them as the chosen witnesses of Christ (see Luke 24:49-49; John 14:26; 15:26, 27; 16:12, 13). Thereafter, they received miraculous power as needed in fulfilling their mission, but they were not repeatedly "baptized" with the Holy Spirit, nor were any others baptized with the Spirit until the gospel was first preached to the Gentiles. When Peter went to tell Cornelius the words by which he and his house would be saved, "the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word" and they spoke with tongues and magnified God (Acts 10:44-46). In explaining this to his brethren in Jerusalem, Peter said: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as upon us at the beginning. Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 11:14-16).

Peter's reference to what happened "at the beginning" (Pentecost) and to the promise of Holy Spirit baptism (Acts 1:5) implies that the gift Christ gave the Gentiles had not been bestowed since Pentecost. There is no reference to Holy Spirit baptism in the intervening period. Furthermore, the apostle said the outpouring of the Spirit on the house of Cornelius was "the same gift" the apostles received on Pentecost. He had to go back to "the beginning" to find its likeness.

The apostles received the Holy Spirit baptism to prove they were the representatives of Christ (Acts 2:32, 33). Cornelius received it to prove the Gentiles had a right "to hear the word of the gospel and believe" (Acts 11:18; 15:7-9). These facts once confirmed by Holy Spirit baptism did not need to be reconfirmed. The baptism of the Spirit on these two occasions also satisfies Joel's promise that the Spirit would be poured out on "all flesh" (Acts 2:17), meaning all races, for it came to Jews and Gentiles alike; but none of either race was baptized with the Spirit after that. Yet in each case, the gift benefited the whole race of those who receive it. The apostles' baptism with the Holy Spirit opened the door of faith to the whole Jewish race. And after "the same gift" came to the Gentiles, the gospel was preached to "every creature under heaven" (Col. 1:23).

Charismatic Errors. In claiming that people today are baptized with the Holy Spirit like the apostles on

Pentecost, Charismatics make some fatal mistakes. (1) They fail to see the fulfillment of John's promise in the events on Pentecost and at the house of Cornelius. (2) They confuse other gifts of the Spirit with Holy Spirit baptism. Other miraculous gifts came by the laying on of the apostle's hands (Acts 8:14-19), but their bestowal or reception is never called a baptism. (3) They ignore the purpose of Holy Spirit baptism in the two instances in Acts and make it an end within itself. (4) They refuse to see the cessation of all miraculous gifts when they were served their purpose (see Mark 16:20; 1 Cor. 13: 8-10; Heb 2:1-4).

Charismatics erroneously claim the same power the apostles had on Pentecost, but they cannot duplicate a single New Testament sign of miraculous power. They cannot speak in tongues, prophesy, or work miracles. They also deny fundamental truth that miracles were designed to confirm. For example, they do not teach what Christ commanded in Mark 16:15, 16. Any person who says baptism is not essential to salvation is a false prophet by any Scriptural standard (see 1 Pet. 4:11; 2 John 9). It is strange that men who claim miraculous power will deny what Christ commands, and not blush to make water slides and swimming pools part of the gospel.

Through their misunderstanding of the Holy Spirit's work in the salvation of the lost, Charismatics have created a unique religious realm characterized by thinking, feelings, actions, and interpretations that are not remotely related to the word of God. Yet they piously wave the Bible as they proclaim false doctrine and deceive millions.

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ATHEISTIC HUMANISM

Ken Dart
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The foundation for humanism was laid long before the recent legal battles over the content of school textbooks. This is evidenced by the basic philosophy which elevates man above a need or desire for God. This posture has existed ever since the first man turned his back on God and decided to try to manage his own destiny.

Both sacred and secular history bear witness to the fact that men have frequently looked to their own wisdom for answers to the questions of life. Early Greek philosophy held that matter (water, fire, etc.) was the ultimate of existence. The emptiness of such human wisdom is described by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians one and two. The degradation of a society which follows such "wisdom" is detailed in Romans 1:18-32.

Seeks Answers Without God

Since the first century, man's inflated opinion of himself seems to have gradually grown to the point at which modern science finally provided the impetus for the growth of present-day secular humanism. Scientific discoveries led some men to conclude that it was no longer necessary to resort to "God" in explaining the universe, but that all the answers could be found within the "system" of nature itself.

In explaining the new humanism, Paul Kurtz said, "The present century has been proclaimed as the Humanist century . . . Using the powerful critical tools of science and logical analysis, modern man now recognizes that the universe has no special human meaning or purpose and that man is not a special product of creation... Modern man now realizes that he is responsible in large measure for his own destiny. Living on a minor planet on the edge of a small galaxy in a vast universe, man has come to see that he cannot look outside himself for salvation. His future, if he has any, is within his control." One can quickly see from such a statement the obvious conflict between the humanist and the Bible. God has clearly stated that man is special (Genesis 1:26) and cannot find his own route to salvation (Jeremiah 10:23).

The Modern Variety

The present humanist movement seems to have been given a real boost during the period of despondency and severe economic plight of the Great Depression. It was during this era that many Americans turned to socialism and communism for answers to their problems. Both of these philosophies deny God. In 1933 Roy Wood

Sellars authored the first Humanist Manifesto which was signed by thirty-four prominent educators, journalists, and liberal theologians. Speaking of this new direction in American philosophy Sellars said, "The Humanist argues that the traditional Christian outlook has been undercut and rendered obsolete by the growth of knowledge about man and his world." Sellars believes that Christianity is based upon myth, and that such traditional "religion" must be rejected in favor of modern science.

Seen In Education

A contemporary of Mr. Sellars, John Dewey, also signed Humanist Manifesto I. He is considered by some as the "patron saint" of the American humanist movement. For example the American Humanist Association annually awards the John Dewey Humanist award, and maintains a 2,000 volume "John Dewey Humanist Library". The most frightening fact related to this man's role in humanism is that he has been the most powerful influence in the public education system in the 20th century. Dewey felt that: "Essentially religion is an attempt to adjust to the actual situations of life, and these valuable experiences should be emancipated from the historical forms of organized religions which are repellent to the modern mind... The details of religion must be sought through the only gateway to knowledge that there is, i.e. science." John Dewey's theories of public education have made havoc of the American public school system and are presently polluting the minds of our children.

In 1973 Humanist Manifesto II appeared in The Humanist magazine issued in Sept./Oct. It was signed by more than 200 persons including such notables as: Isaac Asimov, Antony Flew, Joseph Fletcher, and Sir Julian Huxley. In speaking of the 1933 Manifesto they claimed: That document helped liberate many people from the backwaters of traditional and supranaturalistic religion. It gave to many persons throughout the world a name and focus for their philosophy."

Threatens The Cause Of Christ

More of the proponents' atheism is seen in the first section under the general title, Religion, which states that, "We believe . . . that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, and God... above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species. Any account of nature should pass the test of scientific evidence; in our judgment, the dogmas and myths of traditional religions do not do so . . . We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of the survival and fulfillment of the human race. As nontheists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity." They further state that "promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful." It is affirmed that science proves the emergence of the human species from natural evolutionary forces and that "there is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body."

The implications of such atheistic dogmatism are a threat to everything which the Bible teaches about God,

the creation, the origin of man, and the resurrection of Christ. The very denial of life after death tears and heart out of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and rends every ray of hope from the life of the Christian. Remember that the apostle Paul affirmed that if the resurrection of Christ was untrue, then indeed our preaching and faith were in vain (1 Cor. 15:14). These facts alone should stir within the heart of every lover of the truth enough righteous indignation to spur us on to fight the insidious disease of humanism to "the death".

Summation

The basic philosophy of Humanist Manifestos I and II have been well described by Wayne Jackson as follows:

1. There is no God.
2. The universe is thus self-existing not created.
3. Man, "having emerged as the result of a continuous process" is the product of evolutionary forces.
4. There are no supernatural values for the human race.
5. Man makes his own moral laws.
6. Ethics is situational.
7. Sexual life-styles are to be pursued according to individual desires.
8. The authoritarian structure of the school, family, etc. must be replaced by participatory democracy.
9. Abortion, euthanasia, and the right to suicide must be respected.

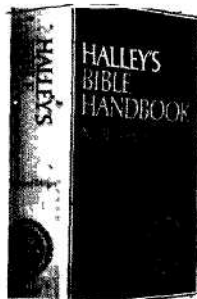
The impending disaster of a Godless eternity for those who subscribe to any or all of the above tenets should cause each of us to consider the consequences of this great threat to our eternal well-being. In consideration of our love for God, His Son, and the souls of men, let us "... remember the Lord who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses." Nehemiah 4:14

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(2 Cor. 5:9)

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PROBLEMS IN PRAYER

If we are going to let the Lord "teach us to pray" (Lk. 11:1), we must learn to recognize some of the problems we face and diligently seek to correct them. Without a doubt we can hinder our own prayers (1 Pet. 3:7).

Teaching In Prayer

Sometimes brethren use prayer to quote scripture and make arguments to teach others. C. R. Nichols told of going to a denominational meeting where an infant was "baptized". They called on some member of the church to pray, who prayed for fifteen minutes or so, quoting scripture and making arguments against infant baptism. While we need to cite Bible passages and make application from them, prayer is just not the place for it. In prayer we are talking to God (Rom. 10:1). He already knows what the Bible says and all the arguments and applications that can be made from it.

Stale Expressions

When we begin praying we sometimes ape expressions we have heard others use. While there is nothing wrong with that within itself, we demonstrate a lack of thought and preparation in using traditional phrases. The following are a few such expressions that can become meaningless because of repetition. "Our Father which art in heaven", "Bless thy ministering servants everywhere", "If we've been found faithful", "We pray for all whom it is our duty to pray for", "Bring us back at the next appointed time", "Guide, guard and direct us till we meet again", "We pray for those that are sick of this congregation", "May the speaker have a ready remembrance of those things he has prepared", "Be with the sick and the afflicted the world over especially those of the household of faith" and "We thank thee for this day and many blessings". Now, don't misunderstand. I am not saying that any of these are wrong to use. The warning is that they can become meaningless. Do you ever stop and think about the real meaning of these expressions as you use them? If we are not careful we can make prayer boring and stale rather than fresh and edifying.

Vain Repetitions

Jesus warned, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matt. 6:7). This is not to say that if we repeat a phrase or a point that it is

wrong. But repetition can become empty and useless. Sometimes we fear that our public prayer will be too short, so we pray and pray and say many of the same things over and over.

There are three areas wherein we can easily become repetitious. (1) *Asking for the forgiveness of sins*. In some services we may hear "forgive us of our many, many sins" every few minutes. We pray for that at the beginning of the services and again in the two prayers at the Lord's table and once in the closing prayer. Can we not go five minutes without committing sin? Are we really all that sinful? Or is it that we don't think God heard our other request? While we do sin (1 Jno. 1:8) the Christian is not to be continually sinning (1 Jno. 3:6-9). (2) *Repetitious dismissals*. Quite often those who are called upon to dismiss the assembly with a prayer pray on and on saying the same things that were said in the first prayer. Could it be that conducting our services "decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40) would call for being a little more careful about what is said in the dismissal prayer? (3) *Praying for everything at the Lord's table*. Some who wait on the table will not only pray for the bread or the cup, but for the elders, the sick, the preacher, church growth and anything else that comes to mind. A study of the institution of the Lord's supper (Matt. 26; Mk. 14 and Lk. 22) along with Paul's instructions (1 Cor. 11:23-24) would encourage us to pray for the Lord's supper and give thanks and not make a long repetitious prayer at the table.

Quiet And Mumbled Speech

Occasionally someone will lead in prayer and can't be heard. The problem may be that he leads it from his seat and doesn't go to the front. Even those who go to the front (in places where a PA system is necessary) sometimes don't speak up or into the microphone.

We must remember that there are those who must follow as we lead in prayer (1 Cor. 14:15-ff). They too must worship in spirit. But, if they can't hear, I may as well be praying in Greek or German. May I suggest that all who lead in public prayers go to the front, use the microphone, speak up and speak clearly.

Big Words and Impressive Speech

I don't know whether some are trying to impress God like the Pharisee (Lk. 18:9-14) or impress the brethren when they use words and phrases that many would not understand. James P. Needham gave the two following illustrations of useless verbiage in a lecture a few years ago at Florida College. A man wrote a note that said, "Your uncle James, being advanced in years, suffering from the debilities that attach to the encroachment of senility, and having suffered severe financial reverses, in a moment of dementia, precipitated his own demise." All that he meant was "Uncle Jim got old, lost his wad, went nuts and bumped himself off." There was the man who said "Elisha's cranial extremity was void of follicular appendages" when he meant that he was bald-headed.

Remember that there are some young and uneducated Christians that you are leading in prayer. And

don't forget that you are praying to God (Matt. 6:9) and he may not be so impressed. Just be natural.

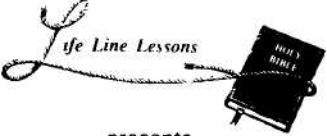
Reciting And Rushing Through As A Ritual

We sometimes rush through the words of a prayer as if it is merely an outward thing we must get done so we can get to something more important. What's the hurry? Do we not have time to talk to our God? Are we taking the time to think what we are saying?

Too Stiff To Say Amen

It is certainly proper and right for other brethren to say "amen" as one closes the prayer (1 Cor. 14:16). "Amen" means "So let it be" (*Vines*, Vol. I, p. 53). It shows that we concur with what has been said. To say "amen" to another's prayer will encourage the leader and edify others. However, we have become so stiff and formal in our services that we feel it is out of place to say "amen" to a prayer or a sermon. Men, let's see if we can't do a little better. Let's hear some loud amens!

May we have the wisdom to see our problems and the courage to correct them and the humility to say "Lord teach us to pray."



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STUDIES IN 1ST & 2ND TIMOTHY

FIRST TIMOTHY (CHAPTER 1)

These letters were written by Paul, an inspired apostle of the Lord, to Timothy, a young evangelist and co-worker with Paul. The letters contain warnings, responsibilities, duties, and instruction to preachers (evangelists). I believe the theme of both letters is expressed in these words "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. 4:16). If the instruction given to Timothy, when followed, would result in the salvation of both the preacher and the hearers, then every command, warning, duty, and responsibility is important to everyone's salvation. It is bread of life. No instruction, command, or warning may be considered lightly, or dismissed with "It's not that important".

The first chapter naturally begins with the author, Paul, whose apostleship was not assumed, but divinely appointed by the Lord.

The letter is addressed to Timothy, a young man converted by Paul at Lystra on his first missionary tour. On his second tour, it was Paul's desire that this young man, who had already favorably distinguished himself among the brethren of that area (Acts 16:2) become a traveling companion and co-worker.

A lesson is learned about the importance of expediency in a preacher's work in Paul's having Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3). Timothy's father was a Greek, and if Timothy was not circumcised problems would certainly arise from Jews in places where they went that would hamper their success. Paul did not do this because it was necessary to Timothy's salvation, but because it would be expedient to their reaching others with the gospel — to save them that heard. All preachers, truly interested in saving those they teach, should be willing to alter some customs, traditions, concepts (not wrong in themselves) if these pose a hindrance to their work.

The first thing Paul told Timothy to do is to charge some that they teach "no other doctrine". Regardless of the popular belief that doctrine is not important, the Scriptures say it is. John tells us that one who fails to abide in the doctrine of Christ forfeits his relationship with God and whoever comes "bringing not this doctrine" is to be rejected (2 Jno. 9-10).

Two things that defile pure doctrine are fables and

endless genealogies. Fables (traditions of men) became a large part of the Jewish religion (Mark 7:6-9). There are numerous doctrines and practices in today's religious world that are completely foreign to the Scriptures. All such are fables, hatched in the minds of men. Genealogies were particularly important to the Jews. Through these the various tribes were identified, possessions kept in the proper family, the priests (Levitical tribe) kept distinct, and the lineage of the Messiah was kept clear. Now, in Christianity (dispensation of God's love which is by faith in Christ), neither Jewish traditions nor a blood relationship to Abraham avails anything in Christ. Giving heed to these things can not result in godly edifying, but rather causes questions or disputes.

In our generation, hours have been spent, and divisions occurred, arguing about our traditional way of doing things, what was Paul's thorn in the flesh, what kind of bush did Moses see on fire but not consumed, etc. Preachers should not involve themselves in such and teach others to abstain from it.

The aim or end of God's commandment is for people to submit themselves unto God with a pure heart, a good conscience, and with faith unfeigned. Preaching truth in love will have this result. When men turn aside to "vain jangling and endless ranglings" over things not "of faith", they are actually promoting themselves with words, and convey no understanding for themselves or others.

Law And Sound Doctrine

The Judaizers loved the prestige connected with being teachers of the law, but they failed to see that the aim or end of the law was Christ; that it ended in Christ and was taken away by him. They used what was good unlawfully when they sought to bind it on others after it had been taken away. (Gal. 3:23-26; 4:9; Acts 15:1,7-11, 24-28). Preachers make the same mistake when they try to bind practices on Christians that are only found in an abrogated law.

The law was given because of transgressions and was made for transgressors — people guilty of all kinds of evil. It pointed out the evil and condemned it. It was, indeed, good. But, under Christ, the righteous refrain from these evils because they are contrary to sound doctrine — the glorious gospel that was committed to Paul's trust, not on a code of laws written to define evil and condemn. Preachers today ought not to appeal to an abrogated code of laws to show right or wrong, but to sound doctrine (gospel) and what is in or out of harmony with it.

The importance of sound doctrine is the thing emphasized throughout this chapter. No other doctrine is to be taught or embraced. Everything else leads not to the saving of self and others, but to confusion, strife, and condemnation.

Paul, An Example Of The Transforming Power Of The Gospel

The gospel (Sound Doctrine) Paul was, by the grace of God, divinely called to preach had transformed him from


a blasphemer, persecutor, and injurious person, steeped in all the Jewish traditions that gendered contention and strife, into a faithful apostle of truth whereby he saved himself and those that heard him. In the apostle Paul we have an example of God's grace and the power of the gospel to save — even the chief of sinners. No theological theorizing or vain jangling could bring about such an effect. Such salvation through the gospel (sound doctrine) calls forth praise and honor unto the only wise God and King eternal.

What had happened to Paul was a pattern for the young preacher, Timothy, as well as others. Timothy is charged to faithfully war a good warfare in preaching sound doctrine, "holding faith and a good conscience, according to prophecies and special gifts given him". Otherwise, he and others would experience "shipwreck of the faith", as had already happened unto some. We might summarize this whole chapter by saying that only the pure gospel of Christ (sound doctrine) can result in the salvation of the teacher and the taught. Let no one tell you doctrine is not important! To Be Continued.

**WAKE THE WORLD
AND TELL THE
PEOPLE**

Wilson Adams

891 Autumn Valley Lane
Gambrills, MD 21054



LEAVING ALL TO FOLLOW HIM

THE STORY OF TWO PEOPLE WHO WERE WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE

I tire of pessimistic attitudes among God's people. I grow weary of the negative mentality that steals away our enthusiasm of commitment to personal evangelism. It seems that in far too many places brethren have lost their faith in the Lord and their courage to try. The crying complaint of "nobody is interested," or "it won't do any good," or "we tried it once and it didn't work," or "nobody will come anyway" — *eats my stomach*. Am I to believe that the situation today is worse than it was in the sin-infested capitals of ancient Corinth, Ephesus and Rome? Am I to understand that our society has digressed to such a sad state that the gospel has lost all attractiveness and appeal? Can I really believe that, in this modern age, no one is willing to leave their all and follow Jesus? I REFUSE TO ADMIT TO ANY OF THAT? *The power of the gospel is as great today as it ever was*. People are hurting in sin, searching for answers and seeking the truth that only the Lord can give — AND MANY ARE WILLING TO PAY A TREMENDOUS PRICE for such peace of mind and hope of heart. I know

that's true because I've witnessed people do it. Take Arthur and Debe Neal of Silver Spring, Maryland for example ...

Arthur Neal is an accomplished singer trained in classical music. He spent five years studying music in Germany and has performed in concerts and recitals in some Europe's most famous churches and cathedrals. During the last several years he has accepted solo positions and music directorship at some of the most noteworthy churches in Washington, D. C. including *Holy Trinity Catholic Church* (home to the Kennedy family), *National City Christian Church* (President Johnson's congregation), the *Temple Beth Shalom*, an Orthodox Jewish Temple, *Christ Episcopal church*, (a very prestigious church in the Georgetown section of Washington) as well as several others. *Debe Neal* is an accomplished concert and opera singer and has performed with the Washington Opera and the Wolf Trap Company as well as working for twelve years as soloist for Washington's *Annunciation Catholic Church* (attended by several congressmen and cabinet members). She also sang for eight years at *Temple Rodef Shalom* (where Ted Koppel of ABC "Nightline" program worships). Arthur and Debe met backstage at the Kennedy Center while they were performing with the Washington Opera.

The Neals obeyed the gospel three years ago. To say that their life took a dramatic turn would be a great understatement. They had to take a serious accounting of the cost of Christianity and then determine to pay whatever price had to be paid in order to live faithful before God. I recently sat and talked with them about their decision to leave denominationalism and be simple New Testament Christians.

ADAMS: Let's talk dollars and cents. How much did it cost you financially to become Christians? Arthur: That's really hard to say. I would estimate that the money Debe and I were bringing in from our musical contracts with area churches ran approximately \$15,000 per year.

ADAMS: That's a lot of money for part-time work ... Arthur: You bet it is. It paid the rent! The Jewish High Holy Days and the denominational seasons of Christmas and Easter were especially lucrative. ADAMS: You mean that regardless of your own religious affiliation you would be hired by a synagogue or a Catholic church? You weren't Jewish nor Catholic? Arthur: It didn't matter. The most important thing was to just give a good performance. ADAMS: So why did you give it up? Debe: In a word—it was sinful. We were able to see from the Scriptures that there is only one true church of Jesus Christ and thus our participation in all of these denominations was wrong. We had no choice if we wanted to go to heaven.

ADAMS: Any regrets?

Arthur: No. There will always be some nostalgia involved, but as the apostle Paul said, "*Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead...*" that's what it's all about.

ADAMS: Debe, how did you learn the truth? Debe: In addition to my weekend work with the *Annunciation Catholic Church* in Washington, I worked full-time in a local music store. There was a Christian co-worker my age who would eat lunch with me every day. I was full of questions about religion and confused in general and so each day we would eat and talk. She would always answer my questions by going to the Bible and, at the same time, she kept inviting me to go to church services with her.

ADAMS: Did you go?

Debe: Not at first, but finally I did. As I look back I'm not sure why I went except for the fact that she was always kind and calm in talking with me. And ... if she didn't know the answer to a question she would simply say so; and on the following day she would have the Bible answer. Her gentle persistence paid off. And the fact that she really knew the Bible impressed me. Most religious people I ever knew had little knowledge about the Bible. But she was different. She seemed to really have things together in her life and seemed sincerely interested in me.

ADAMS: What would you say to those who don't believe that people are willing to give up anything anymore to be Christians?

Debe: Well, first of all, it's obviously not true. We were willing and I'm sure that there are hundreds more just like us. When your goal is to go to heaven you'll gladly give up anything for it — especially when you consider the other alternative.

ADAMS: Would you say that the churches where you performed sought people mainly through entertainment?

Arthur: The denominational scene is very clear whether talking about Episcopalians, Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Jews or any others Debe and I have performed and/ or directed music for. For most of them — they take an extremely "romantic" approach to worship. The attitude expressed is for everyone to have a "warm" and "uplifting" worship experience., I never heard any kind of definitive Bible preaching/teaching in any of those churches. ADAMS: What was preached?

Arthur: Very often we heard a relatively short sermon on a "relevant" political, social or moral issue. Once Debe heard a sermon on "The World's Greatest Peacemaker" and thought all the time that the minister was making reference to Jesus Christ. He wasn't. He was speaking about Gandhi of India. That kind of sermon was typical. I don't believe that I ever heard a preacher correctly use the word "obedience" in reference to man's responsibility to God's commands. For many people, it was obvious that the music was the main "draw" to the church, because it "enhanced" their religious "experience."

ADAMS: Do you find that it is easier, because of your background, to talk with those still caught up in the denominational world?

Debe: Sure. I understand them, and, at the same time, I feel sorry for them. They need to be taught and led to the truth. I remember that the week after I obeyed the gospel I went to "my Methodist minister" and asked him

point blank: "Why didn't you tell me?"

ADAMS: And his response?

Debe: He said something about higher authorities in the church dictating what he could and couldn't teach. I was floored. It really made me angry. ADAMS: What was the reaction in some of the churches when you quit and told them why? Debe: It was mixed. I remember sitting in a synagogue and hearing the rabbi preach about religious unity (this was just after the Pope had visited a synagogue) and saying that there are so many positive things happening to bring about unity between Jews and Christians. "Unfortunately," he said, "some Christian zealots are always going around and saying that 'this is wrong' and 'that is wrong' and they are always giving SCRIPTURE, SCRIPTURE, SCRIPTURE for everything. The world would be a better place if they were not around." After the services I went to him and told him I was giving serious thought to becoming one of those Christian zealots that he had mentioned. ADAM: And his reaction?

Debe: He was stunned. He said, "You mean you are going, to become a fundamentalist? I said, "No, more than that." He replied, "You mean that you are going to be worse than a fundamentalists?—Don't tell me that you are going to join up with the church of Christ? I smiled

ADAMS: What are your goals in life? Arthur: I would like to one day be qualified to serve as an elder in the Lord's church.

Debe: I would like to be a good Christian wife and mother and become more involved in teaching the smaller children in our Bible class program. ADAMS: Wouldn't some people look at that as a dramatic "comedown" from what you once were? I mean, you used to perform before some of this country's most influential people — and for a lot of money....

Arthur: Sure. But, then again, Debe and I decided we're not living to please anyone else but the Lord. For example, what good did it do me to lead a 26 piece professional orchestra and forty singers in Bach's Christmas Oratorio for the *Chevy Chase United Methodist Church* if what I did displeased God? I got paid a substantial amount of money working there part-time, but I'll tell you — being able to have a clear conscience and being able to point to the Bible and say "this is what I've done and this is what I am"—what can possibly compare with that? Today, I am able to be a song leader in an enthusiastic congregation of God's people and couldn't be happier. And, who knows, maybe what Debe and I have done can serve as a source of encouragement to someone else and motivate them to make some changes in their life. If we could do it, so can they.

Arthur and Debe Neal are faithful members of the Wildercroft church in the Maryland suburb of Washington, D. C. Their address is 102 Hannes St., Silver Spring, MD 20901.

DON'T FORGET TO PRAY!

DIVINE COMMUNIQUES

C. G. "Cotty" Caldwell
Florida College
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PRAISE THE LORD

THE DIVINE MESSAGE: "I WILL EXTOL THEE, MY GOD, O KING; AND I WILL BLESS THY NAME FOREVER AND EVER. EVERY DAY WILL I BLESS THEE AND I WILL PRAISE THY NAME FOREVER AND EVER" (Psalm 145:1-2)

Why Do We Praise The Lord?

The quotation cited above is found toward the end of the Psalms. Actually each of the last six Psalms has "Praising the Lord" as its theme. None contains requests or confessions of sins. Each has written purely to "Praise the Lord."

Psalm 145 outlines WHY the Lord's people praise Him:

- I. Because of His Greatness (vss. 4-6)
 - A. His Being (Godhood) is Great (vs. 3)
 - B. His Works are Great (vs. 4)
 - C. His Honorable Character is Great (vs. 5)
 - D. His Terrible Acts (Judgment) are Great (vs. 6)
- II. Because of His Goodness (vss. 7-10)
 - A. His Goodness is Abundant (vs. 7)
 - B. His Goodness is Kind (vs. 8)
 - C. His Goodness is All-encompassing (vss. 9-10)
- III. Because of His Universal Governance (vss. 11-13)
 - A. His Rule is Glorious (vss. 11-12)
 - B. His Rule is Powerful (vs. 11)
 - C. His Rule is Everlasting (vs. 13)
- IV. Because of His Grace (vss. 14-21)
 - A. God is Gracious to those who Fall (vs. 14)
 - B. God is Gracious to those in Need (vss. 15-17)
 - C. God is Gracious to those who Call (vss. 18-19)
 - D. God is Gracious to those who Love (vss. 20-21)

How Do We Praise The Lord?

As we have seen, our text centers around the WHY of praising the Lord, not the HOW. Much of what we hear today involves *assumption* as to HOW one praises the Lord.

Obviously we ought to praise the lord in Biblical worship (both collective and individual, in public assemblies and in private). Singing and praying as taught by the Christ, the apostles and inspired prophets praises the Lord (Heb. 2:12; Acts 16:25).

We also praise the Lord by sincere "confession to his name" (Heb. 13:15). No one should be ashamed of the Lord. In fact, those who hide their faith from others and

are unwilling to speak concerning the Lord shall not be confessed by Him before Almighty God (Matthew 10:32-33).

Although all of this is true, the Bible teaches that genuine VERBAL praise grows out of RIGHTEOUS CHARACTER AND ACTIVITY. Christ glorified God in His condescension (Luke 2:8-14) and men beheld His glory when they observed WHO and WHAT He was (John:14). The very NATURE and WORK of the church glorifies God (Eph. 3:21). Jesus quoted from a passage in Isaiah which goes on to teach that God is glorified by those who put on the "garment of praise" and become "trees of righteousness" (Isa. 61:3, Luke 3:18-19). Peter called on Christians to "show forth the praises of him who called you" by evidencing that we are an elect nation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a people for God's own possession (1 Pet. 2:9).

"Praising the Lord" is not just saying words as some seem to indicate by their preaching and practice. The writer of Hebrews said, "Let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. 13:15). Jesus said, "Not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). God was not glorified when Nadab and Abihu called for the people to praise God in worship but presumed to do something other than God's stated will (Lev. 10:3). The Jerusalem disciples "praised God" continuing daily with one accord and taking their food with "gladness and singleness of heart" (Acts 2:46-47).

Some Timely Warnings

Some are recommending that men "praise God" by recounting their subjective experiences against those of the charismatics? Do you think that men will, or should, believe that God is with you and not with them based on your experiences? I suggest that we faithfully and devotedly put up the revealed TRUTH in contrast to their experiences and see the power of the Gospel change the lives of men by bringing them to true repentance.

Others indicate that "praising God" is best done in a physically conducive and emotionally satisfying atmosphere. This emotional environment which stirs "nearness to God" is sought by many religious people as evidence of salvation, acceptable worship, and/or personal spirituality. It proves nothing. The great cathedrals and moving ceremonies of Catholicism, Islam, Buddhism, and Mormonism do not validate their false "faiths." Neither do our efforts to create a physically "spiritual" atmosphere (a contradiction of terms) by repeating the words, "Hallelujah," "Praise the Lord," etc. at the end of songs or prayers lead men to Christ or bring about spiritual growth. Those blessings come through studying the word of God, obeying His Son, Jesus Christ, and truly serving Him. It occurs wherever men dedicate themselves to the Lord, not simply where the aesthetic environmental factors are "conductive."

Still others seem to think that praising God is best

done either BY or WITH some exciting, personable figure. The television scandals and the subsequent appeals for the return of an admitted fornicator to the leadership of a movement identified with "praising the lord" is adequate evidence. Glorifying God is accomplished in the most sublime way in the life of the godly woman who gives her two mites, or cooks for the needy, or scrubs the floors and washes clothes of the sick. God does not want our feelings excited by a weeping, emotional preacher who claims to "praise him" while proving himself by his false teaching and inconsistent life to be a "ravener wolf" in "sheep's clothing."

The Lord wants more than anything else to be praised by godly lives (1 Samuel 15:22). Won't you join the faithful in true, inward spiritual praise to the Lord, which expresses itself in humble submission and meaningful, sincere expressions of faith according to God's holy Word?

SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

P. J. Casebolt

P.O. Box 1487
Chiefland, FL 32626



"THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS"

"For who hath despised the day of small things . . ." (Zech. 4:10)? The principle set forth in this question is clarified in v. 6: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." The importance of a work is not determined by the size of the work, the number of workers, the force of the adversary, or humble surroundings.

In order for parents and children to have fond recollections of their relationship, it is not necessary for the child to have a room full of expensive toys, a wardrobe full of the best clothes, arms and necks draped with glittering jewels, a new car by the time they are sixteen, and a wall filled with diplomas from the best universities by the time they are twenty-five. A few families may be able to afford these things, maintain a good relationship, and even remain faithful to the Lord, but it will not be because of these ingredients, but in spite of them. And, it is my judgment that any fond memories retained will not be of great events, but of small ones.

If my memories mean anything, those of my children, and those of others with whom I have talked, "the day of small things" is not past. Further, we must learn to appreciate small things before we can exercise responsible stewardship in larger things (Lk. 16:10-12; Mt. 25:20-23).

The memories most important to me now include taking my little girl to the corner drugstore for an ice

cream cone, carrying her down the street to meet her grandpa coming home from work, or taking her to the local yard where she could watch the steam engines switch cars when "choo-choo" was about the largest word in her vocabulary.

My boys and I remember the time that I took all three of them to Cass, West Virginia, to see and ride on the Scenic Railroad, a trip of several hours on an old logging train up the mountain and back again. By that time, the day was far spent, so we found a camping spot at a nearby rustic campground, slept in the pick-up truck parked hard by a babbling stream, had breakfast together next morning, and the oldest boy and I even played some country music for some other campers.

I have taken my boys with me where I would be preaching in meetings (sometimes for several days), before they were old enough to go to school. One got stung by a honeybee, one got the stomach ache from too much popcorn (urged on by the brother where I stayed), but at least we were together. We did some things together as they grew older, but not nearly enough. And, I know I never spent a lot of money on them, for I didn't have it back then, but they didn't care about that, and don't hold it against me.

A time or two, we were able to save enough money (the children worked and saved for the gasoline), to take a bona fide vacation for a few days. The church was always included in our plans, and determined *where* and *when* we spent the vacation. I do not understand how parents can explain taking their children on vacation, and deliberately leaving out plans to assemble with the Lord's people while they are away. Even if they could explain it to me they would still have to explain it to their children and to the Lord.

Parents, children do not require a lot of this world's goods in order to have fond memories of their childhood. Yes, there will be the usual pressure from other parents and children, but if you give them what they need, and maybe a few small things that they want, they will love you and remember you. If they don't, all the gold in Fort Knox would not make them do it. An old hat or a cardboard box with which to play, a Bible to read, and an example to see, may someday turn into priceless treasures.

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"FOR THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM"

**Norman E. Sewell
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It was Jesus who acted "for the joy set before him", even though there was great cost in what He did. And in a similar fashion there is a joy set before us that should cause us to act. I hope you will take a few minutes to study this with me, and to think not only of the cost of being a Christian, but of the JOY.

The passage referred to in our title is Hebrews 12:(1-2). "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God". What was "the joy that was set before him"? Certainly it was not the cross. Jesus "endured the cross, despising the shame". As you read of those last hours before Jesus was betrayed you find Him in the garden of Gethsemane with the disciples, and going away from them just a little to pray. He told them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me" (Matt. 26:38). And then He went on a little farther and prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39). And this prayer He prayed three times. It seems that Jesus knew what He was to endure on the cross in just a short time. Maybe He even knew of the agony of being beaten as was common at that time; or of the agony of being unable to really draw a good breath while he hung there on the cross; or of being forsaken by the Father into the hands of man so that He might die for the sins of the world. Whatever it was that Jesus knew of the cross and His crucifixion, it was not a joy to Him. But it was something He willingly did because it was the will of the Father.

In fact, there was shame connected with being hung on a cross. Paul wrote of Jesus in the Galatian letter, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13). And Paul wrote of Jesus to the Corinthians, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Jesus was made to be sin, or treated as the sinner would be treated, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him".

What then was "the joy that was set before him"?

Perhaps it was in obeying the Father. Remember Jesus' statements, "nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39); or "my meat is to do the will of Him that sent me" (John 4:34); or "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). Or perhaps it was being "wounded for our transgressions" (Isa. 53:5); bearing "our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24); and washing "us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5). There is no doubt that we could not save ourselves, and that Jesus had to die for us if we were to be forgiven. Surely this was a part of "the joy that was set before him". And, perhaps also part of that joy was to go back to the Father where he is 'set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). Jesus sits there now, ruling over the kingdom, serving as head over all things to the church and acting as our High Priest, our intercessor, our advocate with the Father. And because of this we can "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). Paul tells us in the Philippian letter that after Jesus emptied Himself, or "made himself of no reputation" by coming to earth and obeying even to death that "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). Certainly returning to the Father was a part of "the joy that was set before him".

It is possible that we can use this example of Jesus to help us? Can we also learn to look past the hard times, and the persecution, and the infirmities of life, and look for "the joy" that is set before us? Brethren, why do we sing about HEAVEN, and talk about HEAVEN, and pray about getting ready for HEAVEN? Because this is the "joy" that is set before us. With all of the things of this earth being so temporary, and life being so fast and so quickly gone from us; with frailties and troubles all around us; God holds up before us a picture of eternal life that causes us to "run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1). The word for "patience" here refers to "abiding under", remaining steadfast in trials, endurance to keep on running even though it would be so easy to just quit.

Paul told the Romans, "The "Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:16-17). And Peter wrote that we are begotten unto "a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. 1:3-5). And John wrote of those saved ones who will be with God where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are

passed away" (Rev. 21:4).

There is a "joy" set before us, the joy of eternal life with the Father for ever and ever. And there is a "race" set before us that we must run steadfastly to have that home, that inheritance. And Jesus has already shown the way. He "endured the cross, despising the shame", and He did it "for the joy that was set before him". Brethren, heaven is worth all of the pain and all of the fatigue and all of whatever it may cost for us to inherit it. And we must preach it more, and sing about it more, and hold up Jesus as our example of paying the price, even unto death, "for the joy that was set before him". WILL YOU?

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

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ALAN YEATER, University Church of Christ, 290 Warfield Blvd. Clarksville, TN 37043 — We have enjoyed good growth both spiritually and numerically since coming to work with the University church last October. Six have been baptized into Christ so far this year.

We are asking your help in letting military personnel (Ft. Campbell) and college students (Austin Peay State University) know where we are and for what we stand. Churches that follow a social and institutional gospel are predominant in this area. We need your assistance in alerting prospective or present APSU students of our desire to have them work and worship with us throughout their college tenure. The "Church of Christ Student Center" and the social enticements offered by institutional churches in Clarksville ensnare many young Christians who do not have the spiritual stamina to oppose them. We are committed to, not only opposing such error, but to genuinely caring for each other in the Lord's work. It is imperative that we make contact with these students as soon as possible. We will write them and invite them into our homes as soon as they arrive this fall. We have members of the congregation who serve as faculty and staff members of the university and others who are students. We are tentatively planning a series on evidences for faith for the fall college Bible study. We also have a special series planned on the history and geography of the Bible for Sept. 27 — Oct. 2. We urge parents to come and worship with the student children at least once this fall.

We also have a couple of military families living on base that work and worship with us. We plan to begin advertising in the Ft. Campbell paper in the near future. If you know of personnel assigned to this base please send us the necessary information in order to contact them.

NORMANE FULTZ, Rt. 29, Box 37, Kansas City, MO 64166 (816-792-2040) — June first was the beginning of our second year with the Nashua church in Kansas City. Commuting the forty-two miles from Raymore for several months while building our house gave me a renewed appreciation of men who drive several miles each Lord's day

to preach the gospel someplace. It got "old" quickly. We moved in March. The work is pleasant. The people are grand. There is a desire on the part of most to see something worthwhile accomplished in the Lord's work. We have begun assisting in the support to two men elsewhere in addition to some "one time" help to two or three others. We plan to begin an article in a local paper. We receive STS in bundles for the members. So far this year we have had Mike O'Neal, who formerly worked with the church for five years, return for a week's meeting, and have just concluded a six-lesson series on Humanism with Ward E. Ellsworth of Issaquah, Washington. I strongly encourage brethren to contact Ward regarding his lessons on The Family, Humanism and Creation-Evolution. His lessons pack a punch. Peter Wilson is to be with us in September with a series on Discipleship. I have enjoyed meetings this spring with churches in Bradley, IL and Eldorado, KS. Anyone moving to or visiting in the Northland area of Kansas City, come visit with us. Our meeting place is at 11425 N. Main near the north loop of I-435 and about eight miles from KCI airport.

A TRIBUTE TO GLENNA MARIE MANCHESTER

MONTE F. MANCHESTER, 316 East Main, Paragould, AR 72450 — After two years and seven months of happiness, my beloved wife Glenna Marie, passed from this life on June 9 in the Baptist Hospital in Memphis, TN after a valiant battle with leukemia which lasted thirty-six days in the hospital.

A good sister in Christ suggested to Glenna that she take a correspondence course in the gospel of Christ. This she did and then started attending Oak Grove Heights church of Christ where I was preaching. I asked if we could have a cottage Bible study with her. She consented and after four Bible studies she came forward and I baptized her into Christ Jesus our Lord. This was in October, 1984. We were married November 7, 1984. God never made a more wonderful wife and help meet than she. She was faithful unto death and died

in the Lord and I know she is much better off. But, Oh, her passing has left me so lonely! Her first husband, Lester Horton, to whom she was married for 52 years had preceded her in death.

The sister who asked her about the correspondence course said that Glenna said "I have never been satisfied with the religious group I am with, and the members of the church of Christ have been so wonderful to me, I will be glad to take the Bible study course." Brothers and sisters in Christ, does this not tell us something? I ask for the prayers of saints everywhere.

FRANK INGRAM, 9660 37th St., N. Pinellas Park, FL 34666 — I have been preaching for the MacDill Ave. church for almost a year now and am enjoying the work. For those who have asked about my health, a year ago I found I had a malignancy of the bone marrow. I have blood tests twice a month and chemotherapy once a month for four days in a row. A small amount of progress has been made but I am thankful for any amount. I thank so many of you for your calls, cards and prayers. I hope I may be of service in gospel meetings. May God continue to bless Connie Adams and his staff for the fine work they are doing. If you have anyone in our area we can contact, please let us know. My phone number is (813) 578-1013.

LARRY R. DEVORE, P.O. Box 313, Medina, OH 44258 — It is not often that one gets a second chance to do what he really wants to do. I was a full-time gospel preacher for 14 years. When Wayne Walker decided to move to Dayton, Ohio to work with the Haynes St. church, the brethren in Medina asked me to work with them as a gospel preacher. Brother Walker did a good work in Medina and it is a pleasure to follow him. One was baptized recently and another confessed sins. We are having about 50 in attendance on Sunday mornings. At present I am still in need of about \$400 in monthly support. If you cannot help that way, please remember us in your prayers. The church in Medina was able to purchase property upon which to erect a meetinghouse. It is just south of the city limits. The church has sold the old lot which was unsuitable for building. We hope to have a modest building by the end of 1987.

FROM ABROAD

STAFANO CORAZZA reports two more baptisms in the work at Udine, Italy. Other reports from that country indicate much hard work and encouraging results. By the time you read this issue of STS, Harold Fite and James Yates from the Fry Road church in Katy, Texas will be there to visit and encourage the brethren.

CARLOS CAPELLI of Buenos Aires, Argentina reports a good trip for preaching in Venezuela. At Guanapa where there are 35 members, six were baptized in the meeting, and two others before he arrived. Attendance was about 60 each night. At Maracaibo three were baptized. Back in Mendoza, Argentina one was baptized in Las Heras. Local brethren at the Jose C. Paz congregation preached while he was gone.

ACOUSTICS

GAILEN E. EVANS, 2118 Airedale Ave., Ventura, CA 83003 — I read with interest the article by P. J. Casebolt in the June issue. We have helped two congregations in southern California solve the problem of lowered ceilings and acoustical tiles in the past six months. When I preached at Southside in Greenville, TX, we built a new building and the architect called for metal faced tiles in the ceiling grid. I was skeptical about the acoustics and took a "wait-to-see" attitude. When the building was complete, the only problem we had was that there was a little TOO MUCH echo in some spots. So when the church in San Bernardino, CA was trying to solve their acoustically dead auditorium problem, I suggested that they install metal faced ceiling tiles. Now the only problem they have is getting used to hearing the singing! Likewise, another congregation in the Los Angeles area in planning to replace their old tiles with the metal face tiles.

The availability of these tiles may vary from state to state, but we have used those made by United States Gypsum, order number 56082. The description is "2' x 4' Nonperf Metal Faced Tiles" and they come 8 tiles to a package. They are NOT CHEAP! But if acoustical tiles are hurting the worship in a congregation, the price is worth it! I am a preacher and not in the business of selling these or any other brand of tiles, but thought it might be helpful to others to know what has

worked in my experience.

PREACHERS NEEDED

HOPE, ARKANSAS — The church in Hope is interested in locating a preacher for full time work. We have about 40 in attendance and can provide full support for about the first 18 months. If interested, send resume, with references to: Church of Christ, Rt. 1, Box 361-A, Hope, AR 71801

MIDDLETOWN, INDIANA — The church which meets at 1050 Locust St. needs a gospel preacher immediately. The church is not self-supporting but can assist in locating support for the right man. The church numbers in the 20's and is at peace. Perhaps an older, more experienced man would best meet our needs, although younger men would be considered. The last preacher stayed with us for five years. If interested contact Harley P. Franklin, Rt. 1, Box 140, Daleville, IN 47334; or Mike Scott, P.O. Box 53, Middletown, IN 47356; or C. Brown, 275 N. 6th St., Middletown.

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

A DIFFERENT KIND OF TRAVEL

Since back surgery in late March, I have gone to all meetings lying in the back seat of the car, with my good wife, Bobby, as chauffeur. With back flat and knees propped up, I have seen a part of the landscape and been intrigued by cloud formations (something I had not done much of since a boy), except when reading. We listen to tapes of sermons, classes, hymn singing (and sing along) and other music we enjoy hearing. About every other rest stop, we get out and walk for 5-10 minutes. This adds an extra hour or more to a day's travel time but also makes it seem less hurried. In this manner we have just completed a 7,443 mile trip to California, Oregon and back, for gospel meetings. We made it fine and I was able to preach at each appointed time. I was able to drive for short periods to give Bobby some relief. We were just thankful we could go. You can do many things you did not think you could once you decide that is how it has to be done, if it is done at all.

FROM THE REDWOOD FOREST

On our way to Oregon for meetings in Albany and Beaverton, we drove through the Redwood Forest on the upper coast of California. We walked a nature trail through a grove of giant redwoods. Amid those imposing giants, it was silent enough to almost hear your heart beat. Occasional patches of sunlight filtered through to reflect on wild ferns and rhododendrons. Now and then there was a bench where you could pause to listen, look and think. And I thought of the lyrics to a hymn we love:

"This is my Father's world
And To My listening ears
All nature sings and 'round us rings
The music of the spheres."

ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIGION

Evolutionists have a fit when it is even whispered that the divine creation just might be considered as an alternative in the origin of things. Public schools are funded by tax money and it is argued that such reference to divine creation would constitute an establishment of religion. And yet, you can visit many national parks and receive heavy doses of the philosophy of evolution in printed logos or in the speeches of naturalists. There you stand in the awesome splendor of scenes which speak eloquently of his "divine power and Godhood" and it cannot, dare not, be mentioned. Evolution is a philosophy of origins which is not demonstrable. But our government funds it not only in public schools but, of all places, in scenic wonders in national parks where the handiwork of God is most clearly evident.

INVESTIGATE

We carry announcements (as a public service) to churches needing preachers and sometimes for preachers who wish to relocate. We are not in the preacher placement business. It is impossible to know about every congregation which advertises for a preacher, or every preacher who declares himself available. We urge both churches and preachers to carefully search out information which would help to form a proper judgment. We notice more and more churches request that preachers submit a "resume." I know that is standard practice in the business

world but something about it rankles me in the spiritual world. It borders dangerously close to violating the principle "let another praise thee, and not thyself." and the statement of Paul about "measuring ourselves by ourselves." Why not just give people references of those who know you and your work and then let that be considered. We must not promote a professional concept among or about preachers nor in any way encourage faithful men to be viewed as competitors for a job.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	356
RESTORATIONS	191
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XXVIII

OCTOBER, 1987

10

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



WHAT IS HADES?

The word "hades" means "unseen" and refers to the abode of the dead. It means "the realm of disembodied spirits," or the "unseen world." There is no inherent idea of punishment in this term itself, even though the wicked are tormented in hades (Luke 16:22-24). It describes the realm where all the spirits abide between death and the resurrection. The word is translated in the King James Version by the word "hell" (Luke 16:23; Acts 2:27), which may not be clear in our present day use of the word. As we use the word it usually connotes the eternal abode of the wicked after the judgment.

To properly understand the term "hades," it must be observed that there are three entirely different states of the human spirit distinct from each other:

The first is union with a physical body. This state is life on earth which terminates in physical death.

The second state is that in which the human spirit is separated from its physical body. This begins at death and ends with the resurrection of the body. Hades is emptied of all its inhabitants at the resurrection (Revelation 20:13).

The third state commences with the reunion of the spirit and the resurrected spiritual body, and continues for ever (1 Corinthians 15:44). Hades will be destroyed when the third state begins (Revelation 20:14). Christ now has power over death and hades and will abolish them at his second coming (Revelation 1:18).

The Spirit Of Christ Went To Hades

When Jesus died he went to hell (hades) (Acts 2:27,

31). Are we to suppose that Jesus was tormented in hades? Certainly not! He told the thief, with whom he was crucified, that he was going to "paradise," which is a transliterated word meaning "a garden," or "a place of pleasure or comfort" (Luke 23:43).

When Christ went to *hades* (Acts 2:27), he also went into the hands of God, who is in heaven. Just after telling the thief that he would be with him in paradise that day, he said to his Father, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," and he died (Luke 23:46). His spirit went to paradise in hades (Luke 23:43), but he did not go to heaven that day (John 20:14).

Jesus said, "... upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). This is hades, the unseen realm. Peter quotes the prophecy of David concerning the resurrection of Christ that his soul was not left in *hell* (*hades*), nor was his body left in the grave (Acts 2:27 KJV).

"Gehenna"

The Greek word "gehenna" is translated "hell" in the KJV and refers to the place of eternal punishment. It is described as the "lake that burns with fire and brimstone" and "the second death" (Matthew 10:28; 25:41; Mark 9:43,48; Revelation 20:10, 14, 15). This word always refers to eternal punishment. It is not the place where Jesus went at his death (Acts 2:27). The KJV uses the English "hell" to translate both "gehenna" and "hades." The ASV makes a difference in translating the two words, as "hell" and "hades."

"Tartarus"

The Greek word "tartarus" is also translated "hell" in the KJV. It means a place of punishment (II Peter 2:4), and refers to that part of hades where the wicked are held in the intermediate state.

Two Places in Hades

Jesus revealed some facts about the unseen abode of the spirits of the dead in Luke 16:19-31. To call this a parable does not destroy the truth Jesus taught. It teaches that the spirit survives the body and is conscious in hades. He describes two men who died. One was named Lazarus and the other was simply called a rich man. Jesus said Lazarus died and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. Nothing is said about his body,

but it is certain that somewhere it was buried and began to return to the dust from which it came. His spirit went to *hades*. The rich man also died. His body is said to have been buried; it went to the grave. His spirit also went to *hades*, and he found himself in torments. Both of these men were in *hades*, but they were in different states, described by different terms; there was a "great gulf fixed" so that one could not go from one place to the other. The place in *hades* where Lazarus was is called "Abraham's bosom," a place of comfort. The place in *hades* where the rich man was is called "tartarus," a place of torments (2Peter 2:4). The rich man was not in the place of eternal punishment because the word used to describe that place is "gehenna," the final abode of the unrighteous and workers of iniquity.

The righteous who die in the Lord are at rest (Revelation 14:13), and the wicked who die enter torments to await the resurrection from the dead and the judgment (Luke 16:19-31). When Christ comes again all the dead will be raised, some to the resurrection of damnation and some to the resurrection of life (John 5:28,29). After the judgment, which immediately follows the resurrection at the last day, the wicked will be cast into "gehenna," which is the final punishment. This punishment is outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 25:30), the everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord (2 Thessalonians 1:9), hell fire which is never quenched (Mark 9:44, 45), and the place of torment with fire and brimstone (Revelation 14:10, 11).

Guy N. Woods said in his booklet, "Where Are The Dead?" (pages 14,15), that an ingenious theory was developed by brother F. G. Allen in "Old Paths Guide," and later in his sermon on "The State Of The Dead," in the "Old Paths Pulpit" in which he advanced the idea that at the cross Christ abolished the compartment in *hades* designated "Abraham's bosom," and moved it to heaven. From that time all the faithful pass immediately into heaven at death. Others have argued that the intermediate state was abolished and the righteous go directly to heaven and the wicked go to the final and eternal "gehenna." But this theory is proved wrong by Peter's statement on the day of Pentecost, just ten days after the ascension of Christ to heaven. In showing the fulfillment of David's prophecy of the resurrection of Christ, he said: "For David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:34). Neither the body nor spirit of David had ascended into the heavens at the time Peter spoke by the Holy Spirit, and that was AFTER the cross and the ascension of Christ into heaven.

This theory reduces the judgment to a needless event. If all now go to their eternal abode at death, why would they have to be brought out of heaven and *gehenna* in the resurrection to be judged and then returned back to the place from which they were taken? The day of judgment is a day when the dead must give an account of their lives, and it is a day when the Lord sentences all to their eternal destiny in their resurrected bodies (Matthew 25:31-46).

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NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS

Romans 12 begins the practical section of the great epistle on justification by faith. Here the outworkings of a justified life are clearly set forth. In our bodies we offer a living sacrifice both actual and spiritual. We are not now to be conformed to the mold of this world, but, rather, transformed by the renewing of the mind which longs to please God in all things. The religion of Christ changes us from the inside.

But this inner renewing of the mind manifests itself by outward function as we each make use of the differing gifts for service. All of us do not have the same office in the kingdom. We cannot all do the same things and that is a blessing. The "gifts" differing one from another in this passage cover both miraculous and non-miraculous functions. Some have to do with public activity while others concern personal character reflected in relations between Christians (such as "in honor preferring one another"). All of these elements of service are to be rendered with "diligence" (vv. 8,11).

"Not slothful in business" (KJV) is rendered "not lagging in diligence" (NKJV) in verse 11. "Slothful" suggests indolence, laziness or a lack of care. Solomon wrote "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man of void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man" (Prov. 24:30-34). What an apt description of the slothful farmer.

The Hebrew writer contrasts diligence with slothfulness. "And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb. 6:11-12).

The opposite of slothfulness, or lack of diligence, is "fervent in spirit." The word "fervent" suggests intensity of feeling, passion, that which boils with heat. It is to our "spirit" that God directed his revelation. It is in this "spirit" that we hold communion with God. The renewed mind takes delight in the things of God. His spirit is stirred and his service is rendered with great feeling. His service is to the Lord. It must not be apathetically

performed; but with zeal. The key to acceptable service is a proper respect for the Almighty. This is true whether we are speaking of public devotion expressed in corporate worship, or in the everyday use of our abilities in the varied relations of life. We are the Lord's. What we do is seen by him. This principle has many applications. Consider the following three areas.

Daily Work

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccle. 9:10). The servant in New Testament times was to perform "not with eye-service, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (Eph. 6:5-7). Laziness in the work place is a scourge to society. Do it right, the first time. Whether you work in a factory and manufacture a product, or in an office where you program computers or clear important papers through proper channels, please do it right. Practice the golden rule. Don't be "lagging in diligence."

Family Life

Husbands are to "love their wives" "as Christ also loved the church" and wives are to see that they "revere their husbands" (Eph. 5:22-33). A man is to "provide for his own" (1 Tim. 5:8) and a woman is to "guide the house" (1 Tim. 5:14). Laziness on either part places undue strain upon a family. The renewed mind attuned to divine wisdom has a passion for rendering the best service possible, first of all, because that is well pleasing to God. But that impacts upon human relationships. When God is pleased, all of life is better for us. The husband who shows no fervency of spirit in dealing with his wife, or the unconcerned wife toward her husband are both endangering the happiness and stability of their marriage. God is not served, nor our own best interests, when such slothfulness appears.

In the Congregation

I have been to places for meetings where the grass was knee deep around the meetinghouse, paint was peeling off the doors, window frames and the overhang. The tract rack was either bare or cluttered with items yellow with age. The building needed cleaning. No advertisement of the meeting had been done. People would come at the last five minutes and people waited in the parking lot for someone with a key to open the door. I have seen the service started late while the song leader (who did not know he was to lead until he arrived) sat on the front row and thumbed through the book to select his songs. I have seen ill-prepared announcements, scriptures read indistinctly (or incorrectly), and heard sermons which were poorly prepared or else presented with no apparent zeal. I have seen song leaders which never thought of checking to see if there were songs which might enhance the subject matter. I have announced at places all week that I would speak on "Heaven" the last night of a meeting and had no songs at all sung on that subject unless I made it a point to specifically request certain songs. I have seen the Lord's Supper administered so haphazardly that it required supreme effort to concentrate on the meaning of this observance.

At times I have tried to point out a few things to help.

Sometimes it has been received with appreciation and other times with resentment. That may well be my own fault because of the manner in which it was done. I have been lectured on the evils of trying to artificially induce a spiritual atmosphere, a thing which I despise and oppose as firmly as any man could. Worship is not to be induced by turning down lights, holding hands, clapping hands, stained glass windows and elaborately designed pageantry (or for that matter, pageantry of any sort). Scriptural worship is "in spirit and in truth" (Jno. 4:23-24). But if it is scriptural to have a meeting place, it is right to make it presentable. If it is scriptural to have Bible classes, it is right for teachers to be as well prepared as possible and for students to come prepared and it is right to provide a decent environment in which to learn. If it is right to make announcements, it is right to make them as interesting as possible and to do the best we can with them. If it is right to sing, it is right to learn how to do the best we can, whether we lead or sit in the pew and follow. If it is right to pray, it is right to learn how best to do it. If it is right to preach, it is right to learn the basics of language communication, how to organize and most effectively present what we have to say. All of this must be done with fervency of spirit and not with a sluggish, unconcerned, muddle-through-it, get-it-over-with attitude. Do I dare mention the application of this principle to so-called "business meetings"?

Some ordinary training classes could correct much of this, provided those who need the instruction will take advantage of the opportunity to grow. If brethren decide they already know everything and have no room for improvement, then such an effort is wasted on them. These stand in need of the instruction of Romans 12:3 "not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly . . ."

Brethren, don't lag in diligence. Turn up the burner and serve the Lord.

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ABUSED PARENTS

Abused children.

Like the idolatrous nations of old, we are continually becoming a society "without natural affection."

Police were summoned to a sleazy street in one large southern city. The report was that a mother was trying to sell her little girl. I mean she was selling her daughter's body to the perverted men who would desire that kind of shameful encounter.

When the police arrived and arrested the mother, they found the little girl, about six years old, crouched and crying in an alley.

I wonder if anything worse could have possibly occurred in Sodom and Gomorrah?

On the other side of the coin, there are abused parents too. They are grown, and have enough meanness themselves that we generally feel, subconsciously at least, that they may deserve a little abuse.

But I'm not thinking of the kind of abuse that leaves black eyes, broken noses, and visible scars.

And I am not speaking of parents who may "have it coming." I'm thinking of good parents who have loved their children and laid themselves out for them, only to be walked on. Its the good parents who get abused. The bad ones don't care anyway.

The little kids who pout, and scream, and run wild at church and the grocery store, are one thing. Some of that is usually part of being little kids. Discipline, patience, and love are required, and good parents try to give all of it in correct proportions.

Then a certain amount of friction and tension can generally be expected as the children reach adolescence. I read somewhere that God in His grace gives us our children for twelve years to learn to love them before He turns them into teenagers.

It's in those years that good parents try to keep kids from sampling liquor, dope, and sex because they know these things are wrong, and they only lead to trouble.

And its during these years that many good parents take it on the chin.

The old tired cliches are trotted out for some fresh exercise: "Everyone's doing it;" "You're too hard and old fashioned;" "You won't let me do anything;" "You don't understand."

Abused parents lie awake at night listening for that boy or girl who's late getting in. They get calls from well-intentioned folks who inform them that their child was drinking last night, or smoking dope, or sleeping with

somebody.

They will usually try to handle the situation, and as likely as not, will handle it poorly. After all they feel that they've already been whipped. They really don't know how to approach their sons and daughters about these matters. They are shocked and hurt.

Abused parents can't win. If they try to show trust in their children, they are a laughingstock and don't know what's going on. If they do not trust them, they are verbally horsewhipped for that.

Both parents and children need to understand that trust must be earned. And when a trust is violated, it takes some time for it to be earned back.

Teenagers, even those in the upper teen-aged years, are still children in many ways. They may think they are grown, but they are not. They should not be treated like babies. But then they mustn't treat their parents like children.

The parents are not there for the sole purpose of seeing to it that teens get what they want.

All my children are not grown, so I don't have all the answers yet. One thing that has become more evident, however, as I've tried to hold on to the reins of childrearing over terrain that has sometimes become very rough:

Start early.

"He that spareth the rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Prov. 13:24). The Hebrew word translated in the KJV, "betimes" originally meant "dawn," "early morning." It evolved into the meaning of pursuing something at an early age. Corrective, loving discipline must begin early. Instruction must begin early.

Rebellion may still develop, but chances are greatly improved that the child will one day return to the righteous principles that were taught him.

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Prov. 22:15). "Foolishness" in the Proverbs is not light-hearted fun, but rebellion, immorality, and hatred of wise instruction.

Start early to administer fair and loving discipline and instruction.

One man told of a sign that he saw in an office: **"What will you wish you had done ten years from now? Do it now?"**

Yes, parental abuse should be added to the list.

But God's word has a simple answer to a complex problem for those who will give heed. It's not only a simple answer, it's a correct answer:

"Children, obey you parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged" (Col. 3:20, 21).

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SINCERE WORDS

The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Ecc. 12:10)."

Dick Blackford

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"AMEN"

The Greek word translated Amen (Ameen) appears 188 times in the New Testament and Septuagint. It is translated "verily" 120 times. A word that was found on the lips of our Lord and which appears 188 times in His inspired word is worthy of our study. Especially is this so when the meaning of the word is being perverted and men are substituting hand-clapping for it. Definition

Vine's Expository Dictionary points out that when it is used as a reference to God it means that "God is faithful." When used in reference to his precepts, promises, and warnings it means "sure." When the word is uttered by God it means "it is and shall be so." And when used by men it means "so let it be" (Vine, p. 53).

When a man says Amen he is adopting as his own that which has been said. The word is never used in a light or frivolous manner and always carries a solemnity with it. It is limited to the religious atmosphere. It is an expression of faith that God holds the thing true, or will or can make it true (Hastings Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 80-81).

As with many Bible words and concepts, liberal trends are having their effect upon this word. The usage and definition of Amen are in a state of evolution and are not being used entirely as they were in the New Testament. This usually happens to Bible words and concepts when men do not have the proper respect for the original. Look at the "evolution" of such words as baptism, Christian, fellowship, saint, etc.

Some Instances Where Amen Is Used

1. When a curse was pronounced by the priest upon a women guilty of adultery under the law of jealousies she was to respond by saying "Amen, Amen" (Num. 5:11-31).
2. Moses pronounced twelve curses upon the tribes of Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. After each curse Israel was commanded by God to respond "Amen" (Deut. 27:15-26).
3. When Ezra read and explained the law and blessed the Lord, all the people answered "Amen, Amen" (Neh. 8:1-6).
4. Nehemiah rebuked the ones who imposed usury on the people and made them restore what they had taken. All the congregation said "Amen" (Neh. 5).
5. "Amen" was used when a profound spiritual statement was uttered (Mt. 28:20; Rom. 1:25).
6. It was common for others to say Amen at the close of a prayer to express "let it be so" (1 Cor. 14:16).
7. Amen was expressed by one to confirm his own prayers and thanksgiving (Mt. 6:13; 1 Kgs. 1:36).
8. It was frequently used by New Testament writers at the

conclusion of the books and letters they wrote.

There is no indication that Amen was used as a filler or to punctuate one's sermon. Nor was a sentence interrupted in order to say Amen. (This writer heard a Pentecostal preacher say Amen 23 times within one minute on his radio program. For the whole broadcast it numbered in the hundreds). Such usage does not edify and is not doing things decently and in order.

There is no record where Amen was used in a secular (non-religious) way. It is a word which belongs to the spiritual realm. Nor is there any record where a preacher's sermon was interrupted with frequent Amens from the audience.

Is Clapping The Hands The Same As Saying Amen?

A practice which has been prevalent in denominations has found its way into religious services of brethren. This is the practice of applauding after a sermon or lecture on a religious topic. This writer first heard it at the Freed-Hardeman College lectures in 1977. He heard it most recently at the 1987 Florida College lectures. A small group of people (this writer does not know who they were or whether they were brethren) applauded on two different occasions following lessons in which the Bible was taught.

To most Christians, clapping belongs in the secular realm and is associated with sports and entertainment. There is good reason for this since clapping (applause) is never mentioned in the New Testament. Young's Analytical Concordance records seven references in the Old Testament of people clapping. One time it was commanded (Ps. 47:1).

If clapping is another way of saying Amen it is difficult to imagine the woman applauding when a curse was pronounced upon her for committing adultery. She was commanded to say "Amen, Amen" (Num. 5). Could Israel have acceptably applauded when the 12 curses were pronounced on the six tribes? Since God commanded them to say Amen, would he have been just as pleased if they had clapped their hands? (Deut. 27). Would it be acceptable for us to close our prayers with a round of applause (1 Cor. 14:16)? Would it have been appropriate for the New Testament writers to have clapped their hands at the conclusion of their books and epistles instead of saying Amen?

Booing And Hissing?

If one may applaud a sermon to show approval (as one may show approval in this manner at a ball-game), then why could not one equally boo or hiss to show disapproval if he disagrees? One seems just as appropriate as the other. In a matter of time our services would be filled with applause, wolf whistles, cat calls, boos, and hisses. The right for one is the right for the others. If the silence of the New Testament authorizes applause then it also authorizes the boos, hisses, and jeers. Is this really what we want? Has worship become so casual to us that there is no difference in our behavior (and degree of solemnity) at worship or at a sports event?

Since the New Testament is silent about applauding and nothing is said to indicate that clapping is an acceptable substitute for saying Amen, and since it is

also silent about booing and hissing (etc.), we believe we have concluded rightly that God does not approve of either practice in worship or in a religious context.

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DEPENDING ON OTHERS?

The message of the King: "But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbor. For each man shall bear his own burden" (Galatians 6: 4-5).

No doubt most of you have observed with interest the development of what is now being called the "Boston/Crossroads" movement. I must confess to mixed "emotions." I am grateful that many are being baptized into Christ (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). I also appreciate the enthusiastic effort expended to help babes in Christ to grow and maintain spiritual zeal (Eph. 4:11-16). Believing, however, that "the end does not justify the means" (Rom. 6:1), I see some basic errors in the activities of these churches:

1) Many personal decisions regarding manner of life, spiritual activity, and use of time are restricted or denied. Nonconformity in matters of individual choice is met with strong displeasure and/or congregational discipline. (Study carefully principles set forth in Romans 14; 1 Cor. 8; and 1 Cor. 10:23-33 in this regard applying them to matters of judgment and avoiding common misapplications in matters of Divine Truth).

2) A pyramid-type organizational structure is conceptualized and activated in which each member (particularly the new convert) is supervised by a "discipler," who reports to a "group leader," who reports to the two or three elders over all Christians in a city.

3) Spiritual leaders other than elders are appointed to watch for the souls of entire groups of Christians in "house churches" (or other definable collections of persons within the total congregation). It is not claimed that these "leaders" have the characteristics required of elders (see 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9). If the collectivities are "house churches" (plural), this organizational form is unscriptural because it employs "one-man" oversight by an unqualified shepherd (see Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; Titus 1:5).

4) The "house church" concept is in fact a sponsoring-church arrangement with the "city" elders supervising all aspects of the work and worship of many congregations. Pay close attention: either these are "house churches" (plural) or one "city church" (singular). **They cannot be both.**

5) An atmosphere is created (intentionally or unintentionally) in which other churches of Christ are judged by comparing their outward activity, physical evidence of enthusiasm, number of converts, etc., etc., with that of a "Boston/Crossroads" congregation.

There is something else which I believe to be terribly wrong about the movement. It is difficult to articulate. It will certainly be denied. It is, nonetheless, substantive and it is as true as death or taxes:

6) There is a false dependency developed which deters many converts from a truly spiritual relationship with God and promotes a need for social relationship and human management of personal religious activity.

I realize that the **motives** of those involved is a full 180 degrees from what actually occurs. The Leaders and zealous members preach that all should be "totally committed to Christ." The encouragement to consult with a preacher, group leader, or elder on every kind of personal decision and problem, produces a very different result, however. Please let me illustrate how good goals often get turned around:

A woman marries, bears children, and "totally commits" herself to her family. She joins the PTA and becomes president. She takes the children to Little League or softball and volunteers to organize the mothers. None of this is wrong by itself. Soon because of financial needs, she takes a part-time job. she joins a women's club, a volunteer community drive, and a health club, all because she wants to be as good a wife and mother as she can be. She drives the children to music lessons and takes lessons herself. Her life has become "exciting" and meaningful, but she has reached a point at which the house is not cleaned, the meals are not cooked, the clothes are constantly "piled up," and she has begun to neglect the real needs of her husband and children. **She has distorted her real "mission" even though she consciously rationalizes her activity in terms of "commitment" to the family.**

Now look at another case in which lofty ambitions get lost. A church wants desperately to fulfill its responsibility in the saving of souls. It decides that conversion and "discipling" is best accomplished by appealing to the human needs of lost sinners. When one is converted, he is assigned a partner (other than Christ) to supervise his study and prayer. The church plans activities almost every night and diligently encourages the babe in Christ to attend them all. He is monitored constantly with regard to study sessions, divisional group meetings, prayer sessions, new convert classes, personal work group meetings, social get-togethers, and worship services. He is also made to feel guilty (consciously or unconsciously on the part of the elders, partner, or fellow-Christian) if he for whatever reason does not attend any of these without "good reason," fails to bring others on a regular basis, or is not directly responsible for the conversion of another in what others consider to be reasonable time. The Christian's personal activity is brought under the direction of the church or the assigned partner.

Many of these activities can be justified singly as

efforts to assist a new convert, but collectively they sometimes have the disciple following human beings rather than Christ and forsaking other God-given responsibilities. The Lord taught us to "bear one another's burdens" but he also insisted that "every man must bear his own burden." Calling attention to this should not be construed as suggesting that we care less about new Christians. Nor does it mean that most of us encourage spiritual newborns as fully as we should. The issue involves, however, zealous church organizers who naively fail to understand that the religion of Christ is intensely personal and is regulated by Christ's spiritual and moral influence in the everyday choices of his children (see Luke 9:23; 17:20-21). The misdirection of which I speak usually results, in my view, from a "social gospel" approach in which worldly human measurements of "Christianity" are substituted for Biblical spirituality (see John 18:36).

The thinking of brethren regarding the church's collective role in people's individual lives is terribly significant. It is also easy for an enthusiastic group, moved by an enthusiastic preacher, to decide that it needs a new image, a "relevant" message to reach the lost, specially designed programs for today's psychological and social needs, and/or an exciting, emotional atmosphere in which to work and worship. I would not like to see energetic, sincere gospel preachers, elders, and brethren among us duped into allowing that to happen. Such would not be healthy and it would not be Scriptural. It would forget the power of the gospel in the personal life of the Christian. Although some aspects of this problem are different and motives in many are not the same, it would do us all good to study again Jesus' judgment of Jewish zealots who did not understand the true nature of spiritual service to God (Matt. 23:1-15).

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THE CALL TO HOLINESS

The Charismatic movement developed from the early Methodist emphasis on holiness or sanctification. John Wesley connected holiness with perfection and taught that it comes by a "second work of grace" that follows justification. The Holiness movement in particular associated this work of grace with a miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But while the Holiness stress this gift as the means to perfection, Charismatics tend to stress it as an end within itself, expressed in continual miracles and emotional displays as evidence of holiness.

Holiness, the Proper Goal. The key idea of "holiness" in the Scriptures is separation from sin. "Holy" designates the uniqueness of God as absolute in purity, majesty, and glory. In reference to people, it describes the holy state to which they are called by the gospel (1 Thes. 4:7). One who answers the call commits himself to a holy life. He seeks to cleanse himself from "all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). This is required of God's children because of the nature of God. "But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:15,16).

Christians have separated themselves from the world in order to consecrate themselves to God. They are "a holy temple" (1 Cor. 3:17), "a holy priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:5), and "holy brethren" (Heb. 3:1). Yet they do not become holy apart from the grace of God (Eph. 2:8). But when one plants his feet on the solid rock of God's word and turns his face toward heaven, repenting and confessing his sins, the blood of Christ makes him whole through divine forgiveness (1 John 1:5-10). Therefore, the Christian is one whose life is ordered by God. He walks with Him now by faith and purifies himself in hope of being like Him when he sees Him as He is (1 John 3:1,2).

Christianity without holiness has no eternal purpose. Christ gave Himself to sanctify and cleanse the church that "it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). We are made free of past sin in obeying the gospel (Rom. 6: 15-18 and we live holy lives by remaining faithful to the Lord (Rev. 2:10). Paul summarizes the Christian's life in saying, "But now having been made free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Rom. 6:22). Without holiness "no one will see God" (Heb. 12:14).

Miraculous Indwelling Not the Means. All

"Christian" denominations, sects, and groups emphasize holiness. This is proper, but the question is: How are people made holy? Catholics make no sharp division between justification and sanctification but claim the power to both rests with the church and is channeled through the sacraments it administers. Nor did the Protestant Reformers make such a distinction, tending to interpret the holy life as an aspect of justification. But Wesley developed the doctrine that holiness comes by "a second blessing" through an intimate union with the Holy Spirit and a life filled with a horror of sin and love for others. The Pentecostals stress the idea that holiness is derived from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Charismatics hold the same view, but are divided on what constitutes holiness. Some hold the old Holiness view of strict morality, others reduce holiness to a showy but shallow exhibition, and still others see it as "the liberating sense of ecumenism" (meaning anything goes).

The basic flaw in all claims of miraculous indwelling of the Spirit is a misunderstanding of the Spirit's role in salvation. The apostles were not filled with the Spirit on Pentecost to make them holy. They received the Spirit to teach and confirm the word by which they and others might be holy (see John 14:26; 16:13; Mark 16:20). Once the word was firmly established, the attending miracles ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-10), but holiness continues: "And now abide faith, hope, and love" (v. 13). The misunderstanding is evident for the kinds of "miracles" claimed today are selective and contrived. Ecstatic jabbering may be passed off as "speaking in tongues" and theme parks may be attributed to "prophetic revelations." But where are the lethal serpents and deadly poison? Where are the dead raised to life or the lame man who never walked instantly healed?

Belief in latter-day miracles is also based on the wrong view of miracles. Any unusual event or coincidence is chalked up by Charismatics as a miracle. If one finds a parking spot on a busy street, it is viewed as a miracle. No distinction is made between miracles and other means of providence. The thought is advanced that the only way God can work is by miracles. This limits God's power and denies His word. It limits His power in saying He cannot work through natural law; and it denies His word that shows He does work in human affairs without performing miracles.

How the Spirit Leads. The Spirit does not operate directly to make people holy, but He operates to that end through the word of God. Whatever He does in sanctifying God's children, He does by the word. Paul said, "Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:17). But David said, "Your word have I hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You" (Psa. 119:11). Peter spoke of the "sanctification of the Spirit" (1 Pet. 1:2), but Christ prayed for God to sanctify His disciples "by Your truth," adding, "Your word is Truth" (John 17:17; see Heb. 10:10). The fruit of the Spirit includes love (Gal. 5:22), but John says, "But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him" (1 John 2:5). We are led by the Spirit (Rom. 8:14), but God's word is a lamp to our feet (Psa. 119:105). The Spirit

gives life (2 Cor. 3:6), but Christ said the words He spoke "they are spirit and they are life" (John 6:63; see Jas. 1:21; Matt. 4:4).

The foregoing are plain statements. They show that sanctification, love, salvation, guidance, and eternal life come from the Holy Spirit through the word of God, not by a direct indwelling apart from the word. Everything we need for holiness is supplied by His word.

Paul told the Ephesians to "be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" (Eph. 5:18,19); but in a similar passage to the Colossians, he said, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Col. 3:16). The Spirit is not the word, but the word was given by Him (1 Cor. 2:12,13) and is His instrument in effecting holiness (Eph. 6:17). He is called "the Spirit of truth" and the truth He gave is "quick and powerful" (John 14:17; Heb. 4:12). It is by God's word that we will be judged in the last day (John 12:48; Jas 2:12). Since this is true, our responsibility is to obey the word and that is the limit of our responsibility. But if there is a supernatural leading of the Spirit apart from the word, then the word is not the limit of our responsibility. And if the Spirit guides us separate from the word, the word is not the whole standard of judgment, nor is it complete, as Paul affirms (2 Tim. 3:16,17).

Perhaps all agree that Christians are called to holiness. But some claim to be made holy by the Spirit dwelling in them apart from the word. This is not the teaching of the Scriptures. Belief in a charismatic indwelling of the Spirit grew out of a recognition of the need for holiness that failed to see the sufficiency of God's word to accomplish it. But the word is sufficient: "Sanctify them through Thy truth. Your word is truth" (John 17:17).

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STUDIES IN 1ST AND 2ND TIMOTHY

I TIMOTHY, CHAPTER 2

These two letters contain instruction for the evangelist; instruction that, if followed, would result in the saving of "thyself and them that hear thee." The salvation of the preacher and his hearers, or being lost, is tied to the duties, responsibilities, and warnings of these letters. Every preacher and every Christian must, therefore, give heed to what is said.

In this second chapter, two important things are discussed: the necessity of prayer and the place and dress of women. Remember, these things are involved in being saved or lost.

Pray, And Teach Others To Pray

A preacher who is successful in saving himself and others will be often in prayer, and constantly teach others to pray. Prayer is to be made for all men because God desires the salvation of all and Christ died for all. Our prayers contribute to realizing this desire. Any one who has made preaching to save men his life's work would naturally make this objective chief in his prayers.

Prayer usually consists of three things. (1) Supplications — involve a sense of need because of one's own insufficiency, leading one to ask God to supply the need. (2) Intercession — suggests approaching the Father with child-like trust on behalf of others. (3) The giving of thanks should be a part of every prayer because it is by God's grace that we have every good and perfect gift, including the privilege of prayer and our hope for eternity.

Prayer is to be made for all men, yet some are mentioned in particular — kings, and all that are in authority. These are sometimes antagonists of Christians and evangelism. Even so, praying for these will contribute to our "leading a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

Following this instruction pleases God because it contributes to His will for the salvation of all men through the sacrifice of Christ and the preaching of the gospel (truth). Paul was a God-ordained apostle and preacher of this gospel that saves, and coveted the prayers of all faithful saints for himself and all others to the end that men might be saved.

Notice that God's desire for the salvation of all men is realized as men come to a knowledge of the truth. Human theories claim that man's salvation is miracu-

lously accomplished, apart from evangelism, hearing and learning. The inspired apostle Paul knew that man's salvation depends on hearing the gospel, the source of faith, and humbly submitting to its commands. It was so in his own case, and he was willing to persevere, in the face of great persecution and difficulty, soliciting the prayers of others, that others might be saved. This is why he urged Timothy to manifest the same dedication and diligence; to pray and teach others to pray, that the word of God might have free course.

The Dress Of Women

The proponents of Woman's Lib. and modern society deny that a place of subjection for women and how she adorns herself have anything to do with her salvation. However, these are things Timothy was to teach whereby he could save himself and them that hear. In fact, verse 15 plainly connects woman's salvation to her submitting to her God-assigned role.

The dress (adorning) of a woman is not described in terms of style and fashions, but adorning that reflects "modesty, shamefacedness, and sobriety" (KJV): "modest, propriety, moderation" (NKJV): "proper clothing, modestly and discreetly" (NASV).

In our day, style and fashions are often sex motivated. This is freely admitted by many fashion designers. This motive has introduced the mini-skirts, bikinis, and numerous other types of apparel. Seemingly, many women are more interested in apparel that has sex-appeal than in that which reflects a profession of godliness. Lasciviousness is listed as a work of the flesh that forbids one inheriting the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21). Another word for this is "lewdness" and Webster said "tendency to excite lust." Thayer says "wanton (acts or) manners as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handlings of males and females." Truly, dress based on sex-appeal, designed to produce lewd emotions or excite lust, would be "lasciviousness". Women profession godliness will refuse to parade in public wearing such apparel. Truly, this is something Timothy would need to observe and teach in order to save himself and others.

There is also a prohibition of decorative dress, such as would attract attention to the physical. Some have thought the expression "not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array" absolutely forbids a "hair-do", rings, necklace, or any kind of dress except what is very plain and inexpensive. The passage is a contrast passage — not this but the other, rather than explicitly forbidding things named. Peter put it this way, "whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel, But let it be... hidden man of the heart" (1 Pet. 3:3-4). It is like the statement of our Lord when he said "labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (Jno. 6:27). The Lord did not forbid laboring for material things at all, but rather pointed to what should have priority. The Submission Of Woman

The fact that God has given women a place of submission to man cannot be denied by believers of the Bible.

After the fall in Eden, God said to Eve "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Gen. 3:16). Nothing is said here to indicate that woman is inferior to man, or that man's role of leadership is higher and more noble than the submissive, domestic role given to women. The order of authority is plainly said to be "the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. 11:3). The fact that women are assigned a position of subjection to man is why she is not to teach "over the man" for thus she would be out of her place, usurping authority over the man. The silence, in this matter, required of her is a silence with reference to her speaking "over" and acting "above" the man. See 1 Cor. 14:34-35.

In our text, two reasons are stated for women being given a place of subjection. (1) Adam had priority for ruling or leading because he was first formed. (2) Eve was the one deceived in the transgression.

Salvation would come to man by faithfully doing the will of God for him—fulfilling the role God has assigned to him. The woman would likewise be saved by fulfilling the role of submission assigned to her, involving bearing children, coupled with faith, love, holiness and sobriety. The passage does not make actually giving birth to a child a condition of her salvation, but "child-bearing" is put for the submissive role assigned to women.

To Be Continued

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WHY THE JUDGMENT?

QUESTION: *If one is eternally saved the moment he dies (in paradise), and is conscious of his destiny, what is the purpose of the judgment? Wouldn't it be useless?*

ANSWER: Paul stated there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness after his earthly departure (2 Tim. 4:6-8). Yet, this same apostle wrote, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:10). Paul knew heaven was his home, but he also recognized that he must appear in judgment.

The judgment of Christ is not a meeting to determine innocence or guilt. It is not a trial to argue our case in a heavenly court. Mankind will not be brought before Jesus, the righteous Judge, to present evidence to enable Jesus to evaluate what man's eternal reward ought to be. All of that is decided before or prior to the judgment. Yea, it is determined by our obedience or disobedience to God in this life.

All accountable people in this world are either lost or saved at this very moment. Those who die in the Lord will rest from their labors forever more (Rev. 14:13). But those who live and die in sin will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power (2 Thess. 1:7-9). We do not faithfully live for Christ in this life and then have to wait till the judgment to learn whether we are going to heaven or hell. Lazarus knew he was safe and secure in the bosom of Abraham. Stephen knew he was going where Jesus is. On the other hand, the rich man was conscious of his eternal state and that nothing could be done to alter it (Lk. 16:19-31).

Jesus said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn. 5:28-29). As a man lives, so shall he be raised, and so shall he appear before the judgment bar of God. Even as we are gathered before the judgment throne, separation takes place of the righteous and the wicked (Matt. 25:31-33). Those on the right will go away into life eternal, and those on the left into everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46).

Although the judgment is not a fact-finding event in order for Jesus to decide whether to save us or condemn us, it does have a purpose.

(1) **It will be a day of reckoning.** All Christians, as stewards, must give account (Matt. 25:19). Preachers

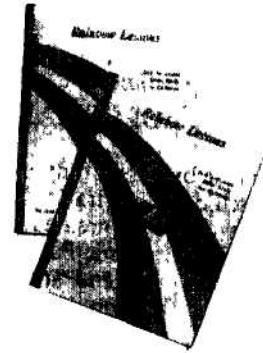
must give account of their preaching (Jas. 3:1), and elders will give account of their oversight (Heb. 13:17). We will give account of our deeds (2 Cor. 5:10), our words (Matt. 12:36f) and our thoughts (Eccl. 12:14). We will give account of our use or misuse of opportunities (Matt. 25:14-30) and our attitude toward duty (Eccl. 12:13); Lk. 17:10).

(2) **It will be a day of rectifying.** The day of judgment will be a day when all things will be made right. God's justice is often difficult to see in this life, but we will see it then. All inequities will be adjusted by Jehovah.

(3) **It will be a day of recompense.** The wicked will be awarded according to their works (Rom. 2:5,8; 6:23), and the righteous will be given the crown of life (2 Tim. 4:6-8; Matt. 25:34) with glory and honor and a redeemed, immortal body (Rom. 2:7; 8:23).

Yes, it is appointed unto man once to die and after that, the judgment (Heb. 9:27).

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DON'T FORGET TO PRAY!

“CONTENTMENT”

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With regard to material goods, there are four kinds of people: (1) those who "have" but are not content, (2) those who "have" and are content, (3) those who "have not" and are not content, and (4) those who "have not" and are content. Only those in category #2 or #4 are pleasing to God.

The whole idea of "having" is relative. Anyone can say "I can't afford it" but that does not make him a "have not." Do we have food and clothing? Paul says, "And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content" (1 Tim. 6:8). I don't know about you, but to me, that statement is one of the most challenging in the New Testament. I mean, what if that were really all I had?? Would I be content? Hmm. After all, many of us own our homes (or are in the process); we drive new cars; we own household conveniences beyond number. The biggest decision many families have to make in a day is what form of entertainment they're going to use — TV, movies, stereo, VCR. Or, what method they are going to use to cook the dinner meal (bar-b-que, oven, slow-cook or microwave?) Hardly a matter of "where is my next meal coming from"! Yet, would we say the average Christian household is "content" (defined as "not wanting more or less")?

Needless to say, contentment is lacking in most lives. Why? One problem is that we measure our "having" by what someone else has. Therefore, I'm a "have-not" if I don't have as nice a car as brother Johns; or as nice a house; if I can't go away as often; if I can't do something he can do, etc. What a miserable life! Paul said "I have learned in whatever state I am to be content" (Phil. 4:11). There is no doubt that we need to learn what Paul learned!

John the Baptist had some interesting things to say along these lines. In Lk. 3:7-9, John uses some very strong language with regard to those who came to be baptized by him. There are a number of interesting questions that come to mind as we consider this passage. One such question is why did the Pharisees, proud of their law-keeping attainments, seek to be baptized by John in the first place? At least one possible reason is that they were not *fulfilled* or satisfied in their law-keeping; i.e., they were not content with their heart-of-stone approach to righteousness and were seeking some deeper experience. Needless to say, John pointed out to them that they were on the wrong track. His was a baptism of *repentance* not a bath of satisfaction.

An exchange follows between John and the people, who ask "What shall we do then?" (v. 10). This question is repeated two more times by two other classes of people. His admonitions are interesting and provide a much-needed lesson on contentment.

John first addresses the people. We'll call them the "middle class," not particularly well-off nor below the poverty level. Just "middle-class," like most of us. John simply says, in v. 11, that they ought to be ready to share what they have. "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." One who is willing to do this recognizes, most clearly, that what he has is from God. He does not hoard his goods for some mystical "rainy day" but, instead, allows his abundance to supply a brother's need. If you want to be content, help someone else in his distress (Jas. 1:27, etc).

We might call the next group the "upper-class" — the tax collectors who often built their wealth on dishonest practices. They too asked "what shall we do?" John told them that before his baptism would do them any good (remember it was a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins [v. 31]) they must learn to be content. He tells them in v. 13 to be honest — "collect no more than what is appointed for you." This was a difficult command since it was so easy to defraud and "scrape off the top" (compare Zacchaeus, Lk. 19:5-10). Contentment issuing from a sincere heart will help prevent a lack of integrity or attempts to justify a "means-to-end" philosophy in business dealings. John says, "Be honest, be content." Even the "haves" must be concerned with contentment. Remember Paul said he knew how to abound as well as suffer need (Phil. 4:12).

Finally, the lower-class soldiers ask "what shall we do?" Now keep in mind that these people were the "have-nots" of the first century. Pay was low, working conditions were often lousy and the development of a "macho" image was, at least in their minds, a necessity for survival. So, while they had little money, they had a great deal of power and authority as well as ample opportunity to bear false witnesses for bribe. John tells them, however, not to do it. "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely..." (v. 14). Be content with soldiering and no longer fall prey to such wicked practices as these, John tells them. And, furthermore, he says, "be content with your wages." Oh what a message! "Be content with your wages!" Quit griping and complaining about how little you are paid and get on with living the godly life! In other words, "bear fruit worthy of repentance" (v. 8).

Whether rich or poor or somewhere in the middle in this world's goods, we are commanded to be content with what we have — even if it is "only" food and clothing. Brethren, is it God-honoring to complain about what you do not have? Have you embraced a philosophy which says that life really *does* consist of your possessions, if just a little bit? Isn't such an attitude sinful? Let's repent of our past discontentment and learn to be "poor in spirit" (Mt. 5:8).

"AND THE LORD LOOKED UPON PETER"

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The rather unusual title of this brief study is taken from a statement found in Luke chapter 22. Jesus had earlier foretold the denial of Peter and beginning in verse 54 we see Peter following after Jesus as He is taken to the house of Caiaphas to be questioned. Peter did indeed deny Jesus three times just as He had predicted. Immediately following the third denial we read this, "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly" (Lk. 22:61-62). I know I must have read those verses many times, but some time back when I read them that one statement just sort of jumped out at me, "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter." Imagine if you can the scene there that night as Jesus is questioned by the Jews. Imagine Peter there among the enemies of Jesus, and for fear that they may count him with Jesus he denies three times, even cursing and swearing according to Matthew's account (26:74). And then imagine Jesus turning and looking at Peter who has just denied his Lord. What would Jesus see if He turned and looked at me, or at you? This is what I want us to think about for a little while.

WOULD HE SEE SIN IN YOUR LIFE? All of us, even we who are Christians, sin. It's not that we want to, we just do. John wrote that "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" and "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:8,10). Jesus wouldn't have to look very hard to see sin, transgression of the will of God. But would He see us living in that sin, and walking in darkness, or would He see us grieved by our sins, and turning away from them? When Jesus looked on Peter the text says that Peter went out and "wept bitterly". How do your sins affect you? David seems to have had that sorrow for his sins for in the 51st Psalms we read, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me"; and "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psa. 51:10,17). Does Jesus see this kind of sorrow for sins in you, or does He see pride and arrogance and unwillingness to change?

Would Jesus see you trying to be and do better than before? Part of being a Christian is growing. We all start out as new born babes in God's family, and we are to grow up from there to the point that we can and do teach other people what we know of the gospel. But growth takes

effort and changing the way you live takes effort. Are you willing to "put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of you mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:22-24)?

Let's all be sure of one thing, GOD CAN SEE us wherever we go, whatever we do. I love to read the 139th Psalm because it tells us that God is always there wherever we may be. But that promise also means that He knows where we are, and what we are doing, and saying. He knows when I dress immodestly; when I think evil thoughts, or do things that I may think are hidden from everyone. Solomon summed up the whole duty of man in chapter 12 of Ecclesiastes by saying "Fear God and keep his Commandments", and then added, "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:13-14). There is simply no hiding from the God of heaven, and Jesus His Son.

And there is no getting around the judgment. It is one of the appointments that we will keep whether we want to or not. One of the errors of humanism which is being taught to our children in school is that man is supreme, therefore he is not accountable to anybody higher than him. But Paul said that God has "now commanded all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31). And we will all be there to "give account" of ourselves to God (Rom. 14:12).

Just put yourself in the picture for a moment; imagine that it is you standing there in the courtyard and Jesus is looking at you. What does He see in you? Imagine yourself standing there at the day of judgment. What does Jesus say to you? Will it be "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34), or will it be "depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mat. 25:41). Are you ready for that day?

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DIGRESSION BY DEFAULT

Default conveys the idea of a failure to do what is required. The principle applies in the realm of legal procedure, sporting contests, and also in religion.

If we fail to pay a loan, appear in court, or comply with the rules of a race, we lose by default. In religion, we must not only run in the race, but we must "strive lawfully" (2 Tim. 2:5; 4:7). Otherwise, we lose by default. Jesus said that some would be lost because they "did it not" (Mt. 25:45).

That is why I say that many individuals and congregations are going into digression by default. They are failing to teach and to heed the precepts and principles which identified digression and apostasy in past generations. We are especially concerned with that particular apostasy which divided the churches of Christ a little over a century ago, and resulted in that memorial to digression known as the Christian Church.

Some have forgotten about that sad chapter in the history of the Lord's church, and the events which made that era one of infamy. Some now involved in a similar apostasy would like not only to forget those events themselves, but they would like for the rest of us to forget them, too. Many of the younger generation have never even heard about those dark days of digression, and they never will if we depend on some brethren to tell them.

We stand on solid ground when we remind brethren of past apostasies. Jesus said, "Remember Lot's wife" (Lk. 17:32). The Holy Spirit, through Paul, reminds us that many of God's people fell in past generations (1 Cor. 10:1-12). The Hebrew writer devotes nearly two chapters (3-4), to past departures, and warns us not to follow others "in departing from the living God" (3:12).

Some of us have never ceased to remind brethren of those precepts and principles which were either folio wed or violated in the division over human missionary societies and instrumental music in church worship. Some still live who left the digressive ways of the Christian Church. But, there are more and more who have either taken up "dialogue" and lodging with their digressive brethren, or else are adopting the same practices and philosophies which contributed to that movement.

Digression by default has been working for several years, right alongside of digression by determination. Their "Mason-Dixon Line" between the adversaries engaged in spiritual warfare became clogged with self-avowed "middle-of-the-roaders." (And that is as far as I

intend to carry that Civil War parallel.)

And, while trying to balance themselves on that line (or crossing back and forth as popularity dictated), these proponents of neutrality gave more aid and comfort to the enemy than they gave to the cause of truth. Those determined to lead the church into digression knew that they could safely turn their backs on the middle-of-the-roaders, while those trying to slow the tide of apostasy had to fight with one hand, build with the other, and listen to the murmuring to those who wouldn't fight.

All during this most recent apostasy, concentrated in the 1950's to the 1980's, some preachers wouldn't touch that old sermon outline "The Differences Between the Christian Church and the Church of Christ" with the proverbial ten-foot pole. One preacher, when specifically requested by a congregation to preach on that subject, declined "because he didn't have a chart" on the subject. Maybe not, but one thing he did have was sense enough to know that some of his brethren were doing some of the same things which we used to condemn in the Christian Church. He later declared himself a citizen of the middle-of-the-road country, too.

Another popular (and influential preacher, refused the request of a congregation to state his position on the issues then troubling the church, and even canceled his own meeting to keep from doing so. Yet another canceled his agreement to work with the church at Paden City, West Virginia, because he was afraid of having some meetings canceled. Those who did attempt to defend the innovations of the day were forced to use the same arguments propounded by the champions of missionary societies and instrumental music. They had no alternative in their efforts to justify those things for which they had no scriptural authority.

In one meeting, a preacher announced that he was going to preach a sermon one night "with no scripture." Some of the brethren thought it was wonderful. Both the preacher and that congregation detoured into digression, and small wonder. Sermons with no scripture will bring digression by default wherever they are preached.

Elders in one congregation requested that I not mention Orphan Homes or the Herald of Truth during my meeting with them. They said that "they were not bothered" with such things, and had made the same request of their local preacher as well as preachers in other meetings. The others had agreed. I didn't. Neither was I invited back for another meeting. That congregation and its preachers later endorsed the very things with which "They were not bothered." They digressed by default.

In the early 1960's, at the old North Street building in New Martinsville, West Virginia, brother Frank Puckett preached a masterpiece of a sermon on issues then troubling and dividing the brotherhood. He wasn't invited back, and because I "amened" his sermon, I had my meeting canceled there. I never have decided if those brethren went into digression by default or by determination, but they made it anyway.

Brethren, these incidents could be multiplied, and there is "famine in the land" today for lack of plain Bible preaching (Amos 8:11). When brethren decide that they

prefer digression and bondage to standing fast in the liberty of Christ, it makes little difference if the preacher's name is Amos or Puckett, they will have their own way.

Some of those going into digression, whether by design or default, condemn themselves. They write some good articles in the bulletins and papers, and preach some good sermons on the radio about the need for religious authority, and the sin of religious division. But, they have one rule for the Methodists and Baptists, and another rule for themselves (Phil. 3:16). They are guilty of the same things which they condemn in others (Rom. 2:1).

One such preacher wrote a good article in his bulletin condemning those in the Crossroads movement of causing division in the church. He even made the division parallel to that caused by the introduction of missionary societies and instruments of music. When I asked him to make the same application of those innovations introduced during the period of 1950-80, he adamantly refused to do so.

The battles fought around the turn of the century are ancient history to some, but those events are still on record, both in heaven and on earth. And, 1960 doesn't sound like too long ago, but when you do a little subtracting, another generation has come and gone, and some don't know the first thing about the digressions of the Christian Church, or the controversies of more recent years.

Preachers, both young and old, need to go back and read some of the debates held during those periods of controversy, starting with the Otey-Briney discussion and working their way down to the present time. Such phrases as "the Bible doesn't say not to" in tandem with "where there is no law there is no transgression" may have a familiar ring.

Whether we go into digression with our eyes open or closed, forward or backward, by determination or default, the end result is the same. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13).

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EUGENE BRITNELL, P.O. Box 969, Russellville, AL 35653—After living in Arkansas for 37 years, the last 26 years with the Arch Street church in Little Rock, we have returned to our native state of Alabama. I am preaching for the East side church in Russellville. We anticipate a pleasant and profitable work in Franklin County where we were born and reared. We just closed a successful series of gospel lessons by Paul Earnhart. If you are in Northwest Alabama, come by and visit with us. Our telephone number is (205) 332-5451.

WAYNE S. WALKER, 310 Haynes St., Dayton, OH 45410 — We arrived in Dayton on July 3 to begin work with the good Haynes St. church. The members greeted us warmly and have made us feel welcome. All is at peace here. The brethren have a strong desire to work and grow. Our fall meeting will be with Royce Chandler of Mason, Ohio (Oct. 18-23). My next meetings will be with the Eastside church in Canal Winchester, Ohio (Sept. 25-27), the South Macomb

church in Roseville, Michigan (Oct. 26-Nov. 1), and the W. Main St. church in Bartow, Florida (Jan. 17-22).

RUSSELL E. SMITH, 9503 Slayton Court, Louisville, Kentucky 40229 — In August the Oak Grove church in Louisville conducted a week-long meeting with Cecil Willis who currently preaches in Fairbanks, Alaska. At the outset, brother Willis stated that nothing "new" would be preached; only those things found in God's word. A knowledge of the word combined with brother Willis' speaking ability caused simple lessons and passages to become clearer in the minds of all who heard him. The spiritual "meat" that was presented will cause growth for all of those who love the truth and will exercise their senses to digest it. If you have not heard brother Willis, or have not heard him for several years, it would be beneficial for all to hear this faithful soldier of the Lord explain the gospel of Christ in its purity and simplicity. He may be contacted as follows: Cecil Willis, 3010 Davis Road Apt. B-37, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

KEITH SHARP, 2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd., Lakeland, FL 33805 — The debate with brother Thomas West at Saratoga, Arkansas was conducted successfully July 20-24. Harold Turner was very helpful as my moderator and I appreciate his excellent assistance. The follow-up debate with J. Noel Meredith will be held in the building of the Stamps church of Christ, Stamps, Arkansas, Sept. 28-29, Oct. 1-2 1987. The first two nights will be on the sponsoring church issue, and the last two nights will be on church support of the orphanage and limited benevolence. Propositions and arrangements have now been finalized with Lewis G. Hale for a debate in Russellville, Arkansas, Nov. 16-17, 19-20, 1987. The issues will be the same as those in the debate with brother Meredith.

My family and I are now settled into our new home in Lakeland, Florida. I am working with the Lakeland Hills Blvd. church at the above address. The office number is (813) 688-4336 and the home number is 859-5228. Jady Copeland labored with the congregation here for the 8 years previous to my coming.

The Mena church of Christ in Mena, Arkansas is looking for a good man who will fearlessly proclaim all the truth to work with them. The brethren are at peace and they have a mind to work. Mena is a lovely town of 5,000 in the Ouachita hills of west Arkansas. The congregation had grown slowly since it began about eight years ago. Jim Everett worked with them for three years, and I preached there three years. Their address is: P.O. Box 3, Mena, Arkansas 71953.

DOUG SEATON, 1723 Tennyson Dr., Jeffersonville, IN 47130 — The door of opportunity is now open in many places with Roman Catholics. At the writing of this note, we have five that turned from

Catholicism to Christ in our work in Clarksville, Indiana. Two recently were baptized after seeing the changed life of another family member that had obeyed the gospel about a year ago. All five of these are faithful members thrilled to be studying the Bible and eager to teach others. Many Catholics are dissatisfied and open to study from the word of God. A great deal of teaching is needed before and after conversion due to the many changes necessary. Another former Catholic and his family have begun attending having become unhappy with the liberal practices where they worshiped. Recently we have had seven confess unfaithfulness that had been away from the Lord for up to 20 years. The longer they were away the harder it was to come back without the encouragement of those who are strong. Our attendance has been increased by about 20 people at all services due to these efforts. It is also much easier to work with the children's classes with the increase in attendance. The additional family members of these new members provides ample opportunities for home studies as well. As we "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature . . ." we must find time to go into our communities and seek those that are lost. This work can't be done for the church, it must be done by the church. Thanks be to God for the increase.

FERNANDO VENEGAS, Casilla #122 C. C, 5500 Mendoza, Argentina, South America—There are now two churches meeting in the city of Mendoza (population 1,200,000). I preach for the one located in the east area of the city and Jorge Trola preaches for the new work in the north end of the city. They have converted a garage into a meeting room. One young man was baptized there recently. Carlos Capelli, from Buenos-Aires, was with us for a gospel meeting July 2-5. The meeting was well attended and Carlos did outstanding work in presenting the truth. Several visitors came, some of whom are still attending and studying.

PREACHERS NEEDED

CRESTWOOD, ILLINOIS — The church here is looking for a man to start work with them in October, 1987. Crestwood is a south suburb of Chicago. The church here has a meeting house and a preacher's residence, both paid for. The building is situated on a major road, and the area is economically strong and growing. Attendance is around 60. We can provide \$350 per week toward support, but we are willing to consider some alternatives available to us for obtaining more for the preacher's salary. We need a man with some experience, but not necessarily an older man. Those interested may contact Lawrence Whited at (312) 389-5008.

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

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NOVEMBER, 1987

Number 11

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
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DO THE RIGHTEOUS DEAD GO DIRECTLY TO HEAVEN?

Peter spoke of David on the day of Pentecost and said, "For David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:34). He was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), and one whose throne was given to Christ, had been dead for hundreds of years, yet Peter said he had not entered into the heavens.

Are the righteous dead, such as Abraham, David and Lazarus, still in hades where Christ was during the three days his body was in the grave? Or have they at some time after the resurrection of Christ been transferred into heaven?

If the righteous dead go directly to heaven, why take them out of heaven and give them a body, bring them before the judgment and then send them back to heaven? Are there two stages of heaven, one without a resurrected body, and the other with a spiritual body? Why have a judgment for those who have already received their ultimate reward in heaven? Precisely when does one inherit eternal life? Does he go to heaven before he receives eternal life, or does one receive eternal life before the resurrection and the judgment? These questions must be answered in harmony with the scriptures.

We are told that Paul said to be "absent from the body" is to "be present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8). We can not put a construction on Paul's statement that would put it in conflict with Peter on Pentecost and Jesus' statement in John 14:1-3. "To be present with the Lord" simply means to be in the care and keeping of the

Lord. If this is not the meaning, all the dead are now in heaven because Solomon said, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). If the spirit goes to God, and God dwells in heaven, it must follow that all spirits that leave the body go to heaven where God is. Obviously, the meaning is that the spirit returns to the keeping of God in whatever place He prepares for the disembodied spirits of men.

The spirit of Jesus went into the hands of God while his body went to the grave. He cried from the cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," and he died. (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Luke 23:46). Stephen expected the Lord Jesus to receive his spirit as he was dying (Acts 7:59). But when Jesus' spirit went into the hands of God, he went to hades, to paradise where he said the thief would be with him. After Jesus arose from the dead, his spirit returned from the hands of his Father, he told the woman at his tomb not to touch him for he had not yet ascended to his Father.

In view of the fact that David had not ascended into the heavens at the time Peter made the statement on Pentecost, and in view of Solomon's statement that the spirit which leaves the body goes back to God, and in view of the statement of Jesus that he had gone to prepare a place, and would come again and receive his disciples to be where he was, it follows that Paul's statement that to "be absent from the body" is "to be present with the Lord" does not mean to enter the mansions in preparation by the Lord. It means the spirit is away from this life and in the keeping of the Lord to await the resurrection and judgment.

Furthermore, the divine record of the crucifixion of Christ gives the account of Jesus' statement to the penitent thief on the cross. He said, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). These obvious facts can be drawn from this statement:

1) Jesus and the thief were together on the cross that day. They were within talking distance of each other. At the time of their conversation the body and spirit of both were intact: they were both alive. But both died that day—the spirit of both left the body.

2) They were never together in the tomb. Jesus was

(Continued on page 4)

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams
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AN APPEAL TO FOREIGN WORKERS

Those of us who publish periodicals are often called upon to make known worthy appeals for brethren who labor in foreign lands, or difficult areas of this country where there are few churches. During the years this paper has been in business, we have devoted considerable space to just such news. I have tried to caution and make appeals only for those cases where there was reasonable evidence to indicate the people involved were worthy. Sometimes it has been necessary to rely on information from those we have every reason to trust. In many instances, we have had personal knowledge on which to base our efforts.

This is always treacherous ground. The urgency of gospel work everywhere in the world weighs heavily on the consciences of those of us who preach the gospel, and especially on some of us who have had a part, at one time or another, in some of this work. Over the years I have written many letters, articles and news items in an attempt to inform brethren of the needs of worthy men. For the most part there is reason to feel good about these efforts. There are some good, devoted brethren scattered around the globe who truly have the best interests of the kingdom of God at heart. These include Americans sent and supported by American churches, and also native men who labor in their own lands among their own people.

But it is a sad fact, that all such appeals are not worthy. Time and circumstances sometimes make it clear that some are working for the "loaves and fishes." There have been some men who have never succeeded in any work they have attempted who decide to go overseas and preach. They won't do any better there than here. Men who can't even master the basic elements of their own mother tongue will make a total fiasco out of learning to speak and write in another language. Some men are petty and dwell on little offenses (whether imagined or real). Sometimes they can't get along with other brethren or with their own families. They magnify grievances, inject them into the church with the result that other brethren feel compelled to "choose up sides" and then seek to enlist the support of brethren here who support them. Jealous men will sometimes make accusations against fellow workers and try to get their support cut off. Brethren here scratch their heads and agonize about what to do.

Those of us who have stuck our necks out to help a brother in a far-away place are sometimes made to feel as though we had a knife stuck in our backs by the very ones we have worked the hardest to help. It not only leaves egg on our faces, it seriously tarnishes our credibility. The next time we go to bat to help a brother, however deserving he may be, our appeals are taken much less seriously. The end result is that we find it harder and harder to support foreign workers. There was a time, a few years ago, when you could write a letter, an article, or make a speech about the work in some corner of the world where you had personal contacts, and brethren were eager to help. **Not any more.** I have noticed a continually lessening interest in supporting men in foreign lands in the last few years. Some churches have been badly burned with men who turned out to be unsound in the faith, immoral in personal life, or so cantankerous in inter-personal relations with brethren that they were left with no choice but to stop supporting them.

Some Helpful Suggestions

Brethren who plan to go to some needy field in this country or to some foreign land to preach would do well to ponder the following suggestions:

(1) Don't ask for more support than you need. Be realistic and do your homework. You must have enough to enable you to live in the economy where you are going. If you need more than appears normal to brethren here, be sure to explain to them the difference in economies.

(2) If you are contacting brethren who do not know you, be sure to give references with whom they can consult as to your worthiness and aptitude for the work. Brethren who do not know you do not owe you anything just because you wrote them a letter or made a phone call.

(3) Make full disclosure of the amounts and sources of all support you receive to every place which supports you. Once or twice a year is not enough. If they supply you with monthly support, then YOU supply them with a monthly report of your work, including an account of support and the places providing it. Any man who is unwilling to do this does not deserve to be supported.

(4) Keep the brethren abreast of your work. Tell them about baptisms, of course. But also tell them about your efforts to teach classes and other teaching opportunities you have. Keep them informed about problems you encounter. Ask for their prayers for specific problems in your work.

(5) If you have a disagreement with another preacher and his family in the area of your work, please don't become the ring leader of a faction nor expect brethren who support you to have all the facts in the case and to automatically take your side. Acquit yourself as a man, not as a little boy who pouts.

(6) Don't make every report an urgent appeal for extra money for first one thing and then another. Some brethren in the Philippines, Nigeria, and other places, against all advice, have filled reports with appeals for money to pay someone's Doctor bill, to buy a loud speaker, a motorcycle, a typewriter, or to put a child through

college. When every report becomes an appeal for more and more money, then don't be surprised if brethren grow weary and decide that you are not honest.

(7) Do everything you can, in your teaching, to help the brethren where you work to be self-reliant and to work toward the time they can be self-supporting.

(8) Plant and water and leave the increase to the Lord and forget about who gets the credit.

(9) If your presence in some field contributes to strife and confusion in the work, then come home and stop accepting support from brethren for you to sow discord and destroy the work of God.

ABOUT RECOMMENDATIONS

It is scripturally right for brethren to recommend brethren they know to those who do not know them or who are not sure about them. Thus, Barnabas vouched for Paul in Acts 9:26-29. Paul wrote commendations of Timothy, Titus, Silas, Luke and others. But it is certainly possible for us to misjudge those we think we know well. If you have evidence that a brother is not worthy and he gives your name for a reference, please be truthful when approached by brethren who are trying to gather the best information they can upon which to form a judgment. A Filipino preacher in Zamboanga has widely circulated a letter using my name in such a way as to imply endorsement. Last year he wrote a bleeding-heart letter in which he told how he and his family were burned out by Muslim rebels and forced to flee for safety in the night with only the clothes they were wearing. Somehow, though, he managed to salvage writing materials and a large collection of names and addresses of American churches to whom he sent his letter. This same fellow was caught accepting much more support than he was reporting, including \$150 a month from a liberal church in Oklahoma, which had no idea he was accepting support from "antis." I have photo copies of the cancelled checks provided to me by the preacher of that Oklahoma church. The same Zamboanga preacher has another letter out this year (the first one was dated in February, 1986) in which, this time, he has lost all and had to flee before the New People's Army. But he still salvaged all his names and addresses. I have had 30 long distance phone calls about this man and have answered 15 letters about him, plus numerous personal inquiries during meetings in various parts of the country. I have done my best to warn brethren about him.

It is dangerous to recommend men for support when they have just left some system of error. Hastily gathered support may be totally justified in some cases, but it is easy to leave the door open to tempt dishonest men who "change" not out of conviction of truth, but as a means of gain. Why not give a man time to get the error out of his system and to show the genuineness of his conviction by sacrificially standing for the truth, even if he has to support his family at whatever honest work he can perform. When the time is right, a Barnabas will come to Tarsus and get you and introduce you to brethren who will stand behind you at an Antioch or elsewhere.

None of this has been meant to discourage honest, hard working gospel preachers who labor in the distant

fields of earth. But it is meant as a message for those who would use us to their own advantage and then stick a knife in our backs by betraying well-meant efforts to help them. Such men hinder gospel work all over the world because they cause sincere brethren to be suspicious of foreign work. It would be money well spent for churches to send one or more of the elders to visit men they support in distant places, not to meddle in local autonomy, but to provide on-site information for the congregation supporting such workers. Meanwhile, we dare not forget that the field in which the good seed must be sown in the world, the whole world. We must work while it is day.

(Continued from page 1)

buried in a new tomb wherein never man was laid (Matthew 27:58-60); Luke 23:50-53; John 19:38-42). The thief was not buried with Christ. Hence, the statement of Jesus to the thief that he would be with him that day did not have reference to the tomb.

3) The language of Jesus had to refer to their spirits which were in paradise that day. It follows therefore that the spirits of both men were together that day in paradise while their bodies were in separate tombs.

But three days later Jesus arose from the dead. He told the woman at the sepulchre, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father" (John 20:17). God dwells in heaven (11 Chronicles 6:33). Therefore, for the three days Christ was in paradise, he had not ascended to heaven. This is conclusive proof that paradise is not heaven, and the spirits of the dead do not go directly to heaven, even if absolutely sinless as was Christ.

What is paradise? The primary sense is "a garden" and usually the understanding is that it is beautiful and restful. Peter spoke of the place where Jesus was when he was with the thief in paradise. "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2:27). This teaches that the body of Jesus was not left in the tomb to decay, and his soul was not left in the tomb to decay, and his soul was not left in hades. Christ went to paradise the day he died (Luke 23:43); his soul was not left in hades, but was raised from the dead on the third day (Acts 2:27); he said he had not ascended to his Father who is in heaven (John 20:17). Hades therefore is not heaven.

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LET'S HEAR IT FOR GOOD NEWS!

I'm all for good news—and the news I'm hearing from across the country in regard to the growth of the Lord's church is extremely encouraging. For example, just a few years ago I would have been hard pressed to name very many congregations numbering 300 or better. Today I know of several (and some in the 400-500 range). Not long ago the discouraging reports of dwindling groups occupying large buildings that once housed thriving congregations were numerous. Today in many places brethren are having to build on, add on and plan for future expansion of present facilities because of rapid growth. A Seattle area church recently purchased a building from a denominational group that was not smaller in size from their previous facility but much larger due to their recent growth. A Florida elder was lamenting the fact that his city had only approved an auditorium capacity of 450 for their new building, a size he considered too small in view of their current progress. A fellow gospel preacher told me that in recent meetings he has spoken to crowds in excess of 500 several times.

And... baptistries are in use again! I recently talked with an elder of a Mississippi church numbering in the 130's who told of 26 baptisms there last year. A preacher just back from a mid-west meeting spoke excitedly of 11 responses to the Gospel during the week. And these are not isolated reports. They are being echoed in virtually every part of the country. There are churches in the deep south which are growing again. The great northwest in finding the harvest ripe. Southern California is a virtual gold mine of people being receptive to the Master's message. Churches located in college towns are finding quality young people who are reaching out to their classmates with the Gospel. Churches in the mid-Atlantic and northeast areas are prospering as well as those in the mid-west. And godly elders with futuristic vision seem to be on the increase.

Is it just I, or do you feel it, too? Sure, there are always going to be folks who thrive on rampant inactivity and who sound a sour note at the slightest hint of spiritual progress. The suspicious ring of—"nobody baptizes that many people without doing something unscriptural" will, I suppose, always be heard. And, that is not to say that there isn't a danger in becoming so enthusiastic about growth that we lose sight of the need to adhere strictly to the New Testament pattern. We must always heed warnings and we must always watch.

The "75" Mentality

I once heard a brother remark: "*The day this church reaches 75 it'll be time to split off and start a new work.*" Can you believe that? Now I suppose in a few cases the above viewpoint might be wise (although probably very few!) yet, that way of thinking seems to permeate a good many people. It's as if "the church has to be small to be sound." Let me state very frankly—I do not believe that! And (for fear that someone may take this and scamper off down the road of the ridiculous) let me hasten to say that I see a lot of great small churches which are great because they are filled with great people who love the Lord and who are doing the best they can with what they have. I love that and always come away encouraged at the sight of such loyal devotion amidst difficult circumstances. Nothing I say is to minimize that nor is it to argue that God puts a premium on numbers. He doesn't. And, yet, numbers represent people and people represent souls—and folks, there just seems to be more souls lining up behind the Cross! And I'm thrilled about that. That's not just good news—it's GREAT news!

And so let me say a word on behalf of larger churches. I believe with all my heart that God intends for every congregation to grow, to reach out to the lost, to become self-supporting and to ring out the message in other places. We need to go back to Luke's workbook on the *Acts of the Apostles* and see that, for the most part, New Testament churches were large, evangelistic and growth oriented. (I don't see any of the "status quo" stuff in Acts, do you?)

For example, take the church in **Antioch of Syria**. The Scripture says that the church began after "*a large number of them believed and turned to the Lord*" (11:21). Barnabas was one of the first preachers at Antioch and Luke reports that through his efforts at preaching the Gospel "*considerable numbers were brought to the Lord*" (11:24). Barnabas was so encouraged at Antioch's potential that he brought Paul to Antioch (11:25-26). Hence, here is a New Testament congregation that had two preachers working at the same place for at least one year. In 13:1 Luke reports that the Antioch church had five preachers! Chapter 13 tells how they were able to send two of them (Paul and Barnabas) away to preach in other places and in 14: 26-27 we see them return again to Antioch to present a full report to the congregation concerning the work that they had accomplished. And chapter 14 ends with Luke's comment that "*they (Paul and Barnabas) spent a long time with the disciples.*"

What do we have in the New Testament church at Antioch? They were large in number. They had a proficient teaching program (who would deny that?). They sent out preachers from there to preach in other places. They maintained a close relationship with the preachers they sent out. They baptized considerable numbers. They were benevolent (11:27-30). They were not afraid to stand up and oppose error (15: 1-3). They were a zealous group of disciples who rejoiced that they could be called "Christians"—*first in Antioch*. What a strong and sound church! And one can only wonder how many other places were touched with the Gospel message because of Antioch's zeal and commitment to Christ.

Or... study the church in Thessalonica. Or how about the Jerusalem church—which, by the way, grew to over 5,000 (counting men only). Why to suggest that a congregation today should set its sights on just one fifth of that number would bring instant criticism from some. Why is it so? We need to go back to the Book of Acts and see that many of the New Testament churches grew to considerable size and because they were large numerically they were able to have more resources, develop more talent, raise up more spiritual leaders, train more preachers, and spend more money to help spread the Gospel throughout the first century world. I thank God for their example!

Perhaps one of the reasons why the Lord's church hasn't experienced the kind of growth it has in years past is because (and this is just one man's opinion) in far too many places the "75 mentality" has been exercised and brethren have split and splintered and swarmed to start new works with only a handful of folks who were totally unprepared to assume the reins of spiritual leadership and motivation. And, thus, rather than one church beginning to reach it's potential and become self-supporting and develop a vibrant teaching program and appoint elders and generate enthusiasm in the community—there are now two churches—both of which are not self-supporting, without elders and struggling to get by financially. I can't make any sense out of it, can you?

And, while we are on the subject, the old song that says—*"larger churches aren't as friendly as smaller churches"* is just not so. I've been in some very unfriendly smaller congregations as well as some exemplary friendly ones. And I've seen some larger churches that were cold and indifferent toward strangers as well as some that would hardly let you get away without showering you with acts of kindness and hospitality. People are people. Some are cold and clannish while others are warm and loving. I fail to see that the size of a group has anything whatsoever to do with it.

The good news is that churches seem to be growing again and I'm excited about that. (Can you tell?) For too long some have wallowed in a puddle of self-pity and pessimism that said (without saying): *"we're anties, we weren't meant to grow, we're supposed to be small and against everything."* BALONEY! Let's stick with Scripture, and be determined to be and to do EVERYTHING the Lord requires with a spirit of enthusiasm and joy. And that includes telling their friends and neighbors, relatives and business associates the "good news" of Jesus Christ and how they, too, can be part of a New Testament church.

"So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily" (Acts 16:5).

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PRAYERS IN THE BIBLE

The disciples made a request, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). Jesus not only taught his disciples by a model prayer or by teaching them about prayer, but he also taught them by his example of praying. We can learn better how to pray by studying the prayers in the Bible. There are a number of prayers recorded in the Bible. These were offered at different times and under different circumstances. These prayers were not empty with useless words, but usually were pointed and short. "Prayers, to the patriarchs and prophets, were more than the recital of well-known and well-worn phrases—it was the outpouring of the heart" (Herbert Lockyer, *All The Prayers Of The Bible*, p. 17).

Nothing could be more instructive than to study the prayers that pleased God. Our intention is to look at a number of examples of prayers. Some of the passages we will notice are prayers. Others will be talking about someone praying. Space will not permit us to look in detail at each one. Our purpose is to give the references and make a few brief comments. This study will serve as a summary and conclusion to our series on prayer.

Prayers Of Jesus

(1) **The model prayer** (Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4). (2) **At his baptism** (Luke 3:21-22). It is most appropriate to pray when one is baptized. New converts should be taught from that point how to pray. (3) **In Solitude** (Matt. 14:23; Mark 1:35; 6:46; Luke 5:15-16). What better way to begin the day than as Jesus did in prayer? If the Son of God needed to pray how much more do we need to? We must find the quiet time to talk to our creator. I am bothered no little by those brethren who don't see much need for praying. (4) **Before choosing the twelve** (Luke 6:12-16). How practical it is to pray when faced with a major decision. (5) **On the mount of transfiguration** (Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-35). In order to truly see the glory of God we must climb the mountain of prayer. "Communion with God issues ever in a transfigured life" (G. Campbell Morgan). (6) **Praise and thanks to God** (Luke 10:21; John 11:41-42). We are very quick to ask, but do we thank God when we receive? (7) **For Peter** (Luke 22:31-32). We should pray for those who are weak. How encouraging it is to others to tell them you pray for them. (8) **In anguish** (John 12:27, 28). While we should pray when we have troubles, that is not the only time we should pray. Neither should prayer be a last resort. (9) **For unity**

(John 17). In this prayer Jesus prayed for himself (vs. 1-5), for his disciples (vs. 6-19) and for the disciples of all ages (vs. 20-26). From this we learn that we should continually pray for unity. Thank God for the peace and unity in the local congregation and pray that it will continue. If there is division, pray that unity may be attained. (10) **In Gethsemane** (Matt. 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46). These prayer were short. They were about trials he was to face. Yet, he prayed that God's will be done. (11) On the cross. He prayed for those that crucified him (Luke 23:34). Shouldn't we too pray for our enemies? He made an inquiry to the Father (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). He commended his Spirit to the Father (Luke 23:46).

Other Prayers

(1) **Abraham prayed for Sodom** (Gen. 18:23-33). (2) **Abraham's servant** offered a prayer for finding a wife for Isaac (Gen. 24:12-14). (3) **Isaac** prayed for his barren wife (Gen. 25:21). (4) **Moses** prayed for Israel (Exo. 32:9-14, 30-34; 33:12-13; Num. 21:7-9). (5) **Hannah** prayed for a child (1 Sam. 1:10-13). This was a silent prayer. (6) **David** prayed for his sick child (2 Sam. 12:15-16), offered praise and made request (Psa. 86:43). He prayed about giving to the Lord (1 Chron. 29:10-19). It is very appropriate to pray just before the contribution. Praise and thank God for the blessings we have. Pray that the money will be used to the praise and glory of God. (7) **Solomon** prayed at the dedication of the temple (1 Kings 8:23-54). (8) **Elijah** prayed that it might not rain and then that it would (Jas. 5:17-18). He prayed for fire to come upon the sacrifice (1 Kings 18:36-37). (9) **Hezekiah** prayed for deliverance (2 Kings 19:14-19). (10) **Ezra** prayed for the sins of the people (Ezra 9:5-15). (11) **Job** prayed for his friends (Job 42:10). (12) **Jeremiah** offered praise unto God (Jer. 32:16-25). (13) **Daniel** prayed three times a day (Dan. 6:10). He made confession and prayed for forgiveness (Dan. 9:3-20). (14) **Jonah** prayed while in the whale's belly (Jonah 2:1-10).

The Apostle Paul

Saul of Tarsus was praying when Ananias came to him (Acts 9:11; 22). He prayed when in prison (Acts 16:25). He prayed with the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:36). He offered thanks for food (Acts 27:34-35). He always prayed for his brethren. He thanked God for them and prayed for their growth and maturity. He didn't just pray for his brethren in general, but specifically prayed for those he loved. He prayed for the Romans (Rom. 1:8-10), for Israel (Rom. 10:1), for the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:4), for the removal of his thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:7-10), for the Ephesians (Eph. 1:16-17), for the Philippians (Phil. 1:3-7), for the Colossians (Col. 1:3-4, 9-10), for the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1:2-3; 3:9-13; 2 Thess. 1:3, 11-12; 2:13) and for Timothy (2 Tim. 1:3-4). Without a doubt, Paul was a praying man. He must have spent much time in prayer.

Conclusion

Prayer is important. It is the highest exercise of man's spiritual nature. Thus, it is important that we take care to do it right. May we ever pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17).

EXPOSITION: TEXT and CONTEXT

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WIVES BE IN SUBJECTION

QUESTION: In recent months I heard a sermon which made reference to I Pet. 3:5. Would you please clarify the meaning of "wives be in subjection unto their own husbands?"

ANSWER: Peter begins this section (I Pet. 3:1-7) of husband-wife relationship by exhorting wives to be in subjection to their own husbands, even their heathen husbands. Those women who had obeyed the gospel might think they did not have to be subordinate to their unbelieving spouses after they became Christians. The apostle counteracts this potentially by the instructions given. The believing wife was not only to be submissive, but also exemplify chastity, reverence, meekness and quietness (calm, tranquil, at peace).

To these impeccable traits and sterling qualities, Peter adds the example of holy women of old (v. 5). They trusted in God, adorned themselves with godly virtues, and were subject to their husbands. Sarah is specifically mentioned as a faithful wife who obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord (v. 6). "Lord" is a title of honor addressed to a superior. Because of her attitude of continuous subordination, and because she recognized the supremacy (headship) of her husband, she serves as an example to all Christian wives today. Peter said, "whose daughters ye are (Sarah's), as long as ye do well."

The word "subjection" is from the Greek word *hupostasso*. Thayer defines it to mean, "to subject one's self, to obey; to subject to one's control; to yield to one's admonition or advice" (*Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 645). Hence, Peter says that wives are to obey, to submit, to yield to their husbands, even their admonition and advice.

From the following Scriptures we observe several things about the wife's subordination to her husband:

(1) It is to be an "own husband" type submission. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:22; cf. 1 Pet. 3:1). The word *own* puts emphasis on the gravity, seriousness and magnitude of her obedience.

(2) From the verse quoted in the preceding paragraph, we see that it is "as unto the Lord" type submission. The wife is to submit herself unto her husband even as she is to faithfully and lovingly obey Jesus Christ.

(3) It is "as the church is subject to Christ" type submission. "Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every

thing" (Eph. 5:24). It would be just as out of place for the church to take over the headship of Christ as it would be for a wife to assume headship of her husband.

(4) It is an "in everything" type submission as the latter part of Eph. 5:24 states. The exception would be if the husband demanded disobedience to Christ on the part of his wife. Apostles of Christ said, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

(5) It is "as fit in the Lord" type submission. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord" (Col. 3:18). Robert Gromacki wrote, "Subordination befits Christian women. God established the authority of family function in the Garden of Eden. The entrance of sin or the salvation experience have not changed that basic principle. It is not a cultural oddity which can be altered in different countries and ages" (*An Exposition of Colossians & Philemon*, p. 148).

Subordination does not mean women are inferior to men intellectually, morally or spiritually, but in God's order of authority, woman is to be in subjection to man. The Bible states, "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. 11:3). Though the wife is subject to her husband, the husband is not without obligation toward his wife. He is to love her even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it (Eph. 5:25). The husband is not to be a tyrant over his wife, abuse her or treat her as chattel property. Neither is he to be a wimp and a passive non-entity. But he is to assume the headship and to love his wife as his own body (Eph. 5:23, 28).

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STUDIES IN 1ST & 2ND TIMOTHY ELDERS

(1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9)

One of the things Paul instructed Timothy about was the kind of man that can serve a congregation in the capacity of an "elder". As an evangelist, Timothy was obligated to teach this to others, which would contribute to "Saving thyself and them that hear thee".

Elders in every church is essentially connected to saving souls. Their work involves "watching for souls" (Heb. 13:17). They "speak unto you the word of God" (Heb. 13:7), and "by sound doctrine both exhort and convince the gainsayers" (Tit. 1:9). Qualified elders, properly functioning in every church, is as essential and effective in saving souls as the evangelist who constantly preaches the gospel that is God's power to save.

The particular role of elders in a congregation, according to the scriptures, is feeding, tending, ruling, overseeing the flock of God which is among you (1 Pet. 5:1-3; Acts 20:28). They belong to the organizational structure of a local church, which consists of bishops (elders), deacons, and saints (Phil. 1:1). God's order is a plurality of elders/bishops (Acts 20:17,28; Titus 1:5-7) in every church (Acts 20:17; 14:23; Tit. 1:5). Arbitrary ruling is forbidden to them (1 Pet. 5:3) and their oversight is confined to the "flock among them". This means that each congregation is independent of other congregations. They are not bound by any ecclesiastical federation, but each church, under its elders, is subject to Christ, the great head of the church.

Relying on human wisdom instead of sound doctrine has brought into existence many organizations, offices and officers which are unknown to the New Testament, and numerous corruptions of the New Testament pattern of church government. When you see one bishop over a congregation, or a number of churches, the bishops of one congregation exercising authority over other congregations, a federation of numerous congregations in Associations, Synods, Boards, Conventions (with their desired and appointed officers), and other like inventions, you are seeing a corruption of the New Testament order.

I believe the lack of dedicated, qualified elders in a church pose the greatest threat to divisions and the loss of souls in the Lord's church today. Brethren, let us continue to pray that the Lord will "send forth laborers (evangelists) into the field", but also that He will "raise up elders in the churches".

But, what kind of men can thus serve? Are the qualifications so exacting that only a very few can qualify? When properly understood, there is a very little required than that required and expected of any Christian. All qualifications given are essential; not one can be ignored. Yet, we must remember that some are absolute and some(most) relative. (Relative means the qualification maybe possessed in degrees). Some are positive and some negative. Titus 1:5-9 is studied along with 1 Tim. 3:1-7 because they deal with the same thing.

Moral Virtues Or Character

As we look at the stated qualifications, I am indicating whether positive or negative; absolute or relative by abbreviations in parenthesis.

1. Blameless—no blame (Neg., Rel.). Because some look for perfection in a relative characteristic, many good men are declared unqualified, thus contributing to "no elders" churches.

2. Temperate, vigilant (Pos., Rel.).

3. Sober minded (Pos., Rel.).

4. Good behavior (Pos., Rel.).

5. Given to hospitality (Pos., Rel.).

6. Not given to wine (Neg., Abs.).

7. No striker—"ready with a blow-pugnacious" (Neg., Abs.).

8. Not greedy of filthy lucre—"eager for base gain-avaricious" (Neg., Abs.).

9. Patient — self control (Pos., Rel.).

10. Not a brawler—"quarrelsome over wine"—"drunken" (Neg., Abs.).

11. Not covetous (Neg., Abs.).

12. Good report from without (Pos., Abs.).

13. Not self-willed (Neg., Abs.). A deficiency here causes elders to act as bosses—lords, be intolerant of fellow elder's views, and members of the flock, which provokes suspicions, distrust, resentment, and strife. Elders should be immovable and unyielding in matters of faith, but in matters involving choice and judgment, a spirit of deference to others must exist. . . "wash their brethren's feet" (Jno. 13:12 -14).

14. Not soon angry (Neg., Rel.).

15. Just (Pos., Abs.).

16. Holy (Pos., Abs.—though holiness itself its relative).

Family Requirements

1. Husband of one wife (Pos., Abs.).

Various views of what is meant by this qualification have been given (No Concubinage, Polygamy, Remarriage, Bachelor elders, etc.). It should be obvious to all that the stated qualification is met if (1) the man has a wife, (2) any previous marriage ended in death, (3) any previous marriage ended by the wife being put away for adultery.

2. "Rule well his own house"—wife-children (Pos., Abs.).

Here, the elder -flock relationship is compared to the father -family relationship. The husband who is tyrant in his home, creating a feeling of fear and resentment, and provoking wrath, discouragement, and rebellion on the part of those in the home, would be the same way,

and do the same, if an elder in the Lord's church. A man's headship (rule) in his home is an indication of what he would be as an elder.

Children also enter into the qualifying of a man for the eldership. He is to have children "that believe" and who are "in subjection". How many children is not stated. Children is plural, but in Hebrew, Greek, and English the word is used so as to embrace the singular. Sarah nursed children though she only had one (Gen. 21:7). All of Jacobs sons and daughters rose up to comfort him, but he only had one daughter (Gen. 37:35). If the plural does not include the singular, then Moses' law "If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother (Matt. 22:24) would not apply until the man had at least two children. The same would be true of a widow qualifying for regular support from the church. She must have brought up at least two before she would qualify (1 Tim. 5:4). Those who would demand that one must have at least two children before he meets this qualification, are saying something the Bible does not say. In fact, they are making "children" mean something different from its Bible use. This concept has kept some congregations from having elders.

Extreme concepts of an elder and his family have contributed to "churches without elders". Some have an "impossibility of apostacy" concept of Prov. 22:6 regarding the "bringing up a child", so that if an offspring, no longer of the household, goes astray, even abandoning the faith, proves defectiveness in the father's training back at home years ago, and thereby forbids that godly father being appointed, or to continue serving, as an elder. More is expected of an elder than God, "who brought up children that rebelled" (Isa. 1:2). There have been cases of elders, with believing, submissive children, serving well for years, then another child came along later in life, and in the eyes of some, the elder became unqualified and would have to wait until that child became a believer and demonstrated submissiveness before he would again be qualified. Such extremes press the scriptural requirements beyond the truth and reason.

Certain Abilities

In order to do the work of an elder, there are certain capabilities that one must have. I think it would be much better to think of the eldership as a work that requires certain qualities or abilities than an office to be filled by men who meet specified qualifications. Maybe this would keep brethren from demanding perfection for every stated qualification.

One of these abilities is "apt to teach". The work "apt" is translated "able" in the NASB and NKJ. The qualification is positive, but relative. No one should try to make the degree of one's ability a necessity.

Another essential quality in this area is "Not a novice"—not a new convert, or one who has not had time to grow in faith and service. The requirement is negative and absolute. Some may go to extremes in setting how much time, which is not revealed. The time would involve whatever is needed to bring about the required condition or situation.

A third ability, essential to doing the work of an elder is "holding fast the faithful work" (Tit. 1:9). This quality is positive and absolute. One can not do the work of an elder without this. He cannot teach others the truth, exhort, convince the gainsayers, or set a proper example without this ability.

Conclusion

A man does not have to be "perfect" . . . with no weaknesses or frailties, above the possibility of being tempted, in order to serve as an elder. There is no such person. Any man who is a child of God, who has and does put to death the works of the flesh, develops the Christian graces (patience, gentleness, kindness, holiness, etc.), with a family that is God regulated wherein he demonstrates godly rule and management, and possesses an intense love and concern for truth and souls, is the kind of man who may be selected and appointed to serve a congregation as an elder. Such men in each church is "bread of life".

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THE BIBLE CLASS BLUES

It is customary to associate the color blue with depression, or with a melancholy disposition. I don't know why, for blue happens to be my favorite color, and brightens my life continually. But, I yield to the common usage of the term.

There is even a category of music known as The Blues. Such songs have been written about coal mines, freight trains, war, love, and all else in between. And, while I enjoy my present Bible class, and do not want to leave my readers in a depressed state of mind, there are enough ideas and practices associated with Bible classes to give a body the blues.

There is not enough Bible taught in most sectarian churches to justify usage of the term "Bible Class." Most Vacation Bible Schools are a farce, having more characteristics of a carnival than of a Bible school. The term VBS does about as much for me as the letters PTL.

But in churches of Christ, it should not be so. A Bible class should be exactly what the term implies—a class where the Bible is taught and studied. While this principle may be implemented in most churches of Christ, there are exceptions. And, from some things I have seen and heard, some classes need to change their name, shape up, or ship out.

Some church members regard the Bible class as a thing for women and children; or, as an opportunity for a few zealous Christians to gain "extra credit" in their quest for eternal life; or, as an occasion for the prodigal to do penance; or, simply as an optional introduction to "taking the emblems" (observing the Lord's supper).

But, there are other attitudes which disturb me even more than those just mentioned, attitudes manifested on the part of both teachers and students who are ordinarily faithful in attending Bible classes.

All congregations are not comprised of the same numbers of people, or even the same age groups. Local needs should determine the type of class, and the method of study. Special classes require special applications.

Most of what I have to say is based on experiences with what is generally termed the adult Bible class — a mixture of various ages, attitudes, and degrees of Bible knowledge. The audience consists of both church members and "outsiders." This adult Bible class, generally conducted in the auditorium, often conveys the first (and last), impressions received by people making their initial contact with the church of Christ. What do they see,

and hear? What must they think?

The Bible needs to be taught and emphasized. Any outline or course of study should spotlight the Bible, and not just a few Bible verses used to give a degree of respectability to some course or author. And, if the one teaching or making a comment is using a translation or version different from that which others have, or different from the Bible in the pews, make it known. It could avoid some confusion and misunderstanding.

I feel left out when I visit a class where everyone else has a workbook, there are no extra copies for visitors, the blanks have been mechanically filled in prior to class, there is no room or time for questions or discussion, and there is not a Bible in sight except the one you brought with you.

And, some courses do not have enough spiritual food in them, milk or meat, to feed the smallest appetite. Teachers have to improvise and ad lib in order to use up the time. No wonder some Bible classes are avoided, or used for yawning exercises. A baby's cry is a welcomed diversion.

I emphatically deny that a textual study of the Bible, either topical or expository, has to be dull or boring. There may be dull teachers and students, but the Bible contains the most interesting and exciting stories to be found anywhere. Even classes for small children need to emphasize the Bible, Bible stories, and Bible characters. But, back to the adult classes in the auditorium.

There are different ideas about what a Bible class should be. Some think it is a place to argue, to wrangle, and an open forum for a diversity of pet peeves.

One brother used to comment after the reading of each verse, "Brother Casebolt, why can't those sectarians see that?" Even when we came to 2 Pet. 2, he made the same comment. I told him, tactfully, that this chapter was primarily concerned with wayward children of God, not sectarians. This brother had spent most of his life in sectarianism, and could see little else.

Brethren sometimes forget that there are visitors, weak members, or even non-members in the audience. A brother (or sister), sitting near the front cannot see who is behind them. The teacher needs to see such things, and keep the discussion headed in the right direction. I believe in plain speech, but there is no need to be rude to visitors or other brethren.

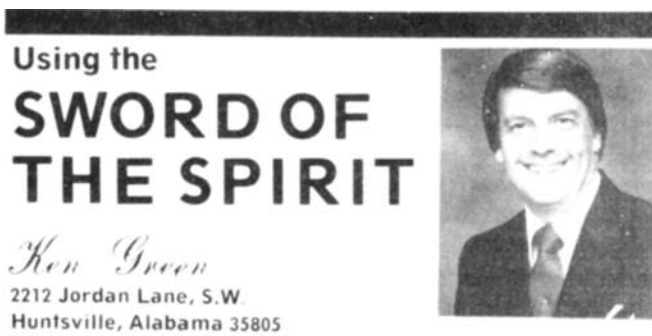
Some teachers don't help the situation much, or not at all. Their idea of a Bible class is to provoke class participation by any means. Participation is good, but it needs to be controlled. There are enough brethren who will think of some knotty problem or foolish question, without the teacher having to throw some bone of contention into the audience for people to gnaw on for an hour.

This method may be some teacher's idea of a lively class, or it may relieve the teacher of study and preparation, but edification should be the goal of a Bible class, not confusion and strife.

Some brethren don't believe in Bible classes, and just don't have them. Others may as well not have them, for all the good they do. Some are concerned that the Bible class may evolve into an organized Sunday School Society, and that is a possibility. But, some brethren are not

about to organize their Sunday morning or mid-week periods of confusion or lethargy out of existence. It is their favorite hour of entertainment.

Few churches encourage the study of the Bible, or provide opportunities for people to learn its truths. The sectarian concept of "Sunday School" has alienated a lot of people. Churches of Christ need to live up to their claim to acquaint people with the wonderful message of the Bible. We need to redeem the time and teach as many people as possible, peradventure a few will yet obey. The longsuffering of God demands it (2 Peter. 3:9).



SPURGEON'S LECTURES

It would do any preacher good to read C. H. Spurgeon's "Lectures To My Students." This 19th century work by perhaps the most famous Baptist preacher of all time is curious for its antiquated reference; yet is timeless as it addresses our human nature which just doesn't change from century to century.

Under title, "The Call To The Ministry," Spurgeon tells of one young gentleman who had left on his mind "the photograph of his exquisite self."

"That same face of his looked like the title-page to a whole volume of conceit and deceit," added Mr. Spurgeon.

The young man sent word that he must see Spurgeon, and upon entrance to his office, "Sir, I want to enter your college, and should like to enter it at once."

"Well, Sir," said I, "I fear we have no room for you at present, but your case shall be considered."

"But mine is a remarkable case, Sir; you have probably never received such an application as mine before."

"Very good, we'll see about it; the secretary will give you one of the application papers, and you can see me on Monday."

He arrived on Monday with the questions answered in a most extraordinary way. "He claimed to have read all ancient and modern literature, and after giving an immense list he added, 'this is but a selection; I have read most extensively in all departments.'"

"As to his preaching, he could produce the highest testimonials, but hardly thought they would be needed, as a personal interview would convince me of his ability at once."

"His surprise was great when I said, 'Sir, I am obliged to tell you I cannot receive you.'"

"Why not, Sir?"

"I will tell you plainly. You are so dreadfully clever that I could not insult you by receiving you into our college, where we have none but rather ordinary men; the president, tutors, and students, are all men of moderate attainments, and you would have to condescend too much in coming among us."

The young gentleman looked at Spurgeon severely, and said with dignity, "Do you mean to say, that because I have an unusual genius, and I have produced in myself a gigantic mind such as is rarely seen, I am refused admittance into your college?"

"Yes," Spurgeon replied.

"Then Sir, you ought to allow me a trial of my preaching abilities; select me any text you like, or suggest any subject you please, and here in this very room I will speak upon it, or preach upon it without deliberation, and you will be surprised."

"No, thank you, I would rather not have the trouble of listening to you."

"Trouble, Sir! I assure you it would be the greatest possible pleasure you could have."

Spurgeon assured him it might be, but that he felt himself unworthy of the privilege, and bade him a long farewell.

Spurgeon later tells of a story which had been related to him of a young man who desired to go to India in connection with the London Missionary Society. He was to be examined as to his fitness for such a post by a Matthew Wilks.

Mr. Wilks wrote the young gentleman and told him to call upon him at six o'clock the next morning. Though he had to walk many miles, he was at the house punctually. Mr. Wilks, however, kept him waiting for several hours. Finally, he arrived in the room and began the interview.

"Well, young man, so you want to be a missionary? Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"Yes, Sir, I hope I do."

"And have you had any education?"

"Yes, Sir, a little."

"Well, now, we'll try you; can you spell 'cat'?"

The young man hardly knew how to answer, but he replied steadily, "C-A-T, cat."

"Very good, now can you spell 'dog'?"

The youth replied, "D-O-G, dog."

"Well, that is right; I see you will do in your spelling, and now for your arithmetic; how many are twice two?"

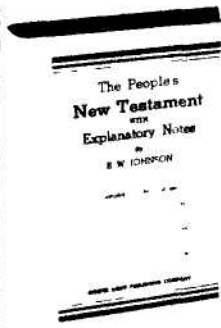
Mr. Spurgeon comments, "It is a wonder that Mr. Wilks did not receive 'twice two' after the fashion of muscular Christianity, but the patient youth gave the right reply and dismissed."

Matthew Wilks at the committee meeting said, "I cordially recommend that young man; his testimonials and character I have duly examined, and besides that, I have given him a rare personal trial such as few could bear.

"I tried his self-denial, he was up in the morning early; I tried his temper, and I tried his humility; he can spell 'cat' and 'dog', and can tell that 'twice two make four', and he will do for a missionary exceedingly well."

May the Lord give us strength to live by these words, "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. 6:3-10)

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There are few words as chilling as "death." It is not a concept we enjoy thinking about very much and yet we all recognize, some of us more distinctly than others, that it is stark reality—no one will escape its icy grip. In large measure, Christians are Christians because of their concern about what takes place after physical death. Every funeral we attend or every death we read about brings the reality back home to our minds—"we too will pass through the experience."

How ought we to think about death? I would like to suggest that we think about it in terms of "shifts." I believe we'll see that the apostle Paul's view of death warrants such a view. Some folks work "shifts" in their jobs and are familiar with three elements of shift-work: the "day shift", the "swing shift" and the "nights shift." Let's consider what the scriptures say about death, using this analogy. As we do so, keep in mind that the Christian ought to view his life as preparation for death. "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). This does not present a dim view of life, but a simple, healthy recognition of its brevity. "Indeed, You have made my days as hand-breadths, and my age is as nothing before You; certainly, every man at his best state is but a vapor" (Psa. 39:5).

Let's first consider the "Day Shift." Paul tells us in 2 Cor. 4:16-5:11 that this body in which we live is on the way out. He says it's "perishing" (4:16); that it is a "tent" -i. e., temporary (5:1); that we "groan" (5:2); that we are "burdened" (5:4). Paul proves the proposition—we had better prepare for the "night shift" while on the "day shift"! There is no future here! "Here we have no continuing city" (Heb. 13:14). Therefore, our life must be lived by faith, not by sight (4:18; 5:7) and it is a life of preparation with *assurance* that the best is yet to come. Paul says "we know" that we have a building from God (5:1). He says that it is God Himself who has prepared us for this very thing and has given us the Spirit as a guarantee (5:5). "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord." Christian, where would you rather be? We are to make the most of our time on the "day shift." But let's be aware that it is coming to a close.

When life is over, what happens? Yes, we die. But what happens at the moment of death? This moment we might call the "Swing Shift" and about it we know virtually nothing. God has not chosen to reveal to us things concerning the experience of death itself. Hence,

because of our lack of knowledge of this element of death, we "fear" death and I believe it is a healthy fear which God has placed within us. I regard with great skepticism anyone who says that they have "no fear" of this aspect of death. It is natural to possess some fear of those things about which we have little knowledge. Death is real (Heb. 9:27) and death is sudden (Eccl. 9:12). The right-thinking Christian never entertains a "death wish." For example, he would not commit suicide, even if it wasn't sin. He doesn't think that way! It is true, as Paul said, that "to die is gain" but it is equally true that "to live is Christ." While we must live our life in preparation for death, we are not "zombies" or celestial tenants just waiting to die. There are those, as someone once said, that are "so heavenly-minded that they are no earthly good."

It is the death in the long view that Christians do not fear. The after-life, we'll call it the "Night Shift," is something we do indeed look forward to. Our love of life is never put in place of our love for the Lord and we willingly give it up when called to do so. Why? Because we do not fear the experience of death itself? No, but because we value the prospect of being with the Lord from then on (2 Cor. 5:8). We look at death, under this aspect, as an extension of "life." Jesus said in Jn. 11:25, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live." Paul called it, in 2 Cor. 4:17, the "eternal weight of glory" which bears no comparison to the temporary troubles we might have to undergo while here on earth. It can truly be said that, for the Christian, death is not a period but a comma. Paul told the Thessalonians that they should temper their sorrow, since those who had passed on had simply "fallen asleep" (1 Thess. 4:13). I like to think of my godly grandparents as having fallen asleep or as moving on to the "night shift" along with that great "cloud of witnesses" we read about in Hebrews 12:1-2.

If we truly accept the premise that death is what we are preparing for, it ought to change the way we think. Jesus said we need to die to this life (Jn 12:24-25) and Paul says we are citizens of heaven (Eph. 3:20). Christians think like people whose civic status is heaven, who have died to the world and its attractions. So, death is merely the transition into that state with which we have already become accustomed. And a person who thinks that way fashions his life goal upon that basis. "Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well-pleasing to Him" (2 Cor. 5:9). Have you obeyed His voice? Are you ready?

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GOSPEL PREACHING:

FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS OR A "NEW" IMAGE?

Ron Halbrook
654 Gray St.
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Since the Word of God is the final standard of truth, the subject matter for gospel preaching is as wide as Divine Revelation itself. "All the counsel of God" should be declared (Acts 20:27). We dare not sacrifice any truth to broaden our appeal to suit the fancies of a generation with itching ears (2 Tim. 4:2-4). The following points are *some* of the fundamentals which have always distinguished the true people of God and which need repeated emphasis in our time. Churches of Christ need to be doing everything in their power to stand for such principles as these:

1. The church must be known as *a people of "The Book"* because we are devoted to its Author as our Rock and our Redeemer. As individuals we must personally know God's Word and serve its Author. As a church we must constantly appeal to that Word and examine ourselves by its teaching in all things (Jn. 6:63; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

2. We want to be known as believing that salvation is *wholly of grace in its origin, provision, and revelation*, but also to be known as emphatically teaching that saving grace is *received only upon the terms and conditions of the gospel* (Eph. 2:8-9; Acts 19:5, 18-20). This means the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ must be at the heart of *all* our preaching. The *necessity* of faith, repentance, and baptism must be made crystal clear.

3. We want to be known as a people of God who strive to work together in *peace and unity based on the Master's Word*, and a people who will *not tolerate ungodly living and false doctrine* (Acts 20:28-32; Jn. 10:1-30).

4. We want to communicate to our community an image of the church as an *undenominational* body, but more than that, as a body *opposed to denominationalism as sinful*—just like any other sin (Gal. 5:19-20; 1 Cor. 1:10-13).

5. We want to be seen as a church which believes in the *reality of heaven and hell* in teaching on the future destiny of the soul — a church which is not only *not teaching Premillennialism* but also *teaching against Premillennialism* as damnable heresies which deny the Lord and bring certain destruction to souls (Matt. 25:46; 2 Pet. 2:1).

6. The church must be seen not only as standing *for morality* but also as *openly opposing every form of immorality* whether homosexual sins, pre-marital sex, or unscriptural divorces and remarriages (Jn. 8:1-11; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

7. We want to be known for standing in *defense of purity* in thought, word, and deed, for instance encour-

aging modesty in dress, while *rebuking every form of impurity and lasciviousness* including immodest dress (Matt. 5:27-32; 18:6; Tit. 2:11-14).

8. We must be recognized as *supporting serious, sober, watchful living*, and as *reproving intoxication and drug abuse of all kinds* including social drinking (1 Pet. 4:1-3; 5:8-9).

9. We want to be known *for scriptural worship* and for *open, unyielding opposition to every innovation* in worship including instrumental music (Acts 2:42; Eph. 5:19; 1 Tim. 1:3).

10. We want to be seen practicing *the Bible pattern for church organization* and *opposing institutionalism* and every other form of departure (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:14-15; 4:1-2).

11. We must be a people who *love their neighbors* enough to personally plant the seed of the kingdom and bless them in every possible way as we have ability and opportunity on an individual basis, but who also *oppose every carnal appeal of the social gospel* in the work of the church (Acts 8:3-4; Gal. 6:10; 1 Cor. 11:34).

12. In summary, we must try as hard as we can to be a church which preaches that there is *only one right way in religion!* Christ *alone* is the Savior of all men, the gospel system is the *only true revelation* of how God makes man righteous, and the Bible pattern for the church is the *only one* God gave or approves. "We" are not the standard in anything but God's Word is the standard to which all men must yield and submit (Jn. 14:6; Gal. 1:8-9; Eph. 4:4-6).

Some among us decided that even though churches of Christ emphasized in the past such principles as are listed above, brethren need a new public image which is to be created by telling what we *stand for* very loudly, and letting what we *oppose* "take care of itself." In other words, we ought to emphasize what the public finds "positive" and appealing, but de-emphasize if not eliminate what the people find "negative" or offensive—like the disciples suggested to Jesus in Matthew 15:12. With this trend comes the idea that the names of false religions, false doctrines, and false teachers ought not to be specified (contrary to the example of Jesus in Matthew 16:6-12).

Another facet of the subtle shift occurring in some quarters is to borrow as much as possible from the most "successful" religious movements of our time. This means highlighting the experiential, the subjective, the positive mental attitude" philosophy, the sensational, the entertaining, the emotional, the how-to-feel-good-about-yourself mesmerism that came out of the me-generation of the 1970's. *Salesmanship techniques* and *motivational jargon* borrowed from the marketplace along with a good dose of *pop psychology* are taking *precedence over plain, serious preaching of the word of the truth of the gospel as God's power to save* (Col. 1:5; Rom. 1:16).

Exposing error and condemning sin is considered counter-productive, unloving, and especially "traditional" and out-of-date (maybe o.k. for earlier times, but cannot get the job done today). Historians have noted such a shift of emphasis in the denominational world for

several decades. A review of "the most exhaustive study of ministry in the U. S. and Canada every undertaken" contained the following observations:

Ministering in America (Harper & Row; \$24.95) deals with the qualities that people in local parishes seem to want in their ministers. Time was when Protestants — liberal or conservative in theology — sought strong spiritual leadership and preaching, personal counsel based on the Bible, even some evangelistic flair. Now, says the report, the liberal churches want mostly pop psychology.

The survey sample covered 43 Protestant denominations with 55 million members (plus Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Unitarians and Reform Jews). The most desirable traits: 1) "Open Affirming Style"; 2) "Caring for Persons under Stress" (with no mention of any religious content); 3) "Congregational Leadership." To a striking extent, many people put appealing personal qualities well above traditional pastoral concern for doctrine and spiritual life, or other worldly values based on the teachings of the Bible.

All are qualities involved with psychological jargon, interpersonal relationships and group dynamics ("A Pallid But Personable Faith?" *Time Magazine*, 29 Sept 1980, p. 85).

This spirit is *rampant* among liberal churches of Christ as they grab at every fad and fancy which offers the promise of momentary popularity. This spirit is only a *trend* among more conservative brethren and now is the time to examine ourselves before its siren song seduces us and destroys our strength as the people of God.

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KEITH E. CLAYTON, 7 Buttolph Dr., Middlebury, VT 05753—The Addison County church of Christ will be moving out of the Cartmell Complex in Middlebury to our new location in New Haven, 2.8 miles north of the Middlebury town line. Our new location is just off U. S. Route 7, on Campground Road, and is visible from Route 7, being only a couple hundred yards off the westerly side. Heading west on Campground Road, we are the first building on the left. Come visit us at our newly rented facility. Our regular assembly times are: Sunday at 9:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. and Wednesdays at 7:00 P.M.

NEW PUBLICATION

DAVID E. PRATTE, 7021 Omaha Court, Ft. Wayne, In 46804—Many families are seeking effective alternatives to the problems that exist in the public school system. Properly done, home education can be a valid alternative. FAMILY TIMES is an informal newsletter for people who want more information about home schooling, or for families who are already home schooling and would like support and encouragement. It is written by home-schoolers who are members of a faithful local church of Christ, and is designed for the special benefit of true New Testament Christians. Family Times will be published

four times a year. The subscription price is \$2.00. Those who would like a sample copy or more information should write: **FAMILY TIMES**, 7846 St. Joe Rd., Ft. Wayne, IN 46835.

PREACHING IN ALASKA

JADY W. COPELAND, P.O. Box 1528, Springdale, Ar 72765—For the last three weeks in July and the first week of August, my wife and I were in Alaska, "the last frontier", for four meetings. The first was at Soldotna where Sam Binkley (not to be confused with his father) was then preaching, though he has since moved. They have about 20 members. They have completed a building (except for some trim work) which will seat about 100 in present form. They have been hindered in the past by not having their own facility. The Fred Howes family have been greatly responsible for the work there.

Next we went to Fairbanks where the church is much smaller than before due to job related moves of several families within the past year. Alaska's economy has been hurt by the oil crunch. There are now 16 members here. Cecil Willis is now working with them and doing a good job. He is working with some young men who have good potential. Joe and Sylvia King have been faithful members in Fair-

banks for a number of years and they continue to be a source of strength in the work. They have a nice building and meet at present in the basement. The upper part is partially completed and will be finished when needed. The brethren appreciate Cecil's work.

Don Spicer moved to Barrow from Anchorage about a year ago and his family along with one other family meet in his home. Both families are rather large and the membership is 10. Barrow is made up largely of natives who are tradition bound and difficult to reach. They hope that a new generation might not be so wed to religious tradition.

Dean Crews works with the church in Anchorage. He has been there five years. He is doing a good work and the church is doing well. As with other places, they have lost some families but still have about 100 meeting there. They are blessed with good elders and prospects for future growth are good.

Prices are high in Alaska and therefore wages for preachers (as well as others) must be higher. While it is true that it gets plenty cold in the inner regions of the state, Anchorage is little different, we are told, from coastal cities in the lower 48 states. When making plans for vacations, consider Alaska and visit brethren there. They are among the most hospitable people I have met in many years. So far as I know, there are only four non-institutional churches in Alaska, and we were glad to hold meetings in each place. It is good to know that brethren are being true to His word in all parts of the world.

SOME HELP NEEDED

Maezel Bates, wife of gospel preacher Carol Bates of Cottage Grove, Oregon, is now undergoing extensive radiation and chemotherapy to treat "stage two" breast cancer, in addition to surgery. Medical insurance has paid some of this, but not nearly all. In spite of help already received from brethren, family and friends, there is still a considerable balance to be paid (and the treatments will continue for a time). We saw Carol and Maezel in July while in a meeting at Albany, Oregon, about 30 miles from Cottage Grove. They attended three nights of the meeting. Her spirits are excellent and she is handling this set-back with the attitude of one who walks with the Lord and trusts Him completely. I have known Carol and Maezel Bates for many years. Their work has been faithful and true. They did not send this appeal. I am making it known because I think good brethren will want to know and help if they can. Also, cards and notes of encouragement would mean a great deal. Above all, join with them and with all of us, who know and love them, in fervent prayer. Contact: Mr. and Mrs. N. Carol Bates, 236 Adams Ave., Cottage Grove, Oregon 97424.—Editor.

LIFE'S A LOT THAT WAY

FRED MELTON, 1915 Tomball Parkway, Houston, Texas 77070

I went back one day where dreams had spanned a lifetime. I sat again by the cool stream as autumn began to shed her cloak of crimson gold. As I remained mesmerized by the rippling clear water, a leaf glided down from the trees above to rest in a quiet pool at my feet. As it nestled there stone still among many of its fellows, I noticed that it was wrinkled and brown. Continuing to stare at this one fallen leaf, I discovered there were streaks of yellow and gold still discernible and even strains of faded green which spoke of its useful life in days gone by. All the trees around me were suddenly shaken by a shifting southwest breeze and I looked to see hundreds of vibrant yellow leaves drifting through shafts of sunlight toward the valley floor to make way for next year's green.

It was then I knew that our lives are a lot that way. If one lives according to God's divine plan, life's colors will surely show through; perhaps even at their brightest just before they fall asleep among their brethren in God's green earth, never more to be seen by the eyes of this old world.

PAUL K. WILLIAMS reports from south Africa that three have been baptized and one restored. One of these was baptized in Zululand, another in Eshowe as a result of a tent meeting. Another was baptized as a result of a tent meeting. Another was baptized as a result of follow-up from a correspondence course. Also, the church in Eshowe with-drew from two. The William's are making are making plans to visit in the USA from August-October, 1988. He would like to hear from

churches who are interested in the work in South Africa and would be glad to conduct some meetings while here.

STEFANO CORAZZA REPORTS FROM Udine, Italy that one was baptized there recently. She is a 21 year-old woman who is engaged to a young man who was baptized in March, 1987.

EFRAIN F. PEREZ of Valparaiso, Chile reports that three groups have been converted in the Valparaiso area after six months of teaching. In July, 1987 a former pentecostal preacher (who was leader of these three groups) was baptized. Since then many others have followed. Five were baptized on August 29 from Limache and LA Narvaes including four men who are now taking the preacher training course.

PREACHERS NEEDED

BEDFORD, OHIO—The Columbus Street church is looking for an experienced gospel preacher. The church can provide a house and full support. Bedford is located 14 miles southeast of Cleveland. IF interested, please contact either of the elders, Jerry Paugh (216) 255-5493; or Joe Stano (216) 232-8286.

OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA—The Okeechobee church of Christ needs a preacher for full time work. Usual attendance is 25-35 on Sundays (40-60 in winter). Partial support is available. Those interested may call James Wagster (813) 763-9612.

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

WHAT THE SEAT CAN ENDURE

Every now and then we are treated to the wisdom that "the mind can only absorb what the seat can endure." This is offered to prompt preachers to be brief. I do not favor repetitious sermons or rambling discourses without apparent design. Every speaker needs to build rapport with his audience and be alert to signs of weariness or loss of interest. Every speaker cannot hold an audience for long periods of time. But it needs to be said that the seat can endure whatever the mind wills. Whatever occupies the mind will determine very often what the seat can endure. That is what enables people to sit for hours to drive to a vacation spot or to see relatives long missed. That is what empowers us to stay strapped in a seat on a jet plane across the country, or halfway around the world. That is what caused me to sit for 7 hours in a school taught by a physical therapist a few weeks after back surgery, with only a five minute stretch every hour. That is what causes people to sit through baseball double-headers and football games. The mind wills it and the seat endures it. The saying is catchy and usually draws a laugh, but it is actually a reverse of the truth. Let's get it straight—"The seat can endure what the mind wills it to endure." Now, that's more like it.

THE GOSPEL IS FOR ALL

In traveling over the country the last few years, and especially the past two, I noticed more and more racially integrated churches, especially in the deep south, —in the midwest and on the eastern seaboard. Not only do I see sizeable numbers of blacks and whites worshipping and working together, but I see blacks serving as elders, deacons, song leaders and teachers. That is as it should be. The gospel is for all. There will be no separate compartments in heaven for different races.

WINTER CLASSES

The editor looks forward to winter classes at Manslick Road church during December, January and February. In addition to classes on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights, there will be a Monday night class on SOUL WINNING and a Friday morning class on the book of HEBREWS. While these classes are planned as a part of the teaching work of the Manslick Road church for the edification of the members of that local body, we are glad to welcome any from the surrounding areas who are free at those times. We have taught winter series since 1965. All students should bring a Bible and a notebook. The Friday morning class lasts from 10:00 AM. to 12 noon.

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 XXVIII

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Number 12

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549



BUILDING BY GRACE UPON THE RIGHT FOUNDATION

It is important to build upon the right foundation for eternity. Millions are making no effort at all upon any foundation. Many are trying to build spiritually upon some foundation, but upon the wrong one. Some have found the right foundation, but are doing very little building. Others have the right foundation, but they take no heed how they build thereupon. A few have the right foundation and are building upon it as the word of God teaches.

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:10,11).

Paul declared that he had laid the foundation "according to a wise master-builder," he did not decide what foundation to lay. It was according to the "grace of God" which was given to him. The grace of God is that unearned kindness extended to man. It refers to different things in the word of God. In the passage under consideration, the grace of God given to Paul enabled him to lay the foundation and obviously refers to the revelation of the Son of God. "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem

to them which were apostles before me . . ." (Galatians 1:15-17). In chapter 2 Paul tells of his experience in Jerusalem with the apostles. "... when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter" ... "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision" (Galatians 2:7, 9).

Again, "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to youward: how that by revelation he made know unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:2-5). Verse 7 speaks of the gift of the grace of God given unto him by the effectual working of his power. And in verse 8: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

When Paul said he had laid the foundation, and there is no other, he laid it according to the "grace of God which is given unto me." In Acts 20: 32 Paul said: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Again, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11,12).

The only foundation upon which one can build spiritually is from the revelation given by Paul concerning Jesus Christ, who is the foundation (Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 3:11). Since the only foundation to be laid is Jesus Christ, and since Paul has already laid the foundation, and no man can lay another, we must build only upon the revelation given to Paul concerning Christ.

Some religious leaders try to lay another foundation by speaking things of Christ not revealed to Paul by the

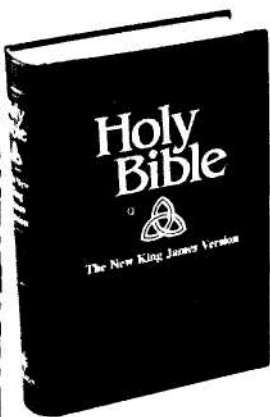
grace of God given to him. They try to cut off both ends of this revelation by denying the virgin birth of Christ, and the resurrection of Christ from the grave is rejected. In effect this takes away the foundation laid by Paul and substitutes another in the name of Christ. Now spiritual building upon a foundation of this kind is not worth the time it takes to speak of it. If one is to build to please God, he must build upon this foundation; he cannot build upon any other.

That foundation laid by Paul, according to the grace of God given unto him — the revelation of His Son — must include the facts of his Sonship and his "all authority" in heaven and earth. He must be accepted as King of kings and Lord of lords. His word must be believed and obeyed in full.

It is not enough to claim to believe in the Christ Paul declared and then disregard the word of Christ that came to us by the apostles whom he had chosen and empowered with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven (Acts 1:2; 1 Peter 1:12). We hear many today who claim to believe in this Christ, yet they totally disregard the word of Christ when it does not suit their purpose. These are not building upon the foundation of the word of God of which we have been speaking. They will be lost! We must take heed how we build upon this foundation, which was laid by the grace of God.

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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EDITORIAL STEW

FULLTIME WHAT?

Paul wrote: that "they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). It is beyond question, for those who respect the word of God, that gospel preachers have a right to be supplied with material needs so that they can devote their entire lives to the work of the gospel. Such support should be adequate to the demands of the times and circumstances where one has to live. This support is not charity, it is a "wage" (2 Cor. 11:8). Gospel preachers are not beggars and they should neither be treated as such, nor should they ever regard themselves in such a fashion when they must ask for help to go and preach in needy places.

But with all that said, when a man accepts support for "full-time" work in the kingdom, he ought to do "full-time" work in the kingdom! He is entitled to some free time for his family and for his own personal well being. He cannot work 16 or 18 hours a day, week in and week out, without paying a heavy price in terms of his health and sorrow brought on by a neglected wife and children. But "full-time" work does not mean that a man ought to have unlimited time to baby-sit while his wife works. If she thinks he has nothing to do, because she sees him sit with books open while he reads and ponders, or has to go here and there to talk to people about the Lord, then she needs to be educated as to what his work really is. Gadding about the community might make the "good old boys" down at the corner cafe think you are a "regular fellow", or spending a great deal of time involved in civic activities might cause you to be regarded as a pillar in the community and a good influence, but these are not evangelism. A man cannot be effective as a hermit, but social or civic-butterflyism is not evangelism.

There is never any excuse for a gospel preacher having very little to do with his time. There is so much to learn and so many good tools available these days to help with that process. A man can never preach or teach what he does not know. And he cannot know what he has not studied. Having spent adequate time in study and prayer, he needs to seek out opportunities to teach both "publicly and from house to house." My brother, if you are going to accept support for "full-time" work, then do "full-time" work. It is dishonest to do otherwise.

PUNCTUALITY IN SUPPORT

Having personally been on the receiving end of support from several places to labor in an isolated field, I know how to appreciate brethren who are always punctual in sending support. Often, men who labor overseas in remote areas of our own country, face serious financial problems because some who agreed to support them are so unpredictable as to when that support will arrive. That forces such brethren to have to juggle house payments, rent, car payments, or other regular monthly expenses, until such support comes. Sometimes letters have to be written or phone calls made to inquire into it. All right, brethren, how would you like to have to track down your pay check? Some church treasurers do an excellent job in keeping up with all of that (and it is a very responsible job, and one often not fully appreciated). But some are negligent and wait and send two or three months at one time, not realizing what a crisis this may create. Maybe a little better communication on both sides of the problem would help.

YOUNG MOTHERS

Everywhere we go there are young mothers who are present at every service along with babes in arms, or preschool children who grow tired, weary and sometimes fretful by the last two or three days of a meeting. I know there are times when such young women wonder why they even bother to come at all. Usually, the children disturb the mothers (and sometime fathers) much more than they do others. But take heart, young mothers. You are establishing an important pattern with your children and you are setting a good example for the rest. It takes real dedication to hang in there and keep on trying when you and the children grow weary. You may think you will never smell like anything but sour, spit-up milk, ever again, but your worthy example is a sweet smelling savor ascending before the throne of the Almighty. God bless you!

W. C. SANDEFUR

With sadness we note the sudden death of W. C. Sandefur, faithful gospel preacher of Salem, Indiana. He succumbed to a sudden heart attack on October 11. We have no details about the funeral at this writing. He was 58 years old. We first came to know "Sandy" when he preached at Milbridge, Maine. He did much good work there with excellent results. For the past several years he has labored with the church at Salem, Indiana, helping it to develop into full scriptural organization. Perhaps we can have a more extensive report later. We will miss him and extend out kindest sympathies to his wife and children.

SPECIAL ISSUE PLANNED

Sometime in the spring of 1988, we plan a special issue of this paper entitled: CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHURCH. We will ask our regular column writers to produce the material. Be watching for later announcements.

BOUND VOLUME

We are rapidly rounding out the 28th year of this publication. Every two years we bind 200 copies in hard back, in attractive blue buckram to match all previous

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NEW PUBLICATION TO FOCUS ON EVANGELISM

A new bimonthly magazine called SPREADING THE WORD is published in Nashville, Tennessee with William C. Tuggle as editor and Royce Chandler as editor of foreign work. In an opening editorial, editor Tuggle said "Therefore, the single theme of SPREADING THE WORD will be the work of evangelism." Both home and foreign evangelism will be emphasized with teaching articles and news reports from around the world. There is a need to reawaken brethren and rekindle zeal for the work of the gospel over the whole world. Therefore, this paper should serve a much needed purpose. The first edition contains articles not only by the editors, but by Ray Ferris, Dennis Freeman, Cathy Hardage, Leslie Diestelkamp, Steve Rudd, Gardner Hall, Bill Reeves, Greg Brown and Keith Clayton, plus a reprint from James P. Miller. Charter subscriptions are offered for \$9 for two years (12 issues), or \$7.50 for a club of five or more. They also advertise a bulk rate for bundles to one address. Those interested may address them at: STW Publications, 950 Glendale Lane, Nashville, TN 3724. It looks good and should DO much good.

LET THEM KNOW

If you find special help or encouragement from some article, why not take a moment and send a note of thanks to the author of that article. It means a great deal to a writer to learn that his effort has touched a life and made a difference.

THANKS TO...

Jane Ashbrook for her faithful and efficient work in the office of STS. She keeps the business work on schedule when we have to be **who knows where** in meetings. This is not only a great benefit to our subscribers but a great relief to us in the necessary travels for our work.

David Key and his excellent office force at RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER (**Marie Ricks, Mary Catherine (Wimpy) Threlkel, and Phyllis Key**) for their continued patronage in advertising through this paper. Except for the church ads, Religious Supply Center is the only client we have. Their store is well stocked with books, tracts, class materials, Communion supplies,

maps, and other needed things and their service is excellent and always friendly. David is expanding floor space, **again**. Why not "give them the business." They will make you glad you did.

CONGENIAL CO-WORKERS

It is a great blessing to work with the six good elders at the Manslick Rd. church in Louisville. Donnie Rader is the local preacher and does his work with much ability. It is a pleasure to get to hear him preach when we are home. A. C. Grider is here off and on between meetings and teaches a Wednesday night class when he is home. It is an enriching experience to be around him and his good wife, Hallie. Fortunate are those churches which get to hear this veteran of the cross. We are neighbors, living just one mile apart (though he insists that I live on the WRONG side of the railroad tracks which run between our places). We see little of each other during the meeting months but during the winter months we get to visit more. We are thankful that our lot has been cast in such a good place, surrounded by such faithful servants of God. There is much talent at Manslick Road. A recent series of bulletin articles on "The Family" was written entirely by men of the congregation and it was rich. Raymond Byers, an elder here for many years, is now retired from his work as a building contractor and will be able to devote much more time to the work of the congregation. The Lord has truly smiled upon us.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO ...

OUR READERS. Many of you have stayed with us ever since we began this publication. Because of you, we have been able to keep the paper in operation. You have sent the paper to friends, relatives and other brethren. You have shown admirable trust, patience and love, even when we used poor judgment, or just plain "goofed." We need you, still, but please be advised that we also love you.

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THE PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence" (Col. 1:15-18).

The Colossian letter sets before us Jesus Christ our Lord in all of His supreme majesty, honor, power, and glory. This is done in such a measure and with such emphasis as to excel that found anywhere else in the New Testament. The reason for so exalting Christ involved heresies that threatened the future security of this church. These heresies reflected on the person and work of Christ in redeeming mankind. Therefore, the apostle Paul emphasized the pre-eminence of Christ. From this point of truth it follows that all men are "complete in him" (Col. 2:10). So far as our spiritual welfare is concerned, nothing more is needed. This lesson was urgently needed then, and I am persuaded that the need is equally urgent in our day.

Background Knowledge

A little background knowledge, geographical, historical, and circumstantial, will help us to understand better and to appreciate more the efforts of Paul in our text as well as throughout the epistle.

GEOGRAPHICALLY — Colossae was located on the main trade route from Ephesus and the Aegean coast to the Eastern world, about one hundred miles east of Ephesus at the head of the Lycus River Valley — the gateway to the East. Colossae was one of three once very prominent and prosperous cities, namely, Hierapolis, Laodicea, and Colossae. Hierapolis was about six miles north of Laodicea on the slope of the mountain range that enclosed the valley on the north. Laodicea was on the south bank of the Lycus river, a tributary to the Maeander. Colossae was about ten miles up the river to the east at the foot of Mt. Cadmus (8250 ft. high) which stood like a sentinel overlooking the Lycus River Valley.

HISTORICALLY — Many years before, Antiochus the Great had transplanted two thousand Jewish families from Babylon and Mesopotamia into this area. They prospered so well that many more of their fellow countrymen — even from Palestine — came to share in their

prosperity. Hence, we might well expect that while the Colossian church was largely Gentile, it would have a good sized Jewish element in it.

CIRCUMSTANTIALY — Epaphras, "a faithful minister of Christ" (Col. 1:7) and of the Colossian church (Col. 4:12) had visited Paul in prison in Rome (Col. 1:7, 8). From him Paul had learned much about the churches in the Lycus River Valley (Cf. Col. 4:13). Paul rejoiced over the Colossians' "faith in Christ," their "love toward all the saints," their fruitfulness, their "love in the Spirit" and their "steadfastness of faith" (Col. 1:4, 6, 8; 2:5). However, his heart was made heavy when he learned of that which threatened the future security of this fine church.

Heresies in the Church

While much has been written concerning "the Colossian Heresy," there is little agreement as to what it was. Some have grouped all of the heresies under one heading, namely, Gnosticism. One thing is certain. We can determine the dangers that threatened this church by taking careful notice of the epistle itself and the errors exposed, reproved, and condemned therein by Paul.

Judaism — sought to bind on believers ceremonies of the law of Moses, insisting that such were necessary to salvation. This issue was to be expected in view of the Jewish population in that area and the Jewish element in the church. Paul deals with it very pointedly, saying, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come: but the body is of Christ" (Col. 2:14-17). Thus, Paul shows that such were only a shadow of things to come, and since the reality has come, no man is accountable for observing such today. We are complete in him (Col. 2:10). To contend otherwise is to reflect on Christ. No wonder Paul said elsewhere "Whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4).

Philosophy — The influence of the Grecian Philosophers was wide spread throughout this part of the world. This philosophy placed undue emphasis on knowledge and wisdom, insisting that one's spiritual welfare depended upon such in addition to that found in the gospel of Christ. Hence, Paul warned: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit. . ." (Col. 2:8). Furthermore, concerning Christ he said, "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3). Indeed, we are complete in Him!

Asceticism — was taught by the Pagans of that day. It affirmed that bodily torture and a denial of bodily appetites made for greater spiritual development. Thus, many lived an ascetic type of life even to the point of suffering injury to their health and physical well being. Even some of the restraints of Judaism became a part of this overall doctrine. That such had worked its way into the church is evident from what Paul wrote in the Colossian letter showing that such ordinances were of

the world and after the commandments and doctrines of men: "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" (Col. 2:20-22). Paul foresaw such practices as departures from the faith and warned against it (1 Tim. 4:5). Later, with the development of Roman Catholicism, we find that some of it's tenets involved in part of the old doctrine of asceticism, namely, the doctrine of celibacy and the eating of certain meats.

Gnosticism — involved as a basic tenet that the spirit is good and matter is evil. Since God is Spirit and altogether good, He could not possibly touch matter.

Therefore God is not creator of the world. On this point Gnosticism taught that God sent out emanations, each farther away than the last so that finally one could touch matter; that the farther away from God, the more ignorant of and the more hostile toward God such an emanation would be, and that by such an emanation the world was created (Cf. comments by William Barclay, **The Letters To The Philippians, Colossians, and Thesalonians**, pp. 118-19).

Furthermore, it follows from such a premise that if Jesus Christ is the Son of God, He could not have dwelt in a flesh and blood body. This doctrine was widespread throughout the churches of Asia (Cf. 2 Jno. 7). Such doctrine reduces Christ to somewhat of a spiritual phantom, robs Him of His humanity, and makes impossible His being the Saviour of mankind (Cf. Heb. 2:9-18).

The Pre-Eminence of Christ

In our text Paul lays an ax at the root of all these evils by affirming a threefold pre-eminence, which combines to establish His pre-eminence in all things — supreme pre-eminence!

In relation to the Father—He is the image of the invisible God. He is the fullness of the Godhead (Col. 2:9). He is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person (Heb. 1:3). Thus, Paul not only refutes the ancient doctrine of Gnosticism, but also the current doctrine of Modernism which affirms that Jesus was only a man, perhaps a good man — even the best man that ever lived — but still a man. One simply cannot believe in the Christ of the Bible without believing in the fullness of His deity.

In relation to the physical creation — He is the firstborn of every creature. Unfortunately, our English translation admits an idea contrary to truth, namely, that Jesus was the first in order of time of all created things. This makes Him a created being which accommodates the view of Gnosticism and also Jehovah Witnesses of today. Thus, again we have a denial of the deity of Jesus.

The word "first born" is often used to denote order of rank and not always order of time, e. g., Ex. 4:22, Psm. 89:27; Heb. 12:23. The Hebrews often used the word to denote one with honor, privileges, and blessings above that enjoyed by others. Obviously, it is so used in our text. The Greek "oti" translated "for" with which the next

verse begins (v. 16) means "because." Thus, He is the "firstborn" of all creation not because He was the first in point of time of all created things, but rather because He is the creator of all that was created (Cf. John 1:1-3). Instead of being an agent or some inferior, secondary god or emanation, He is the creator of all! What pre-eminence! Verse seventeen further confirms this position and adds even more majesty to His pre-eminence.

In relation to the spiritual creation — He is the head of the church (V. 18). Paul affirms the same thing in Eph. 1:22,23. To be in Christ is to be in His spiritual body, the church, and since all spiritual blessings are in Christ (Eph. 1:3), our spiritual well being depends upon our being in this relationship (the church) and in submission to His authority in everything (Cf. Col. 3:17).

Unfortunately, many today are doing things in the interest of their spiritual welfare by nearly every standard of authority in the world except that given by Christ. Such reflects upon His headship and robs Him of the pre-eminence ascribed by Paul.

Our salvation does not depend upon the philosophy of the intellectual aristocrats of the past or present. It does not depend upon the doctrines, commandments, and ordinances of men. The religious orders of men, secret, denominational, or otherwise cannot save. Furthermore, they cannot add anything to our spiritual well being that is not provided in the spiritual body of our Lord — His church. To contend otherwise is to deny the pre-eminence of our Lord and Saviour. Jesus Christ.

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DO CHURCHES NEED PREACHERS?

QUESTION: Why the glaring absence of mentioning any evangelist in Phil. 1:1 which states, "to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi with the bishops and deacons?" If they can go on without preachers, for they had elders, why can't we? I personally understand that bishops must be "able to teach" for they are to "shepherd the church of God" which is among them. Then, why the need for a preacher when a congregation is scripturally organized?

ANSWER: Philippians 1:1 begins, "Paul and Timotheus..." Conspicuously, evangelists are named in the very verse that is under question. Although Paul and Timothy were not at Philippi at the time, they were always with some congregation edifying the members or they were establishing churches wherever people would hear and obey. Other evangelists were doing the same and one could have been at Philippi when Paul wrote this epistle to those saints.

Because Phil. 1:1 does not mention "evangelists" as being among the saints at Philippi, it does not mean they had none. Elders are not mentioned in Paul's salutation to the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1), but this does not necessarily indicate they had not elders. Acts 14:23 and Tit. 1:5 would imply they probably did. The church at Antioch of Syria had prophets and teachers in it (Acts 13:1). Elders are not cited, but this does not suggest that churches are not to have elders. When we collect and compare the verses that relate to this matter, they clearly show that evangelists have the scriptural right, yea, the obligation to teach both saints and sinners.

We know that evangelists were "located" with churches to edify the saints and to preach the gospel to the lost. Paul told the Ephesian elders, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by a space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31). He taught them "publicly and from house to house" (v. 20). Timothy was charged by Paul to "abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia (Philippi was one of the churches there, WEW), that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (1 Tim. 1:3). Although Ephesus had elders or bishops, both Paul and Timothy preached there for a prolonged time. We know Paul was there for three years.

When Paul and Barnabas returned on their first missionary journey, they came to Antioch of Syria. "And

when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them And there they abode long time with the disciples' (Acts 14: 27-28). Here are preachers "located" a long time with the church at Antioch. When the Judaizing brethren came down from Jerusalem and taught circumcision as a condition of salvation, Paul and Barnabas had no small discussion and disputation with them (Acts 15:1-2). These preachers defended the faith while they were at Antioch.

The Bible teaches that apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers were put in the church for, among other things, "the perfecting of the saints . . ." (Eph 4:12). Apostles and prophets revealed the truth, evangelists preach the truth, and elders (pastors) see that the church is fed the truth and walk in it. Elders are not given the job of personally doing ALL the teaching. If so, teachers, as well as preachers, are not needed in the church. But God placed teachers and preachers in the church (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:8,11). Elders are to "tend the flock," which includes feeding or teaching, but they do not have to do all the feeding themselves. Preachers and teachers assist them. (Parenthetically, teachers are not listed in Phil. 1:1. Does this mean they had no teachers at Philippi? Certainly not!)

Men who are elders may also be preachers, serving in both capacities at the same time. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" (1 Tim. 5:16). Peter was an evangelist and an elder. He wrote, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder..." (1 Pet. 5:2). In Peter's case, it seems to me, that he was about as "located" as one could get.

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"LABORERS TOGETHER"

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (1 Cor. 3:9). The Corinthians did not seem to understand this description of labor relations in the Lord's vineyard, and it is evident that some today do not, though that misunderstanding may be expressed in different ways. Then, the problem involved the relationship of preachers to one another; now, it concerns preachers and congregations.

We need to be careful when writing or speaking on this subject, lest we tend to polarize the attitudes already prevalent, and alienate fellow-labourers even further. We need reconciliation and understanding, not agitation and suspicion. With regard to his goal, let me say that I am not personally faced with such a problem at the present time, and intend to be objective in my observations.

I have known preachers who wanted to draw up a contract in case they were to be mistreated by the congregation. Some congregations regard the preacher as an antagonist, a competitor, and strive to keep him frustrated and on the defensive. Some brethren suggested in a business meeting that when a preacher moved, he lost his "seniority" and should have to "work his way up" as far as salary and benefits were concerned. Some congregations will support a preacher, but do not want his talents and energies to extend beyond the borders of the local congregation. One elder suggested that the local preacher's salary should stop when he left town for a meeting, and not begin again until he returned. Another congregation wanted the preacher to submit a detailed report of his hourly activities each week.

The examples of congregations and preachers as adversaries could be multiplied, and might provide some interesting and amusing reading were it not so deplorable. And, such an exercise may widen the gap between those who should regard themselves as "labourers together" in the Lord's vineyard. Surely the congregation supporting the preacher and the preacher being supported need to have some basic ground rules governing their relationship, but the implementation of the "golden rule" (Mt. 7:12), and a common desire to further the cause of Christ should end up in unity instead of in a court of civil law.

While we all should believe in and respect congregational autonomy and personal commitments, I see no way for congregations and preachers to operate on the

time clock method of employment. A preacher should be fully supported by the church, and the preacher should give himself wholly to the work of an evangelist (1 Cor. 9:14; 2 Tim. 4:5). General guidelines may be established and all concerned should endeavor to operate honestly within those boundaries. If a congregation hobbles a preacher until he cannot do the Lord's work, that preacher should make other arrangements. If a preacher has a history of defrauding congregations, that preacher should not be hired in the first place, or if already hired, fired, if he will not shape up.

Consider these facts, and meditate upon them. The knowledge and experience which I have gained in the past forty-odd years is now benefiting the local congregation which presently supports me. I prepared sermons in my last meeting which I am now preaching in the local pulpit. Conversely, the studying which I do at home will benefit the congregations and communities which I may visit in the future. And, if the local congregation did not assure me of support, I could not even schedule meetings with congregations which are not financially able to support me.

During my last meeting, I assimilated and preached the material which I have been studying and preparing for the past five or six years, and yet I only spent seven days with that congregation. Yet, those brethren supported me well, and gave me time to study material which will be used in my home congregation or in some future place as yet unknown. I have been able to preach in meetings, conduct funerals, write articles, and help congregations and individuals in a variety of situations because brethren gave me both moral and financial support. At the same time, I had to do some of these things without the aid and encouragement of some brethren, and even in spite of them.

The lifeline of the church, and the salvation of souls is tied to the preaching of the gospel (Rom. 1:15,16). The devil is the only adversary we need in this monumental task, so let us not spend our time "provoking one-another, envying one another," but rather as "labourers together with God."

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STUDIES IN 1ST & 2ND TIMOTHY (No. 4) DEACONS 1 Tim. 3:8-16

Deacons, as elders, belong to the organizational structure of a local congregation. The word (diakonos in Greek) means "servant -minister". Every Christian would be this. However, our text speaks of those who "use the office of a deacon" and certain qualifications are given for those who thus serve. The church at Philippi consisted of elders (bishops), deacons, and saints (Phil. 1:1).

Their Work

The selected seven in Jerusalem, appointed to look after the needs of certain widows are generally regarded as men serving as appointed deacons. (Acts 6:1-6). The word "deacon" is not applied to them, but in verse 2 the Greek word "diakoneo" is used, translated "serve" with reference to their work. In this text, their work was seeing that certain widows needs were met, spoken of as "serve tables". Their service would enable the apostles and elders to continue teaching the word of God without interruption (vs. 2). From this, it has been concluded that deacons execute the material matters of the congregation under the authority of the elders. Every congregation does have numerous physical needs, in addition to looking after the needy, such as preparation of the building for the assembly, continual maintenance, equipment and supplies, ushers, treasury, etc.

Does teaching churches to appoint deacons, and their function, have anything to do with saving self and others? Indeed it does! The fact that their work frees the elders and evangelists for more time in "the ministry of the word" contributes to the saving of others. Too, I believe the statement "will purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (vs. 13) has reference to their standing in the eyes of the Lord, rather than to their exaltation and promotion among men, as some conclude. Some say promotion to the eldership is meant. This, however, seems to be in conflict with the motive and spirit for any service rendered in the name of the Lord. All such service is rendered to please the Lord and save souls. Such faithful service will be pleasing to the Lord in the judgment. So, scripturally qualified and functioning deacons in a congregation, while attending primarily to material matters, actually has as a background purpose and result, the saving of self and others.

Their Qualifications

Verse 8 begins with the word "likewise" which means just as elders are to be men with certain qualities and abilities, it is the same with deacons. These are then listed. They differ only slightly from the qualifications for an elder.

1. Grave. (Gk. *semnous*) "august, venerable, reverent, To be venerated for character, honorable" -Thayer. English Translation: "grave, serious, honorable, serious demeanor, dignified". Webster: "sedate, dignified, solemn vs frivolous, trivial, light". This quality is, of course, relative.

2. Not doubled tongued. (Gk. *madilogous*) *ma* -"never at any time"; *dilogous* -"double in speech, saying one thing to one-another with another" Thayer. English translation: "not tale-bearer; straight forward man; not deceitful in speech; no gossip; sincere in their talk."

3. Not given to much wine (English translation). Greek, "*ma oino polio prosechontas*". *ma*, "not, never at any time"; *oino*, "wine"; *polo*, "abundant, plenteous, much"; *prosechontas*, "given ... addicted to". Literally, "not addicted to much wine" — "not under the influence of strong wine."

4. Not greedy of filthy lucre. (English translation). Greek, "*ma aischrokerdas*". *ma* -"never at any time"; *aischrokerdas*, "eager for base gain; sordid". Other English translations: "no lover of money; not addicted to dishonest gain".

5. Hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. Greek and English, "stability in that which was once for all delivered to the saints -(Jude 3). Hold this with a clear conscience". Three things are involved, (1) a pure conscience, (2) centered in the faith, (3) continually hold . . . through life.

6. Blameless. Two different Greek words are translated blameless. In 1 Tim. 3:2 the word *anepilampton* is used, which means "one against whom no evil charge can be sustained", while in Tit. 1:6 the word *anegklatos* is used, meaning "not open to accusation, unblameless". English translations, "blameless, without reproach; irreproachable" . . . "Live so no charge of guilt can be proved against."

Family Qualifications

7. Husband of one wife. The meaning here is the same as was said for elders in the previous lesson. A scripturally married man is to be selected. According to verse 11, wives also have a responsibility.

8. Rule children/house well. Rule, in the Greek, means "stand before-attend to". Children: "off spring-custody". House: "wife and children". Well: "according to God's will. The emphasis here is on the position the man occupies in his house. He is properly standing before and managing. The matter of how long is not suggested. A man, to qualify as an elder, must be in this position long enough for his children to be believers and not accused of riot or unruly. This suggests that a deacon may not be as old as an elder. If a man has the character, wisdom, and ability to do the work of a deacon, and is properly standing before and managing a family, he is in a position to serve well as a deacon and should be appointed.

9. Proved. Verse 10 says "Let those also (as with elders) first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon. The word first, in the Greek, is "proton" and means "at the first" or before they serve in the office of a deacon. The word "proved", in the Greek, is "dokimadzo" and means "to test, examine, prove, scrutinize".

There are various ways of doing this. Time is one way, but this is relative and no one has the right to set a certain time limit ... 1,2,3, years. Letters of recommendation from faithful brethren at other places where one has lived and served in the Lord's vineyard, and recommendations (testimony) from known faithful brethren often contribute to the "proving" of one to be appointed to the office of a deacon.

Why Such Teaching?

The last three verses of 1 Timothy 3 tells us why Paul gave to Timothy the instruction he did, including that about elders and deacons. Without Paul being there to personally instruct, he wrote "that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Congregations, properly organized, filled with informed and dedicated saints, properly functioning in the work of the Lord is the foundation and structure for spreading the truth that "makes men free". A brief synopsis of what is involved in this truth is then given; "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." It is simply the glorious gospel of Christ, said to be the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16), all emphasized in the church of the living God.

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REMINDERS ABOUT SIN

For some reason we have a tendency to forget some of the basic truths. I do not mean that these points have completely left our minds, but that we are not conscious of them as we ought to be. For example, we do not use the word "sin". On the other hand there is the extreme concept that poor judgments and contrary opinions are to be treated as sin. We have a tendency to think that all are doing wrong and we rationalize that there is no danger in our own lives. All of this indicates that we have forgotten a few things about sin. Thus we need to be stirred up by being put in remembrance of the things we really already know (2 Pet. 1:12-13).

What It Is

Sin is a violation of the law of God. John said, "Who-soever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Thus, if it is contrary to law (a Bible passage) it is sin. It may seem minor and insignificant to you, but it is still sin! It doesn't have to be "major" (e. g. adultery or theft) to be sin. We can sin in attitude and thought as well as in what we do.

It is possible to violate God's law by doing something that God has forbidden (Jas. 2:9). It is also possible to sin by not doing what God has commanded (Jas. 4:17).

A thing is not sin simply because you don't like it, it is different, it is contrary to your opinion, it is contrary to tradition or your judgment. It is not sin unless it violates the law of God. And yet, we sometimes look at some brother or sister like two dollar bills when they haven't done anything wrong. If it is sin, let's call it sin. If it isn't, let's leave it alone.

What It Does

We have a tendency to minimize the consequences of sin. We begin to think that if it is a "little" sin that it is not all that bad.

Sin separates from God. Isaiah warned that "your iniquities have separated between you and your God .. ." (Isa. 59:2). The apostle Paul said that death (separation) comes upon all that sin (Rom. 5:12) for the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). James said that sin brings forth death (Jas. 1:15).

Sin renders our prayers ineffective. Peter said that the "eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Pet. 3:12). The wise man said, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination" (Prov.

28:9). By sinning we not only separate ourselves from God, but from all the benefits of being the children of God.

There is no distinction in sins. The passages that say sin separates from God or brings spiritual death do not only apply to the "big" and willful sins. So, it doesn't matter whether it is "little", "big", ignorant or willful, one or an hundred — if it is sin it separates from God. I need reminding of that often.

In The Life Of The Christian

He will sin. There will be times that the Christian will sin. John said, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). This does not mean that he will be constantly sinning 24 hours a day. Neither does it mean that God will overlook the sin. All that texts says is that there will be times that the Christian will sin.

He is not to continue in sin. Paul raised the question in Rom. 6, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound" (Rom. 6:1)? The rest of that chapter is a response to that question. We have been raised in the likeness of Christ's resurrection and thus we live a new life. The old man is crucified (v. 6). Now that we have obeyed the gospel we are servants of righteousness rather than sin (vs. 17-18). John says that the one that is born of God "sinneth not" or "doth not commit sin" (1 Jno. 3:6, 9; 9; 5:18). These verses do not mean that the Christian does not sin at all. For that would contradict 1 Jno. 1:8. The point is that the Christian doesn't continue to make a practice of sin. Thus the concept that says the Christian is just sinning all the time is out of harmony with the Biblical picture.

He can be forgiven. When the Christian does sin, he can obtain forgiveness. John said that the blood of Jesus Christ "cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). He also wrote, "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1).

He must seek forgiveness. The Christian who sins is not automatically forgiven without any action. Rather, Simon was told to repent and pray for forgiveness (Acts 8:22). John said, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Sin Will Surface

God instructed Israel to drive out all the people as they entered into the land of Canaan. Then he warned, "But if ye do not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23). We have deceived ourselves into thinking that we could hide our sins. And maybe we can for a while. However, sooner or later they will surface. It did with Achan (Josh. 7) and Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5). It always takes another sin to cover the previous one and then finally there are so many that our sin becomes known.

Tendency To Rationalize

For some reason we want to justify our own wrong and that of our family. We reason that our situation is different. We shift the blame to someone else so we have no guilt feeling. We think that the Lord will understand our case and overlook the sin.

The Jews must have reasoned the same way. Paul labors in Rom. 2 to show that the Jews were committing the same sins that the Gentiles were. Thus he asked if they thought they would escape the judgment of God (Rom. 2:3). Have we forgot that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34)? Do we need to be reminded that we can think we are doing right while we are continuing in sin (Acts 23:1; 1Tim.4:1)?

I realize that you already knew these things. But, honestly, didn't it help to be reminded again?

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Did you ever have to say "I'm sorry, I was wrong"? All of us have needed to make a statement something like that, but there are some people who just won't admit to any wrong, or any sorrow for wrong. They may say, "IF I have done anything that offended you, forgive me", but that's not the same thing at all. Perhaps some think it is a sign of weakness to admit error or guilt, but I propose to you that it is a sign of manhood to face your sins and other mistakes and correct them. And unless you are able to live a sinless life as Jesus did while here on the earth, the time will come when you must acknowledge those sins and either correct them or give account of them in the judgment.

Our relationship with God is totally dependent upon our acknowledging our sins. In the 51st Psalm, when David had finally seen his sin with Bathsheba he wrote, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me" (Psa. 51:2-3). Or as Solomon wrote in the Proverbs, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. 28:13). Further, John wrote, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Even our repentance is dependent upon recognizing that we are wrong, and that we must change.

Likewise our relationships with men require that sometimes we acknowledge wrongs done and say "I'm sorry". In the sermon on the mount Jesus said, "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. 5:23-24). I understand Jesus to have said that even our worship is affected by our relationships with men; that failure to repent and correct wrongs may indeed cause our worship to be in vain.

And perhaps the place where we most often fail to recognize our faults and ask for forgiveness is in our own families. Have you ever punished one of your children unjustly? I have, and had to go to that child later and ask to be forgiven. In our thoughtlessness and carelessness we say and do things to wives or husbands that hurt so badly, and are not deserved. But admit wrong? We just couldn't do that, could we? The "prodigal son" as we have come to call him made many serious mistakes, but he is

also a wonderful example of a man facing his sins and not running away but doing what had to be done to correct them. Even when his father came running out to meet him with open arms he did not try to rationalize and get out of confessing his sins. On the other side is the story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts chapter 5. Here were two people who lied and refused to correct their lies when given the chance. And they both died without ever making right the wrong they had done. Which of those two examples is more like you?

Have you ever said, "Well, that's just the way I am, and I can't change"? You may have said it, but it isn't true. That's the same excuse that is sometimes offered by the homosexual, blaming God for his own sins. Sometimes we sing the song, "OPEN MY EYES, THAT I MAY SEE". Are you willing to open your eyes? When Jesus told why He taught in parables He said, "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed" (Matt. 13:15). Are you willing to see what you look like in the sight of God? There is only one way to do that, and that is to dig into the word of God and use that divine measuring stick to measure yourself. James wrote about looking "into the perfect law of liberty" and continuing in it. Only by first seeing what God wants you to be can you know how to change. And in addition to opening up your Bible and measuring your self by it. I suggest that you spend a lot of time in prayer for wisdom, help, courage and strength. We can have confidence that God knows and cares. Peter wrote, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:6-7). And the Hebrew writer told those Jewish Christians, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:5-6).

Don't be afraid of ridicule or rebuke when you have to say "I'm sorry, I was wrong". Just do what you have to do to be right in the sight of God. It will make all of your relationships better too!

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WILLIAM C. SEXTON, 4400 N.W. Gleason, Kansas City, MO 64151 — We have finished two years with the Roan Ridge church, 6403 N.W. Roanridge Rd. in Kansas City. We have been fairly pleased with the results this year, although never completely, with so much more to be done. Eight have been baptized since January (3 recently), in addition to several restorations and identifications. Dick Blackford was with us in a meeting in November. I was in a week-end meeting in June with the Pleasant Valley church in Wichita, Kansas and in October with the Westside church in Morrilton, Arkansas where I presented a series on "Personal Responsibility in Man's Salvation." Coming to Kansas City? Visit and worship with us at Roan Ridge just off I-29 at 64th Street, N.W., 7 miles south of the KCI Airport. Request: I have an IBM compatible computer and am interested in finding software that is ideally suited for preparing a preacher's income tax. I'm sure some have had experience in this respect and would appreciate hearing from those who have found what works well in this regard — with as much simplicity as possible!

A. A. GRANKE, JR., 1 Cherokee St., Sumter, SC 29150 — David Powlas, a devout member of the Woodland church of Christ, Sumter, South Carolina, is recovering from open heart surgery to replace a defective valve. In August, at age 34, he was diagnosed as suffering from congestive heart failure, and was also discovered to have a congenitally defective aortic valve at the entrance to a major artery leading from his heart. It was surgically replaced, and he is recovering satisfactorily. But his medical expenses total approximately \$32,000 and he was not covered by insurance. Although he has not been preaching for several years, brother Powlas formerly labored as a full-time evangelist in Orangeburg, SC and West Palm Beach, FL. He has lived in Columbia, SC the past five years and works as a motel auditor there. His illness has brought further strain on his family's budget by keeping him out of work for two months. He has recently returned to worship services and expects to resume work soon. The church at Woodland is small and is not able to offer much help with his expenses. If you are in a position to assist brother Powlas, or know of a church or individual who may be interested in doing so, please write him at 3430 Kay Street, Apt. D-3, Columbia, SC 29210. His phone number is (803) 772-4371.

JIM MCDONALD, P.O. Box 247, Jasper, TX 75951 — Faithful brethren have rallied to the needs of Conrad Steyn and George Harris in South Africa since their stand against innovations in that country. Each has received enough help to pay bills which had accumulated for several months without support. But most of that has been one-time help. Each one needs to locate an additional \$1500 per month to be able to devote full-time to the work in that country. These men present a rare opportunity for the spreading of the gospel in South Africa. The task is not yet completed, brethren. Can you help? Write either of them at: Conrad Steyn, Box 133, Rondebosch, 7700 South Africa; or George Harris, Box 300, Steenberg 7945, South Africa.

PREACHERS NEEDED

PALATINE, ILLINOIS — The church at Palatine is interested in locating a preacher for full-time work. Sunday attendance averages about 60. We can provide a majority of support. Some full-time experience preferred. Send resume and references to: Church of Christ, 1050 N. Deer, Palatine, IL 60067, or contact Harlan Stoa, 130 E. Palatine Rd., Palatine, IL 60067. Phone (312) 705-0544.

JAMESTOWN, KENTUCKY — The church at Jamestown is looking for a full-time preacher at least 30 years old, who is willing to begin work with us sometime after the first of the year, 1988. Those interested should contact William O'Neall, phone (502) 866-3863.

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA — The Myrtle Grove church in Pensacola needs a preacher. Though there are no elders, the church is self supporting. Sunday attendance is about 60. We prefer a man 35-50 years old. Contact Scotty Mills (904) 456-2430; or Russell Green (904) 456-6721; or write to Church of Christ, P.O. Box 3415, Pensacola, FL 32516.

GLEN ALLEN, ALABAMA — This congregation in northwest Alabama is looking for a preacher for full-time work. This church of 25-30 can supply partial support and has contacts for additional support. Those interested may write Glen Allen Church of Christ, Box 161, Glen Allen, AL 35559, or call Kermit Vaughn at (205) 487-2538.

CROSSVILLE, ALABAMA — This congregation in northeast Alabama needs a preacher. We can supply \$200 weekly. Call R. C. Hammonds (205) 659-2687, or Marvin Ruf (205) 528-7333.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We are glad to carry these notices for churches seeking preachers to work with them. We include them as news items and as a convenience to churches and make no charge for this service. We do not carry any news item for several months. Sometimes we are asked to run such notices several times. This we will not do. Further, we want readers to understand that we do not personally endorse all of the qualifications demanded nor are we in a position to judge the nature of the work at any given place. Churches and preachers alike should investigate each other thoroughly. CWA)

SHORT NEWS

The NEWSLETTER REPORTS are shorter than usual this month due to the index which we must print for the bound volumes. We are glad to have your news. It is edifying for brethren to read of the progress of the gospel throughout the world. The trials and triumphs of the Lord's people everywhere should be the concern of all who love souls and who labor for their salvation. Many readers say they always turn to the news column first. Do you have some good news? Let others know about it. It will thrill them to learn of it and perhaps embolden them to try harder to grow both in spirit and number.

Index for Volumes XXVII and XXVIII

<p>ACCEPTED OF HIM—Donnie V. Rader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepted of Him 78 Efficacy of Prayer—Part 1, The..... 364 Efficacy of Prayer—Part 2, The 388 Hindrances to Prayer..... 438 How to Face Temptation 148 Is the Church of Christ a Denomination? 128 Lord, Teach us to Pray..... 205 Prayers in the Bible..... 534 Problems in Prayer..... 487 Reminders About Sin..... 562 Way to Pray—Part 1, The 265 Way to Pray—Part 2, The 325 What a Privilege to Pray..... 224 <p>ARROWS OF TRUTH FOR DENOMINATIONAL ERROR— Ward Hogland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lord Reward Him, The..... 180 Veils and Blindfolds 76 <p>BREAD OF LIFE—Herschel E. Patton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kick out God and His Word—Hire a Counselor 396 Problems of Breakers of the Bread of Life..... 247 Problems of Breakers of the Bread of Life—Part 2..... 271 Studies in 1st & 2nd Timothy—Deacons..... 561 Studies in 1st & 2nd Timothy—Elders..... 536 Studies in 1st & 2nd Timothy—1st Timothy (Chapter 1)..... 489 Studies in 1st and 2nd Timothy—1st Timothy (Chapter 2)..... 513 Wind and Cloud Watchers..... 35 Worship—Service..... 80 <p>DIVINE COMMUNIQUES—Colly Caldwell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on Others?..... 510 Husbands, Wives, and Occupational Planning..... 413 Language of each People, The 385 Not After Man..... 294 Praise the Lord..... 492 Speak Truth 313 Unto the Praise of His Glory..... 268 <p>EDITORIAL—Connie W. Adams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appeal to Foreign Workers, An..... 531 Catching Up 411 Certain Sound, A..... 435 Church Autonomy in Cape Town, South Africa..... 483 Events at the Second coming of Christ 363 Foreign Workers in a Financial Crunch..... 459 Heroes—Franklin T. Puckett 411 Joyner Wilson Adams 315 Meetings—Long or Short 171 Mother is not Home 339 Not Slothful in Business 507 Patton-Phillips Exchange 195 Pentecostalism and Final Revelation..... 147 People of the Book 291 Preachers, Meetings and Temperance 267 Quiet and Peaceable Lives 75 Ready to Preach the Gospel 99 Statement from Cecil Willis..... 195 Thanks to Brethren Waters and Rader..... 51 Time to Watch, A..... 243 Vine and the Branches, The..... 387 Volume 27 Closes..... 267 War Among the Liberals..... 3 Warnock-Deason Exchange, The 51 We Need Your Help 123 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What Shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?.....219 Where Do We Go From Here?..... 27 <p>EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS—Connie W. Adams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost Persuaded 17 As Others See Us..... 65 Baptist Hog Day..... 257 Caught in Coup Attempt 209 Different Kind of Travel, A..... 496 Dollar Devaluation..... 233 Establishment of Religion..... 496 Evolution at Abilene Christian University 113 Forkland Heritage 209 Good Friend Crosses Over, A 472 Gospel is for All, The 544 Hard to Please 89 Harry Pickup, Sr.—One of my Heroes 472 Investigate..... 496 Preaching in Canada 137 Prospective Politician..... 17 Song Impeders..... 233 Sour Pickle Religion 17 Television Trash 185 Ties That Bind 65 To Filipino Brethren 185 What the Seat Can Endure 544 <p>EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS—Donnie V. Rader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Mothers and Day Care for Infants 401 <p>EDITORIAL STEW—Connie W. Adams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Column by Colly Caldwell 267 Fulltime What? 555 Punctuality in Support..... 555 Young Mothers 555 <p>MY SERVANTS THE PROPHETS—Rodney Miller</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God of Isaiah, The 10 Isaiah—Lessons from Circumstances..... 82 Isaiah saw in the Temple who he was when he saw who God was..... 108 Isaiah Saw in the Temple Who to Trust 29 <p>MYSTERY OF INIQUITY, THE—Eugene Britnell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I Married a Catholic 103 Pope Visits the Jews, The 153 Questioning the Pope's Authority..... 30 <p>PRECEPTS AND PERCEPTIONS—James R. Cope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May Churches of Christ Support Human Institutions? 1 4 May Churches of Christ Support Human Institutions? 2..... 62 May Churches of Christ Support Human Institutions? 3..... 105 May Churches of Christ Support Human Institutions? 4..... 130 May Churches of Christ Support Human Institutions? 5..... 157 This Blessing Can be Yours 273 <p>RESTORATION FOOTNOTES—Earl Kimbrough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call to Holiness, The..... 512 Charismatic Baptism..... 484 Good Religious Literature..... 174 Influence of a Bad Example, The..... 59 Man Who Died With Christ, A 85 No Craving for Worship..... 59 Proving Doctrine by the Dead..... 131 Roots of Modern Charisma 462 Stay out of the Kitchen 59 Wrong Place at the Wrong Time, The..... 111 <p>SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST—P. J. Casebolt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accomplishing Death 158
--	--

Acoustics—The Silent Killer	412	Chariot Scenes at 35,000 Feet	289
Bible Class Blues, The	538	From House to House It's Not What You Think	460
Day of Small Things, The	493	Kitchen Table Conversions	361
Digression by Default	518	Leaving all to Follow Him	490
Faith on the Rocks	246	Let's Hear it for Good News	533
Ignorance, Increase, and Leadership	206	Our Challenge	73
Jeremiah 50 7	272	Our Commission	101
Laborers Together	560	Our Compulsion	150
Old Jerusalem Ring, The	466	Why Silent about Good News?	52
Preacher Needed	442	WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?—Weldon E. Warnock	
Preaching Part Time/Full-Time	109	Appointment of Elders	467
Questions on Assembling	390	Baptism of 1 Cor 1213, The	102
Seek First the Kingdom	39	Bible Classes and the Assembly	172
Silence of God, The	295	Boys, Men and Women Teachers	348
Sixteen Questions for the Premillennialist	175	Committees	28
Spending the Lord's Money	327	Divorce and Remarriage' Response	61
Supposition and Scripture	12	Do Churches Need Preachers?	559
They Have Taken Away	337	Elect Lady, The	270
Unity of the Spirit The	135	Engaged or Married to Christ?	222
SINCERE WORDS—Dick Blackford		Forsaking the Assemblies	418
Amen	509	Green and Dry Tree, The	150
Brotherhood Papers	322	Helping Widows and Orphans	79
Charging the Rich	415	Jesus Breathed on Them	270
Indifference Tranquillizer of the 20th Century Church	463	Leaving God's Presence	28
Should Scientific Creation be taught in Public Schools?	372	Marrying 'Only in the Lord'	393
We are not saved by Grace, Faith or Works	391	One Baptism, The	150
What we owe our Readers	292	Resurrected Body of Jesus, The	11
THINGS MOST CERTAINLY BELIEVED—Julian R. Snell		State of Righteous Dead	324
Hardest Command of God	200	Why the Judgment?	515
Principles of Discipleship	465	Widowers	374
Robert Crawley	127	Wives be in Subjection	535
Special People	374	Women Teaching Baptized Boys	198
THINK ON THESE THINGS—H.E. Phillips		WORD OF HIS GRACE, THE—Marshall E. Patton	
Building by Grace upon the Right Foundation	553	Authority for Congregational Singing (1)	106
Church Built by Jesus Christ, The	121	Authority for Congregational Singing (2)	125
Do the Righteous Dead go Directly to Heaven?	529	Pre-Eminence of Christ, The	557
Establishment of the Church, The	145	Abernathy, Dennis C.	
How Does the Grace of God Save?	49	Micaiah's Good Attitude	176
Keeping the Heart with Diligence	217	Adams, J. Wiley	
Law and Grace, The	97	Family Table, The	196
Practice What You Preach	433	Adams, Stanley W.	
Preaching Christ	1	James A Rodgers at Rest	416
Salvation at the Point of Faith	241	There's Still Trees	279
Speaking the Truth in Love	25	Berkley, Warren E.	
Unique Claims of the Bible	193	Politics and Religion Caution'	110
Walking in Love	170	Blackford, Dick	
What is Death?	482	Observations Upon 20 Years of Preaching (1)	132
What is Hades?	505	Observations Upon 20 Years of Preaching (2)	152
What is Man?	457	Bolton, Robert A.	
USING THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT—Ken Green		Wright Randolph has Gone to his Reward	416
Abused Parents	508	Bowman, Russ	
Authority of Elders, The	245	Riding for the Brand	223
Criminal Justice	326	Caldwell, Colly	
Ex Critic Speaks, An	156	New Concerns About an Old Problem	36
Flying by Instruments	417	Chancellor, Derek R.	
Gods House	129	How can I do This Great Wickedness?	299
He will do Something Better	340	Dart, Ken	
How Would you Answer?	221	Atheistic Humanism	486
Monster of Frightful Mien, A	5	Dean, Guthrie	
Playing the Game	441	Be of Good Cheer	351
Spurgeon's Lectures	539	Deason, Jim	
Useless Bones	197	Mental Divorce? A Replay	60
What We Need	58	Devore, Larry R.	
Where's the Answer?	83	Don't Quit too Soon	394
WAKE THE WORLD AND TELL THE PEOPLE—		Dodd, Bill	
Wilson Adams		Doctrine of Limited Soundness, The	446
Back To The Bible	436		

Farish, Robert H.	
Liberty.....	202
Some Word Studies.....	444
Fiscus, Gary	
Twin Brothers.....	252
Garrison, Michael	
Exegesis, Hermeneutics, and Catholicism.....	227
Givens, Don	
No Secret Disciples	87
Graham, Bobby	
Christ is the Answer, But What is the Question.....	203
Following Things That Make for Peace.....	134
Ingredients of a Successful Gospel Meeting.....	274
Overseeing the Flock of God	296
Greeson, Wayne	
God's Pattern.....	298
Where Art Thou?.....	204
Grider, A.C.	
Television Evangelists, The.....	228
Who Then Can Be Saved?.....	15
Halbrook, Ron	
Church and Its Elders Debated by Holt and Smith, The.....	13
Gospel Preaching: Fundamental Truths or a "New" Image?.....	542
Himmel, Frank	
What the Council Observed about Peter and John	300
Holderby, Olen	
Blindness in Part.....	446
Holt, Jack	
Introduction to Individualism—Part 1	155
Individualism vs the Local Church—Part 2	177
Individualism vs the Funds of the Local Church—Part 3.....	199
Individualism vs Elders—Part 4.....	225
Hudson, Bruce	
Crisis of Faith Without Confusion, A	63
Humphries, John	
Why India?	419
James, Bruce	
Tribute to Billy J. James, A Husband, Father, Christian, Preacher, Elder.....	350
Johnson, J. Mike	
Concern for Others	445
Good from Bad	421
Priorities	395
Jones, W.R.	
Respect in Marriage.....	398
Kerr, Gary	
Earl Fly Asleep in Jesus	416
Lee, Irven	
Old Problems Again.....	182
Manchester, M.F.	
End of all Things is at Hand, The	230
Martin, Luther W.	
Bordeaux New Testament, The.....	468
Comments on Matthew 16:13-20.....	443
Genesis in the "Bible" of Joseph Smith	254
Gutenberg's Printed Bible.....	302
Heavens and the Earth ... are Reserved for Fire, The	173
Oddities of the Book of Mormon	275
McKibben, Dan	
Did Life Begin in Clay.....	298
Milliner, Ronny	
Jesus as a Neighbor.....	409
Moody, Tom	
Go Back to the "Short" Meetings?.....	346
Needham, James P.	
Louis Earl Fly Changes World	439
Nosker, John L	
Tribute to a Prince and a Great Man in Israel.....	316
Nowlin, J. Edward	
Suicide.....	469
Patton, Marshall E.	
Patton-Phillips Debate—First Affirmative	317
Patton-Phillips Debate—Second Affirmative.....	341
Patton-Phillips Debate—Third Affirmative	365
Patton-Phillips Debate—Rebuttal.....	371
Phillips, H.E.	
Patton-Phillips Debate—First Negative	320
Patton-Phillips Debate—Second Negative	344
Patton-Phillips Debate—Third Negative	368
Patton-Phillips Debate—Rebuttal.....	371
Posey, David	
Contentment	516
Night Shift.....	541
Pratte, David	
Is Conscience a Safe Guide in Religion?.....	276
When Does a Boy Become a Man?.....	347
Rader, Donnie V.	
Review of "The Security of the Believer," A	8
Review of "The Security of the Believer" (2) Response to Waters, A.....	56
Review of "The Security of the Believer: (3) Response to Waters, A.....	33
Rader, Dorris V.	
Parties and Factions.....	86
Sewell, Norman E.	
And the Lord Looked Upon Peter.....	517
For the Joy Set Before Him.....	494
I'm Sorry	564
Shane, Joe	
Drawing Near Before Withdrawing.....	422
Sharp, Keith	
Harold F. Sharp, Sr. Passes	372
Shewmaker, Fred A.	
Dad is Gone.....	251
Personality Conflict.....	422
Smith, Truman	
Are There Miracles Today?.....	132
Keepin' House for the Lord	248
Spears, Dudley R.	
Mormon Criticism of the Bible, A.....	38
Stephens, Loren T.	
Sylvia Lee Wheeler.....	392
Terry, Richard W.	
Ministering to the Terminally Ill	179
Rearing a Godly Family in an Ungodly Society.....	249
Thomas, Kenneth E.	
Subtle Evil Influences.....	255
Ward, Dene	
Fruitful Vine, The.....	158
Ward, Keith	
Dreams	181
Reaping Adam's Whirlwind.....	229
Waters, Robert	
Security of the Believer (1), The.....	6
Security of the Believer (2) Response to Racier, The.....	31
Security of the Believer (3) Response to Racier, The.....	53
Watts, O.E.	
Word With You: Phroureo, To Guard, A	470

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	280
RESTORATIONS	74

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

READ YOUR BIBLE TODAY
