

# SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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## THINK ON THESE THINGS

*H. E. Phillips*

P.O. Box 1631  
Lutz, FL 33549



### FROM THE HEART THE MOUTH SPEAKETH

"O generations of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12: 34-37).

These are stinging words for most of us because we talk far more than we should, and concerning the things that are evil. But Jesus said the mouth speaks what is in the heart. We are often told that we can not tell what is in a man's heart, but the Lord gave us a means of knowing if the man will speak. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7: 20). Observe a man's conduct and listen to his words and you will know his heart.

Add to this the statement by James: "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body... Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of

nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3: 2, 5, 6).

There are several evil conditions of the heart that would never be known if words did not come from the mouth. Envy, jealousy, hate, self-conceit, lack of love, etc., come to light by our speech regardless of how much we try to keep them hidden. Unjust and hurtful criticism is one of the most frequent of evil speech. Paul said, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice" (Eph. 4: 21). James said, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your heart, glory not, and lie not against the truth" (James 3: 14).

Beware of the person who gets you to one side and begins: "Sister Blank is a good woman, BUT..." This lead statement is presumed to make you accept what is to follow an awful truth which must be told. Beware of that person who finds fault continually with every one of whom he or she speaks. Self-conceit and jealousy make us require the conduct of all to be measured by our standards only. Criticism of one's friends, possessions, and habits is usually a sign of envy and lack of love. When the very tenor of one's language about his brother or sister in Christ is fault-finding and ridiculing, you mark it down that person is not right at heart. If we have some criticism to make of a person, let us go to him and talk about it. In that way some good can come of it.

If we will strive to keep our tongues under control we can be a greater influence for good and cultivate a better attitude toward others. Angry and evil words hurt all men and help none; but words of truth and soberness spoken out of a heart free of malice and bitterness help all and hurt none.

It is also a fact that wagging tongues spreading evil gossip will soon cease in shame if ears will refuse to listen. Evil speaking is possible because there are eager ears to listen to slander. Do not think that you can hide the real condition of your heart when you either speak or encouragingly listen to slander and criticism of others. "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (James 3: 8).: But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Gal. 5: 15).

Jesus made another statement that should govern us

in our language as well as in other conduct. Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7: 12). How would you like to have someone talk about you in the way you talk about them? What would your estimate be of such a person as a Christian? Every time you begin to speak of another person in a manner to discredit him or her, stop and think if you would want them to speak so of you. If not, do not say it! God will deal with us exactly alike in the judgment.

We believe that most people who talk about others in a hurtful and unjust way do so expecting to make people think more of them. It never works that way! When you criticize another to a friend, he will know that you would do the same to him if it served your purpose. We do not want this reputation. Let us be careful of our tongues and speech; our hearts are betrayed by our language.

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# Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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## OBSERVATIONS ON ROMANS 14

Romans 14 deals with the tension that sometimes arises between strong and weak Christians. In the specific case introduced, the strong brother was the one "who believeth that he may eat all things and the weak brother "eateth herbs" (v. 2). Paul was a strong brother, for he said "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself (v. 14a). Yet, the weak brother who "esteemeth anything to be unclean" could not eat without violating his conscience, hence, could not eat in "faith." This is the "faith" of verse 1 and also verse 23.

It was a matter of divine truth that it was acceptable with God to eat meat. It was also acceptable for one to eat herbs. For brethren of either persuasion to judge the other as unworthy before God was wrong. The strong brother could exercise his liberty, but not in a circumstance where he would put the weak brother under pressure to violate his conscience. The weak brother, not yet fully taught and persuaded, was to have his "faith" to himself before God (v. 22). In this way both the strong and the weak could live with their consciences, forbear with each other and allow time to study, learn and grow.

But if the weak brother in this passage was the untaught, then the only way for him to ever become strong was for him to be taught. If Paul was persuaded "by the Lord Jesus Christ," then divine revelation had been given and the knowledge and application of that would help one who was weak to be strong. Further, this implies that truth could be known on the subject. Paul came to be "persuaded" and could not have been unless the truth was within reach.

The eating of meat in Romans 14 must have been of the same kind as that described in 1 Cor. 8: 4 and 7 where some ate "with conscience of the idol." To buy a piece of meat in the marketplace which had come from the idol's temple where sacrifice had been offered, in itself, was not wrong. To eat it with no intention of honoring an idol was not wrong. But to eat it with conscience of the idol, supposing that by the eating of this meat, veneration was being given to the idol, was wrong. The solution to the problem? Teaching and forbearance while that was being done.

### Not An Excuse For Fellowshiping Error

Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 and 10 were never intended as proof texts to justify fellowshiping erroneous doctrine and immorality. The church at Ephesus was commended because "thou hatest the deeds of the

Nicolaitans, which I also hate" (Rev. 2: 6). To the church at Pergamos the Lord said "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam... to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth" (Rev. 2: 14-16). Here the eating of things sacrificed to idols is linked with fornication which often attended idolatrous ceremonies. The Lord would not tolerate either the **practice** or the **doctrine** which led to it.

Again, to the church at Thyatira, the Lord said "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, **to teach and to seduce** my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, **except they repent** of their deeds (Rev. 2: 20-22).

Romans 14 must never be used as an excuse for a doctrine which eventuates in immorality within the church. These other passages make that clear.

### Faith and The Faith

Romans 14 concerns matters of "faith" in the sense of being fully persuaded in one's mind that what he does is right before God. He must not "doubt" if he eats. That is not "of faith." But the truth on the subject was that it was right to eat meat as long as there was no veneration of the idol. Paul was "persuaded by the Lord Jesus" on the matter. That was "the faith." It was part and parcel of the divine system of truth. God granted liberty in this area. That was "the faith." A brother was not to abuse his liberty to embolden a weak, untaught brother to violate his conscience. That was "the faith."

This great passage was never written to justify every kind of a doctrinal or moral perversion which man might invent. The passages we cited in the letters to the churches of Asia are abundantly clear on that subject, as are other New Testament references. It did not matter whether Hymemaeus and Alexander were sincere in what they taught or not. They were wrong and their teaching contrary to "the faith" with the end result that the faith and hope of others were imperiled thereby. Those who taught the Corinthians that "the resurrection is past already" were wrong, whether or not they were lovable.

Every time we are faced with some new crisis among God's people over some teaching and it's practical import, we are hastened to Romans 14 with the admonition "not to judge another man's servant." Roy Key and Ernest Beam back in the early 1950's left the faith after first compromising with the Christian Church and seeking grounds for expanded fellowship in spite of instrumental music and other dividing wedges. They took us to Romans 14. Carl Ketcherside and Leroy Garrett and younger disciples such as Edward Fudge and the cadre that he influenced, sought an expanded platform of "unity in diversity" among the "heirs of the restoration"

and took us to Romans 14. This was supposed to cool down the rhetoric so we could fellowship instrumental music, Premillennialism, institutionalism, the social gospel, and you name it. After all, we should not judge another's servant. And since he is honest in what he teaches and practices we should not be too severe in condemning him. Never mind how many souls are led astray and how many churches are weakened to the point of losing their identity as a people belonging to the Lord.

Every time I see a brother start making a list of how many things brethren have differed over, I wonder what is the substance to the shadow. There is a point to these lists. Right now, the point of the most recent lists, is to leave the impression that since good men have disagreed over various aspects of the subject of divorce and remarriage, that we should be still and allow error to be taught with its attendant evil work and say nothing while the purveyors of said error are active and vocal and churches are being divided. And make no mistake about it, that is exactly what is happening!

The doctrine that an alien sinner is not under law to Christ and its application to adulterous marriages is causing havoc. If these are only views privately held, why are churches being troubled over them? From what source is the doctrine coming? Several well-intentioned brethren have said they don't agree with the doctrine. But they are miffed because I, and a few others, have identified a well-known and highly respected brother who holds and has **publicly taught** this view to the disturbance of churches. Whether we used good or poor judgment in such identification is now a moot point. The fact is, the pernicious doctrine is being taught, souls are being encouraged to remain in adultery, the peace of local churches is being disrupted. When you fellows get over your grumbling and get your noses back in joint, would you please take up the sword of the spirit and HELP to expose this doctrine for what it is and warn of the devastating moral consequences? Do you really believe that adultery is a matter of indifference with God? That one may, or may not, practice it without divine approval or disapproval? I know how you will answer it. And when you do, you will have to remove it from the realm of things considered in Romans 14. If you know a better way to approach the problem, then by all means do it, but please **APPROACH THE PROBLEM**. "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" (Tit. 2: 11).

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**THOMAS H. ICARD**

Thomas H. Icard, gospel preacher of Richlands, Virginia, died of a massive heart attack on September 28, 1989 in a hospital in Pittsburg, PA where he had gone for tests about his diabetes. He was 49 years old, lacking ten days. He preached five years for the church at Wellsburg, WV, seven years with the Tomlinson Run church in PA, in Virginia Beach, VA and was working with the church at Richlands at the time of his death.

He was the editor's brother-in-law . Services were conducted in Wellsburg, WV by Wilson Adams, Owen Thomas and Stan Adams, then later another service was conducted in Hopewell, VA by John Nosker, J. Wiley Adams and the editor. Burial was at Chester, VA in the beautiful Sunset Memorial Park. He is survived by his wife, Glenda, two sons, Howard and Jimmie and a daughter, Patti. Friends who may wish to write to Glenda may address her: Mrs. Glenda Icard, P. O. Box 362, Richland, VA 24641.

**HUGO-RELIEF**

Since hurricane Hugo hit the coast of South Carolina, I have received calls from all over the country inquiring about the condition of brethren in that area. There are two congregations in Charleston: Ashley Heights and West Ashley. Little damage was done to the Ashley Heights building and no damage done to the West Ashley building. The hurricane actually did more damage to buildings belonging to brethren north of Charleston. The building of the Woodland church in Sumter had several trees fall on it. I have personally seen the damage in Charleston and it is unbelievable and yet no brethren were seriously hurt. The care and love of brethren throughout the country has been heart warming. Immediate needs of some brethren at Ashley Heights have been met. The church there has received several thousand dollars and is now refusing additional help. At this time I do not know of any brethren who are in need. Thank you for responding to these needs.

But there are many other people who yet could use help. Many small towns do not have the government that Charleston does to assist in receiving help from state and federal officials. The state has set up this number to call if you would like to help individually: 1-800-868-HUGO. They will tell you where help is most needed.

—Jim Allen, P. O. Box 4, Beaufort, SC 29902

## WAKE THE WORLD AND TELL THE PEOPLE

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### ANTIOCH — THE POWER OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

The book of **Acts** describes in thrilling detail the growth and spread of the Gospel as New Testament Christianity burned its way into the hearts and homes of men and women throughout the Roman world. If the epochal events narrated by Luke do not electrify your imagination and stir your emotions, then nothing could. Acts describes the turning point in all of history. This is not the history of one man but of one God who used many men to reach the world by means of the greatest message ever delivered.

Acts 13. Antioch serves as a pit-stop on the road to God's global plan. In Jerusalem the match had been lit. In Judea and Samaria the fire was kindled. In Antioch the fuel is added, thus igniting a spiritual explosion that would reach to the "remotest parts of the earth" (Acts 1: 8). Indeed the Antioch church served as the gateway to the world. It was **from** this place that Paul and Barnabus would go. It was **to** this place that they would return.

#### Antioch Was Willing To Let Them Go

Read again our primary passage in Acts 13: 1-3. Look closely at the final phrase in verse 3 - "**they sent them away.**" The point? It should be obvious. **THERE WOULD BE NO EVANGELISM IN OTHER PLACES IF SOME PLACE DOES NOT SACRIFICE. "They sent them away..."**

Do you think it was easy to let them go? Paul and Barnabus were not leaving on a six day meeting with all the modern conveniences of air travel, warm beds and meal lists. This was an indefinite journey filled with unforeseen perils and problems. And no specific timetable. They left not knowing when they were coming back or if they were coming back. Like a parent facing the day that every parent dreads - the day when their child is no longer a child and leaves the nest; a day of long good-byes, hand-holding, final words, and tears; a day when you turn loose because you know that is the way it must be. Antioch faced that day. It wasn't easy.

The Antioch church loved these men! When they were just beginning their walk with Christ and needed guidance, experience and encouragement, Paul and Barnabus responded (Acts 11: 22-26). They came to Antioch, grounded them in the truth of God and, at the same time, endeared themselves in the hearts and lives of these people. This was a love affair between congregation and preachers, between teachers and students. Paul and Barnabus had done something for these new converts

that no one else had accomplished. And they would never forget it.

Take **Barnabus**. Barnabus came to Antioch at a time when any preacher who went there would be taking a chance - on failure, on frustration, on the unknown. But he went. He went when he could have stayed in Jerusalem. The church was settled there. The apostles were there. Jerusalem had leadership, experience and sound organization. Yet he pulled up roots, left the security of home and moved north to help a new church composed of unknown pagan believers. You don't forget someone who sacrifices like that. And... you don't let them go very easily either.

Or take **Paul**. How they must have loved the preaching of Paul. Acts 11: 26 informs us that for an entire year Paul labored in Antioch teaching "considerable numbers." Paul had a way of teaching that reached into the hearts of his hearers. There may have been better preachers and more eloquent orators (2 Cor. 11: 6), but no one could take the message of the risen Savior and make it live any better than Paul. He had been there. He was a witness with his own eyes. His enthusiasm for the Cross was without comparison. His zeal for Christ was without masks. Paul was real. He loved His Savior and he loved His Savior's people.

It's no wonder that the Antioch brethren gathered to fast and pray (Acts 11: 3). Sure the church was, by now, well established and the sound preaching and teaching would continue through the work of Lucius, Manaen and Simon (13: 1); all of that is true. But the fact remains that you don't lose a Paul and a Barnabus easily. They would be missed. Their absence would be felt.

The brethren gathered to pray; for the safety of their beloved brothers for the success of the Gospel... for their return back to Antioch... Surely they prayed for all of that and more. This was no mid-week "does anybody have any more announcements?" and "Oh yeah, remember Paul and Barnabus in your prayers..." gathering. The church met and fasted and prayed. And, no doubt, cried.

Then they let them go. Somebody had to. There would be no conversions in Pisidia without the support of the brethren back home. There would be no Lydia of Thyatira, no Philippian jailer, no Ephesian elders. Somebody had to let them go and give them the support they needed. That somebody was Antioch. And, when you think about it, Paul and Barnabus endured much as they traveled (2 Cor. 11: 23-28) but somehow they always managed to keep going against all odds. How? How were they able to stand up under the pressure, the persecution, the stress? How? There are a lot of reasons but one that sticks out in view of our present context is this: they knew that the folks back home were spending a lot of time with bowed heads and bended knees. Then when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. "

In a day so many are hungering and thirsting in distant lands for the soul relieving power of the Gospel, may God help us to find more men like Paul and Barnabus who are willing to go. May God help us to find more churches like Antioch who are willing to send, support and en-

courage. It takes both. Search your heart and answer the question - are we really doing the job? I leave you to your own conscience...

## WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

(Rom. 4:3)

Send all questions to:

*Weldon E. Warnock*

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Xenia, OH 45385



### IS THE CHURCH TO EVANGELIZE?

**QUESTION: Isn't it the local church's responsibility to support those from the treasury who evangelize rather than doing the evangelizing itself? It seems to me the Great Commission was given to individuals rather than to the church, and, hence, the church has no obligation to preach the gospel, itself.**

**ANSWER:** It is true the local church's responsibility is to support, financially, preachers of the gospel, but to say that a church may only support preachers, and not evangelize itself, is to deny the church what the Bible authorizes and obligates it to do.

Certainly, the Great Commission was initially given to the apostles, and those whom they baptized were to observe all things Jesus commanded them (Matt. 28: 19). Among those things commanded was to "go teach all nations." This was given before the church was established, and before disciples were baptized into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But the church falls under this Commission by implication as it has the duty to preach the gospel as well as individuals. We learn this by either a command, positive statement or an example.

Granted, the church uses agencies in doing its work of preaching, but it is the church at work, nevertheless. This is also true in other functions of the church, such as edification and benevolence. Cf. 1 Cor. 12: 28-29; 14: 26-33; Acts 6: 1-6; 11: 27-30; 1 Cor. 16: 1-3. The church is no less involved in evangelizing, as it is in other assigned activities, while employing agencies. Paul rejoiced that the church at Philippi had "fellowship in the gospel" with him (Phil. 1: 5; 4: 15-16). Other churches had fellowship with Paul while he labored at Corinth (2 Cor. 11: 8).

Let us notice several passages that show the local church is to preach the gospel.

1. 1 Thess. 1: 8. "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad." The church at Thessalonica preached the word far and near.

2. Phil. 2: 16. "Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." The word is to be "held

out" or "proffered" to a crooked and perverse generation (v. 15).

3. 1 Tim. 3: 15. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of the God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." W. E. Vine says "pillar" is used metaphorically "of a local church as to its responsibility, in a collective capacity, to maintain the doctrines of the faith by teaching and practice."

4. Acts 13: 2. The church at Antioch sent out Saul and Barnabas on their missionary journey. "And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." When they returned from their journey, Paul and Barnabas "gathered the church together" and rehearsed all that God had done with them (Acts 14: 27).

All of the preceding passages show conclusively that the church has the function and responsibility of preaching the gospel in order to evangelize the world. By implicit and logical deduction, therefore, the church comes within the purview of the Great Commission.

If the local church, itself, has no God-given function to preach the gospel, then why are churches conducting radio and TV programs, cottage meetings, tent meetings, offering Bible correspondence courses, distributing gospel tracts, having gospel meetings and involved in other ways of reaching the lost?

Yes, the church is to preach the gospel!

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### HOME SCHOOLING

Some years ago while driving home late one evening from a gospel meeting I was enjoying the host of a call-in talk show that I had managed to tune in from a Northeastern city. The fellow seemingly specialized in common-sense psychology and his advice to troubled callers had a ring of Bible based ethics and wisdom about it.

My complacent consent was shaken, however, when a mother related some problems she was experiencing with her teen-aged daughter, and the radio counselor advised her to take the girl out of school and educate her at home. "How on earth can you just take a kid out of school? I protested. I decided the counselor was some kind of nut and searched for something else on the dial.

I now know the answer to my question, for we are beginning our third year of home schooling with our daughter. She is now thirteen.

Home schooling is not for everyone. I have no intention of mounting a campaign to persuade all Christians to adopt this course. But if you share some of the frustrations that my wife and I have sustained over the training of our children, perhaps you have not seriously considered what we came to recognize as a viable alternative to public education.

We have four children. Three are married and on their own (sort of). I am thankful to God that all are faithful Christians. I remember asking Pete Wilson's advice on rearing children and he said, "Remember that you're bigger than they are and do a lot of praying." We always tried to do that and, in spite of many mistakes I wish we could amend, I think we did a few other things right. But folks, this child rearing business isn't as easy as I used to think it was!

In regard to secular education, we've tried the public schools and a private school operated by Christians. The private school was, in the middle school and upper grades, a much better situation for us than the public education available. One of the principal drawbacks was the expense. It was a hefty financial load. Then too, public education or private, the quality depends foremost on the individual teachers in the classroom. Public schools have no monopoly on good, or bad teachers.

"Why did you decide to home school?" is a question that I almost always hear when people learn what we are doing. Here are some of the reasons:

1. From our experience and observation we believe

the odds are against Christian parents raising their children in the training and discipline of the Lord (Ephesians 6: 4) when the schools take over most of the training and much of the discipline or lack of it.

Most Christians have been alarmed over the influence of humanism in the schools. Even more treacherous is the peer pressure that is constant in that environment. I watched one of my children depart into the far country and almost demolish her life because she wanted so desperately to be accepted. She wanted friends. If I could go back and go at those years again, I assure you that I do not know what I would do differently to avert that situation, at least as far as our personal efforts as parents are concerned.

While our children fared better in a school administered by Christians, I don't believe the percentage of young people who have continued as faithful Christians upon leaving home is much higher there than it is with those who have graduated from public schools. Someone may say, you can't blame the schools. Well, the environment our impressionable youngsters are forced into day after day is largely to blame. I see too many good Christian parents who have given their best and highest efforts to training their children lose them to the world! This is probably the main reason so many churches have problems appointing elders. Parents come off wondering what they did wrong, and the fact is they were playing against a stacked deck.

This is one reason we decided to home school.

2. We have tried to have family worship on a fairly consistent basis ever since we started a family. School schedules and activities have never been cooperative. In the early grades the children often have so much homework that this interferes. Wednesday nights and gospel meeting weeks are especially hectic because the children's lives at school and at home are being run by the teachers.

As children get into high school, if they are athletes or good students, their evening hours are filled with practice and games and school functions. We found that family life was virtually destroyed during the very time that parents need to be exerting the primary influence in the lives of their children. We got tired of it.

3. Academically, there are decided advantages in home schooling. A student in the traditional classroom that does not catch on quickly to a new area of study is often left behind and never catches up. One of my children missed out on basic math in the early grades and was in the dark when algebra was introduced. He was totally unprepared for college math, though for a variety of reasons he seemed to do average work in high school. In home schooling the teacher can be sure that the child has grasped the lower foundations of study before moving on.

Now let me share with you the objections that I have most often heard to home schooling.

1. "But won't your children miss out on the socializing?" I often respond, "Yea, and there are a lot of other advantages too!"

Really. How much good has ever been produced by a bunch of kids hanging out together? Now, I know some association and interaction with the peer group is im-

portant. But sufficient opportunities for this exist apart from school. And in such cases the parents can exercise greater control in the choice of associates.

2. "But doesn't it take a lot of time to home school? Like anything else important, it takes time and it takes discipline. But in many cases this will not prove to be a prodigious obstacle. A child can normally accomplish in three hours of home schooling the work that takes six hours or more at school. If evening work is assigned, the parent can know that this is work the child can accomplish on his own. We have found that we spend no more time teaching our child now than we did in helping with homework when she was in school.

One family in the congregation just finished their first year of home schooling. They have four children. One was in the fourth grade, two (twins) were in the first grade, and one is a pre-schooler. The biggest concern of these parents was the time factor. But the mother, who does most of the teaching, soon saw that she wasn't as busy as last year when she was room mother in three classes, vice-president of the PTA, volunteer librarian, and, as a dutiful parent, just generally on call for any need.

3. "But can they get a quality education?" One might expatiate on the quality education that most children are getting in the public schools. Tests consistently indicate that home schoolers do better, scholastically. We have been extremely pleased with the S. A. T. scores that home schoolers here have tallied.

But as one friend expressed it, "What are you going to do, Green, when they get to the multiplication table?" I think that was his subtle way of asking if there might be subjects I won't be able to handle. In the home schooling organization we belong to, tutors are available at a nominal fee. Video tapes are now available from educational publishing firms that specialize in home schooling. Also a number of fellow Christians in this area with expertise in higher mathematics and many technical areas have indicated that they will be happy to lend a hand.

Meanwhile, our daughter is doing very well. She has developed a love for reading that she did not have before. In the past couple years she has read **Little Women, Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, Great Expectations, Christy, Heidi**, the ten volumes in the **Mandie** series, as well as several other good books. She is presently reading the **Anne (of Green Gables)** series. We made a good study of the book of Proverbs last school year. She won first place in the seventh grade in a space art contest sponsored by UAH.

4. "But isn't that against the law?" Different states have different laws. Some state laws make it easy on home schoolers; some make it difficult. There has been no specific legislation in the state of Alabama, so it's an open question here. We belong to a local organization of home schoolers that provide certified teachers to help coordinate the curriculum and program. They also give the S. A. T. tests each year and keep records of grades and report cards. We keep records of the work that is done each day. We also belong to a legal defense group that offers legal assistance if the school board decides to take the matter to court. This "insurance"

costs \$100 per year.

I have not written this column with the purpose of answering all questions. We are still quite new to the home schooling program. Some brethren have been doing it for years. But we have found that this approach to education helps us, rather than hindering, to fulfill the Biblical mandate to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

If you would like to learn more about home schooling, I encourage you to pick up some books on the subject at a religious book store. The books by Raymond and Dorothy Moore (published by Word Books) authorities in education and pioneers in the home school movement, are highly recommended.

## SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

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### STRAINING THE GNAT

"Ye blind guides, which strain at (strain out, ASV) a gnat, and swallow a camel" (Mt. 23: 24).

All of us may be guilty at times of straining out the gnat while swallowing the June bug, or maybe even a camel on occasion, due to inconsistency, or failure to make the proper application of a matter. But it seems that the Pharisees were guilty because of hypocrisy, not just because of ignorance.

I do not profess to know at what point our ignorance or inconsistency may turn into hardness and hypocrisy, nor do I profess to know just when a June bug turns into a camel. But, I still think we can tell a gnat from a camel, and profit from a study of the subject at hand.

We have marveled at the self-acclaimed scholars who profess to be experts on the 1000-year reign of Christ and other symbolic language in the Book of Revelation, but still can't seem to understand other plain, non-symbolic passages concerning the kingdom of Christ.

Then, there are others who can verbalize about the genealogy of Cain's wife, Melchizedek, or some "foolish and unlearned question," but still can't understand plain language like "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16: 16).

But all this straining out gnats and swallowing camels is not confined to those outside the body of Christ. Some of us in the church can put on a pretty good performance in the act of straining and swallowing, and the subject of the Lord's supper seems to produce its share of this activity.

When I visited the Philippines in 1984, there had been a congregation of "one cup" brethren established since my



visit in 1977. Some zealot had decided that the Filipino brethren didn't have enough obstacles to overcome, and decided to give them another bone of contention on which to chew. And in my area of the country, there is renewed effort on the part of the one-cup brethren (I don't know how else to identify them), to make disciples for their cause.

But, even that does not concern me so much as do the other exercises in nit-picking and gnat-straining done by brethren who use individual containers for the fruit of the vine. In some places, it is next to impossible for a man to "wait on the table" without being criticized for something. He shouldn't use the term "emblem," or "loaf," or "represent," or "common to a spiritual use," or any like expression in his remarks about the Lord's supper.

Since all things are to be done unto edification, it is fitting that something be said on such occasions so as to exhort brethren and inform the unbeliever. But when the audience is sprinkled with gnat strainers just wait-ing to pounce on a man's words, I advise brethren to just quote 1 Cor. 10: 16 and let it go at that. Or call on one of the gnat strainers to offer thanks (or the husband, if his wife is the critic).

I've heard some strange language used by those who preside at the Lord's table, and some of it just cannot be harmonized with the scriptures, but my observance of the supper depends a whole lot more on my attitude of heart than it does on the grammar or choice of words on the part of those who are serving the Lord's supper to the congregation.

Now, if what I have said is all that there is to be said, I doubt that I would have bothered to say it. But now we come to the swallowing of the camel.

Some of the very ones who are the most observing when it comes to finding fault with how we observe the Lord's supper, will forsake the entire assembly of the church, go on vacation or some other jaunt, and not even observe the supper or the other acts of worship associated with it.

Or, some will attempt to eat the supper (which the Lord placed in his kingdom), with digressive groups who corrupt the worship with mechanical instruments of music or other innovations which are more appropriate in a Bacchanalian feast than they are in the worship of the church, which is the temple of the Lord (Eph. 2: 19-22).

We certainly need to "speak as the oracles of God" and we would not discourage those who would teach us the way of the Lord more perfectly. Neither would we offend the conscience of some sincere brother or sister who has a problem with some of the things which are done or said at the time we are supposed to be discerning the Lord's body and shed blood.

But let us examine ourselves, and make certain that we are not "straining out the gnat and swallowing the camel."

"Pray without Ceasing" (1 Thes. 5:17).

## BREAD OF LIFE

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

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### STUDIES IN TITUS CHAPTER 3

In the previous chapter, Paul describes the true character of Christians that must be manifested in their dealings with one another and the motive behind their action. This chapter deals with attitudes the Christian must have toward unbelievers.

#### Attitudes toward Unbelievers (v. 1-3)

Christians need to know what their attitude should be toward those of the world, and Titus was responsible for teaching this. Since Christianity is to manifest itself in every relationship of life, we must know how to act toward civil authorities (v. 1). Titus was to remind Christians that the Lord ordains that they be in subjection to such (See Rom. 13: 1-7; 1 Pet. 2: 13-17).

Nero was the Emperor when Paul wrote this letter to Titus and was a persecutor of Christians, yet Christians are told to subordinate themselves to him, and all such authorities. Civil disobedience is never justified, except when those in authority demand that Christians disobey God's stated will. Then Christians must obey God rather than men (Acts 4: 18-20; 5: 29).

"To be ready unto every good work" suggests the limits wherein Christians are to be ready to obey Civil authorities. Respect their position, honor, pray for, and obey, so long as God's will is not violated. Certainly, the Christian must not do evil that good may come.

In dealing with others, Christians must not "speak evil of" anyone. That is, they must refrain from speaking reproachfully, railing at, or reviling anyone, especially rulers and authorities (v. 2). A Christian must not show himself to be contentious, quarrelsome, ready to attack others (forbidden of elders - 1 Tim. 3: 3), but rather one who manifests gentleness and meekness in dealing with all men.

Sometimes Christians are disposed to lose patience with those of the world who follow divers lusts and pleasures, being filled with malice, envy and hate (v. 3). They seem to forget that they once were in "the same boat," and are, actually, living examples of what God's grace can do for those about them who are now as they once were.

The Christians escape from the shameful past is not due to any merit of their own, but rather to the "kindness" and "love" of God, which had appeared, (v. 4) Kindness in this verse is the same as "goodness" in Rom. 2: 4. Love is literally "love for mankind." From the original word comes "philanthropy." Salvation is due to the kindness or goodness of God, based upon his love for

fallen man. This system for saving man appeared or was manifested in the coming of Christ and the perfecting of the gospel (See Tit. 2: 11-12; 1 Cor. 15: 1-4).

Verse five mentions something this salvation did not come by—"works which we have done," what it did come by—"His mercy," and how it was effected—"By the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit."

This, and other "not of works" passages (Rom. 4: 1-6; Eph. 2: 8-9) suggests to some a conflict between any works in connection with salvation and salvation by faith. Martin Luther had this problem and by adding the word "only" to Rom. 3: 28 he became the father of the "Salvation by Faith Only" doctrine, which is in direct conflict with James 2: 24.

This problem is due to a failure to note the sense in which works is used in these passages. This text speaks of works which we (ourselves) have done, and Eph. 2: 8 speaks of salvation "not of yourselves" which does not involve "works" of which one may "boast" (V. 9). Obviously, meritorious works are under consideration in these "not of works" passages. There is nothing that man could, or can, do that makes his salvation a possibility. Man only accepts through an obedient faith that which God's grace and mercy made possible, or provided. There is a great difference between meritorious works and obedience which springs from faith. No New Testament writer ever placed "obedience of faith" (Rom. 1: 5; 16: 26) in contrast with faith. Truly, salvation is by grace (God's love, goodness, mercy) through faith (expressing itself in obedience) and not by works (meritorious) of which one may boast. (Eph. 2: 8-9).

The how of His saving according to his mercy is by "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit." In our salvation, a regeneration or renewing takes place, involving a "washing" and the "Holy Spirit." "Washing (laver) of regeneration," according to Arndt and Gingrich, is "the bath that brings about regeneration." Obviously, this washing refers to baptism, which the Holy Spirit, through Peter, says saves us (1 Pet. 3: 20). The expression is equivalent to being "born of water and the Spirit" (Jno. 3: 5). The Holy Spirit in revealing, confirming truth (the gospel), and indwelling the Christian, plays a very prominent role in the begetting, birthing, and development of the new creature in Christ. Take away God's grace, the agency of the Holy Spirit, the gospel (death, burial, Resurrection of Christ) or the obedience of faith, and regeneration (salvation) is impossible.

The Holy Spirit, an important agent in regeneration, was promised to all obedient believers (Jno. 7: 37-39; Acts 2: 38-39; 5: 32; Gal. 3: 14) and verse 6 affirms that this promise was fulfilled. The terms "shed" or "poured out" are figurative (The Holy Spirit is a person and cannot be literally poured out), indicating that this promise of the gospel has been given unto us.

Verse 7 states the true position of the Christian based on what has been previously stated. He had been justified (acquitted, declared righteous, made acceptable) by God's grace and, therefore, is "an heir according to the hope of eternal life."

Verse 8 shows Paul's reason for writing these things to Titus, especially those instructions about the basis of salvation and the works Christianity demands, The Lord expects such action on the part of the redeemed, and since such is good and profitable unto man, it follows that a failure would be bad and unprofitable. It was important that Titus affirm this constantly to the saints, lest they lose their hope.


#### Paul's Final Charge To Titus (v. 9-15)

Not only did Paul want Titus to teach Christians to positively teach and hold to truth and maintain good works, but they must also avoid certain things which will hinder successful evangelism and even destroy the cause of Christ in a given area. Some of these things are "foolish questions, genealogies, contentions, and striving about the law" (v. 9). Timothy was also thus warned (1 Tim. 1: 4; 6: 4-5; 2 Tim. 2: 14, 23). The evangelist or teacher may easily get bogged down in these things which will make the teaching and learning process, so far as truth is concern, a complete failure.

Titus is told to reject a factious man (heretic - K. J. ), after the first and second admonition (v. 10). Such an one is not the preacher (teacher) who contends for truth when confronted with an opposing view, but one who contends for theories and practices clearly foreign to or out of harmony with Scripture. Such can be identified not only by what he is teaching, but by his attitude and demeanor. Persistence in advocating things not authorized by scripture, generating strife, is sin and the one who so does brings condemnation upon himself (v. 11).

In Paul's final charge to Titus, two things are emphasized, (1) Doing works worthy of the gospel; (2) Purity of doctrine and the peril of false teaching. Neglect either of these and the salvation of the teacher and hearers will be impossible.

From verses 12-15, a personal note to Titus, it seems that Paul sent this letter to Titus by Zenas, the lawyer, and Apollos. At the proper time, he would send Artemas, or Tychicus to Titus, at which time Titus would leave Crete to join Paul in Nicopolis.



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## 20TH CENTURY PAPYRI DISCOVERIES: THEIR IMPACT UPON THE NEW TESTAMENT!

**Luther W. Martin**  
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Rolla, MO 65401

Between the 3rd and 10th centuries, Greek manuscripts of the New Testament were written in 'uncials' (capital letters); one letter at a time and not connected with other letters. As far as is now known, there are 276 uncial manuscripts in existence.

Another type of New Testament manuscript, was a cursive type of writing originating from the 9th of the 16th centuries and sometimes called minuscule due to its small size, when compared to the 'uncial' or **majuscule** size. There are 2, 795 of these cursive manuscripts known in the 1980's. Some 80% of the cursives are of the Byzantine Text; much like the **Textus Receptus**.

There were also some 2, 200 Greek Lectionaries, which were used in the public worship of the early church. A scribe would prepare a copy of part of a New Testament Book, for study by the congregation. These also were mostly of the Byzantine Text.

For two hundred and seventy years the King James Version had been the dominant English Bible (1611-1881). It was in 1881 that the English Revised Version was completed and published. But in the 1890's, a great mass of 'papyri' began to be discovered in the dry sands of Egypt. Fragments of the New Testament Books, dating back to as early as 125 A. D., were found by Adolph Deissmann and Professor Thumb of Germany, and Grenfell and Hunt of England. These many bits of 'papyri' served to prove that the New Testament had NOT been written in **Classical Greek** but had been written in **Koine Greek**, the commonly spoken Greek of the 1st century A. D.

This surprising fact had not been known by the earlier translators, such as Westcott and Hort, and others. The early Greek lexicographers had given New Testament words **Classical Greek** definitions. J. H. Thayer would prove to be the first lexicographer that identified the changing meaning of Greek words from the **Classical** to the **Koine**. (Example - **psallo**).

Tischendorf listed only ONE papyrus in his writings. Westcott and Hort mentioned NONE! But, in the 1980's, 88 Papyri Manuscript fragments are known and cataloged! Several readings found in the Papyri, agree with the Byzantine or Majority Text, and thus render invalid the Westcott - Hort textual theory.

### Contents of New Testament Papyri

MATTHEW—Fractions of 16 different chapters.  
MARK—Fractions of 9 different chapters.  
LUKE—Eight complete chapters and fractions of 13 additional chapters.

JOHN—Twelve complete chapters and fractions of all 21 chapters.

ACTS—Twenty-three complete chapters and fractions of 25 chapters.

ROMANS—Fractions of 16 chapters.

1 COR. —Fractions of 16 chapters.

2 COR. —Fractions of 13 chapters.

GAL. —Fractions of 6 chapters.

EPH. —Fractions of 6 chapters.

PHIL. —Fractions of 4 chapters.

COL. —Fractions of 4 chapters.

1 THESS — Fractions of 4 chapters.

2 THESS. —Fraction of 1 chapter.

TITUS—Fractions of 3 chapters.

PHILE. —Fraction of 1 chapter.

HEBREWS—Two complete chapters and fractions of 13 chapters.

JAMES—Fractions of 5 chapters.

1 PETER—The complete book, plus fractions of 3 chapters.

2 PETER—The complete book, plus fractions of 2 chapters.

1 JOHN—Fractions of 5 chapters.

2 JOHN—Fraction of 1 chapter.

3 JOHN—Fraction of 1 chapter.

JUDE—Complete, plus a fraction in each of 2 additional Papyri.

REV. —Fractions of 13 chapters.

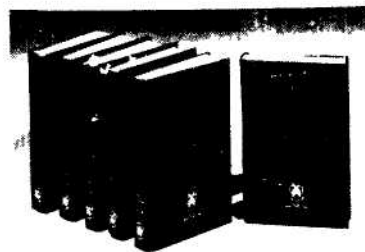
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## SERVE ONE ANOTHER

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One of the things that separates the people of God from the multitudes of the world is the willingness to "serve one another." In Paul's letter to the Galatians he wrote: "**For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another**" (5: 13). Being a Christian does not bring us the freedom to run over the feelings of others, or to stake our claim on our rights regardless of who might be affected by it. Instead the Holy Spirit directed Paul to write that we are to "**serve one another.**" This concept is very different from that of the world. Where the world says, "look out for number one," the gospel says, "**Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others**" (Phil. 2: 3-4).

It appears that this willingness to serve, to be a servant to others, is not natural to us but must be learned. Jesus criticized the Pharisees because they loved to have the preeminence. In Matthew chapter 23 He told them, "**But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chiefs seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi**" (v. 5-7). Then Jesus made the application of His lesson to the multitude by saying, "**But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted**" (v. 11-12). There is always a danger that we too may love the preeminence, the chief seats, the sounds of the praises of our fellowman, and forget who we really are, sinners who have been cleansed by the blood of Christ.

On at least two different occasions reported in the book of Matthew the disciples were involved in discussions of who was the greatest among them. In chapter 18 "**Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven**" (v. 2-4). Later, in chapter 20 James and John came to Jesus, along with their mother, requesting that they be allowed to sit on His right hand and on His left in the kingdom. And verse 24 tells us that the other ten among the apostles

were "**moved with indignation**" against these two brethren. Then Jesus answered them, "**Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 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: 25-28). There just isn't any room in the kingdom of God for the pettiness of setting ourselves up as better than others.

In John chapter 13 we see Jesus, just after the Passover, washing the feet of the disciples. This He did, not because they were really in need of physical cleansing. Jesus said: "**Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them**" (v. 12-17).

In Luke chapter 17 we find Jesus again teaching the disciples about being servants. He said: "**But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do**" (v. 7-10). When we serve our Lord, and when we serve one another, we have done only that which is our duty to do. There is no special reward, no extra stars in your crown; just the joy of serving as the Master requires.

Most often when we talk of doing good for others the idea seems to involve money. But very often the thing we have least of is money, and the thing we have the most of is our selves and our time. Is it too much effort, too inconvenient, too time consuming to go by and pick up someone who needs a ride to the assemblies? Is it too belittling to stop by some brother or sister's house to help with some chore they can't handle alone? Are we too important and too busy to stop by the home of a brother or sister who is ill or shut-in and help mow the grass, or wash the windows or whatever may be needed? Certainly there are times when brethren do not want this kind of help, for it makes them feel that we think they can't cope on their own. But we should be willing to inconvenience ourselves to do for others. If we would follow Jesus we must learn to "**serve one another.**"

## CHARISMANIA: ERRORS AND EXCESSES OF THE MODERN CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

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David R. Reagan went into apostasy and left the churches of Christ several years ago to wander in the wastelands of Premillennialism, denominationalism, and Pentecostalism. Modern converts to Pentecostal concepts who have not joined the old line Pentecostal denominations and who take a softer line on some traditional Pentecostal issues are called charismatics. Reagan conducts his own independent ministry called "Lamb and Lion Ministries" especially devoted to spreading Premillennialism. This work has led him to associate with many Pentecostal and charismatic groups for nearly a decade.

In the April 1989 issue of his paper **Lampighter**, Reagan made several "Observations on the Charismatic Movement." If those of us who oppose all the unscriptural errors of the charismatic movement were to make the same observations Reagan makes, we would be accused of being prejudiced, narrow-minded, and traditional. Speaking from the vantage point of his fellowship and participation in various charismatic activities, Reagan will not be so charged. His observations are objective, and his analysis is accurate. At both the beginning and ending of his article, he highly commends the charismatics for their revival of miracles, "Davidic praise worship," and "victorious living." But the real heart of his article is a stunning expose of the excesses and errors of the charismatic movement, listed below.

1. **THE SPIRIT OVER JESUS.** Reagan laments that "the dove has come to replace the Cross as the symbol of Christianity. That is tragic and un-Biblical. Our salvation is not in the power of the Holy Spirit. Our salvation is in the blood of Christ. The Cross is our hope; not the baptism in the Holy Spirit."

2. **GIFT OVER FRUIT.** Though he attempts to defend miraculous gifts of the Spirit today, Reagan admits that an overemphasis on miraculous gifts has fostered "an incredible degree of spiritual arrogance" and has caused much division. "The frequent result is people who speak in tongues but who cannot control their tongues."

3. **EXPERIENCE OVER SCRIPTURE.** "Visions, dreams, and out-of-body experience have been applauded, even when what was reported ran contrary to the Word. This tendency has opened the Movement to an invasion of the occult."

4. **PRAISE OVER PRAYER.** Reagan has found that charismatics so love to "revel" in praise that they lose the sense of humility which ought to be expressed in prayer and in the confession of our sins before the Lord. "God cannot inhabit the praises of an unholly people."

5. **UNITY OVER PURITY.** "One of the most danger-

ous trends within the Charismatic Movement has been its growing tendency to embrace anyone and everyone who claims to have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit." Reagan bemoans the fact that charismatics often fellowship "spirit-filled Catholics," who are "in bondage to doctrines of demons like the exaltation of Mary," and accept "spirit-filled" Mormons, who believe that "Jesus is one of several thousand gods created by the supergod Adam, an exalted man!"

6. **COMFORT OVER SUFFERING.** Reagan complains that "those who are not healed are treated with embarrassment and are often condemned for 'a lack of faith.'" "We do not receive glorified bodies until the resurrection," Reagan notes. "All the overemphasis among Charismatics on painless living has eclipsed the true calling of scripture. The fact of the matter is that we are called to suffer for Christ (Rom. 8: 17; Phil. 3: 10; 1 Pet. 4: 13). The scriptures say that Jesus was perfected through what he suffered (Heb. 5: 8-9). Can anything less be expected for us?"

7. **POWER OVER HOLINESS.** Reagan laments an "increasing lust" among charismatics for political and economic power and for the things of this world. "The union of the Church with the world has always resulted in the corruption of the Church. Our quest is to be for holiness, not power (1 Pet. 1: 13-16). Is it any wonder that the power hungry ministry empires of these latter days have been plagued with constant scandal?"

8. **SUCCESS OVER SACRIFICE.** Reagan severely castigates charismatic ministers who trumpet "worldly success as a measure of Christian faith," and who "live in conspicuous splendor, pointing to their ministries." "What a perversion of the gospel! How can those who wallow in materialism claim to be followers of a man who denied the world, who had no place to lay his head, and who died with only one possession—a robe? For them, the Rolex watch has replaced the Cross as the symbol of Christianity."

9. **PARTIAL OVER PERFECT.** Reagan did not include this last point but it is the root of all the errors, excesses, and confusion which is manifested in charismania. 1 Corinthians 13: 8-13 teaches that the miracles of revelation and confirmation provided the means for unveiling truth part by part by part. "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." When the revelation of all truth was completed, new miracles of revelation and confirmation were no longer needed in God's plan. All such miracles were to "fail," "cease," "vanish away," and "be done away" with the **full** and final revelation of the New Testament. Pentecostals and charismatics of all varieties have been led into many extremes and excesses by trying to hold on to "the partial" when "that which is perfect" has already come.

The Holy Spirit has already fully revealed the gospel of Christ as God's mighty power unto the salvation of every soul. Let us preach that gospel in its simplicity and fullness today without creating unrealistic expectations of new miracles. The miracles served the temporary purpose of bringing the gospel into the world, but the gospel itself is the permanent plan of God for the salvation of souls. Let us preach the gospel of Christ in its original

purity and power, and urge men to accept it and obey it. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16: 16).

## WHO HARDENED PHARAOH'S HEART?

**David A. Padfield**  
**2612 S. Villa Drive**  
**Evansville, IN 47714**

Of all the characters in the Bible, few have caused as much speculation as the Pharaoh who ruled Egypt during the time of Moses. God spoke to Moses about Pharaoh and said, "I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go" (Exodus 4: 21). This promise of God was repeated on several other occasions (Exodus 7: 3; 9: 12; 10: 20, 27; 11: 10).

Many fanciful theories have been devised to explain how God hardened Pharaoh's heart. Calvinists often point to this case and claim that God miraculously hardened his heart by the Holy Spirit. But, as is always the case, their argument fails in the light of other passages.

Three times in the narrative we read that Pharaoh hardened his own heart (Ex. 8: 15, 32; 9: 34). Four other times the Bible simply says his heart "grew" or "became" hard (Ex. 7: 14, 22; 8: 19; 9: 7). The record also indicates the magicians had a hand in the hardening of Pharaoh's heart (Ex. 7: 22; 8: 19).

When we put all the pieces together, what do we find? Pharaoh was an insolent, arrogant and cruel man. He had two reasons for not wanting to release the Israelites: pride and covetousness. It would look bad for a monarch to allow nearly two million slaves to go free. It would also hurt the national economy if he lost his labor force.

It went against the grain for a man like Moses to make demands in the name of Jehovah. Every time Moses spoke Pharaoh's heart grew harder.

The magicians also played a part in the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. By the use of enchantments, they tried to neutralize the miracles of Moses. Robert Jamieson commented, "the art of those ancient magicians, who were not common jugglers, but educated men, was enlisted in support of the idolatry of Egypt... it is not difficult to imagine what immense power those professors of occult science must have wielded over the minds of men in an age of darkness, when the superstition of Egypt was in all its glory."

I suggest God hardens the hearts of men today the same way He did 3, 500 years ago. Some men will never condescend to listen to a simple gospel preacher. The "pride of life" (1 John 2: 16) will cause them to close their ears to the truth. Pride kept many of the rulers from confessing Christ, "lest they be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12: 42, 43).

When a man repeatedly hears the gospel message, yet refuses to obey it, his conscience becomes "seared" (1 Tim. 4: 2). To some men, gospel preachers are the "aroma of life," but to those who have had their conscience seared, they are the "aroma of death" (2 Corinthians 2: 16).

False teachers also help to harden the hearts of some. Pentecostal preachers, by their use of "signs and lying wonders" (2 Thes. 2: 9), have deceived people into putting their trust in things other than God's word. Denominational creeds and traditions have also blinded men to the truth (Matt. 15: 8, 9).

Religious groups like the PTL club have convinced many people that "Christianity" is a sham. It is tragic that the shenanigans of these con artists will cause people to give up on God, and never find out what it really means to be a Christian.

When Jesus prayed for the unity of his disciples, He said, "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent me" (John 17: 21). The unity of our Lord's followers would help convince the world that the Father had sent Him. The denominations who preach "join the church of your choice" are acting against the prayer of Christ.

Pharaoh had the opportunity to heed the voice of God. I am sure he would give 1,000 worlds like this one for another chance. You have the same choice Pharaoh had. The difference is that he cannot change his decision now, but you can.

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## THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

*Send all News Items to: Connie W. Adams, P. O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109*

**STEVE KEARNEY**, 140 Woodlawn Park Grove, Firhouse, Dublin, Ireland—During the late summer, six were baptized and one restored in the work in Dublin. We have lost over \$200 a month in support and could use help. In May we were visited by the Daniell family from Tonbridge Wells, England. The Colly Caldwells from Temple Terrace, Florida were here later and Colly spoke for us. Also in August we were visited by Les and Linda Maydell from Pretoria, South Africa. Then Bill and Inez Fain from Portland, Oregon visited with us en route to England and Germany. All of these encouraged us much.

**WILSON COPELAND**, 9747 Union Terrace Lane, Maple Grove, MN 55369 — In the May, 1989 issue of STS, we announced a special two-week door-to-door effort for the city of Duluth, Minnesota and appealed for volunteers to come and help us. The response was beyond expectations. In addition to Melvin Krumrei, Jady Copeland, Rick Lanning, Keith Barclay, Rennie Frazier and myself, we were joined by the following: Wayne Troulias, Fultondale, Alabama; Mike Johnson, Gardendale, Alabama; David Hawthorne, Columbia, TN; Lonnie and Cindy Fritz, Peoria, IL; Roland and Donna Fritz, Woodbury, TN; Orman and Frances Henderson, Deerfield, MO; Kent Persall, Cullman, AL; Carlton McPeak, Mt. Pleasant, TN; David Diestelkamp, Eau Claire, WI; and Albert and Bernice Wanous, Pine City, MN. We distributed about 9,000 pieces of literature, had many at-the-door discussions, and feel much good was done. Twelve adults and ten children visitors attended the meeting the second week, there were seven home Bible studies conducted the week of the meeting. Over 30 other names were left who had interest in having a Bible study. Another door-to-door effort will be made next summer in another Minnesota city. Consider this your "Minnesodian call" and start planning to "come over and help us."

**MIKE HUGHES**, P. O. Box 2481, Corinth, MS 38834 —We have been with the central church for a year in which time four have been baptized. We have started a bulletin mailed to 300 homes. I typeset two magazines, as a labor of love. One is THE APOSTOLIC MESSENGER published by Walton Weaver and the other is called GOD'S ALTERNATIVE put out by Wayne Goforth. I am seeking sermon outlines from faithful gospel preachers for possible publication in an outline book. I have lost \$100 a month in support. I would like to be placed on the mailing list of those who publish bulletins. Visit with us at Central, located on Central School Road off Hwy. 72 East. Our phone number for directions is (601) 287-6413.

**JOE PRICE**, 1053 North 1390 West, Layton, Utah 84041 — I have just returned from a two-week preaching trip with brethren Robert W. LaCoste and Dennis Scroggins to Moscow, Idaho and Calgary, Alberta, Canada. In Moscow three teenage girls were baptized into Christ. In Calgary, one brother was restored. Daily classes and evening services were conducted at both places. The churches are similar in several ways. They are small in number. The Moscow church has 15 members and the Calgary church has 25 members. Neither church has an evangelist working with them now but both are interesting in finding a good man to work with them. Moscow is about 75 miles from other churches while Calgary is about 150 miles from the closest congregation. In Moscow, our morning classes had alien sinners each day, with some attending nightly services. At Calgary, about 25 contacts were made with people enrolled in correspondence courses, and two of these came four nights of the meeting.

At both places, the topic of marriage, divorce and remarriage was of great concern. In Moscow, we conducted a 3 and 1/2 hour class one morning on the subject, at which the brethren had many questions. In Calgary, Friday night was devoted to the subject, with questions following our speeches. That session lasted almost three hours. The

brethren are hungry for the truth on this crucial subject, which have caused doubts to arise. Some preachers in the northwest and other parts of the U. S. have suggested that the topic of MDR is too "complex" and "controversial" to take an absolute stand upon it. This has caused brethren in these churches to doubt the truth Jesus taught in Mt. 19: 3-12, et al. We encountered the doctrine that the guilty, put away fornicator may remarry, as well as the doctrine that aliens are not amenable to Christ's marriage law. It is crucial that brethren and preachers in the northwestern part of the U. S. and the southwestern part of Canada take a strong stand for truth on this subject. Doubt must be replaced with firm conviction upon the revealed truth of God. We plan to return and work with them again next year. Any interest in the work at either place may contact, in Moscow, Eddie Northern (208) 882-5242. In Calgary, contact Wayne Bailey (403) 258-1358. For more information you may also call me at (801) 546-6216.

**ROBERT H. FARISH**, Rt. 4, Box 4384-D, Belton, TX 76513 —The Leon Valley church met in their new meeting house, located at 4404 Twin City Blvd., Temple, Texas 76502, for their first service June 18, 1989. Jerry Fite began a gospel meeting on that date. The preaching was true to the word of God and effectively presented. Our next meeting will be in October with Harold Fite preaching. We are the closest congregation to Ft. Hood, or brethren at Killeen. Tim Coffey is the capable local preacher. I know of no other preacher, young or old, who spends more time and labor in the Lord's vineyard. We feel there is a bright future for the church here. About half the congregation is made up of children, from babes-in-arms to young teens. We invite you to visit with us and solicit your prayers. The last request was not intended as just the right thing to say in closing! We will appreciate your prayers and are confident they will help.

**JOHN W. PITMAN**, P. O. Box 9, Louisa, KY41230 —Paul Casebolt was here in late August in a well attended meeting. We look for his return in the fall of 1990. In the past six weeks there have been seven who confessed wrongs and one baptized. I need some additional support. If you know of anyone living in this area of the Big Sandy Valley please contact us at the above address or call (606) 639-9546.

**TOL BURK**, 1500 E. 12th Sweetwater, TX 79556 — After much prayer and continued thought my family and I have decided to move to St. Croix in the U. S. Virgin Islands next June with a view toward spreading the gospel throughout the Caribbean. There are 5 million English-speaking people in the Caribbean as well as 9 million who speak Spanish. There are several brethren already on St. Croix. The cost of living is high. We need help for monthly support, travel funds and equipment to help us in the work. Please contact me at the above address.

**RAY VOTAW**, Box 801, Springs 1560, South Africa — Because of health problems, I have not been able to made distant trips and have been meeting with the local black church made up of Kwa-Thema Ndabele and Bapedi tribesmen. Although I helped establish this church many years ago, my work with them has been the same as with some 40 other churches I have helped - a case of benign neglect. I'm always surprised and thrilled at how these "neglected" churches have matured - most of the time without me. I strongly believe that a case can be made for a preacher in my type of work making it a point of not being too available. These Kwa-Thema brethren have one "official" service in a school hall for a few hours each Sunday morning. Then with some pre-planning most of them go to some member's house

where there are physical and/or spiritual problems. The same is done each Wednesday evening, again, concentrating on those whose faith is weak or who might have become completely unfaithful. These are their plans - not mine. In the past few months there have been several baptisms. Among the "babes" there are several young women and men who receive much encouragement, exhortations and sometimes rebuke from their older, faithful and knowledgeable brethren. I would not want to leave the impression that all the work is without problems, but these churches have shown their ability to cope with their own problems in a decisive and scriptural way.

The winds of change have received hurricane force in this country. Even for an old hand like me (we began our 36th year this week) these are heady, exciting and frightening times. The uncertainties of these unsettling conditions makes the certainties of the gospel more appealing (Jno. 14: 6). This blessed assurance is being held out by God's people from the Zambesi River right down to the tip of the Cape of Good Hope. Be assured that you there in the U. S. A. have many brothers and sisters here.

**PAUL WILLIAMS, P. O. Box 324, Eshowe, 3815 South Africa** — The Bible Slides Lectures presented by Gene Dumas from Milton, Vermont provoked great interest wherever they were presented which included Krugersdorp, Soweto, Nigel, several places in the Venda, Gazankulu, Zimbabwe, Pietermaritzburg, and Eshowe. In the nearly two months he spent here he got a good introduction to the churches here, and the brethren and visitors received great good from the information on Bible history, prophesy and evidences.

Gene is an energetic, enthusiastic fellow who attracted friends everywhere. We thank him for coming to South Africa and we thank the churches and individuals who made it possible for him to come. Three more were baptized from the work of two native young men, Funda Mpanza and David Nkonyama.

**WALLACE H. LITTLE, P. O. Box 751973, Memphis, TN 38175**—My wife and I having settled our problems according to God's word, I now want to get back into full-time preaching. I have 25 years full-time preaching experience. Since my military retirement provides for most of my financial requirements, I do not need much additional support. For this reason, I am particularly interested in hearing from small congregations needing a full time man, but unable to provide full support. For personal reasons, I prefer to locate in east Texas, southeast Arkansas, western Louisiana or western Mississippi, but I will consider any place with a need I can fill. After October 1, please contact me at: 3108 Longhorn St., Rosenberg, TX 77471. Phone (713) 232-2890.

**PREACHERS NEEDED**

**HUDSON, NEW YORK** — We have been without a preacher for a year and need someone to help us in the gospel. We have 34 people - 6 men, 15 women and 13 children. We are a young group. A considerable amount of support would need to come from other sources. Keith Clayton from Vermont has helped us in door-to-door work and knows about our work and needs. Anyone interested may call (518) 784-9703.

**MCMINNVILLE, TENNESSEE** — We are in need of a full time preacher for the West End Ave. church here, located about 70 miles S. W. of Nashville, TN. We own our own property. We will be able to partially support a man, although some outside help will be needed. For more information contact: Don Henry, 139 Clearview Dr., McMinnville, TN 37110. Phone (615) 473-3425.

**AUGUST CHRISTIANITY MAGAZINE**

Paul Earnhart is to be commended for the August issue of CHRISTIANITY MAGAZINE which deals with the family. In addition to some excellent articles touching various aspects of the subject, Paul

has written some excellent material dealing with the reasons why an alien is under law to Christ and also what repentance demands. In his usual style, it is forthright, perceptive, and carefully thought out.

**THE NEW HERMENEUTICS**

Those who attended the Nashville meeting last December will remember the call from some institutional speakers for a "new Hermeneutic" and decrying the old way of demanding a precept, approved apostolic example or necessary inference to prove something from the New Testament. Well, on October 14, 1989 there was an all day forum on this subject at Freed-Hardeman College. Two speakers who think there is a need for a "new hermeneutic" spoke. They were Thomas H. Olbricht of Pepperdine University and C. Leonard Allen of Abilene Christian University. Two men who opposed this also spoke. They were Howard W. Norton of Oklahoma Christian University and Earl D. Edwards, Freed-Hardeman College. The sessions were moderated by Stafford North of Oklahoma Christian University. The flyer sent out by Freed-Hardeman College said: "Does one learn God's will by command, example, and necessary inference or by some other approach? The overall theme will focus on "the new Hermeneutic" and how to interpret and understand God's will.

Are the New Testament letters epistolary or constitutional? Should there be fuller fellowship with the evangelicals? Is instrumental music in worship in the realm of judgment? Should there be more latitude for disagreement?

Will there be a division in the church with reference to interpretation of Scripture? THESE ARE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS.

COME HEAR THEM DISCUSSED. "

Indeed! They are important questions. All is not at peace among the institutional folks, either.

**LULU PENCE**

On September 21, Lulu Pence, longtime member of the Expressway church in Louisville, celebrated her 100th birthday. She is one of my favorite people. She lives with Geneva, her oldest child (who is now 80). Her husband passed away at the age of 90. They were married 65 years. Sister Pence and daughter are remarkable people. They attend every service (including every night of every gospel meeting) at Expressway. She is seldom sick. Geneva says she gets up singing each morning. Her mind is keen and she is always pleasant to those around her. She concludes her day by reading her Bible from 7 P. M. to about 9: 30 P. M. When her eyes get tired she sometimes reads only 1 1/2 hours. She then prays for 15 minutes or more and says she has much to be thankful for. She usually reads an entire book at one sitting. Short epistles such as Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians she reads all in one night's reading. She commented to Paul Woodward, an elder at Expressway, that in reading she always does three things to help understand what she reads: (1) "I find out who is doing the writing"; (2) "I learn to whom he is writing"; and (3) "I determine why he was writing." She has read all the Old Testament at least 25 times and the New Testament well over 100 times.

I love her sense of humor. Last year, I attended a party for her in the home of the Woodwards on her 99th birthday at which time R. J. Stevens was present and sang "Happy Birthday" to her, before we all joined in. I saw her a few days later at a meeting at Expressway and told her I enjoyed her party and had never attended a 99th birthday party before. She looked at me with a twinkle in her eye and said, "Well now, you want to take good care of yourself so you won't have to miss the one next year. It'll be something." Well, I tried to take care of myself, but regrettably was out of the city in a meeting and was not able to attend. But a large crowd of people did attend and it was really something, according to all accounts. Thank God for dear people like Lulu Pence and the grand and worthy example they set for the younger.

**IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH**

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