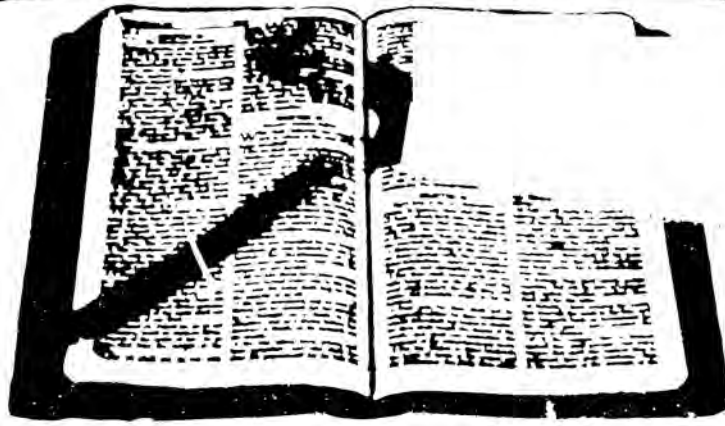


WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32
"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"k forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25
"Grace and truth: came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1976

NUMBER 1

Advantages Of A Written Revelation

The advantages of a written revelation are far too numerous to mention in any one sermon or article. The religious world is in a turmoil today because of its many differing doctrines. It is little wonder that millions who have never studied the Bible for themselves are confused as to what is right in religion. One of the confounding issues of



ARVEL CURTIS

the day, as well as days gone by, is the so called continued revelations, which the serious Bible Student rejects fully. Many are misled by those who promote their false ideas of new revelation. There is a vast difference in the revelations of today and the INSPIRED revelation, the Bible. The New Testament proves emphatically that the so called revelations are false and uninspired. Jesus promised the apostles, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you ALL THINGS, and bring ALL THINGS to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn. 14:26). The apostle Paul clearly stated Jesus Christ as the source of his revelation (Gal. 1:11, 12). Paul declares, "How that BY REVELATION HE MADE KNOWN 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)" (Eph. 3:3, 4). Paul also declares all the Bible to be inspired of God and complete to furnish man to every good work (II Tim. 3:16, 17). Since the New Testament is inspired of God and instructs us completely there is no need for additional revelation. The fact that Jesus promised the apostles ALL TRUTH denies the reality of any new truth. The difference in New Testament revelation and revelation today is INSPIRATION. The Bible is inspired of God while current revelation is inspired of men which is to say not inspired at all (Gal. 1:8, 9). Let us

look at some specific and important advantage of the written revelation that God has given to us.

THE WRITTEN REVELATION PROVIDES A COMMON FAITH. The New Testament in the hands of people puts them on common ground. The written revelation does not change from hand to hand but speaks the same to all men everywhere. Jude states, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). The Bible is not at fault when men are divided for it speaks the same message in every locale. The so called revelations of today say different things. In various places they may differ on such things as the second coming of Christ, the Kingdom, worship and other doctrinal matters which proves their origin not to be of God. But this is not true with the New Testament, for it speaks the same everywhere under all circumstances. The written revelation is the only reason that could be given for the churches of Christ being able basically to believe and practice the same thing in every location without the aid of another creed or some kind of earthly headquarters. When we do differ it is from lack of study of the Book. Thanks be to God for the written word which gives us common faith and furnishes us to every good work.

THE WRITTEN REVELATION DOES NOT CHANGE. While modern revelations not only vary with men but also change from day to day, the Bible does not change. Who can afford to put his soul into the hands of changing revelation? Think of the revelations of men that had to be changed on the second coming of Christ alone. Yet, how many times has the written revelation changed on such matters? We can depend on the written word of God. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). The meaning is that everything Jesus said in that chapter and in every other chapter and verse will come to pass. His word is true and will never be destroyed. His word

will judge us in the last day (Jn. 12:48), and will live on in eternity (Rev. 14:13). God keeps all of His promises in His word (II Pet. 3:9). God's love and mercy has been most kind to furnish us with a dependable, never changing, written revelation which makes all men equal before Him.

THE WRITTEN REVELATION IS OBJECTIVE. To be objective is to be such that all may see, look and evaluate. But what about the revelations of men? They are subjective and cannot be seen by others. They require a total dependence on the one receiving the revelation. It is taking the word of unproven men who differ among themselves against the unity of the Bible with miracles to back the message of those who wrote. The validity of the written may be checked and studied to one's own satisfaction without its changing from day to day. There is a great deal of comfort to look into the revelation of God, written by some forty men who set forth God's will toward man, and to be able to find harmony and oneness. The written revelation is reliable and does not have to rely on memory. Some men have great minds and wonderful memories, but who is willing to trust his salvation only to memory? Men vary in their revelations and feelings which proves their unreliability. It proves also that they are uninspired, not from God. The Holy Spirit was sent by God in the name of Christ to inspire men to write down His will for us. This revelation is perfect (Jas. 1:25), indestructible (Matt. 24:35), and most reliable in furnishing us unto every good work (II Tim. 3:16, 17). May we study and obey its commands, rejecting all modern day revelations which would add to or take away from the perfect Law. All such revelations are of men and not of God. Let us be ever grateful for the objective truth of God's word. — P. O. Box 6477, Moore, Okla. 73160.

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" — Jn. 1:17.

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Submitting An Article

When one submits an article to be published in a periodical, he naturally does so with the hope that it will be published. Unless the article is published, it will never accomplish its potential, and the author's time has been wasted, except for the good he personally received from writing the article.



BOBBY DUNCAN

But many good articles never appear in print. They simply are not selected by the editor for publication. This is not because the editor does not agree with the content of the article, or because he is not a personal friend of the author. It is often because the article would require too much editorial work before it could be sent to the printer. Editors of brotherhood papers typically are busy men. If an editor has several equally good articles on his desk from which to select, he will usually select those which require the least amount of editing, and which are most nearly ready to be sent to the printer as they are. If an author knows what an editor expects, it will be easier for him to submit articles that will most certainly receive the attention and the consideration of the editor. Otherwise the editor may know at a glance that a certain article, though perhaps rich in content, would require too much editing; and so he lays it aside without reading it, and picks up one that is more nearly ready to be sent to the printer.

Articles submitted for publication in WORDS OF TRUTH should be, above all, articles that teach the truth. We are of no disposition to teach error on these pages. We do not hold the view that fairness demands

the devil be given equal opportunity to teach his error on the pages of a paper published by God's people. The devil certainly does not give God's truth an opportunity to be heard, if he can keep from it.

Articles should be type written, and double spaced, on plain, white, letter size paper. Some typewriters can be set so that the lines are a space and a half apart, instead of two full spaces. This looks neat, and requires less paper, but double spacing leaves more room for making necessary changes and corrections in the text. Also it is preferred that reasonably wide margins be left on both right and left sides of the page, and at least an inch of blank space at the top and bottom.

The complete text of the article should be carefully read to see that there are no errors in spelling or grammar. Scripture references and quotations should be checked for accuracy. The Authorized (King James) Version, or the American Standard Version should be used in articles for WORDS OF TRUTH. An effort should be made, by examining a recent issue of the publication to which the article is being sent, to learn how the editor prefers the references be inserted into the text. For example, in WORDS OF TRUTH, we follow the method prescribed in the MLA STYLE SHEET. This means that a period or comma after a reference would appear outside the parentheses. For example: "Jesus wept" (Jno. 11:35). We would emphasize that different publications prefer different styles of punctuation, and that a recent issue of the publication should be examined to determine the style preferred.

Articles for WORDS OF TRUTH should be no longer than five pages. It is preferred that they be no more than three pages, but some subjects cannot be discussed adequately in that short a space. Sometimes in a periodical with limited amount of space it is difficult to find space for lengthy articles, whereas short articles can always be used. Articles shorter than a full page are always welcome.

The author's name should appear immediately under the title of the article, but not his address. This should appear at the end of the article, over against the left margin. We publish the addresses of all authors, so that one who may want to contact him about the article may know how to do so.

When an author sends an article for publication, he should indicate to the editor if the article has been or is being sent to other publications as well. The date of the article's being sent to other publications should be included, and, if it has already been published, the date of its previous publication. As a rule, editors would prefer to publish articles which their readers have not already read in some other publication. And if one subscribes to more than one brotherhood periodical, he does not want to receive the same articles in each of them. It is unfair for an editor to publish an article, only to learn that the same article was read by his readers a week before in another publication.

These are some simple suggestions for those submitting articles to this publication. Other publications likely would have other suggestions, and some of the ones made here would not apply.

As we suggested earlier, if we do not know an author, either personally or by reputation, we would appreciate his telling us something about himself when he sends his first article. We would appreciate also a picture of each author which we might run with his article.

Excelling In Service

[The following article was written by the late brother Nichols, and appeared in WORDS OF TRUTH several years ago. It is as timely now as it was then. — Editor]

BY GUS NICHOLS

Some men seek to excell in business. Their competition is keen, and they know it. They know that they must excel or fail. Some students seek to excell in their school work. They know that it is advantageous to make good grades. Some are aware of the fact that if a man does not want to fail in life he must seek to have a good name which is rather to be chosen than great riches (Prov. 22:1; Eccl. 7:1). A good reputation is the biggest investment one can make in business. If a man does not have good character he has very little to invest in life. "Honesty is the best policy" only when it is founded on conviction concerning the rightness of it. Honesty is not the best policy if it is only for the sake of policy and reputation. Only the house on the rock can stand in the final day of rewards. The houses on the sand are sure to fall (Matt. 7:21 - 28).

EXCELLEING IN SERVICE

"Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church" (I Cor. 14:12). First of all, one must seek to excel himself. He must seek to be a better man than he has been in the past. He must get out of the rut and away from his old habits of sin and shame. He must become a new creature in Christ (II Cor. 5:17). He must learn to walk "in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-5; 17:18). He must die to the love and the practice of sin, and live no longer therein (Rom. 6:1-2). He must cease to do evil and learn to do good (Isa. 1:9-22).

EXCELL OTHERS IN SERVICE

One should also strive to excell others in service. Some colossal failures thus far in life have great potential - great talents and endowments - even by heredity. Some of them have been reared in good homes and have had advantages which others have not enjoyed. Some now have challenging opportunities calling loud and long for real men and women to come away from the mottley crowd and get on the stage of action - the kind of action which will count for time and for all eternity. In view of such advantages, Jesus raised the question, "What do ye more than others?" (Matt. 5:47). Usually the most liberal givers in the church are very poor people, though they are rich in faith and in spiritual blessings (Rev. 2:9; 3:14-19). As a rule, children reared in ease, luxury, idleness and fleshly pleasures are no account when weighed in the balances of success and failure in life. They do less than others who are inferior in ability and opportunity. The best of people are excellng because they do not shun the hard way, the way of work and unselfish service. Those who want something for nothing have a terribly hard time getting it, while nearly all of them utterly fail.

Members of the church should seek to do more than others", for they are under greater obligation to do so than worldly people. Instead of doing as little for the Lord as possible, each member should seek to excell others. Christians are able to do more than sinners. The faithful are able to do more than backsliders. And the true Christian should be able to do more - far more - than even the best of moral men out of the Lord's church. We should actually be able to do more than our religious neighbors with their weak faith, faulty diet of false doctrine, social gospel and worldly ideals. As truth is always better than

(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods.)

"Did Paul occasionally write without inspiration? Are some of his statements his own opinion? Explain I Cor. 7:6,12,25 regarding this matter."

Our respect for, and our dedication to, the Scriptures rest largely on, and are principally determined by our concept of the type or kind of inspiration which these writings possess. We often preach on the *Inspiration of the Scriptures*; and, we subscribe to the view that they are *verbally* inspired. By this is meant that the Holy Spirit presented to the mind of the inspired writer, or speaker, the thought to be expressed, and then influenced the said speaker, or writer, to select the exact word which might best convey the thought delivered.

Occasionally, we are asked to harmonize this view with some affirmations of Paul, appearing in the seventh chapter of First Corinthians, alleged to be in conflict with the idea of verbal and plenary inspiration. There, three questions, touching marriage, are raised, and by him discussed: (1) The expediency of marriage under existing circumstances; (2) separation from an unbelieving companion; and (3) the proper action for a father with a virgin daughter of marriageable age (I Cor. 7:1-9, 10-24, 25-40).

First Corinthians 7:1-7 contains a discussion of duties and responsibilities of husbands and wives to each other. The instruction is followed by the remarkable affirmation, "But this I say by way of concession, not of commandment" (Verse 6). "By permission, not of commandment," is the King James' rendering. This has been interpreted to mean that the apostles were merely *permitted* to say this, but not *instructed* to do so by the Lord, or by the Holy Spirit; and that it involved no more than his own human judgment regarding the matter. But this conclusion disregards contextual significance, and overlooks the fact that the distinction which Paul makes is simply between *commanding* the husband and wife to follow a certain course, and *permitting* them to do so. This instance does not really involve the question of inspiration, though it does relate to the extent of authority which he, as an apostle, could exercise. Clearly evidenced in this matter, is the fact that so great was his authority that he could, and did, issue commands, or grant permission, as he deemed proper! Excepting the Lord, who but an *inspired* apostle could do this? In the second instance (I Cor. 7:8-24), he points to a ruling of the Lord (verse 10) and, and then makes another himself, following it with the observation, "But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord," from which some draw the conclusion that Paul intended to distinguish between his own authority and the Lord's, thus assigning a sanction to the latter, not properly extended to the former. The allegation is that in one instance Paul cited an affirmation of the Lord, in the other his view in the matter, thus distinguishing between what the Lord commanded, and what he regarded as proper, this latter view being merely an unauthorized opinion! Here, again, this conclusion is erroneous, because it disregards the ground of distinction which the apostle drew. He is not contrasting the Lord's authority with his own; he is distinguishing between an express declaration of the Lord

while he was on earth, touching the matter; and another aspect of the subject on which Paul ruled, but on which the Lord did not directly speak. With reference to I Corinthians 7:10, Jesus legislated in Mark 10:2-12; with reference to I Corinthians 7:12, Paul issued an inspired dictum on an aspect of marriage not dealt with by the Lord. That Paul possessed an awareness of his power and authority so to do, is clearly seen in I Corinthians 7:17, where he said, "So ordain I in all the churches," a statement certainly requiring apostolic authority and divine guidance.

A third instance deals with the subject of parental permission for the marriage of virgin daughters, Paul wrote: "Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: but I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be trustworthy (I Cor. 7:25). It is alleged by those who question, or deny the doctrine of plenary inspiration, that the apostle, in this instance, conceded uncertainty, and expressed himself in the matter according to his best human judgment. This conclusion, however, betrays a gross misapprehension of the contest, and the apostle's words. His "judgment," is not to be put in contrast with the commandment of the Lord, and by reducing it to an *opinion* make him to say that his ruling in the matter was no more than an unauthorized, human concept, *without* the Spirit leading. To the contrary, he concluded his discussion of the matter by saying, "I think that I also have the Spirit of

God." The words, "I think," convey no uncertainty; the expression is a common one, in the sacred writings, of emphasis (I Cor. 4:9).

The distinction which the apostle draws here, and in other instances cited in the seventh chapter of First Corinthians were not designed to establish a distinction between *Truth* and *Opinion*, the former issuing from the Lord, the latter from Paul; but between matters of revelation *already* made, and such as were now issuing through the inspired apostle. It is instructive to note that Meyer, the eminent German commentator of many years ago (along with all knowledgeable writers on this theme), has said that Paul "distinguishes here and verses 12, 25, not between his own and *inspired* commands, but between those which proceeded from his own inspired subjectivity, and those which Christ himself maintained by his objective word."

We may therefore conclude that the apostle, far from suggesting that his inspired comments were to be regarded as of less authority than the commands which issued from Christ, intended to make them of equal sanction; and, it is noteworthy that Paul, in this same epistle, subjected his affirmations to the test of miraculous spiritual discernment, by saying, "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that *they are the commandment of the Lord*," (I Cor. 14:37).

Why Preachers Move: Preacher Focus

At the request of one who is deeply concerned about this problem three articles will be written on the general theme of "Why Preachers Move." The first one will focus attention upon preachers themselves. The second one will deal with elderships. The third one will focus upon the membership. These three areas form the basic ingredients as touching preacher moves whether they be frequent or infrequent. And if all preacher moves were infrequent, it is doubtful these articles would be necessary. Every type of work or profession has some turnover. But the preacher turnover currently characteristic among churches of Christ is nothing short of amazing. The late and deeply beloved brother Gus Nichols, who preached for the great Sixth Avenue congregation in Jasper, Alabama from 1933 to 1975, frequently reflected on the thought that he could not keep up with where his preaching brethren were located because of their frequent moves. The late editor of WORDS OF TRUTH was an astute judge of human nature and this observation was undergirded with practical prudence. Unfortunately, not many preachers and congregations have believed in and practiced long tenures for preachers, as brother Nichols and Sixth Avenue did for more than four decisive decades. Incidentally, I was two years old when brother Nichols moved to Jasper; I was forty-four when I attended his funeral in November of 1975. That was a long tenure, wasn't it?



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

A number of preachers move frequently because they dislike the idea of settling down in a permanent position and establishing lifetime roots in one area. Somehow they have formed the concept that a year or two here

and a year or two there is a wise practice for all preachers. We wonder how successful a doctor or a lawyer would be who practiced such as that. It takes awhile to become acclimated to a given area. It requires time to get to know an area and its people — to know what their problems are and how best to deal with them by the employment of truth. It requires time to build up confidence among people, which is a basic ingredient of preacher-people relationships. Just about the time many preachers get to the place where they are ready and ripe for the performance of a really good work they get the moving fever. And when preachers get the roaming fever their real value to a local congregation is usually lost. Many preachers move frequently because that is their adopted philosophy. We need more preachers who will want to experience long and fruitful ministries and build in the process great churches which will do a great and lasting work for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every preacher who reads this article will know what is meant by the honeymoon period of his stay with a congregation. This is the beginning period. This is the "extra sweet" time when he is earnestly enthusiastic with the new work and its challenge, and the congregation is freshly moved and deeply excited with his being there. As yet he does not know much about them and they know but little of him. His sermons are more general then and they are unusually well pleased with his selection of sermon topics and the development of the same. As he gets to know what the needs are and begins to apply the specifics of the gospel to his audience each Lord's Day and in his personal contacts with them they may become more and more displeased with his SPECIFIC selection of sermon topics. They may feel toward him as some did Jesus in John 6:60, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" They may not like for him to preach the whole counsel of God as Paul said he did at Ephesus. Paul said in Acts

Excelling In Service

Continued from Page 2

error, so those who believe, love and obey the truth are always better and bigger in the sight of God than those without proper spiritual food and exercise in the Lord's service. Pure, primitive Christianity is better for the life here and now, as well as the only assurance of life eternal in the world to come (Mk. 10:28-30). As sure as truth is better than a lie, true Christians, as a product of the truth, live a better, richer, fuller and better life in God's sight than those in error. The seed - thoughts of error and false doctrine inevitably bring forth a harvest of bitterness and disappointment (Gal. 6:7-10).

Why Preachers Move: Preacher Focus

Continued from Page 3

20:26-27, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Sometimes it does not take long to make an enemy of a person by simply telling him the truth from God's word. Paul wrote of this in Galatians 4:16: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" About this time the official honeymoon is ended rather abruptly. The early glamour fades. But why should dissatisfaction appear at this point if he is preaching the gospel? Is not this why he came? Is this not why they invited him to come? Did not the preacher realize that no congregation is perfect? Were one perfect his services would not be required. Again the congregation should have realized that with the acquisition of a new preacher they were not getting a person of sinless perfection. Did not the congregation want a man who would meet their spiritual needs? Did not the preacher come because he fully intended to meet those needs? In marriage the honeymoon period should help the couple produce a long, happy, and useful home for both husband, wife and later the children. In preacher-congregational relationships the honeymoon period should level out into a long period of robust and healthy building of a great church. But such calls for a mature preacher — not a baby — and a mature congregation — not one that is still acting like a spoiled child. There are immature preachers; there are immature churches.

Some preachers among us have a supply of sermons that will carry them through just about two or three years. During that time they simply rehash what they have preached before in other short tenures of service. There is no real indepth of a continuing study. Hence, they are not growing. They are not refueling their spiritual batteries each day. Congregations are frequently contributing culprits here for they see no need in a preacher's having several hours free each day for Bible study. Preachers who do a great work have to practice a system of priority in their work. They cannot begin to do all that a congregation expects and many times demands. That priority they must practice means a pre-eminent place for study. When preachers who never "hit the books" run through about one hundred to one hundred fifty sermons they have built up for a backlog, they are out of soap. They decide it is easier to move than to become diligent students of the Book. They decide to move ~~Q&T~~ rather than

move INTO their study for regulated growth in disciplined study. Preachers who stay have to study. Shame, SHAME on preachers who for one cause or another do not study! Shame, SHAME on congregations who would hinder deliberately their preachers from being diligent students of the Book!

The work load with a lengthy tenure may become more than one person can bear and retain his bodily health. Congregations, are you listening at this crucial point? More will be said about this part of the problem in the second and third installments. The preacher may decide that the grass is greener on the other side of the fence and so has the dollar indicator in the air all the time he is in a given location. He may decide that it is easier to move and escape the meeting of a thorny problem rather than sticking it out and facing it with spiritual courage. Preachers often move because they do not intend to like where they are going. And sure enough they do not like it when they get there!

Preachers move frequently because they remain aloof and form no cordial working relationships with people in the church and people outside the congregation. Some preachers have to move frequently because they are not honest and back debts long ignored have a sure way of finally catching up with them. Now and then a preacher will move because he has not been morally circumspect around those of the opposite sex. Nothing will move a preacher more rapidly than this. Some brethren in the pews may be practicing the new morality or situational ethics in their own lives but they will not tolerate it from their preachers. And elders should not tolerate it from either morally loose preachers or morally lax members. Both need discipline and that with promptness. There is NO EXCUSE for immorality among God's people.

Some move often because their wives and/or children make it impossible for their preacher husband or preacher father to do an extended work of growth and development.

Some move frequently because they lack patience and expect too much too soon. Rome was not built in a day nor is a great congregation built the first six months the preacher is there. Some move frequently because they have the Biblical concept of a preacher's work, and the congregation has a denominational concept of his work. Such can lead easily to an early conflict between the preacher and the untaught congregation. But would it not be better to teach a congregation patiently from the books of I and II Timothy and Titus what a preacher's work is really about than to give up in a huff and move quickly? Brethren had to learn the false concepts of a preacher's work. They CAN BE taught the Biblical concept of that work. Such will make it much easier for the rest of that stay and much easier also for the next man who moves there. In all probability those who move for this reason will find the next place of similar sentiment in regard to the real nature of his work. Then the same process has to be repeated.

Some preachers move frequently because they have too much pride and too little humility. Thus they will not admit a mistake. Preachers err also and none of us should be willing to save face at the expense of truth and congregational serenity.

These are not all, but constitute some of the preacher-dominated factors which contribute to frequent moves of preachers. Next we shall look at WHY PREACHERS MOVE: **ELDERSHIP FOCUS.**

How To Get Along With Your Husband

1. Always abide by the golden rule, and treat him as you would like to be treated if you were the husband (Matt. 7:12).

2. Remember that God did not make him for you, but made you for him, and said, "He shall rule over thee" (Gen. 2:18; 3:16).

3. Don't kill him with unnecessary problems and worries, or by nagging, jealousy, or strive - just love him to death; and he will live longer (Eph. 5:22).

4. Strive to make your home a "little blue heaven", and if he is not spoiled he will be happy, and you will be the sweetest woman in all the world to him (Eph. 5:33).

5. Don't be too quick to chalk up little imperfections against him; but commend his virtues and merit his love and respect (Col. 3:18-19).

6. Remember Christian wives have the best possible chance of being good and happy wives, for they have many divine motives and incentives which influence them not possessed by the unbelieving and disobedient (I Pet. 3:1-7).

How To Get Along With Your Wife

1. Treat her as you would like to be treated if you were the wife and she were the husband (Mat. 7:12).

2. Be a good head of the house, and let her be the neck which sometimes turns the head from side to side, thus giving a much broader vision of things (Eph. 5:23-24).

3. Her way may not be any better than yours, but if it is as good as yours, let her have her way as often as possible (Phil. 2:3).

4. Remember you took her away from a good home: now do your best to give her a better home in exchange for the one she lost (Josh. 24:15).

5. Study your Bible daily. Get you a "CRUDEN'S COMPLETE CONCORDANCE", which sells for about \$5 and read all the scriptures on some great Bible subject, on topic, every day. Then you can be the right man at the steering wheel. (Gen. 18:19; Isa. 34:16).

6. Don't get drunken on authority, nor let your head get "too big." Be humble as a little child while ruling with a firm hand (I Tim. 3:4-5).

The Mid-Week Meeting

"No time to pray!"
Oh, who so fraught with earthly care
As not to give to humble prayer
Some part of day?

"No time to pray!"
Mid each day's dangers, what retreat
More needful than the mercy-seat?
Who need not pray?

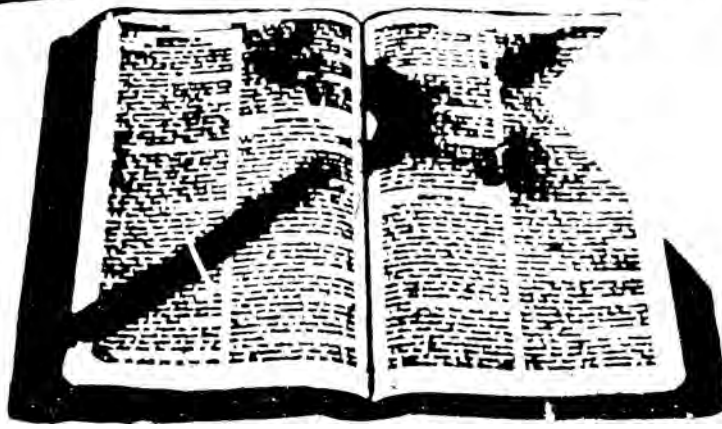
"No time to pray!"
Must care or business urgent call
So press us as to take it all,
Each passing day?

"What thought more dear
Than that our God His face should hide,
And say through all life's swelling tide,
"No time to hear!"

WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"th the words of truth"
vs 26:25

ne by Jesus Christ"
7

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1976

NUMBER 2

"I Am A Miniskirt"

[The report from Paris a few days ago is that the hemline is moving back upward, in ladies' styles. It is sad that even some women in the church will allow those who have no regard for decency or morality to dictate the style of their attire. The following article appeared in WORDS OF TRUTH in 1972. Editor]

GUS NICHOLS

I am a miniskirt! Of course, a senseless thing like me can't talk. But a miniskirt can offer a lot of suggestions, and cause a lot of people to talk, and to commit a lot of sin. I may be too small to be of much value in warming and protecting the body; but I am tremendously powerful. I can attract the attention of the purest as well as the most wicked of men and boys. I can even cause the one who wears me to be tempted above her power of resistance, and perhaps, cause her to arrive at her marriage altar robbed of her virtue. I can cause her to be married to some one far inferior to herself and one she has never loved.

Girls say they wear me to attract the attention of the opposite sex. But if they were not so ignorant they would know that ANY MAN, whom a girl can win by means of a miniskirt, can be taken away from her by another miniskirt.

Being a miniskirt does not keep me from going to church. I like good company and want to be popular, even in the church. I want attention, and have the power to attract it unto myself. Of course, any miniskirt can tell you that the most alluring and attractive thing in the world is a beautiful spirit, an attractive personality, the inward beauty of virtue and strong character! And when I think of this, I wish I had been big enough and had been made into a midi. The woman who invented me says she did it to appeal unto the lust of men. All of this worries me no little!

We miniskirts actually lie about women, and greatly misrepresent them. We represent them as being sex-maniacs, when nothing could be further from the truth. We cause men and boys to believe these lies about women and girls. This causes many girls and women literally to have to fight men and boys in self-protection. We miniskirts are a crying invitation unto them to make such attacks. Rape and venereal diseases are now up 86 percent over the past year or so. (Look for a public announcement of this fact on a card

displayed in your drug store.)

Our preacher and elders often make us miniskirts feel bad, and even sometimes to get mad. Preachers blame us miniskirters for stirring up the lust and passion of men till they can't keep their hands to themselves, and that such misbehavior will even lead to nonresistance, or to rape.

We miniskirts argued with our preacher that men ought to be Christians and have pure hearts and they would not be tempted by a nude leg and thigh. The preacher reminded us that this is the same argument which is made by those favoring nudist colonies, where they dress like the lower animals. They argue that if we have pure minds the two sexes can live together as they were born into the world, and that without an evil thought and deed. Of course, that which proves too much, proves nothing. This worries us miniskirts, and especially when hearing such sermons. We think we need a new preacher, but the elders are old fogies, and think we should be governed by an old Book that is obsolete. However, we miniskirts must admit that without the Bible standard our country and marriage and home are all headed for destruction, and then what would that sort of life be worth?

At times, we miniskirts think that the whole thing is a big-a-do about nothing. But our preacher argues that we are to be governed and controlled by divine wisdom, and not by what we think. He argues that in the very beginning, God was against the miniskirts: that when Adam and Eve had sinned in eating the forbidden fruit, "The eye of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and MADE THEMSELVES APRONS" (Gen. 3:7). Though there were no other human

beings, God was against their "apron" custom, and manner of dress. And so, "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God MAKE COATS OF SKINS, and CLOTHED THEM" (v. 21). This means they were unclothed when they wore their aprons, which were about the same as miniskirts. If God had intended for man to go naked he would have clothed him with hair in the first place, as he did the lower animals. Nothing (said the preacher) is more beautiful than the human body clothed with beautiful, lovely clothes, properly fitted. It was then argued that God is the same God today that he was back there in the beginning, and that moral principles like modesty, never do change. God tells us that he changes not (Mal. 3:6). Neither does Christ change in character (Heb. 13:8).

Even after the flood, those who saw Noah's nakedness were condemned in the sight of God (Gen. 9:20-27). Those who covered his nakedness were blessed of God. This preacher made us miniskirts feel bad, and even worse, when he went on to say the Bible says, "And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies" - Then God killed about three thousand men of them (Ex. 32:25-29).

The preacher went on to show that when God had men built an altar, they as priests were not to go up by steps upon the altar, "That thy nakedness be not discovered (uncovered) thereon" (Ex. 20:25-26). God even made the priests to wear breeches "To cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs shall they reach" (Ex. 28:39-43). These breeches were to be worn under top coats. This was all that they "BEAR NOT INIQUITY AND DIE" (Ex. 28:39-43).

Who Held The Ropes

GLANN M. LEE

The first recorded persecution in the life of Paul, perhaps three years following his conversion (Galatians 1:16-18), is recorded in Acts 9:23-25. "And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and

let him down by the wall in a basket." The life of Paul is intently interesting, being divided into two major parts: (1) the persistent persecutor (Acts 7:58-8:1; Acts 9:1ff); and (2) the persecuted preacher. He often referred to his persecutions (2 Corinthians 11:24 - 33) and

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Error Which Does And Does Not Condemn

Those who advocate extending fellowship to denominationalism sometimes make the argument which, on the surface, seems valid, but which falls down under scrutiny. The argument goes something like this: we extend fellowship to many with whom we differ over such things as the hat question, the un-Lord's supper, etc.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Then we should have no trouble extending fellowship to those with whom we differ on such a "instrumental" matter, the frequency of the Lord's supper, the design of baptism, etc. And then the question is asked: "Why will you fellowship error on one point, but refuse to fellowship error on another?" Though this kind of reasoning has led many astray, only a little reflection will reveal its fallacy.

In the first place, if this reasoning is followed to its logical conclusion, fellowship could not be withheld from anyone, regardless of the doctrine he teaches. For how could we extend fellowship to those in error on one point, but refuse to extend fellowship to those in error on another? If it is right to extend fellowship to those in error on the hat question, then it would be wrong to exclude those in error on the music question. And since this is the case, it would be inconsistent to exclude from fellowship one simply because he is in error on the subject of baptism or the Lord's supper. And then what right would we have to decide that those who are in error on the subject of the virgin birth or the resurrection of Christ should not be included in our fellowship? As a matter of fact, the

denial of the very existence of God would not be grounds for withholding fellowship, if this reasoning were followed to its logical conclusion!

Why is it right to extend fellowship to those who are in error on one thing, but wrong to extend fellowship to those in error on another? There are two kinds of error: (1) error which does not deter one from a course of action in harmony with the will of God, and (2) error which leads to a course of action out of harmony with the will of God.

There are any number of errors which one may believe which do not directly affect his manner of life or his religious practice in an adverse way. Some in Paul's day obviously held to erroneous views regarding the eating of certain meats (Rom. 14; I Cor. 8). But these views did not cause them to follow a course of action out of harmony with the will of God, and those who knew the truth were exhorted to receive them (Rom. 14:1). Some during the first century believed circumcision to be a requirement of God (Acts 15:1). Their believing this error would have brought about no violation of the will of God, had it not been for the fact that they sought to force their views upon their brethren. This action constituted perverting the gospel and brought upon them the anathema of God (Gal. 1:6-9). One's belief of error will not damn his soul unless his erroneous views lead him into a course of action out of harmony with the will of God. If he is living in harmony with the will of God he has fellowship with God and with other faithful saints (I Jno. 1:9).

But there are other errors which, if believed, will directly affect one's life and religious practice so as to turn him aside from the will of God. If one's belief of error causes him to go beyond the doctrine of Christ, he is out of fellowship with God (II Jno. 9). If one does not know enough truth to live in harmony with the will of God, he cannot be free from sin (Jno. 8:32). If one's belief of error caused him to worship according to the doctrines and

commandments of men, his worship would be vain (Matt. 15:8,9). If the belief of error led one to be a member of a religious institution not authorized by God, he would be "rooted up" (Matt. 15:13). If his belief of error led him to preach a perverted gospel, the curse of God would rest upon him (Gal. 1:6-9). God has no fellowship with those who believe this kind of error. And He neither expects nor tolerates our extending Christian fellowship to those with whom He has no fellowship.

The familiar Old Testament story of the prophet of God who lost his life as the result of believing error will serve to illustrate the difference between error that condemns and error that does not. This man of God had been charged: "Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest" (I Ki. 13:9). But the old lying prophet told him: "I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water" (v. 18). Believing this lie, the man of God violated God's instructions, and paid with his life. The error which he believed was of such nature that it caused him to follow a course out of harmony with the direction of God.

But suppose instead, the lying prophet had simply convinced him that God wanted him to hurry on home, being careful to carry his staff in his left hand all the way. This would be just as much a lie as the lie he believed, but the consequences would not be the same. For believing this lie, and acting accordingly, he would still not be following a course out of harmony with the instruction God had actually given him.

For one to be in error on some point that does not affect the faithful performance of his duty to God is one thing. But it is another for one to hold to error that would keep him from faithful obedience to God. The former we may and should include in our fellowship. The latter we may not.

The Power Of Preaching



LARRY CHOUINARD

Preaching originated in the infinite wisdom of God, as His own distinct medium for reaching the souls of men. God ordained that the pre-announced way of spreading the good news of salvation is through the oral or private proclamation of His Word. No other methods are powerful, such as the printed page, but nothing supercedes truth communicated on a personal eye to eye level. It is unfortunate that many have relegated preaching to an outdated mode of communication. Some would tear down pulpits, and in its place put "encounter groups", "testifying" and "private devotions." This trend is just another sign of man's dissatisfaction with the God-ordained pattern. Certainly there is a place for "group discussion" and "devotional periods." But these modern methods of instruction can never replace strong pulpit preaching of the Sacred Scriptures.

Perhaps the disenchantment with Gospel preaching stems from a misunderstanding of what Biblical preaching consists. Phillips Brooks, as quoted in the "Yale Lectures", defines preaching in this manner: "Preaching

is the communication of truth by man to man. It has in its two essential elements, truth and personality. Neither of those can it spare and still be preaching. The truest truth, the most authoritative statement of God's will, communicated in any other way, but through the personality of brother man to men is not preaching. Truth is like language. The domain seems to be crystal, but except of biblical preaching. The personal, spiritual, God-ordained way of the soul of fellow man by the most effective way of communication. God's truth, but what are the essential qualities of Biblical preaching? It is sad, but nevertheless true, that many congregations have never heard a Gospel sermon. Much of the modern proclamation is nothing more than a "Sunday School pep-talk." These shallow, emotional, uninspiring so-called sermons that plague our pulpits deserve to be "put to rest." There are several essential qualities that characterized first century preaching, and which must be found in twentieth century preaching, if the populace is going to listen.

There is a desperate need for a return to strong Biblical content in our sermons. All true preaching must rest on the authoritative basic affirmation, "Thus saith the Lord!" The Bible is not our "spring-board" into a magnifying of our own eloquence and abilities. Many preachers suppose that a casual reference "now and then" to the Sacred Scriptures stamps their preaching as Biblically oriented. The Bible must be the

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Please give an exposition of I Cor. 7:36-38."

"But if any man thinketh that he behaveth himself unseemly toward his virgin daughter, if she be past the flower of her age, and if need so requireth, let him do what he will; he sinneth not; let them marry. But he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power as touching his own will, and hath determined this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin daughter, shall do well. So then both he that giveth his own virgin daughter in marriage doeth well; and he that giveth her not in marriage shall do better." This is the American Standard translation of I Cor. 7:36-38. The passage, thus translated, readily yields itself to analysis, and the meaning is obvious. Under consideration is a father and his unmarried daughter. The daughter has reached and has already passed the age when girls ordinarily marry. If the daughter is to marry at all, it is time that consent by the father be given, and the usual arrangements be made. This procedure is entirely in order and violates no rule of revelation. However, if the father, (who in that day arranged for the marriage of his children) chose to keep his daughter single and at home, in view of the trials soon to come, his decision was now subject to criticism, inasmuch as such a course would likely work out to the advantage of the daughter. Either course was proper; perhaps the better one, because of impending persecution and trial, would be for the daughter to remain unmarried. If the American Standard Translation is correct, the foregoing is obviously the meaning of this passage. This is the view adopted and defended by McGarvey and Pendleton in the Standard Bible Commentary: "Marriages in the East were then, as now, arranged by the parents. If a parent saw fit to marry his daughter he had a perfect right to do so and was guilty of no sin, but if he heeded the apostle's warning as to the coming trials and kept his daughter free from alliances he acted more wisely." (page 84)

The King James' Translation, however, gives a different turn to the passage (when some, erroneously, have amazingly noticed that Paul in this section of the Corinthian Letter, actually sanctions premarital sex).

These verses read in this Version: "But if any man think that he behaveth himself unseemly toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will; he sinneth not; let them marry. Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin doeth well. So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well: but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better." From the fact that this Version makes Paul say, "Let him do what he will; he sinneth not; let them marry," there are those who have concluded that the apostle is saying here that it is proper for a boy and girl to engage in sexual relations before marriage if they intend to, and later marry. This is a gross perversion of Paul's statement — a conclusion which makes him justify here what he condemns elsewhere in his writings. Again and again, he taught the

sinfulness of fornication and adultery and warned that those who engaged therein could not inherit the kingdom of heaven. Obviously, he does not advocate here what he so strongly condemns elsewhere. Those who draw this conclusion are in error in making the "man" of the passage some one other than the father of the girl (I Cor. 5:11; 6:13; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; Gal. 5:19).

The Revised Standard Version gives still another view of the matter. It reads: "If any one thinks that he is not behaving properly toward his betrothed, if his passions are strong, and if it has to be, let him do what he will, he does not sin: let them marry. But whoever is firmly established in his heart, being under no necessity but having his desire under control, and has determined this in his heart, to keep her as his betrothed, he will do well. So that he who marries his betrothed does well; and he who refrains from marriage will do better." Here, as often elsewhere, this alleged version does not translate, it simply seeks to explain what the "translators" thought Paul meant. The Greek word translated "virgin" in the American Standard Version, and "betrothed" in the Revised Standard Version is *parthonos*, the same word rendered "virgin" in Matt. 1:23, where it applied to the mother of our Lord. There is neither lexical nor grammatical justification of the RSV rendering, and the efforts perverts the apostle's meaning. It is of interest to note that the RSV here is in perfect harmony with the rendering of this passage by the usual liberal modern speech "translations." For example, the so-called "Good News For Modern Man" renders this passage, "In the case of an engaged couple who have decided not to marry: if the man feels that he is not

acting properly toward the girl; if his passions are too strong, and he feels that they ought to marry, then they should get married. There is no sin in this. But if a man, without being forced to do so has firmly made up his mind not to marry; if he has his will under complete control, and has already decided in his own mind what to do — then he does well not to marry the girl. So the man who marries his girl does well, but the one who does not marry her will do even better." Here, as in all of this class of "translations," the words of the text are largely disregarded, and the version sets out what its producer believed the passage to teach — not what is said in the Greek text.

Moreover, all of these versions which eliminate the word "virgin," and make the relationship one between a boy and his girl friend, rather than between a father and his unmarried daughter, are in the absurd position of affirming that the boy can and may properly control his girl friend, in the matter of marriage, the rest of her life. If the boy has determined to remain single all of his life, in what sense can he continue to designate her as "his virgin," or, as the RSV has it, "his betrothed?" Are we to assume that Paul is teaching here that the boy can decide that he will never marry, and in the same decision, *sentence his girl friend to spinsterhood, the rest of her days, with the sanction of inspiration?* These translations give the man the privilege of celibacy, and at the same time, put him in position to deny to the girl of the passage the right of ever marrying anybody else. How could any person in his right mind conclude that such was the apostle's intent here? Yet, this conclusion follows from the renderings given, and aside from other considerations, is obviously false.

God Is The Audience

Jesus severely reprimanded the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23 for an outward appearance of righteousness which was really just "religious" action. They were trying to impress men and were succeeding, but the impression made on God was far from acceptable.

It is a very obvious fact that "every one who comes to the church building at the hour of worship does not come for the same purpose. George Baker has said, "Sitting in a church house does not make you a Christian any more than sitting in a hen house makes you a hen." An abiding faith (Hebrews 11:6) plus a determination to proceed scripturally (John 4:24) are essentials to acceptable worship.

Elton Trueblood has called going to church "the greatest spectator sport in America". Is this your concept? Do you regard the pulpit the stage and those participating there performers? Do you ever complain of the "poor job" they did? Perhaps, we need to ask again, "why do we come?" The whole building is the stage when we assemble. Everyone is a performer, and God is the audience. And, He would certainly have reason to criticize the performances of many. "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (I Peter 4:18).

One of the greatest needs with each of us is to take a long serious look at our religion and



ELTON TRUEBLOOD

the motives behind it. To be righteous means right before man, but above all, right before God.

Ask yourself some questions about your religion. What has it prevented? Are some specific actions taken by you because of convictions based on Bible teaching? What has your religion developed? Do your attitudes and actions toward others exemplify your respect for the teaching of Jesus? What has your religion grown into? Do you have such regard for the truth that you shudder at the thought of "going beyond that which is written"?

Jesus said religion is not enough (Mt. 23:23). It is the hearing AND doing that counts. We may have heard a particular truth many times, but if we aren't doing it we need to hear it again.

Roses In December

G.F. RAINES

In old age the "dead past" frequently becomes the living present! You should, therefore, "live soberly, righteously, and godly" (Tit. 2:12) while you are young and endeavor to be the kind of young person that you will want to remember yourself as having been when the end of your life approaches.

The memories of aged people who have walked with God from their youth are like roses in December!

Paul E. Holdcraft has said: "I have never heard of an aged person who was sorry for having lived a God-fearing life, and I have never heard of a godless old person who was

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The Power of Preaching

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basis for answers and solutions given in answer to the human dilemma. This drift from the Scriptural foundation in preaching is another indication of HUMAN INGENUITY thinking it can probe the future and solve the problems that face man.

Putting the Bible back into the pulpit is certainly a relevant cry today. Intellectually lazy preachers who refuse to study and produce sermons with a sound scriptural foundation, would do the church a favor if they would take up another "occupation." It's time we stop sacrificing the faith of God's children for the sake of having a "big name" in the pulpit. Sometimes it is not what a man preaches from the pulpit that destroys the faith of others, but what he refuses to preach. The Satanic host has reduced many mighty pulpits to weak, social conscious, impotent dead shells. It's time elders and leaders of the congregations wake up before the wolves completely scatter and consume the flock.

Biblical preaching consisted of a balanced presentation of God's revelation to man. On the day of Pentecost, Peter not only told those Jews that they were wrong and had sinned by crucifying the Holy One of God, he also informed them of God's compassion, love, and willingness to forgive them. A steady diet of negative criticism will eventually destroy any congregation. There is a time for exhorting as well as a time for rebuking (II Tim. 4:2). Some preachers eat, drink, and sleep one issue that is particularly pressing upon them. For example, there are some brethren who cannot get into a pulpit without "raking-over" some liberal. There is no one issue that demands ALL the church's time. Balance in our preaching means giving as much time to GRACE as we do BAPTISM; to EVANGELISM as we do LIBERALISM; to LOVE as we do FALSE TEACHING; to HOLINESS as we do SIN; to MERCY as we do OBEDIENCE. Preaching is a delicate operation that demands the keenest wisdom and the most sensitive hands. Let's truly be "harmless as doves and wise as serpents."

Enthusiasm is the ingredient that makes the pulpit come alive. Preachers need to generate excitement from the pulpit. Sermons ought to blaze with fire and conviction. If you cannot get excited about a sermon you plan to preach, you cannot expect much reaction from the audience. Jeremiah said his message felt like "a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing and I cannot contain" (Jer. 20:9). Enthusiasm is the genuine expression of deep convictions. Preachers must be convinced that they have the greatest news in the world to offer. This conviction leads to a flaming zeal which leads to mighty influence. Enthusiasts without content is sinful; content without enthusiasm is sterile. As one preacher put it, "If you can't put fire into your sermon, you need to put your sermon in the fire."

There is power in the preaching of God's Word. The communication of the Divine message by means of the pulpit is a thrilling responsibility. The preaching and teaching of the gospel ought to be the heart and soul of every public proclaimer of the Good News. Far too many treat preaching as they would some "secular occupation." A "good work" is determined not by the potential that characterizes a congregation, but what they are willing to pay, and the benefits they can provide. Materialistic minded preachers will eventually sap the church of her spiritual zeal. We need sacrificial zealous proclaimers of the scriptures, whose God is the Lord and not

their own worldly ambitions. The Restoration of New Testament Christianity must begin with the pulpit. — 148 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, Calif. 94523.

Who Held The Ropes

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he never fought this first persecution (2 Corinthians 11:33).

WHO HELD THE ROPES FOR PAUL?

Someone had to hold the ropes for Paul to be let down over the wall! They are unknown! Their names are forgotten! They join the ranks of the unknown heroes. There are countless unsung heroes today - Godly parents, gospel preachers, faithful elders, Bible teachers, dedicated Christians, etc. Often their true worth is overlooked. Names may be forgotten but service never dies. When we inspire a boy or girl to build a noble character and Christian personality, only eternity can measure the greatness of the achievement. F.W. Woolworth was once hired as a janitor for 50 cents a day by a retail store owner who did not think he had enough business sense to wait on customers. Marconi, the inventor of the radio, was bawled out by his father for wasting time when he first began to experiment with radio. Albert Einstein's teacher classified him as a dunce, and even his parents thought him backward. When Thomas Edison was in school, he was always at the foot of his class because he couldn't remember the three R's. His teacher called him stupid and doctors predicted he would have brain trouble. The first time George Gershwin played the piano on stage, he was laughed out of the theatre by the audience and his fellow actors. When Zane Grey was still an unknown, trying to sell his book manuscripts, a publisher told him that he had no ability for writing fiction. While there are many heroes of our past and present as a nation, our nation has survived largely due to the unsung heroes. The success of the church is due largely to her unsung heroes.

WE NEED SOME ROPES TO HOLD ONTO

Charles Dickens' statement, "Tale of Two Cities", well describes our age.

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times;

It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness;

It was the epic of belief, it was the epic of incredulity;

It was the season of light, it was the season of darkness;

It was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair;

We had everything before us, we had nothing before us."

Larry A. West has well said: "Ours, without doubt, is the age of contrasts. Ours is the age of the convicted; it is the age of the apathetic. It is the age of strong feelings. It is not only the age of the skeptic, but it is also the age of dedicated believers. It is not only the age of the superficial thinkers, but it is also the age of those who want to know the facts, who want to be told like it is. Ours is the age of the sensational and the nostalgic. On the one hand, some women want to be liberated from their traps, wanting more than just the husband, the children and the home, and are reaching out for something sensational. Our entertainment, such as our spectacular movies of destruction and emotionally charged, spectator sports, is sensationalized as we reach out for satisfaction. Yet, on the other hand, some are turning to nostalgia, craving "Happy Days," the "Hit Parade," and the days of "The Waltons." Even though we have stepped on the moon, we cannot control our pollution, shortages and population threats. Even though we have ended the longest war

of U.S. involvement, our morals are still contaminated on the home front with rising crime, drug abuse, sex exploitation, alcoholism, abortion, divorce and rebellion among our children."

WE DO HAVE SOME ROPES TO HOLD ONTO

The solid certainties of our faith are ropes to be held onto in our age of doubt and skepticism. We must hold onto the rope of God's existence (Gen. 1:1; Psalms 90:2). We must hold onto the rope of the Bible as the verbally inspired word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Psalms 119:160). We must hold onto the rope that Christ is God's Son (Matt. 3:16-17; Matt. 17:1-5). We must hold onto the rope that the church is God's family (Matt. 16:13-18; Acts 2:47; Heb. 12:28). We must hold onto the rope of God's love for us (John 3:6; Rom. 5:8; Ephesians 2:8).

THOSE WHO HELD THE ROPES RENDERED A GREAT SERVICE

Those who held the ropes for Paul assisted in a time of great need! Paul's life was in danger. Today's current dangers confronting the church, liberalism, modernism, immorality, etc., must be met. We must hold onto the ropes! Those who held the ropes accomplished a great work for the Lord. Those who helped Paul thereby were helping to reach the world through Paul. Think what would have been lost to the church had Paul been slain at this time! We would not have the fruits of his works, including two thirds of the New Testament! Those who held the ropes manifested the spirit of Christ. They were satisfied to let God receive the praise. Yet they were babes in Christ. Paul had been their enemy, but they quickly forgave.

Would we have held the ropes for Paul? Are we now holding the ropes with our money prayers and moral support of good works among us? Are we holding the ropes for local programs of evangelism? Are we holding the ropes for the work of the local congregation? We must hold onto the ropes for the benefit of others and for our own benefit. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for by doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Timothy 4:16). If one is not faithful in his prayer life he is not holding onto the ropes. If one is not faithful in attendance at worship services, he is not holding onto the ropes. If one is not giving generously of his prosperity, he is not holding onto the ropes. If one is not a diligent Bible student, he is not holding onto the ropes. If one is not looking for ways of leading others to Christ, he is not holding onto the ropes. Let us not lose precious souls (the soul of others and our own) by our failure to hold onto the ropes. — 3248 Lorna Road Birmingham, Al. 35216.

Roses in December

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satisfied with having spent a lifetime in sin."

The Book of God says:

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7,8).

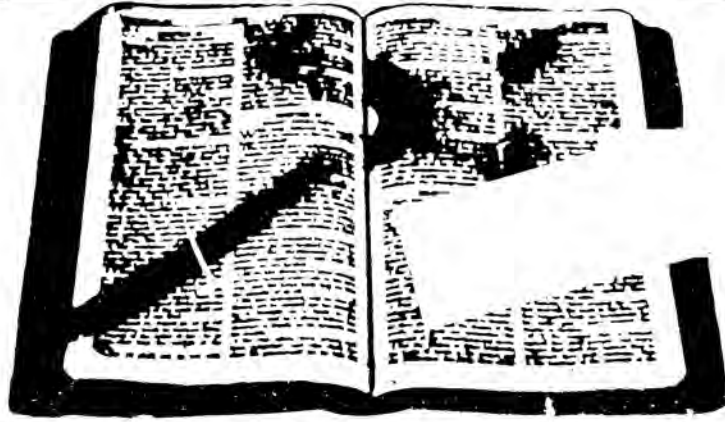
"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Ecc. 12:1). — Newton, Miss. 39345.

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Words Of Truth

WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"Forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1976

NUMBER 3

Why Preachers Move - Congregational Focus

By request we are presenting three rather frank articles dealing with an ever increasing problem among churches of Christ. Preacher turnover on such a frequently practiced basis amounts to sizeable investments annually among the Lord's people. Not only is such expensive, but lost in the process are a certain number of preachers



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

annually. They get tired of being victims of this often practiced malady of their work and the insecurity it brings, and decide to seek for a place of permanency in a more secure setting. And brethren, we might as well be realistic and face it - local preachers have about as little security as does a football coach in the wake of a losing season. In all probability he will get to finish out the school year, but many preachers are not so fortunate. If a number of insensible and inconsiderate congregations do not wake up to the abuses they fling at their preachers, they will one day be unable to get a preacher at all! And that is not whistling in the dark either. Such a sentiment was recently expressed to this writer by one who has been in this work a third of a century or more. To date we have looked at the problem from the preacher's side and from the eldership's side. Now we turn the focus upon the congregation. Here is where a great deal of the problem lies, and if ever corrected, much of it will be corrected at this very point.

A DENOMINATIONAL, PASTORAL FONDNESS

We have absolutely too many members of the church today who have formed ALL their guidelines about the gospel preacher and his work from witnessing pastoral work among the religious denominations of the day. They even have a proneness to call him their pastor. They have never taken the time to delve deeply into what Paul wrote Timothy and Titus respectively about the real work of gospel preaching. What the pastor is in a denominational setting is exactly what they want in a preacher of the gospel. When he

refuses to fit their mold, they begin to apply pressure to move him on. As deeply pathetic as the matter is, many elderships will not buck such an ungodly concept, especially if it exists among wealthy contributors, but will spinelessly acquiesce. Another good preacher is seriously abused and a practice that needs instant elimination is more deeply entrenched than ever. We say shame, Shame, SHAME!! This is one of the real WHYS preachers move so frequently. It is either move and stay a gospel preacher in another locality or remain and become like a denominational pastor. What a shameful alternative he faces at this juncture in his work!

AN IMPOSSIBLE WORK LOAD

Nearly all in the congregation from elder to shut-in, from deacon to song director, and from the elderly to the younger have their own concept of what the preacher should do and what he should not do. Some will expect a visit every week and will fuss if it is too short. These same people will never visit the preacher all the time he is there, and will never pick up a phone to call and see how his sick child is that has kept him and his wife up night after night for long periods of time. Seven days a week and twenty-four hours per day would not get all done that some demand to be done by the local preacher. If the preacher will allow such thoughtless brethren will fill his time with incidentals. They will make a fulltime chauffeur of him. He will become their errand boy, and on his own expenses for the most part. After all, who else in the congregation has the time except the preacher and his wife? The rest work! The preacher just preaches! His work is done in two thirty to forty minute sermons each week! Some who will give a dollar or two on Sunday out of their wealth will feel perfectly justified in laying inconsiderate claim upon his time and services. After all, we are digging deep to pay him a good salary! They will saddle him with so many incidentals that he has no real time for study, prayer, and meditation. Then they will wonder why his sermons are so shallow each Sunday. The reason is an obvious one indeed.

Some will expect him to make hospital rounds daily and nursing home calls weekly. Some will expect him to know of their illness and hospitalization just as soon as they are admitted. Some years ago this writer visited a member the same day he entered. The family

had already begun to ask, "Has not the preacher been to see you YET." People of this disposition will inform the doctor when sick, but expect the preacher to know of it without his being notified. How he can do this is still a mystery to most of us who do local work. No one person can do all this and live with himself in the neglect that such necessitates of his real work of study and preparation. Such is a definite contributing factor toward preacher moves on a frequent basis.

THE PROXY SYNDROME

The word PROXY means to work through another. Syndrome refers to a group of symptoms that occur together and characterize a disease. Surely no one will deny that the oft practiced philosophy of "let the preacher do it" or "that is what we are paying the preacher for" is a real disease and it is really a killer among preachers. It kills the congregation who practices such. It kills the real work preachers need to be doing. It kills the preacher physically if he tries to do it all.

Sometimes an eldership will take five minutes to embark the congregation on some laborious task and their next words are, "Brother Preacher, we are putting this job on your shoulders. Each of us works eight hours per day, five days per week, and you are the only one present with time enough on your hands to do this job." His days and nights may be just as full as they can be, but here is another task put upon him that should have been done and could have been done by another. This writer would feel like he was retired if he only had to work five days per week and eight hours per day!! I have been preaching more than twenty - seven years and I have never had that short a work week and do not desire such. I have about decided that many brethren do not believe the preacher does anything because of one of two reasons: (1) They judge the preacher's work for the Lord by what they do and this is practically nothing. (2) They judge the preacher's work by what they would do were they in his place!! The proxy syndrome is a definite MOVING factor in frequent preacher turnovers.

THAT EVER PRESENT DOUBLE STANDARD

Many people in the congregation have a definite double standard for preachers, their wives, and their children. These standards are far higher than for elders and their families.

Continued on Page 4

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Turner To Write

In a recent issue of WORDS OF TRUTH we called attention to the plans of brother Rex A. Turner, Sr. to discontinue writing the TEACHER'S ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY published by the Gospel Advocate Company, in order that he might devote his time to the raising of funds to support



BOBBY DUNCAN

Alabama Christian School of Religion. Our article said, in part: "Now, in a time when the church so desperately needs great and good men in strategic locations, it would be a great waste for brother Turner to forsake his writing to spend time in raising money. We certainly want to see the Alabama Christian School of Religion continue. It has done a tremendous job, and is on the threshold of even greater accomplishments. We realize that without sufficient funds the school cannot continue. But is it the part of wisdom to allow a man of brother Turner's stature and ability as a writer to leave off his writing in order to give his time to raising support for the school? For us to allow this to happen would be the epitome of folly."

Recently we received news that a decision has been made for brother Turner to continue writing, instead of devoting so much time to raising money for the school. This decision was made on the strength of the belief that brethren will not allow the School of Religion to become defunct because of lack of funds. To our knowledge, only four churches have responded to our plea to put the School of Religion into their budgets. About \$1,650.00 per month additional is needed. We again

urge brethren to give serious consideration to this plea. In contributing to the Alabama Christian School of Religion, you will not only be aiding a most worthy institution, but you will also be helping keep brother Turner free to write.

If you have any questions about the school, contact them, and they will be happy to answer your questions. If you are within reasonable driving distance of Montgomery, they will be happy to send someone to your congregation to speak on a Wednesday evening, and to tell about the school. The telephone number at the school is (205)

Straight Word To Smokers

Why should I now bother you confirmed smokers with the terrifying statistics about lung cancer and respiratory ailments brought on by smoking? Would you even then be persuaded to quit?

Some smokers respect the Bible about as much as they do the warning on every pack of cigarettes: "WARNING: THE SURGEON GENERAL HAS DETERMINED THAT CIGARETTE SMOKING MAY BE DANGEROUS TO YOUR HEALTH." There are some who love God, their families, and themselves enough to kick the habit. But they are extremely rare. Neither medical facts, nor scripture nor inflation will deter the determined smoker.

Why should I burden you down with what the Bible says? You've heard it all before, haven't you? Don't you remember hearing preachers rant and rave about how it is a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21)? about how you cannot thank God for its use (Col. 3:17)? about how you are defiling the temple of God (I Cor. 3:16, 17)? about abstaining from all appearance of evil (I Thess. 5:22)? and about how we must not be enslaved to anything except Christ (I Cor. 6:12)?

When you smoke in hospitals, doctors' offices, and waiting rooms, don't you realize that you are looked on in contempt and scorn by all those innocent victims who don't have the courage to tell you so? They are all afraid they'll offend you. But you don't mind offending them, do you?

Your breath stinks. You would be embarrassed to eat garlic or onions and then mingle in polite company. Yet when you smoke, your breath always has that foul stench that is so offensive to non-smokers. You cannot hide it nor cover it up.

Your body, clothes, house and car stinks. All that a smoker owns has been branded, not visually, but branded by odor. The smoker's body has an odor that cannot be washed away nor perfumed away. His clothes, his house and his car all reek with the same stench.

I know you do not realize how offensive you really are. Apparently, hogs, billy goats and some smokers are in the same class. Neither of them realizes just how bad he smells.

Doesn't it bother you that you are trespassing on another's rights? Now it would be different if you would wear a glass bubble around your head when you smoke; at least you would not be violating others' rights to breathe fresh air. But then you couldn't see where you were going, the smoke would be so thick. It takes plenty of fresh air to disperse

the smoke.

If you are uncertain about the scholarship of brother Turner, or his value as a writer, we suggest you examine the 1977 TEACHER'S ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY. The "Historical Perspective" prefacing each lesson in the first quarter is of inestimable value in studying the period of the Babylonian captivity. We had not seen this volume when we wrote our commendation of the 1976 volume. If possible, this one is even better than the other.

the smoke.

You have developed a hardened heart. You can light up in the tightest places, such as an elevator, or the sealed cabin of a plane, where you smoke cannot get out. Now honestly, friend, is that fair? As far as etiquette and good breeding go - you just blew it up in smoke. I know some smokers who have shown enough decency not to smoke in tight places. But many smokers are rude and ill-mannered.

You don't have any love in you. Oh, I know you think you do, but you don't. You don't love yourself when you continue to consume a substance containing 19 poisons, according to Dr. D.H. Kress. You might as well have a habit of cutting out a chunk of your own flesh every few minutes throughout the day. You don't love your family and friends when you constantly subject them to poisonous fumes. And you don't love me. You don't mind irritating my nose, throat and lungs whenever and wherever we meet. You might as well be poking a steel brush down my throat.

All the smokers I know of admit that it is a bad habit and a bad example. Smokers warn and discourage their children from smoking. Why can't it be recommended to others?

Many smokers get angry when the subject is brought up. If it is wholesome and healthy why should they get angry? I've never seen anyone get angry when we start talking about food. But when the smoker becomes angry at the mention of smoking, he condemns himself and admits that there must surely be something wrong with it.

I know a man who smoked so long that finally one of his lungs collapsed. It was a dead lung and had to be removed. He told me that after his surgery three doctors came in to see him. One doctor told him, "You would still have your lung today if it were not for cigarettes." All three doctors told him, "Smoking will kill you." But the hypocrisy of it all is that two of those doctors had cigarettes in their mouths, and the other one had a pipe. They were just like all other smokers: "Don't do as I DO; do as I SAY."

Dear Christian smoker, can't you see your hypocrisy, your inconsistency? Can't you see what a shame and a farce your life is before the world? — Rt. 2, Box 455, Parrish, Al. 35580.

Four things a man must learn to do

If he would make his record true:

To think without confusion clearly;

To love his fellow-men sincerely;

To act from honest motives purely;

To trust in God and heaven securely.

— Van Dyke

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Is eating on church premises forbidden in I Cor. 11:20-24?"

The Lord's supper was instituted on the evening before our Lord's tragic death on the cross, and immediately following the observance of the Passover Feast in the upper room in Jerusalem (Matt. 26:26-30; Mark. 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-23). All of the original apostles, except Judas, were present when Jesus instituted the Supper (John 13:21-30). Paul, of course, was not there, not having been selected to be an apostle until some years later; but, he received directly from the Lord, by special revelation, the details (I Cor. 11:23-25). Its design is to commemorate the death of our Lord (I Cor. 11:26), and it is to be observed each first day of the week (Acts 20:7).

The Corinthians had corrupted the Supper by combining it with an ordinary meal. It is very likely that this resulted from an improper mingling of the "Love Feasts," in which the saints met and shared their food, with the Lord's Supper (Jude 12; II Pet. 2:13). At any rate, they had greatly abused the purpose and intent of the memorial which the Saviour established on the eve of his death, and the situation required immediate correction. There was, indeed, such divergence from the original design of the Supper that it was not possible to observe it under the conditions there prevailing.

What led to this corruption the apostle describes in this fashion: "For in your eating each one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken." Some had more food than others; these ate before the others; and, thus some were filled and others were hungry. From the fact that the apostle had said some were "hungry," and others, "drunken," some draw the conclusion that this means they were getting drunk at the Lord's table, whence they infer that the fruit of the vine used in the memorial feast must have been intoxicating wine! But, this is to read into the passage more than is really there. The meal at which some were "drunken" was not the Supper of the Lord, but one of common food; and, it is by no means certain that the word drunken here signifies intoxication. It is placed opposite hungry, in the text, to describe a state opposed to hunger; and the Greek word is also defined by the lexicons "to be filled, plentifully fed." Such is very possibly its meaning here. Moreover, it undoubtedly describes the same action as that which the apostle intended by the word drink in the sentence, "What, have ye not houses to eat and drink in?" (Verse 22). Who would possibly conclude from this that Paul is telling the Corinthians that they may imbibe intoxicating liquor at home? It is sinful to drink alcoholic beverages, in any quantity, anywhere. We conclude therefore that the word drunken and the word drink, as used in these passages, may not properly be construed to support the concept of alcoholic use.

There are those who cite this instance in an effort to prove that it is wrong for Christians to eat food on church property, particularly, if the premises are also used for the purpose of worship. But, this is grossly to misapprehend

the situation which existed in Corinth, and the criticism which Paul offered. The abuse in Corinthian worship consisted of (1) participating in a common meal in connection with the Lord's Supper; (2) selfishness in eating before others; (3) a failure properly to understand the nature and purpose of the Lord's Supper. Paul did not condemn the brethren for eating on church property - there is absolutely no evidence in the sacred writings that the church in Corinth owned any property - but for corrupting the worship and for exhibiting greediness and selfishness. Obviously the apostle is not saying here that it was permissible to eat and drink in excess and to ignore the poorer brethren at home! He alluded to their houses as places to eat and to drink in because this is where people ordinarily consume food - not in worship! If his statement is to be construed as a positive command to eat and drink at home, then it would be wrong to eat and to drink in restaurants or other eating places, or, for that matter, in the homes of relatives or friends.

It is clear, therefore, that the correct

understanding of this matter depends on the proper analysis of the situation then existing in the church in Corinth and the purpose which prompted Paul to deal with it. It is a misuse of the passage to cite it as prohibiting "dinners-on-the-ground," or other similar exercises widely practiced by our brethren today. The "Love Feasts" of the early church were very similar (if not identical) to the "covered dish luncheons" in vogue today in many congregations. I have joyously shared in these bountiful feasts from coast to coast, and from the great lakes to the gulf for many years and I have never observed any resemblance to the corruptions which Paul condemned in the church in Corinth. On the contrary, these happy occasions warm the hearts and elevate the spirits of those who generously and unselfishly share their food with others. Members of the church who regularly sit down to eat together do not usually engage in bitterness and back-biting. Congregations would promote a higher level of fellowship and brotherliness by participating in more of these delightful exercises.

All Words And No Action

Have you ever worked with a congregation that seldom, if ever, practiced discipline? Many elderships feel that all the discipline needed is a sermon from the pulpet on any problem arising in the congregation. If the preacher gets into trouble for speaking on the problem, they can always escape the heat by terminating that preacher's tenure and hiring another.

Any eldership that wants its evangelist to speak out against forsaking the assembly but refuses to withdraw from those who have quit attending are inconsistent! It is like sending a man into battle with a rifle without bullets.

An eldership that refuses to get involved in the work of overseeing the flock needs to resign from a work they are not performing. Sheep which stray need to be sought and brought back. If they refuse, they need to be withdrawn from. Any elder or group of elders who refuse to take this part of his responsibility serious does not actually "desire" the work of a bishop and is not thereby qualified to serve!

There is adequate information in the book of Proverbs to show what happens when parents will not correctly discipline their children. Cf. Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 22:6, 15; 23:13, 14; 29:15, 17. If a child's soul is delivered from hell with discipline, why isn't the same true in the case of the church member? Isn't this what Paul is saying in I Cor. 5:5? Why do so many elderships refuse to practice what the New Testament teaches on this subject?

In October, 1976, I was appointed an elder to serve with three other men who were already bishops in the Bellview church. These men knew and practiced their responsibility in this matter. I wish each elder would review the qualifications of a bishop and see whether he is doing what God states he must do in this area!

(1) Take care of the church as he rules his own house (I Tim. 3:4,5).

(2) Exhort and convince (convict) the

gainsayers (Tit. 1:9).

(3) Watch for the souls of the flock (Heb. 13:17).

(4) Take the oversight (I Pet. 5:2).

(5) Leading the church in withdrawing from the disorderly (Heb. 13:7; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15; Rom. 16:17, 18).

If a man is not willing to get involved in withdrawing from those who walk in sin, he is puffed up like the Corinthians and needs either to repent or get out of the eldership (I Cor. 5:2). Brethren, fellow elders, let us be honest and get serious about this great work over which the Holy Ghost has made us overseers (Acts 20:28)! — 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.



RAY HAWK

In Christ

In Christ there is no East or West,
In him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.

In him shall true hearts everywhere
Their high communion find;
His service is the golden cord
Close binding all mankind.

Join hands, then, brother, of the faith,
Whate'er your race may be.
Who serves my Father as a son
Is surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both East and West,
In him meet South and North;
All Christly souls are one in him
Throughout the whole wide earth.

— John Oxenham

Common Things

The things I prize of greatest worth
Are just the common things of earth.
The rain, the sun, the grass, the trees;
The flowers, the birds, the glorious breeze;
Clouds that pass, and stars that shine,
Mountains, valleys, all are mine;
Rivers broad, and open sea
Are riches none can take from me,
Our God is here on ev'ry hand,
Upon the sea, upon the land!
And day by day my thanks I give
That with these common things I live.

—Selected

Why Preachers Move - Congregational Focus

Continued from Page 1

Yet there are more qualifications set forth in the Scriptures for elders than for evangelists. More is said about elders and their households than about preachers and their families. The standard for preachers and their families is higher than for deacons and their families. It is higher than for any other member. Just where in the Bible do we read about this double standard? I have been hearing it from brethren for years but have not yet read of it in the Bible. A lady was once very critical of a preacher for a certain type of recreation in which his family participated. It required no immodesty or wrong doing. In less than a year she was condoning her son's participation in that very type of recreation. Verily the legs of the lame are unequal. Preachers and their families should live up to Christian standards - not superhuman standards or sinless standards imposed and enforced by the brethren. Elders and their families should live up to Christian standards. So should the deacons and their families. The same should be true of all members of the church and their families. Expecting more than God demands or more than the Bible commands from the preacher and his family is part and parcel of frequent preacher moves - yea of preachers' quitting in ever increasing numbers. It is true that this is not justifiable on their part, but neither is the super critical treatment they sometimes receive. Some are going to have to answer for such in the day of judgment.

A WITHDRAWAL OF THE WELCOME MAT

Members of the church who get it in for a sound preacher because he has attacked their pet sins and refuses to condone their wayward ways and vicious vices can produce a coldness of atmosphere that would freeze over a lake at the equator! By little innuendoes, a deliberate refusal to speak or be cordial, anonymous phone calls and letters, or outright invitations to leave, they can manifest the very spirit of Satan toward a man who has tried to save their souls. The preacher may not have been kidding when he said, "I have had several invitations to move. When I get one away from here I intend to accept it!" In such instances the Golden Rule of Matthew 7:12 is trampled underfoot. The "Be ye kind" spirit of Ephesians 4:32 is ignored. The disposition of "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another" of Romans 12:10 is treated as though it had application to all except preachers and their families.

The world of the preacher and his family is a lonely world when brethren withdraw the welcome mat. Usually, the preacher and his family are far removed from physical kinsmen to whom they might ordinarily turn in such hours of loneliness. This is another cause for preacher moves.

MISPLACEMENT OF BLAME

When things go well in a congregation the preacher is sometimes praised whether he actually had much to do with it or just stepped into the situation that was ready to bud and blossom. Quite frequently the congregation is prone to say, "My, but aren't WE doing well here? We are on the march for the Lord!" The Lord is seldom given his due of credit for giving the increase by such seekers of glory. But let there be an adverse setback like a false teacher's entrance, a worldly member's scandal that becomes public, or an economic situation that moves quickly several leading families elsewhere, and the preacher is the easiest one to blame. And blame him some

surely will. Ask any veteran preacher if this is not true!

Entirely too frequently congregations call for a change of preachers when the real problem is not in the pulpit. It is right in their midst, and was there a long time before the preacher they are about to move came into the congregation. But through the years they have refused - steadfastly refused - to face and solve the thorny problem. Moving the preacher will not settle a problem of which he is no part!! Moving the preacher will not settle troublesome problems that are deeply entrenched among those in the pews. But

The subject of forgiveness was frequently mentioned by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount as recorded in Matthew 5:7. (See Matt. 5:21-26; 6:12, 14:16; 7:12). Three kindred spirits, all essential to the well-being of the church, are giving, thanksgiving and forgiving. Forgiving is a most desirable and necessary characteristic of the heart. Forgiveness is important in the home, the church, the community, and the nation.

There are several fundamental reasons for forgiving one another. We should forgive one another because God commands it. "When you stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mark 11:25). We should forgive one another because Jesus set the example of forgiveness when, on the cross, he said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). We should forgive one another because we have been forgiven. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32). "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. 3:13). We should forgive one another in order that we might be forgiven in the future. "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6:14-15; See Mk. 11:23 and Matt. 18:23-35).

"How often must we forgive one another?" "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him: till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, not until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:21-22). "And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Lk. 17:4).

"Should we forgive one who will not repent?" We should forgive as God forgives. God forgives those who repent (Lk. 13:3). To those for whom the Lord prayed in Luke 23:34, Peter commanded, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). We should always have a forgiving spirit. "The goodness of God leads to repentance" (Rom. 2:4). We are to "recompense to no man evil for evil" (Rom. 12:17).

"How should we forgive one another?"

elderships in some congregations and congregations generally have trouble in seeing the matter that way. This writer wonders why!!

Brethren, we need to solve these problems that plague us about preacher turnovers and set a goal of long, happy, contented and fruitful ministries for both congregations and preachers. This writer longs for the coming of that day among all our congregations. Do you not also? This problem can be, should be and must be met and solved! — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Forgiveness



GLANN M. LEE

Forgiveness must come from the heart (Matt. 18:35). The responsibility is placed upon the offender (Matt. 5:23-24), and the offended (Matt. 18:15-17).

The Bible abounds with great examples of forgiveness; Joseph in forgiving his brothers (Gen. 45:1-15), David in forgiving Saul (I Sam. 24), Stephen (Acts 7), and Jesus (Lk. 23:34).

"Every person should have a special cemetery lot in which to bury the faults of friends and loved ones." "The best way to get even is to forget." An African proverb says: "He who forgives ends the quarrel." Edwin Hubbell Chapin said: "Never does the human soul appear so strong and noble as when it foregoes revenge, and dares to forgive an injury." George Herbert wrote: "He that cannot forgive others, breaks the bridge over which he himself must pass if he would ever reach heaven; for every one has need to be forgiven."

"The kindest and the happiest pair
Will find occasion to forbear:
And something, every day they live,
To pity, and perhaps forgive."

—William Cowper

Trouble often arises over little things and this is often the result of a lack of communication. It has been well said that "a giving church is a growing church; a thanksgiving church is a wide awake church; and a forgiving church is a humble church." — 3248 Lorna Rd., Birmingham, Al. 35216.

"There is always time to find
Ways of being sweet and kind:
There is always time to share
Smiles and goodness everywhere."

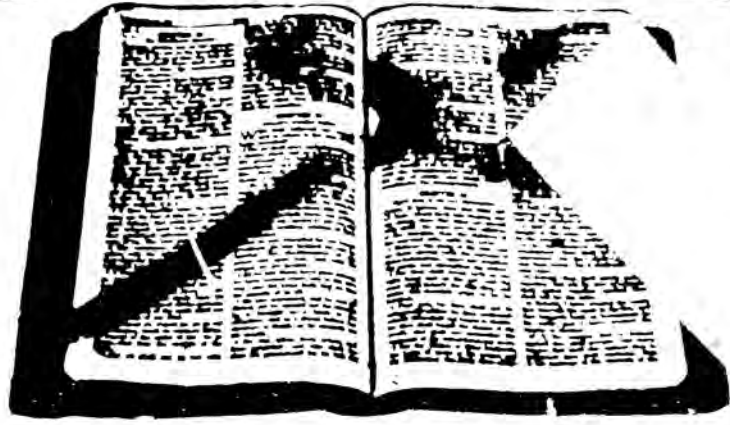
"Time to send the frowns away,
Time a gentle word to say,
Time for happiness and prayer,
Time for kindness everywhere."

"Time to give a little flower,
Time for friendship any hour:
But there is no time to spare
For unkindness anywhere."

A wise old owl lived in an oak,
The more he saw the less he spoke;
The less he spoke the more he heard.
Why can't he be like that old bird?

Subscribe To Words Of Truth

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"The truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, JANUARY 7, 1977

NUMBER 4

Is Election Unconditional?

Before me is a book called, "God's Predestination". On page 2, paragraph 4, we have the following. "Because God knows his people ahead of time, he can predestinate their salvation. God has predestinated the salvation of every born again believer. He has elected His people from the foundation of the world. The scriptures say in Ephesians 1:4-5 'According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world . . . having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will' ".



WINFRED CLARK

Now this author assumes that because God had a plan to save man in Christ that this proves unconditional predestination or election. He has God foreknowing the individual to be saved rather than foreknowing how and where he is saved. It is at this point that his doctrine breaks down. His doctrine would destroy the free moral agency of man and would make God a respecter of persons.

He needs to pay attention to his passage. Someone needs to ask how one becomes a child of God? Does he in becoming a child of God become one of the chosen? If he becomes one of the chosen is he one of the elect? Has he been elected or chosen of God? Surely the author would not say the child of God is not chosen. If he does he has two groups in the passages he uses (Eph. 1:4-5). Does one become chosen and then a child of God?, or are the chosen the children of God? Peter considered the elect to be such. Note I Peter 1:2. Here they are called the elect according to the foreknowledge of God. Note verse 14. "As obedient children." Verse 17 points to the fact of their calling on the Father. But only children can do that. Then note verse 23: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, but the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." Now is there any doubt that Peter considered the elect to be children of God? But did you notice verse 22?

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth. . . ." That is how they became a part of the elect. Turn on over to I Peter 3:21. There you will see that Peter speaks of baptism's saving. He had made such a condition to be met for the remission of sins in Acts 2:38.

Now from the foregoing would you conclude that they became a part of the elect without meeting the requirements to be obeyed? They did obey, you can well see (I Peter 1:22). Thus obedience is involved in one's becoming one of the chosen or one of the elect. If not, do you have some in the epistle who are the elect of I Peter 1:2 without obeying the truth, and others who obey the truth and are not of the elect? Surely not. Are they all of the same group? If so, they all obey as I Peter 1:2 and I Peter 1:22 indicates. Their election would not be unconditional. If theirs was not, neither

would any other's be under the gospel.

Notice Paul's language in Gal. 3:26-27. In these verses he shows one becomes a child of God by faith and being baptized into Christ. But this is exactly what Jesus told the apostles to preach in Mark 16:16. There he says "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." If he is saved he is chosen. He is one of the elect. He becomes such, not without meeting God's conditions, but by doing exactly what God says. He is in Christ where the chosen are and he is there because the Lord puts him there (Acts 2:47). That was what God planned to do when man sinned. That plan is fulfilled in Christ.

No, election is not unconditional under the gospel. So says Peter and Paul by inspiration!!

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Preachers, Remember When You Went To School?

Many of the preachers who read this note can remember those lean, hard days when they were struggling to get through school that they might be prepared to preach God's Word. If you were like me, you wore the same clothes for two or more years, and grew skilled with the needles and patches. My old car was like Nader's Corvair, unsafe at any speed. I regularly had to have help in pushing it off to start the engine. We feasted on preacher's round steak (bologna) back when it was cheaper than other meat. Koolade was cheaper than tea or soft drinks. I lived in a trailer that would be hard to class as adequate housing even for an Australian aborigine. Some Christian friends sent \$15 or less per week and I got \$20 when I preached once a month. Many godly brethren aided with gifts of chickens, vegetables and other assistance, as they could. I made it through and have no regrets nor complaints to make. However, not every aspiring preacher survived.

Back then most churches did not think a man should be supported while *training* to preach. As soon as he got through school, they were quite willing to provide a good salary. Our method of training men in those days was faulty. It kept hundreds of good men from even attempting to get the education they needed in order to preach. It reminds me

of the folks who promised to help the swimmer get a life jacket only after he had swum the Atlantic. Others found it easier to omit the schooling altogether and just add a willing flock and go to work, ready or not. This certainly had its limitations. We were wrong in our attitude toward preacher training then. Thank God things have changed.

Today good men are sent to schools of preaching where they study only the Bible, those courses related to it and preaching. They are supported by considerate churches while so doing. This is entirely proper and scriptural. "They that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel" (I Cor. 9:14). "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (I Tim. 5:18).

Paul instructs us to commit unto faithful men the things we have learned (II Tim. 2:2). He asked in Rom. 10:15, "How shall they preach except they be sent?" I ask with the same logic, how shall they preach except they be trained? And how shall they be trained except they eat? If it is right to support a man to study so he can preach on Sunday, then it is right to support him to study so he can be qualified to preach, period. If not, why?

Help a good man. Each quarter we have men who want to enroll in our School of

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WORDS of TRUTH

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Jehoiachin, The Gordian Knot Of The Premillennialist

According to Greek legend, king Gordius of Phrygia tied a knot, and an oracle revealed that the knot would be untied only by the future master of Asia. Alexander the Great, being unable to untie the knot, cut it with his sword. The expression "Gordian knot" has come to mean any difficulty from which there is no escape, or any problem which cannot be solved.



BOBBY DUNCAN

The premillennialist, and all others who teach that Christ is to sit on a literal throne in Jerusalem when he comes again, have a "Gordian knot" with reference to what the Bible says about a man whose name was Jehoiachin. He is also called Jechonias (Matt. 1:12), Jeconiah (Jer. 24:1; 27:20; 28:4), and Coniah (Jer. 22:24, 28; 37:1). He was the son of Jehoiakim (II Ki. 24:6), and the grandson of Josiah (II Ki. 23:34). He succeeded his father, Jehoiakim, as king of Judah, and reigned three months (II Ki. 24:8), after which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem and took him captive back to Babylon (II Ki. 24:10-13). His father's brother, Zedekiah, was made king in his stead (v. 17).

A prophecy made by Jeremiah concerning this man and his seed, makes it impossible for Jesus to sit upon the throne of David in Jerusalem. Because of the wickedness of this king of Judah, the prophet said: "Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they

1:12 is not the Coniah of Jeremiah 22:28-30. To make such a statement is to acknowledge the strength of the argument. There would be no need for the future kingdom advocates to deny that Jechonias and Coniah are one and the same, were it not for the fact that their doctrine hinges upon this point. If they are one and the same, there is no way their doctrine can be true. And so they must insist that the Jechonias of Matthew is a different person from the Coniah of Jeremiah.

A careful study of II Kings 23:30-25:7 along with I Chronicles 3:17-24 will convince the student that the Jechonias of Matthew is the Coniah of Jeremiah. Josiah was the grandfather of Jechonias, but it is not unusual in the genealogies for one to be called the son of a distant ancestor. Salathiel is said to be the son of Jechonias in both Matthew and I Chronicles. Zerubbabel (Zorobabel) is the son of Salathiel (Shealtiel) in Matthew 1:12 and in Ezra 3:2.

Furthermore, in I Chronicles 3:10-14 the genealogy of Jeconiah is identical to the genealogy in Matthew, down to Jechonias, aside from the fact that Matthew's list is slightly abbreviated, so that it is divided into three sections of fourteen generations each. These facts should prove conclusively to the honest truth seeker that the Jechonias of Matthew 1:12 is the Coniah of Jeremiah 22:28-30.

INDEX TO BE PUBLISHED

Those who have been receiving WORDS OF TRUTH will be happy to know that an index for 1976 has been compiled, and will be printed in next week's issue. This will enable those who have kept back issues to find articles contained therein. We plan to do this for coming years also. With this in view, you may want to begin with this first issue of 1977 to file your WORDS OF TRUTH each week.

cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. 22:28-30). Language can be no plainer than this. If a man is of the seed of Coniah (also called Jehoichin, Jechonias, and Jeconiah), then he can never prosper sitting upon the throne of David and ruling in Judah. This is exactly what some claim that Jesus is going to do when He comes again.

But Jesus is of the seed of this man, Coniah. In Matthew's genealogy of Christ, it is said that, "Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel" (Matt. 1:12). Though some difficulty may be attached to determining the exact meaning of some of the things said in verses eleven and twelve of this chapter, there is no difficulty in determining that Jechonias of verse eleven is the same as Coniah of Jeremiah 22:28-30. There is also no difficulty in understanding that the inspired writer makes it clear that Jesus descended from this man. This being the case, for Jesus to reign on David's throne in Jerusalem would make Jeremiah a false prophet.

This argument, arranged syllogistically, takes the following form:

Major Premise. No man of the seed of Coniah will prosper, sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem.

Minor Premise. Jesus is of the seed of Coniah.

Conclusion. . . . Jesus will not prosper sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem.

In an effort to destroy this argument, some have denied that Coniah is in the genealogy of Christ, saying that the Jechonias of Matthew

Biblical Love

What Is Love?

RON HARPER

Not too long ago, an article appeared in this paper under the title: "Biblical Love No. 1. Why Should We Love." This present article will deal with the question, "What is Biblical Love."

We are living in a sex oriented society. Movies no longer appeal to people unless they are full of sex. Shaving cream cannot be advertised unless there is a seductively dressed woman in the commercial. All this has led to a misunderstanding of love. Love and sex have become synonymous. At the very best, love is thought of as an emotional feeling one has. It is true that both of these are involved in love within the husband - wife relationship, but this article is to deal with Christian love, i.e., love for God, love for the brethren, and love for fellow-man.

The most common word in the New Testament for love is *agape* and its verb form *agapao*. W.E. Vine defines this word as follows: "The characteristic word of Christianity Love can be known only from the actions it prompts. Christian love. . . is not an impulse from the feelings" (*An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*).

B.F. Westcott gives the following comments on *agape*: "Love must find scope in our true and full life. *Agape* is an expression of character, determined, as we are forced to conceive of things, by the will, and not of a spontaneous, natural emotion. In this sense love is the willing communication to others of that which we have and are; and the exact opposite of that passion which is the desire of

personal appropriation" (*A Commentary on The Epistles of St. John*, p. 133).

These, or any other definitions, would be of no value in this study if they were not Biblical definitions. These are, however, Biblical definitions.

I John 3:17,18 says: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." This passage, in effect, gives a test for true love. Love must be demonstrated. If we love our neighbors, we will provide for them when they are in need. Verse seventeen speaks of one who places a barrier between his feelings and the needs of his brother. John pointed out that true love is not in a verbal expression, but it is in action. What kind of Christian would I be if I saw a brother in need of food and did not feed him.

The sheep on the left hand in Matthew 25:31-46 were cast into everlasting fire because they failed to carry out certain acts of kindness. They failed to show their love.

I Timothy 5:8 says: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." Why is this man worse than an infidel? Because he hath denied the faith. How has he denied the faith? By failing to provide for his own. He has failed to show his love. The person who does this is worse than

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Why is love said to be greater than faith or hope? [I Cor. 13:13]"

It is significant that the greatest eulogy of love ever penned—the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians—occurs in a letter addressed to a church divided in sentiment and torn into factions and parties. To obtain the proper perspective of this great chapter it must be read and considered in the light of the chapter which immediately precedes it. Chapter 12 contains a discussion of the various gifts miraculously bestowed by the Holy Spirit on certain individuals in the church in Corinth, and reveals the strife which had arisen over their reception. A number of gifts are mentioned, among them being miracles of healing, the discerning of spirits, prophesying, and speaking in tongues. Disregarding the purpose for which the gifts were bestowed, their possessors became arrogant and assumed an attitude of superiority over those possessed of gifts and regarded as important as theirs. Those empowered with the ability to speak in tongues believed themselves to possess a gift superior to those who prophesied. Chapter 13 of First Corinthians was designed, not to belittle any of the gifts of the Spirit, but to show that they were useless unless dominated by the spirit of love.

It is not possible for a heart filled with love for one's brethren to contain bitterness and hate. Paul sought to reveal to the Corinthian brethren that their cause was common to all, and that they were all one in Christ. Where this conception prevails today there is an end to the petty bickerings and jealousies which often tear congregations asunder and expose them to the contempt and scorn of their enemies. Brethren who love each other do not quarrel; all differences vanish.

It is said that during the War Between the States there came at the close of a day of fierce fighting a lull in battle. When the thunder of artillery and the rattle of musketry were silenced, the quiet of a summer evening descended on the contending armies. Only a narrow river separated the two armies. In the cool of the evening a company of Union soldiers began to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner." As the last notes of the stirring song died away on the air, a company of Confederates on the opposite bank struck up "Dixie." Then the men of the North sang "Rally Round the Flag," and the Southerners answered with "My Maryland." Back and forth they challenged each other with patriotic airs of their respective causes. Finally there rang out on the air the sad, sweet words of the song, "Home, Sweet Home." Both camps took up the song and sang it together. In a moment the bitterness of war was drowned in the memory of father and mother, sister and brother, wife and sweetheart. A common love obliterated their differences, and they became one as memories of home and loved ones surged through their breasts. When love for God and the souls of those about us possesses us, envy, strife, and bitterness sink for evermore into forgetfulness.

Indicative of the temporal nature and limited duration of the spiritual gifts about

which they were striving, Paul said: "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (I Cor. 13:12). By the words "now" and "then" Paul does not refer to the life here and the life hereafter, but to two distinct phases of the present life. The period of spiritual gifts was a time of restricted vision; though they saw, it was as through a glass darkly. Ahead was a period when the clear, unrestricted light of truth would shine into their hearts from the

complete and perfect revelation of God. Meanwhile he would have them know that the things which to them seemed so important were greatly inferior to the compelling influence of love in the heart. How we do need this lesson today! The bulk of our own importance is so great that we can see but little else. We are quick to criticize, but slow to praise; we are quick to take offense, but slow to forgive. We become skillful in casting darts, but have not learned to bind up broken hearts.

The Conversation At Caesarea Phillipi (No. 1)

One of the famed and familiar conversations mentioned in the Bible is that which occurred between the Christ and his apostles in the coasts or regions of Caesarea Philippi. This conversation is alluded to briefly by Mark in Mark 8:27 and by Luke in Luke 9:18. Matthew records it in far greater detail than do the other two biographical penmen of our Lord's



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

life. Therefore we take note of what the inspired Matthew wrote in Matthew 16:13-20. The passage says, "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias, and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell (Hades-ASV) shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ."

A MOST INTERESTING CONVERSATION

This conversation is interesting and significant from several viewpoints. It is of interest because of the place where it occurred. Caesarea Philippi was located some one hundred and twenty miles north of Jerusalem. It was situated at the most eastern and important of the two recognized sources of the famed Jordan River. It was located at the southern base of mighty Mt. Hermon. Caesarea was named in honor of Tiberius Caesar who was the reigning Roman Emperor during the Lord's personal ministry. The addition of Philippi was in honor of Herod Philip and to distinguish this inland city from the coastal city of Caesarea on the Mediterranean Sea, and which served as the Roman capital of Palestine in the first century. This city was founded on a rock, as it were, and was well fortified when Christ and the disciples visited there during his personal

ministry.

This conversation is interesting because of the personalities involved. Christ was there and began the conversation with a question that called for a response from the disciples. The disciples were there and this adds interest to the significant conversation.

The conversation is of interest because of the principles discussed. The proper identity of the Great Prophet from Galilee was requested. What the disciples said about his identity was all important. The profession of his Deity by Peter is one of the most important confessions that ever fell from the lips of mortal man. Then there was the precious promise to build his church. The apostle Peter was to be given the keys to open the doors of the church or the kingdom, which he did to the Jews in Acts 2 and later to the Gentiles in Acts 10. This promise of authority was later delegated to the entire apostolic band in Matthew 18:18.

This conversation is of deep, abiding interest because the Spirit of God saw fit to include it in the Sacred Canon of God's Word. It is of priceless interest because of so many profitable lessons that can be gleaned from the same.

A SEARCHING QUESTION ABOUT HIS IDENTITY

Jesus began the conversation by inquiring into what the Palestinian masses were saying in regard to his real identity. Being God in human flesh, as he certainly was, it was not essential that he make inquiries in order to supply information for himself. This question was wisely designed to teach and impress a much needed lesson upon the hearts of the disciples. Surely the disciples were in position to know what the masses were saying in this regard. Six chapters earlier, Matthew 10, they had been sent out on the Limited Commission. This mission that was to the house of Israel only, took them into various parts of Palestine. Quite naturally they would hear what the people were saying in regard to the identity of the Controversial Prophet from Galilee. They conveyed to the Lord immediately the reports that had garnered amidst their missionary tours. They reported that some saw in Jesus the flaming courage and tremendous zeal of John the Baptist. Others saw in Jesus the colorful character and the unbending disposition of Elijah, a great Hebrew prophet of the past. Some saw in Jesus the tender-hearted sympathy that once characterized the lamented Jeremiah, a former prophet of the Southern Kingdom, or Judah. Others were not sure as to the correct identity of this powerful prophet that had emerged overnight in Palestine. Hence, they simply designated him as one of the prophets of the past.

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Preachers, Remember When You Went To School?

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Preaching who do not have sufficient contacts to gain their needed support. These are grown men, not mere boys. Usually they are family men. They come highly recommended by the home congregations and other Christians. They are willing to give up jobs and careers, and move from their homes. Let us not leave these men to struggle with the situations we had to struggle with. Most successful preachers should use their good influence to encourage congregations to put a preacher trainee in their budget. Will you not help in this good work? As Moses said, "Remember the days of old." Do not shrug and say, "Let him get by like I did." We are to do for others as we would have them do for us (Matt. 7:12). Would we not have thanked God for a brother, or a congregation, who had taken it upon themselves to help us live while we were striving to equip ourselves as soldiers of Christ?

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The Conversation At Caesarea Phillipi (No. 1)

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FOUR CASES OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Not a single one of these answers were correct. Everyone of them, without exception, was a wrong answer. Jesus was not John the Baptist. To say such was to ascribe too much honor to John and absolutely too little honor to him who was more than man. Jesus was John's Lord. He was not John in resurrected form. Jesus was not Elijah. To ascribe such was to extend too much honor to Elijah and too little honor to Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus was not Jeremiah. This, too, was an extension of too great an honor to Jeremiah and too little honor to Jesus. Jesus was not one of the unnamed prophets of the Hebrew past. Jesus was not nameless; even before his birth the angel had told Joseph, ". . . and thou shalt call his NAME JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21). All of these wrong appraisals of his real identity robbed him of the rich honor and the deep dignity that Jesus Christ rightly deserved. The Palestinian masses were attempting to place Jesus into a category that the Son of God just would not fit. They made their most grievous mistake by the mere assumption that he was simply a man and nothing but a man. Jesus does not fit the mold made for humanity and humanity only. It is eminently true that he was the Son of man but he was more than that; he was the Son of God. Since he was much more than man and in reality was man's Maker he could not be fitted into the mold reserved for just humanity.

THE RIGHT APPRAISAL

With this as background material the Lord became more personal with his disciples. He requested to know their appraisal of his real identity. As was frequently the case in such situations, Peter spoke for the entire apostolic company. Peter's answer was both terse and comprehensive. He courageously confessed him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God. Never had Peter given utterance to an expression that was more profound or far-reaching in importance than was this statement. This was a realization that Jesus was the Anointed of the Father. It was a recognition of the Deity of Jesus. It was a

royal recognition of Jesus as the Son of God and Jehovah as the Father of Jesus of Nazareth. It was a recognition that in Jesus there is something more than humanity. He was also God clothed in human flesh. This confession shows independence of thought on Peter's part. He surely had not learned this great truth from his Palestinian contemporaries who thought Jesus was John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the nameless prophets of the past. Peter's confession had been directed by divine testimony and not by human testimony. There are entirely too many people today whose only concept of Jesus Christ is what they have heard others say in a deceived description of him. They have never gone to divine testimony to learn about his real identity, to observe his real worth. How about you, dear reader? Is your concept of Christ established upon divine testimony or upon deeply fallible human testimony? — Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Biblical Love

What Is Love?

Continued From Page 1

an infidel who does not even believe in God. It is the very height of hypocrisy for a person to claim to be a Christian and fail to show his love. Love must be demonstrated.

The Samaritan of Luke 10:33 was the only one who had any love for the man on the side of the road. The Priest and the Levite knew the law and that it required them to aid their fellow-man yet they failed to show their love. The only one with any love was the Samaritan, the natural enemy of the Jew.

The book of Acts is full of incidents where Christians demonstrated their love. "And they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need" (Acts 2:45). In Acts 4:31-35 it is said that the early Christians sold their land so that the needy brethren would be provided for. In Acts 11:27-29 the saints at Antioch sent relief to the brethren at Judea when they heard of the coming dearth. All of these passages tell us what love is. How many of us would be willing to sell our land to provide for the needs of others? The Christians in the first Century did not go around talking about love. They demonstrated their love.

II Corinthians 8 tells of the liberality of the saints at Macedonia. These brethren gave out of their deep poverty. Verse 3 says that they were willing to give beyond their power to minister to the saints. Why were these brethren such good stewards? Was it not because of love? Would anyone give out of their deep poverty for any other reason? Some who are wealthy might give for lesser motives, but few would give out of poverty for reasons other than love. The world would be so much better if we all had that kind of love. We sing "O How I Love Jesus," and then refuse to give as we have been prospered. What kind of love does that show?

Another misconception about love is that if we love a brother, we will not say or do anything when he is living in sin or teaching error. To rebuke one is to judge his motives and be "unloving". If we say or do anything, we are trying to make a big name for ourselves. Does true Biblical love mean that we tolerate anything someone says or does?

I John 5:2 gives another test for love. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and KEEP HIS COMMANDMENT: For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

John gives two ways we can be sure of love. 1. We know that we love God's children when we love God and keep his commands. 2. The love of God involves keeping his

commandments. This being the case, it is logical to conclude that if we do not keep the commandments of God, we love neither God nor his children.

Jude 3 says that we are to "contend for the faith." Can we keep this commandment when we sit by and say nothing when one teaches that instrumental music is scriptural? Does this mean that we say nothing to those who teach that baptism is not essential to salvation as long as one believes in Jesus as the Son of God? Are we to sit idly by while someone says that we can fellowship people of any persuasion as long as they accept Jesus as the Son of God? Why is it that those that love the Word of God are the ones who are unloving while those who would preach any other gospel are the ones who are pious and loving? Is it because many fail to understand what love really is? Remember John's test for love. "We know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments." If I truly love my brother, I will not sit silently by while he teaches error. If I truly love him, I will try to save his soul, not allow him to lose it.

If I have a brother living in sin, is it the loving thing to do to remain silent? How much love does it show if I do not try to get such an one to repent? Galatians 6:1 says that we are to restore one who is overtaken in a fault. This does not mean that we are to overlook sin. We are to try to get him to repent. We are to try to restore him to usefulness in the service of the Church. It is however, not always possible to get one to repent. We are to withdraw from those that walk disorderly (II Thessalonians 3:6). We are to do this after we have tried to restore him.

These are things that are commanded in the New Testament. "We know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments." What kind of love do we have if we show no concern for the soul of a brother who is in sin? It shows no love at all, only a disregard for what God has said.

The person who says he loves God but does not keep his commandments, does not understand what love is. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jno. 3:18). — Box 249, Carbon Hill, Ala. 35549.

The Annual Voice Of Freedom Breakfast At F-HC February 9

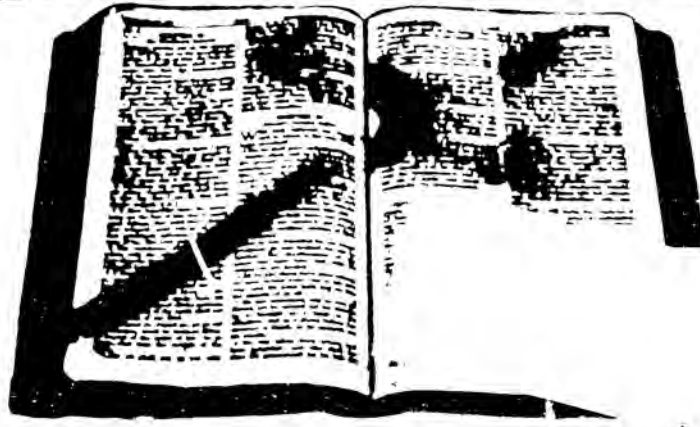
ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.

The annual VOICE OF FREEDOM Breakfast at the Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship will be held Wednesday morning, February 9, 1977 at the Blue Room in Gano Cafeteria at 6:30. The program will last about one hour. Speakers this year will be Garland Elkins, J. Noel Meredith and the esteemed editor of VOICE OF FREEDOM, P. D. Wilmeth. We are delighted that these three busy men have made their plans to be with us and to bring us a short message about VOICE OF FREEDOM.

Last Year we had a very fine breakfast meeting with fine interest manifested in the paper, with good speeches and with a fine member of subscriptions turned in for the paper.

The Blue Room will only accommodate about fifty so it will be upon a first come first served basis. Those who come should go through the cafeteria line and then come promptly to the Blue Room. This is your invitation to attend and thus lend your support to a great publication that is pioneering in the fight to preserve our religious freedom from the ever tightening encroachments of Catholicism and Communism. The VOICE OF FREEDOM is now in its twenty-fifth year.

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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1976

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FROM
THE EDITOR

The Bible and Masonry

The things said in this article are not intended as an attack against the character of any individual who holds membership in the Masonic lodge.

When we refute the errors of denominationalism we are not calling into question the character of any individual member of a denomination. We trust the things said in this article on Masonry will not be interpreted as an attack

against the character of any person who holds membership in the Masonic lodge. We believe the things said here should be sufficient to show that the practice of Masonry is out of harmony with the teaching of the Bible.

Several good books and some tracts have been written on the subject. These contain authoritative quotations from some of the official publications of the Masonic organization. It seems, however, that the average member of the lodge is unaware of these official publications, and of the positions they set forth. Consequently he is unmoved by arguments against Masonry based on these quotations; for he considers the quotations themselves not to be from reputable sources.

For this reason we have chosen to quote only from the *Masonic Manual of Alabama*, compiled in 1940 under the authority of the Grand Lodge. This is a book familiar to all Masons in Alabama, and one whose authority they recognize. We are sure it is quite similar to Masonic manuals for other states also. When the positions set forth in this book are attributed to Masonry it is not likely that Masons will deny them.

We shall set forth some scriptural objections to Masonry, and then we shall mention briefly some arguments sometimes used in seeking to maintain the idea that there is nothing wrong with belonging to the lodge.



BOBBY DUNCAN

MASONRY CLAIMS FOR ITSELF DIVINITY

We are told by some that Masonry claims no divinity for itself. But consider the following ode which is sung at the installation of the Grand Master of the state:

*Hail Masonry divine,
Glory of ages shine;
Long may'st thou reign!
Where'er they Lodges stand,
May they have great command,
And always grace the land;
Thou art divine. (Manual, p. 181).*

If this language does not attribute divinity to Masonry, it would be difficult to find language that would do so.

Those being initiated into the first degree are told concerning Masonry that: "No institution was ever raised on a better principle or more solid foundation; nor were ever more excellent rules and useful maxims laid down than are inculcated in the several Masonic lectures" (Manual, p. 31, 32). What about the Lord's church? Is it "raised on a better principle or more solid foundation"? Are the "excellent rules and useful maxims" of the Masonic lectures just as good as those set forth in the sermon on the mount (Matt. 4-6)? It seems that Christian people would have difficulty being a party to such ungodly allegations.

MASONRY APPLIES BLASPHEMOUS TITLES TO MEN

Faithful Christians down through the years have respected the teaching of the Bible (Matt. 23:8-10; Ps. 111:9, etc.) concerning attributing to men titles that belong only to God. We have little difficulty in explaining to our denominational friends why men should not be called "Father" or "Reverend." But just take a look at the list of titles of the officers of the Grand Lodge:

*Most Worshipful Grand Master
Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master
Right Worshipful Senior Grand Warden
Right Worshipful Junior Grand Warden
Right Worshipful Grand Treasurer
Right Worshipful Grand Secretary
Right Worshipful and Reverend Grand Chaplain
Right Worshipful Grand Orator
Right Worshipful Grand Marshal
Worshipful Senior Grand Deacon
Worshipful Junior Grand Deacon
Grand Stewards
Grand Tiler (Manual, p. 208).*

It would be extremely interesting to hear some member of the church explain to one of his Masonic friends why he does not call preachers "Reverend," but thinks it is alright to use the above titles in addressing certain ones in the lodge. Can you imagine trying to justify calling one who has never obeyed the gospel of Christ "Right Worshipful Grand

Is The Word of God Lost In Human Translation

There was a time that no one doubted the translation from which he read the King James translation. But in this day and age men are wanting translations that teach their doctrine. They are wanting translations that are more to their thinking instead of what the Holy Spirit says in the Bible. So this age is seeing a host of Modern Versions with their many errors.

Many people criticize the King James Version, not realizing its great value. The King James has stood the test for many centuries. It is true that it is not perfect and that there are some defects, but not so serious as to cause a person to be lost. All the many different translations have caused doubt among honest people that seek for the truth. There is a fear within their minds that the truth of God's word is lost in mis-translations of the Bible. This is another way the Devil goes about to discourage honest and sincere

Master" while admitting it would be a violation of the scriptures to address even the apostles as "Reverend"?

MASONRY DEMANDS ONE'S FIRST LOYALTY

Jesus teaches that God's kingdom and His righteousness are to occupy first place in the lives of His children (Matt. 6:33). And we are taught that our brethren in Christ are to be the first objects of our benevolence (Gal. 6:10). But it is demanded of Masons that they "prefer a poor brother (*fellow Mason, BD*), that is a *good man and true*, before any other poor people in the same circumstances" (Manual, p. 203). Concerning this *fellow Mason* they are told: "You must employ him some days, or else recommend him to be employed" (Manual, p. 202, 203).

Did you get the picture? A stranger comes along who is a Mason. He is in need of help—either a job or some financial help. A faithful brother in Christ whom you have known for years is in the same circumstances. You can render assistance to only one of the two. It is obvious that one cannot be a good Mason and at the same time obey Christ under these circumstances.

"MASONS ARE NOT ATHEISTS"

While it is a compliment to any organization to say that its members must believe in God, this within itself does not make membership in the organization pleasing to God. But instead of saying that Masons must believe in God, it is more correct to say that Masons must believe in deity. One may renounce the God of the Bible and still be a Mason. "Any man, good and true, whether he be Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, Parsee, Buddhist, Brahman or Deist may be admitted to Masonry because all these religions require a belief in Deity" (Manual, p. 342). And it is clearly stated that there may be "Lodges or Masters objecting to the use of selections from the New Testament" (Manual, p. 69).

"THEY DO GOOD"

While it is admitted that Masons do good from a benevolent standpoint, the same could be said for the Salvation Army and nearly every other religious denomination. But there is not a good thing one can do as a Mason that he could not do as a Christian, for the man of God is "thoroughly furnished unto all good works" by the Scripture (II Tim. 3:16, 17). Besides all this, Christians are to do all the good they do in the name of the Lord Jesus, and not in the name of the lodge (Col. 3:17). This being the case, why would a child of God want to belong to the Masons?

In closing we will refrain from saying that a Christian cannot hold membership in the Masons. In view of the foregoing information, however, we would observe that one cannot be completely loyal to Masonry without sacrificing his loyalty to Christ.

people from seeking the truth of God's word

The Bible clearly shows that this cannot be the case. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words, shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). Paul said concerning the coming of Christ, "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (II Thes. 1:10). This clearly shows that when Christ comes again the teaching of the apostles will have been sufficient that people could believe.

It is very proper to hold up the King James Version and call it the word of God. Jesus said the Apostles quoted many times from the Septuagint Version, which is a translation of the Old Testament, and called it the word of God. — Star Route, Box 886, Mulga, Ala. 35118.

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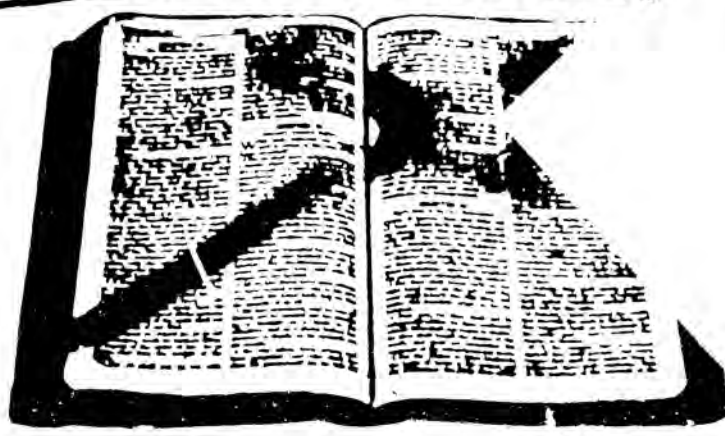
"Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
 Forgive our feverish ways;
 Reclothe us in our rightful mind;
 In purer lives Thy service find,
 In deeper reverence, praise.

"Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
 Till all our strivings cease;
 Take from our souls the strain and stress,
 And let our ordered lives confess
 The beauty of Thy peace."

One Book, and only one,
 The Book my Father gave;
 One Book, and only one,
 The Book with power to save.
 One Book, and only one,
 That points the pilgrim way;
 One Book, and only one,
 To keep me, lest I stray.

J. R. Clements.

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32
"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"the words of truth"
26:25
by Jesus Christ"

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 1977

NUMBER 6

Bible Basis Of Fellowship

GUS NICHOLS

(Explanatory note: Two or three decades ago, Gus Nichols was scheduled to share the same platform for six consecutive nights with R.H. Boll, of Louisville, Ky. However, a few weeks prior to the set date, Bro. Boll substituted Frank Mullins, of Fair Park church, Dallas, with his unreserved and "unqualified" endorsement. Without alternating speeches, each was to make only one long address, with the other speaking on the same subject at the same session. The first three nights were at Gallatin, Tenn., with the series repeated the next three nights at Charlotte Ave., Nashville. The following themes were assigned: (1) "The Kingdom of God," (2) "The Second Coming of Christ," and (3) "The Resurrection, The Judgment, and The End of the World." In addition to these main addresses, each made a ten-minute speech at each location on "The Basis Of Fellowship". So far as I know, none of these speeches has been published. Since his death, I have played again some of these tapes, and believe my father's statement on Bible principles for fellowship are as timely now as they were then. Therefore I submit the following from the tape recording, with only minor corrections to improve sentence structure. — Flavil H. Nichols.)

Brethren and Friends, we are now perhaps thinking of the prayer of our Lord near the cross when he said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word" (--that takes US in!) ". . . that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn. 17:20-21). Jesus here prayed for the unity and the oneness of all his disciples - of all Christians.

However, Jesus does not want unity at just any price! He does not want us to have a unity that is based upon anything other than the TRUTH of God's word. The church must STAND for the TRUTH, TEACH the TRUTH, and PRACTICE the TRUTH, "that the truth of the gospel may continue with you" (Gal. 2:5), and that we may not drift away and apostize - or go into denominationalism! Only in this way may our children and our children's children have the plain, simple, and glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ uncontaminated with the doctrines and the

commandments of men. If we pass it on to them, we must not drift a little at a time into one '-ism' after another, until we have given up, or abandoned, the gospel of Christ.

Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matt. 10:34-36). What does Jesus mean here? He does not mean that he does NOT want peace in the home, and peace in the church, and peace everywhere. But he was simply teaching and instructing his disciples to the intent that they would not compromise the TRUTH in order to have peace with anybody - in the home, with mother-in-law, or with daughter-in-law, or with anybody else! They are not to have peace as a compromise matter at the expense of the TRUTH!

In the light of that, we have seen a dangerous tendency among our premillennial brethren, whom we love (as I have stated, and as I hope we have also SHOWN that we do). I believe there is a tendency among them to drift, to compromise, to fraternize with the sectarians and denominations. In the Wallace - Norris Debate, they sided with J. Frank Norris, a sectarian preacher, even while he opposed the truth on the subject of Baptism! Our premillennial brethren sat over on his side of the house, and sided with him, lending their influence to his error! This trend is, we think, becoming very prominent and prevalent. (If I am wrong, then let me be corrected). We think that when these brethren call denominational preachers to hold meetings for them, or invite them to do so, they are fraternizing with them, and are thereby "selling the truth down the river"! In all such I believe there is great danger!

Bro. Earnest Beam is putting on a special effort to sell the church on the idea that "we all are brethren - we all have obeyed the gospel, and all have been baptized into the one body; now, let us all be together, regardless of doctrine! -- even instrumental music ought not to keep us apart"! He published his paper, THE FORUM, along that line, pleading for that sentiment. In other words, "Let us have unity at any price"! Now, it is right along that line, I think, that these

premillennial brethren are drifting. The apostle Paul wrote, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine" (Rom. 16:17). Just as surely as people go contrary to the word of God, and teach things not in the Bible - just that surely there is going to be trouble, confusion, and division!

That spirit is trying to get into the "saddle" - into the leadership - of the church, by forcing people who do not believe it, to listen to, and to put up with, premillennialism in the pulpit. We have pleaded with our premillennial brethren not to press these things. They say, "We must teach our views"! They went about teaching their premillennial views for about twenty years, and we kept our mouths shut, until finally we see that they are determined to "sell the church down the river" on premillennialism -- which we believe to be just about as false as "Russellism"! Therefore, the time is come when we must do something about it! Since they feel that they simply MUST teach their theories, we feel that we simply MUST reply to them! But when we begin to preach the truth about the Lord's Kingdom, why, naturally there is (to some extent) misunderstanding and confusion.

Let us return to Romans 16, where Paul wrote: "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them". When I was a young preacher, a brother in one of our congregations went off with the 'Russellites' (now called JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES). The brethren and I talked with him, but he would not heed our admonitions. He said he simply MUST teach his premillennial theories! So the elders put him out of the class, refusing to let him teach in their building. Well, he said he was being "persecuted" for his conscience's sake! "Persecution" was his cry! He thought we ought not to make his false doctrine a test of fellowship! But, meanwhile, he was trying to "sell the church down the river" on 'Russellism"! They, in order to obey Christ, had to put him out of the fellowship of the church. Today he stands off to himself, aloof from the church! Well, I regret to see a man whom I love severed from the true church and true fellowship; but we could not with justice and in respect for God's eternal truth see it perverted, without defending it! So, we just

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WORDS of TRUTH

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Prayer And Miracles

A well known preacher has said: "The need for miracles to authenticate the message of God- has passed. But in another sense miracles still happen as God's children, the Christians, call on him through prayer... We could not believe in prayer if we did not believe in supernatural power. God's power comes into our world when it fits into his eternal purpose and changes things That is what a miracle is."



BOBBY DUNCAN

Does an answer to prayer require a miracle?

Has God ceased to perform miracles to confirm the word, while continuing to perform miracles to answer prayer? The idea that such is the case is cropping up among brethren with increasing regularity. But miracles have ceased. 1 Corinthians 13: 8-10 points out clearly that they were to last until the completion of God's revelation to man, and then they would cease. Either miracles have ceased, or else the Bible is not yet complete. But the Bible is complete (11 Tim. 3:16,17; 11 Pet. 1:3; Jude 3). Therefore, miracles have ceased.

But this is denied by some who contend that, if miracles have ceased, then God cannot answer prayer. This contention presupposes the false idea that God can function only in a miraculous way, and not at all through the laws of nature which he has set in operation. This position makes God inferior to man in this respect: man can utilize the laws of nature to bring about certain desired ends, but God cannot do so. One man can comply with a request made by another man, and do so in complete harmony with natural law. But this theory says that God cannot do so--that the only way God can comply with a request made by a man is to do so by performing a miracle.

This theory says that God made the world, and set in operation certain natural laws which govern and control the world, but the only way God can govern and control the world is by some way other through these natural laws. This is like saying that a man puts a steering wheel in an automobile with which to steer, but if he wants to steer the automobile, he must use some method other than the steering wheel. It is like saying he installs brakes with which to stop the automobile, but if he wants to stop the automobile he must use some method other than the brakes. This theory not only is contrary to Bible teaching, but also is contrary to common sense.

Why Preachers Move

No. 2

By request this three - part series is presented relative to the extremely frequent practice of preacher turnover among churches of Christ. Already note has been made in regard to the part played in this problem by preachers. But preachers are not alone in this vital matter. Quite frequently it is the case where preachers want to stay longer. They desire



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

and deserve to have a longer tenure of service. They dislike to uproot their families at every "moving mood" of the fickle brethren. But sometimes it is the case that elderships and congregations do not intend for any preacher to stay long in their midst. Some years ago an eldership in a Tennessee congregation made agreement with a man to work with them. He moved with the understanding that it would be for at least a year. At the end of six months they informed him it was inspection time - a time to determine if he would be their choice for another six months. It made no difference to them that it was in the middle of the school term, the end of December, and the end of the six months. They permitted him to stay a total of eighteen months and then moved him in the middle of another school term. And some congregations wonder why they have trouble securing the services of an able gospel preacher!! Some congregations have a pat rule that a preacher may only stay one or two years and then there must be automatically a change regardless of how well he is doing or how well the cause locally is doing. This amounts to extremely poor leadership regardless of who is in the role of leadership. One congregation had a standing rule of changing every year. Needless to say, they are not growing, and in all probability will never grow with that type of leadership concept. In this article we propose to focus emphasis upon the leadership facet in frequent moves for preachers. This is a mounting matter and elders must bear part of the blame. The third and concluding article will focus attention upon the members of the congregation in this vital matter. They too, share some guilt.

AN UNINFORMED ELDERSHIP

A major reason for the vast amount of preacher turnover is traceable directly to an uninformed eldership. In all reality these two terms have no logical affinity. An eldership cannot be a Biblically qualified one if it be uninformed - uninformed relative to the Bible - uninformed relative to the work of elders and uninformed in regard to the work of

evangelists. Some elders do not know the difference between what they should be doing and what is the real work of their local preacher. His work is not to do their work for them. Yet in too many places that is their concept of his work. Except for employing him, determining his salary, determining how many meetings he can conduct annually, regulating what his wife may or may not do and terminating his services when the brethren become ready for a preacher change, they turn the remainder of their work to a large degree over to him. They seem to be determined to make of him a "one man pastor" while he is in their midst. A gospel preacher once went to look into a prospective work. He asked the elders in the interview, "What do you expect of your preacher day by day?" When finished with the list they had mentioned almost nothing that belongs exclusively to what Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:5: "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." Except for his pulpit work and being the bulletin editor their concept of his work was built around public relations. Time for study was not even mentioned. Needless to say that congregation has had trouble keeping a good preacher. Elders need to study the book of Acts and the epistles to determine their work in the eldership. Then they especially need to study I and II Timothy and Titus to determine the Scriptural concept of the preacher and his work. Uninformed elderships contribute heavily to preacher turnover. We desperately need educated (Bible style) elderships. Thank God for the ones who are so educated, and the number of those who are is growing daily. This is encouraging.

A COMPROMISING ELDERSHIP

We have preachers who will compromise the truth. They are in the wrong work and being shame on the Heavenly Cause. We have elders who will compromise the truth. Such are unworthy of the sacred trust placed in them. Such are immediately disqualified. A compromise of truth by an elder means he has trampled underneath unholy feet everything Paul wrote into the Sacred Record of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. A compromising eldership has repudiated its holy calling. In many congregational settings today there are men in the pulpits who are set for the defense of the gospel. They feel just as Paul felt in Philippians 1:17. They are determined never to shrink in declaring Jehovah's full gospel, just as was characteristic of Paul in Acts 20:26-27. They are determined to preach Christ and him crucified (I Cor. 2:2). But in some of these congregations there are worldly sinners in the pew. They are not about to have their pet sins called in question from an uncompromising pulpit. Some of these worldly members may be quite wealthy. Thus they may be heavy contributors. They let it be known to the elders that there is either to be a toning down of pulpit pressure against certain of their sins or else they will begin withholding a portion of what they give each Sunday. They may get even more vocal than that. They may say, "Get rid of that meddling preacher or we leave." The leaders at first may be determined to stand behind their preacher. They may say, "Is he preaching error? The objectors have to say "NO." The next query from the elders is, "Has he conducted himself in any type of unbecoming manner?" Again the answer is "NO." Then the elders say, "What then do you have against him?" They may cover the real cause by saying that he is just too loveless in his preaching or too negative in what he says. What they really mean, but are too subtle to say it, is that he is not in love with our sins

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Paul in I Cor. 15:20, said that the dead are asleep. If they are asleep, how can they be conscious?"

The dead are "asleep" in that they rest from their labors: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them" (Rev. 14:13). This does not mean, however, that they are in a state of unconsciousness. Though no longer in *this* life, they maintain the same consciousness and awareness that characterized them here (Rev. 6:6-9; Luke 16:19-31). The doctrine of soul-sleeping, (the theory that the dead pass into a state of unconsciousness) is a cheerless, hopeless theory. The logical consequences of which is that the dead *have perished*, and must experience a re-creation in order to exist at the Last Great Day. This follows from the fact that the dead become as if they had never been. If this is so, it follows that they no more exist after death than they did before they were created. To exist again, they must be recreated, not resurrected!

Paul felt a great desire to depart "and be with Christ," which, he said, "is far better" (Phil. 1:23). Are we to understand the apostle to be saying that it is better for one of the apostles of the Lord, who labored more abundantly than all the rest (II Cor. 11:23), to die, and to pass into a state of unconsciousness and insensibility, than to be alive and engaged in the Lord's work on earth? 'Tis impossible conclusion follows if the doctrine of soul-sleeping is true. "Precious in the sight of Jehovah is the death of his saints" (Psalm 116:15). Are we to suppose that God wants his faithful followers to descend into unconscious activity and so become as if they had never been? So must we believe, if the doctrine of materialism, as taught by Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians, the World Wide Church of God, etc., is true. Soul-sleeping is repugnant to our feelings, and contrary to the scriptures.

"What is the meaning of the phrase, 'baptized for the dead' in I Cor. 15:29?"

"Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them? Why do we also stand in jeopardy every hour?" Bible teachers, expositors, and commentators differ greatly in their understanding of this passage, agreeing only that it is an exceedingly difficult one! These differences of opinion as to the significance of the phrase, "baptized for the dead," and the allegations that the passage is obscure, and difficult of interpretation, are largely due, in my opinion, to misapprehension of the circumstances which prompted Paul to pen these words. Most expositors begin with the assumption that *baptism for the dead* involves some strange significance growing out of practices today unknown, and if not this, that the words themselves are not susceptible of being understood. Conybeare and Howson, usually extremely judicious in their approach to difficult New Testament problems, have this to say in their excellent

work, "Life and Epistles of Paul." "On the whole, therefore, the passage must be considered to admit of no satisfactory explanation. It alludes to some practice of the Corinthians, which has not been recorded elsewhere, and of which every other trace has perished." It will be seen that they follow the common view that the phrase "baptized for the dead" embodies obscure concepts not capable of being certainly known today. Those who attempt an exposition of the passage present long dissertations in an effort to determine whether (a) the baptism alluded to is literal or figurative; whether (b) the dead mentioned are physically dead or spiritually dead; and (c) what the preposition *huper* (for) signifies in the phrase *for the dead*.

Those who follow this approach assume that there are matters taught in the passage (I Cor. 15:29), not elsewhere set out in the New Testament, and that an understanding of the phrase *baptism for the dead* requires an in-depth look into this passage itself. These expositors overlook the fact that the words were penned by Paul, not to explain something about baptism, *but because the Corinthians clearly understood what he meant by it*, and what their perception of it would enable them properly to grasp what he was teaching regarding the resurrection of the body. It should be noted that the passage appears in a context where the subject under consideration is the resurrection of the body. Whatever I Cor. 15:29 teaches, it is with reference to the resurrection of the body - not baptism! It thus adds to our knowledge of the resurrection - not baptism. Some in the church in Corinth questioned the resurrection of the body. They accepted the doctrine of a future life; but, they had difficulty in accepting the teaching of Paul, and others of the apostolic age, that the body would eventually come forth from the tomb. Many of them had formerly been pagans; and, the pagan view of evil was that the body was the seat of it and, to leave the body, was to leave the source of all ills; to be told that one day they would re-enter their bodies involved grave difficulty for those who still held some vestiges of their earlier beliefs.

To prove the resurrection of the body, Paul alluded to their baptism. Baptism is a picture of a burial *and a resurrection*; some of them were now denying a resurrection of the body; what then, of their baptism? It portrayed that which they now questioned! Why were they baptized for (*huper*), with reference to, the state from which they would come forth by resurrection, if there be no resurrection? Their view actually nullified their baptism!

I Cor. 15:29, therefore, is illustrative, in the setting in which it appears; and, the lesson it teaches resulted from the clear perception which the Corinthians already had regarding baptism. If we will remember that the subject being considered was the resurrection of the body - and not baptism - and that baptism was introduced to explain the resurrection - and not baptism - all difficulties will disappear. This passage, indeed, all passages, in order to be understood, must be regarded in the light of their contexts; and, often problems which appear extremely complex and difficult of solution disappear when contextually considered. The adage, "A text taken from its context becomes a pretext," ought to be often rehearsed by all who attempt to expound the sacred writings. Merely to list the views which have been advanced regarding their passage, largely resulting from disregard of the contest and the design which led Paul to write these words, would extend my answer far beyond what space permits.

Capital Punishment

The other day I watched a program on television in which William F. Buckley and others spoke on the pros and cons of capital punishment. Those who were against capital punishment gave several arguments to sustain their view.



RAY HAWK

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS CRUEL AND INHUMAN PUNISHMENT

Capital punishment is final. There is no rehabilitation. However, when man says it is cruel and inhuman, he forgets about the victim(s) of the criminal. Did the criminal administer cruel and inhuman punishment to his victim(s)?

In the Old Testament God commanded the death penalty for certain crimes. Justice was swift. Cf. Num. 35:30,31; Deut. 17: 2-7; Lev. 20:10-16. In the New Testament God placed the sword in the hand of the government to punish the evil doer (Rom. 13:1-7). To charge that the death penalty is cruel and inhuman punishment is to charge God with injustice. Paul said man in his wisdom would reject God's wisdom (1 Cor. 1:18-27). Man rejects God when he rejects God's law in the punishment of evil doers. 2 John 9 states we do not have God if we do not continue in the doctrine of Christ. Rom. 13:1-7 is part of the doctrine of Christ. Therefore, to reject Rom. 13:1-7 is to reject the doctrine of Christ and not have fellowship with God!

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT DOES NOT DETER CRIME

Perhaps the death penalty will not stop wicked men from crimes worthy of death. Most evil doers think they will not be caught as most drunk drivers think that only other drunk drivers will have accidents. However, the death penalty keeps that criminal from ever repeating his crime. The courts of our land are allowing hardened criminals to serve light sentences and then be released upon society to continue their crimes. Jails are overflowing and many offenders are being given probationary sentences rather than jail terms. Our whole philosophy is geared to abet and encourage crime. If a man commits a crime of murder, but knows he cannot be put to death, why should he hesitate to kill again and again to escape capture? If the opposition counters by saying a murderer will also kill again and again to escape incarceration because he can only die once, I must then point us to the Bible. God enjoins death upon such an individual. God's wisdom is far better than man's (1 Cor. 1:25).

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS UNCHRISTIAN AND REDUCES THE GOVERNMENT TO THE POSITION OF THE CRIMINAL

How can capital punishment be unchristian when the authority for it is given in the New Testament? If practicing Rom. 13:1-7 reduces government to the position of the criminal, God is the one who does so. Who can believe it? God will punish murderers in the lake of fire forever (Rev. 21:8). Is God unchristian like? No. Does this reduce God to the position of the murderer? No. Then neither does it reduce government to the level of the criminal for practicing Rom. 13:1-7.

If anything is unchristian, it is the doctrine that we must not practice capital punishment. God's servant for executing wrath upon the

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Bible Basis Of Fellowship

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MUST take a stand!

We cannot fellowship every brother in the church who teaches some "-ism" of some kind, just in order to have an outward "Unity" and "Peace". This does not mean that we are to do wrong; this does not mean that we are to hate; this does not mean that we are to "persecute", nor mistreat, anyone! No! -- not any more than when the church withdraws fellowship from a disorderly brother. It is not "persecuting" him!

In Titus 3:10 we read: "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, REJECT". So, instead of holding on to false teachers, or "heretics" - we are to "reject" them! I would not, therefore, invite a premillennialist to hold a meeting where I preach! I would not do that at all -- any more than I would a "Russellite" -- for I don't believe the premillennialism taught by members of the Lord's church any more than I believe "Russellism"! Therefore, my Friends, to invite that sort of man for a meeting will lead to trouble.

Now, if a premillennialist is a member of the congregation, but is not preaching or teaching premillennialism to the disturbance of the church, and is not trying to put premillennialists "in the saddle" (so to speak) -- why, I would fellowship him. But I would do the same for a "One - Cupper" -- a brother who believes in using only one container for the fruit of the vine in the communion! But if he begins to preach that, to the disturbance of the church, I would insist that the church withdraw fellowship from him for "sowing discord among brethren" in violation of Prov. 6:19.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing. . ." (I Cor. 1:10). How are we to do this? How is it possible for all to "Speak the SAME thing"? Peter tells us how: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11). So, let us all "speak as the oracles of God"! This is the way for us all to "speak the same thing".

If I lived in Gallatin, I would propose to these good brethren this: "Brethren, I'll give you my hand on it, that I will not "preach" these things if you will not "preach" on them; rather, we will just "read" what the Bible says - without a word of comment. Get into the pulpit and read all that the Bible says - both sides - every passage of Scripture which Bro. Mullins has used, and every passage that I have used - just "read" them to the people!" Surely, this ought to ease the conscience of anybody! -- I would agree to peace on those terms! - For it is not the Bible that is causing the division: it is their speculation that this "beast" is the same as that "beast" over in another passage! -- and that this "tail" is the same as that "tail" over yonder! (Bro. Mullins said the Bible says nothing about "tails" -- but it does: "And his TAIL drew the third part of the stars of heaven," and swept them down!" (Rev. 12:4). That is just another of his blunders!

The point is, let us be careful not to hate; but let us not compromise the TRUTH, nor pervert the WORD! Now, if we are obligated to worship with everybody who has ever obeyed the gospel, then we must invite the Christian Church to come over -- or dismiss and go over with them, and be "one" with them! But, my Friends, we must keep the WORSHIP pure; and that is not all: we must keep the DOCTRINE pure! We cannot afford to compromise God's truth on either DOCTRINE or WORSHIP.

Paul wrote: "Let us therefore follow after

the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom. 14:19). If these premillennial brethren will quit commenting and interpreting, I will agree that I will never interpret another verse, I will never offer another comment on it. If they will all agree to that, we will agree to it, and together we will just READ what the Bible says about ALL these things -- these "beasts," and everything else -- along with the passages I have used! Brethren, that will make for peace! I know it would! A person would be against the Bible who would reject that, it seems to me.

Now, my Friends, this is the idea: in order to have peace where there is confusion, let us "follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." I do not believe in peace at just any price!

May God bless every one of us to that end.

Why Preachers Move

(Continued From Page 2)

and refuses to cease preaching against them. The attempted blackmail is in full sway when they say, "It is either his TERMINATION or our EXIT." A sound eldership will stand with its preacher in such. But a compromising eldership will tell the preacher that he is then at liberty to resign or be fired. Now we are not talking about an eldership's relieving a man of his preaching post who is a false teacher, is a dishonest preacher who constantly has trouble with back bills coming to the elders that he owes, or one who is always in trouble with some woman due to immoral behavior. We are talking about dealing with a sound man who is just what the congregation needs but will not be allowed to stay. Many a good, sound, able gospel preacher has been moved when the real trouble lay in worldly members and a spineless eldership who refused to discipline the ungodly and to hold high the hands of a man of God who was set on preaching a full gospel. Judgment will be severe with every eldership who has majored in compromise. In such cases the eldership has turned the work of overseeing into the hands of worldly blackmailers? If not, WHY NOT?

AN INCONSIDERATE ELDERSHIP

Some elderships are good as gold in the realm of consideration for their preachers. This writer serves under one of just that very kind at Ripley, Tennessee. Thank God for all such elderships. But others are inconsiderate to the hilt. They may keep a good man year after year and never raise his salary or if raised, let it be but a fraction of what inflation does to his living costs each year. They may begrudge what they do pay him though he has helped them meet and exceed the budget each year he has been there. When he leaves, in all probability, they will pay gladly the next man much more than they ever paid the former preacher. Brethren, in all seriousness, is this right?

Sometimes an eldership will decide it is time for a move. They are not thinking of making a move themselves; they are thinking of moving the preacher! The decision may come at a time when it will mean uprooting the preacher's children in the middle of a school year. It may come at a time when but few openings are available such as the middle of a cold winter. Nearly all the time I have anywhere from one to five preachers who have asked me to help them locate a place. Many times they have been done just as described in this very paragraph. As these lines are written I am seeking to help a fine preacher who has been done that very way by a congregation he has sought to help save from liberalism and

they did not want to be saved from it. Where is their heart in such calloused actions as these? It would be well for every elder to walk in the shoes of a preacher for a three to five year period. Inconsiderate actions such as the foregoing then would be at a bare minimum. Elderships which are considerate are the answer to much of this problem; elderships which are inconsiderate will always be prominently part and parcel of frequent preacher turnovers.

CONCLUSION

Informed elderships, uncompromising elderships, and considerate elderships in relationship to gospel preachers would work wonders in making possible longer tenures, better tenures, happier tenures, and more fruitful tenures for every good preacher among us. We thank God for every eldership that is of this courageous caliber. This writer's heart bleeds when he hears of good preachers who are mistreated and abused by the thoughtless.

Capital Punishment

(Continued From Page 3)

evil doer is the government. The word "servant" is from the Greek word "deacon." To bind the hands of the government and take away the sword to execute wrath is to make government less than God's servant in this matter!

It is not unchristian to practice capital punishment, it is unchristian to abolish it! It is not criminal to practice capital punishment, it is irresponsible and criminal to stop government from being God's deacon "To execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom.13:4).

CONCLUSION

This nation needs to get back to God in this matter and many others. We are headed for ruin because we have followed man's wisdom rather than God's. The church is God's agent for calling men to a "Thus saith the Lord." Let us not be silent.

New Books

THE GENESIS RECORD, by Henry M. Morris. The author of this book is a co-author of the well known book, THE GENESIS FLOOD. THE GENESIS RECORD is a commentary on the book of Genesis. The author evidences scholarship in the areas of ancient history and archeology. His discussion of the ark and of the flood is well worth reading. The author also evidences a lack of knowledge of the Bible, and allows his Calvinistic theology to show through.

MACKNIGHT ON THE EPISTLES, by James Macknight, D.D. This is not a new book, but is a new publication of an old standard work. We mention it here to call attention to the fact that this is a one-volume edition, and sells for \$14.95.

Both of the above are publications of Baker Book House.

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"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 1977

NUMBER 7

Does Scriptural Marriage Enslave Women?

The feminist movement often called "Women's lib" is a misnomer; it will not give the kind of liberty desired even if all its goals are achieved. It will not grant the freedom so fervently desired by many a woman and, in fact, may even enslave her.

The women leading this movement seem to fear one thing above all else—male domination. They imagine that a marriage following the principles of Ephesians 5:23-30 would bring that domination. Would it, really? We endeavor to follow those principles at our home (perhaps inadequately at times) and I believe my wife will tell you truthfully she is far from dominated. I have rarely tried to issue a command and I can well remember the results once when I tried!

Could it be that God created two sexes because He wanted each to find fulfillment in two completely different roles? A woman is designed physiologically for certain functions and a man for others. Mentally and emotionally they are different and are restricted by design to be better fitted for those functions. A bird is designed for flight; is the bird ruined because it must take to wing and fly? Is his freedom restricted and his ego devastated because he cannot crawl as the worm? Aside from differences of anatomy, did God make man and woman for other reasons than merely the procreation of the race? He could have made one sex as in some other levels of biology but chose not to do so. Procreation could have been accomplished without two distinct beings.

Man was lonely, having no companion as did the beasts. The loneliness would have been destructive if not alleviated. God ended that loneliness by creating woman. Had woman been created first, a companion would have been necessary to end her desolation as



MARTEL PACE

well. "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen. 2:18) must include something in the psychological makeup of them both requiring the other for the completeness of the one. Thus, the relationship of marriage was necessary for them both.

AUTHORITY IS NECESSARY

In any social order structure is necessary. Total equality may be a wonderful dream, but it can never be a reality. Some always become "more equal." When the God-ordained structure is observed in the family, contentment will be the result. A wife's submission to her husband's authority will not be restrictive when Ephesians 5:23-25 is obeyed; it will be as the bird taking flight and finding real freedom. No woman will ever be free trying to be a man and no man will ever be free trying to be a woman.

MEN ARE NOT TRYING TO BE WOMEN

Men who are normal are not trying to do all the things women can do better. Why should women try to do all the things a man is superior in doing? A woman may be able to climb a telephone pole and repair the wires, but I doubt she will ever delight in it as a man might. The ordinary man does not delight in the kind of domestic activities a woman finds fulfilling either. Why subject women to masculine standards of measurement? But when women try to do the masculine tasks they must find themselves measured by masculine standards. Finding themselves falling short, they will naturally feel themselves in the worst of servitude and long for release.

We must have differences; these are what make life exciting. Just as there are differences between Christ and his church, there must be differences between man and woman. The submission is not a product of culture but the result of built-in design by the Designer.

THE LEADERS ARE IRRELIGIOUS

A survey made in 1976 found only 14% of the leaders of the women's liberation movement to be regular church-goers. No wonder so many of them deny the natural position and function of women—they deny design and reject the Designer! Two recent books (*All We're Meant To Be*, by Nancy

Hardesty and Leatha Scanzoni, and *Man as Male and Female*, by Paul Jewett) plead for women's rights in a religious way from Christian foundations. However, both contend that what Paul wrote simply reflected his Jewish rabbinical training rather than the true will of God. Claiming to be religious while rejecting the inspiration of an apostle scarcely ranks them above the atheists at the head of the Lib movement.

The Bible is really little concerned with superiority/inferiority arguments. The issue is: Man lives his life in a masculine way and woman hers in a feminine way. A rejection of the Bible causes this distinction to be blurred, and confusion results. Women were a powerful force in the New Testament church and are so today without taking over the leadership. We need to preach and teach more about the great women of the Bible and the power they exercised over such as Moses, Samuel, etc. Subordination does not imply inferiority just as Jesus' submission to God does not imply inferiority.

Conclusion

Few perfect husbands are to be found and few perfect wives. We must not strive to overthrow God's system because of the abuses. God's plan is perfect, and to reject his system because we have often inadequately followed his plan would be a serious blunder.

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A Thousand Pardons

In *Words of Truth*, January 14, we failed to give credit to the author of a fine article entitled, "Is the Word of God Lost in Human Translation?" The author of the article is Danny Best.

In the previous issue (January 7) a similar mistake was made, in which we failed to give John Waddey credit for his fine article entitled, "Preachers, Remember When You Went To School?"

We hope brethren Best and Waddey will forgive this bit of injustice.

— Editor

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Washing Feet



BOBBY DUNCAN

Does the Bible teach that we are to wash feet as an act of worship, along with the Lord's supper and other acts of worship? Some say that it does, and that we are inconsistent in insisting upon eating the Lord's supper every first day of the week, while never having a foot washing service. If the washing of feet were taught as an act of worship like the Lord's supper, and to be observed in connection therewith, we would be in error to fail so to observe it. But what does the Bible say?

A part of the misunderstanding with reference to this matter grows out of the fact that some think that Jesus instituted the washing of feet in connection with the Lord's supper. Such is not the case. As a matter of fact, Jesus did not institute foot washing at all. It was practiced many years before he became flesh. The hospitality of Abraham to the three men who visited him in the plains of Mamre involved the washing of their feet (Gen. 18:1-4). Abigail asked that she might wash the feet of the servants of David (I Sam. 25:41). Jesus issued a mild rebuke to Simon the Pharisee, because Simon had failed to provide for the washing of the feet of the Lord when he entered into his house (Luke 7:44). This incident in the life of the Lord was a long time before the incident recorded in John 13. The washing of feet was already being practiced, and had been practiced for centuries, before the Lord was born into the world. But it was always an act of hospitality, or courtesy, and never an act of worship to God.

Furthermore, a careful reading of the thirteenth chapter of John will reveal that it was in connection with the Jewish passover,

and not the Lord's supper, that Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. In the Authorized Version there are two statements that, at first glance, seem contradictory. One is in verse one, the other in verse two. Verse one says, "Now before the feast of the passover. . . . Verse two says, "And supper being ended. . . ." Now, was it before the feast of the passover, or was that supper already ended? The seeming contradiction disappears when one understands that the passover feast was served, but had not yet been eaten. It was before the feast of the passover, in that it

was before the feast was eaten. Supper was ended, in that its preparation was finished, and it was ready to be eaten. It was at this point that Jesus girded the towel about him and proceeded to wash the feet of the disciples. It was after the eating of the passover meal that the Lord's supper itself was instituted (Cf. Luke 22:20). This makes it plain that the washing of the disciples' feet was in connection with the passover feast, and not in connection with the Lord's supper.

But why was the act performed in connection with the feast of the passover? John 11:55 shows that certain bathing for purification was performed in preparation for eating the passover. It was customary for the Jews to bathe in preparation for the passover, but their feet were washed again after they got to the place where the feast was to be eaten. They considered that, because of their having walked to the place of eating, their feet needed washing again. This is evidenced by two things: (1) the very presence in the room of the water, the basin, and the towel, and (2) the statement of the Lord to Peter in Verse ten, that one already washed "needeth not save to wash his feet." Please observe carefully that statement of the Lord. It clearly shows that Peter's feet NEEDED washing, in order for him to be clean. Goodspeed's translation of the Lord's statement to Peter is as follows: "Anyone who has bathed only needs to have his feet washed to be altogether

clean."

Why did Jesus do the job of washing their feet? Without question, it was to teach his disciples a much needed lesson on humility. Ordinarily the feet of the master would be washed by the servant. For any one disciple to gird the towel about himself and to wash the feet of the others would be an admission (in their thinking) that his rank in the kingdom was somewhat below theirs. None of them were willing to make such an admission. In fact, there was already a "strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest" (Lk. 22:24). The Lord used this occasion to teach them that greatness is measured in terms of service rendered, and not in terms of service received.

After the church was established, did the saints practice the washing of feet? Yes, just as it had been practiced for centuries. But they did not practice it as an act of worship to God. In I Tim. 5:10 the washing of feet is listed with such things as bringing up children, lodging strangers, and relieving the afflicted. It is never mentioned in connection with New Testament worship. The Lord's supper, on the other hand, is mentioned and alluded to numerous times after the church was established; and it is always clearly an act of worship.

One final observation is in order. Some claim that the washing of feet is to be performed in connection with the Lord's supper. If such were the case, would it not seem strange that the two are never, ever mentioned together? Matthew, Mark, and Luke all tell of the institution of the Lord's supper, but do not say anything at all about the Lord's washing the feet of his disciples. John, however, mentions the washing of feet but does not give an account of the institution of the Lord's supper. It seems that God was exercising special care in seeing that those writers who wrote about the institution of the Lord's supper did not write about the Lord's washing the disciples' feet, and vice versa.

Religious Tragedies

By FRANKLIN CAMP

Nearly every newspaper carries one or more items telling of some tragic event. We read of tragic deaths; we read of tragic wrecks; we read of tragic events that leave lives blighted and ruined. But the greatest tragedies of the day are not carried in the newspaper. The greatest tragedy of every age has been religious tragedies.

The *tragedy of ignorance*. It is tragic for a person to be ignorant in the economic realm. Those who are unlearned and untrained. In some trade or profession today can know only poverty and misery. But the greatest tragedy of ignorance is in religion. It is no more possible to please God in ignorance than it is in rebellion. Wilful ignorance is rebellion. We pity the people of Athens who were worshipping in ignorance. Only ruin could await them unless they could be taught. But there are multitudes today who know precious little more about the truth of religion than the people of Athens did. Ignorance of the truth turned religious men into murderers (Ac. 3:17). Ignorance of the truth turned Saul into a sincere, zealous persecutor (I Tim. 1:13). What a pity to think of one's fighting the very truth of the Bible, thinking he is doing God service, but instead of serving God he is traveling toward the brink of ruin (John 16:2). Ignorance of the truth kept the Jews from recognizing Christ as he fulfilled in detail every statement of their own scripture. What a shame for God's own Son, and their only

hope, to stand in their very presence and be unknown because of ignorance. Yet the Christ of the Bible is unknown to the majority of the people today because of ignorance. If he should come back and walk the streets of our town, he would be unknown because people are so ignorant of the truth.

The *tragedy of false teaching*. It is tragic for one to be misled by false information in anything. But the greatest tragedy is for one to be misled in matters that have to do with his eternal welfare. It was indeed a tragic day in the lives of Adam and Eve, and all their descendants, when they listened to the false teaching of the devil. The world is still paying the price for their believing a lie. It was a tragic day when the young prophet, that had faithfully carried out God's command to condemn Jeroboam, believed the falsehood of the old prophet. It led to death. It is a tragic thing today when men are misled into thinking they can be saved by faith only, that baptism is non-essential; that sprinkling is baptism; that additions in worship are permitted by God. It is tragic because it leads to the loss of the soul.

The *tragedy of riches*. The tragedy of riches may be seen in the rich young ruler who could not bring himself to give them up to save his own soul. What a pity that a mortal, dying man should stand with the offer of life before him and refuse it all because of earthly

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Does II Cor. 6:14-18 forbid a Christian to marry a non-Christian?"

No.

This passage may not properly be applied to marriage as such, but only if the marriage results in an *unequal* yoking. Where such yoking exists, the relationship is prohibited whether it be in marriage, business, social relationships, or in any other association where the situation involves an unequal yoking. The passage reads: "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? for we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Where the yoking is "unequal" the Christian is to sever himself from the relationship immediately: "Come ye out from among them," is the edict of inspiration (II Cor. 6:17). If this passage applies to every marriage involving Christians and non-Christians, it is the obligation of every Christian married to a non-Christian to sever the union! There is no alternative. On such an assumption, the Christian is in a forbidden relationship which must be terminated at once. But, Paul clearly teaches, in I Cor. 7:12-14, that there are circumstances in which Christians may be joined in marriage to non-Christians: "If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her. And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband; else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." It follows therefore that any interpretation of II Cor. 6:16, 17 which makes any marriage relationship between a Christian and a non-Christian sinful results from a misapprehension of the apostle's meaning, and perverts the passage.

Any relationship, including marriage, which hinders a Christian in his duty to God is wrong and must be terminated. To illustrate: A Christian and a non-Christian are partners in the grocery business. Their relationship is cordial, their association is pleasant, and the Christian is in no way hindered from doing what is right. Eventually, however, the non-Christian decides that it would be profitable financially to begin the sale of beer and other alcoholic liquors in the store. His partner, being a Christian, cannot become a party to such a sinful endeavor, and he must speedily extricate himself from a relationship which has become wrong. A Christian woman is married to an unbeliever who has thus far offered no objections to her active Christian life, but who now forbids it and threatens to leave her if she persists in pursuing her duties as a Christian. What is she to do? She has an

obligation to her husband to be in submission to him; but, she has a higher obligation to God to obey him. "Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart; the brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases; but God hath called us in peace" (I Cor. 7:15).

It is obvious that Paul's purpose in II Cor. 6:14ff was to warn against any arrangement or relationship which would compromise a Christian's convictions, but it does not forbid *some* relationships involving association with wicked and ungodly men, or, for that matter, with idolators, if we do not participate in their idolatrous acts (I Cor. 5:9, 10; 10:13-33). Even the most casual examination of II Cor. 6:14ff shows that *if* this passage is designed to restrain Christians from entering into any compact or association with unbelievers, Christians could neither work for, nor be associated with any company, business, or other legal, economic, or social organization composed, in part, of unbelievers! All business

contracts, all trade agreements, all social unions with non-Christians would, necessarily, be prohibited and children of God, on this hypothesis, could participate in such activities only if all involved were Christians! Obviously, such is not the apostle's meaning; and yet, this conclusion follows if this passage is made to apply indiscriminately to any relationship involving non-Christians.

I would urge Christians to marry only in the Lord; there are many reasons which may be advanced why this should be done; but, we must not misuse or misapply this passage, or any other, to teach what may be shown to be expedient in other passages. There are grave risks in all marriages; the risks increase when one of the parties thereto is not a Christian. It is one thing however to say that it is *inexpedient* to enter into such a relationship, and an entirely different matter to say that it is a *sin*. I have long believed that the scriptures teach the former, but not the latter.

The Baptism of John

John's baptism is of keen interest to the diligent Bible student. It is and has been a subject of much discussion both in and out of the Lord's Church. One reason for its popularity is its closeness in time and purpose to the baptism of the great commission. While there is a good resemblance of the two, they are not the same. There are

some significant points about the two baptisms that should help us to understand that the baptism of the great commission is what is to be preached and obeyed today. We shall consider the origin, mode, purpose and endurance of John's Baptism.

THE ORIGIN: John was a man sent from God. "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (Jn. 1:6). The prophets foretold of his coming and his work (Isa. 40:3). It was by God's angel that his name was given (Lk. 1:13). Being sent by the Lord included his message's being of the Lord (Matt. 3:3). For John's audience to reject his message was for them to reject the Lord who sent the message. "But the Pharisees and lawyers REJECTED THE COUNSEL OF GOD against themselves, BEING NOT BAPTIZED OF HIM" (Lk. 7:30). Many today are as guilty as the Pharisees and lawyers for their rejection of the baptism commanded by Jesus Christ and will miss heaven because in rejecting baptism they reject God (Jn. 3:5). The foregoing passages without doubt establish that John's baptism had its origin with God.

THE MODE: The baptism of John was a burial in water. This is established both by example (Matt. 3:16,17) and the actual meanings of the words BAPTIZE (the act itself) and BAPTISM (in reference to the act). Vines says under the noun form in his comments, "Baptisma, baptism, consisting of the processes of immersion, submersion and emergence (from bapto, to dip), is used (a) of John's baptism, (b) of Christian baptism, and, under verb form, Baptizo, to baptize, primarily a frequentative form of bapto, to dip. It is used of the rite performed by John the Baptist who called upon the people to repent that they might receive remission of



ARVEL CURTIS

sins" (Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, pp. 96,97). John said, "I indeed BAPTIZE you with water" (Matt. 3:11). To apply the literal meaning of baptize John is saying, I indeed immerse or dip you in water. John baptized in Jordan a river of water flowing out of the Sea of Galilee. There was plenty of water in the Jordan, as there is until this day. There are those who suggest that Jordan was so narrow that one could stop its flow merely by placing his foot across it. Those who make such statements do so in attempt to dodge the plain and simple command to be baptized in order to be saved from sin. Being privileged to cross the Jordan River in 1971, this scribe can personally testify that such is not the case. It was easy to see that no foot could stop its flow. As far to the north as one could see there was more than plenty of water for baptizing and to the south armies could be baptized without any problem whatsoever. "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region around about Jordan, and WERE BAPTIZED (immersed or dipped) of him in Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matt. 3:5,6). He also baptized in Aenon near to Salem, because there was much water (Jn. 3:23). The mode of John's baptism, as the baptism of the great commission, was unquestionably immersion. When John baptized our Lord, Matthew records, "And Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water" (Matt. 3:16A). There was a going down into, an immersion, and a going up out of (cf. Acts 8:38,39).

THE PURPOSE: John's baptism was to be preceded by repentance. He preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins (Mk. 1:4). He required on the part of his subjects a demonstration of true repentance. "Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance" (Matt. 3:8). John would not baptize those who refused to repent and neither should we. The question is sometimes asked as to whether we should baptize those who are living in adultery and have no intention of repenting. John would say no.

John's baptism was for (KJV) unto (ASV) remission of sins. Those sincerely repenting and receiving his baptism received remission of sins (Matt. 3:8). It must be understood that John's baptism was looking toward the cross of Christ as were animal sacrifices (Heb. 10:3,4), and forgiveness was not complete until Christ shed the atoning blood in his death on the cross, without which is no

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Religious Tragedies

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possessions. But the world today is filled with mortal, dying men who are doing the same thing. They only think and live for material possessions. How tragic for a man to spend all of his time and energy for that which will bring about his ruin.

The tragedy of idleness. Idleness is tragic for several reasons. The first is that the idle in the Church will be lost. Heaven is for workers not idlers. The parable of the vineyard shows that the Lord wants workers in the vineyard. The man with one talent teaches the same lesson. Idleness is also tragic because it leaves the world without the gospel, and the world without the gospel will be lost. But the lost, to whom we could have carried the gospel, but did not, will carry us down with them to their doom (Esk. 3:18).

The tragedy of partial preparation. This is seen in the parable of the ten virgins. The five foolish virgins made only partial preparation. But this partial preparation was of no more value to them than no preparation. The person that only partially prepares to meet God will be no better off than the man who makes no preparation. Partial preparation will cause one to be lost just the same as no preparation. But to be lost is to end in hell. The man with one talent was cast into outer darkness just the same as those who never made any move toward trying to save their souls. How much better off will the person be who is lost because of only partial preparation than the person that is lost because he made no preparation? It is tragic for one to know enough to know he ought to prepare to meet God, and yet not make enough preparation.

LET US SEEK TO AVOID THESE TRAGEDIES IN RELIGION.

The Baptism of John

(Continued From Page 3)

forgiveness. The baptism of John looked toward the cross while the baptism commanded by Christ looks back to the cross. John's baptism was for the salvation of those of his day who believed and obeyed. Those who rejected it were lost (Lk. 7:30). Since the blood of Christ was shed in his death on the cross immediate forgiveness of sins is received today upon being baptized into his death for remission of sins (Rom. 6:3,4; Acts 2:38).

THE ENDURANCE: John's work was to prepare the way for God's Son (Mk. 1:3). Included in that preparation was the baptism of repentance for remission of sins. John in preparation for the coming of Christ preached, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" (Mk. 1:15). When John had made clear the way for the Savior, he came. After his life, death, resurrection and ascension he established his kingdom (Acts 2). The law of his kingdom then went into effect which included his baptism (Mk. 16:15,16) thus bringing an end to John's baptism. That his baptism was no longer valid can be seen in the account of the Ephesians of Acts 19:1-7). About twelve men had received the baptism of John, evidently by the hands of Apollos who had been teaching his baptism at Ephesus (Acts 18:24-28). Upon learning of this the apostle Paul taught them the baptism of the Lord Jesus and immersed them. Those who received the baptism of John before Pentecost were not required to be immersed again. Although the Ephesians (who had received

John's baptism since Pentecost) were required to be baptized in the name of the Lord, there is no evidence that Apollos was. He, having been baptized before Pentecost, for some reason (perhaps his geographical location), had not heard that the baptism of Jesus Christ was in effect. He had not heard of the receiving of the Holy Spirit, and this occurred at the same time the baptism of Jesus began. As soon as he was corrected in the matter of John's baptism, he began to preach that Jesus was Christ. The conclusion must be the endurance of the baptism of John was until Pentecost, the beginning of the law and

kingdom of Christ.

There is no scripture that authorizes the teaching or practice of John's baptism today. We commend unto all the baptism authorized and commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ. There is but one baptism today and those who have not been scripturally baptized are lost in their sins. This one baptism (Eph. 4:5) is a burial in water for remission of sins in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18,19; Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:15,16). This we encourage all to do. — P.O. Box 6477, Moore, Okla. 73160.

Returning From The Dead

In the January, 1977 issue of the *Reader's Digest*, the book section contains an essay on the experiences of people who were pronounced clinically dead but later revived. The author of the story gave several statements from interviews he had taken from people who had "returned from the dead"!



RAY HAWK

The experiences of the people were parallel in most cases, according to the author, regardless of their educational, religious, or racial background. Most heard a high pitched sound or bells ringing. They felt as though they were passing through a dark tunnel or cave. This reminded some, who knew the Bible, of "the valley of the shadow of death" (Ps. 23:4). They were then able to see their bodies and those who were frantically working on them to restore life. They felt they were floating and that when contacted by a nurse or doctor, that person passed through them. They felt alone until they found themselves surrounded by friends and loved ones who passed away prior to their sickness. These spirits came to help them. They also felt the nearness and spoke with a being surrounded by light. They said they felt great peace and love on His presence. When they were told they could not remain but had to return to their body, they did not want to go. The next thing they remembered was waking up in the hospital.

Some Christians have read this story and are asking questions about it. Are these stories true? What does the Bible teach on this subject?

First, the Bible shows where the person goes who does not obey the scriptures. The rich man "in hades... lifted up his eyes, being in torments" (Luke 16:23). How can atheists, Jews, and others have identical, pleasant experiences as those who claim to be Christians? The Bible clearly shows a distinct separation of the Christian from all others. Cf. Matt. 25:46; Luke 16:19-26. In the case of Lazarus we find he went to "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:23). As for the rich man, he "died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments" (Luke 16:22, 23). Abraham told the rich man, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish" (Luke 16:25). The *Reader's Digest* has all, regardless of religious affiliation, having the same experience. I'll take the Bible account, for it is inspired.

Second, does Jehovah allow uninspired, nonbelievers and sectarians to reveal what He told an inspired apostle was unlawful to utter?

Paul stated, "How that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (II Cor. 12:4). Jesus did not reveal his experiences of death (Acts 2:31). God has revealed what He wants revealed.

I do not know why the individuals in the *Reader's Digest* article had similar experiences. They were not dead in the Biblical sense, for they could not have been revived except by a miracle. I cannot explain the workings of human minds, but I do know what God has revealed, and I will stand upon that

4850 Saufley Road,
Pensacola, Florida 35206

Are The Daily Bible Readers Gone?

The congregation where I attended as a boy in Oklahoma was interested in knowing how many of those in attendance each Lord's Day were daily Bible readers the previous week. A count would be taken during the Bible School hour and the number would later be posted in the auditorium for all to see. I'm happy to report that my home congregation still continues this practice and many other congregations throughout the brotherhood do the same. These are to be commended.

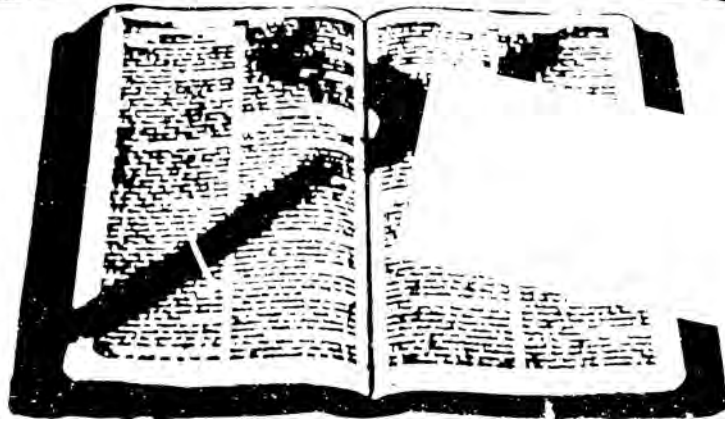


MICHAEL D. STONE

Some congregations that at one time asked about the daily Bible readers no longer do so. Why have they stopped? My observation is that the percentage of Bible readers compared to the number in attendance was so low that we became embarrassed for the figures to be posted. And, instead of getting to the root of the problem and encouraging our people to read the Bible more, we just quit asking them if they read their Bible and took the sign off the statistic board in the auditorium. What a tragedy!

I heard the late Gus Nichols in a Gospel Meeting in Lincoln County, Tennessee not long before his death make the following observation: "The greatest threat to the church in this century is ignorance gone to seed." It is a sad commentary concerning many in the church today that we know very little about the Bible. We have reared a generation that certainly manifests its ignorance which has gone to seed. Are the daily Bible readers gone! — P.O. Box 832, Culpeper, Virginia 22701.

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25
"truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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A Bitter Enemy

RAYMOND ALLEN HAGOOD

Everyone who supports the use of alcohol as a beverage needs to sit through one session with an alcoholic. More than a week ago a man came into my office from the streets looking for a handout. Before he left, I had learned a great deal about him. He was a member of the church, though no longer faithful. He had recently lost a good job, because he had been too drunk to go to work. His wife had left him. When in a drunken rage he had insisted that she leave. I saw a man before me who had lost all of his possessions, save the clothes on his back, had lost all human dignity, and had developed an insensitivity toward God.

I thought to myself as he was telling me these things that I wish some of our brethren who so adamantly support social drinking could see and hear what I was witnessing at that time. I personally know of nothing else that has caused more trouble, grief, and sorrow than alcohol. Nothing has been so successful in making strong men weak, healthy men sick, rich men poor and basically good men corrupt. I know of nothing that has produced more tears and heartaches for children and innocent family members than alcohol. I must say, paradoxically, that I know of no other evil that is as faithfully defended as is the consumption of alcohol. If there were not any commands in the Bible which condemn alcohol, and there are many, the very fact that alcohol has produced so much tragedy, heartache and destruction would be enough to condemn it.

The Bible speaks strongly against the illicit use of alcohol. Solomon said in the Old Testament, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" [Proverbs 20:1]. Isaiah described alcohol's ability to steal man's energy and industry, and rob him of a profitable life. "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands" [Isaiah 5:11, 12]. In Galatians 5:19-21 Paul lists the works of the flesh and declares that those who work such shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul says, ". . . Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor

drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" [I Corinthians 6:9-10].

Note please here that the Bible specifically condemns drunkenness. Many supporters of social drinking often respond to this statement by saying, "The Bible condemns drunkenness, but I never get drunk; I just take a few drinks." A reply in this fashion evidences a gross misunderstanding of the word drunkenness. These people assume that the word drunken means to be almost unconscious from the consumption of alcohol. It is very apparent to every thoughtful person that there are degrees of drunkenness. A man is drunk when he drinks one beer. If he drinks five beers, he is simply five times more drunk. This truth was forcefully demonstrated to me two or three years ago when I read an advertisement in the *READER'S DIGEST* by the Seagram's Distilling Company. In this ad they had a man write the sentence, "I can drive when I drink." The man wrote this sentence first when he was sober. After taking two drinks, he wrote the sentence again, but

this time it was distorted. He wrote the sentence after four drinks, after five, and after seven. Each time the sentence became more and more illegible, until finally it was almost impossible to read. The last two sentences of the ad read, "When you drink too much, you can't handle a car. You can't even handle a pen." After this man had taken two drinks, he was drunk enough that he could not even write a six-word sentence without some distortion. [By the way, you can probably still get copies of this ad from the Seagram's Distilling Co., 375 Park Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10022].

The consumption of alcohol as a beverage is sinful and deadly. It can only produce problems; it can never bring forth good fruit. Man could not create and promote a more bitter enemy. I long for the day when all of the Lord's people without exception will consider the illicit use of alcohol to be the true enemy that it is.—Church of Christ, 25 Union Place, Vicksburg, Miss. 39180.

Freed-Hardeman Lectures

"I would like to say a word about Freed-Hardeman College at this time. First of all, if nothing else edifying and spiritual were connected with Freed-Hardeman College other than good singing, it would make the difference in the secular schools and our Christian schools. I was thinking while we were singing this good song, "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound. . . I once was lost, but now am found. . ." and so forth, that if, when I get to heaven, they don't have any better singing than we've had here tonight, I would be thrilled every moment of the time, and rejoice to be permitted to stay forever. I never would get tired of it."

The foregoing words were spoken twenty years ago by our late beloved brother Gus Nichols as he began his speech on Tuesday evening of the Freed-Hardeman College lecture program. The session was being held in the auditorium of the Henderson church building, which, at the time, was the largest auditorium available. This writer was present, and recalls that the auditorium was full to capacity, and that brother Nichols, as always,

did a masterful job in his presentation.

From that day to this, many changes have taken place; but one thing remains the same. The lecture program at Freed-Hardeman continues to be one of the highlights of the year for a great many people. And regardless of how large the auditorium becomes, there never seems to be quite enough space to accommodate the throngs who attend. Many churches across the country not only give their preachers the week off to attend the lectures, but also pay their expenses. They reason, and rightly so, that many benefits will accrue to the congregation as a result of his having attended this great program.

In addition to being mailed to several thousand regular subscribers, this issue of WORDS OF TRUTH is being passed out to those attending the Freed-Hardeman lecture program. If any of our readers would like a free bundle of a recent issue of this paper to distribute to the congregation where he worships, he should request such, by writing, WORDS OF TRUTH, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501.

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Stealing Sheep



BOBBY DUNCAN

Perhaps one of the quickest and easiest ways to increase the size of a local congregation is to visit with members of other nearby congregations and persuade them to leave their place of worship and begin worshipping with the congregation one is trying to increase. Though this writer has never had any experience in this kind of "evangelism," he writes from

knowledge received in talking with those who have been the objects of this kind of efforts. If, having read this article, you are interested in knowing more about this quick and easy way to church growth, we are sure that some who are particularly adept in this field will make their services available to you for further instruction.

Several approaches have been found effective in this type of work. There is the "WE NEED YOUR HELP" approach. The idea is to persuade the prospect that the congregation where he presently worships is large enough that it can easily get along without him, and, in fact, doesn't even need him. At the same time he is to be impressed with the fact that one of his influence and ability is desperately needed in "our" congregation. It sometimes helps to tell him you need him badly to teach a class, or lead singing, especially if you know that he is not presently engaged in these things where he is now worshipping.

There is also the "DON'T GET LOST IN THE CROWD" approach. In this, the prospect is reminded of how large his present congregation is, and of the fact that there are people in the congregation whose name he doesn't even know. "Why, they will never

even really miss you." Get him to see that his talents are hidden in such a crowd, and that he needs to be in a smaller congregation, so that his light will shine more brightly. (Or if he is in a smaller congregation, you can always point out that larger congregations have more work to be done than smaller ones, and that his chances for greater spiritual growth and development would be enhanced.)

A third approach is the "KILL 'EM WITH KINDNESS" method, in which the prospect is showered with attention. Pay him a social visit at least once a week, and be on hand to wipe his nose every time he sneezes. Before long he will begin to realize he has never had this kind of attention from the home congregation, and he will be ready to make the switch, maybe without your ever even asking him.

With any of these methods it helps to criticize mildly the preacher, elders, and other members of the congregation where the prospect is worshipping. This gets him to thinking it would really be better not to stay where he is. It also helps him to become critical and a good recruiter of other members of the congregation when he himself has made the switch.

Finding prospects for this kind of "evangelism" is quite easy. Among the best prospects are those who are already disgruntled about their home congregation. If

they have been offended or neglected by the preacher, elders, or some other member, they are prime prospects. Even more ripe for the plucking are those who have been negligent or worldly, and have received one or more admonitions from the elders. If they like to practice ungodliness in dress or life, let it be known that "we are not the judge" in such matters and that "our" preacher never "meddles in such things."

But one thing must be kept in mind: this kind of "evangelism" makes absolutely no contribution to the growth of the kingdom of God, and does not one thing to help populate heaven. It is nowhere sanctioned in Scripture, and it demonstrates contempt for God's arrangement in the local church. It sets brethren against brethren, encourages discord, hinders discipline, and commercializes Christianity. Those who participate in it are guilty of sin, and will be eternally lost unless they repent, confess and forsake it.

We are aware of the fact that there are legitimate reasons for changing one's place of work and worship. We do not criticize those who change for legitimate reasons. The things said here are said to help us recognize and avoid the practice commonly known as "stealing sheep."

A Polluted Worship



ARVEL CURTIS

Jeremiah 7:29-31 and Exodus 20:24-26 plainly state that it is possible for God's Worship to become polluted. This pollution is not from God's standpoint but from those who attempt to worship Him. To pollute means to soil, to make unclean, impure or corrupt. Jeremiah rebuked the people of God for polluting His house. Would not the same rebuke be as strong to us if we were as guilty in the Lord's Church as they were in God's House? To study their situation and make application to ourselves should keep us from becoming guilty of the same terrible sin.

JUDAH'S PROBLEM WITH WORSHIP. Judah was so corrupt and had so polluted God's house that there was need for **NATIONAL LAMENTATION**. "Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath" (Jer. 7:29). But how had they polluted the Lord's House? In general terms they had done evil. But what is evil? Jeremiah, did not just generalize, as many preachers do today, but was specific in his rebuke (Jer. 7:30, 31). Their lives were filled with idolatry (v. 30). This seemed to be a continuous problem with God's people in those days. We seem to have continuous problems of some nature in the church today. Our's are different from theirs but not less sinful. They went to such extreme in their idolatry as to burn their own children in sacrifice to their idols (v. 31). They were guilty of stealing, murder, adultery, swearing falsely, burning incense to Baal, etc. (Jer. 7:9, 10). They were guilty of repeating empty phrases (Jer. 7:8). They also were guilty of **SAYING** many righteous things and **DOING** none (Jer. 7:4). We are many times guilty of some of these things but the courageous

rebuke of Jeremiah does not seem to be present. In the church we often extend fellowship to those guilty of the same sins and never say one word. With their lives characterized by these poor and sinful qualities is it any wonder that God would cry out, **YOU HAVE POLLUTED MY HOUSE?** How could they think of offering acceptable worship without first correcting their lives? God declares that He will not meet His people in worship **EXCEPT THEIR HEART AND LIVES BE RIGHT** (Ex. 20:24-26).

HOW MAY WE BECOME GUILTY OF POLLUTING GOD'S WORSHIP TODAY? We become just as guilty as those of Judah attempting to worship when we have idols in our lives. It is not likely that any in the Lord's Church would be guilty of idolatry in the same form as Judah but what about other forms? Are we not as guilty when we allow possessions and things to come between us and true service to God? When our jobs, friends, relatives, etc. hinder us from faithful dedicated service they become forms of idolatry. The apostle Paul states that **COVETOUSNESS IS IDOLATRY** (Col. 3:5).

We also pollute our worship when we attempt to worship God with a heart of mixed emotion. Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). Half hearted worship is not acceptable to the Lord. When one attempts to worship while wishing he was somewhere else or desiring things of the world he is guilty of polluting worship. It should also be understood by those who are careless in their dress that immodesty hinders one's worship.

For Christians to dress like the world (immodestly) through the week and then approach God for worship on the Lord's day is to attempt to worship with an impure heart and life (I Tim. 2:9,10). As far as modesty in worship itself, the principle has always been the same. "And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone, for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, **THOU HAST POLLUTED IT**. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, **THAT THOU**

(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Explain II Cor. 12:1-4. Who is the 'man in Christ' there designated? Where is the 'third heaven'? Why unlawful to relate?"

"I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (II 12:2-4). Visions were miraculous experiences wherein matters were made to appear before the mind as vividly as if they were actually seen with the physical eye. Revelations involved the supernatural unveiling of truth not formerly known to the individual involved. It seems certain that Paul was the person to whom reference is made, though, in these verses, he is not directly identified. In II Cor. 12:1, he said, "I must needs glory, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord." Obviously, there would have been no occasion for Paul to glory (boast) of the divine revelations of others. The visions and revelations were Paul's; each series was divinely bestowed; and both evidenced his heavenly calling, since men not thus commissioned would not have been thus empowered. The apostle's purpose, in citing these remarkable experiences, was to establish his apostleship, and to exhibit his superiority to the false apostles then plaguing the church in Corinth (II Cor. 11:13).

A "man in Christ," is a Christian (Gal. 3:26, 27). The event the apostle describes occurred fourteen years earlier. II Corinthians was written in the fall of A.D. 57. It occurred, therefore, in A.D. 43. This falls within the period when the apostle was in the last portion of his labors in Tarsus, or the first part of his stay in Antioch. In view of the fact that these remarkable experiences were given to him to strengthen him for exceptional suffering and painful persecution, and inasmuch as this was to characterize him throughout his missionary efforts, it is reasonable to conclude that the events he mentions occurred in either Tarsus or Antioch shortly before the beginning of these historic travels (Acts 9:26-30; 11:25,26).

The apostle did not know whether he was "in the body," or "out of the body," when these supernatural occurrences were experienced. It was therefore possible for him to have been "out of the body" when they occurred. This remarkable concession on the part of the apostle is especially revealing and significant in the illumination which it sheds on the nature of man. It demonstrates, by implication, that (1) there is an entity of man, separate from the body, which can exist "out of the body;" (2) inasmuch as consciousness is an attribute of the spirit of man, and not of the body (I Cor. 2:11), it follows (3) that the doctrine of soul-sleeping (that all there is of man is material substance and that nothing survives death) is false; and (4) the spirit does not die when the body does. Moreover, since the spirit of man is the "knowing" part of man (I Cor. 2:11), it is positively shown in these words of Paul that the spirit is capable of functioning "out of the body."

It should be noted that the apostle, while in

the state which he describes, both *saw* and *heard*; he could have been "out of the body;" therefore, he teaches us that it is possible for one to *see* and to *hear* when "out of the body" as well as "in the body." Were it impossible for consciousness to exist when the spirit leaves the body as materialistic urge, Paul would have known this and would have concluded that he was *in the body* when the events to which he alludes occurred! Paul's concession, that he may have been "out of the body" when he *saw and heard*, demolishes the doctrine of materialism as taught by Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians, The Armstrongs, and all other materialistic religious bodies.

The apostle was caught up "even to the third heaven," and "into paradise." "Heaven is spoken of in three different senses in the sacred writings: (1) where birds fly (Luke 9:58); (2) where the moon, the sun and the stars are (Psalm 19:1-6); and (3) where God is (Deut. 4:39). "Paradise," literally, a *pleasure garden*, is used here to designate a place of great blessing. The original paradise was the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:28); it is applied to the place of abode for the righteous dead (Luke 23:43), between death and the resurrection, and heaven (Rev. 2:7). It emphasizes the *state* of things prevailing, and is used, in the scriptures, to denote more than one place. As

the word "heaven" is variously used therein, so is the word Paradise. Here it most likely refers to the final abode of the soul.

During the apostle's supernatural journey, he heard "unspeakable words," not "lawful for a man to utter." "Unspeakable" is from the Greek word *arrhetos*, defined by Arndt-Gingrich, as beyond the power of human beings to utter, but this definition appears too restricted in the light of the context. In the clause following, the apostle said that the words describing what the apostle heard were not "lawful" for a man to utter. This strongly suggests that they were "unspeakable" in the sense that it was not permissible to repeat them. *Why rule that to be unlawful which is impossible?* They were therefore unspeakable in the sense of not being allowed - being too sacred far from utterance by man. Why was Paul thus restrained from revealing what he said and heard? There are many possible reasons: (1) These experiences were for the apostle's benefit alone - to strengthen him in his trails; (2) the scriptures provided all the information we need to prepare for heaven (II Tim. 3:16, 17); and (3) to reveal these supernatural matters would have served only to satisfy curiosity and it is noteworthy that God never does this.

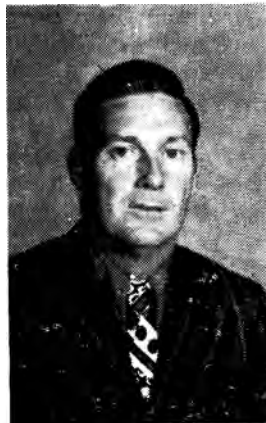
Sin

This is the first of three articles on the very vital subject of sin. If we are going to use the phrase "We speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where the Bible is silent" then we must get back to the Bible and believe what the Word of God says on this subject.

I. WHAT IS SIN?

The word sin literally means missing the mark. A good example is that of taking a dart and throwing it at a dart board. If one throws too hard and the dart goes beyond the dart board, one has missed the mark. Likewise when a person adds to the word of God and makes a law that God has not made, he has missed the mark and has sinned. We are to observe the Lord's Supper every first day of the week according to Acts 20:7. To make a law that we need also to observe the Lord's Supper every Wednesday night would be adding to God's word and would constitute missing the mark. Referring back to our original example, I take the second dart and do not throw it hard enough to reach the dart board and thus miss the mark. The same is true when I take away from God's word by teaching that baptism is not for the remission of sins. I have missed the mark and have sinned. I take the third dart and throw it in such a way as to hit the dart board. When we do not add to or take from God's word but speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where it is silent, we will be on target and will not sin.

John says, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). We transgress by taking away or going beyond. When we transgress God's law we are not abiding in the doctrine or teaching of Christ and cannot have God. "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

and the Son" (II John 1:9). John further states, "All unrighteousness is sin. . ." (I John 5:17). God is righteous, and when one lives an unrighteous life he is living contrary to God. Whatever is contrary to God is sin. ". . . Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God. . ." (I John 3:10). When you know what is right and good and do not do it, then you have sinned. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). If we did what was good we would be very busy and would not be slothful. What God tells us to do is good, and we must do it. God is opposite to the devil, and good is opposite of bad.

II. WHO HAS SINNED?

"As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Romans 3:12; Psalms 53:3). "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin. . ." (Galatians 3:22). John said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us" (I John 1:8, 10). There is not a person upon the face of the earth who has not sinned and, therefore, we can appreciate what Jeremiah said in Jeremiah 10:23: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." It will not be until a person believes he is in sin and is lost that he will agree with Jeremiah that he cannot direct his own steps. Every man has sinned and, therefore, every man needs a Savior. When a person believes he is not in sin he will look to himself and become arrogant, and he will not submit his life in obedience to God. When a person knows he is a sinner he will have humility and will cast his cares upon God (I Peter 5:5-7). There is not an infallible man living upon the earth today. We must seek the infallible God who is perfect. We must preach on sin and let people know they are sinners, and only then can there be true converts. A man will not buy an insurance policy until he sees the need of such. A person will not obey the gospel until he comes to the conclusion he is lost and needs a savior. — P. O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580.

The Conversation At Caesarea Philippi (No. 2)

The inspired Matthew relates this famed and familiar conversation in these words: "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ" (Matt. 16:13-20).

In our initial article we had discussed what the Palestinian masses thought about his identity. Then the question about his real, actual identity was placed before the apostles. Peter, acting as the spokesman for the entire group, said he was the Christ, the Son of the living God. This was a confession of his Messiahship and his Sonship.

THIS ANSWER PLEASED THE LORD

There is no doubt but that the answer given by Simon Peter found an immediate acceptance in the heart of the Christ. We may also surmise that he was not pleased with those who thought he was John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the unnamed Hebrew prophets from the ancient past. He pronounced a blessing, a coveted blessing, upon Simon Peter because of the correctness of his answer. The Lord pronounced no kind of blessing upon those who had misjudged him and greatly erred in their appraisal of him. Those who thought he was John the Baptist did not confess him as the Christ, the Son of the living God. Those who confessed him as Elijah did not confess his Christhood and his being the Son of the living God. Those who thought he was Jeremiah did not see him as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy and as the long awaited Messiah. Those who confessed him as one of the unnamed prophets of an ancient era did not really realize who had come to earth and was in their Palestinian presence at that very hour. Just why was the Lord so well pleased with the confession that Peter had just enunciated so clearly, so courageously and so correctly? The remainder of this article will seek answers to this vital query.

IT WAS A COMPREHENSIVE CONFESSION

When one confesses faith in Christ in the same tone and tenor as did Peter it simply means that he recognizes Jesus to be what he claimed to be. In reality when one confesses Jesus as Christ and as the Son of the living God he is confessing Jesus to be both God and man. It is not enough to confess his humanity. It is not enough to confess his Deity. We must confess him as both God and man. He was not Deity only; he was not humanity only. He was the perfect combination of both God and man. He was and is the Son of man; he was and is

the Son of God.

There were those in the first century who denied that he had come in the flesh. John, the apostle of love, deals very effectively with this in his epistles, especially in his first and second epistles. There have been those who confessed his humanity but denied his divinity. Either of these is an improper confession of Jesus Christ. The confession to which Peter gave utterance points both to his humanity and to his Deity. He was both God and man.

This is a very comprehensive confession because it enables one to place one hand upon the book of Genesis and the other hand upon the book of Revelation and say in essence, "I accept all the Bible as the word of God." Since Jesus endorsed the Old Testmaent as inspired and inerrant and prompted the New Testmaent to be written, he gave an unequivocal endorsement to the entire Bible. One cannot confess faith in Jesus if he denies that which Jesus endorsed so completely and without any sort of reservation.

IT WAS TO BECOME THE GOOD CONFESSION OF CHRISTIANITY

This was a great confession on Peter's part because it was to become in later years the very confession that people would make as they became and remained Christians. Jesus said in Matthew 10:32-33, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." If we are to have the Lord confess us in the sweet by and by in the Father's presence, then we must courageously confess him in the here and now. Philip preached to a man of Ethiopia in Acts 8. The man then demanded to be baptized if nothing hindered him doing so. The Bible says in Acts 8:36-37, "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Paul wrote about the confession of Christ in Romans 10:9-10 and connected it with salvation. He wrote, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Paul referred to the confession Timothy had made by saying, "Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses" (1 Tim. 6:12-ASV).

A HEVENLY DERIVED CONFESSION

The Lord was exceedingly pleased with Peter's making this confession because it was one he had learned from the Father and not from man. The pleased Jesus said to the confessing Cephas, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 16:17). It is a certain fact that Peter did not learn this great truth from listening to the Palestinian masses of the day. Had Peter's ear and heart been open to what the masses were saying about the Controversial Prophet from Galilee he would no doubt have thought Jesus was John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the nameless prophets from the Hebrew past. That is what flesh and blood said relative to the Lord's identity. But Peter had learned this vital and fundamental truth from the Heavenly Father. It is quite possible that Peter may have been on the banks of the Jordan when

the Lord Jesus was baptized. At that occasion the Father sounded these words from the holy heavens: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17). If Peter were not present for this great occasion, he had learned the truth about the Lord's identity from the Father on some other occasion. In the very next chapter after this famed conversation occurred Peter will hear the Father say in clear and concise terms, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5).

A FOUNDATIONAL CONFESSION

The Lord was pleased with Peter's confession because it was upon this rock or foundational truth that he would soon erect his church. The church would rest upon the firm foundation that he is truly the Christ, the Son of the living God. The church was to be built on the fact that Jesus was the Christ, that he was Divinity, that he was the Son of the living God. It was never the Lord's intention to build the church upon a human foundation or upon a man such as Peter. It was his divine intention that the church would be built on the foundational fact that Jesus was truly the Christ, the son of the living God. Peter's great confession provided the Lord with the very opportunity that the occasion demanded for him to announce what was to constitute the foundation of the church or the kingdom of heaven.

CONCLUSION

Reader friends, have you ever confessed this Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God? If not, why not? You need to believe on him, repent of your sins, confess him as Peter did, and upon that comprehensive confession be baptized for the remission of your sins. Will you not do it today? — Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

A Polluted Worship

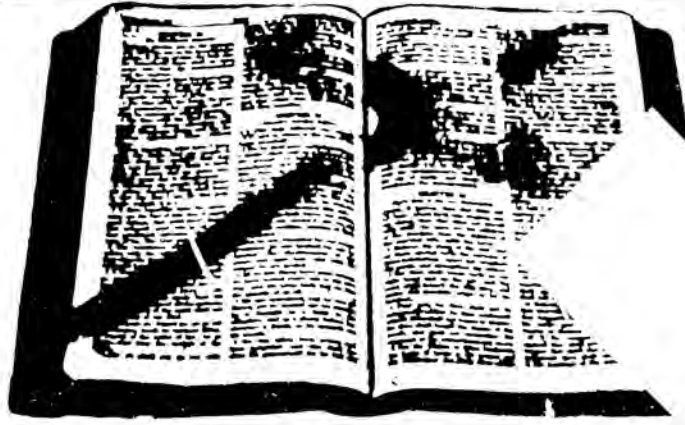
(Continued From Page 2)

NAKEDNESS BE NOT DISCOVERED THEREON" (Ex. 20:25, 26). When we go before God to worship we need to be extremely careful in our dress. If God was this particular in times past we should not expect Him to be different today. If the worshippers polluted their worship by showing their nakedness then so would the same pollute worship today.

Many pollute God's worship today by changing His way of worship. The New Testament clearly sets forth that in worship we are to engage in (1) Eating the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7), (2) Singing (Eph. 5:19), (3) Praying (I Thess. 5:17), (4) Giving of our means (I Cor. 16:2), and (5) Teaching God's word (Acts 2:42; Matt. 28:20). Any attempt to add to or take away from His way of worship only pollutes it and makes it unacceptable.

Judah because of her sinful life and impure heart ruined a wonderful relationship previously held with the God of heaven. Their sin was evidently more serious than they thought it would ever become. "For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: **THEY HAVE SET THEIR ABOMINATIONS IN THE HOUSE WHICH IS CALLED BY MY NAME, TO POLLUTE IT**" (Jer. 7:30). May we worship God and serve Him with love, reverence, respect, decency and in truth that our worship may be pure and acceptable. "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Psa. 89:7). The Bible teaches us that before anyone can worship God acceptably he must be in the Lord's Church and faithful in His service. Each one must obey the gospel to get into church to enjoy this relationship with God (Jn. 9:31; Rom. 6:17, 18; Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:16).—Box 6477, Moore, Oklahoma 73160.

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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Colleges, Editors, Preachers and Splinters

[The following article appeared in the February issue of VIGIL, and was written by the editor of that fine paper. We commend it to your reading and thinking. - Editor]

HARRELL D. DAVIDSON

All of us who desire to be sound gospel preachers and writers, who desire to preach and print the truth, are aware of the fact that each of us must contend for the faith (Jude 3). Those of you who read the pages of VIGIL and have read them in the past few months know full well that the writers and editor are not liberal. We are vitally concerned over the different departures from the faith and the danger areas about us.

We have personally fought against the entire anti movement. We continue to fight for singing in worship unto God and reject playing an instrument. We have dealt with modernists and have challenged the theistic evolutionists. We have lectured across the country on liberalism and its dangers. We have called names and produced evidence from the men and/or the speeches they made. We do not list these things to boast but rather to establish the fact that we love the truth and have and will do everything within our power to protect it and defend it. However, the things that I see in 1977 are the most frightening of any that we have been confronted with in my life time.

Brethren, we face a real danger of destroying ourselves. For example, a year ago some wanted to close the doors of a Christian college because they used the Revised Standard Version in some class rooms. Much anxiety existed over this issue. So in the dead of winter the faculty signed an agreement that stated in effect that they would use the American Standard or King James versions in the classroom. All of this was done before the annual lectureship began. Yet, during the lectureship many had to rub the wounds that were already created and bleeding and wanted to keep calling attention to the error that had existed. Brethren did not want to allow time for a change to be made. Summer came and the fight was still hot and heavy. The policy agreed to by all the Bible teachers was being followed to the letter. Brethren still did not trust sound Bible men who affirmed that the policy was being followed. Some were asking brethren not to support that particular institution anymore. As distrustful and

unchristian as it may seem to be it is a fact. Some wanted to sound a lot and act little in the matter and not give a chance to correct the situation.

We use this example to show the turmoil and near division that existed. We almost had a King James faction in our brotherhood. It seems that brethren wanted to hear the bad reports and would not accept the true reports that they received. In fact such a faction is still possible unless we start acting with more reason.

And some of our papers have picked up on an issue that was an isolated affair. Editors championed a cause and spread one congregation's problems all over the brotherhood. This would be bad enough within itself, but the information that was printed was within itself incomplete and biased due to the fact that a thorough investigation was not made. Yes, some looked into the situation, but they did not investigate both sides of the issue. Good men were castigated and called liberals that are in no respect liberal. The point is that when we print information we ought to investigate both parties or both sides of the issue and then print the truth about the matter. Again we strive for *some new thing* to get on our horse and ride about shouting every where, "did you know?"

Colleges, churches, editors of papers and others often do make mistakes in judgment. We believe that we need to be just as lenient as possible and not go off half cocked on any issue without giving the institution or person a

chance to correct the situation. We are not suggesting that we condone a false teacher or false brother. We are saying that we must be careful in reaching our conclusions. Can't we have modernation in these areas of concern? Some have practiced the very thing (or similar) that they have accused others of.

We believe that the brotherhood stands ready to divide into yet another faction due to a decision that a committee has made regarding inviting some speakers to speak in a particular lectureship. Rumors are already flying not worth repeating. At least one of the speakers in question is a staff writer for a well known paper and his articles and name appear along beside other men's articles and names who are above reproach. How many have started another paper or fight the paper for its co-operating with the individual?

We also believe that mistakes have been made in the selection of those speakers, but let us have enough common courtesy and exercise modernation and give our brethren a chance to correct the wrong that has been done. Unless we are very careful we will take steps in 1977 to splinter and perhaps destroy ourselves. We are getting to the point that we trust no one. A simple suggestion from someone causes us to push the panic button and cry liberal et al. Let us consider a spirit of meekness suggested by Paul in Galatians 6. Let us be careful and make good decisions and be fair in all our dealings. Perhaps we need to practice more of the Golden Rule.

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Union Or Unity?

JOHN B. TRACY

The factious consequences of religious division have been experienced by nearly everyone at one time or another. Many know the heartaches which often accompany marriages that are religiously mixed. Others have been acquainted with the constant quarreling which goes on between neighbors and friends of different religious backgrounds. In response to this religious confusion, some misguided individuals thank God for all the "different churches", and even argue that, like spokes of a wheel with Christ at its hub,

we are "all headed in the same direction". However, nothing could be more contradictory to the spirit of unity prayed for by our Lord in John 17:20-21.

The current "Ecumenical Movement" within the Protestant and Catholic churches seeks to remedy the deplorable results of division by forming religious "unions". So-called "Union Meetings" of organizations such as the World Council of Churches bring together various denominational bodies which agree to work together toward a common

(Continued On Page 4)

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The Preacher's Salary

[The following article was written in 1974, and is reprinted here at the request of one of our regular readers.]



BOBBY DUNCAN

The subject of this article is one about which little is preached or written. One who preaches on the subject leaves himself open to the accusation that he is preaching for money. But in failing to teach on the subject we have done an injustice to the brotherhood. The church cannot survive without preaching. Yet many capable men are leaving full time preaching to earn their livings in secular work. This adds to the acuteness of the preacher shortage. Others are working under financial burdens that hinder their effectiveness. And there is a constant shift of preachers from one congregation to another. Doubtless this situation exists for a number of reasons, but it is certain that our failure to teach our brethren regarding the preacher's salary has made its contribution.

The brethren where this writer preaches have been far more generous in this respect than the writer deserves, and those who know the circumstances understand that it is not to these that the things said in this article are directed. But it is the conviction of this writer that brethren generally need teaching in regard to this matter, and that most of our brethren will do better when they are taught better.

It is taken for granted that those who read this article are already in agreement with the idea that it is scriptural for preachers to be supported from the treasury of the church (I Cor. 9:4-14; II Cor. 11:8; Gal. 6:6; etc.). Consequently this article does not deal with

the scripturalness of the matter, but with certain matters of judgment involved in the application of Bible teaching. We would emphasize the fact, however, that even under the law of Moses God demanded that just wages be paid to strangers and brethren alike (Deut. 24:14; 25:4; Jer. 22:13). And in the New Testament strong language is used in rebuking those who refused to pay their laborers (Jas. 5:4). Of how great a sin, then, is one guilty who would hinder the payment of just and reasonable wages to one who preaches the glorious gospel of Christ?

COMPARING SALARIES

There is certainly nothing wrong with comparing the salary of the preacher to that of other members of the congregation. In doing so it is important that his salary be compared to those with approximately the same amount of education, experience, natural ability, drive, and who work about the same number of hours, and have about the same amount of job - connected expense that the preacher has.

Also there are several things which must not be overlooked in making such comparisons. It should be remembered that retirement plans, and group life and health insurance, paid in part or in whole by employers generally, are not usually a part of the church's arrangement with the preacher. While these items often constitute a major part of a contract between management and labor, they are seldom given any consideration in hiring a preacher or setting his salary.

It should be remembered that the preacher is required to use his automobile in connection with his work. And with the price of gasoline what it is today, this is a major expense.

While the preacher's income is not diminished by such things as weather conditions, strikes, lay-offs, supply and demand, etc., neither is it increased by overtime, production, time and a half for holidays, etc. If he is fortunate enough to preach in a few meetings he receives a little extra income, provided the meeting does not cost him more than he is paid for his services.

Besides wanting to set the proper example in the matter of liberality, most preachers have strong convictions about the matter of giving. And while many members of the church contribute from three to five per cent of their incomes, most preachers contribute at least fifteen per cent. In addition to this when there is made a special appeal for some good work, the preacher is usually among the first to respond.

It is usually preferred, of course, that the preacher's wife not be employed outside the home. Yet she can usually be depended upon to buy a gift for every new bride and every new baby in the congregation.

If all these things are kept in mind, certainly it would be in order to compare the preacher's salary with that of others in the congregation.

HOUSING

The fact that churches sometimes own a house for the preacher has caused some to set the preacher's salary too low. Naturally if a congregation owns the preacher's house it does not expect to pay him as much as if he furnished his own house. But the difference should not really be very much. Take for example a congregation which owns its own house, and which considers housing to amount to about \$3,600 per year. If a preacher's tenure with that congregation were five years he would have received \$18,000 worth of housing. Quite a sum! But when he moves to the next place he takes not one penny of it with him.

But suppose instead of furnishing a house they had simply paid him a full salary, and he had used the extra \$3,600 per year to invest in a house of his own. At the end of his five year tenure he would own quite an equity, which

he could sell and be several thousand dollars richer. This would be the result of having been paid in money rather than housing. Churches which choose to own the preacher's house should take care not to penalize the preacher and his family, salary wise.

INFLATION

Some preachers are underpaid merely because brethren have been negligent in adjusting their salaries to keep step with inflation. For example, if a congregation hired its preacher for a reasonable salary three years ago, and are not paying him *substantially* more now than when they hired him, he is underpaid. And in addition to these "cost of living" raises, a preacher should be deserving of some consideration for additional years of experience and service, as characterizes employees of most organizations.

A failure to give this matter consideration is, doubtless, one of the reasons why preachers move about so much. Often a preacher who is making plans to move is heard to say: "It is not just the money, but the feeling that the brethren just don't care whether we go or stay." It is not hard to understand why this feeling exists if the brethren have shown little or no concern for the fact that the preacher and his family are living on the same income they were receiving when gasoline was twenty-seven cents a gallon.

HOW VALUABLE PREACHING?

By their failure to see that the preacher receives a respectable wage brethren are advertising the fact that they either do not consider the work of preaching to be very important, or that they do not consider their particular preacher a very valuable man. While we abhor the idea that preachers are anything more than human or that they must receive special treatment, we also abhor the disposition of some to demean the work of preaching. Preachers are ordinary people, but their work is extra-ordinary - the most important in the world. If elders want to show how important they think the work of preaching is, and how highly they esteem the man they have hired to do this great work, they should begin by seeing that he is adequately paid. Otherwise they should not be too surprised to find that in the minds of some the work of preaching is barely respectable, and what the preacher preaches is not very important either.

PREACHING FOR MONEY

Perhaps there are some preachers who are "preaching for money." Most of the preachers we know, however, could be making more money if they were otherwise employed, and without half the headache. But they are preaching because they want to preach. And in most cases they will continue to preach, even if it becomes necessary to "make tents" to support themselves and their families. They believe in the importance of their work, and they are concerned about a lost world. But their determination to preach the gospel regardless of cost furnishes no legitimate excuse for brethren to support them in a poor fashion. Our gratitude for their determination should prompt us to see that they are supported adequately.

WASTING THE LORD'S MONEY

In many congregations there are those who seem to think it is their special assignment to be doubly sure that the preacher is not overpaid. After all, the money belongs to the Lord, and it would be a sin to waste it. While we are sure that no worthy preacher wants to be overpaid, we can think of worse crimes than overpaying a man who spends his life in preaching the glorious gospel of the Son of God. One that comes to mind at present is underpaying him.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Did Paul confess to using deceit in II Cor. 12:16?"

"Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile" (II Cor. 12:16). Times out of number has this passage been quoted to show that Paul was not above crafty methods in accomplishing his ends, and would on occasion resort to guile if necessary. With this supposedly Pauline authority to support them, many people in all good conscience resort to deceptive measures to gain their good ends, and are thus led into grievous sin by their false and misleading interpretation of this passage. It is a vile slander on the apostle Paul to charge him with craftiness and guile. *The key to the interpretation of the Second Epistle of Corinthians is to be found in the proper use of quotation marks!* Paul had many enemies in the church at Corinth—men who were engaged in a desperate attempt to destroy his influence in the church there. They said of him that, as to his person, he was weak and contemptible; as to his speech, it was rude and of no account; as to his authority, it was very questionable, since he had no credentials from Jesus and the other apostles; as to his teaching, it was obscure, corrupt, selfish, and untrue; as to his personal character, he was unreliable, cowardly, carnal, boastful, *crafty*, possibly an embezzler, often beside himself, and surely forsaken of God! The Second Corinthian Epistle is an effective refutation of these slanders. In it Paul deals with them one by one, answering the false and malicious lies being circulated against him. There were no quotation marks in the original manuscript; and there did not need to be, for all concerned would readily recognize the charges of Paul's enemies whenever they occurred in the Epistle. There are no quotation marks in any of the ancient manuscripts, and none in our English versions, and the result is that now the words and sentences quoted from his slanderers by Paul are not so clearly definable by us as they were by the Corinthians; and, hence, in some instances these slanders, one of which is, "Being crafty, I caught you with guile," have come to be accepted as truths uttered by Paul concerning himself.

The context contains a full and complete vindication of himself against this vile slander. It is quoted only that he might immediately confute it. The contextual force of the statement is: What you say is not true that being crafty, I caught you with guile. Did I catch you with guile? Did I take advantage of you in any way? Did I take advantage of you by any of my co-laborers whom I have sent unto you? Answer me, did I? Your own consciences must answer you that I did not. I sent Titus to you. Did Titus catch you with guile? Did Titus take advantage of you? Walked we not in the selfsame spirit? Walked we not in the same steps? (II Cor. 12:16-18). I am no liar (II Cor. 11:31). Neither was Titus. We do not resort to the use of craftiness. The serpent beguiled Eve in craftiness (II Cor. 11:3). We are not following after him. You accuse me of being crafty and catching people with guile; but I tell you that "we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by the

manifestations of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (II Cor. 4:2).

Who can seriously believe that Paul was capable of penning the words, "We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, *not walking in craftiness*," and in the same Epistle later confess, "Being crafty, I caught you with guile?" The apostle was not capable

of such a flat contradiction. Already he had written to the Thessalonians that "our exhortation was not. . . in guile" (I Thess. 2:3), and what was true of his ministry in Thessalonica was equally true of it in Corinth. If one wishes to indulge in craft and in guile, he must go elsewhere than to Paul for an endorsement of such procedure.

A Polluted Worship

In the first article we discussed the fact that sin means missing the mark. We also discussed who has sinned, and came to the inevitable conclusion that all have sinned. In this article we will be concerned with "the consequence of sin" and "improper attitudes toward sin."

III. THE CONSEQUENCE OF SIN:

"Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:5). Yes, sin has brought on physical death (Romans 5:12), but also the second death which is the eternal separation from God. Many people think of death only from the physical aspect. It is the second death, being separated from God, that is terrible and of which James and other writers are speaking. Paul said, "For the wages of sin is death. . ." (Romans 6:23). A person making \$2.50 per hour who works 40 hours will earn \$100.00 in wages. A person living in sin, outside of Jesus Christ, will receive the wages of spiritual death. Jesus said, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). Unless our faith in Christ motivates us to obey Him we will die in our sins outside of Christ where salvation is (II Timothy 2:10), and thus be separated from God.

"Behold Jehovah's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, so that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1-2). Yes, our iniquities or sins have separated us from God, and this is the greatest separation that man can experience. Every person of the age of accountability is either a servant of the devil and lost or a servant of God and saved. "Jesus answered them, verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8:34). "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey: whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness" (Romans 6:16). The people who will be lost will be those who are servants to sin.

IV. IMPROPER ATTITUDES TOWARD SIN:

Some people deny sin. They speak of sin as mere "mental agitation", or "a theological abstraction" or "an invention of preachers to keep them in business". However, the Bible affirms that sin is real. If it could be possible for people in the 20th Century to talk to people in the Bible who had sinned, I am sure that we would be told that sin is real. Nadab and Abihu know what sin is (Leviticus 10:1-2). Ananias and Sapphira could tell us what sin is

and its terrible consequence (Acts 5:1-10).

Some will even mock at sin. Solomon said, "Fools make a mock at sin. . ." (Proverbs 14:9). Mockery is made of sin when it is turned into a joke or something funny. However, when a man makes a serious study of the grave consequences of sin, it will cause him to mourn rather than mock, and to languish rather than laugh.

Some love sin. Solomon said, "He loveth transgression that loveth strife" (Proverbs 17:19). The people who love sin, hate the good and righteous things of life. "Who hate the good, and love the evil. . ." (Micah 3:2). David said, "Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness." (Psalms 52:3). Concerning Moses it is written, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25). Paul in writing to Timothy said there would be "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (II Timothy 3:4). Yes, many love sin and are living in rebellion against God.

Many people minimize sin. This is very evident when we observe how people speak of sin. "Sin is just misdirection." "Sin is a mere defect of the temper." "Sin is just a carry over from our previous unlightened age." These are just a few of the erroneous descriptions of sin. It is also evident that many seek to rationalize sin by using some of the following excuses. "Well, we are all products of our rearing." "Young people will be young people." "Everyone must sow some wild oats." WE try to minimize sin by the way we seek to reduce its effects and consequences and all too often we have heard statements similar to the following: "It will all come out in the wash." "It will not be remembered 100 years from now." Look at the way sin is classified. We think lying and murder are terrible, whereas we consider ingratitude and malice as hardly being worthy of being classified as sin. We will stop minimizing sin when: (1) we call it what it is, (2) see what it is, (3) consider what it does, and (4) think where it ends.

Some today seek to dismiss sin. This is what Felix did in Acts 24:25 when he said, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee". Some of the Athenians tried to dismiss sin from their life. "And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. . ." (Acts 18:32). If one has cancer and chooses to push the fact from his mind, the malignancy does not go away, but continues gnawing at his vitals, speeding death his way. So it is with sin.—P. O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580.

Beautifully Confused

"Breddren and sistren, tonight ah feels like dat great genral, Napoleon Bunypart, when he stood on the banks of the great ribber, de Mississippi, overlooking de Shara Desert and de promised land, wid de snow covered Alps in de background. It was den he uttered in de Hebrew tongue dem immortabe words, "E PLURIBUS UNUM", meaning "My Go, My God Why hast THOU FORSAKEN ME?"



Jerry T. Bramlett

Union Or Unity?

(Continued From Page 1)

cause while ignoring the religious, doctrinal issues which separate them. In so doing, they insult Paul's plea for unity in Ephesians 4:4-6.

A recent survey conducted by the Survey Research Center of the University of California at Berkley proves that such an attempt at unity is doomed before it starts. It concluded that 32% of the Congregationalists, 24% of the Methodists, and 16% of the Episcopalians do not even believe that Jesus is the divine Son of God. Moreover 43% of all Protestants, according to the survey, do not believe that Christ was born of a virgin. Imagine trying to form a basis for religious union when such a large minority deny one of the basic tenets of the Christian faith!

Unity is more than just tolerance of different doctrinal positions. Unity is dependent upon a common faith which can only be produced through the acceptance of the complete authority of God's Word. Any movement which allows the preaching of a "different doctrine" will be just as "accursed" as those who preach it (Galatians 1:6-9). The "unity of the Spirit" will only result when individual Christians determine to sit down together with open Bibles and open minds and "search the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).—Southside Church of Christ, 1686 Williamson Road, Macon, Georgia 31206.

A Fool Who Was Rich

All the fools in the world are not rich and not all the rich are fools but some of the rich are fools, not because they are rich but because of other factors of which covetousness is a most prevalent one. This is graphically set before us in one of the Lord's parables (Luke 12:13-21). A man out of the multitude would have Jesus speak to his brother that he divide an inheritance with him. In response the Lord Jesus answered, saying, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." The lesson clearly is against the sin of covetousness.



VIRGIL BRADFORD

To covet is to be inordinately desirous; avaricious (Webster). A man may be covetous whether rich or poor. He longs with an envious spirit for that which belongs to another, which he may not even need, and when once he possesses it, it possesses him and becomes his god. This principle is set forth in many places in the Divine Record. The tenth of the Decalogue was, "Thou shalt not covet - anything that is thy neighbors" (Ex. 20:17). Listed with other sins is covetousness concerning which Paul writes, "With such a one, no not to eat" (I Cor. 5:11). And he is in this verse specifically applying this instruction to one who is a brother in the family of God. The covetous person has allowed the objects of his affection to make him an idolator

because those THINGS have taken the place of God in his life (Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5). The same is shown in Jesus' statement in Mark 10:24 following his conversation with the rich young ruler. He said, "Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" So, one finds many statements and examples showing the great danger of allowing wealth in one form or another to keep men from God.

NOT A FOOL IN ALL THINGS

"The rich fool" in the parable was far from being a fool in many ways. He was not a fool because he was rich, for many great characters such as Abraham, David and the kings of Israel and Judah were men of great wealth. The Scriptures also give definite instructions to the rich showing them how to use their riches and avoid the uncertainties connected therewith, "laying up for themselves a good foundation - that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed" (I Tim. 6:17ff).

Neither was this rich farmer lacking in skill, wisdom and foresight in planning his crops and carrying out his plans. Farmers do not succeed accidentally. They do it on purpose. This man was able to look ahead, perhaps profiting by past mistakes and as a result he enjoyed a bumper crop that year.

Without a doubt he majored in "auto-dynamics." After he made plans he had the will and determination to go to work, to carry out those plans. Nothing luke-warm about the man! (Cf. Rev. 3:15ff).

THE PARABLE STATED

"The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have nowhere to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry."

Now, why is this man called a fool? First, he left God out of his plans. No greater mistake did mortal man ever make. He forgot that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (Ps. 50:10-12; Hag. 2:8; 1 Cor. 10:26, etc.). He possessed not so much as one grain of wheat but what grew from that which God created in the beginning, the earth, and was nurtured by the richness of the soil, rain in its season, and the continued providence of a benevolent God.

Second, he counted on something over which he had no control and regarding which we are all warned not to count on, TIME. "Much goods - many years," he thought. But he, no more than we, could know what a day would bring forth (Jas. 4:13).

Third, he wanted much more than he actually needed and planned to hoard what was in his possession. We should not conclude that God wants his people to be poverty stricken, for if he had he would not have promised such things as we need (Matthew 6:33), nor suggested that we work in order to be able to have that by which we can help those less fortunate (Ephesians 4:28).

Fourth, he sought happiness in earthly possessions. It was not only eat, drink, be merry, but we may easily imagine that he wanted to leave a huge fortune so that his "children would not have to work like I did." It is a pity, yea, a sin for anyone who can work not to work. Furthermore, the word of God says that such is not fit to live! Not in those words, of course, but it does say that such a one should not eat. If he doesn't eat he dies, and according to the Lord that is what he deserves (2 Thes. 3:10). The words of Solomon might well be kept in mind if we are thinking to lay up huge sums for those who are coming after us. He wrote: "I hated all my labor

wherein I labored under the sun, seeing that I must leave it unto the man that shall be after me. And WHO KNOWETH WHETHER HE WILL BE A WISE MAN OR A FOOL?" (Eccl. 2:18f).

And fifth, this rich farmer forgot his hungry neighbors. The time will never come when there are not those in need (Mk. 14:7). And in our day untold millions are starving for the "bread of life" which only Christians can provide. As individuals and congregations we should remember that all we have is from the Lord. It belongs to him, and as stewards we shall some day be called to give account.

SOME EVIDENCES TODAY

Vast accumulation for the sake of having it rather than using it is dangerous and idolatrous. None should think that I am saying these things against possession of wealth. It is not wealth or money that is the "root of all evil" but rather the LOVE OF MONEY that leads us astray (Cf. 1 Tim. 6:9-10). Some church members will forsake the worship of God with no consciousness of wrong if they can make time - and - a - half for Sunday overtime. Their first consideration is, What do I get out of it? The President of a Christian school once said that when he received applications from prospective teachers that the questions usually asked were, What do you pay, What kind of a retirement plan, and What fringe benefits, etc.???? Wonder if gospel preachers are afflicted by this also? Are we being blessed without being a blessing in return? (Cf. Gen. 12:2).

GOD SAYS, THOU FOOL

"But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall thy be?" This concludes the parable and then the Lord Jesus sums up the point of emphasis, saying, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." What a soul - piercing question! Tonight you are going to die, then what will become of all of your accumulated wealth? And what a price to pay! This night is thy SOUL, thy LIFE, required of thee! Well might it be added here the words spoken of him who betrayed the Lord for thirty pieces of silver: "Good were it for that man if he had not been born" (Mk. 14:21).

It is probably quite difficult for most of us, if not all, to think of covetousness as a work of the flesh, and that it is classified as an act of the mind and heart as sin against God along with murder, idolatry, adultery, lasciviousness and such like. But all who believe God's word to be true and account that by that word we shall be judged will carefully consider the seriousness of a covetous heart. By combining the various Scriptures it is not difficult to see that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21). We suggest that covetousness is one of the most subtle of sins, and that we therefore should examine our own selves whether we are in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5). — Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

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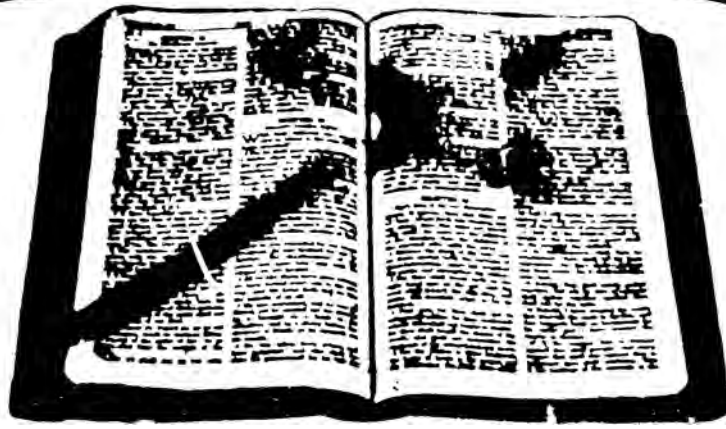
TO THE

WORDS

OF TRUTH

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WORDS of TRUTH



*"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"*
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth: came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

VOLUME 13

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NUMBER 10

Ashamed of The Church of Christ?

Of late, the idea is being promoted by some in the church that it is denominational to refer to ourselves only as the church of Christ. The claim is that since the New Testament refers to the church as the church of the first born (Heb. 12:23), the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12), etc., as well as the church of Christ, it becomes denominational to use only this term. There is some merit in this argument, but very little. For those who argue this because they are ashamed of and object to the strict Biblical teaching done by members of the Lord's Church over the past years, there is no merit. We should make it a practice in our preaching and teaching to point out that the Bible does definitely use other terms in reference to the church. In teaching alien sinners to obey the gospel of Christ, this needs to be pointed out. But to say that we are in the same category with denominations because we answer as being members of the church of Christ, or because we have church of Christ on all of our church buildings, is absurd. Denominational or sectarian names are unscriptural and sinful (1 Cor. 1:10-14; 2 Jn. 9). here is scriptural authority for the name church of Christ and therefore it is not denominational (Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16). There are two things that we need to keep in mind in reference to this subject.



ARVEL CURTIS

He directs our worship and our lives.

2. A NAME IS USED FOR THE SAKE OF IDENTITY. It is sad that the world is so divided in religion that there is necessity for distinctive identity. If there were no false religions today, it would not be necessary to have names on church signs and buildings. Since we do have this problem it necessitates our identifying ourselves. Since we must use a common name for the sake of identity, which would be more scriptural than church of Christ? None. Suppose some church member were passing through a large city on the Lord's Day and looking for a place to worship. He decides to check the phone directory. Instead of finding a number of churches listed under the heading churches of Christ, he finds several names that vary. Would this not tend to be confusing to him? Suppose I visited another area for a gospel meeting and several churches from this area sent their greeting by me. In my first address should all the names

used in the New Testament be used in referring to the churches which sent greetings or would it not be just as well and more convenient simply to say, the churches of Christ in our area send you greetings?

Certainly we need to be aware of the fact that the Lord's Church is referred to by other names in the New Testament. The membership of the church needs to understand this. But does this mean that when people ask us what church we belong to that we are to confuse them by giving a different answer each time? By no means. Does this mean we should change our church signs to read differently each week or month rotating the various Biblical terms? Certainly not. We should not be ashamed of the term church of Christ. It is Biblical (Rom. 16:16) showing that we belong to Christ, and it is certainly not denominational. —P.O. Box 6477, Moore, Oklahoma 73160.

Youth

MRS. C.M. (Dona) KARRH

I have worked with youth for many years in the public schools, as well as in church work. I have seen their joys, sorrows, tears, laughter, successes, disappointments, their awakening, their progress, their love, and their good works. Oh! how happy they are (in many instances) to learn new ideals, and to succeed in righteousness and honor. I rejoice to see young people grow day by day. When needs arise, youth can be among the most helpful. All some of them need is a good leader to show them the way. Long ago Solomon wrote: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). Youth is simply beautiful with its aspirations and dreams, its bright gleams and determinations, some of which turn out to be mere illusions. Young people are the beginnings of stories without end, and they perpetuate humanity; hence they desperately need God. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. . ." (Eccl. 12:1).

Nothing else is like good men and good women. They want their work to please God, and to bring them satisfaction, security, and respect. Being good, or righteous, will exalt

them more quickly than anything else. (Prov. 14:34). "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30). It is as true now as when Solomon wrote it, that "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. . ." (Prov. 22:1).

WORTH

Children are a priceless possession. "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord. . . Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them" (Ps. 127:3,5). The loveliness of youth is a profound relationship between happiness and love. Perhaps we are unable to tell why we love them, or how much we love them; it is something we must show. We show it as we teach them to grasp the ideal of honesty and integrity, and incorporate them into their lives. These qualities are good companions for life, and help attract others to an individual. We get no more from life than we give, but these traits enable us to give the very best of which we are capable. Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). One who loves will always be happier than one who is filled with hatred. "Give, and it shall be given unto you: good measure, pressed

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"Called" In Acts 11:26



BOBBY DUNCAN

The latter part of Acts 11:26 states, "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." Those who insist that it makes no difference what name the people of God wear contend that the name Christian was given in derision by the enemies of the saints, and that it, therefore, is not a name which God intended his people

to wear. Is it possible to know whether the name was given by God or whether it was indeed given by the enemies of the saints? We believe that it is.

While contextual considerations are significant in determining the answer to this question, we believe the most conclusive argument is in the text itself. The passage says that the disciples were "called" Christians. As a rule, our English word "call" is translated from the Greek KALEO. But in Acts 11:26 it is from a different Greek word, the word CHREMATIDZO, which is used in the New Testament only in referring to statements which originated with God. While the Greek word KALEO occurs some one hundred forty-nine times in the New Testament, and is translated by our English word "call" one hundred twenty-five times, the Greek word CHREMATIDZO occurs only nine times in the Greek text of the New Testament. In each case it definitely refers to a statement or warning or admonition from God. Let us notice these occurrences.

In Matthew 2:12 CHREMATIDZO is translated "being warned of God," and refers

to the warning the wise men received not to return to Herod and tell him the location of the child who had been born King of the Jews. In verse twenty-two of the same chapter the word is used again to refer to the warning which Joseph received from God not to return to Judaea, but to go into Galilee. The rendering in the King James Version is "being warned of God." Please note that the Greek word for God (THEOS) is not in the text, but the translators felt that it was inherent in the verb CHREMATIDZO.

The third occurrence of this verb is in Luke 2:26, where it is translated "revealed." A reading of the verse shows clearly that the revelation was one given by the Holy Spirit to Simeon, assuring him that he "should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ."

The fourth occurrence of CHREMATIDZO is in Acts 10:22, and is translated in the King James Version "was warned from God." The reference is to the appearance of the angel to Cornelius to instruct him to send for Peter.

The fifth occurrence of the word is in Acts 11:26, the passage which tells of the naming of the disciples.

The word occurs for the sixth time in Romans 7:3 where it is rendered in the King James Version "shall be called." The reference is to the fact that a woman who marries another man while her husband is living will be called an adulteress. There can be no questioning who calls her an adulteress, if one is familiar with the teaching of the Bible. (Cf. Matt. 19:9 and Matt. 5:32).

The seventh occurrence is in Heb. 8:5 where the word is translated "was admonished of God." The entire verse reads, in the King James Version: "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."

Occurrence number eight is in Hebrews

11:7. The verse reads as follows: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." It is the phrase "being warned of God" which is translated from the single Greek word CHREMATIDZO.

The ninth and last occurrence of the word is in the next chapter, and verse twenty-five. Here it is rendered by the single word "spake." The context will show that the speaking under consideration is that which was done by Moses as he instructed the people concerning God's law.

Berry's Greek-English Interlinear New Testament renders the word "divinely instructed."

A single noun form of this Greek verb appears in the New Testament, in Romans 11:4, and is translated "answer of God."

In view of these uses of the word CHREMATIDZO it should not be difficult for the honest truth seeker to see that the word is not employed in Acts 11:26 to denote the doing or saying of something by some man or some group of men.

It is interesting to note also that this Greek word CHREMATIDZO is a word that was used by the Greeks in referring to the response given when they consulted their Gods. (See WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, by Marvin R. Vincent. His discussion of the word in Acts 11:26 points this out.)

As we said earlier, there are other considerations of a contextual nature that strongly support the idea that the name "Christian" was given by divine injunction, but the use of the Greek CHREMATIDZO in Acts 11:26 seems to be a conclusive argument. Those who say the name was given in derision by the enemies of the saints simply make an assertion without offering any proof whatsoever.

"Who Took The Office of Apostles Out of the Church?"

Since God set the "apostles" in the church (I Cor. 12:28), a reader of WORDS OF TRUTH inquired who took the "apostles" out of the church?

First, let us get the facts straight: The church of Christ has apostles! It still has the same, identical, apostles whom Christ set into it.

Those New Testament apostles are the only apostles of Christ. No one now living could qualify to become an apostle, for one requirement of an apostle was that he had to see Jesus after his crucifixion, and thus be a "witness" to the fact that he has been raised from the dead (Acts 1:21-22).

By those first-century apostles Christ revealed and confirmed the new covenant. The Holy Spirit guided them "into all truth" (Jn. 14:26; 16:3), which left no un-revealed "truth" for so-called "apostles" of later centuries to reveal. The entire scheme of redemption, or plan of salvation, "was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb. 2:1-4) - and no part of that "great salvation" needs twentieth-century "confirmation" by men who were born 1900



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

years too late to have "heard him!"

The Lord's apostles were given power also to lay hands on certain disciples and to bestow on them miraculous gifts (Rom. 1:11; Acts 19:6). Those "spiritual gifts" (I Cor. 12:1-3) were given "by the laying on of the apostles' hands" (Acts 8:18), and were intended to serve during the era when the new covenant was in the inspired MEN, and while it was being put into writing. The same gospel which was first in inspired MEN is now in an inspired BOOK - the written New Testament.

Since the written word now contains "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3; Jn. 20:30-31), and "furnishes" the man of God "thoroughly" or "completely" (II Tim. 3:16-17; cf. A.S.V.) unto every good work, those spiritual gifts are no longer needed. They were designed to last only "till we all come in the unity of the faith" (Eph. 4:13), or until all the parts of the gospel were revealed and confirmed in the written word, or were put together in the written New Testament. Being no longer needed, they "ceased," "failed," "vanished away", and were "done away," as Paul foretold they would (I Cor. 13:8-13). Even if they were needed today, all the true "apostles" are dead, and none now living could qualify to become "apostles" (Acts 1:21-22), therefore, none now could bestow miraculous gifts by laying on of hands!

The apostle Paul referred to himself and
(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Some who use mechanical instruments of music in their worship seek to justify their practice with the allegation that the phrase 'singing and making melody' in Eph. 5:19, permits the use of such instruments. Please comment."

The Greek phrase, translated, "singing and making melody. . ." in Eph. 5:19, is *adontes kai psallontes*, and the words, "making melody," are the rendering of *psallontes*, present participle of *psaloo*, a word of exceedingly varied meaning through the centuries preceding the Christian era. All words have a basic or root meaning; but, usage greatly modifies their significance, and any effort to determine the meaning of a word or phrase involves not only an examination of its lexically, but also historically. The only proper criterion as to the significance of a word is the use to which it was put by the people of the period in which its meaning is sought.

The word *psaloo* provides an excellent demonstration of this fact. Among its varied meaning, at different times in history, has been the act of plucking out the hair, the snapping of a carpenter's string, and the twanging of the strings of an instrument. While the basic meaning of the term is inherent in all of these usages - plucking or twanging - it will be seen that the actual significance of the term has fluctuated greatly, and that these different meanings are not interchangeable! A simple test by which one may determine the proper definition of a word is to substitute the definition of the word for the word and to see if this makes sense. "Singing and plucking hair. . .?" "Singing and snapping a chalked carpenter's line. . .?" "Ah! but some one says, try your third definition and see what happens: "Singing and twanging on the strings of an instrument. . ." There, you have it, exults the user of the instrument. Not so fast. It will be seen that the action is not only to occur, but the place - the sphere - of it is designated. "Sing and make melody 'in the heart'." Literally, twang an instrument in the heart? The idea is as absurd as it is impossible.

The truth is, the word *psaloo* translated "making melody," no more signifies the literal twanging of an instrument, when Paul used it, than it conveys its earlier notions of plucking out the hair or snapping the chalked carpenter's string. By the New Testament period, it had undergone another modification, acquired a figurative significance, and meant metaphorically, as Paul clearly indicates, to *twang the strings of the heart* - to sing. And, in this manner do the authorities define it. After giving its earlier meanings, in the Old Testament scriptures. Thayer defined it as follows: "In the New Testament to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song" (Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament). Similarly, Bagster's New Analytical Lexicon says, "In the New Testament, to sing praises." Approximately fifty of the world's greatest Greek scholars of the day translated the New Testament from Greek into English in what came to be known as the King James' Version, and in no instance did they render this term in its several occurrences other than to sing (Rom.

15:9; I Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; James 5:13). The American Standard Translation, done by about one hundred of the world's most seasoned Greek scholars, was similarly done and in no instance did these men translate the term to include the playing of a musical instrument in worship. Dozens of the world's most profound authorities, including all of those who have produced major translations have borne witness in their works that the word does not today include the use of a mechanical instrument and that it means only to sing. Greek Orthodox Churches, whose people ought certainly to know the significance of the words of their own language, for centuries rejected the use of

mechanical instruments in worship; and, when a few of their liberal churches introduced such, they were marked and stigmatized as apostate institutions for this reason!

Moreover, those who use instrumental music in worship are unable to follow their argument to its conclusion. It is conceded by the most avid defender of the practice that one may acceptably approach God in public religious devotion without it; its use is a matter of personal choice; and it is, therefore, in the realm of expediency. But, if the instrument inheres in the word and to *psallete* is to use a stringed instrument, it follows that one cannot *psallete* without it!

A Polluted Worship

V. PROPER ATTITUDES TOWARD SIN.

The two previous articles on sin have concentrated on: what is sin, who has sinned, the consequence of sin, and improper attitudes toward sin. We will conclude this series of articles on sin by discussing "proper attitudes toward sin."

We should admit sin. David is a good example of admitting sin. "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. . ." (Psalms 51:3-4). The Apostle Paul is a good example in the New Testament. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners: of whom I am chief" (I Timothy 1:15). There is not much you can do toward getting a person to obey the gospel until he admits he is a sinner.



Jerry T. Bramlett

We should hate sin. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (Proverbs 8:13). "Hate the evil and love the good" (Amos 5:15). "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil" (Psalms 97:10). "Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way" (Psalms 119:104). God hates sin (Deuteronomy 16:22; Proverbs 6:16). The reason that we should hate sin is that we avoid things we hate. A person who hates a body of water will not get close to it. We should use the same logic against sin.

Man must shun sin. "Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good" (Romans 12:9). "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thessalonians 5:22). We must pray for help. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. . ." (Matthew 6:13). When one shuns sin he will not see how close he can get to it without actually sinning.

We are to resist sin. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). ". . . your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith. . ." (I Peter 5:8-9). Jesus is the great example when he resisted evil and the evil one (Matthew 4:1-11). When resisting sin and the evil one, we are not to give an inch or compromise the truth (Ephesians 6:13).

We are to expose sin. God condemns sin. "For what the law could not do, in that it was

weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). The Holy Spirit reproved sin. "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin. . ." (John 16:8). Jesus exposed sin (Matthew 7:15-20). The cry today is "preach a positive gospel" and "do not preach anything that is negative." The twenty-third chapter of Matthew is an example of preaching by Jesus against sin and hypocrisy. Gospel preachers today must expose sin (I Timothy 5:20; II Timothy 4:1-2; Titus 1:13, 2:15). It is my opinion that failure to expose sin is hurting the church more than anything else. Members of the Lord's church are living in sin, and they seemingly feel no remorse since preachers are not exposing the sinful life they are living.

We are to conquer sin. This is the solution for sin. The overcomers, not the overcomed are promised the blessings of God. "To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7). "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Revelation 2:11). "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment: and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life. . ." (Revelation 3:5).

CONCLUSION

Our great spiritual problem today - mine and yours - is a little three-letter word spelled S - I - N. When you subtract the first and third letters and look at the remaining letter "I", then we have discovered the major problem. Sin has been every man's problem since Adam and Eve (Genesis 3). One person may appear righteous when compared to me or some other individual, but is this person righteous when compared to Christ? The answer is an emphatic "No." Christ died upon the cross because man is a sinner and needs forgiveness of sin. - P.O. Box 118, Parrish, AL. 35580.

Marry A Christian

I have been asked to write an article about what it means to me to be married to a Christian. The person who asked me to do this knows my story and feels that I am well qualified to write on this subject. Having been on both sides of the fence, I can say with authority to every young person considering marriage that, next to accepting Christ in baptism and committing your life to Him, your selection of a companion has to be the most important decision of your life.

First of all, we have failed to stress the sin and heartbreak of divorce and to instill in our

(Continued On Page 4)

Youth

(Continued From Page 1)

down, shaken together, and running over, shall they give into your bosom" (Lk. 6:38, A.S.V.).

To help mold a character is the most valuable work in the world. Other elements will fall and decay; but a soul will live throughout eternity. The destiny of a nation is in our hands; therefore we must wisely mold and shape the character of the leaders for tomorrow. "For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it" (Matt. 7:14, A.S.V.).

HAPPINESS

"Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah" (Ps. 144:15, A.S.V.). God's people are taught to "rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:3). Again we read: "Rejoice evermore" (I Thess. 5:16).

Happiness begins from within, as love does. It moves outward in caring for others, and joins with life. One who is truly happy is made even more joyous at the chance to be useful, to become involved, and to take hold of opportunities. Happiness is not limited to counting one's own blessings; yet those truly happy can find peace and comfort in Christ's promise: "Blessed are the peace makers: for they shall be called the sons of God" (Matt. 5:9), and such other promises.

As youth matures, it cultivates (or captures) adult visions, including the capacity to care genuinely for others than themselves, and the sense of truly belonging in a world of infinite possibilities. Happiness includes the earned reward of caring. "Even a child maketh himself known by his doing, whether his work be pure and whether it be right" (Prov. 20:11). Happiness does not depend on money, or leisure, or society, or even on health; it

depends on our relations to those we love. Basic to true happiness is a proper relationship with God: "Happy is the man whom God correcteth" (Job 5:17, A.S.V.).

LOVE

"He that loveth not, knoweth not God: for God is love" (I Jn. 4:8). True love is the gift which God has given. The greatest need in the Christian life today is a better understanding of what love and its influence is. It has been said that "The individual's capacity to love is the hope of the world." Love evidences itself in giving to others, in pouring out its feelings in deeds of kindness and warmth. It will manifest itself in deeds (I Jn. 4:9-12). It can outlast most other things, and does not seek to limit its endurance. When all else has fallen, love still stands (I Cor. 13).

Love will help us to win souls to God and eternal life. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3). Each should pray that our dear Father will teach us how to live a great life, and give us an understanding heart. Peter wrote: "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (I Pet. 5:7). "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).

Solomon gave himself up to a study of all possible sources of joy. Some of his experiences were painful and unsatisfying; but he found that happiness is not to be had in life's vanities. Rather, he wrote: "Now let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13-14). — 1002 Sixth Ave., Jasper, AL. 35501.

Marry A Christian

(Continued From Page 3)

children the consequences of breaking God's law on this matter. Even though God does give the right to remarry to the innocent party, I can tell you from experience that divorce has to be one of the most crushing experiences that a Christian can face. To have to say that you are divorced carries with it the "taint" of sin, asking yourself the soul-searching question of whether you might have contributed to it in the sight of God, and trying to explain to your children, the elders, and last but not least, the degrading effect on your ego.

In my case, I was one of the most blessed women in the world because there was a bachelor in the church that I had known and respected for many years. I had been very close to his family so it was only natural that they should be concerned with my problem. As time passed our friendship grew into a much closer relationship and finally culminated in marriage.

Christians may take for granted the fact that you and your spouse will get up on Sunday mornings and attend services together as well as all other meetings, but when you have done this alone for over twenty-five years and had full responsibility for the spiritual training of your children, it takes on a real depth of meaning. When Christ is the center of both of your lives there is no conflict as to the type of entertainment you will engage in, and your friends automatically turn out to be other Christians. This takes away so many temptations that you are confronted with when your husband is not a Christian and interested in worldly pursuits. My first husband was a top business executive, and although I never gave a cocktail party, I did attend them with

him but was never able to feel that it was the right thing to do. A person may think that these things will not hinder his spiritual life, but the decisions of whether to please God or your husband are constantly with you. When you make the decision to follow Christ you often end up alienating your husband. When you cannot be with him, you are naturally against him, and how can two walk together except they be agreed? When you have the same aim or goal in life, with the chief goal being a home in heaven, it makes for a lighter load!

The joy of studying the Bible together with a Christian husband has been an enriching experience for me. Many evenings find us trying to arrive at some Biblical truth that has been brought up in class or elsewhere. Even the blessing at the dinner table is more meaningful, and working together for Bible class parties or teenage get togethers becomes fun. It is so good to be able to visit as a couple because I have done it so long alone or with another lady. It was our pleasure to have the visiting preacher and his family, who are old friends of ours, to stay with us during our meeting last summer.

My husband and I have only been married a little over two years and we have had our share of problems and disappointments, but they have been easier to bear by having Christ as the Head of our house. I pray that it will never be otherwise. My husband makes me feel that he loves me as Christ loved the church, making it easier to reverence him as the Bible directs, and like the woman in Proverbs I intend "to do him good and not evil all the days of my life." When things are going well it is sometimes easy to forget, but I

try to remember to thank God every day for my good Christian husband, whose companionship I cherish, and I pray that we might have many years together.

In conclusion, I know that a lot of young people consider marrying with the idea of converting their mates after marriage, especially if they will attend services with them before marriage. This was true in my case, because I felt sure that as intelligent as my first husband was, he would soon obey the truth. He might have, but worldly success began to come his way and changed the picture. Your whole future in this world and perhaps your eternal destiny may be determined by your choice of a partner. My advice would be to consider it very seriously.

(Submitted by Ray Hawk. The woman who wrote this is a very good friend. I asked her to write the article and show the difference between being married to a non-Christian and a Christian. Her name remains anonymous to protect her and her children from embarrassment.) — 4868 La Ventana Terrace, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.

"Who Took The Office of Apostles Out of the Church?"

(Continued from Page 2)

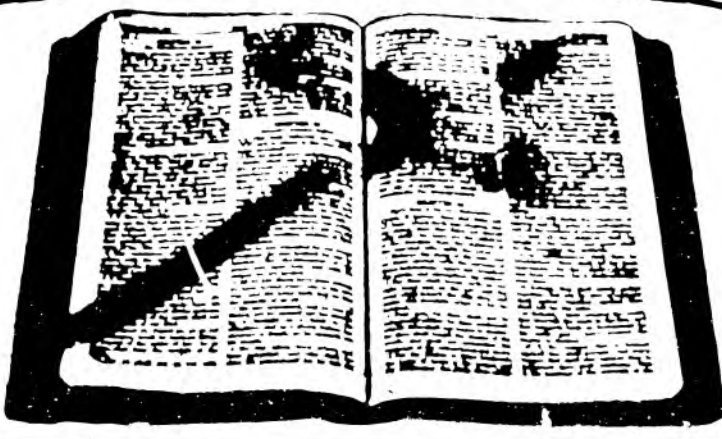
others in his day as "the last apostles." (Note the margin in II Cor. 4:9). He claimed "God hath set forth us the apostles last," or "the last apostles." Those first-century apostles still rule through their writing, and no man or angel has divine authority to change what they preached - and (through their writing) still teach. (Read Gal. 1:6-9). To those apostles, Jesus said, "In the regeneration. . ." (that is going on now!) ". . . in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory. . ." (he is on his throne now, Acts 2:30-33) ". . . ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28). By their written word they still rule with Christ and "judge" us. This is why we must continue steadfastly "in the apostles' doctrine" as the early saints did (Acts 2:42).

No provision was made in the will of Christ for those original apostles to have successors. The requirements (Acts 1:21-22) preclude any man's being qualified to be a successor to that office. Since they have not abdicated their position, there is no vacancy to be filled anyway.

Yes, the church of the Lord still has the same original apostles selected by the Lord himself. He said to them, "Ye which have followed me" - not, "Ye who shall be born hundreds or thousands of years after I am crucified" - but "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also" - not, "Ye and your successors!" - but, "ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:26). So Christ intended for those first-century apostles to continue "judging" and "ruling" with him throughout the whole period of "the regeneration" - or during the entire time that men will be born again.

Those who now claim to be "apostles" are what Paul called "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ" (II Cor. 11:13). The original apostles about whom we read in the New Testament are the "last apostles" (II Cor. 4:9, margin). No one has taken them out of the church. Neither does the Lord's true church recognize any others as "apostles of Christ."

WORDS of TRUTH



*"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32*
"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

*"Grace and truth"
Jn. 1:17*

VOLUME 13 FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1977 NUMBER 11

Benton Cordell Goodpasture

BOBBY DUNCAN

On Friday morning, February 18, the illustrious pilgrimage of our beloved brother B.C. Goodpasture, editor of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE since 1939, came to an end. He would have been eighty-two this coming April 9.

But the life of brother Goodpasture is not to be recorded for posterity in length of years, but in depth of devotion, in height of attainment, and in breadth of service. His contributions to the betterment of the world in which he lived lie in various areas - preacher, author, editor, elder, educator. In addition to all this, he was a friend to every good work, making sacrificial personal contributions, and using his influence to encourage others to contribute.

It was the privilege of this writer to hear brother Goodpasture speak on several occasions, including his very last public address, which he delivered so beautifully on the lecture program at Freed-Hardeman College earlier this month. The GOSPEL ADVOCATE, under his superb editorship, has been mailed into our home each week as far back as we can remember. We talked with him by phone only a few weeks before his death. But we were not closely associated with him, as were some others. Observe what some who knew him best said about him.

Willard Collins, Vice-President of David Lipscomb College, said, "B.C. Goodpasture is 'giant' among present day preachers." He further stated, "He is a product of the American way of life. He is an example of that hard work and devotion to duty can accomplish in this great country."

In speaking of brother Goodpasture's qualifications as an editor, Rex Turner, resident of Alabama Christian School of Religion, and former President of Alabama Christian College, said: "B.C. Goodpasture is qualified by way of innate intellectual capacity and scholarship. . . ." He further said that he was "qualified by way of integrity and purity of character, by a spirit of humility, and by a loyal dedication to the word of God. . . ." "In a third place," says brother Turner, "B.C. Goodpasture is qualified by way of good common-sense judgment, keen wit, and a great sense of humor."

The late L.R. Wilson said: "All of our Christian schools that have kept faith with their founders owe a great debt to the 'Gospel



BENTON CORDELL GOODPASTURE

Advocate,' and to its present editor, which they will never be able to repay. Without doubt, many thousands of dollars have been contributed to all of these institutions as a result of the facile pen of B.C. Goodpasture. It is doubtful if the financial contributions of any one man have meant as much to all of our Christian schools as has the combined contributions received by them as a result of the encouragement given by the present editor of the 'Gospel Advocate'."

Our late beloved brother Gus Nichols said, "Personally, I consider B.C. Goodpasture as the greatest and best gospel preachers whom I have ever had the privilege of hearing. I doubt that any living preacher could excel several of his great masterpieces which I have heard under varying circumstances. He is truly a master of assemblies. His presence commands attention. His voice was rich and mellow with pathos which at times plucked the heartstrings

of those who heard. His delivery was warm and fervent with interest in his audience whom he loved and admired. He always spoke deliberately and with ease - yes, and without notes. His vocabulary was always ready to lend him the right word, or phrase, or the right quotation, at the right time. His illustrative material made one think of the parables of Jesus. His power of exhortation and persuasion made his discourses and invitation extended almost irresistible. But as I view B.C. Goodpasture. . . it will take the divine picture of his whole life of loving and sacrificial service in the kingdom of God, both as a great preacher and editor of the 'Gospel Advocate,' to portray the greatness of this man whom I love and admire for his works' sake."

The late, great H.A. Dixon, who was President of Freed-Hardeman College, said: "The chief secret of brother Goodpasture's success as a writer lies in his great intellect. He has been and is an avid reader and student through the years. He knows the truth, and he knows how to present it effectively. His editorials are pungent, often terse, and sometimes, in dealing with foibles of brethren he has, as did our Lord, employed withering sarcasm and irony. His figures are apt, his illustrations are perfectly suited to the occasion and his words are chosen with care so that every reader is able to understand. No word is wasted, and no figure is inappropriate. His articles demonstrate what he is preeminently interested in naked truth, in exact facts, and in divine authority. He has ever stood for the simplicity of the gospel, and for the triumph of truth."

Athens Clay Pullias, President of David Lipscomb College, said: "In guiding the 'Gospel Advocate,' and in his general leadership in the brotherhood, he has shown the stature of a spiritual statesman; in personal bearing, he is dignified, calm, and thoughtful. Perhaps the most accurate phrase to describe the man is this: he is a man of balanced judgment and careful scholarship, a sober judge of men and of events, and a tower of strength to the cause of Christ."

Brother Guy N. Woods, who was an intimate friend of brother Goodpasture, said: "I have never known brother Goodpasture to be guilty of any action which might remotely

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**From The
Associate Editor**

**"What Is The Mission
Of Civil Government?"**

With the change of our national government from one administration to another, a regular reader of *Words of Truth* is interested in knowing what the Bible teaches about the function of civil government. As should be true regarding every question, let us turn to God's word for the answer.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Read with me Romans 13:1-7: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."

According to this scripture, civil governments are "ordained of God," and are the "ordinance of God." Jesus told Pontius Pilate that the powers which he as governor had "were given thee from above" (Jn.

19:11). The God who rules the world today is the same "Most High" who in Daniel's day "ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth over it the basest of men". Of him we read: "He removeth kings, and setteth up kings" (Dan. 4:17; 2:21). Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that "the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory" (Dan. 2:37), and "hath made thee ruler over them all" (Dan. 2:38). Later Nebuchadnezzar confessed: "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35).

In the light of these passages of divine truth, we conclude that the proper mission of civil government is to preserve order and to protect the innocent and righteous, while restraining evil doers. Government *should* be a "terror" to the lawless and disobedient, being an "avenger for wrath" unto them, bearing "not the sword in vain."

Paul wrote to Timothy: "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and with mankind, if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine..." (I Tim. 1:8-10).

That same government should be the minister or servant of God "for good" to the righteous, law-abiding citizen. God ordained and over-rules human government to protect our lives, homes, and property from the wicked, lawless element of society. For this reason Christians are taught to "pray for" rulers, making intercession as well as supplications for them. We are not taught to pray for any particular form of government, party, or individuals to be perpetuated in office; but as a result of our prayers God may over-rule so that Christians "may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Tim. 2:1-2). Our God is able to deliver his children from "wicked and unreasonable men" who "have not faith" (II Thess. 3:1-4)!

Not only must saints pray for the rulers we must also obey the civil laws (Tit. 3:1; I Pet. 2:13-15)—unless they conflict with God's higher law. In that case, "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29; see also Acts 4:19-20). This obedience is to be rendered with "honor" for the officials. "Honor the king" (I Pet. 2:17) in principle means we in America must "honor the PRESIDENT."

A third responsibility Christians have to the government is to pay our taxes, customs, tolls, and tribute. (Read again Rom. 13). We should do this cheerfully, as unto the Lord (Eph. 6:6-7), and not merely as to our fellow-men. Let each Christian strive to be an asset to his country by being a productive, happy, peaceful citizen. And while we love our own nation, let us not hate other countries, but "honor all men" (I Pet. 2:17).— East Walker Church Christ, Sumiton, Ala. 35148.

**False Prophet Lindsey
Begins To Squirm**



WAYNE JACKSON

Almost seven years ago, Hal Lindsey, a popular promoter of dispensationalism premillennialism, authorized his multi-million best seller, **THE LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH**. Throughout the book Lindsey pushes the idea that "the time is short," and "the Lord is coming soon." And he is not using those expressions in a relative sense. He boldly and recklessly advocated this contemporary generation would in a likelyhood witness the return of Christ to earth. Actually, Lindsey differs but little from cultist date-setters of by-gone eras. Whereas "prophets" of the past have attempted to pin-point the year (sometimes even the day) of the Lord's second advent, Lindsey was content to limit it to within a few decades, at the same time taking the precaution to couch his predictions in such terms as "perhaps," "possibly," and "it could happen." Note the following quotation from his book.

"But the most important sign in Matthew has to be the restoration of the Jews to the land in the rebirth of Israel. Even the figure of speech 'fig tree' has been a historic symbol of national Israel. When the Jewish people, after nearly 2000 years of exile, under relentless persecution, became a nation again on May 14, 1948 the 'fig tree' put forth its first leaves.

"Jesus said that this would indicate that He was 'at the door,' ready to return. Then He said, 'Truly I say to you, THIS GENERATION will not pass away until all these things take place' (Matthew 23:34 NASB).

"What generation? Obviously, in context the generation that would see the signs - chief among them the rebirth of Israel. This generation in the Bible is something like forty years. If this is a correct deduction, then within forty years or so of 1948, all these things could take place" (p. 43).

Note please, that Mr. Lindsey contends that Matthew 24:32-34 is an indicator of the time of Christ's return. The "generation" that will witness the Lord's advent is alleged to be indicated by the establishment of Israel in 1948. Since according to him a biblical "generation" is some forty years, Lindsey concluded the Lord should return by 1988 or so. Now, however, as the 1980's rapidly approach, "Prophet" Lindsey is piping a slightly different tune. In an interview published in the January 1977 issue of "Eternity" magazine, Hal Lindsey declares:

"I don't believe we can know specifically the time when Christ is coming back but I believe he commands us to recognize the generation, the generation. I don't believe, for instance, you can say the state of Israel was born May 14, 1948 and so, exactly 40 years from then, it's going to happen. I've never done that and never would. That's why I say it's between 40 and 100 years. And nobody knows whether 'this generation' officially began with the rebirth of Israel or not."

Compare this quotation carefully with the former of some seven years back and you will see a reversal of some 180 years! That "fort

"The Pure In Heart"

This lesson brings our thoughts to the wonderful "Sermon on the Mount." The "Sermon on the Mount" is probably better known to the public than any other teaching our Lord did. It contains the basic principles of Christ's kingdom or kingdom pointers. No one can enter the Kingdom of God without obedience to



TOMMY VERNON

any of these principles neither can one live in and enjoy the blessings of the Lord's kingdom (church), without following these instructions. The church of Christ is God's school of training here on this earth. In the Lord's church his disciples are to be taught and therefore developed in the practice of all these kingdom characteristics.

It is true that this sermon, as such, may be very familiar to many, yet only a few are submitting their lives to its teaching. This sermon is just the opposite of what the world would have us believe today. The individual who cultivates any one of the "Beatitudes" or any of the other lessons taught in this sermon alone will be a better character, but he who cultivates them all together will be blessed abundantly in this life and saved in heaven at the end of it all.

ONE POINT HERE

In our lesson for this article we shall not in any wise make an effort to deal with all the "Beatitudes." On the other hand, it seems that each one of the beatitudes spring from the preceding one, and all are twined together to make the child of God whole or complete. We urge the reader to read and understand that the principles herein are inseparable the one from the other as the glove from the hand. If the hand is destroyed, the utility of the glove is obviously eliminated.

Yet, I will confine my efforts in this lesson to only one of the beatitudes: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8). As Christians we think in terms of being saved ourselves and of saving others, but do we dwell enough on the practical implications of "the pure in heart." Unless we seek constantly to do better ourselves, within our hearts and in our thoughts; unless we set our life's goal upon those objectives which are positive rather than those things which are negative, on those actions which are for good rather than those which are for wrong, then we cannot see God.

PURITY IN THE HEART

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God. . ." (Phillipians 2:5-6). The organ in the animal body is called the "heart" because it is the seat of physical life, so the "heart" as used in the Bible is the seat of man's spiritual life. It is the organ of intelligence, reason and understanding. It is, as I understand the Bible to teach, the inner man. In what sense is this true?

The Bible heart thinks (Matthew 9:4). The Bible heart studies (Proverbs 15:28). The Bible heart reasons (Mark 2:8). The Bible heart meditates (Psalms 19:14). The Bible heart imagines (Genesis 6:5). The Bible heart intends (Hebrews 4:12). The Bible heart understands (Matthew 13:15). The Bible heart loves (Matthew 27:37). The Bible heart sets forth the issues of life (Proverbs 4:23). Out of the Bible heart proceeds all sorts of evil

(Matthew 15:19-20). Out of the Bible heart comes good (Matthew 12:35).

There is only one way that we may come to purity of heart and this is through obedience. "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" (I Peter 1:22). "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9).

CONCLUSION

There is only one way to keep the heart pure. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2). The "pure in heart" see God now and will enjoy his presence in heaven for evermore. — P.O. Box 135, Bear Creek, AL. 35543.

Restoration, Not Reformation

JOHN B. TRACY

I have purchased a piece of antique furniture. Should I paint over the many coats of paint already on the furniture, or should I strip the layers of old paint and restore the original wood? Any antique lover would know to tell me to do away with the added layers of paint in order to restore the piece of furniture to its original finish. In similar fashion, any lover of God's Word would tell the religious world to strip off the many layers of modern denominationalism and restore the original church of the New Testament. This is precisely the plea of the continuing Restoration Movement of which we are a part.

The Gospel according to Matthew reveals the intention of our Lord to establish His church (Matt. 16:18). The singularity of the church is affirmed by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:4-6. Christ will be the Savior of that singular body over which he is head (Eph. 5:23). Therefore, one would assume that the religious world would strive to enter that body where salvation is found.

Instead, however, the sectarian world has produced churches after the teachings of men which has resulted in the religious confusion of denominationalism. Because this apostasy was predicted in II Thessalonians 2:3-7. It should not surprise us that there are some 350 separate religious bodies today. After the first denomination had held dominion over the political and religious world for 1200 years, sincere religious leaders such as John Calvin, Martin Luther and John Knox sought to reform the apostate church. However, their work resulted in the establishment of Protestant Denominationalism which created the rise of religious sects content to continue forwarding the doctrines of men.

In the late 1700's, concerned religious leaders throughout the world began acting independently to restore the original system of Apostolic Christianity. They by-passed current human doctrines, creeds, and dogmas in a return to the simple teaching of the Bible. They determined to preach the same doctrine, practice the same worship, be governed in the same way, and do the same work as the church of the first century. They knew that to do so would result in their restoring the original church for which Jesus died and over which Jesus reigns. Today, we can do no more or less than they did in continuing that spirit of restoring the New Testament church.

Southside Church of Christ
1686 Williamson Road
Macon, Georgia 31206

The Most Effective Teacher

That peerless Man of Nazareth who walked the streets of Jerusalem 2000 years ago changed the world. Because of His words, example, and influence, especially upon the Roman government, the first century world was radically altered in one short generation! Through the Gospel, Jesus is still creating excitement and renovating the lives of



JAMES B. ANDREWS

men and women wherever His word is accepted. Elders, evangelists, and teachers would do well to acquaint themselves with His methods of bringing the lost to a realization of the Truth. (A familiarity with John 4:1-30 will be of great benefit as the reader considers reasons why Jesus was the most effective teacher.)

HE BELIEVED IN THE WORTH AND DIGNITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL. The woman who came to Jacob's well could not believe her ears when Jesus asked HER for a drink of water. "How is it that thou, being a Jew, asketh drink of me which am a woman of Samaria?" The Samaritans were probably descendants of the Israelites and the Assyrians, and were thought to be even worse than the Gentiles. They could not be witnesses in Jewish courts; they could not be proselyted to Judaism; whatever they touched was as swine's flesh! Jesus ignored national and racial differences that He might see a soul!

HE KNEW HOW TO CREATE INTEREST. This writer, like many other teachers, grows tired of hearing complaints about boring sermons and Bible classes. However, every Bible teacher should remember that he is obligated to present truth well. The Samaritan woman was too interested to yawn! Before she recovered from the shock of His having broken the racial barrier, He made another profound statement: "But whoso drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." Her literal interpretation was wrong, but there was yet time to explain. Jesus had her attention; He was DEMANDING her interest. The old cliché, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink" is generally accepted as truth. But the farmer knows better. He knows that you CAN make a horse drink BY SALTING HIM FIRST! Jesus "salted" sincere audiences.

HE KNEW HIS SUBJECT. A college freshman decided to tease an aged janitor. "Tell me, Uncle," he said, "what have you learned at this university?" The old man stopped, leaned on his broom and made a tremendous response: "I'se larn'd in des fo'ty yers a body cain't teech what 'e don't know, eny more'n 'e can cum back f'om whah 'e ain't bin." What profound wisdom! The 12-year-old lad who astonished doctors and lawyers was never at a loss for material to present. He was the Word; He came to declare God (John 1:18). by Him, God was manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16). Like every other thing about Him, His knowledge was perfect. Many "evangelists" effectively "preach" politics, poetry and philosophy, yet bluff their way through the Scriptures. God knows; students know; ignorant teachers

(Continued On Page 4)

Benton Cordell

Goodpasture

(Continued From Page 1)

be regarded as unworthy of a Christian gentleman. I have, on the contrary, known of repeated instances where he has turned aside to favor those whom he knew had not supported his interests, and the interests of the 'Gospel Advocate.' Only a man of great magnanimity is capable of rising above pettiness and meanness of spirit in this fashion and of thus imitating the example of the Lord. My knowledge of, and genuine respect for, these characteristics have endeared him to me through the years."

When the history of God's people in the twentieth century is written, very few names will stand so prominently or shine so brightly as the name of Benton Cordell Goodpasture. Though he has fallen - nay, risen - his good influence will live as long as the world may stand.

(All quotations in this article are from the book SERMONS AND LECTURES OF B.C. GOODPASTURE.)

False Prophet Lindsey Begins to Squirm

(Continued from Page 2)

years or SO" of 1970 is "between 40 and 100 years" in 1977. In other words, that "or so" is an increase of some 150 percent on Mr. Lindsey's prophetic scale! Is THAT prophecy? Moreover, in 1970 Lindsey felt it was "obvious" that 1948 commenced the terminal generation, but now he confesses "nobody knows whether 'this generation' officially began with the rebirth of Israel or not."

The truth of the matter is, in Matthew 24:4-34 Jesus was not discussing His future, visible coming at all. This is reserved for verses 36 and following. Matthew 24:4-34 deals with those signs which would be preliminary to the 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem. The "these things" of this general context (cf. Mt. 23:36; 24:2, 3, 33, 34) are in bold relief to the "that day" of 24:36. "This" and "these" (cf. 34) are pronouns of proximity whereas "that" and "those" (cf. 36, 38) are pronouns of remoteness.

Jesus Christ emphatically declared: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be accomplished." The verb SHALL NOT PASS AWAY (Gr. OU ME PARELTHE) is an aorist subjunctive. This is an example of "THE SUBJUNCTIVE OF EMPHATIC NEGATION. When special stress is placed upon a negative proposition, the subjunctive is used with OU ME" (Dana & Mantey, A MANUEL GRAMMAR OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT, p. 172). Now there is simply no question about it; if the "generation" of Matthew 24:34 commenced with 1948, as per Lindsey's 1970 "obvious" deduction, Christ will have to come within the next decade or so. However, by stretching it to 100 years, Mr. Lindsey conveniently gets himself off the hook - for if Jesus doesn't come by 2048 (100 years from 1948) Lindsey will be long gone anyway! — 3906 E. Main, Stockton, CA. 95205.

The Most Effective Teacher

(Continued From Page 3)

deceive only themselves! The Bible is God's plenary revelation. How much a teacher imparts is directly proportional to know much he knows.

HIS LESSONS UNFOLDED LOGICALLY. Spare this writer from the school of thought that believes Jesus' sermons were ill-prepared, rambling, and illogical! Even though the "Sermon on the Mount" contained a multiplicity of ideas, those who heard it understood (Matthew 7:28-29). When Jesus DID decide to withhold certain truths from some in His audience, He still followed a logical plan of presentation so that these truths could be later understood by sincere followers (cf. Matthew 13:10-17; John 2:19-22; 12:16). The discussion with the woman at the well cannot be carefully read without seeing that Jesus had a definite objective, and utilized good teaching methods in reaching His goal; likewise, effective teachers today use lesson plans or outlines.

HE TAUGHT FOR RESULTS. Teaching was no doubt exciting and interesting for Jesus, but it was also very serious business. By telling the woman about her past and present marital states, the Master convinced her that He was a prophet, thus giving support to His initial proposal, and pointing to the need for a spiritual discernment of His marvelous "well of water". But when He negated both Jewish and Samaritan beliefs about where to worship,

the woman obviously believed He was going too far, even for a prophet. "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things," she said. Then Jesus frankly made His closing statement, "I that speak unto thee am he."

Was the woman ready for that earthshaking conclusion? These things seemed so wonderful to her, yet so unreal! Perhaps she stood there for a moment - excited, pondering, studying His expression. Then the disciples returned from the village. Would this kind stranger change His disposition? Would He fear being accused by His Jewish brothers, and being embarrassed, abandon her? No! Strangely enough, the disciples didn't accuse; neither was He embarrassed. ENOUGH!! A LESSON WELL TAUGHT!! The woman left her waterpot (her reason for coming to the well in the first place!) and hurried into the city, calling to the men, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that I did: is not this the Christ?"

Truth has never failed; Jesus never failed; however, some of His students did fail (John 6:66). The Gospel will not fail now. It was, and is, God's power to salvation (Romans 1:16). Christians need to study, pray, and work so that spiritual failure will rest with the insincere who reject God's power, and not with us who present it! — 4301 Wheeler Road, Martinez, Ga. 30907.

Gradual Healing?

"And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly" (Mark 8:22-25).



RAY HAWK

This passage is used by Pentecostals to prove miraculous divine healing may be gradual. It is this author's conviction that all healing is divine, but not all healing is miraculous. Notice the following.

DIVINE HEALING

1. Timothy, 1 Tim. 5:23
2. Trophimus, 2 Tim. 4:20

INVOLVES: Medicine, doctors, hospitals, and convalescence.

MIRACULOUS DIVINE HEALING

1. Lame man, Acts 3:6-8; 4:16
2. Dorcas, Acts 9:36-42

INVOLVES: Supernatural powers that cause immediate healing without medicine, operations, doctors, or convalescence.

Pentecostals believe a miracle has been performed when a holiness preacher prays for someone with a headache and that individual gets over it three or four days later! If a person has cancer and through an operation is goes away, they think a miracle has been performed. It is true that divine healing has taken place, but it is not miraculous divine healing!

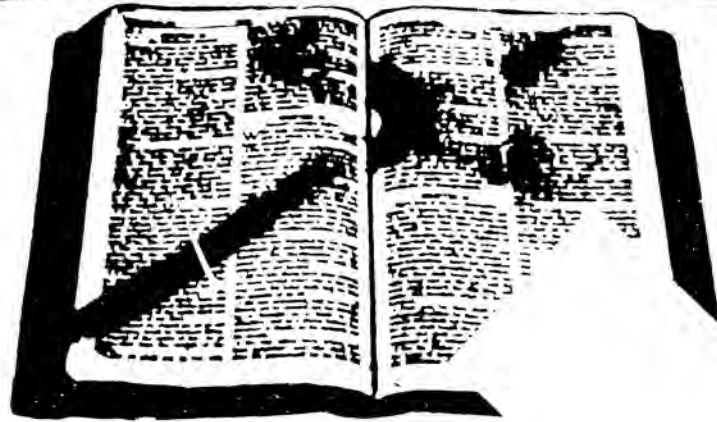
Mark 8:22-25 is used to show that gradual healing is miraculous. Yet, does Mark 8:22-25

prove gradual healing? My reply is in the negative. First, Jesus did not miraculously heal the man over a period of several hours, days, or months; but during the few months that it took him to do the things described in these verses. Jesus first put spit upon the eyes of the blind man. He asked him what he saw. The blind man saw men walking, but they looked like trees. Jesus then put his hand to the man's eyes and this time he saw clearly. How many Pentecostal meetings have that to happen? That isn't gradual healing but may be classified as immediate healing like the rest which Jesus did. One cannot find a case of miraculous divine healing in the New Testament that took hours, days, or weeks to perform. It just isn't there. The Pentecostals must have a long, drawn out process for their healings because they are not miraculous and it takes time for healing. I call this divine healing, but not miraculous divine healing.

A second point on this matter should be revealed. The Pentecostals shy away from picking up serpents. Yet they claim to be the same kind of believers as those mentioned in Mark 16:17-20. They usually argue that there is only ONE example of snake handling in the New Testament. They infer that since there is only one example, that it was not too common then nor now for one to handle snakes. If that is so, then we can use the same argumentation for "gradual" healing. Mark 8:22-25 is only ONE example. Yet, Pentecostals rely on gradual healing for the majority of their "claimed" miracles. If one example produces a majority of their cases, why doesn't Acts 28:3-6 also produce the same?

It is regrettable that our Pentecostal friends will take Mark 8:22-25 and try to make it say what they commonly do. The practices are miles apart. Miracles have ceased. To claim miracles is to hold to a false doctrine and endanger the soul. — 4868 La Ventana Terrace, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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Repenting Or Reporting

Obviously, one should be very careful in his criticism of another's motives or sincerity. Jesus warned, "Judge not according to the appearance." But he also went on to say, "but judge righteous judgment" (Jn. 7:24). It was also our Lord who said, "wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20). With this in mind I would like to make some observations about "public confessions."



RAY DUTTON

The principle behind the practice of public confessions is derived from several passages of Scripture. For instance, in his sermon on the mount Jesus sets forth the will of God regarding the proper correction for an offense. "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought 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). If the sin(s) are publicly known then James 5:16 would also be applicable. "Confess your faults one to another and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." These, as well as other passages, form the basis for expecting a public confession of sins which are publicly known.

FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

But what does it mean to confess one's sins? Does it mean that we merely acknowledge that we have sinned? Or is it suppose to mean that we have repented of our sins and are making this fact known? Obviously it is the latter. John 1:9 says that "if we confess our sins, he (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God demands more than just the acknowledgment of sin; he demands repentance. And if God demands repentance, I suggest that the church can accept nothing less.

REPORTING IS NOT REPENTANCE

Too frequently today we are seeing brethren walk down the aisle to REPORT and not REPENT. This is not an unrighteous judgment; it is a statement of fact based upon fruit inspection. For example, when we see a

brother come forward on a Sunday morning to confess (or I should say REPORT) his sin of negligence in attendance, and then this same brother doesn't even show up Sunday night because of a ballgame, it is not an unrighteous judgment to say he REPORTED instead of REPENTED.

Then there is the brother who has been told by the elders that he is going to be withdrawn from if he doesn't repent and make a public confession of his sins. The brother walks down the aisle (as the elders have told him he must do) and confesses (?) his sins. However, as soon as the threat of withdrawal has passed he goes right back to his old sinful habits again. No, the brother didn't REPENT; he just REPORTED.

And what about the brother who accidentally "gets caught" right in the act of some sin (adultery, drunkenness, etc.)? Usually if the brother is a regular attender (maybe even a preacher or an elder) he will immediately make a "confession" (?). And in

spite of the fact that he may have been participating in the sin for a long time, when it becomes public, he suddenly decides to repent(?) in "sackcloth and ashes"! If this were true repentance, one often wonders how public knowledge of sins produced Godly sorrow in the heart of a sinner who apparently had no such sorrow prior to his sin's becoming public.

I don't want anyone to get the impression that I believe there are none in these conditions who truly are penitent, but the fact that there are even a few who are guilty of reporting when they should be repenting makes it imperative that we do more teaching on the subject of repentance and confession. If we don't, we may have to add a new category to our list of "RESPONSES": (1) Those coming to be baptized; (2) Those coming to confess sins; (3) THOSE COMING TO REPORT. -- 1501 6th Ave., Jasper, Ala. 35501

Power Shortage

RAYMOND ALLEN HAGOOD

That Satan possesses great power, no knowledgeable person questions, but that he possess irresistible and inescapable power, we emphatically deny. It is the disposition of some to attribute certain powers to Satan which he simply does not have. If it can be proven, however, that Satan does indeed have power so great that it is impossible for man to overcome temptation, then it can be successfully argued that man, when he yields to temptation and sins, cannot help it and therefore is not accountable to God for his own sins. It requires but a casual study of temptation, as discussed in the Bible, to convince us that such is not the case.

We are told in James 1:12, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." Here the Bible clearly teaches that it is possible to endure and overcome Satan's greatest power - temptation. In James 4:7 the Bible says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Why would the Lord instruct us to resist the devil, if it were not possible for us to do

so? We are instructed in I Corinthians 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Satan's power is so limited, in fact, that God has arranged things such that we cannot be tempted beyond what we can hear. We also learn that with every temptation there is a way of escape, if we will but find the way and take advantage of it.

Perhaps the most profound scripture dealing with an analysis of temptation is James 1:14. "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

Brethren, it is not that Satan is so powerful, but that often we are so weak. In truth Satan possesses only the power in our lives that we ourselves give him. We can produce a real "power shortage" in Satan, if we will but stand up to him and not let him have his way with us. If we do not RESIST him, we ASSIST him. If we do not overcome temptation, it will overcome us. — Church of Christ, 25 Union Place, Vicksburg, Mississippi.

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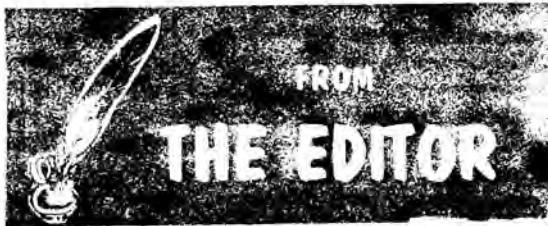
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Anita Bryant

We know nothing about the religious convictions of Anita Bryant. But she had demonstrated the nature of her moral fibre in an effort last week to stop the Dade County Commission in Dade County, Florida from passing an ordinance banning discrimination against homosexuals. As a result of her efforts, Miss Bryant was denied a television series that was within her grasp. The ordinance passed anyway.



BOBBY DUNCAN

According to news reports, a New York television production firm, sent a telegram saying: "We sincerely regret that the extensive national publicity arising from the controversial political activities you have been engaged in ... prohibit us from utilizing your services."

Miss Bryant said: "It destroys the dream that I have had since I was a child -- a dream to have a television series of my own, to entertain and present wholesome subjects to my fellow American"

An editorial in the BIRMINGHAM NEWS Monday, February 28 said: "Throughout the Vietnam war, actress Jane Fonda generated publicity by speaking out against American foreign policy. She went so far as to travel to North Vietnam, appear in Communist propaganda films and, in general, give aid and comfort to the enemy of the United States.

"But if Miss Fonda has ever been denied a job as an actress because of her vocal political stand, it must be a well-kept secret. Instead, her career had moved right along and she continues to star in major motion pictures."

It is the firm belief of this writer that the

television industry could use some programming the likes of which might be forthcoming from one with enough moral fibre to oppose wickedness. If anyone presently in the television industry opposes wickedness of any sort, it is not apparent from the set in our den.

What if the shoe were on the other foot? Suppose a practicing homosexual should be denied a television series because of his having engaged in political activities to enhance his peculiar lifestyle. Observation of recent developments in our society causes this writer to have no doubt that such action would be interpreted as a violation of one's civil rights, and as the editorial in the BIRMINGHAM NEWS said: "the furor would blow the lid off the entire television industry."

We do not know how much Anita Bryant has lost, but America and the television industry have suffered the real loss.

Gay Women Preachers

James Pilgrim

The ordination of gay women preachers by the Episcopal Church was recently reported by one of the major networks. We are no longer shocked at anything that happens. Disappointed, yes, but shocked, no. We live in one of the most confused ages in the world's history. The religious world today reminds us of Paul's statement to the Romans; "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Rom. 10:2). The latest move by the Episcopal Church is an example of Paul's statement.

Sexual immorality, whether normal or perversion, has always been condemned by the Lord. On the other hand, we see God as the author of sexual purity. He made man and woman (Gen. 1:27). They were told to replenish the earth, which certainly involved the conjugal relationship (Gen. 1:28; 4:1, 2). Everything God made, including this relationship between a husband and wife, was good (Gen. 1:31). Thus, the place God gave for sex was within the framework of the marital relationship, between a husband and his wife. This is the normal and approved plan. Any relationship different to the pattern given by God is not of God, and is, therefore, wrong or sinful.

Fornication is a general term, including all forms of illicit sexual intercourse. One commits fornication when entering into any relationship different from that ordained of God. For example, a relationship between two unmarried persons (Gal. 5:19-21), married persons who carnally lie with those married to someone else (Matt. 19:9, Gal. 5:19-21), married and unmarried persons (Gal. 5:19-21; Gen. 39:7-12), two men or two women (Rom. 1:24-32), and other variations. This article is concerned with the latter perversions, that is, between those of the same sex.

Sexual perversion was condemned in the Old Testament. Lot pled with the men of Sodom not to act so wickedly (Gen. 19:1-11). Sodomy was strongly condemned in Deuteronomy 23:17, 18. God compared Israel's rejection of Him for other gods to whoredom (Ex. 34:15). Both Asa and Jehoshaphat acted to rid Judah of sodomy. (1 Kings 15:12; 22:46). The New Testament is equally clear in condemning the sin of sex perversion (Rev. 21:8; 22:15; Rom. 1:24-32). Such persons, without repentance, will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 21:15). The Lord does not accept such persons and/or their service in their unrepentant state.

Brethren, the Lord loves all people, even sex perverts (John 3:16), and He does not

want to see anyone perish (11Pet. 3:9). However, the Lord demands repentance of all sin to have life (Acts 11:18; Luke 13:5). Repentance does not permit one to continue in the practice of sin (Matt. 3:8; 21:28-32). Churches accepting gay people without repentance neither love them nor do them service. They only contribute to their eternal damnation, and become partaker of their evil deed (11 John 9-11).

The news report quoted the women as saying the men were more shocked over their being ordained as women preachers than over their being gay. How the unbelieving world must be laughing over such folly. How Satan must be rejoicing.

Beloved, we must not give in to the signs of the times. We must defend the pure doctrine of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Let us pray for the world. Let us resolve to teach more. Let us win more souls to the Lord. However, let us also realize that repentance is a part of the plan of salvation. Let us not sit idly by while Satan walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8).

A second article will follow, dealing with the ordination of women preachers.

Does "Water" in John 3:5 Mean "Spirit"?

I have heard you Church of Christ people preach that "water" in John 3:5 means literal water (H₂O). Don't you know that "Water" means "Spirit," and refers to the Holy Ghost? This is the gist of a query from a regular reader of Words of Truth.

One of the best ways to understand a text is to read it; so read John 3:5: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Notice that Jesus did NOT say, "Except a man be born of water which is Spirit. . ." But he did say, "Except a man be born of water A-N-D. . ." (something in addition). . . AND of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." So, the Spirit is mentioned as something in addition to "water."

A rule of interpretation allows for the proper meaning of a word to be substituted for that word, and it will make sense. But if "Spirit" is substituted for "water" in John 3:5, it makes NONSENSE! It would read: "Except a man be born of Spirit and of the Spirit. . ."

The word "water" by itself, without any modifying word or phrase, NEVER means, "Spirit" in the Bible! (If anyone thinks otherwise, let him supply the reference!)

Let us emphasize that the Holy Spirit DOES have a part in the new birth. His part is to "lead" us, for Paul wrote, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" - hence, they have been born again (Rom. 8:14). What was the Spirit's function in



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods.)

"Does I Thess. 4:16-18 teach that there will be two literal resurrections - one for the righteous, another for the wicked?"

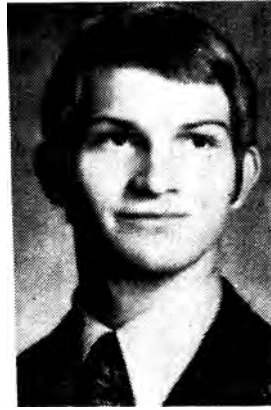
"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:16-18). Advocates of the doctrine of premillennialism cite this passage as evidence in support of their theory of two literal resurrections: one for the righteous, and, a thousand years later, a resurrection of the wicked. This passage asserts that the dead in Christ shall rise first; does it not follow, then, they ask, that the dead out of Christ shall rise second? What, at first glance, appears to be an argument of some plausibility to that end vanishes on examination of the contest. The subject under consideration is not the order in which righteous and wicked will be raised; it is, instead, a discussion of the relationship that will obtain between the resurrection and the catching up of the saints. It should be recalled that the Thessalonian Epistles were penned for the purpose of correcting an erroneous view in the church in Thessalonica that only the righteous living would be allowed to participate in the blessings and benefits of the Lord's coming, those having died before that event being, of necessity, left out. The apostle writes to show that the righteous dead will be resurrected before the righteous living are caught up, so that both the righteous living and the righteous dead may together be caught up to meet him when he returns. They were, therefore, to comfort one another with these words, being assured henceforth that their dead would not be excluded from the benefits attending the Lord's return. Inasmuch as the wicked will not be included in the "catching up," no mention is made of them in this passage. They will, however, rise at the same time the righteous do: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the 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" (John 5:28, 29).

"We have been told to 'give until it hurts'. I have observed that some of my brethren are extremely sensitive to pain!"

"The person who never loses himself in the Lord's work, will never find himself in the Lord's reward."

Misconceptions Concerning The Church

While in the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, our Savior promised, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:13-18). After the fulfillment of this promise Paul wrote to Timothy, "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" (2 Tim. 3:14,15). The church which Christ built and of which Paul wrote is grossly misunderstood today. The majority have no true conception of (1) what the church is, (2) how to obtain entrance into it, or (3) how to behave thyself in the house of God.



DALTON KEY

WHAT THE CHURCH IS

The church which our Lord died to establish is not a temporal structure, for we have no divine record of Christ's ever building a structure of this kind. He said, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). Neither is the church a social or political organization. Notice, please, that "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). He did not say "on this world", but "of this world." His kingdom or church is not secularly oriented. The church is the combined body of the saved (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23). The saved are in the church; the church is made up of the saved. Since the church was bought by a spiritual price (Acts 20:28), has a spiritual head (Eph. 1:22,23), and is made up of spiritual members (Col. 3:1; Rom. 8:6), it ought to be a spiritual church, going about spiritual activities. Let us not secularize the church which our Savior built.

HOW TO OBTAIN ENTRANCE

The church is the family of God (Eph. 3:10-13; 1 Tim. 3:14,15). Entrance into the church is the same as into any family. One must be born into it (John 3:1-5; Rom. 6:4; 2 Cor. 5:17). One must be married into it (Rom. 7:4; Rev. 22:2,9). One must be adopted into it (Gal. 4:5,6). The saved are added to it (Acts 2:47). Salvation comes about because of God's grace (Eph. 2:8,9; Tit. 2:11), Christ's blood (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:15; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19), and man's obedience to the commands of God pertaining to salvation (Matt. 7:21; James 4:7,8). These commands (for the alien) are: (1) to believe those inspired materials which have been heard (Rom. 10:17; Mark 16:16; Heb. 11:6), (2) to repent of all sin (Lk. 13:3,5; Acts 3:19), (3) to confess Christ publicly as the son of God (Acts 8:37), and (4) to be buried with Him in baptism for remission of sin (Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21; Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12). God's grace will not save if mankind will not obey; Christ's blood will not cleanse unless it comes in contact with man's sin - stained heart.

HOW TO BEHAVE

All we do must be authorized by Christ (Col. 3:17), for to Him has been given "all authority" (Matt. 28:18, ASV). Further-

more, He is the head over the church (Eph. 1:22; 5:23), and as such should have control over its activities. If we cannot find divine authority or approval for our actions or attitudes within the church's worship we ought to stop those actions or attitudes. Finally, in this regard, we are instructed, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40). — Box 619, Douglass, Kansas 67039.

The Conversation At Caesarea Philippi

NO. 3

This is the third in a four-part series of a famed and deeply familiar conversation that occurred between the Lord and his disciples in the regions of Caesarea Philippi located at the southern base of historic Mt. Hermon, the highest peak in all that general area. The passage, as given in Matthew 16:13-20, reads,



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some Elias, and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell (Hades-ASV) shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ."

A BRIEF REVIEW

Previously, attention has been called to some interesting things about the place where this conversation occurred, the personalities involved and some of the principles set forth which grew out of this conversation. The Palestinian masses had an entirely different appraisal of Jesus than did the apostles. The masses sought to fit him into a mold that was never made for the Mighty Messiah. Peter confessed him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God. Indeed he was the Christ. Indeed he was the Son of the living God. With this courageous confession from Peter's lips the Lord found pleasure and exhibited ardent approval. In fact Simon Peter was blessed for having made this clear and convincing confession of the Lord's Deity.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CONTENTION ABOUT PETER'S BEING THE ROCK

In verse 18 of this historic and familiar conversation found in Matthew 16 the Lord promised to build his church. It was to be built on a rock. What was this rock? Was it the apostle Peter? Roman Catholicism has answered in the affirmative for centuries. Their religion rests upon the foundation of

(Continued On Page 4)

Does "Water" In John 3:5 Mean "Spirit"?

(Continued from Page 2)

producing the new birth, or in making them "sons of God"? He "led" them! This is accomplished by and through the word which the Holy Spirit revealed and confirmed by inspired men in the first century. (Read 2 Pet. 1:21; Heb. 2:3-4; Jn. 16:13 - 14:26).

But the element of "water" (H₂O) is also involved in the new birth. Jesus said it is! (Jn. 3:5). And it is literal "water", too, without any modifying word or phrase. Examine the chapters surrounding this very conversation, and see the uses of the word "water."

John the immerser said, "I baptize with water," (verse 33), which evidently must have been plain "water." This is only two chapters prior to Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus.

At Cana, Jesus said, "Fill the waterpots with water," and he meant the "water" that could be "tasted," and which the servants "drew" (Jn. 2:7, 9). "Water" in the SECOND chapter of John had no reference whatsoever to the Holy Spirit! Neither does it in John 3:5 - the very next chapter! It just means "water!"

After the discussion of the new birth, John baptized where there was "much water" (Jn. 3:23). In fact, at the time Jesus told Nicodemus he must "be born of water and of the Spirit" (Jn. 3:5), John the immerser was "baptizing with water" (Jn. 1:26, 31; Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:5). John had preached his baptism "to all the people of Israel" (Acts 13:24), and multitudes already had been baptized "in the river of Jordan" (Mk. 1:5). Jesus himself had been baptized "in Jordan" (Mk. 1:9-10), after which he came up "out of the water" (Matt. 3:13-17; Mk. 1:9-10). Under these circumstances, surely Nicodemus should have understood that Jesus referred to water baptism as being "born of water. . ." In fact, baptism is mentioned four other times in that very chapter: John 3:22, 23 (twice, and 26).

Those who rejected John's baptism, "rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him" (Lk. 7:29-30). Nicodemus therefore should not have been surprised that Jesus so plainly stated the necessity of water baptism, making it one of the conditions of entering into the kingdom. Jesus said, "EXCEPT a man be BORN OF WATER" - that is water baptism! - "and of the Spirit" - whose part is to lead him (Rom. 8:14) - "he CANNOT ENTER into the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:5).

For those who still imagine that the word "water" means "spirit," let us examine John 4 and John 7. In Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman, the word "water" - without a modifier - means only the liquid from Jacob's well! When Jesus used the word figuratively, he modified it, calling his blessings "LIVING water" (Jn. 4:10) - not just "water" alone. He also spoke of "the water THAT I SHALL GIVE HIM" (v. 14), clearly indicating it was not literal "water." However, in verse 46, lacking any descriptive adjective, "water" refers to H₂O, as it does also in John 5:3, 4, and 7.

The next use of the word "water" is in John 7:38-39, where Jesus said, ". . .

out of his belly shall flow rivers of LIVING WATER. (But this spake he of the Spirit. . .)" Notice the adjective "living" which modifies "water," indicating a figurative use of the word "water," and not its normal, ordinary meaning.

However, in John 3:5 there is no such modifier. Hence, in that text, "water" means simply "water," not anything figurative at all. I repeat: the word "water" - without any descriptive word or phrase accompanying it - NEVER means "Spirit," but always means plain "water." And in the very contest of John 3:5, both before, and after, Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, the word "water" means simply what it says - just "water." - East Walker Church of Christ, Sumiton, Ala. 35148.

The Conversation at Caesarea Philippi

(Continued From Page 3)

Peter's Primacy. They contend that the Lord's church is built upon the apostle Peter. In the footnotes of the Confraternity Version, a Catholic Version, they suggest by way of commenting on Matthew 16:18 that Peter is the rock. On verse nineteen they suggest that Peter has complete power within the church. They suggest that Peter "has the power to admit into the Church and to exclude therefrom." In a footnote on Matthew 18:18 they suggest that Peter is both head of the church and head of the apostles. They deny that Peter is simply the porter in this striking imagery, and claim that in reality he is all powerful.

The New English Bible greatly adds to this Roman Catholic contention by Rendering Matthew 16:18 in these words: "And I say this to you: You are Peter, the Rock; and on this rock I will build my church, and the forces of death shall never overpower it."

Is this what the Lord taught? Is Simon Peter, just a man, really the rock upon which the Lord proposed to build his church? Does the church rest upon a man and not upon the Lord of glory as far as the foundation is concerned? The remainder of this article will suggest why the apostle Peter could not be that rock.

COGENT REASONS FOR REJECTING THE PETRINE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH

The apostle is NOT the rock upon which the church is built. In the Greek text of this passage the Lord did not use the same word for Peter as he did for the rock upon which his church was to be built. The original word for Peter is PETROS; the word for rock is PETRA. Our Lord really said, "thou art PETROS, and upon this PETRA I will build my church." These two words are not in the same gender. PETROS is masculine gender; PETRA is feminine gender. The two words have different connotations or meanings. PETROS or the word for Peter signifies "a small detached stone." PETRA, the rock upon which he proposed to build the church, signifies "a ledge or a cliff of rock." Hence Jesus could not have intended at all to be understood as meaning that he would build the church upon Peter.

Sometimes Roman Catholicism will try and refute this argument by saying that Jesus spoke in the Aramaic here or that Matthew wrote in the Aramaic. But it is simply a Catholic assumption that Jesus spoke in the

Aramaic. It is a second assumption that Matthew wrote in the Aramaic. They have assumed in the third place that Jesus used identical terms in speaking of Peter and the rock upon which the church would be built. I remind each reader that facts of a doctrinal nature are not build upon assumptions!! They are built upon truth and it is not truth to say that Peter and the rock here are identical terms. THEY ARE NOT!! The two terms "petros" and "petra" are in the oldest Greek manuscripts we now have. One able Bible scholar has well declared, "To ASSUME that our oldest and most reliable manuscripts were wrong, and that there was no distinction in the original language is contrary to all rules of sound exegesis" (L.R. Wilson, ROMAN CATHOLICISM FACTS OR FABRICATIONS, p. 3).

Peter cannot be the rock for another weighty reason. It is a rule of sound logical reasoning that no object can occupy two or more positions in the same picture at the same time. Jesus presented a figure of a building in this passage. Peter is portrayed as the porter or the doorkeeper. He could not be the foundation and the porter at the same time. In fact a picture in which the same person appears twice is classed as an anomaly which means a deviation from the natural order and fitness of things.

If Peter were the foundation of the church, it is passingly strange that no apostle ever preached him as the foundation. Not even Peter preached himself as the foundation. Paul even stated very clearly in I Corinthians 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay that that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." That does not sound like the preaching of the Petrine foundation of the church to me. Does it to you?

If the church is build upon Peter THE MAN, then it could not have been built upon any supposed office he may have held and certainly cannot rest upon any of his supposed successors or the various Roman Popes. If the church were built on the OFFICE Peter supposedly held, then the Romanists are wrong in contending that it (the church) was built upon Peter THE MAN. If the church is built upon Peter THE MAN, then they are wrong in contending that Peter could have passed down any office or authority to any of his so-called successors. The Romanists cannot have it both ways. They are wrong on both scores for the church is not built upon either Peter THE MAN or Peter's OFFICE. Even if Romanism were right on one of these points, which of course she is not, then she would be wrong on the other point. But to be wrong in both points, as she manifestly is, must be an embarrassing position for an infallible church to be in over this weighty matter!

WHAT IS THAT ROCK?

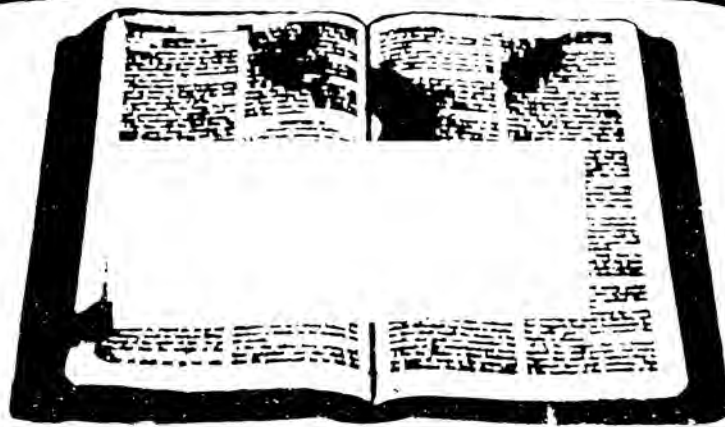
It is the confession that Peter made in Matthew 16:16 which said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." That confession formed the foundation of the soon-to-be erected church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus was to be the builder of the church; Peter unequivocally was to be the porter or the doorkeeper; the great courageous confession of verse 16 was to be the firm foundation upon which the Lord's glorious church would be built.

Reader friend, you need to accept this plain, crystal clear and positive declaration and act accordingly. This is one of the most obvious truths of Holy Writ. - P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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NUMBER 13

Gay Women Preachers

In a previous article, we mentioned the ordination of gay women preachers by the Episcopal Church. We dealt briefly with the sin of sex perversion. This article focuses on the ordination of women preachers.

Women are demanding, and obtaining, roles heretofore forbidden them. The ordination of women preachers, elders, deacons, and such like is becoming the norm. The Lord's Church has not escaped the movement. The role of women in the Lord's work has received no little attention in recent years. Much of what has been said by proponents of women preachers has been subjectivism. Feeling often takes precedence over authority, over what the Lord says. It is time to lay aside our feelings (Jer. 10:23; Prov. 16:25), and ask for a "thus saith the Lord".

An absolute necessity in arriving at any truth is the realization that one passage will never contradict another. Truth is always consistent. Any conclusion with inconsistencies is erroneous. With this in mind, let us consider woman's role in the Lord's work.

First, let us notice some Biblical rules governing the function of woman. Paul wrote, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (I Tim. 2:9, 10). Observe that the woman is to (1) learn in silence, (2) be in subjection, and (3) not teach in any way which demands her usurping authority over the man. Any situation which contradicts that inspired statement (I Cor. 2:13) is not according to the doctrine of Christ (II John 9-11). Another law given by Paul in I Corinthians 14:34, 35, says, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at



James Pilgrim

home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." These inspired words (I Tim. 3:16, 17) were uttered to meet a specific need at that time (A.D. 57). However, the principle is as applicable today. Again, any situation contradictory to the God-breathed statement is wrong or sinful. If not, using objective reasoning based upon the scriptures, show why not.

Second, woman's subjection to man is seen in other passages (for example, Ephesians 5:22-33). Notice that the wife is to be submissive to her husband, her head, and she is to reverence him, that is, honor, defer to, obey. This submission was not new. The law taught it (I Cor. 14:34). Comp. Gen. 3:16. Sarah both believed and filled this God-ordained place for woman (I Pet. 3:1-6). Situations different to the divine order are of men, and therefore, vain worship (Matt. 15:9).

Third, women were excluded from certain offices or works. Only men were selected to serve as apostles (Matt. 10:2-5; Acts 1:26; Rom. 1:1), elders (I Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9), deacons (I Tim. 3:8-13; Acts 6:1-4), and evangelists (Acts 21:8). An elder must be the husband of one wife; so must a deacon. We do not read of women apostles and preachers. Do not the limiting qualifications of elders and deacons, and the silence of the scriptures regarding women elders, deacons, preachers, and apostles inform us as to the Lord's will in the matter? Any situation different to the Lord's will—His revealed pattern—is without Bible authority, and therefore, sinful.

Fourth, we can see a difference in the roles of men and women in other areas of life. For example, only women give birth to children. Other set, unchangeable differences could be cited; however, one should suffice. We see, and accept, differences in roles to be played by men and women in other areas of life. Why can we not also realize that God has given some differing roles for His kingdom? The fact that man does not have children does not make him inferior to her. Neither does her having children make her inferior to man. Why then should she feel inferior to man in being restricted from serving as a preacher, elder, deacon, or apostle?

Fifth, certain men are not permitted to

serve as elders or deacons. For example, unmarried men, married men without children, married men without faithful children (I Tim. 3:4, 5; Tit. 1:6). These men are not second class citizens in the kingdom of God. Neither are they inferior to any other Christian.

Sixth, women have work to do in the body of Christ. Their work is as imperative, important, and influencing as any work done by any first century apostle, preacher, elder, or deacon. So it is of those offices that remain today. She can serve as did Phebe (Rom. 16:1,2), labor in the gospel (Phil. 4:2, 3), be ready to, and follow, every good work (Tit. 3:1; I Tim. 5:9, 10; Eg. Acts 9:36-43), train (teach) younger women (Tit. 2:3, 4), learn (I Tim. 2:10), pray (I Cor. 11:5), and publicly expound in a way not violating I Tim. 2:9, 10 (Joel 2:28; Acts 21:9). Lois and Eunice taught young Timothy (II Tim. 1:5; 3:14, 15). Acts 18:24-28 is an example of a husband and wife engaged in teaching a brother in error, however, we do not believe Priscilla acted contrary to I Tim. 2:9, 10. All, including women, are to sing (Eph. 5:19).

Question: Do not the works of woman just listed contradict the laws previously given? No! Paul did not forbid a woman to teach period. What he did forbid was her teaching in any way that would cause her to exercise dominion over man. Teaching which does not put her in such a position is not wrong. Silence does not mean muteness. It has reference to her quiet, unassuming role. Certainly she may sing under a man's direction. She may follow in prayer as do all others. Neither of these things violates God's rules regulating her works. Since the scriptures do not contradict themselves, we are sure that Acts 18:24-28 and 21:9 are not examples of woman's usurping authority over man. To assume that she did is to assume the very point to be proven. Any work she does must be within the guidelines given by God.

There is work for all to do. In some instances, the work of men and women is the same (for example, Gal. 6:10). In other areas it is different. May we realize this. May men do their work. May women know their work and do it proudly, pre-

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WORDS of TRUTH

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But there seems to be a strange difficulty on the part of some in applying this same principle with regard to the government of a local congregation. Hebrews 13:17 says, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

Does the fact that I do not personally endorse every aspect of an elder's life mean that I am not obligated to submit to the eldership? Does the fact that the eldership may make decisions with which I do not personally agree mean that I am not obligated to abide by those decisions? How can I respect God, and at the same time show contempt for His arrangement?

Certainly those who serve as elders should live as close to perfection as they possibly can. This is true of all Christians. No doubt the church has suffered in many instances because elders (and others) have not maintained godly lives for themselves and their families. Also there can be no question

regarding the fact that elders and elderships have made, and will continue to make, mistakes. But God's arrangement is for each congregation to be overseen by an eldership, and for each member of the congregation to submit to that eldership. As in the case of the civil government, the only exception to this would be if and when the eldership sought to require the Christian to do something that violates the will of God. In such cases, to be sure, "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Our duty to submit to the eldership, like our duty to submit to "the powers that be," is not predicated upon our personal endorsement of the men who serve as elders, nor upon our agreement with the decisions which they make. It is predicated rather upon the fact that it is the will of God for us to "obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves." To refuse to submit is to show contempt - not for the men who serve as elders, but for God's arrangement. If not, why not?

The Conversation At Caesarea Philippi

(No. 4)

The portion of this famed and familiar conversation about which we will be meditating in this fourth and concluding installment of this intensely interesting passage, Matthew 16:13-20, is located in verses 18-20. They say, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell (Hades-ASV) shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ."



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

"I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH"

Upon the great, dynamic, foundational truth that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God Jesus said, "I will build my church." This is the first time in the Bible that the word church occurs. It is strictly a New Testament expression. It never occurs in our Old Testament Scriptures. (It is often spoken of in the Old Testament in predictive prophecy, but always by other names such as the kingdom, or the Lord's house, but never by the actual word church).

It should be observed that Jesus used the future tense in regard to his building this divine institution. This means that it was not built before the foundation of the world. This means it was not built in Abraham's day. This even means that it was not erected in the days of John the Baptist. John the Baptist had been put to death back in Matthew 14. So, the church was not established in the days of John the Baptist. At the time Jesus spoke these words his personal ministry was almost concluded. Therefore his church was not established at this time as it was still future at the time he made this powerful pronouncement. It was still future at the time of his crucifixion. Joseph, the Arimathean Senator, was still looking for and awaiting the kingdom of God or the establishment of the

Lord's church (Luke 23:50-51). It was still future when Jesus met with the disciples just prior to his ascension in Acts 1. The Bible says that the apostles asked of him on this occasion, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" (Acts 1:6). Hence, it is an easy matter to conclude and conclude correctly that the church was not established during the Lord's personal ministry. The very tense of the verb in Matthew 16:18 shows that it was yet future from the time this interesting conversation occurred. It is simply a dodge and quibble to say that "I will build" here is not future tense but simply means the Lord will expand or add to his church. The English translation does not warrant such; neither does the Greek text. If the church were already in an established reality at the time this conversation occurred, then it was without a tried foundation, without a law, without a head, without the spirit, without blood and possessed no members. There could be no church in an established sense with any of these lacking, and surely could not be with all of them lacking. "I will build" is clearly and obviously future tense and means that the church had not yet been established. Acts 2 is the time the church was established upon the earth.

Special note should be taken in regard to what Jesus was going to build. He promised the building of his church. He called it "my church." It was to be built by him. It would belong to him and not to another. He was to be its builder, founder, purchaser, head and Saviour. If the Lord had intended to build a multiplicity of churches, why do you suppose he used the singular so significantly on this occasion? He did say "my church." He did not say "my churches." Just as there is one kingdom of God so there is one church of the Lord. Just as here is one bride of Christ so there is one church of the Lord. Just as there is one vineyard of the Lord so there is one church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as there is one fold as a place of spiritual repose for all the Lord's sheep so there is one church of the Lord. When Jesus says "my church" we had better not tamper with this divine declaration and seek to make it read "my churches." Reader friend, do you not agree? If not, WHY NOT?

THE CHURCH SHALL STAND

Jesus made solemn and sacred promise that

(Continued On Page 4)

FROM

THE EDITOR

"The Powers That Be"



BOBBY DUNCAN

God intends for His people to be law abiding citizens. By inspiration, Paul said: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). In recent years it has become fashionable among some, even in the religious world, simply to refuse to obey the law because

they feel that some particular law is not a good law. Paul pointed out that those who do such resist "the ordinance of God" and that they "shall receive to themselves damnation" (verse 2).

Please remember that the government extant when Paul wrote Romans was, to say the least, not a government which respected God and His will. But Paul did not urge Christians to rebel against that government. He taught them rather to be submissive. Teaching elsewhere in the Bible points out that the only exception to this submissiveness would be when "the powers that be" sought to cause Christians to do that which would be a violation of the will of God. In such cases, "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Our duty to submit to "the powers that be" is not predicated upon our personal endorsement of the men who occupy governmental offices, nor upon our agreement with the decisions which they make. It is predicated rather upon the fact that it is the will of God for us to "be subject unto the higher powers." To refuse to submit is to show contempt - not for those enacting and enforcing the law, but for God's arrangement. Most Christians we know agree with this conclusion.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"*Explain I Thess. 5:17.*"

"Pray without ceasing; in every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward." It is God's will that (1) we pray without ceasing; and that (2) we be thankful about everything (Phil. 4:1-6). To be thankful is to feel a deep sense of gratitude to God for the manifold blessings which he lavishly bestows upon us; and "to pray without ceasing," means to engage regularly in prayer. The words "without ceasing," translate the Greek adverb *adialeptos*, which means, "constantly," "unceasingly." The apostle uses this word in I Thess. 2:13, in the sentence, "And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing. . ." by which, of course, he did not mean he was engaged every moment in prayer to God (when would he have preached the gospel?), but that he regularly included the matter about which he wrote in his prayers. The disciples were "continually in the temple, blessing and praising God," but this does not mean that they engaged in these activities twenty-four hours a day. What is meant is that they went regularly to the temple and participated in the morning and evening sacrifices, and offered their devotions at stated intervals. (Luke 24:53).

Mephibosheth

JERRY JENKINS

One would think that there could not possibly be more than one Mephibosheth in the Bible. Actually, there are two. Most of us remember the son of Jonathan by this name. When King Saul, his grandfather, and Jonathan, his father, were slain at Gilboa, he was an infant of five years. When the news of the disaster came, his nurse fled carrying him upon her shoulders. In her haste, she let him fall and Mephibosheth was crippled for life in both feet (II Sam. 4:4). He was probably reared in the house of Machair and later David remembered his promise to Jonathan to "not cut off thy kindness from my house forever. . ." (I Sam. 20:15) and brought him and his wife to Jerusalem where he was a daily guest at the royal table (II Sam. 9).

When Absalom revolted, due to his sympathy with David he had to flee for his life. He had allowed his beard to grow ragged, his feet to be unwashed and his linen unchanged. He is mentioned only one other time and that in connection with David not allowing the Gibeonites to harm him (II Sam. 21:7).

There are many lessons that can be drawn from this account. First we see David honoring his word to Jonathan. How important it is for us to be honest today. I recently heard of a man who sold a truck and only a few hours after he had given his word to sell the truck for so much, someone offered to buy the truck for more. Because he had given his word, he did not take the higher amount. This is the kind of Christianity taught in the Word of God.

Second, we learn the lesson of the influence

of parents. We actually think of parents exerting a bad influence on their children, but here Jonathan influenced David so that his son, Mephibosheth, later was blessed because of the friendship that they had made. As parents we need to ask ourselves the question, are we living in such a way that our friends will remember our children kindly?

The other Mephibosheth was the son of Saul by his concubine, Rizpah. Along with six other victims, he was crucified and sacrificed to Jehovah to avert a famine from which the country was suffering (II Sam. 21:8ff). What a waste of a man's life. He gave his life because of the evil deeds of his father, Saul. In a fit of rage, Saul killed many of the Gibeonites, who had dwelt peaceably with the Israelites for

many, many centuries.

Why was Mephibosheth killed? First, we was killed because the Gibeonites wanted revenge, but their revenge was against the wrong people. Saul was already dead and nothing that they could do could hurt him. Second, he was killed because of a father who could not admit wrong. Saul had been rebuked by Samuel, which threw him into a tirade against the Gibeonites. How often we try to take out our faults upon others, as did Saul.

One Mephibosheth was blessed because of a good father. The other was cursed because of the evil deeds of his father. Will our children be blessed or hurt because of us? — Church of Christ, 5328 First Ave. North, Birmingham, Al. 35212.

The All-Sufficiency of God's Word

John B. Tracy

A preacher entered a Bible class while the lesson was in progress and asked the children, "Who broke down the walls of Jericho?" A student responded, "Not me, Sir!" The preacher turned to the teacher and asked, "Is this the usual standard of Bible knowledge in this class?" The teacher answered, "This boy is honest and I believe him. I really don't think he did it". Leaving the room in disgust, the preacher sought out the deacon in charge of teaching and explained what had happened. The deacon retorted, "I have known both teacher and student for some time, and neither of them would do such a thing". By this time the preacher was heart sick and reported it to the elders. They said, "We see no point in causing a big disturbance about it. Let's pay the bill and charge it to upkeep."

While this story is amusing, it is also alarming. Although the point is exaggerated for illustration, too many Bible School programs in the church could be characterized by such a lack of Bible familiarity. And yet, today, perhaps more than ever before, the church needs to return to basic Bible study. With liberalism and modernism creeping into the church on virtually every front, the only safeguard against apostasy is the proper application of Truth against error. To continue as members of the New Testament church we must know the Word, love the

Word, and share the Word with a lost world. We must be again impressed with the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures for the pattern of the church, for the plan of salvation and for the policy of Christian living. We must return to an awareness of what the Bible says about men, instead of just an awareness concerning what men say about the Bible.

John Greenleaf Whittier expresses the folly of human wisdom apart from God's word with these words:

*"We search the world for truth
We call the good, the pure, the
beautiful.
From all old flower fields of the
soul
And weary seekers; are the best!
We come back laden from our
quest.
To find that all that the wise men
said.
Was already in the Book that our
Mothers read!"*

When will the religious world acquire a basic respect for the authority of God's Word in all matters of faith and practice? When will members of the Lord's church indicate their acceptance of the all-sufficiency of the Bible by returning to a more dedicated effort to learn it's contents? — Southside Church of Christ, 1686 Williamson Road, Macon, Georgia 31206.

May It Never Happen Here

JAMES D. JUDD

I wish it were only a story, but it really happened!

A few weeks ago, I visited a congregation. I was greeted warmly at the door. The preacher asked, "Do I know you?" and the fine elderly gentleman answered that he lived near and was visiting. The preacher welcomed him as best he could with many others waiting to come in.

The visitor moved inside where it became clear that he did not know the way to the auditorium. He inquired twice and received a "that-a-way" reply. I went to him and introduced myself, asking if I could show him into the auditorium. He was so appreciative. He said it was embarrassing not knowing where to sit. His wife had planned to come but she was sick, so he came alone.

After a pleasant exchange of words, I moved on greeting my brethren. Before the services began, our visitor was alone in a crowd and not a friend. I asked if I could sit

with him. His face lit up as he said, "I would appreciate it. I'm feeling sorta like the lost sheep, you know how it is when you are new and don't know anyone." My heart melted because if there is a feeling I have known. . . this is it.

We had a wonderful visit, singing and studying together. The personal benefit from that service seemed somehow greater than many in the past. As we worked our way out of the building, one brother came and asked if I had met this visitor. The visitor told the inquiring brother how lost and alone he felt when arriving, but he had found a friend and "sorta felt at home" and would now bring his wife since he knew folks here.

I didn't have the heart to tell this kind soul that I too, was a visitor much less that I was a preacher of the Gospel. Please now, never let a visitor feel alone, without a friend. This is a terrible feeling, especially in the house of God where others so evidently love one another.

Gay Women Preachers

(Continued From Page 1)

sently, and proficiently.

There is simply no scriptural authority for ordaining women preachers, elders, deacons, and such like. Let us not be moved from the right way. Let us help educate others regarding the work of all in the Lord's body. Let us help all who have been swept away by the emotional plea of various women's movements to come back to the way of the Lord. — P. O. Box 414, Centre, Al. 35960.

The Conversation At Caesarea Philippi

(Continued from Page 2)

the gates of Hades would not prevail against his church. Though he would die, go into the compartment of Hades known as Paradise or Abraham's bosom, yet death would not hold him as a permanent captive but would release him. Death would not interfere with his building the church. Hades would not prevail against his church throughout the future either. The late and lamented H.A. Dixon used to say that Matthew 16:18 was the Golden Text of the book of Revelation. The entire book of Revelation is an excellent commentary upon the stability of the church to withstand the greatest of odds, the fiercest of foes, the deadliest of enemies and the most determined of opposition. Just as the city of Caesarea Philippi was well founded and well fortified in that day so his church would be well founded and well fortified. It would be built upon the rock foundation that he was the Christ, the Son of God. It would be founded by the Lord himself. Jesus never turned the building of his church over to another but reserved the rights of building and founding it himself. The church of the Lord would be well fortified. Satan and all his cohorts would be powerless in seeking to destroy the Lord's church. In the words of Hebrews 12:28 it is the divine kingdom or the heavenly institution which cannot be moved, which cannot be shaken.

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

The Lord told Peter in Matthew 16:19, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Jesus spoke of building his church in Matthew 16:18. Yet he called this same divine institution the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 16:19. Hence, he used the terms church and kingdom interchangeably in this intensely interesting conversation. The word church emphasizes that the members are the "called out" ones. By the gospel they are called out of the world into the light, love and service of Jehovah's Cause on earth. (2 Thess. 2:14). The idea of the kingdom emphasizes the concept of how the members of this mighty movement are governed. The church or the kingdom of heaven is a Divine Monarchy. Surely the church and the kingdom are one and the same. Unless this is so, then Jesus promised to build one institution and gave Peter the keys to the wrong institution. That would be a colossal mistake for a human to make; surely it would be even more amazing if God's Infinite Son made it. Obviously he did

not, all the determined premillennialists on earth to be contrary notwithstanding!!

Possession of the keys simply meant that Peter would state the heavenly terms upon which entrance into the divine institution might be achieved. This he did to the Jews on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. This he did to the Gentiles at Caesarea in Acts 10. This same promise was later extended to the entire twelve and not just exclusively to Peter. We read in Matthew 18:18: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Hence, there is no special primacy given to Peter but what was extended later to the entire twelve. In no sense of the term is Peter the head of the church, more than one half billion Romans Catholics to the contrary notwithstanding! In no sense of the term is he set forth within Holy Writ as the head of the apostles. Had he been their apostolic and primary head, surely one of them would have mentioned it elsewhere in the Scriptures of the New Testament. Yet not that first did. The "Primacy of Peter" is not a Bible doctrine unless it is taught in the Bible. It is not taught in the Bible. Therefore it is not a Bible doctrine.

These two passages in Matthew 16:18 and 18:18 do not mean that the apostles had the power to lay down the stipulations for salvation of their own choosing. Matthew

16:18 quite literally means that whatever you, Peter, bind on earth already will have been bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth already will have been loosed in heaven. The same is true in regard to the teaching of Matthew 18:18. Hence, Peter and the apostles would simply be the echoes of the Lord's proclaiming that which already had been decided upon and chosen within Heaven or in the infinite mind of Jehovah God. It should be kept in mind also that when Peter spoke on Pentecost, at the household of Cornelius in Acts 10 and as all of them spoke at other times subsequent to the day of Pentecost, it was not really their doing the speaking but the Spirit of the Father who was speaking through them. Jesus made this matter crystal clear in Matthew 10:19-20 and in John 16:13 when he declared it would not be their speaking but the Spirit's speaking through them. They simply were given the right to preach and proclaim that which already was decided in the infinite counsels of Heaven.

Why did Jesus forbid their telling any man that he was the Christ? They were not yet prepared fully for this work of proclamation and the time was not yet ripe for its being heralded to a waiting world. What a truly great conversation we have in Matthew 16:13-20. It sparkles with a multitude of gems - gems of saving truth. — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tn. 38063.

A Plea For Balance

CURTIS DOWDY

I have talked with several brethren about a problem I sense within the brotherhood. Early last week I wrote James W. Clark about this problem. Sunday morning I received a telephone call from brother Clark, preacher at Bremen, Georgia; he shares my concern. I refer to it simply as an unbalanced spirit.

This spirit is untimely for many reasons, but perhaps the two greatest reasons are the loss of two great stabilizers. I mean, of course, brother Gus Nichols and B.C. Goodpasture. These men had the spiritual integrity and stamina to balance a given situation. There are others among us who have this ability, this discernment, this objectivity, but there are never enough and to lose one hurts, much less two.

I have learned much from many people; in fact I learn something from everyone. Brother Franklin Camp taught me years ago to listen and I could learn from a ditch digger; I have never forgotten. I listened to brother Nichols in his Friday night training classes and to brother Goodpasture when he visited in our home, hearing them speak and reading their writings. Of the many lessons these stalwarts have taught me I list a few, which are needed now as never before.

1. Always try to be fair.
2. Don't be too hasty.
3. Don't try to force one to accept a position he doesn't really believe.
4. Never be factious (one can be factious even when he has the truth).
5. Try to see the other fellow's side.
6. Never be bitter.
7. Maintain the "Christ-like" attitude.
8. Have the facts before you before you speak.
9. Be ready to listen (keep an open mind) and to forgive.
10. Always preach the truth in love.

These principles have all come from the "sermon on the mount." They hold the solution to our problem of an unbalanced spirit."

In our efforts earnestly to "contend for the

faith" we should practice the above. However I wish to emphasize the no. 1 - "Always try to be fair." Now I readily admit that this is not easy, especially when someone does not agree with me. Nevertheless, unless I maintain a balance, a fairness, I may end up like Herod the Great, turning upon my own, out of suspicion and fear, destroying them and myself.

For years here in Tennessee some of us have pleaded for a "fairness law" regarding science textbooks. We have not at this writing been able to get it. It would be a shame for us to plead for "fairness" in science textbooks while for a lack of fairness we ripped the brotherhood apart. The legs of the lame are unequal.

Brethren, we need balance as we face the live issues of the day. Anyone can run toward extremes when he feels strongly about something. When there is a point of difference between good brethren and both have strong feelings the pull is away from each other. At that point balance is so essential - a movement back toward the center.

To assist us in this balancing effort I recommend the following to read often: Eph. 4:1-6; Matt. 5:9; Phil. 2:3; Prov. 17:19; Rom. 12:3; I Cor. 13.

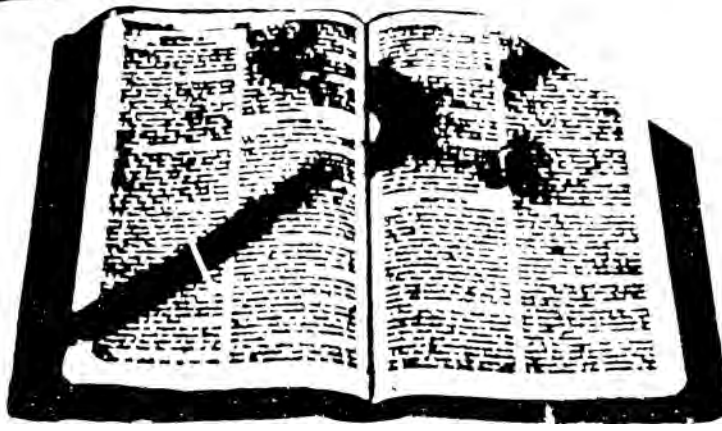
The time has come for men of balance to speak out and to help balance the rest of us. It will take many to fill the void left by brothers Nichols and Goodpasture. As my good friend and professor Rex A. Turner Sr. says, "We all need a good balance wheel." — P.O. Box 456, Obion, Tn. 38240.

"Gossiping is sometimes called the hoof and mouth disease - hoofing it over to the neighbor and mousing. This disease has never built a church, but it has torn many a church asunder."

WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



Speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

VOLUME 13

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NUMBER 14

Is Social Drinking Justified?

(No. 1)

For some three or four articles in WORDS OF TRUTH I want to discuss with you one of the great evils of our day. It is a rampaging evil. Its victims are now numbered among the multiplied millions. More and more it is being extended social grace and approval. More and more it is being accepted as a way of life. More and more members of the church are joining the ranks of the social drinking crowd. Preachers and writers who oppose such are not very high in the popularity scales with such loose and lax members of the church. But that does not matter in the least with this writer. WHAT IS RIGHT is far more important in determining attitudes and actions than WHAT IS POPULAR in our book.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

ALCOHOL IS NOW BIG BUSINESS

There is neither doubt nor debate over the fact that consumption of alcoholic beverages in our country is big business. It is bad business all right but BIG is its proper designation. It is big from the standpoint of the amount that is produced. It is big from the standpoint of the number of people employed in its manufacture. It is big from the amount of advertising that is done to increase its sales and promote its use among humanity. It is big from the growing number who are becoming more and more addicted to its slavish use. It is big from the standpoint of what it does to the brain and body of man; what it does to the soul now and for an eternity that is yet to be. It is big from the standpoint of problems it creates both for its users and those who never touch it but are adversely affected by the alcoholic users. It is big from the multiplied thousands who cross over into the camp of problem drinking and alcoholism every month, every year. The problems growing out of alcoholic consumption are greatly magnified due to the fact that its makers, promoters and patrons paint a rosy picture for those they seek to conquer to its slavish use. The end of the problem is ruin, eternal ruin. Liquor brings ruin to the body, the mind and the spirit of man. It destroys man morally, spiritually, bodily, mentally and socially.

Liquor has the great power to destroy the whole of man. Liquor has some well known but frequently concealed aliases. They are RUIN, DESTRUCTION, DEGRADATION, IRRESPONSIBILITY, SADNESS, DEATH and the like. Yet the masses of men hearken to it as though it were totally harmless. But HARMLESS it is not!

THE INCREASING CURSE OF SOCIAL DRINKING

The main gist of these few articles, as indicated in the title, is to be about social drinking. Without serious doubts this is the greatest class of alcoholic consumers. Social drinkers are not as yet classed as heavy drinkers. They do not now need to drink morning, afternoon and evening. They do not now seek to drink while alone. They are not yet classed as alcoholics. The NOT YET concept is mentioned because many of them in the future will become heavy drinkers. Many of them will leave the crowd of drinkers and will begin to drink in privacy. They will reach the state where no day is a day without liquor or a day without strong desire for more and more liquor. They will reach the place where they will spend money for liquor that is needed for food, clothing and shelter. Some will reach the camp of acute alcoholism. How did they begin? Like all drinkers do without exception. By taking that first drink! That is the most fatal step in a life of drinking—the very first one. Then they began to take it in smaller portions. Drinking with the crowds and to be socially acceptable came next. Many of them once prided themselves on being able to take their liquor or to leave it alone. But as is usually the case they decided not to leave it alone and soon it began to take them. Alcohol became the king; it became the tyrant. They became duped serfs to its addicting powers; they became the enslaved patrons of something that proved to be too powerful for them.

In our country today there is a growing laxity relative to drinking, especially social drinking. The practice is increasing among adults; it is taking a sharp rise among the youth of our land. THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL of Memphis, Tennessee, in its edition for February 20, 1975, revealed some startling information relative to the drinking habits of young people in New York City. This survey was made among juniors and seniors in high school. Their ages would have been about sixteen to eighteen. 8,400 were surveyed. They survey revealed that 80 per

cent of the males and 75 per cent of the females drink "beer, wine or liquor". The "vast majority" of them do so only on special occasions and in limited amounts. The survey further revealed that the age at which these youngsters began to drink is steadily dropping. Many of them are already having real problems with strong drink and they are yet in their teens. Some of them are already alcoholics. Read it beloved, and weep! This is among our young people in this great country that has so much to offer to a young person of sober mind, strong body and responsible disposition.

SOCIAL DRINKING: A REAL PROBLEM AMONG RELIGIOUS PEOPLE

Social drinking has become a way of life with vast multitudes of people. Included in this growing number are many people who call themselves religious. They think nothing about spending Saturday night out drinking with the devil's crowd and then coming to a church service Sunday morning when the smell of liquor has scarcely vacated their breath! The number of people who attempt to justify social drinking is increasing. Joining the ranks of those who drink and try to justify it are religious leaders. The number includes preachers, elders, deacons, Bible school teachers, etc. In a Southern city a short time ago there was a young man teaching a class of teen-agers. He was telling them what is wrong with social drinking. One of the young girls in class spoke up and said that her Daddy kept beer in the refrigerator at home and the family thought nothing was wrong with drinking. Would you be surprised to learn that he was a church leader in that congregation? He was! The young man went to him immediately and suggested that such was wrong on the church leader's part. The drinking deacon told him immediately that there is nothing wrong in drinking as long as one does not get drunk in the process.

Closely akin to this has been the often expressed sentiment, "The Bible does not condemn drinking; it only condemns drunkenness." The implication of this is that if one avoids out right drunkenness, then he may drink in varying amounts all he wants and as often as he desires without sin. Beloved readers, do you believe this? I tell you rather plainly that I do not believe a word of this! Surely people who voice such folly as this have not read very carefully what the Bible says about strong drink. Solomon, the Wisest of the Ages, said this in Proverbs 20:1:

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FROM
THE EDITOR

The Second Generation



BOBBY DUNCAN

sook the Lord God of their fathers. . . ."
(Judges 2:7-12).

Joshua had, with due emphasis, transmitted to his generation, and to the next, the will of God. Consequently no apostasy occurred during the lifetime of Joshua, or during the lifetime of those who immediately followed him. But the following generation forsook the Lord. It is obvious that, while their parents were faithful to God themselves, they failed to transmit with due emphasis the will of God to their children.

Brother Guy N. Woods has made the following comments:

"It is my conviction, friends, that we are in the second generation today. Why, there are those. . . who, under no conceivable circumstance will ever renounce the truth for denominationalism in any form. We have been taught the truth, and we have it so deeply engrained in our hearts and in our characters, that there is no possible way by which we could be induced to give it up, or to renounce it.

"But in my view there is real reason to be concerned about whether or not we are transmitting it to the next generation with the emphasis with which it came to us. We forget

that in every generation the truth must be taught all over again, or apostasy results."

There is, indeed, evidence to indicate that we are in the second generation. Apostasy will not claim us, because preceding generations have, with due emphasis, transmitted to us

Good Ministers

(I Tim. 4:6)



Arvel Curtis

A minister is a servant, an attendant, one who ministers to the needs of others both physically and spiritually. Jesus said, "But whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister" (Mk. 10:43). All members of the church are ministers. The idea that the local preacher is "The Minister" of the church is false. He

is simply one of the ministers of the church. The scene of the judgment given by Christ in Matthew 25 does not say that "All Preachers" will be gathered before him but "All Nations" (See verses 31, 32 and 44). Paul said, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). All members of the church have the responsibility to minister to others to the extent of their ability and time. Although all Christians are ministers, the intent of this article is to deal mostly with those of us who preach the gospel. Most of the instructions herein are based on the apostle Paul's words to the young preacher Timothy.

PAUL CHARGED TIMOTHY TO BE A GOOD MINISTER. "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained" (I Tim. 4:6). Those who preach the gospel should desire to be the best ministers possible. There is an old saying that anything worth doing is worth doing right. This certainly would apply to ministers of the gospel of Christ.

There are some things that do not determine whether one is a good minister. For example, what one thinks of himself does not determine this. To hear some preachers boast of their accomplishments would lead some to believe that such were good ministers. Sometimes by merely reading a church bulletin one might think that man to be a great minister. If some preachers were as great as their own bulletin portrays them, it would be an occasion to stop every few lines and sing "How Great Thou Art". Because one thinks he is a good minister does not necessarily make him one. Fancy clothes do not make one a good minister. Although preachers should dress well and be as neat in appearance as possible, that alone does not make him a good minister. A preacher may work for a large church and preach in the largest building in town, but this does not necessarily make him a good minister. Any preacher who is not a good minister by the standard given by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament is

the will of God. Bust are we transmitting it to the next generation with the emphasis with which it came to us? Or have we forgotten that in every generation the truth must be taught all over again?

not a good minister at all. If we can look at some of the charges given by Paul as he wrote to Timothy, it should give us an idea of just what to look for in God's approved minister.

A GOOD MINISTER MUST BE A MINISTER OF LOVE. "Now the end of the commandment is charity (love A. C.) out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned" (I Tim. 1:5). Love must motivate us to do what we do. Whatever charge, exhortation or rebuke that was to be given by Timothy was to be given in love. There may be those who preach for the sake of pride, prestige, money, or just to be able to stand before a group and speak, but such are not good ministers. The good minister preaches because he loves God, Christ, the gospel, the church and the lost. He preaches because the word burns within him as Jeremiah of old. "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer. 20:9). Someone said that brother H. Leo Boles used to advise young preachers, "don't preach if you can keep from it". This is good advice. If one's love for the gospel does not compel him to preach then maybe he should not preach.

Preachers must be ministers of love and it is important that we understand that love. Some seem to have the idea that if one loves he will preach only positive sermons. This person does not understand the love Paul here speaks about. It is a false idea of love to conclude that if you love the church you will not preach a sermon that rebukes sin in the church. Those who have this attitude have never learned that it requires more love to rebuke than to favor, compromise or commend. For example, it is easy to commend a brother who is doing a good job leading the singing or teaching a class. But how easy is it to approach a brother face to face with his sin that will condemn his soul? Which takes the most love? Those who overlook sin and fail to point out sin in their sermons contribute to souls being lost. The apostle Paul said, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15). This love includes positive preaching, negative preaching, exhorting, reproving and rebuking (II Tim. 4:1-8). Those who desire only positive preaching would not welcome the apostle Paul or even the Son of God into their pulpits.

GOOD MINISTERS OF CHRIST WILL STAND UP FOR THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL. "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (I Tim. 1:3). Judaizing teachers plagued the church during Paul's ministry. It seems they followed him in an attempt to destroy the good he accomplished. Hence he left Timothy at Ephesus to speak up

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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"Give an analysis of I Tim. 4:1-15, as it relates to young preachers."

An analysis of I Tim. 4 will reveal that the apostle there discussed at length, ministers both good and bad: (1) the Spirit's prophecy concerning heretics in latter times (1-5); (2) what constitutes a good minister—(a) as touching heresy (6); (b) as touching himself in example (6-12); (c) as touching himself in consecration to study, exhortation, and teaching.

That heretics would inevitably make their appearance in the latter times, and that some would depart from the faith, is clearly indicated. To this end "the Spirit" spoke "expressly". Several facts of much significance follow from this statement: (1) The Spirit speaketh, as over against the "seducing spirits" that lead men to apostasy. (2) The Spirit speaks *expressly* — i.e., plainly, intelligibly. (3) The things revealed by the Spirit to occur in the latter times were: (a) men shall fall away (apostatize from the faith); (b) give heed to seducing spirits; (c) follow the doctrines of devils; (d) speak lies in hypocrisy; (e) have a seared conscience. Evidence of the acceptance of the doctrines of demons would be (1) forbidding to marry; (2) commanding to abstain from meats, *Celibacy* and *asceticism* were to be outstanding marks of the apostasy.

These theories grow out of the view that the body is the seat of evil, a view of wide prevalence in the apostolic age. Paul was forced to contend with it on numerous occasions, and numerous churches of the New Testament were imbued in part at least with this heresy. The letters to the churches in Corinth and Colosse deal with certain phases of these pagan superstitions. From the apostolic age to the present these doctrines have wrought much evil in the world. The doctrine of celibacy is the father of monasteries. It has served to foist on to the world in every age a crowd of exceedingly bad men and women. It strikes at the very foundation of society, the home; and makes marriage a thing of evil, despite the fact that "marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled" (Heb. 13:4). God instituted marriage in the sunny recesses of the Edenic home, Christ honored it with his divine presence, and the Holy Spirit sanctified it by likening it to Christ and the church. No idle hermit in his cave, no ascetic monk in his cell, and no nun in her convent can exclude sin from the heart. This is not the manner in which the child of God is to avoid sin. Jesus, in the shadows of Gethsemane prayed: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one" (John 17:15). We are thus to elude the power of sin while in the world, and not its *presence*; this, so long as we remain in the world, is impossible.

From a consideration of evil ministers the apostle turns to a good minister of Jesus Christ (I Tim. 4:6). He is thus described: "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness". His preaching is thus to be: (1) *negative* — i.e., put the brethren in

remembrance of these things by warning them of the seducing spirits; (2) *positive*, nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine, by which he would be able to edify and instruct the church. Any preacher is remiss in his duty who does not incorporate into his work these two characteristics of effective preaching. He sustains a responsibility to those about him to warn them of dangers that would lead to apostasy; and he must include in his preaching that which will strengthen, edify, and build up the saints.

Moreover, he is to serve as an *example*: (1) in heartily believing what he preaches; (2) in character and life (letting no man despise his youth); (3) in diligent study and practice ("till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine"). The duty of the preacher to *study* is thus clearly set forth. It is only in this way that he can make the necessary personal advancement essential to successful work as an evangelist, or acquire the information needed to make his preaching effective and productive of results. The following statement, from an old preacher of another generation, quaintly expresses the importance of much study on the part of

preachers: "Some preachers fall into the habit of preaching the same sermons over and over again. Such a habit calls for a wide range of ever-changing pasturage. The first time such a sermon is a juicy roast, next time it is only warmed over, next time it is hash, next time it is soup out of the bones. Finally, it becomes as weak as the sick soldier's soup—made by holding a piece of blue beef up between the sun and a pot of boiling water, so as to boil the shadow! Soon those sermons that warmed your own heart will no longer taste well, not even to your own mouth, and you may be sure that they will not taste well to the congregation."

Young preachers need to be repeatedly warned against mental and spiritual laziness. The unused gift or faculty goes into paralysis; a stream, ceasing to flow, stagnates; the law of atrophy operates to destroy that which becomes inactive. Booker T. Washington tells the story of his rebuke of a congregation for violation of its contract to pay their preacher, and how he was completely silenced by a remark of one of their sturdy members: "We done paid for them sermons *last year!*"

Let's Fight Pornography

TOM CHILDERS

HUSTLER magazine is a pornographic publication which sets forth in blazing colors homosexuals and lesbians in the sexual act. The editor of this magazine made the national news recently when he was arrested for publishing the magazine. What caught our attention was the fact that this magazine is sold above the counter in Lamar County and the young people said it could be purchased as easily as soft drinks. Pornography is destroying the minds, morals and souls of our people. We feel it is time Christians stood up and took a stand against pornography.

Christians can fight pornography by knowing if it is sold openly in their community. Elders, preachers, Bible teachers and parents should go to the local businesses, that stock magazines and examine what is being sold. If one is embarrassed (and a Christian should be) to be seen standing in front of most of these magazine racks, then take your wife or one of the elders with you and investigate what is offered for sale. If you find such hard-core publications as Hustler, Playgirl, Male, Oui, Club International, Gallery, Club, High Scoeity, For Men Only, Pent House, Stag or Advisor, please be assured that your day will be ruined and you will be deeply disturbed if you love decency. If you find such literature (?) then let the store

owner know that you object to its sale and you will no longer do business with him if he continues its sale. Also tell him you will use your influence to ask others not to do business with him.

One can fight pornography by mail by taking the matter received to the local Post Office and signing form 2150. This form is based on Title 39, United States Code No. 4009 which prohibits a company from offering for sale by mail any erotically arousing and sexually provocative matter.

We can fight pornography by not buying it ourselves and rebuking brethren who do. Pornography and Christianity do not go together. The person who reads the Bible will be a better person. The person who makes pornography his daily diet will be worse off mentally and spiritually. The Bible says an adulterer and fornicator cannot go to heaven (I Corinthians 6:9-10). How does one become an adulterer or fornicator? Not only by the act, but Jesus said by the lustful look (Matthew 5:28). By not stretch of the imagination can a person be pure in heart and be a regular looker at pornography.

Let's fight pornography. In doing so, we are fighting FOR decency and the salvation of the souls that pornography seeks to destroy.—624 Ridgeway, Bolivar, Tn. 38008.

Preach The Word

DALTON KEY

The obligations to "speak . . . the things which become sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1) and to "speak . . . as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11) rest squarely upon the shoulders of all who would print, publish, or preach religious materials. Young Timothy was charged by Paul to "preach the word", for "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:1-4). To the brethren at Corinth Paul declared, "woe is me if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16). No other message would he preach save that gospel revealed unto him of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11,12). Christ commissioned His apostles to "go . . . into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark

16:15). Observe, please, that these messengers were not sent out to preach their own opinions; they were not sent out to preach the world's wisdom; they were not sent out to proclaim the theories of Calvin, Wesley, Luther, or Eddy; they were divinely commissioned to preach the gospel.

So many today would ignore these plain and simple admonitions to "preach the word" and the word alone. This is evidenced by the enormity of religious division which plagues our land today. Let us strive always to "speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent." - Box 619, Douglass, Kansas 67039.

Is Social Drinking Justified?

(No. 1)

(Continued From Page 1)

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Again the inspired monarch wrote, "Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: . . ." (Prov. 23:20). Later in the same chapter Inspiration prompted Solomon to say, "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:29-32). Does this sound like the Bible provides sanction for drinking provided outright drunkenness is avoided? Does this sound like Scriptural approval for social drinking? It has the definite tone and absolute tenor of total abstinence to me. One is not only to refrain from drinking such but is not ever to look upon such with approval when it is in its intoxicative stages.

The New Testament presents this general prohibition which certainly includes strong drink in all amounts. Paul said, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). The

American Standard Version says, ". . . abstain from every form of evil." Considered as a tree, strong drink is evil in its roots, its trunk, its branches and its leaves. The person who wants to please God cannot pluck from its infamous fruits and partake in controlled amounts. Social drinking is sin, Sin, SIN!!! There is no way it can be justified regardless of the person who thinks he can.

SOCIAL DRINKING: ITS SURE FRUITS

Social drinking is to alcoholism what that first does of deadly dope is to addiction. It is what that session of heavy petting is to overt fornication. It is what the lusting or coveting of another's possessions is to outright theft or brazen robbery. It is what that first effort to deceive is to a life of lying. Each is a door opener. Social drinking is the opening of the door that leads DOWN-WAY DOWN-a long corridor. DOWN that corridor will be found heavy drinking, problem drinking, alcoholism, poverty, social ostracism, loss of health and ultimately the loss of one's soul. Beloved reader, to open that door is not justified. IT CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED. Social drinking is wrong, woefully wrong!

P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Good Ministers

(I Tim. 4:6)

(Continued from Page 2)

for the gospel and to charge false teachers that they teach no other doctrine at Ephesus. There was only one gospel in Paul's day. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:4, 5). The one faith spoken of here is the gospel.

The Galatian churches were also having their problems with false teachers perverting the gospel (please read Galatians 1:6-10). Some conclusions from these verses are (1) There was only one gospel (v. 7). (2) Some were perverting the one gospel (v. 7). (3) When one changes the true gospel in one point, it is no longer the gospel (v. 6, 7). (4) The judgment of God will be against those who change the gospel (v. 8, 9). (5) If one changes the gospel, he is a man pleaser and not the servant of Christ (V. 10). It would naturally follow that the one gospel's being preached would result in the establishment of one church. Paul said there is one body and one faith (Eph. 4:4, 5). The apostle knew that a perverted gospel would lead to a divided church. The reason we have so many churches today is because we have so many perverted gospels. Paul declared to the Galatians that a perverted gospel is a no gospel. When men preach today that it is a matter of opinion whether we use instrumental music in worship, they preach a no gospel. When brethren preach and teach that the church should fellowship those who practice the "holy roller" doctrine of the Holy Spirit, they preach a perverted, no gospel. Good ministers will stand up for the truth of the gospel as Timothy was instructed to do. They will not bury their heads in the sand as if nothing is happening while anti and liberal movements threaten the church. They are concerned about mission work, personal work, edification and benevolence, but they also are ready to stand firm and defend the truth.

"I am set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). So is every good minister of the gospel of Christ.

GOOD MINISTERS ARE NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God (2 Tim. 1:8). "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). For a period of about fifteen years the church of Christ was said to be the fastest growing religious institution in the world. In 1967 this scribe remembers a large banner stretched across a fair booth in Florence, South Carolina with those words written on it. Why are we not growing as we have in years past? Someone has suggested that it is because of sin in the church; that we are no longer as concerned as we have been about keeping the church pure. I am sure this is part of our problem. I also feel that another problem is that many preachers and elders have become ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Why a statement like this? Many preachers have taken the Bible out of their preaching, and elders allow them to continue to fill the pulpit. Too many preachers hurriedly read one or two passages just to get to what they want to say or what some man has said. Is it no longer important what God said? One man recently told me of visiting a church in which the preacher preached for about twenty-five minutes to approximately 500 church members and did not use one verse of scripture in his entire speech. It seems that there would be no circumstance possible for speaking from the pulpit for twenty five minutes without using some scripture. I would be

ashamed to speak even five minutes at a P.T.A. meeting without referring to the word of God.

Also it is not uncommon to hear of a preacher holding a gospel meeting and preaching an entire sermon and never giving the plan of salvation. If we do not intend to tell people they are lost and how to be saved, why are we preaching? Some say we should not tell a person he is lost. After all they say, we're not the judge. Such are ashamed of the gospel of Christ. The Bible clearly states that those who know not God and obey not the gospel of Christ are lost (II Thess. 1:7-9). How is it possible to save souls and see the church grow if we will not show people by the scriptures that they are lost and show them by the word of God how to be saved? Is it any wonder we have dropped in growth? People in general are anxious to hear the truth whether they will accept it or not. We need to let them have the plain truth of God and let them decide for themselves if they desire to obey or not. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32). Good ministers preach in love, but they preach the gospel and are not ashamed. — P. O. Box 6477, Moore, Oklahoma 73160.

Smile A Little

A California driver was speeding along a mountain road in his sports car when he ran over the edge. The car top was down and the driver managed to grab hold of a tree as the car dropped thousands of feet into the canyon.

"Help," he called, as he hung on, dangling above the canyon. "Can anyone hear me," and all he got back was an echo: ". . .hear me?"

"God, can you hear me?" he called. The clouds rolled together and a deep voice said: "Yes, I can hear you." "Will you help me?" "Yes, I will help," answered God. "Do you believe in me?" "Yes, yes, I believe in you." "Do you trust me?" "Yes, yes, I trust in you. . . . but please hurry."

"If you trust in me, let go of the tree." A long silence. . . then the man hanging from the tree cried out, "Can anyone else hear me?"

Want This Job?????

A Christian business man advertised for new employees. He stated that a generous salary was available with good working conditions. But only those who were faithful members of the church would be considered.

The executive was convinced that no true Christian would even consider giving less than the minimum the Jews were required to give, so in his advertisement he stated that he would pay a salary that would be ten times what the new employee had given the church in the previous year.

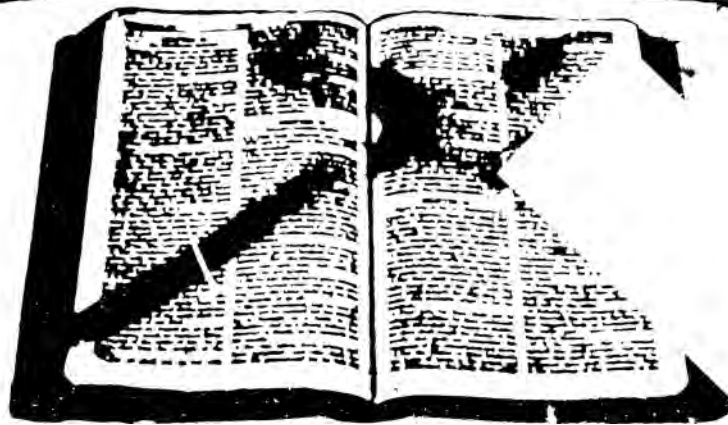
If you had seen his offer, would you have accepted the job?? Some have said they could not afford to work for such a ridiculously small salary.

How about YOU??????

"We have been told to 'give until it hurts'. I have observed that some of my brethren are extremely sensitive to pain!"

"The person who never loses himself in the Lord's work, will never find himself in the Lord's reward."

WORDS of TRUTH



*"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32*

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

*"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25*

*and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17*

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The Whole Armor Of God

Every Christian is a soldier of Christ, a soldier of the cross. "Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Wherefore take up the **WHOLE ARMOR** of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:10ff).



VIRGIL BRADFORD

In Paul's writing to Timothy he alludes to the Roman soldier and warfare showing that we are all in a fight to the finish. By the prophecies of Scripture he was to "war a good warfare" (I Tim. 1:18). Again, he is urged to "fight the good fight of faith" (I Tim. 6:12). Then, "Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 2:3). And in reference to Paul's own experience as a "soldier of Christ" he writes, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" (II Tim. 4:7). As a result of this kind of warfare "there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."

MUST VOLUNTEER

As Tennessee has long been known as the "Volunteer State" so the army of Jesus is made up wholly of volunteers. He will never press you into his service against your will. We are all free to make the choice for ourselves as to whom we shall serve. To Israel the prophet said for the Lord, "If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land" (Isa. 1:19). Jesus the Son of God in his struggle against Satan says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). And how every soul under the yoke of sin needs that

rest! The Lord Jesus Christ is the "Captain" of our salvation. He leads the way. He has conquered death, the grave and all the Hadean world in the glory and power of his resurrection. He has never lost a battle, and indeed, one of the principle purposes of the Revelation is to assure his people that all the enemies of Christ will eventually be overcome. Christ will conquer all the powers of Satan and the world. The last enemy to be destroyed is death; and the devil, along with all the wicked persecuting world, will be cast into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (See Jn. 16:33; I Cor. 15:25; Rev. 20:10).

OUR STRENGTH MUST BE THE POWER OF CHRIST

Let us not imagine that we of ourselves are able to stand successfully against the "wiles of the devil." "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from Jehovah" (Jer. 17:5). Both in the days of Isaiah and of Jeremiah in the face of being carried captive by the Assyrians and Babylonians respectively, Israel thought to escape the sure word of God by going to Egypt for help. Their hope was in armed men, horses and chariots, but not in the Living God. Their end is well known: Israel was carried away into Assyria and enslaved; Judah was carried into Babylon for seventy years until they learned that they needed help from God Almighty. It is still "Not in man that walks to direct his steps." And "I can do all things through him (Christ) who strengtheneth me" (Jer. 10:23; Phil. 4:13).

THE WHOLE ARMOR

Just imagine the soldier of Paul's days going forth with helmet, shield, sword, girdle and breastplate but leaving off his thick-soled shoes! He would be practically helpless in the face of the enemy. One article missing would make him fatally vulnerable to the enemy attack. Yes, the whole armor must be put on, as with the soldier so also with the soldier of Christ Jesus. The story has been told of a battle ship with a twelve inch steel armored deck sunk by an enemy's plane flying over and dropping a bomb down the smoke stack, the only unprotected spot on the whole top side of the ship. The results: total destruction. Well did Benjamin Franklin write on this matter, "A little neglect may breed mischief: for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want

of a shoe the horse was lost; for the want of a horse the rider was lost." Hence, the battle and the kingdom were all lost for the want of just one little nail. This principle is a fact of life which we should face while time is on our side.

CHRISTIAN WARFARE NOT CARNAL

As stated in the text our fighting is not against flesh and blood. It is not a carnal engagement with guns, planes, ships and tanks; but, it is against spiritual wickedness, against the devil and all who serve in his ranks. Our fight, in reality, is against Satan. In his effort to defeat the Christ he uses every deceitful tactic by every possible approach that he can muster against truth and righteousness. He can be an angel of light, a roaring lion, or the subtle serpent. He is able to become all things to all men for evil. But let us believe that Christ is greater in power and in the end Satan and his army will go down in defeat. What a miserable world this would be otherwise. Yet, there are three, and only three, avenues of temptation he can use, namely, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. He used this approach with Eve; tried it on Christ, and uses it on every occasion possible with you and me (See I John 2:15-17). Satan is the spirit that works in the children of disobedience; Christ works in and through those whose hearts are determined to follow the "Captain of their salvation" to the final victory of the ages.

REPETITION, REPETITION, REPETITION

Repetition on our part is sometimes rather vain, but never with the Lord. He twice urges taking the **WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD**, then proceeds to tell us exactly what the armor is. Only by this are we able to war the good warfare. One can't fight Satan while living a life of evil, alienated from God and neglecting his own soul. Satan must be withstood. And "having done all to stand" means to stand steadfastly in the faith, using the armor both defensively and offensively. When we put forth our best effort we will still need that help from above, from Him who is Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. He is our pattern, our great example. When attacked by Satan he wielded the sword of the Spirit, simply, but with great skill (Matt. 4). You and I can do the same if

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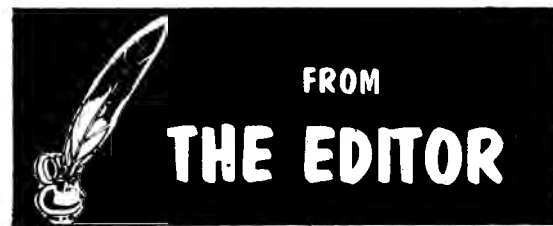
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Keeping Score

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:21, 22).

Jesus had taught a lesson on forgiveness and on restoring the transgressor. It is said that the Jewish leaders had established the tradition of requiring that a transgressor be forgiven three times. Peter indicated that the teaching of the Lord had caused him to progress beyond that point. He doubled that number, then added one more to it, and came up with seven.

But Peter was in error. He made the mistake of wanting to keep score with regard to right doing. He was willing to do whatever was necessary - even unto forgiving seven times - in order to get across that line which separated right from wrong. But it was enough just to be barely on the right side of that line.

Jesus' reply shows the fault with Peter's thinking. Why, Peter, would you want to hang around on the borderline? Why be so concerned about keeping score? Would it be so tragic should you forgive a transgressor one more time than is absolutely necessary? Why not throw away your score card and forgive as many times as is possible, so you may know the joy of being like Christ, and so your growth as a follower of Christ might not be so stunted by the limitations you have placed upon yourself?

Many there are who are all too concerned about a borderline. This is not to suggest that there is not a line of demarcation between



BOBBY DUNCAN

right and wrong. There very definitely is such a line, and we must recognize and respect it. We are rather suggesting that some want to stay too close to that line. While they do not wish to displease God, like Peter, they want to keep score; and like Peter, they inevitably get hauled up short.

It should be the desire of every Christian to do all the good he can, and to stay as far away from evil as is possible. A familiar story, and yet one which illustrates our point, is of the king who was trying to hire a driver for his chariot. The first applicant bragged that he could come to within an inch of a cliff's edge without any danger at all. The second said he could drive up to the very edge of the cliff without any danger. The third applicant was awarded the job when he said that he did not know how close he could get to the edge of the cliff, and he was not interested in learning. He was more interested in staying as far away from the edge as he could. This should be our attitude toward the line that separates right from wrong, but it is not the attitude of some.

Take, for example, the matter of church attendance. Some ask if we believe it is necessary for a Christian to attend all the services. Now, why would one ask such a question? Is it because he wants to attend as many services as necessary, but no more? It would seem that all Christians would want to attend every service possible, whether such is required of God or not. But some, like Peter, have made it impossible for themselves to

grow in the faith, because they have placed foolish limitations upon themselves. They are so afraid they will attend more services than is necessary.

The matter of our giving is another example. How many times have preachers been asked if Christians must give a tenth? Is one asking such a question saying that he will give a tenth if required, but otherwise will be satisfied to give much less? Every real Christian wants to give as much to the Lord and His cause as is possible. He is not worried about the possibility that he will give more than is absolutely required.

The same principle applies to every aspect of our lives. But some insist on keeping score with God with regard to the amount of time they spend in Bible study, the way they dress, the way they talk, the way they wear their hair, the kind of recreation in which they engage, their personal involvement in the work of the church, etc. In all of these areas they want to do what God requires of them in order to go to heaven, but, having done so, they are careful to do no more.

Jesus taught what we often call "second mile religion" (Matt. 5:38-41). Paul taught that we should "abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). The religion of our Lord is one in which we must completely and unconditionally surrender to Christ (Rom. 6). When we have so done, we will quit keeping score with God.

"Ma" Bramlett - A Godly Woman

JERRY T. BRAMLETT

Beulah Jeffcoat Bramlett, affectionately known as "Ma" Bramlett, passed away in Tupelo, Mississippi on Wednesday, February 9, 1977. "Ma" Bramlett was born August 10, 1876. She married James T. Bramlett on November 24, 1895 and this union was blessed with four sons and four daughters, five of whom are still living today. She obeyed the gospel in 1892 in Choctaw County in Mississippi. "Ma" Bramlett and her family later moved to Tupelo, Mississippi where she was one of the founders of the church in Tupelo. She was the oldest member of the church in Lee County, and she is thought to have been the oldest member in the entire South. "Ma" Bramlett was the first cousin to Doss Jeffcoat, who was a leading pioneer gospel preacher throughout the Southeast and Southwest and did much in strengthening the Lord's church in Mississippi.

On "Ma" Bramlett's 100th birthday, August 10, 1976, five generations of Bramletts gathered with her in her honor, and she received letters of congratulations from President Ford, the Mayor of Tupelo, Governor Cliff Finch of Mississippi and was also made the oldest Colonel on the Staff of Governor Finch on her birthday.

Through the years of her long life I have gleaned many lessons from her that have helped me to be a better person. She was a living example of Matthew 5:16. All of her eight children were baptized into Christ. Her influence went beyond her sons and daughters. Her grandson, Preston Bramlett, is an elder at the Gloster Street church of Christ in Tupelo, Mississippi. Another grandson (this writer) is a gospel preacher in Parrish, Alabama. Paul K. Bramlett, her great-grand son, is the capable song leader at the West Main Church of Christ in Tupelo. "Ma" was a woman of great faith. She never wavered in her faith and was always present for worship until infirmities of the years prevented her from being able to leave her home. Her faith was deep-seeded in the Word of God and everything that was involved in living a

Christian life.

Many times when I would visit "Ma" Bramlett in the hospital she would admonish me as I would get ready to depart by saying, "Jerry, you had better preach the gospel." She fully believed that "the gospel was the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16). She would not hear to "soft-soaping" or "watering down" the gospel of Jesus Christ.

After suffering a stroke in 1970 she had to have a leg amputated on two different occasions. She would tell the doctor that she did not want to have surgery, but just let her die and go home to be with the Lord. She had no fear of physical death. She believed what the Psalmist said in Psalms 116:15: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." II Timothy 4:6-8 describes her feelings concerning this life and physical death: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there

Continued on page 4



STANDING LEFT TO RIGHT: Victor Bramlett, Marie Hickson, Mollibet Kendrick, Myrtle Rogers, Vindex Bramlett. SEATED: "Ma" Bramlett.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Who are the 'widows' indeed' mentioned in I Tim. 5:3, 9, 10, 16?"

Paul, in his first Epistle to Timothy, said, "Honor widows that are widows indeed" (I Tim. 5:3). To honor is, literally, "to show respect for." Here, however, the word has figurative significance and designates the obligation to provide support. Aside from this usage in other instances in the sacred writings, such a conclusion would properly follow from the fact that it is manifestly impossible to show proper regard for a deserving person in need without supplying the need. The "widow indeed," is one destitute with no one who can, or will, provide such needs.

"Let none be enrolled as a widow under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works; if she hath brought up children, if she hath used hospitality to strangers, if she hath washed the saint's feet, if she hath relieved the afflicted, if she hath diligently followed every good work" (I Tim. 5:9, 10). This is, by many, a much misapprehended and misunderstood passage and is, therefore, worthy of the most careful consideration in view of current controversies today. Certain widows were to be *enrolled*. Those to be enrolled were to possess the qualifications designated in verse 10. It is by some assumed that only those enrolled were to receive support from the church treasury (I Tim. 5:16). On this assumption, no widow, *however destitute* she might be, could qualify for church support unless she were at least sixty years old, had been married but once, had raised children, and cared for strangers, had relieved the afflicted, had washed the saints' feet, and had diligently followed every good work. To possess such a rich background of Christian service would of course require of such women *considerable means* in earlier life. Extremely poor women could not possibly have done all of this; shall we thence conclude that the bounty of the church was available to those only who once had *plenty*, but not to those poor all of their days? The idea is absurd. Paul does not say that the foregoing qualifications were essential to receiving support from the church. It will be observed, from an examination of I Tim. 5:3, 8, 16, that such were not conditions precedent on the part of the widows there designated to such support. These qualifications were necessary in order to be *enrolled*, not merely or solely to receive aid from the church treasury. Enrolled in what?

The word "enrolled" is from the Greek *katalegestho* from which we derive our English word *catalog*. Thus, certain women, in the apostolic church were to be cataloged, placed on a *list*. For what reason? Thayer, the eminent Greek Lexicographer, says that it was for the purpose of being "in charge of the widows and orphans supported at public expense," i.e., at the expense of the church. These were, therefore, women of unimpeachable character with a long and rich experience in Christian duty, who were made responsible for the care of the needy - both

widows and orphans (James 1:27; I Tim. 5:16) - and supported by the church. They were simply Christian *matrons*, possessed of the requisite ability to perform necessary tasks associated with such work. In their care were widows who could not qualify for the enrollment but who were proper objects of the church's care (I Tim. 5:16).

"But younger widows refuse: for when they have waxed wanton against Christ, they desire to marry; having condemnation, because they have rejected their first pledge" (I Tim. 5:11, 12). *Refuse* the younger widows! Refuse them what? Support, when they are destitute? Food, when they are starving? A young widow can be just as hungry, cold, and destitute as an older one. Moreover, a woman fifty-nine years old (thus short of sixty), who has never married; or, if married, never had children; or, if sixty, married and with children, never had the means to lodge strangers, can be in want as much as any other. Here is additional evidence of the fact that the enrollment was not merely or solely to receive aid. The younger widows are not to be refused help when hungry; they are to be refused *enrollment*. Why?

It is, as Paul points out, likely that they will not be content to serve in the capacity of the *enrolled*; they will desire to remarry and thus to renounce their pledge of devotion to the work. We may thence properly conclude that there was a roll of special widows in the early church, possessed of the qualifications listed in verse 10, with particular duties and responsibilities involving other needy persons who were objects of the church's care (Mark 14:7; Gal. 6:10; James 1:27; I Tim. 5:3, 5, 16).

Additional reasons for refusing enrollment to younger widows are, by the apostle set out in verse 13. They will, he declared "learn to be idle, going about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not." Thus, those without the rich background of Christian experience characteristic of the women mentioned in verse 10 would be disposed to shirk responsibility, shrink from onerous duties, become gossipers and busy-bodies, "speaking things they ought not." Such a disposition would render them wholly unfitted to serve as *matrons* for the poor and destitute widow or the needy child bereft of parental care.

"If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed" (I Tim. 5:16). If a believing sister had a widowed mother, or grandmother and can provide for her, she is to do so. In order that the church will not be burdened with those who have other sources of support, so that it can provide for those who are widows *indeed*, and thus without any support from other sources. Here the obligation of the *church* to the destitute widow is clearly evidenced. "That it may relieve them." It? The church! The church may do what? May "relieve them that are widows indeed." How may the church do this? The scriptures designate no specific mode of procedure. The matter is in the realm of expediency. Whatever method that expedites the duty is acceptable, whether in the homes of the needy or in the homes established (in harmony with state laws) for the purpose. But, whether in their homes, or another's the *church* is the institution which *provides* the support (James 1:27; I Tim. 5:16), the *home* is the institution which provides the *care*. That the early church supported homes in which destitute widows were provided for from the church treasury is unmistakably taught in I Tim. 5:1-16.

Is Social Drinking Justified?

No. 2

Multitudes of people who frown on the abject alcoholic and despise the hopeless drunk will condone and participate in social drinking. Yet in all probability the abject alcoholic or hopeless drunk of today was a member in good standing of the social drinking elite a few years back. Furthermore, the social drinker of today who prides himself on being able either to take or leave his liquor may well be tomorrow's abject alcoholic or hopeless drunk. After all he is consuming that which leads to the low level of a drunken misfit. He is traveling the road. In fact he may well be on a roller coaster toward alcoholism right now. Alcoholism may well be at the next bump in his travels.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

IS IT ALL RIGHT TO DRINK A LITTLE?

Social drinking is based upon controlled amounts at the time. It is based upon the consumption of a little and not a lot in any given setting. Many feel that just a little social drinking is all right. Is it? Would you say it is all right to lie a little? Why not? Remember we are not talking about lying a lot. Would you say it is all right to curse a little? Would you say it is all right to steal a little? Would you say it is all right to read just a little of what pornography is putting out? Would it be all right to look just a little at the nude pictures of one of the opposite sex? Would you say it is all right for a person to lust just a little after another's wife? Would it be all right for a woman to steal just a little of the affection of another woman's husband? Would you say it is all right to be dishonest as long as one does it in small amounts? Does not every reader see the utter folly of trying to justify sin by saying it is all right as long as only a little of the sin is accepted and practiced? Sin is sin and it cannot be practiced with immunity either in small or large doses. Surely we can all see that self evident fact! Sin has a sure fire way of encouraging all its slavish patrons to take larger and larger bites of the forbidden fruit - in this instance of the forbidden liquid.

WHAT ABOUT THE WINE MAKING OF JOHN 2?

Nearly every religious leader who condones social drinking will either begin with or soon get around to Jesus and his first miracle in John 2. People see the word wine in this passage and immediately conclude that the Lord made something which was capable of making people drunk. Beloved reader, I deny this with all the fervency of my being. The word for wine in this passage is OINOS. It can refer to the juice freshly squeezed out of the grape. It may refer to the juice while it is still in the grape. In neither of these cases is it yet intoxicative. It may refer to something which is intoxicative and will make men drunk. The context determines its use. There is absolutely no doubt but what Jesus made the pure juice of the grape in this passage. If he made that

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The Whole Armor Of God

(Continued From Page 1)

we will to do his will.

Sadly, there are multitudes who have never been enrolled as soldiers of the cross. They are not Christians. Yet others have been deceived by the "doctrines and commandments of men." Not a few have deserted, have gone A.W.O.L. The greatest mistake of any soul is to think that somehow, someway, by chance perhaps, when the day of all days arrives that Jehovah God will look the other way and let us slip in in spite of our indifference, lukewarmness or unfairness in letting the other fellow bear the burden and heat of the day. Enlist today. There is plenty of room. And Jesus Christ never turns away the honest and good heart seeking to do service in the Lord.

Details of the "Armor" to follow. — Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

"Ma" Bramlett - A Godly Woman

(Continued from Page 2)

is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

"Ma" Bramlett has left this world, but her influence will live on for years to come. "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" (Revelation 14:13). — P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580.

Is Social Drinking Justified?

No. 2

(Continued From Page 3)

which was intoxicative, then he violated the law under which he then lived. How? Let it be remembered that he lived under the law of Moses when he performed this miracle. This law was very much in effect when this miracle was transacted. That law said in Proverbs 23:31-32, "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Did the Lord violate the tenor and tone of this passage? There are those who say that he did because they claim he made an intoxicant upon this occasion. I strongly maintain that he did nothing of the kind! Did Jesus make something that at the last bites like a serpent? Did he make something that possesses the power to sting like an adder and of all places - at the beginning of a brand new marriage? Unequivocally, NO!! The Bible says

not even to look upon wine when it is in its intoxicative state. Yet Jesus commanded, commanded mind you, the servants to bear some of what he had just made to the governor of the marriage feast. Could they do this without looking upon it? Did he not mean for the governor to drink thereof when it was brought to him? If what the Lord made was an intoxicant, then he stood in open violation of Habakkuk 2:15 which says, "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!" Did the Christ at Cana violate this passage of Sacred Scripture? He surely did if what he miraculously made in John 2 were an intoxicant. Did Jesus make something which would make men drunk when this passage clearly forbids such? Did the perfect Lord make something in John 2 that has so frequently been connected with immorality of every kind and sin of every description? If one takes the position that Jesus made an intoxicant in John 2, then there is no way for him to avoid these inescapable conclusions? If so, how?

Some of the sure fruits of alcoholic beverages through the ceaseless centuries have been broken lives, broken vows in marriage, broken homes, mistreated children, wrecked hopes and injured souls. Did the Lord make that which is so potently capable of breaking and wrecking lives? Did he make that which is such a contributing factor toward broken vows in marriage and ultimately divorce? Did he make that which has led frequently to the mistreatment of little innocent children? Who can believe that he did? Did he make that which has blasted millions of holy aspirations and led to irreparable damage to human souls by the masses? Did Jesus really choose to begin his mighty sins with the making of something that has cursed the world since Noah became drunk in Genesis 9:21? Whatever this miracle was it was a manifestation of his glory. But would the making of several gallons, perhaps

close to 150 in all if all the water placed in the containers were turned into an intoxicant, have led to an exhibition of his glory? If so, HOW? Since when has there been anything glorious about an intoxicant? Glorious is not an adjective that belongs by the side of liquor. Is liquor glorious when it turns men into monsters? Is liquor glorious when it turns women into harlots? Is liquor glorious when it kills or maims people for life? Is it glorious when it withholds food, clothing and shelter from the mouths and bodies of innocent wives and precious children? Is liquor glorious when it breaks down inhibitions and causes the unmarried to commit fornication or adultery? Is liquor glorious when it breaks up homes as it has done in millions of cases in the past? Is liquor glorious when it becomes an active and willing ally to so many glaring and grievous crimes?

A paper recently crossed my desk containing information from The National Commission on Causes and Prevention of Violence in which they revealed how alcohol and crime are related. These crimes were considered to be related in some degree with alcoholic misuse: (1) 64 per cent of all murders, (2) 41 per cent of all assaults, (3) 34 per cent of all rapes, (4) 29 per cent of other sex crimes, (5) 100 per cent of drunk driving and (6) 100 per cent of vagrancy. Is this the glorious world of alcoholic consumption? If our blessed Lord turned that water into an intoxicant, it was anything but a glorious transaction. Now, who will deny it?

The truth of the matter is that he did miraculously what he and the Father had been doing through a grape vine, moisture and a growing season from the morning of time. He just speeded up the process. And what he made is what the grape vine produces - grape juice. Jesus Christ DID NOT make an intoxicant in John 2, all our liquor loving preachers and church leaders who keep the fiery liquid in their refrigerators at home notwithstanding. — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Shazam!

JOHN W. BROWN

The above is the name of a Saturday morning cartoon with which I am sure your children are familiar. I am NOT an avid viewer of children's cartoons, but I happened to see this one a few days ago and discovered a philosophy taught therein to which attention must be called.

For those of you less familiar with SHAZAM, it is a cartoon, the hero of which is a young boy who can fantastically change himself into a super being possessed of super powers (a la Superman) at the utterance of the word "shazam!" This super being, known as Captain Marvel, then sets out on a mission to right all wrongs and declare an end to injustice of every sort. Marvel is summonsed to this stupendous task by a group of men known as "the elders." Here lies the crux of the false philosophy. The elders are composed of the heros of ancient heathenism (Zeus, Mercury, Achilles, ET AL). They are representative in the cartoon of life's ultimate authority. Now note this: numbered among the elders is one Solomon. Assumedly, Solomon represents the religion of the Jehovah God of the Bible and thus New Testament Christianity also.

Do you not see what a perilously dangerous doctrine is being taught to our unsuspecting children? Christianity is pictured as only one in a pantheon of many equally good world religions. Is this not similar to the Colossian heresy of the first century? One seeking

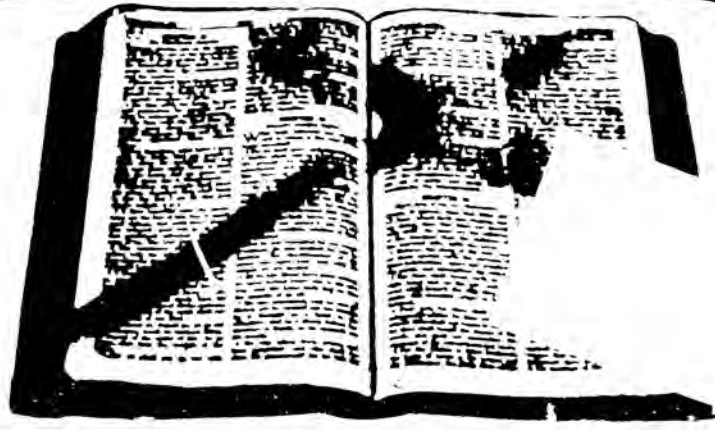
salvation needed Christ, but not Christ and His gospel only. He also needed paganism. This led Paul to declare "For in him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him (Col. 2:9-10). SHAZAM teaches our children that they are not complete in Christ; that they need Zeus, Mercury, Achilles and "who knows" what else!

Brethren, indeed the hour is late for realizing what is being taught in our own homes through the medium of television. Now I am not advocating that we all band together in an effort to purge the TV set from the home of every professing Christian, and label as a misguided heretic all who do not choose to cast their lot with us. However, I am saying that we need to be informed on these matters. A false doctrine may be taken lightly if it appears trivial at first notice. But, if a doctrine is false and if it is taught to a gullible audience long enough, it can have far reaching consequences.

May I offer the following suggestions: (1) Be sure you watch any TV program with your children before they are allowed to watch the same program alone.

(2) Prohibit your children from watching programs which teach or imply a false religious philosophy. (3) When the TV set is turned off, see to it that you teach your children the truth from God's Holy Word (Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4; 2 Tim. 3:15). — P.O. Box 245; Sulligent, Al. 35586.

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32
"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25
"It came by Jesus Christ"
1:17

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1977

NUMBER 16

B. C. Goodpasture: A Prince Among Men

That Friday morning of February 18, 1977, seemed so unreal. A call from Ted Underwood at the Advocate office informed me that Brother Goodpasture had suffered a massive stroke late the afternoon of February 17. Stunned and saddened I went promptly to the Father's throne in prayer. Countless others did the same thing that Thursday night and early Friday morning as news spread of his extremely critical condition. The Father was implored that he might be spared, might fully recover and carry on his great life's work for years to come. But moments later a second call from Brother Underwood informed me that Brother Goodpasture was gone.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The mighty oak had fallen. The gifted preacher had preached his final discourse. The prolific penman had written his last article. The towering editor had edited his last paper of the almost two thousand issues that covered his long tenure as editor of the "Old Reliable." The congenial BCG had told his last anecdote to add wholesome color to a conversation or to illustrate with vividness a point in a sermon or lecture. He had made his concluding decision in behalf of truth and for the ardent advancement of the sacred cause when he loved better than life itself. He had given his last gift to an appreciative child. He had promoted his last good work. The lad from Livingston who became the man with a mission had fought his final heroic battle on the firing line for Christ.

Words of tribute have already appeared in this great journal relative to the late and lamented Goodpasture. The present tribute will depict a few of the foundational, fundamental and fervent facets of this many-talented man.

David mourned the death of Abner. In tribute to the fallen military giant the Shepherd King said, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" (II Sam. 3:38). Relative to the preaching and editorial giant who has but recently left earthly scenes the precious

passage also bears a similar sentiment, an ardent appropriateness. The fallen Chief of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE is worthy of every syllable that will appear in this tribute and then not even the half can be told.

A PRINCE IN THE PULPIT

Brother Goodpasture began to preach in October of 1912. Had he lived till this fall he would have preached the gospel for a full sixty-five years. His first sermon was on the theme of faith. His last lesson was on "Paul's Final Charge." This concluding message was given at the Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship on Tuesday, February 8, 1977. Some three thousand people heard this dynamic discourse. It was presented superbly and without flaw.

Brother Goodpasture had no superior as a preacher in our generation. Brother Gus Nichols, himself a great and gifted preacher, once called Brother Goodpasture the finest preacher he ever heard. In the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, May 3, 1973, Brother Guy N. Woods, one of the greatest preachers of any age himself, said of Brother Goodpasture, "He is one of the greatest preachers of all time." Brethren Nichols and Woods knew great preaching when they heard it.

By both native characteristics and acquired training he was truly the master of assemblies. His speech style was with ease and fluent. He always spoke without notes. From an amazing array of both scriptural and secular knowledge he could draw with eloquence and ease from his vast reservoir of rich Biblical and secular lore. What he drew at a moment's notice never failed to enhance and enrich his particular discourse. His voice was well modulated and filled with resonance. His pulpit decorum was that which belonged to the regal dignity of a prince. His grammar was flawless; his enunciation was as perfect as any speaker of his era. He possessed an amazing vocabulary and made every word count. He boiled down his message and gave his fortunate audience the meat of the message. His scholarly grasp of the Bible, of Hebrew and Greek, of literature, of the entire Restoration movement, of human nature and of current happenings was in constant evidence in every sermon he gave, in every lecture he delivered. Every time he preached he raised the dignity of twentieth century preaching. How great would have been our loss if this talented person had chosen another

line of work rather than gospel preaching.

A PRINCE AMONG EDITORS

To an earlier generation the names Lipscomb and Sewell and the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, were synonymous. Mention of the two men demanded recognition of the paper. During the twentieth century the name of B.C. Goodpasture has been the most prominent name among GOSPEL ADVOCATE connections. For some fifty-seven years he was associated with the paper as Circulation Manager, as contributing penman, as staff writer and as editorial chief since March 1, 1939. Some two weeks from the day of his death would have witnessed the completion of a full thirty-eight years in the editor's chair. Nearly half of his illustrious, eventful and colorful life was spent as the Chief Builder and the Guiding Architect of our oldest, best and most influential paper - the GOSPEL ADVOCATE.

It was in this responsible role that he influenced literally tens of thousands weekly. This he did by his own great editorials, by what his family of writers wrote and by what he kept out of the Advocate. A wise, judicious editor has to know what to include, what to omit and just when an approved article or planned editorial will accomplish the maximum amount of good. In all of this he was eminently successful.

I served as a writer for some sixteen years and on his staff for about eight years. It was a great honor to be on his writing team. He was always kind and gracious to me. He used every article my wife sent him through the years. He was like a father to the two of us. In all my dealings with him I never found him failing in the art of friendship to my family or to me. We have lost a firm, fine family friend in his passing.

A PRINCE IN GENEROSITY

Goodpasture and generosity have had much more in common than their beginning with the same letter of the alphabet. His generosity knew no bounds. He was a modern personification of the Biblical principle that "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Like the beautiful and benevolent Barnabas of his classic biographical sermon Brother Goodpasture was generous of hand, generous of heart and generous of judgment. Legion are the people he helped and many of these never helped

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FROM
THE EDITOR

An Often Misunderstood Passage

Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7:1). This passage is often cited in an effort to show that we should never criticize or condemn any actions on the part of any person; and to do so would be a violation of the teaching of Christ in this passage. If such really were the meaning of the passage, it would be



BOBBY DUNCAN

an error to cite the passage as proof that one has done wrong in criticizing another. For in so doing, one would be condemning the actions of another - the very thing which the passage is alleged to forbid.

Verse sixteen of this same chapter points out that false prophets shall be known by their fruits. We believe it was the late Marshall Keeble who said that Christians are not to be judges, but that we are to be fruit inspectors. False prophets are to be marked and avoided (Rom. 16:17). Those who walk disorderly are to be withdrawn from (II Thess. 3:6). If one is guilty of preaching a doctrine contrary to the doctrine of Christ he is not to be received into our homes nor bidden God speed (II Jno. 10:11). All these facts make it mandatory that we form judgments with regard to right and wrong.

John 7:24 commands that we judge with regard to certain matters: "Judge not

according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." Certainly Jesus does not command in one passage what he forbids in another, and He does not forbid in one passage what He commands in another. In one passage He commands that we judge righteous judgment. In another, He forbids some kind of judgment. But He does not forbid righteous judgment, for He commands that. It follows, then, that the judgment which is forbidden is judgment which is not righteous. An examination of Matthew 7:1 in its context will reveal that that is precisely what the Lord forbids in that passage.

We should be extremely careful not to forbid what the Lord has commanded, nor to command what he has forbidden.

"That We May Be Like Other Churches"

DOUGLAS SIMS

Samuel was greatly distressed when Israel rejected God's plan for them and desired a king. Even after he had described how things would be for them under the rule of a king, the old man of God was not able to dissuade them.

In I Samuel 8:19-20 we read, "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; that we may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge over us, and go out before us, and fight our battles."

The present generation has witnessed many changes in the Lord's church. Some are good, but many are not, especially those that are motivated by the desire to be like others about us. This trend can be seen in a number of ways, only a few of which I will enumerate here.

When I was a boy, most churches of Christ were worshiping in modest surroundings, many times in remodeled houses or business places. Sometimes the church was looked upon as the "other side of the track" type of religion. The first four years of my regular ministry was in such a building. It was an old remodeled school house, more than fifty years old. Much work went into that old building, and we were proud to worship in it and to invite our friends to do so. We did not need the most expensive building in the community to worship and serve God.

Some time ago I heard a brother tell a large audience that we can now hold up our heads in pride, because "our buildings are just as big and beautiful as any denominational church"! I preached one Sunday in a building where the sun shone through the cracks in the walls, but we did not have to hang our heads in shame!

While "trying out" for a job with one congregation, I was told by the Elders that the greatest accomplishment in that city was that they had almost as much money in their building as any of the denominations in town. To such people as these, success is measured by what the congregation "owns" in the way of buildings and real estate. Let no one say I am against comfortable church buildings, but I am against the idea that once a congregation has a great new building, the work is finished.

It is too easy to re-write the great commission to read, "Come, all ye of the world, and hear the gospel preached in our beautiful building." Too many times, it is a fact that a congregation has settled down in a new building, sat down to rest, and while resting, died!

There are many other areas where the

desire to be like others is apparent. There was a time when the news media referred to the church of Christ as a "fundamentalist" group. Some brethren object to this usage in connection with the church. The term fundamentalist indicates one who adheres to the scriptures literally for doctrine and practice. Why would we want to be recognized in any other way? Are we no longer desirous of being known as those who "speak as the Bible speaks"?

Preachers are being told not to preach the "old fashioned", narrow type sermons of the past. Somehow the truth is not supposed to be able to convert the "modern" man. If it won't, what are we to use? We are told to "dwell on our points of agreement, not our differences", to be positive, not negative. The preaching of the truth will expose error, and will of necessity contain both positive and negative teaching. Only the truth will make men free, but it will take the whole truth, not bits and pieces as denominations have used through the years.

As our popularity increases, we often see the zeal of Christians decline. For years I have seen religious people who were content to be blissfully ignorant of the Scriptures and depend on the preacher to tell them what they needed to know. Today the members of the churches of Christ fit the same pattern. A smooth talking preacher of false doctrine has no trouble today in leading multitudes in any direction he chooses to go.

When we cease to tell the world of the one body, the church, the one way to heaven, we have accomplished the goal of many modern day "Israelites". We have become like the "other churches", and we may as well enjoy it while we can, for this is all the reward we will ever receive. — 330 East Ave., Cedartown, Ga. 31025.

Why A Christian Should Be Immodest

RAY HAWK

I would like to give several reasons why a Christian should wear bathing suits, shorts, halters, and other revealing clothes.

1. It helps you to relate to the world.
2. It allows others to admire your exposed body.
3. It puts sinners at ease around you for they identify you as one of them.
4. It identifies you as an unbeliever for you pay no more attention to 1 Tim. 2:9,10 than do other unbelievers.
5. You offer your exposed flesh upon the altar of the lustful view of others.
6. It shows that your mind is on things beneath and not on things above (Col. 3:1).
7. It indicates that you are not clothed with Jesus Christ (Rom. 13:14).
8. It makes a mockery of Matthew 6:33. — 4868 La Ventana Terrace, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
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Guy N. Woods.)

"II Tim. 3:16, in the King James' Version, is translated, in part, 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God. . . ' whereas, the American Standard Version renders this position of the verse, 'Every scripture inspired of God. . . ' Why this variation? Which is the better rendering?"

The American Standard translation of this passage has occasioned much criticism; and, in my view, properly so, because it is inferior to the rendering of the passage in the King James' Version. The Greek phrase involved is, '*pasa graphee theopneustos kai ophelimos*,' literally, and in the order in which the words appear, "All writing God-breathed and profitable." Obviously, to translate in harmony with our idiom, and to indicate the significance of the statement as intended by the sacred writer, the words must be rearranged, the subject and predicate determined, and a copula (connecting link between the two) be inserted. To this end, the following questions must be settled: (1) Where should the copula (the verb *is*) be inserted; (2) What is the meaning of the adjective *pasa*? (3) Is the particle *kai* adjunctive or simply connective?

To deal particularly with these matters, we take them up in order: (1) Where should the copula be inserted? The King James' Translators (and, I think, correctly), inserted it *before* the phrase, "given by inspiration of God," thus making the passage say, in effect, "The scripture is inspired of God. . ." The American Standard Translators, however, placed the copula (*is*) *after* the words, "inspired of God," thus saying, in effect, "Scripture, which is inspired of God, is profitable. . ." implying that some scripture is not inspired. They drew this conclusion on the ground that the word translated "scripture," is the word *graphee*, "writing," and since there is much writing which is not scripture, they ought to distinguish between writing which is inspired and that which is not. It is to this a sufficient answer that in every instance, in the Bible, the word *graphe* denotes *inspired* writings. There was no need, therefore, to attempt the distinction which they make.

(2) What is the meaning of the adjective *pasa*? The King James' Translators rendered it "all," the American Standard scholars translated it "every". The latter thus rendered it to support their conclusion that inspiration is not claimed for all *graphe*, but only that specifically designated. There is a rule of Greek syntax that this adjective, when appearing in the singular, and with the article, should be translated, "every", rather than "all," but to this rule there are exceptions. A.T. Robertson says with abstract substantives, proper names, and single objects, *pasa* means "all," and an induction of passages where it appears in the New Testament not only shows this to be true, but also establishes it as the only proper rendering. "All (*pasa*) Jerusalem" was troubled, not *every* Jerusalem! (Matt. 2:3). Our Lord said that it becomes us "to fulfill all (*pasa*) righteousness," not *every* righteousness (Matt. 3:15). When the apostles were miraculously delivered from prison, their jailors found the prison doors shut "with all

(*pasa*) safety," not every safety! (Acts 5:23). And, often elsewhere.

(3) Is the particle *kai* adjunctive or simply connective? The American Standard Translators thought it was the former and so rendered it *also* in the phrase, "is also profitable," whereas, the King James' Translators thought it a simple connective, translating it, "and is profitable." Here, again, in my view, the effort of the American Standard Translators is open to serious objection. Their use of the particle in the sense of *also* implies at least two coordinates, for the implication is that something else preceding the words "is also profitable," was affirmed to be profitable too! No such statement appears.

The King James' rendering is much the preferable one. (1) It is a better translation of the original text. (2) It clearly establishes the proper significance of the word translated "scripture." (3) It claims for all "scripture," inspiration; and, though the passage is directly applicable to Old Testament scripture, inasmuch as the writings of the New Testament are scripture in exactly the same sense, it includes, by implication, these also (II Pet. 3:15, 16).

Genesis and the Universe

All positions concerning ultimate "origins" involve assumptions based upon a "faith commitment." No man was present to observe the origin of the universe, nor can the laboratory repeat the phenomena. It follows that the question of "origins" may be classified as philosophical in nature, rather than a scientific subject. This accords precisely with the Hebrew affirma-

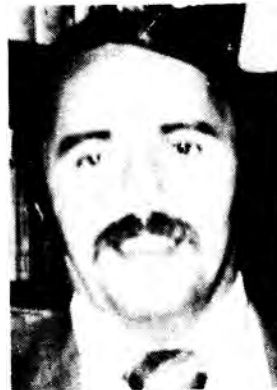
tion: "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. . ." (Heb. 11:3). The Christian clearly understands that "creation" is basically a "faith commitment" to God's revelation. Though the Christian approach to ultimate origins is based upon "faith" it does not logically follow that the Christian faith lacks substantial facts. The modern dichotomy between facts and faith is not a Biblical position. Faith, in the Biblical sense, is founded upon facts to which the honest man can subscribe with intellectual integrity.

At the same time the non-Christian scientist must also admit that he approaches the question of origins with assumptions and presuppositions that reflect a profound "faith commitment." Both empirical observation and experimentation fail in establishing the historicity of a past event. The experimental methods of natural science cannot possibly penetrate the past. That a man, such as Alexander the Great ever lived is not subject to scientific analysis, but rather historical testimony. Natural science can aid one in explaining present processes, but it is not the key that unlocks the past. John Whitcomb in his book, "The Early Earth," sums up the testimony that every naturalist must express,

in terms of Hebrews 11:3: "By faith, we evolutionists understand that the worlds were not framed by the word of any god, so that what is seen has indeed been made out of previously existing and less complex visible things, by purely natural processes, through billions of years." Though almost all science books present evolution as a "scientific fact" it is nothing more than a faith, and a faith it will have to remain. The evolutionist delights in boasting that while Christians depend on faith, his theory is settled upon the facts. But more honest scientists are pressed to agree that origins lie, "wholly beyond the ken and scope of science, which is concerned about how things go on, and has nothing to say as to how they absolutely began" (Asa Gray, Natural Science and Religion, P. 38). The problem of origins can only be settled by a reasonable interpretation of the available facts. Creationists maintain that the biblical account of creation is not only in harmony with all the facts of science but is more reasonable in the light of the complexity of the universe. On the other hand, the "faith" of the naturalist asserts that he can interpret all the facts adequately without yielding to a Creator. Theoretically there are only four explanations offered for the existence of the universe. The first explanation suggests that all logical and rational answers are impossible because we do not have sufficient evidence to conclude one way or another. Secondly, some have claimed that everything originated from nothing. Thirdly, others suggests that impersonal forces reigns as the originator. Finally, the Christian maintains that an all-powerful intelligent Creator is responsible for the universe. An analysis of each of these proposed explanations reveals the Biblical concept to be the most reasonable in the light of all the factual evidence.

The first answer asserts that there is no logical explanation for the existence of the universe. All is finally chaotic, irrational and absurd, hence there can be no basic answers. Such a theory attempts to give an answer where they claim there is no answer. The one thing he KNOWS is that everything is UNKNOWABLE. By merely stating his theory the advocate has involved himself in a flagrant inconsistency. The following syllogism establishes the argument: (1) No rational or logical answer can be given. (2) But the advocate propose an answer. (3) It therefore follows that his own answer must be irrational and illogical. To this we heartily agree. The external world has order and complexity that we must conform to in order to live. Should he put his theory into practice one could not know anything for sure. What a frightening situation! The very nature of man rebels at a philosophy that denies the possibility of knowing. This would spell the end of advancement in all areas of learning. But amazingly, the agnostic commits verbal suicide and then keeps right on talking.

The second proposition admits there is an answer which can be rationally and logically considered. Everything, says he, has come out of absolutely nothing. For one to accept this position we remind him that NOTHING means no mass, no energy, no motion, and no personality. Sometimes we allow this theory to sneak in a "something" to begin with which makes it no longer "nothing." This theory consists of nothing more than wishful thinking. From all experience and observation it is certainly safe to conclude that "nothing only produces nothing." But the naturalist would have us believe that at sometime in the remote past "nothing produced something." No wonder that naturalist often calls the discussing of origins a "waste of time". Seriously to propound the theory that



LARRY CHOUINARD

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Genesis and the Universe

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"nothing produced something" would be a reflection upon the intellectual integrity of man. An adequate cause must be responsible for the universe, and "nothing" certainly does not fill the bill.

The third possible explanation for the existence of the universe is that all originated from the impersonal. It matters not if this impersonal takes the form of mass, energy, or motion. This is probably the predominant view held throughout the world. In the West it manifests itself in the hypothesis of mechanical Evolution, while in the East it is seen in the pantheistic religions. Since our Western culture is predominantly saturated with the "evolutionary" concept, we shall concern ourselves with the fundamental assumptions of evolutionary thinking.

Basically the hypothesis of evolution asserts "that millions of years ago, lifeless matter, acted upon by NATURAL forces, gave origin to minute living organisms which have since produced all living and extinct plants and animals including man." By no stretch of the imagination can the evolutionary concept be made to harmonize with supernatural creation. Several attempts have been made, (Gap-theory, Day-Age theory, etc.) to bring the Genesis record into harmony with the pseudo-scientific claims of modern geology. The results of such thinking, produces only a mutilated account of origins, and is looked upon as ridiculous by both pure evolutionists and non-evolutionists. The next article will deal with the assumptions of evolutionary thinking. — 148 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, Cal. 94523.

B. C. Goodpasture: A Prince Among Men

(Continued From Page 1)

him that first time in the extension and circulation of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE! But he did not help people just to receive help in return. That was not his brand of generosity. Good works in the twentieth century have had no finer or more generous promoter than Brother Goodpasture. He served a God of generosity and a Lord of liberality and he emulated both in his own lovely life of generous giving.

Brother Goodpasture was both thrifty and generous. This little story will illustrate that point rather vividly. I was once traveling with Brother and Sister Goodpasture. In one of his purchases he figured up how much he had saved by stopping at this place where the prices were somewhat lower. Sister Goodpasture remarked, "He will use that savings to do something for someone, perhaps on a book to give to someone." He spent his life giving of himself and of that which a gracious God had bequeathed to him.

A PRINCE IN FRIENDSHIPS

Brother Goodpasture knew how to make friends; he knew how to keep friends; he knew how to be a friend. These are the intense imperatives of real friendship. Numbers of preaching brethren were befriended by him. His brand of friendship was often extended to brethren who had been mistreated. He possessed the marvelous knack of knowing when a call from him, a letter or the use of an

article by a brother would be the very tonic that a disenchanting spirit and a discouraged disposition needed for a resurging revival. He would not turn his back on a brother who was down as long as he believed the brother was sound and wanted to do the right thing. He was the friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Prov. 18:24). He was the personification of Emerson's friend with whom one could be sincere and in whose presence he could think aloud. He wrote a beautiful book and valiant volume on what real friendship is all about.

A PRINCE AMONG MEN

The following words fit so well,

"His life was gentle, and the elements

So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up

And say to all the world, 'This was a man!'"

The cynical philosopher Diogenes once walked the city streets of ancient Athens with lantern in hand in the daylight hours. When asked the WHY for this unusual action he declared he was searching for a man. Had he met Brother B.C. Goodpasture he would have realized his quest. The lantern could have been extinguished; the search could have been terminated. Jeremiah, in sixth century Judah, was sent to find a man in Jerusalem (Jer. 5:1). Again had the sensitive seer met BCG his quest would have been a signal success.

Brother Guy N. Woods paid respects to him as a man in the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, May 3, 1973. He delightfully depicted his character as being "as rugged, as firm, and as immovable from principle as the Cumberland mountains which overshadowed the area whence he came." In his bearing he pictured Brother Goodpasture as being "one of the most dignified, poised and cultured men I have ever known." He called him a great man and one possessed of a strong personality. Brother Woods again stated that "in the only true and real sense of the word, he is, in many respects without an equal in the brotherhood. . . He is the only prominent man in the brotherhood from whom I never saw a statement or sentiment with which I disagreed!" Brother Woods paid an unusually noble compliment to his "greatness of spirit." This great tribute from the erudite Guy N. Woods, one of the dearest friends Brother Goodpasture ever had, closes by saying, "An eminent statesman once said that were it to be discovered that intelligent beings inhabit some steller planet, and it was his responsibility to select a representative of the human race to be sent there in demonstration of our best, his selection would be Alexander Campbell. Were I making the selection, it would be B.C. Goodpasture." It is significant to observe that at the Woods Appreciation Dinner on February 7 that Brother Goodpasture fully reciprocated this sentiment and said the same about Brother Woods. Were two to be sent on such a mission my selection would have been B.C. Goodpasture and Guy N. Woods.

A PRINCE OF SCRIPTURAL SIMILITUDES

In character analysis of Biblical personalities Brother Goodpasture had neither peer nor superior in our day. His sermons on Enoch, Andrew, Barnabas, Mary of Bethany, the Prodigal Son, the rich young ruler and other Bible characters were classics. It is doubtful they will ever be surpassed out there in the future. Brother Goodpasture made these Biblical personalities come alive before his audience. Brother Goodpasture not only knew these persons by Biblical acquaintance with them but he emulated them in his daily decorum. Like Abel, he being dead yet speaketh. Like Enoch and Noah, he walked with God. Like Abraham, he was a man of faith. Like Isaac, he loved peace and pursued it. Like Jacob, he was a prince of God. Like Joseph, he was a man of personal purity, of a

tolerant and forgiving spirit. Like Moses, he was a powerful leader of men. Like Samuel, he never ceased to pray for God's people; he never ceased to teach us the grand and glorious way to travel to the city of God on high. Like Joshua, he was a conqueror. Like Caleb, he was strong and sturdy at fourscore and past. Caleb in his eighties was still a warrior. So was the gallant Goodpasture. At fourscore and five Caleb had Hebron on his mind; at nearly fourscore and two the eminent B.C. Goodpasture had heaven upon his mind. Like the Shepherd King, he sought the God of his fathers all his earthly pilgrimage. Like Isaiah, he was stately as a man and magnificent in his mission. Like Jeremiah, he was sensitive of soul. Like John the Baptist, he was a great preacher. Like Peter, he spoke as the oracles of God direct. He was a book, chapter and verse preacher. He never believed that the day of the proof text was gone and it was not gone from the type of preaching he did. Like Andrew, he had a good name at birth; he retained that good name; he added a lovely luster to that name. Like Barnabas, he was a gem of generosity. Like Paul, he preached the whole counsel of God. Like Luke, he was always loyal and dependable. Like the Christ he loved and honored, it was his will do to the Father's will.

Farewell to the Faithful Warrior. We possess the heavenly hope for him and for all of us of meeting again in fairer climes and upon brighter shores.

Setting Goals

JOHN B. TRACY

It is amazing how few people ever achieve excellence. Even many of those with outstanding talents never reach their potential. Why? Because they have not set goals. One motivational expert claims that only three percent of the people set specific goals. But, he says that 98 percent of those who set realistic goals will achieve them. Therefore, the importance of setting and surpassing goals within the work of the church is obvious.

In our text, Philippians 3:12-14, the Apostle Paul evidences some important concepts relative to the setting of goals:

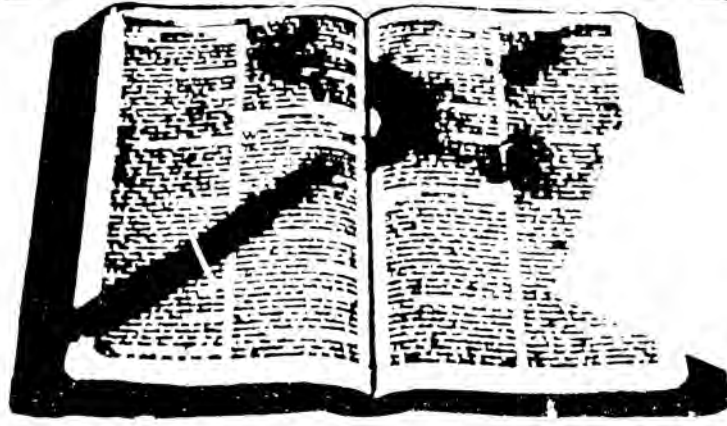
1. He recognized that he had room for improvement. He said, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. . . ." Every congregation needs to recognize that, no matter how much they have going for Christ's cause, they have a great deal of room for spiritual improvement.

2. He had singleness of purpose. Paul declared, ". . . but this one thing I do. . ." Too many of us react to the Lord's work like a bug around a light bulb - we're here, there and everywhere. Rather than being pulled in every direction, we should realistically assess our talents and channel them to be used in the area of work in which we can be most successful.

3. He forgot about the past. Paul said, ". . . forgetting those things which are behind. . ." Many in the church today waste time and talents because of their preoccupation with the past. Some glory in the "good ole days" of yesteryear, and others grieve over the failures of the past. However, we cannot afford to allow the past to intrude on our accomplishing goals of the present.

4. He looked toward a goal. The A.S.V. reads, "I press on toward the goal. . ." Many congregations plan the work of the church but fail to work the plan. We must be impressed with the importance of setting realistic, reachable goals and then dedicate ourselves to the task of constant, consistent efforts toward accomplishing them. — Southside Church of Christ, 1686 Williamson Road, Macon, Ga. 31206.

WORDS of TRUTH



*"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32*

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

*"With the words of truth"
26:25*

Jesus Christ"

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True Repentance

JERRY H. WILSON

Repentance is often defined as "a change of mind concerning sin evidenced by reformation of life." It is a turning from the world of idolatry to serve the true and living God (I Thess. 1:9). This seems simple enough, but the application of repentance to our lives often poses a problem for many professed disciples.

Actually the New Testament describes two types of repentance. We might refer to one as "temporary repentance." Some theologians have referred to it as "crisis theology" and others more popularly as "emergency religion." These terms should be self-explanatory. Feeling a need for God only during periods of hardship is a phenomenon of human nature.

A Biblical example of temporary repentance is Judas Iscariot. Consider his actions: "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, 'What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they conventioned with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray Jesus'" (Matt. 26:14-16). The events which followed concerning the arrest and crucifixion are well known. "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself" (Matt. 27:3-5). The repentance which Judas evidenced was channeled in the wrong direction. After returning the money, Judas should have returned to his Master and asked for forgiveness. After receiving forgiveness, Judas could have become a great tower of strength in the early church as did Peter, John, and the other apostles. As it stands, Judas has the blackest record of all history!

The concept of temporary repentance can be popularly illustrated by the experience of many combat soldiers. Many military men are notorious for swearing, gambling, drinking, committing fornication, etc., but become very religious and prayerful when facing battle. "There are no atheists in a foxhole." Once the battle is over, most feel free to return to their former habits.

Many combat soldiers will carry small New Testaments in their shirt pocket. Every great

great once in a while, a story will circulate about a soldier's life being saved because the New Testament stopped a bullet just inches before it entered the heart. This is commonly interpreted to be the mercy of God. The fallacy is that the New Testament was never intended to be a good luck charm. A deck of cards in the pocket could have served just as well.

This shallow thinking can also be observed in the lives of many church members. Common faults among God's people are a general neglect of Bible study, prayer life, instruction of children, attendance, etc. Religion is a matter of convenience. The peak of dedication can be seen in a crisis. Once I asked a person about his lack of attendance on Sunday and Wednesday nights. "It has never been convenient," was the answer. Jesus Christ did not die upon the cruel cross to establish a whims and fancy religion (Phil. 2:5-8). Remember the nauseating example given by Peter. Is it refreshing to see a dog eat its own vomit? Is it pretty to see a clean sow lie down and continue to wallow in the mudhole? No, but this is the inspired example used to describe wayward church members (II Peter 2:20-22). We should repent of our wickedness, pray to God for forgiveness (Acts 8:22), and allow the blood of Jesus Christ continually to wash away our sins (I John 1:7-9).

The type of repentance which pays spiritual dividends can be described as "true or permanent repentance." A Biblical example is the apostle Peter. As his Master faced the severest trial of His earthly life, Peter denied Him three times, accompanied by cursing and swearing (Matt. 26:69-75). "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how that he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly" (Luke 22:61-62). Actually what Peter did was no worse than the sin of Judas. The difference can be seen in the type of repentance. Peter's bitter remorse evidenced genuine repentance and he became the acknowledged leader of the apostles and the first century church (Acts 1:15; 2:14; 10:5; Gal. 2:9).

The alien sinner should truly repent and become a Christian. The indifferent church member should truly repent and dedicate his time, talents, and energy to the Lord's

service. When we are genuinely converted, the commandments of the Lord will be a pleasure rather than a burden. Only a few of our many responsibilities are now outlined:

We must incorporate the truth of God into our lives: "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (ASV-II Tim. 2:15). "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:17).

We must grow in usefulness and Christian service: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Peter 2:2). "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18).

We can receive strength through prayer: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 8:1). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

We must discharge faithfully our obligation toward our children: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

We must attend faithfully the worship services of the local congregation: "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" (Heb. 10:25). Notice the language describing the severity of this sin: "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. . . Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace?" (Heb. 10:27-29).

Really, the Lord has not placed any responsibilities upon us that are impossible to fulfill. It is only a matter of attitude and priority. Jesus Christ said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Remember that "godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (II Cor. 7:10). — P.O. Box 384, Waldorf, Md. 20601.

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Silent Prayer



BOBBY DUNCAN

In nearly every denominational service this writer has witnessed, there was at least one period when the congregation engaged in silent prayer. Like a number of other denominational practices, the practice of having silent prayer in the public assembly has been borrowed by some of our own brethren.

For be it from us to contend that a thing is erroneous just because it may be practiced by those in error on other points. But before we borrow a practice from our denominational neighbors or anyone else, we should examine it in the light of that which is written to be sure it is in harmony with the will of Almighty God.

Be it understood that we are here discussing the matter of silent prayer in the public assembly. It would be ridiculous to take the position that it is not proper under any circumstances to engage in silent prayer. How one prays privately is one thing; but how the prayers of the public worship are to be prayed is a different matter.

Two questions are in order in determining whether an assembled congregation should engage in silent prayer: (1) Does the Bible set forth principles that regulate prayer in the public assembly? (2) If so, is it in harmony with these principles for an assembly to engage in silent prayer?

In answer to the first question, be it observed that there is clear teaching in the Bible with reference to the matter of public worship and the prayers therein prayed. This teaching is to the effect that such prayers are to be prayed in a manner intelligible to the entire assembly. The man who had the gift of

tongues was forbidden to lead prayer in the public assembly unless an interpreter was present (I Cor. 14:28). All who prayed in the public assembly were to "pray with the understanding" (I Cor. 14:15). This means they were to pray so as to be understood by the entire assembly. Those in the assembly should be able to say "amen" to the prayer (verse 16).

In answer to our second question, it is not in harmony with these principles for an assembly to engage in silent prayer. Every argument the apostle used against praying in an unknown tongue in a public assembly, with no interpreter present, could be used with the same force against the practice of calling upon an assembly to engage in silent prayer. Why would an interpreter be necessary unless the public prayers were to be common to all the worshipers? If each person in the assembly were to word his own prayer, what difference would it make whether a man prayed in an

unknown tongue? Furthermore, how could one in an assembly "pray with the understanding" (i.e., so as to be understood by the entire assembly), if he uttered no sound? And if one cannot say "amen to a prayer he hears, but does not understand, how could he possibly say "amen" to a prayer he doesn't even hear?

Our Lord said: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matt. 6:5,6). This passage disparages the practice of assuming a praying position in a public place to engage in private prayer; and it teaches that private prayers are to be prayed in private places.

Is Social Drinking Justified

(No. 3)



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

We now continue with our studies relative to social drinking and whether this highly popular and ever increasing practice can be justified in the life of a person who wishes to please God and be a real honor to human society. Numerous proponents of the desirability of social drinking are determined to make Jesus Christ sub-

servient to their views. They are determined to make him into a drinking Lord, a liquor loving Lord, mind you. In our previous study attention was directed to the thought that some have sought to make what he manufactured in John 2 into an alcoholic beverage capable of making men drunk. I do not believe a word of this, and expressed why in plain, positive and pointed language in the last article. But we now take up another blasphemous assertion against our Lord which has been urged as Scriptural sanction for social drinking.

JESUS CALLED A WINEBIBBER IN LUKE 7:34

A religious leader among churches of Christ was recently requested to respond to some questions about social drinking and whether such is permissible for Christians. The only thing he condemned in his answers as sin was outright drunkenness. In an effort to add some measure of sagging support for this extremely flimsy case he referred to the fact that the Bible calls Jesus a winebibber. This religious leader feels there must have been some basis for this in the fact that Jesus must have partaken of that which was capable of making men drunk else this accusation would have never been hurled at him. Others have taken practically this same position about the accusation that Jesus was a winebibber. For those who feel that Jesus actually partook of intoxicants during his ministry we have several things we ask you to consider.

In the first place, we ask you to take note of who said this about the Lord. The actual accusation occurs in Luke 7:34. Let us back up a few verses and get some of the context into proper perspective. The Bible says in Luke 7:29-35: "And all the people that heard him,

and the publicans justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil (demon - ASV). The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! But wisdom is justified of all her children!"

Did God say his son was a winebibber? No! Did Jesus say he was a winebibber? No! Did the Spirit of truth infer that he was a winebibber? No! Did one of the apostles say Jesus was a winebibber? No! Did one who desired to tell it just like it is say he was a winebibber? No! Who said he was winebibber? The very same ones who said John the Baptist was possessed of a demon. Will religious leaders who say there must be some grounds for the accusation that Jesus was a winebibber due to its being said say also that John the Baptist was demon possessed? The very same ones who declared Jesus to be a winebibber said John had a demon. The enemies of both John and Jesus accused the former of having a demon and the latter of being a winebibber. Since when have the Lord's enemies been reliable in appraising the Lord's character? Will anyone be so highly inconsistent as to say that the enemies lied about John's being demon-possessed but told the truth about the Lord's being a winebibber? Now what kind of respect is that toward the Lord Jesus Christ? The truth of the matter is that John was not demon-possessed and Jesus Christ was NOT a winebibber in any sense of the term. The enemies were wrong on both scores. How sad that we have religious leaders who will side with the enemies in blaspheming the totally sober Master of men! Shame, shame, shame on any preacher or any other religious leader who would stoop to such infamy against our blessed Lord. Seemingly, they love their liquor more than they do the Lord? If not, why do they then place him in such low repute

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Explain Hebrews 6:4-6."

"For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6).

The Hebrew treatise was written to warn the saints of the threat of Judaizing teachers. It is obvious, from many things appearing therein, that the people for whom it was particularly written, had embraced Christianity, but were being seduced by false teachers whose design was to lead them to repudiate Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, and to return to the law of Moses as the only proper basis of salvation. Some had already succumbed to the temptation to return to the religion of their fathers, with consequent rejection of Jesus as Messiah, and had thus put themselves beyond redemption.

Tragic as it was to fall away from the favor of God, the guilt of those who thus did was compounded by virtue of the heights from which their apostasy occurred. Never were people more highly blessed; never was there less excuse for the fatal fall these of whom the apostle wrote deliberately experienced.

They were (a) once enlightened; (b) they tasted of the heavenly gift; (c) they were partakers of the Holy Spirit; (d) they tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come; and then (e) deliberately forsook the Saviour to return to the shadows of the old order. They had, of course obeyed the gospel; only of those who were children of God could it be affirmed that they were "once enlightened," had "tasted of the heavenly gift," had been partakers of the Holy Spirit, and had imbibed the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. These characteristics can belong only to Christians. Men are enlightened by the light of God's word (Eph. 5:8; Psalm 119:50); the heavenly gift of salvation is bestowed on children of God only. Moreover, these "fell away," from Christ and from salvation; they must have once been with him in order so to do. Here is, obviously, a clear cut case of apostasy.

It seems exceedingly strange, in the light of the foregoing facts, that great religious bodies would teach that it is impossible for a child of God to sin to the extent of losing his soul in hell. There are, indeed, more than twenty-five hundred warnings of the possibility of apostasy in the sacred writings; why, if such a possibility does not exist, should such earnest and repeated warnings have been delivered? Why did the inspired writers of the word spend so much time solemnly warning the people to beware of apostasy if God had decreed that such is forevermore impossible?

That apostasy is not only possible, but certain, when men forsake the faith, is affirmed in Hebrews 6:6. Moreover, of these it is said that, "It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance." It is, from this, clear that those contemplated were in a special class, inasmuch as many passages of scripture offer pardon to penitent people (Gal. 6:1; 1

John 1:7-9). We are assured that if we confess our sins, the Lord will graciously forgive and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Why then, in this case is no forgiveness promised, or possibility of repentance granted?

The answer is to be seen in the nature of the apostasy characteristic of these people.

These were not ordinary apostles - individuals who had succumbed to temptation and sin through weakness, indifference or stupidity. They had repudiated Christ as their Saviour, and had returned to the law of Moses, as the only proper system of religion, on the assumption that a future Messiah would appear, more acceptable to the Jews than Jesus of Nazareth.

The law could not justify; no Messiah was yet to come; their repudiation of Jesus eliminated the possibility of salvation through him; and thus their salvation became hopeless. It should be observed that the reason they could not be saved was that it was impossible "to renew them to repentance." Thus, their helpless situation resulted from no failure on God's part, but from an unwillingness on theirs, to comply with God's plan. By their permanent rejection of the Christian system, they had made it impossible to be saved by the only plan possible - through Christ. They erected the barrier; not God. But, cannot those who have repudiated Christianity, be made to see the error of their way and return, and find forgiveness at the hands of God?

Yes, if they return!

These, contemplated in the text under study, were past the possibility of returning.

They had themselves deliberately gone beyond the point of no return.

So abandoned indeed were they that "they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." So hardened were they toward Christ, they would not hesitate to repeat the shame of Calvary! Of course such hardened characters will not in penitence turn to him who alone can save. The writer vividly pictures, in figurative fashion, the condition characterizing them: "For the land which hath drunk the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them for whose sake it is also tilled, receiveth blessing from God: but if it beareth thorns and thistles, it is rejected and nigh unto a curse; whose end it is to be burned" (Heb. 6:7,8).

If those who had been privileged to enjoy the unspeakable gifts set out by the apostle could, and did fall away, how very, very careful should we be that we, too, do not fall victims to the blandishments of Satan. It is fatal for us to assume that because we have obeyed the gospel and are in possession of salvation from past, or alien, sins, we may live at ease and glide through life with the assurance that our redemption in heaven is secure. Faith, repentance, confession and baptism, in water, indispensable conditions of pardon, are not the conditions of going to heaven. Obedience to the primary conditions is the ground-work of salvation; such is necessary in order to get into the sphere where we may prepare for eternal salvation. The condition of going to heaven is a faithful life. Those who thus live are indeed secure.

On Support Of Missionaries

ROGER E. DICKSON

How can a state-wide eldership determine the support of its missionary? No few elderships have found it hard to determine correct and sufficient missionary support. And they have found it hard to keep such support correct and sufficient during the years the missionary is on the field. There are several matters involved with this problem which have no simple answers. Usually, US citizens are out of contact with the real cost of living in foreign countries. This seems to be the real crux to this problem. But elders should try to determine what the cost of living is in the country where their missionary will be going or is presently living.

There are some basic points that should be remembered in determining the support of missionaries. I cannot state in this article, or any article as far as that goes, a specific amount of support for such and such a missionary who is working in Paris, Bangkok, or Madan, or even some areas of Brazil where I am presently working. The cost and custom of living varies drastically in all parts of the world. But there are some principles that can help guide us in determining support for missionaries.

Before I mention any specific thing, there is one general principle which envelopes this subject completely: Inflation has made cheap mission work a thing of the past. There is no such thing as cheap mission work today. And stateside churches who want to do mission work are going to be put to the test by this inflation. While the States has been sitting around with single digit inflation, the rest of the world has been shouldering double digit, or even triple digit inflation. Fifteen years ago a missionary could be supported for \$500 a month. But the same missionary in the same location today would need \$1200 a month. In

fact, the United States is becoming one of the cheaper places to live in the world because of its low inflation rate. In the big cities of the world the cost of living is usually higher than the States. About two years ago a New York firm surveyed the cost of living in Sao Paulo, Brazil and compared the figures with the average cost of living in U.S. cities. It was discovered that Sao Paulo had a cost of living over 15 percent higher than the average U.S. city. That means if a man was making \$1,000 a month in the States, he would need \$1150 in Sao Paulo. And that was two years ago! Inflation to the Brazilian economy last year was 49.3 percent. (Anyway, that's what the government admitted. The "real inflation" was higher.) And the cost of living in the rest of Brazil and many parts of the world is not much cheaper than Sao Paulo.

So keeping this in mind, here are just a few points to consider when determining the support of any missionary family.

1. HIGH COST HOUSING: The cost of housing has inflated out of sight in large cities of the world. People are leaving the countrysides to find work in the big cities. Such movements of populations has driven to the sky the cost of land and housing around big cities. In Sao Paulo, houses that rented for \$200 a month two years ago are renting for \$450 a month today. It is going to cost money to house a missionary family the way he should be housed and this should be considered in every missionary's support.

2. FAT PRICED FOOD: No missionary should be supported insufficiently. And there are no few cases where missionaries have had to sacrifice a balanced diet for their children

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Is Social Drinking Justified (No. 3)

(Continued from Page 2)

toward one of the infamous evils of all time - alcoholic beverages?

In the second place the same passage in which Jesus is accused of being a winebibber has him a gluttonous man. Are those who contend that he in reality was a winebibber also willing to say he was a gluttonous man? Why say the one and refuse to say the other? A religious leader once pulled this passage on me in trying to justify social drinking. He was perfectly willing for Jesus to be a winebibber. When I showed him such also necessitates Jesus' being a gluttonous man he quickly backed off both scores. He had not studied carefully his own flimsy argument. Be it remembered that Jesus lived under a law where a gluttonous and drunk son was subject to capital punishment (Deut. 21:20-21). Did Jesus violate the very law under which he lived all his life on earth by being a winebibber and a gluttonous man? According to the enemies he did. And we have any number of liquor loving preachers and religious leaders who will say the same thing just to say there is some semblance of Scriptural support for the consumption of alcoholic beverages. What a pity!! What utter shame!!

In the third place the Old Testament law under which our blessed Lord lived placed a strict prohibition against being among winebibbers and gluttons. Solomon wrote in Proverbs 23:20-21: "Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." How could Jesus have been a perfect Lord and Master of men if he were really a winebibber and a glutton? If he were really what the enemies said he was, how could he have kept from violating this very passage? And again, if Jesus Christ were really a winebibber and a glutton, how could any of his disciples have associated with him for a moment without violating the tone and tenor of Proverbs 23:20? This needs an answer from the liquor loving preachers who have made our blessed and holy Lord into a first century guzzler of intoxicants.

In the fourth place we wonder how many of the other accusations are true which were hurled at the Lord during his personal ministry. Even his friends did not always say that which was true in regard to him. Are there grounds sufficient for concluding that Jesus was really beside himself or crazy? The Bible says in Mark 3:21, "And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself." Is such really so just because his friends said it was so? Are there sufficient grounds for concluding that Jesus had Beelzebub and that "By the prince of demons casteth he out the demons?" That accusation was made against God's Son in Mark 3:22. Is this the secret of all his miraculous powers? Are there grounds that he was demon-possessed in John 7:20? The multitudes said of the Christ, "Thou hast a demon: . . ." Are there sufficient grounds to conclude that he was a Samaritan - a member of a mongrel race - not a pure Hebrew at all? That is what the enemies said of him in John 8:48. They answered and said unto him, "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" There is just as much ground to conclude that he was a Samaritan and was demon-possessed as to conclude that he was a winebibber and a gluttonous man. If not, WHY NOT? Have religious leaders forgotten about asking that very vital question in

Biblical interpretation about WHO IS DOING THE SPEAKING?" It is so that the enemies accused him of being a winebibber; IT IS NOT TRUE THAT HE WAS WHAT THEY ACCUSED HIM OF BEING. That is the crux of the issue at hand.

In the fifth place, are we to conclude that Jesus was an imposter, that he really was not God's Son at all? That is the very charge on which Jewish leadership sent him to Pilate and later obtained the crucifixion decree against him. But according to the religious leader who thought the accusation of his being a winebibber would not have been leveled unless there were some grounds for such, one could also conclude that there must have been grounds for his being an imposter because of what the enemies - ENEMIES MIND YOU AND NOT FRIENDS - had to say about him! It is nothing short of amazing and alarming to what low ground liquor loving preachers will stoop in order to find some measure of support for deadly, diabolical and destructive liquor. Toward such I say shame, Shame, SHAME!!!

On Support Of Missionaries

(Continued From Page 3)

because their supporting churches did not understand their real plights. If missionaries don't eat right they get sick. And what good is a sick missionary? Make sure there is sufficient funds in his salary to buy sufficient food for his family. And just speaking for Sao Paulo, food is no cheaper here than in the States.

3. EXPLODING GAS PRICES: The U.S. is one of the cheapest places in the world to buy gasoline for cars. Many countries of the world pay more than \$2.00 for a single gallon of gas. And that's high. So when planning the support of a missionary always allow sufficient funds for transportation cost. His effectiveness on the field is many times measured by his ability to get from point A to point B. But getting from point A to point B may cost him over \$200 a month.

4. CAR COST: Don't think the prices of cars are cheaper outside the U.S. They're not! They're usually higher. One missionary recently wrote me from southern Asia and said that he had to pay \$7,500 for a used jeep. Supporting churches should count on buying transportation for the missionary. Without dependable transportation, his effectiveness would be drastically cut.

5. INSURE INSURANCE: In determining the support of a missionary, never forget social security, hospitalization and life insurance costs. Know what a missionary has to pay monthly for these and count them in the budget.

6. ABOVE CONTRIBUTION DONATIONS: Every missionary gives regularly to the church. But on top of that, he always has those added needs which call upon him every month. There are the poor, the unclothed, the hungry, the unpaid light bills of the church, etc. with which he must be concerned. From where does the money come to meet these

needs? You guessed it. The soft-hearted missionary usually digs deeper into his own pocket. It must be remembered that missionaries are faced with this problem in a way that no one else in the entire world is. He is working with people who have no where else to go. And he is a spiritual leader who must show compassion.

7. SAVINGS: When all the necessities are figured in the monthly support of a missionary (food, clothes, travel, insurance, etc.), supporting churches should support a missionary enough above that sum to allow him to save. If he has no savings, he will find himself in an unbearable financial crisis at some time or other. Those unexpected accidents usually always pop up. I'm not a pessimist, but one should always be prepared for those unexpected costs.

Other points could be added to this list. The main point to remember is not to try to get by cheap with a missionary family. Remember, the Golden Rule applies to him as it applies to you. And why should we try to scrape by? One of the biggest lessons I learned from my Brazilian brethren is the responsibility they feel toward one another concerning wages of preachers and employees for the church. They believe that the church should pay more than that which an employee would receive in working for the world. And didn't Paul have this in mind concerning elders in 1 Tim. 5:17?

Local preachers in the States are paid better today than they ever have been in the past. It seems to be an attitude among some churches to pay their local preacher an adequate wage but send their missionary into a field where the cost of living is high and expect him to live on \$800 a month. It takes only a little thinking to see that this will not work.

Let us never forget our missionaries. And let us never forget to support them sufficiently. I have yet to see a missionary get rich because he had been oversupported. But I have seen many who have suffered severely because they had not been supported sufficiently. — Avenida Nove De Julho, 4805, Caixa Postal 30.008 - 01.000, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Respect of Persons

G.F. RAINES

Many passages in the Holy Bible tell us that God is no respecter of persons. For example, in Acts 10:34, 35 Peter says, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34,35).

Jesus is no respecter of persons. He said to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

Paul says: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5).

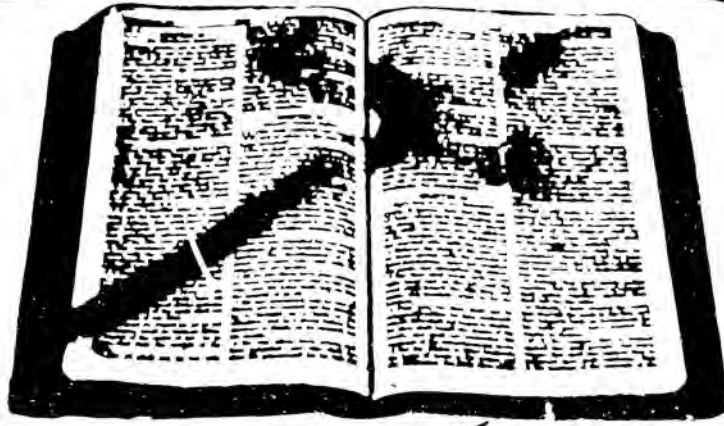
James says: "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors" (Jas. 2:9).

Dr. Harrison S. Evans has well said: "The mark of a great person, of a true humanitarian, is to be able to be concerned with others and to appreciate their significance irrespective of their social position or influence. This attitude is fundamental in the Christian ethic, and it was a cornerstone of Christ's philosophy and mission." — Newton, Miss. 39345.

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*"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32
"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17*



*"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25
"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17*

VOLUME 13

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Living With People of Other Races

Curtis R. Dowdy

The New Testament speaks of a oneness and a unity wrought through Christ which emphasizes the dignity of every person. When we stand at the cross upon which the "son of man" died we view people of all races with respect and honor, "... that he by the grace of God should taste death for Every man" (Heb. 2:9). There is a kinship in Christ that has broken every barrier down. How interesting the information found at Hebrews 2:11: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren". Questions seem in order here:

1. If Christ is not ashamed to call ALL sanctified people brethren WHAT should we call them?
2. If Christ who sanctified and those sanctified are one, what should our attitude toward the sanctified be? Should not our attitude be that of loving respect!

LOOK AT EPHESIANS 2:11-18: This passage speaks of reconciliation for ALL without regard to race. Although God has chosen Israel as the nation to fulfill His divine purpose He never intended to convey the idea that they were selected because they were above other races. Because God is God He could make choice of the Jewish race without any prejudice toward other races. However the mark in the flesh, given as a sign that God would use a certain race, became a symbol of their exclusiveness and by which they shut out other people. They gave to the Gentiles the name "uncircumcision," and it came to be a word of contempt. The mark had never been a sign of superiority but of their relationship to God's purpose. Now that the purpose had been fulfilled the sign retained by the Jews was completely man-made and meaningless. There is a lesson here which can help us in living with those of other races. To take some physical difference and emphasize that difference as a sign of superiority over others will lead to contempt.

God dealt in a more direct way with the Jewish race to bring about His divine purpose, as is seen at Eph. 2:13. The Gentiles,

however, were "without God and without hope," due to their worship of many gods (Acts 17:22). In short, the Gentiles had moved so far from God that they were "without God," and in that condition there was no hope; whereas, the Jews being sinners (Rom. 2) nevertheless believed in the one true God. Removed from Christ both Jew and Gentile would be lost.

The fulfillment of the divine purpose through the Jewish race was now an accomplished fact (the incarnation and crucifixion). That which had separated Jew from Gentile, the Law, was "broken down" (taken out of the way) and ALL are in the same boat (Eph. 2:14-18)!

Two men of different race and who hated each other violently were on the same ship during WWII. The ship was sunk and the two men ended up on the same raft. To survive they found it necessary to pull together, to help each other. In the many days that followed they worked together, and they found the old hostilities abating. By the time they were finally rescued respect had taken the place of hate, and they remained close friends down through the years. I am convinced that when we understand that ALL of us are in the same boat we can then work together with respect for each other no matter what the race.

Paul knew the solution to the problem of living with people of other races was found in the lostness of man, the grace of God and the power of the Gospel (Rom. 1:14-16). In this light the color of skin, the slant of eyes nor ones position in society made any difference. After all God had "made of one blood all nations of men," and we are all the "offspring of God" (Acts 17:26,29).

CONSIDER GALATIANS 3:11-14. It took a vision to convince Peter that the Jew is not above the Gentile (Acts 10:9ff), and he exclaimed, "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). However, what Peter learned did not keep him from giving in to the pressure of prejudice. It was for this that Paul "withstood him to the face" (Gal. 2:11-14). Take note that the prejudice of one race toward another caused Peter to fear being seen eating with those of another race. Peter's "not walking according to the truth of the gospel" was in the impression he would leave on the minds of others. Brethren would understand Peter's action to mean that the wall of separation was

still up.

There are two lessons in the foregoing worthy of thought: **FIRST, THE POWER OF PREJUDICE.** Prejudice comes from self-centeredness, an ego inflater that causes the feeling of superiority. Tryon Edwards correctly noted. "He that is possessed with a prejudice is possessed with a devil, and one of the worst kind of devils, for it shuts out the truth, and often leads to ruinous error."

It is only proper that one take pride in his race and its accomplishments. Nevertheless, when that pride is blown out of proper perspective and begins to exhibit an attitude of superiority, at the expense of others, race relations will be strained at best.

Travel is a great help in coming to appreciate people of other races and lands. This no doubt helped to balance the view of Paul. On a recent flight to another nation I had the pleasure of being seated next to the Assistant Superintendent of Education of a small island nation. We talked at length about the attitude of his people toward America. His attitude was that America had taken them for granted and to "get even" they would court with Castro. Whether this is true of the nation or just the thinking of this one man I cannot say. However, it does point up the problem of living with those of other races. They must not be taken for granted nor be looked down on as inferior. We must recognize the dignity of every individual and respect him for what he is!

SECOND, THE POWER OF INFLUENCE. Through Peter's withdrawal from the Gentiles he influenced others to do the same. This is always the case. When we move in the wrong direction others will follow. This should, therefore, serve as a warning.

APPLY GALATIANS 2:28,29. Spiritual Israel, Abraham's seed, is made up of those from every race who have accepted God's grade through faith by being baptized into Christ. Christ, the realm of equality, knows no superior or inferior whether in race (Jew, Greek) in sex (male, female), or in society (bond, free). Nevertheless, equality does not mean sameness!

Living with people of other races in respect, honor and peace is a beautiful commentary upon one's own relationship with the Prince of Peace. — Obion, Tenn. 38240.

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Words Of Truth



BOBBY DUNCAN

With the end of the month of April we will have served as editor of this paper for one year. It is in order that we express our gratitude to our associate editor, Flavil Nichols; to our circulation manager, Ray Dutton; to our staff of capable writers, and to the personnel of the NORTHWEST ALABAMIAN for their fine work in publishing the paper. We realize that we have not done our work as editor perfectly, but we trust we have profited by our mistakes.

It is in order also that we express our appreciation to those who subscribe to the paper. Without you, the paper would be of no benefit at all. We are humbly gratified to know that our circulation during the past year has increased by about seven per cent. We trust that we shall continue to be worthy of the confidence of our growing family of readers.

So far as we know, WORDS OF TRUTH is the only weekly paper of its kind that is actually owned by a local church of Christ. Shortly after the death of our late, beloved brother Nichols, it was learned that WORDS OF TRUTH was owned by its publisher in Haleyville. The elders of the Sixth Avenue church immediately set about to obtain ownership of the paper, which they purchased for a two-dollar bill and a five-year contract with the publisher. This means that the eldership of the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper, Alabama will always be in complete control of this publication. While our publisher handles all the mechanics of publication, mailing, collecting money, etc., what goes into the paper is decided, as has always been, by the editor. Should a change in editors be necessary, the new editor would unquestionably be named by the eldership of

the Sixth Avenue Church.

While our circulation continues to grow, as it did while brother Nichols edited the paper, we are ever striving to increase our number of subscribers. If the other members of the congregation where you worship do not receive WORDS OF TRUTH, please encourage them to subscribe. Or better still, if you will write for a free bundle to distribute,

we will be happy to send them to you.

We sincerely believe that it will pay off richly if churches will send the paper each week to each family in the congregation. This can be done for just eight cents per issue, per family. And the church treasurer will be billed monthly. Like your daily newspaper, it can be discontinued any time you wish.

Is Social Drinking Justified

Alcoholic consumption is big business in our land. It constitutes a grievous problem to our populace. Alcoholics and problem drinkers continue to increase every day. The curse of social drinking is a constant feeder to the ranks of the alcoholic and the problem drinker. Hundreds of social drinkers cross over daily into the camp of those with acute problems toward alcohol.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Justification for social drinking is sometimes sought from a statement made by the apostle Paul. This statement is found in Romans 14:21. The passage says, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." It is highly unfortunate that every time the word WINE occurs in the Bible there are those who just automatically assume that it refers to an intoxicant. The truth of the matter is that the word WINE does not always mean an intoxicant. I have already proved that conclusively in a previous lesson on John 2. The Bible speaks of wine when it is yet in the grape. Surely it is not an intoxicant at that point. The Bible says in Isaiah 65:8, "Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all."

Does wine in Romans 14:21 refer to an intoxicant? I do not believe for a moment that it does. Romans 14 deals with matters that are largely indifferent in and of themselves. It touches things which are all right if done and are all right if not done. But alcoholic beverages by no stretch of the imagination are indifferent in and of themselves. Liquor consumption just does not fit into what Paul is saying in this entire chapter. It is not in the same class as whether one should eat meats or refrain from the eating of meats. At this point I want to refer to a statement about this passage from the pen of my warm friend, brother Roy Deaver. Brother Deaver said, "Paul says, 'It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth.'"

"I do not accept the view that the word 'wine' in this passage refers to intoxicants, and that Paul therefore classifies the drinking of intoxicants within the realm of indifference. The word 'wine' here is used with the word meat (flesh) and must refer to something which stands before God as meat stands. Further, the word 'wine' (oinos) does not necessarily mean an intoxicant. It may refer to the juice freshly squeezed from the grapes. It may refer to the juice of the grape while it is still in the grape. This is the word used in John 2, and I do not believe for a moment that the Lord made something intoxicating. Even if it could be proved that in Paul's day and in that culture, that the drinking of intoxicating

wine was a matter of 'indifference' it would not follow that such would be the case in our day. Millions of broken homes, destitute children, murders on the highways, cases of loss of influence for good, and countless other tragedies all declare that the drinking of intoxicants is not a matter of indifference. A Christian will have nothing to do with drinking intoxicants" (Roy Deaver, THE CHURCH AND FELLOWSHIP, Freed-Hardeman College 1974 Lectures, p. 311). Relative to this fine statement I am in full agreement. I add a hearty Amen and Amen to what the scholarly Deaver has so ably and capably stated. He is a thorough student of the English Bible and an able student of the New Testament in its original text - the Greek tongue.

At this point I introduce a very obvious lesson from an Old Testament passage. We read in Leviticus 10:8-11, "And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations: And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses." Some lessons are quite obvious by this stern prohibition. The priests were not to minister to the Lord in the tabernacle while under the influence of strong drink. Since the tabernacle in the Old Testament was a type of the church in the New Testament, does anyone really think the Lord will be pleased with those who serve him in the church of his only begotten Son if they do so under the influence of alcohol? If you think this beloved, where is Scriptural justification for your conclusion on this point? Be it remembered that people who are Christians are members of the church all the time and not just when they assemble at certain times to engage in public worship. These were priests in Leviticus 10 who were not to minister to the Lord while under the influence of liquor. Those who are Christians constitute a royal priesthood and a holy priesthood according to Peter's message in I Peter 2:5,9. We are priests, therefore, all the time if indeed we are Christians! Does anyone really think that God was displeased with drinking priests under the Mosaic Covenant but will be thrillingly pleased with drinking priests under the Christian covenant? If anyone so thinks, what is the Scriptural basis for so concluding?

Why was this stern punishment relative to drinking priests given and do not forget that violation of this prohibition carried with it capital punishment? It was in order that the priests might be in position to distinguish between the holy and the common, between the clean and the unclean and might be in position to teach with sobriety God's law to the children of Israel. The implication is a strong and obvious one indeed that a liquor loving and liquor consuming priesthood would not be in position to distinguish between the sacred and the secular, between the unclean

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Is forsaking the assembly grounds for church discipline?"

Yes.

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for he is faithful that promised: and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh" (Heb. 10:23-25). It is often assumed that the meetings some were forsaking in that day were Lord's day meetings of the church only; but, there is nothing in the text or context that justifies such an assumption. The admonition of the apostle was and is applicable to any assembly of the disciples for religious purposes; and, those who *abandon* (such is the significance of the Greek word translated "forsaking" in the foregoing text) any such assembly, are in disobedience to the apostle's injunction. Thus, people who flagrantly disregard their duty and refuse to attend any of the meetings of the church are subjects of discipline. Obviously, the level of disinterest would determine the extent and degree of apostasy and consequently the measure of discipline exercised; those who attend regularly on Lord's day, but no other meetings of the church, are not as far along the road to apostasy as are those who never attend; but, all members who are remiss in duty and who are not faithful in attendance at all services, are subjects of the church's discipline.

This does not mean that people who attend only on Sunday morning, ought immediately to be withdrawn from! It is unfortunate that the view is widely current that the *only* discipline which the church may exercise is withdrawal of fellowship. Discipline is a term of much wider import than this; it means, among other things, "teaching, instruction, training which corrects, molds, strengthens or perfects" (Webster). The action thus involves an approach the design of which is to correct what is lacking in one's character and conduct and, by instruction, warning and chastisement, eliminate the weaknesses, imperfections and defects involved.

This is an obligation of the elders which they are solemnly required to discharge both individually and through other faithful disciples of the Lord; and this is one of the reasons why it is so requisite for elders to be able teachers of the word and wise administrators of the work of the congregation. Any member of the church who shows any remissness is thus a subject of discipline. We must not wait until the illness is terminal before beginning treatment of the patient! This points up what is taught repeatedly in the scriptures that discipline has as its goal the restoration of the erring and the weak to usefulness in the church; not excommunication! (I Cor. 5:1-13). Paul makes this exceedingly clear in his admonition to the Galatian churches: "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

Occasionally, however, there are those who

resist every effort which the saints make to restore them, and who persist in their disregard of duty thus leaving the church with no alternative but to withdraw fellowship. "Fellowship," involves partnership, participation, a sharing of responsibility and reward. Withdrawal of fellowship is the termination of any association, fraternal, social, or religious with those who are in this category. Here, too, much error is current regarding this action. It is generally thought that such is the sole responsibility of elders of the church; and, the view obtains that it consists largely of an announcement from the pulpit that brother "A" or sister "B" has been withdrawn from. This is not withdrawal; it is merely the announcement of intention to do so - the actual withdrawal comes when each member of the congregation ceases all social and fraternal association with brother "A" or, as the case may be, sister "B". Withdrawal is an action of the members of the congregation, not simply or solely a decision of the eldership, though such decision usually precedes the action. A congregation may withdraw fellowship from the erring whether it has elders or not. In the actual withdrawal, the elders act as individual Christians, not in their capacity as elders. Much teaching is sorely needed in this area of congregational activity today.

Not infrequently the question is asked, "How can a congregation withdraw fellowship from one who has already ceased all fellowship with the church?" a query that evidences a defective concept of what fellowship is, and what withdrawal involves. If fellowship were no more than association in religious services thus involving, at the most,

two or three hours a week, there would be merit in the objection; but it is far, far more than this. All disciples of the Lord, whether faithful or not, are members of the body of Christ; and, their conduct, whether good or bad, reflects upon the church, thus justifying its efforts to keep itself pure and influential in the community. And, as we have seen, discipline, the ultimate action of which is disfellowship, has as its object, the ultimate restoration of the fallen to fellowship. Paul instructed the church in Corinth to turn the incestuous man over to Satan "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (I Cor. 5:5).

Moreover, Paul instructed the Thessalonians "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" to "withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the traditions which they received of us" (II Thess. 3:6). It is significant that the words "walketh disorderly" translates a Greek phrase with a military connotation, signifying *out of step, not in proper order*, and it is remarkable that Arndt and Gingrich say that involved literally is "irregular religious services!" Quite obviously, a person who is not in attendance because of carelessness, love of the world, etc., is "out of step," and not in "proper order" with the rest of the congregation, and thus an object of discipline. Where it is properly practiced, it has a salutary effect on the rest of the congregation; it impresses the people of the world with the fact that it is the aim of the church to keep itself disciplined and pure, and it is the Lord's way as taught in his word. To oppose this teaching of the scripture is to array oneself against God.

Genesis and the Universe

(No. 2)

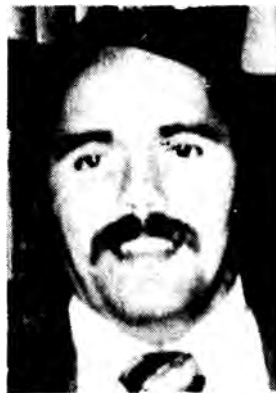
Is the evolutionary "faith" the most reasonable in the light of all the evidences? There are two basic assumptions to which every evolutionist must cling in order for his theory to get off the ground: (1) Matter has always existed; (2) Uniformity of natural causes in a closed system. These form the base upon which the entire evolutionary system rest. However, if the vast framework of the evolutionary claim is built upon the foundation of false premises, it follows that the entire system must be dismissed as fallacious. An examination of the evidence reveals the basic assumptions of evolution to be contrary to both logic and science.

In the first place, modern physics and astronomy has set aside the old philosophy of the "eternity of matter." Of all the laws of physical science none are more basic and certain than the two laws of thermodynamics. Dr. Henry M. Morris explains the meaning of the two basic energy laws: The first law states, "that although energy can change forms it cannot be either created or destroyed and therefore the sum total of energy remains constant." Concerning the second law of thermodynamics Dr. Morris continues, "The second law of thermodynamics

states that in any real process or system in which energy is being transformed into other forms, at least some of it is transformed into heat energy which cannot be converted back into other useful forms" (Henry Morris, *Studies in the Bible and Science*). Since the amount of useful energy is decreasing, the earth is growing old, running down and is due to ultimately burn itself out. But if matter is eternal such would have long ago taken place. Furthermore, the laws of thermodynamics indicate a change not "upward" but "downwards." The two laws testify to a gradual march toward decay and randomness, not growth and complexity. Evolutionists ignore the facts and suggest that the tendency is toward a higher degree of organization. In a world where the general trend seems to be toward falling apart, wearing out, and fading away, the evolutionist has a heavy burden of proof upon his shoulders to show that in one large segment of the scientific realm all movement is in the opposite direction.

But suppose we allow the major premise of evolutionary thought, namely, that lifeless, dead matter has always existed. Does it logically follow that life, personality and intelligence is the product of lifeless, impersonal matter? The law of biogenesis states that "life comes from life." The theory that life arose spontaneously of itself is contrary to scientific facts. However, to the prejudiced mind, the most absurd improbabilities are considered more probable than the alternative of creation. Evolutionists must turn a blind eye to the established findings of scientific investigation in order for their theory to get off the

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LARRY CHOUINARD

Genesis and the Universe

(Continued From Page 3)

ground. The crutch of the "eternity of matter" cannot, in the light of scientific inquiry, support the evolutionary scheme.

The Uniformitarian concept of historical geology serves as the other pillar to support the evolutionary theory. In the early nineteenth century Charles Lyell popularized the "uniformitarian" approach to earth history. While Lyell was a theist he nevertheless was unhappy with the early chapters of Genesis. Basically he contended that present rates of change have "continued as they were from the beginning of creation," thus present processes may serve as a "key to the past." According to the uniformitarian concept, present rates of change can account for all geological formations. Supernatural creation, the flood and all major catastrophes are an impossibility within the framework of "uniformitarianism". Once again we stress that such an assumption is the "faith" of the evolutionist. "Uniformity of natural causes in a closed system" cannot be subject to scientific verification. The "uniformitist" can neither empirically establish the original condition of the earth nor that change has been at a uniform rate. One might with equal force begin with another assumption and interpret all the data in light of his explanation. The Apostle Peter describes the argument of uniformitarianism when he wrote of scoffers who would reject the promise of the Lord's return. "where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Note that these mockers willingly ignored the account of the Genesis flood. The great flood, which is attested by abundant geological evidences, serves to show uniformitarianism to be a faulty assumption. But not only does the biblical record stand diametrically apposed to the philosophy of uniformity, the facts of geology also prove the uniformitarian principle to be fallacious. Whitcomb and Morris in their book, "The Genesis Flood" presents abundant scientific evidence to demonstrate the unsoundness of the uniformitist claim (See PP. 130-211). Hence both the Biblical record and geological evidence testify to those "rare historical occasions mentioned in scripture where God intervened in the normal physical processes of the universe, causing significant changes therein for a time" (Morris and Whitcomb, Flood). However many will still cling to the "theory" in spite of the facts. In his work, *EVOLUTION AND THE NEW INQUISITION*, James D. Bales writes, "If one is acquainted with the background of Darwin and other evolutionists in the nineteenth century, he will realize that they accepted evolution not because scientific evidence proved it, but because they had rejected the idea of creation by God, and had determined that all must be explained naturally."

The assumption that the universe is the product of non-intelligent forces, fails miserably in explaining the marvelous order and design which meets the eye everywhere we look. Disorder never spontaneously turns into order. Organization requires an organizer. Albert Einstein once remarked, "I shall never believe that God plays dice with the world." Dr. Einstein often compared the world to a

well-constructed puzzle. When faced with the order of the cosmos the unbiased thinker dismisses mere impersonal chance as the ultimate originator. Even those who do not succumb to the abundant evidence find themselves personifying nature in order to escape the horrid conclusions of a desolate universe.

In short, both the Bible and reason stand opposed to an impersonal beginning. The innumerable and complex systems within the universe testify to creative forethought and design. Natural processes cannot provide an adequate explanation for the intricate structure and complex design which characterizes the whole cosmos. In a subsequent article we shall consider the alternative of divine creation.—148 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, Calif. 94523.

Is Social Drinking Justified

(Continued From Page 2)

and the clean and would be absolutely impotent in teaching effectively Israel what was needful from the Mosaic Law. Since this prohibition comes in the very wake of the serious defection of Nadab and Abihu, could it be the case that the two oldest sons of Aaron may have been under the influence of strong drink when they offered strange or common fire to the lord? I would not be dogmatic on this point at all, but the possibility may well be there. There must have been some reason why this stern prohibition was injected right at this point in the book of Leviticus and in the very next paragraph after the infraction committed by these daring priests.

THE "NO HARM" ATTEMPT AT JUSTIFICATION

Some seek to justify social drinking on the grounds that it does not harm. It would be interesting to have the proponents of this define harm for us! Unequivocally I deny that this is the case at all. There are all kinds of harm in social drinking. A few of them are mentioned. The social drinker is no longer the answer to the alcohol problem in our nation. He is already a part of the problem. If not, WHY NOT? His influence is exactly nil in keeping others away from the problem. The social drinker may never become an alcoholic himself and yet he may influence someone to drink who will ultimately become an alcoholic. It may be one's mate in marriage. It may be one's own child. It may be one's business partner. Will God hold the social drinker guiltless in such situations? Nay verily!

On the other hand the social drinker may one day awaken to the realization that he has become an alcoholic. A young man in the service of our country some years back began to drink with some of his buddies. His preacher urged him to quit immediately. The young man said that liquor posed no danger to him. He said he really disliked the stuff; he only drank it to be sociable. Within ten years he was a miserable and pathetic alcoholic. The preacher was right; he was wrong. What he vowed he would never become he DID BECOME!! Of course if that story occurred now, the young man might have a preacher who condoned social drinking. And alas, the

number of this sorry lot is growing. I am ashamed of any of my preaching brethren who speak any word of favor for alcoholic beverages.

Beloved reader, one just does not know the full route that liquor will take him when he chooses to travel DOWN Alcohol Lane. And it is LITERALLY DOWN all the way. The end of that descending lane for millions in our day has been Alcoholic Place. Alcoholic Place ends at Hell's Blvd. I call it a boulevard because a boulevard is a broad thoroughfare or a broad street. And multitudes currently travel this one way street. Changing the figure a bit it becomes the river of no return to literally millions of them.

Social drinking kills brain cells. This is no longer open to serious debate. Social drinking affects homes and marriages. It affects children. It affects the soul of the one who does the drinking. Every drink is a step away from heaven; it is a major step toward hell. Reader friend, make no mistake about it. Social drinking in ANY AMOUNT is sin, Sin, SIN!!! — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Material Prosperity and Religious Apostasy

It seems in more cases than not, when material prosperity prevails within a society so does religious apostasy. The two seems to go hand in hand; however, this need not be the case.

A case in point is the nation of Israel. Hoses prophesied about 809-698 B.C. At this time there was material prosperity in Israel and religious apostasy. In Hoses 7:8, the inspired writer declares that "Ephraim, (i.e., the nation of Israel, mds) he mixeth himself among the peoples." The great nation of God had lost its identity as a distinct people chosen by God. They had succumbed to the pressure to compromise with those round about them. They wanted to be like everybody else more than they wanted to be like God. The cry "everybody's doing it" was the cry from the lips of Israel (Read 1 Samuel 8). Just because everybody's doing it doesn't make it right. I didn't then, and it doesn't now.

God has certainly blessed our nation and the church. We have more material possessions now than ever before. We, also see more religious apostasy now than in previous years. It seems that we are swiftly mixing among the peoples. The plea of Hoses like the plea of Jeremiah in Jeremiah 6:16 was the plea that God's people rejected their own regret later. Let us ask for the old paths in our day.

I believe there is a relationship between material prosperity and religious apostasy. Perhaps, we are too prosperous for our own good. — P.O. Box 784, Brevard, N.C. 28712.

Belview Preacher Training School Lectureship

The 3rd Annual Belview Preacher Training School Lectureship begins May 8 through 12. The theme will be "Contending For The Faith."

Those appearing on the program will be Kenneth L. Furlong, William A. Yugas, W. Emery Hardin, George E. Darling, Sr., Winfred Clark, Ernest S. Underwood, Lynwood Bishop, Roy Deaver, Gerald Miles, Clifford Dixon, Henry McCaghren, Jack Hansen, Daniel Denham, Bill Cross, Ray Peters, Albert Fleetwood, Rex A. Turner, Sr., Jim Sentell, Roger Jackson, Charles Tharp, Gerald Reynolds, John Priola, and Franklin Camp. We hope you will make plans to attend.

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32
"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"... words of truth"
"Grace and truth shall come by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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Loins Girt About With Truth

Truth is the foundation article of dress for the soldier of Christ. Without it all else is without a firm foundation and is destined to failure. In Ephesians 6:10-20 Paul, the Lord's apostle to the Gentiles, described in detail the "whole armor of God." Every true Christian is a soldier of the cross and must be engaged in the good warfare, not against flesh and blood, but against Satan and all that he may engage to be his helpers. After graphically stressing the need of the **WHOLE ARMOR** of God the apostle then addresses himself to the details of that armor, the first of which is the girdle of **TRUTH**. The girdle of the Bible had various uses, but being about the loins it surely came into close proximity to the armor above, which is described as the "breastplate of righteousness."



VIRGIL BRADFORD

WHAT IS TRUTH?

The Scriptures are not primarily interested with scientific truth, truth concerning philosophy or chemistry, but has to do first of all with things that pertain to God and eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, truth is what is opposed to error and spiritual darkness and sin. The Psalmist wrote, "Thy law is truth" (Ps. 119:142). And Jesus, in prayer to the Father said, "Thy word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). The word of truth is the sanctifying power of God and is referred to elsewhere as the "truth of the gospel" (Gal. 2:5). It is also evident that today, as in the first century, there are those who receive the word as it is in **TRUTH** the word of God, and others who look upon it as the word of men (I Thes. 2:13). We should have no real problem in discovering for ourselves which it is with us. If we accept God's word as truth from God to us we will act upon it; if we don't we won't. Though there is much truth pertaining to many things that are not Bible subjects there is only one **TRUTH**, or one body of truth, and we are straitly warned not to preach or receive "another gospel" other than that which Paul

and the rest of the apostles taught lest we be irrevocably cut off from God, cursed for ever (Cf. Gal. 1:6-9).

CHRIST VERSUS SATAN

The story of conflict between the Lord and Satan runs throughout the Bible, from Genesis 3:15 to Revelation 20:10, the latter reference given to fully assure God's people that Christ will ultimately win over the devil and all his hosts and shall cast him into the lake of fire and brimstone, the second death. Throughout the Old Testament Satan tried mightily to thwart the purpose and promise of Jehovah to send the Savior into the world on behalf of the fallen race. Such was the Adversary's effort to rid the world of Christ when as a babe his life was threatened by Herod the King, but which effort failed because an angel of the Lord gave warning to Joseph who carried the young child into Egypt until the death of Herod (Matt. 2). When our Lord was crucified the devil without doubt thought the victory was his, but thanks be to God, he was raised from the dead, ascended to heaven, was seated on David's throne, and "death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9).

The sacred record says of Jesus that he was full of grace and truth, and, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:14,17). Later, just a short time before his death he assured the disciples of his forthcoming victory, saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no one cometh to the Father but by me" (Jn. 14:6). But concerning the devil Jesus said, "there is no truth in him - he was a murderer - a liar from the beginning" (Jn. 8:44). To refuse the truth of Christ is to side with Satan, sin, darkness and error. All false teaching and false teachers are of the devil. An outstanding example of this is found in Hymenaeus and Philetus "who concerning the **TRUTH** have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some" (II Tim. 2:17f). Others would "turn away their ears from the **TRUTH** and be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:3-4). Let us not be deceived into thinking "it makes no difference what a man believes, just so his heart is right." Believe rather the word of Jesus: Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (Jn. 8:32). Now just what is the value of **THE TRUTH**?

ONLY TRUTH CAN SAVE YOUR SOUL

As stated above, the truth shall make you

free. "But thanks be unto God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made **FREE FROM SIN**, ye became servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17f). "Of his own will he brought us forth by the **WORD OF TRUTH**, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (Jas. 1:18). Preceding freedom, or forgiveness of sins, there must be logically the acceptance, or belief, of **THE TRUTH** which leads to sanctification" (2 Thes. 2:13f). But faith alone saves no one, so "ye have purified your souls in your **OBDIENCE TO THE TRUTH** - having been begotten again - through the word of God" (1 Pet. 1:22f).

Countless thousands have been persuaded by false teachers that obedience to the Lord in baptism counts for naught. What a pity that men will go on and "exchange the **TRUTH OF GOD FOR A LIE**" (Rom. 1:25). The Lord God certainly placed baptism in a strategic sequence to try the faith of men, proving whether they accept the word of God as the word of men, or whether they will do what God says do because God says it. And "God is no respecter of persons." Of course, as a Christian each one must also make the same application of principle to whatever we are commanded in **WORDS OF ETERNAL TRUTH**.

TRUTH AND THE CHURCH

Jesus promised to build his church upon the **TRUTH** that he is the Son of the Living God (Matt. 16:18; I Cor. 3:11). This he did when he arose from the tomb and a short time thereafter "preached the gospel by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven" (1 Pet. 1:12). The church of Jesus Christ has the awesome responsibility of "speaking **THE TRUTH IN LOVE**" which certainly includes not only love of **TRUTH**, but love for God, and all his creatures who are lost in sin, and who can be delivered only through the saving power of the blood of Christ according to the gospel (Rom. 3:24f; 1 Jn. 1:7; Rom. 1:16f).

Our worship of God must be in spirit and **TRUTH**. This truth is found in the New Testament and applies to the church now, not to those under the law or to those who are in heaven. Most, if not all, though we have the **TRUTH** concerning the items of worship, have

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WORDS of TRUTH

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A Case Of Public Rebuke

"But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabus also was carried away with their dissimulation" (Gal. 2:11-13). Paul had earlier shown that the truth he preached was not taught him by the other apostles, but was given him by revelation (1:11,12). He now proceeds to point out that any person - even an apostle - who fails to live in harmony with the gospel preached by himself is not walking uprightly, and should be rebuked.



BOBBY DUNCAN

From these verses we learn, first, that Peter was not the Pope. While the doctrine of the papacy of Peter is completely unfounded in Scripture, there are many who take for granted its truthfulness. The Pope is supposed to be infallible, but Paul said Peter "was to be blamed." Men today in the Roman Catholic Church do not withstand the Pope to the face, as Paul did Peter on this occasion. Furthermore, Peter had a wife (1 Cor. 9:5), which the modern Pope cannot have.

Secondly, we learn from these verses the danger of an undue regard for the pleasing of men. Peter obviously knew there was nothing wrong with his eating with Gentiles. This he did, before certain came from James. But he

knew the scruples of these Jewish brethren concerning eating with Gentiles. Rather than disturb these brethren, he simply acted hypocritically (dissembled). Now, there is nothing wrong with wanting to keep peace among brethren. But there is a point beyond which we cannot go in order to keep peace. The truth of the gospel cannot be sacrificed upon the altar of peace and harmony. Even for the sake of peace, it is a sin to give in to the dictatorial scruples of men, when these scruples are in violation of the will of God.

Thirdly, we learn from these verses that a public sin merits a public rebuke. Paul's statement in verse fourteen is: "I said unto Peter before them all. . ." Paul's rebuke of Peter on this occasion was not a private rebuke, because Peter's sin was not a private sin. It is suggested by some that Matthew 18:15 teaches that those who sin are to be approached privately; and that one who publicly renounces false doctrine or other types of sin without first approaching the offender privately is in violation of this passage. Such is not the case. Matthew 18:15ff has to do with a private and personal offense, not a public one. Think of the error that would have gone uncorrected if Paul had approached Peter privately with regard to this matter, and if it had been "settled" between the two of them. Public sin cannot be settled privately. 1 Timothy 5:20 says: "Then that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." This is what Paul did. Is this what you would have done?

Finally, these verses show us the great

Baptism A Miracle!!!!



Jerry T. Bramlett

There is a doctrine taught by some within the Lord's body that baptism is a miracle. The key is understanding this problem is to know the correct understanding of the word miracle. A miracle is something above and beyond the laws of nature that cannot be done by the laws of nature. It is not a miracle for a chicken to lay an egg nor for the egg to produce a chicken, but it is a miracle to produce a chicken without an egg or an egg without a chicken. A miracle is that which is above and beyond the laws of nature and which man does not have the ability to do.

The law of God spoken by His Son, Jesus Christ, is: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). When a person believes and is baptized it is not a miracle; because the person has not gone beyond and above the law of God. Thus baptism is not a miracle. If a person could be saved without faith and baptism that would be a miracle, because a person could be saved above and beyond the law of God. But a person cannot be saved in being disobedient to the law of God. Thus it is not a miracle when one submits to the law of God in baptism.

If baptism is a miracle then repentance and praying for an erring member to be restored would likewise be a miracle; for God forgives an erring child when he repents and prays as much as he forgives an alien sinner in baptism. God's divine law for an erring child of God is to repent and pray (Acts 8:22).

force of bad examples. First Peter dissembled, then other Jews, and then Barnabas himself. Would Barnabas and the other Jews have acted as they did had not Peter led the way? How we behave is often more far reaching in effect than what we teach. The good teaching of a lifetime may be destroyed by one bad example. Edgar A. Guest wrote the following lines:

I'd rather see a sermon than hear
one any day,
I'd rather one should walk with me
than merely show the way.
The eye's a better pupil and more
willing than the ear;
Fine counsel is confusing, but
example's always clear;
And the best of all the preachers are
the men who live their creeds,
For to see the good in action is what
everybody needs.
I can soon learn how to do it if you'll
let me see it done.
I can watch your hands in action, but
your tongue too fast may run.
And the lectures you deliver may be
very wise and true;
But I'd rather get my lesson by observing
what you do.
For I may understand you and the
high advice you give,
But there's no misunderstanding how
you act and how you live.

Restoration of an erring member is not a miracle, as this is not going beyond the law of God.

If baptism is a miracle then our daily prayers to God for forgiveness will be a miracle. For if we forgive and pray for forgiveness, we will be forgiven (Matthew 6:14-15). But prayer is not a miracle, for when we pray we have not gone beyond and above the law of God (1 Thessalonians 5:17). If baptism is a miracle then it will be a miracle when we ask God to bless our food when we eat. But giving thanks to God for food is not a miracle; for we have not gone beyond and above the law of God (Acts 27:33-36).

If baptism is a miracle then faith is a miracle; for a person cannot be saved without faith (Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24). Faith is not a miracle; because a person who has faith has not gone above and beyond the spiritual law of God.

If baptism is a miracle then repentance is a miracle. Jesus said, "unless we repent we will perish" (Luke 13:3). Repentance is essential to one's salvation as baptism is essential, for Peter said, "repent and be baptized" (Acts 2:38). Repentance is not a miracle; because a person has not gone above and beyond the law of God.

If baptism is a miracle then confession is a miracle. to be confessed by Christ before the Father, we must confess Christ (Matthew 10:32-33). Confession is essential to salvation (Romans 10:10). When a person confesses Jesus as the Son of God, he is not performing a miracle; for he has not gone beyond and above the law of God.

In God's divine plan of salvation a person must believe by hearing the word of God, repent, confess and be baptized. One step is not more important or less important than

(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"What did James mean when he wrote,
For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and
yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty
of all?" [James 2:10].

The law, to which the sacred writer alludes, is undoubtedly the "royal law," of which mention is made earlier in the context (verse 8). Duties of men to men are summed up in the edict, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Jews, even those who had obeyed the gospel, claimed allegiance to Old Testament precepts such as Lev. 19:18; and James' argument appears to follow this pattern: "If you are to justify your actions by the law, you must observe it fully. It is most inconsistent for you to claim justification for some actions which you trace to the law while violating others, such as Deut. 16:19, 20, which straitly forbids showing respect of persons." Their action, in this respect, was a flagrant violation of the law which they affected to follow.

Though they kept all the rest of it, but stumbled in one point they became guilty of all. The verb, in the Greek text is in the perfect tense, and the meaning is that such a person stands guilty of all. All of what? Certainly not guilty of having transgressed every specific commandment of the law. Quite obviously, one who steals does not, by such an act, become a murderer; one who lies does not, in so doing, become a drunkard. How then does one become guilty of "all" by violating one precept of the law?

The meaning is, one stands condemned by all the law when one violates any portion of it. This principle is well-known and universally recognized. Some members of our society are styled criminals. These are those who violate the civil laws of our land. What makes them criminals? Their infractions of the law. How much of the law? *Any part or portion thereof.* A murderer is no less a criminal because his only crime is murder. He need not to this add other violations of the law in order to acquire this classification. A lawbreaker is one who breaks the law. There may be, and doubtless often is, but one law involved; nonetheless, such a person is properly regarded as a lawbreaker. What is the relationship of such a person to the law? He is a law violator. While one must keep all the law in order to be lawful; one need break only one precept of the law in order to be a law violator. Thus, one may keep much of the law with great consistency, yet violate one portion of it, and stand condemned by the law as a breaker of it.

To illustrate: A flock of sheep in a pasture surrounded by a paneled fence are in the pasture. If they leap over one of the panels, they are out of the pasture. It is, of course, not necessary for them to leap over every section of the fence around the pasture to be outside. One leap puts them out of the pasture. Similarly, one violation of God's law, unforgiven, puts one in the position of being condemned by it as a violator of it; disobedience to one precept puts the person who thus does this, in an area outside that which is characteristic of those who keep it.

The vital lesson taught here is that all of God's law is pertinent to us, and that we must

not feel at liberty to tamper with any portion thereof. He who seeks to pass judgment on the validity of God's laws, and to regard some as essential and others as unnecessary, is most presumptuous, and has officiously invaded the realm of God. One does not justify the violation of one law by citing another observed. It is not a valid defense against the charge of theft that one did not get drunk, slander another, or commit murder. Obedience to God's law involves complete submission of the will. Those who keep only such laws as those which they approve, or in which they find satisfaction, have repudiated the will of God, and have substituted their own. Such a disposition is presumption of the most objectionable type. It is not our prerogative and privilege to pass judgment on the propriety of any law of God. The fact that they are his is sufficient reason for unquestioned obedience thereto. God's will must be obeyed, not because it commends itself to our sense of what is right and proper, but because it is God's will! Man may indeed advance in wisdom and perception to the point he sees, in some instances, why God spoke as he did; but, this is not the ground on which his will is to be obeyed.

We are to do what he said because he said it, whether we can see any reason for the command or not. This is the only real test of faith. Here, many in the world - and in the church - stumble, because they walk by sight and not by faith. Only those who can truly say,

The Most Important Question

JERRY H. WILSON

What is the most important question in life? Different answers have been given to this question by different personalities depending upon interests, circumstances, etc.

Where can I make the most money? When I was in the U.S. Army, a group of us were eating lunch and discussing our future plans after release from active duty. Invariably money was considered the standard of success. My observation was offered that all success cannot be measured by money. A quick reaction followed: "Just watch me."

Other answers are similar. How can I receive glory and honor from men? How can I increase in social prestige? These types of answers are expected from worldly-minded folk.

Is your answer any different from these? Do you claim to be a Christian but spend your efforts in selfish pursuits? Are you truly interested in spiritual matters?

The Bible contains a number of important questions: "What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" (Matt. 27:22). "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 8:35). "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16). The answers to all spiritual questions are extremely important and should not be minimized. All overlap one with the other. Our attitude toward Jesus Christ as the Son of God cannot be separated from salvation.

However, the most important question in life is presented three times in the narrative of THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES:

(1) "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:31).

(2) "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).

(3) "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36).

Notice the answers which followed from the question:

(1) "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

(2) "Repent ye, and be baptized every one

and . . . command
eaven.

We must be . . . extend the
principle taught by James beyond that
intended, and assume that one is as guilty
who violates but one precept of Jehovah as
one who has violated a thousand of his
precepts; or, that there is but one plateau of
depravity, and that one reaches it on the
occasion of the first violation of God's law.
Such is not taught, either in this passage, or
elsewhere in the New Testament. What is
taught is that any sin, however insignificant it
may appear to the sinner, or to those about
him, is as much a violation of God's will as
any other would be. It is obvious that James
has under consideration in this context
presumptuous actions engaged in by
individuals who have passed judgment on the
validity of God's laws, and have decided that
some of them are important and others are
not. These considerations are applicable to
those who keep the law in those instances in
which they approve of what God has said,
while violating, without hesitation, the law in
those instances in which they disapprove.
David expressed the disposition which should
characterize us all, in this respect, when he
wrote, "I have rejoiced in the way of thy
testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will
meditate on thy precepts, and have respect
unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy
statutes: I will not forget thy word" (Psalm
119:14-16).

of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the
remission of your sins; and ye shall receive
the gift of the Holy Spirit" (ASV - Acts 2:38).

(3) "If thou believest with all thine heart,
thou mayest" (Acts 8:37). Notice the response
which followed from the reception of the
answer:

(1) "And he took them the same hour of the
night, . . . and was baptized, he and all his
straightway" (Acts 16:33).

(2) "Then they that gladly received his word
were baptized: and the same day there were
added unto them about three thousand souls"
(Acts 2:41).

(3) "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of
God. And he commanded the chariot to stand
still: and they went down both into the water,
both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized
him" (Acts 8:37-38).

A composite study of the examples of
conversion show the answers and the actions
are invariably the same. We must be obedient
to the gospel plan of salvation. This includes
faith, repentance, confession of Jesus as the
Christ, and baptism for the forgiveness of
sins.

Most of you who read this are already
baptized believers. If you are not, I plead with
you to put your life in proper focus and answer
the question in the same manner. Once we are
the children of God, let us encourage one
another unto love, unity, and good works. Let
us encourage lost souls to render obedience to
the gospel.

This life is too short to squander our time in
selfish pursuits as a non-believer or in
self-gratifying "ego trips" as a believer. As
Christians, we have a new perspective that is
completely different from the worldly person.
"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those
things which are above, where Christ sitteth
on the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1).
"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a
new creature: old things are passed away;
behold all things are become new" (II Cor.
5:17). — P.O. Box 384, Waldorf, Maryland
20601.

Loins Girt About With Truth

Continued from page 1

need of close examination as to the spirit in which we engage in worship. Elders in the church should see that the best possible conditions are created to encourage a proper spirit in worship to God. (Jas. 1:24-25).

"Soldier of Christ arise and put your armor on." "Buy the TRUTH and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23). For "the TRUTH OF THE LORD endureth for ever" (Ps. 117:2).

"Let your loins be girt about with truth." This is the beginning point for us all. Please read again the inspired instruction in Ephesians 6:10-20 which we hope will call to your attention further in weeks ahead. — Route 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

Baptism A Miracle!!!!

(Continued From Page 2)

another. If baptism is a miracle every other step in God's plan of salvation is a miracle, and if any other step in salvation is not a miracle neither is baptism. To be consistent the whole of God's plan of salvation stands or falls together.

When a person preaches that baptism is a miracle he is only using denominational jargon and he should repent of his preaching such a doctrine that is contrary to the law of God. Peter said, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11). It is impossible to "speak as the oracles of God" when preaching that baptism is a miracle, for the oracles of God do not teach that baptism is a miracle. — P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Ala. 35580.

Promotional Schemes

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

Recently, a brother in Christ handed me a bulletin published by a denominational church. The news department featured an article entitled: "Out-Reach Schedule." This schedule dealt with an all out effort to "create excitement and to help build our Sunday School attendance." A five-Sunday program was outlined to attain set goals for attendance. The first Sunday was called "bake a cake for the one with the most visitors in Sunday School." The second Sunday was called "Yo-Yo Day" wherein "free yo-yo's were to be given to all the boys and girls in attendance at Sunday School, plus a great demonstration of how to yo-yo!" The third Sunday the members were informed that this was to be "Pack-A-Car Day". A free gift was to be given to the person who would bring the most to Sunday School in their car. The last Sunday in this attendance drive dealt with a religious program that would feature the "choir."

Frankly, it is very difficult for me to read such silliness without snickering - until I think

of the seriousness of the situation. In times past, brethren accepted such promotional schemes as a part of denominationalism. However, changes have occurred in our thinking and practices. I'm afraid that we have become so over-whelmed with "bigness" that we think that the end justifies the various means and schemes to get people to attend our periods of Bible study and worship. In this, we have cheapened Christianity.

Each Christian should encourage others to come and study with us the Bible during our services. The various vehicles such as cars and busses should be used in transporting people to the place of worship. But, do we need to "ape" the denominational promotional schemes?

The church of God cannot be built upon such a faulty foundation. Methods should not violate principles of New Testament Christianity. The preaching and teaching of the Holy Scriptures, along with the evangelistic thrust of the individual Christian can and will assure a local congregation of a healthy and strong work that will be stable for years to come. God will give the increase if we will plant the seed of the kingdom in the hearts of our friends and neighbors. The Christians of the first century believed this and we have practiced this in times past without an atmosphere of the secular. — East Hart Avenue, Opp, Ala. 36467.

Fruitless Seed

RAY HAWK

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11).

Most Bible students are familiar with the parable of Jesus on the sower in Luke 8:4-18. Jesus mentions a sower, seed, and different kinds of soil. The soil represents the minds of men and what they did with the seed once it was sown.

All of us recognize that everyone who hears the gospel will not obey it. This is evidenced by the parable before us. Out of the four different kinds of soil, only one received and kept the word! From such passages as Matt. 7:13,14 we realize that few will be saved. However, more can be saved if we will not allow the seed to be fruitless!

LIVING SEED

The New Testament teaches the word is the seed which must be planted in the minds of men to produce Christians (Luke 8:11). Paul tells us this word is "quick (living), and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword" (Heb. 4:12). II Cor. 3:6 shows us the New Testament "giveth life." When we obey the word our souls are purified (I Pet. 1:22). By obeying the truth we are "born again" (I Pet. 1:23). This word saves our souls (James 1:21). Therefore, men need the word of God taught to them to go to heaven!

MODERN EQUIPMENT

What would you think of a farmer who had seed for planting; hundreds of acres to cultivate; the most modern equipment to plant, cultivate, and harvest a crop; but never put the seed into the earth? I am sure we would understand that he would soon go bankrupt. If there is no sowing, there can be no harvest. This is a principle that cannot be changed.

WHY WE HAVE SO LITTLE YIELD

In the churches of Christ we have seen a decline in church growth since 1969. Why? We have beautiful buildings. Our preachers have college degrees and can speak as well as anyone. We have successful training courses, seminars, and classes to train people to teach the Bible. We have modern equipment to aid

us in teaching God's word. Why are we not the fastest growing religious body in America today? I believe the answer lies in the fact that not enough Christians are sowing the seed! Although we, like the farmer, have the best equipment available, we will never receive an abundant crop until we have an abundance in planting! Paul said, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (I Cor. 3:6).

When there is daily planting and watering, there will be daily increases! This means every Christian must be involved! There can be no shirkers in the vineyard of the Lord. We have the best seed available for planting in the minds of people, but unless we plant it, it becomes *fruitless seed!* — 4868 La Ventana Terrace, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.

What Is Repentance

One who reads WORDS OF TRUTH regularly inquires about the meaning of the word "Repentance."

Our English word "Repent" comes from the Greek word METANOEO, which Thayer defines as "A change of mind for the better, which abhorrence of past sins, heartily to amend." It means a change of mind and purpose for good, with a resulting change of behavior and attitude.

Repentance is the point at which we decide to break off the willful and intentional practice of sins. My father often expressed it as "coming out of the sinning business!" God wants us to come out of sin - and to stay out! He uses all the moral, suasive power and influence of the gospel to motivate us by his truth, with its facts, threats, examples, and promises. "Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (II Cor. 6:17).

This change of mind, with its revolutionary intentions and purposes, is such a tremendous change that many mistakenly think that at this point they are saved! It is such a great victory over habits of sin, and results in such a different way of living! Christ clearly teaches that without repentance all will perish (Lk. 13:3,5). Without repentance, no sins will be "blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

However, repentance is not the only requirement of believers before they receive forgiveness. The apostle Peter said, "Repent AND BE BAPTIZED. . . for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). While baptism does not make one quit PRACTICING sins -- repentance does that! -- baptism is "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

No man is ready to be baptized until he has repented. God "now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). Have you repented?

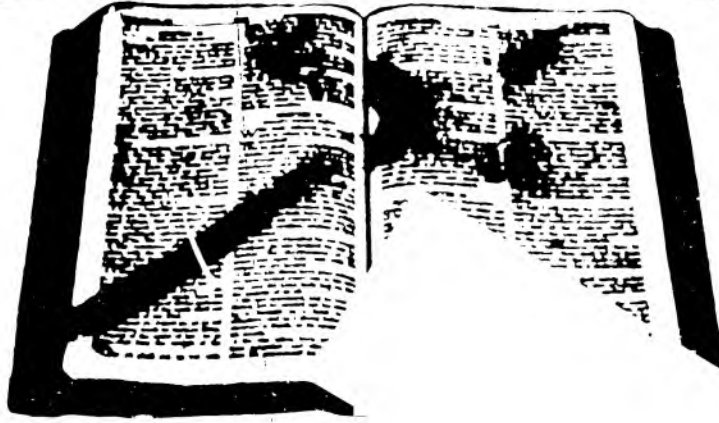


FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

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Words Of Truth

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32
"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25
"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

VOLUME 13

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Evangelism Without Doctrine

We are seeing a revitalization of evangelism among churches of Christ. The renewed enthusiasm is catching on all over the country through various workshops. Witness the thousands who gather in Tulsa and Florence. The church is becoming soul conscious once more.



MARTEL PACE

Others are also concerned about evangelism in their churches. The new head of evangelism for the United Methodist Church is Dr. George G. Hunter III. He recently stated, "The United Methodist Church is in bigger trouble than she currently perceives." The UMC has lost members during the last ten years in shocking figures. He said that very few times in church history has a denomination lost so many members and made a comeback.

Those of us on the outside of the Methodist persuasion looking in have been predicting a terrific demise of Methodism for some time. This is the first report I have seen of their own public admission of it, however. It was my pleasure to do a research paper on John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, some years ago. It became obvious quickly during that research that modern Methodism is a far cry from the spiritual giant Wesley was. He was a firm believer in holiness of life including total abstinence from alcoholic beverages. He was opposed to instrumental music in worship among several other things in contrast that are currently espoused by modern Methodism.

Modernism has swept away most Methodist seminaries although there are some lingering fundamental believers of the Bible in that body. When a group tends to reject the infallibility of Scripture in its entirety it will soon have a doctrinal laxity. When there is no solid body of doctrine to which one adheres including a firm belief in all the Bible there is no reason to be evangelistic. When a person or church is not evangelistic it will lose

members.

This is why I try regularly to preach doctrinal lessons on the distinctiveness of the church of Christ, our restoration plea, the conditions of salvation we believe are Biblical that others do not, along with principles of right interpretation of the Scriptures.

Part of the program in Methodism is over-organization. Mr. Hunter complained that the Board of Global Ministries was not doing an effective job in new church development and world evangelism "and doesn't want anyone else to." Hunter said the Methodists opened 68 new churches from 1970 through 1974 but closed 1,679 during the same period. But all this must be approved from above. Without local initiative and control, decline is inevitable. The United Methodist Church has LOST OVER 1,000,000

MEMBERS in the last decade.

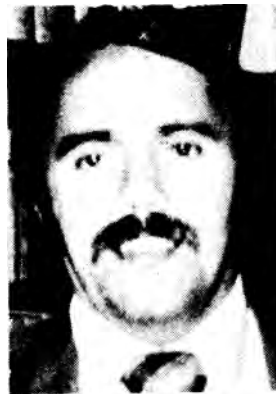
We can learn from the mistakes of others. When our pulpits no longer cry out about judgment to come, eternal damnation in hell, a heaven to be gained, and an infallible Bible to follow, decline will certainly come. What are you hearing from your pulpit? Is it a continuing parade of ego-building poetry? Is it a soothing psychological treatise on the happy life? Or in sin denounced in no uncertain terms and doctrine soundly pronounced? Is instrumental music condemned as sin? Is baptism for the remission of sins regularly stipulated? Is the undenominational aspect of the church stressed? Are we headed down the road of Methodism?

P.O. Box 722
Kennett, Mo. 63857

Genesis And The Universe

NO. 3

The Biblical concept of the origin of the Universe can be summed up by the grand affirmation of Genesis 1:1. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." While the book of Genesis may not be a scientific text-book, it is scientifically unimpeachable when it declares that all things owe their existence to God. No



LARRY CHOUINARD

established fact of science contradicts the Mosaic declaration. In fact, the present order and intricate design that characterizes our universe is best explained by a creative mind. Since causes always produce like effects, it follows that our orderly cosmos could not have been the product of random chance. Furthermore it is an established axiom that "what is prior and originates is superior to that which it originates." The engineer is

superior to the machine he devised and the bird to the nest he has made. For life and personality to have originated from impersonal dead matter implies that the lifeless and impersonal is superior to life and personality. John Gerstner in his book "Reasons for Faith", asks, "How could matter, which has no life in itself, actually produce a life which can reflect no matter and tell it that it has no life in itself?" To suppose the occurrence of complexity from the simple and order out of chaos to have occurred in some remote and unobservable time in the past, is clearly a case of "an hypothesis being formulated to justify an hypothesis." But the naturalist supposes that given enough time anything can happen. But such an assertion, however convenient it may be to the dogmatics of evolution, belongs strictly to the realm of wishful thinking. Obviously such logic must remain unimpressed by the normal course of events. Since true science is an investigation of present processes, how in the name of reason can evolution claim to be scientifically established. Furthermore, the

(Continued On Page 4)

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FROM
THE EDITOR

The Eldership And INTEGRITY

Practically every effort at establishing false religious doctrines or practices begins with an attack against the reliability of the Bible. It may be an open attack, as per the atheist; or it may be a very subtle attack, as per the zealous denominationalist, who tries to justify his departure from truth by high sounding phrases about keeping the



BOBBY DUNCAN

"spirit" of the law, and not the "letter." This latter, a perversion of Paul's discussion in the sixth chapter of II Corinthians, is as much an attack against the Bible as the attack of the atheist. Generally speaking, even in the body of Christ, differences that arise over doctrinal matters arise because some have not the proper regard for the Bible, God's book.

Such is the case with reference to an ever increasing error among us and to which the April issue of INTEGRITY is dedicated. The error is that elders in local congregations have not the right to make decisions respecting the congregation, and that the idea of being in submission to the eldership is not taught on the pages of the New Testament. We certainly agree with the idea that "the decision-making process in the church is not to be the result of men, ambitious of authority, achieving a role of control and 'lording it' over the Christian community." We know of no man who believes it should be thus. To imply by such statements that this is the idea being refuted in these articles is unfair, and might even cause some to question the INTEGRITY of

INTEGRITY. The point at issue is not whether elders have the right to abuse their office, nor whether elders may usurp the lordship of Christ. The point at issue is whether or not God, in the New Testament, has ordained that a congregation be overseen by elders, and that members of the congregation are to submit to the eldership. The New Testament teaches precisely that; INTEGRITY denies it.

INTEGRITY's editor-in-chief says he feels "that there is a word from the Lord" which will settle the matter, and consequently he asked J. Harold Thomas and Joseph F. Jones to address themselves to the question. We also feel very strongly "that there is a word from the Lord" which will settle this matter. But this "word from the Lord" is not to be found in the writings of men such as J. Harold Thomas and Joseph F. Jones, but in the writings of men such as Paul, Peter, and Luke.

But as we said in the beginning, efforts to establish false doctrine usually begin with an attack against the reliability of the Bible. And so we are told that the word "rule" does not mean "rule" in such passages as I Timothy 3:5 and 5:17. We are to believe that the translators of the King James Version and the American Standard Version made an error in this case, because Professor Bo Reicke said so. According to the professor, the Greek word PROISTEMI 'rule' means to lead and to care for. We agree that leading and caring for are words of elders. But is their work limited to this, and does PROISTEMI mean such? It is true that the word can mean such, but this is a secondary meaning of the word. The word occurs eight times in the Greek New Testament, and not one single time is it translated to mean merely leading and caring for. It is significant that in I Tim. 3:5 the word "rule" and the phrase "take care of" both occur; and the word rule is translated from PROISTEMI, while the phrase "take care of" is from a different word entirely. If the inspired writer intended only the matter of "taking care of," why did he not use the same word in both instances? But, of course, we realize that in order for the false doctrine to be sustained, verses which teach the truth about the matter must be impeached. Another example of this is the fact that twice in this discussion I Peter 5:2 is referred to as being

"textually uncertain." Well, that is what I would say about it if it didn't fit my doctrine, and if I loved my doctrine more than the doctrine of Christ.

While it is admitted by these writers that some churches in New Testament times had elders, it is strongly implied that there is no basis for concluding that this was God's arrangement for every congregation. We deny this implication! Paul left Titus at Crete to "set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city" (Tit. 1:5). Until elders were ordained in every city, things were not set in order, and something was wanting. Before Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch from what we commonly refer to as Paul's first missionary journey, they "ordained them elders in every church" (Acts 14:23). Discussing this very matter, however, the writers for INTEGRITY quoted B.H. Streeter, who said: "in the Primitive Church there was no single system of Church Order laid down by the apostles." The inspired writers said there were elders in every church, but B.H. Streeter said there were not. Who will you believe?

If I did not have a Bible, there are some things I would know anyway. I would know that someone has to take the oversight of any sizeable undertaking. While Christ is sovereign in matters that are revealed, some matters are left to human judgment, and some decisions with regard to these matters must be made. In matters having to do with a local congregation, God has ordained that these decisions be made by the eldership. They are to take the oversight, and we are to submit to them (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17). This movement to invalidate the eldership is just another outcropping of a disposition so prevalent in our generation - the disposition to rebel against rightfully constituted authority. Let us have no part of it.

PARDON OUR OVERSIGHT

In a recent issue of WORDS OF TRUTH a fine article entitled "Material Prosperity and Religious Apostasy" appeared. We failed to include the name of the author of this article. We always like to give credit, and hope you will pardon our oversight. The article was written by Michael D. Stone.

The Breastplate Of Righteousness

The "whole armor of God" is described in Ephesians 6:10-20. We have heretofore given emphasis to the WHOLE ARMOR. Any individual part if missing would expose the soldier to danger or would hinder him from aggression against his foes. Our strength must be in Christ (Phil. 4:13). The girdle described must be "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." This truth is the gospel, the word of the Living God.

Now let us consider another article in the regalia of the "Christian Soldier," that is, the BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. Elsewhere we read of the breastplate of faith and love" (I Thes. 5:8). Righteousness, with faith and love, forms a grand triplet of Christian characteristics without which no man can see the Lord in peace.

What is the significance of the breastplate?



VIRGIL BRADFORD

The vital organs of the body of the Roman soldier were protected by the breastplate. That armor was made of different materials but slipped over the head and shoulders so that both front and backward parts were guarded. In case the shield failed to ward off the darts or arrows of the enemy the armor would cause them to fall without their intended effect and the soldier's life might thus be saved. It seems quite obvious, then, that this is a defensive article of the armor.

Wherever we go in this sin-stricken world we may expect to meet the devil and his host of assistants. As a rule we should be advancing into the camp of the enemy but there are times to retreat, in which case the backward parts need to be protected as well as the front. No more important application of the need of a retreat can be cited than Paul's instruction to Corinth and to Timothy. The first is short, terse, essential to survival: "Flee fornication" (I Cor. 6:18). The second is broader in scope and covers all such sins of the flesh and mind that war against the soul: "Flee youthful lusts" (II Tim. 2:22). We cannot be "soldiers of the cross" while flirting

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FRED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"What is the meaning of James' statement,
"The tongue can no man tame"?"

The entire verse, from which the statement, "The tongue can no man tame," reads as follows: "For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind; but the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poison" (James 3:8). God gave man dominion over the fish of the deep, blue sea, over the birds of the starry heavens, and "over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:27). In the exercise of these powers thus divinely bestowed, man has succeeded in subduing all kinds of the lower creation. It should be noted that James did not say that every *wild* thing has been tamed; only that every "kind" of creature has been tamed, i.e., brought under subjection to man. Beasts, of the most ferocious nature, great fishes of the sea, birds that fly high in the heavens, and even slimy serpents have yielded to the superior powers of man, and have become subordinate to his will. Though man has demonstrated his ability to subdue the brute creation, he often miserably fails to exercise similar control over himself.

The tongue can no man tame. Are we thence to conclude that it is not subject to restraint, and must be allowed to excess of which it is capable? The context opposes this view, and the purpose which prompted the passage was to teach that man *must* exercise such control. Does it mean that God has assigned us an impossible task? Has he given us an uncontrollable tongue, yet expects us to control it? God never imposes upon man that which man is incapable of doing. What then, is the meaning of the statement, "The tongue can no man tame?"

Birds and beasts, however wild and fierce they may be in their native habitat, *when tamed*, are no longer dangerous. It is not necessary to keep a tamed beast chained. The tongue can never be tamed. It may be successfully restrained for forty years only to leap out, in an unguarded moment, a dangerous and hurtful thing. Thus, this affirmation of James ("the tongue can no man tame") was penned for the purpose of demonstrating to us the necessity of maintaining ceaseless vigilance in all matters pertaining to the tongue. We must guard it every moment of our lives. How very, very conscious ought all of us to be regarding this painful fact. How often do all of us give utterance to matters which ought never to have been said and which later we would gladly recall. It is, alas, impossible to recall the spoken word.

The moving finger writes; and, having writ
Moves on; not all your piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."

Paganism

Christianity in the widest sense of that term is professed by only 30% of the earth's population. The rest of the people worship in various forms of heathenism. Excluding Islam, these people worship gods made by man's hands.

The consequences of paganism are appalling. All of these religions leave their followers in the depths of moral degradation. Every kind of immorality, deceit and dishonesty prevails. Socially the strong dominate the weak, women are degraded before men. The poor are treated as the dirt of the ground. Financially the nations that are addicted to idolatry are generally poor with only a very few men holding most of the money. Domestically, the home is the throne of the tyrant father, women are little more than slaves. Children are sired with little thought of moral training. Politically, these nations are either oppressed or they are oppressive. The rights of men mean little to heathen rulers. The welfare of a society is of no serious concern. Those in power enrich themselves at the expense of their poor subjects.

The only effective weapon against idolatry is the gospel of Jesus. It will tear down the strongholds of ignorance (II Cor. 10:3-5). While the major Protestant churches have done much in the past to combat paganism it is sad to see a willingness to accept the pagan religions as equal partners by the liberal leaders of today's Protestantism.

Idolatry is wrong. It is wrong on numerous counts. We will notice four areas in which it is condemned of God.

IDOL WORSHIP DISHONORS GOD THE CREATOR OF MAN. Paul writes: "Because that, knowing God, they glorified Him not as God neither gave thanks. . . professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts and creeping things" (Rom. 1:21-23). Even as Jehovah strictly charged ancient Israel, so it is today, "I am Jehovah thy God. . . thou shalt have no other gods before me, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them for I Jehovah, thy God, am a jealous God. . ." (Deut. 5:5-9). It is hard for Americans to visualize human beings prostrating themselves before images of beasts or men, debasing themselves in the most abject manner before the creation of human hands. Yet one has only to board a modern jet liner and in a matter of hours he can be in Asia or Africa where such is the rule of life, not the exception. While unbelieving religious liberals and altruistic anthropologists speak of the splendor and beauty of heathen worship, the Christian is shocked, disgusted and appalled. It is gross and sensual, far from beautiful. It dishonors the God in whose image man is made, to offer such vile worship.

IDOLATRY IS WRONG BECAUSE IT IS VAIN AND FOOLISH. Isaiah ridicules the idol worshippers of his day. And none calleth to mind, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh and



JOHN WADDEY

eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination (idol)? Shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside; and he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Isa. 44:19,20). Again in 46:1-2, Isaiah cuts sarcastically at Bel and Nebo, gods of Babylon, as he forsee the people fleeing their city with their idols strapped to the backs of their beasts. Not only can they not save their worshipers, the gods themselves must be saved from capture or destruction by their devotees. Man, the crowning jewel of all creation, made in God's likeness with intelligence, superior to all other creatures, should perceive the folly of such senseless worship. Paul argues in Rom. 1:20 that all idolators are "without excuse," since with their native intelligences and basic senses they could realize to one God's everlasting power and divinity. He further charges that such idolatrous worship is the result of man's becoming vain in his reasonings and professing himself to be wise. Man seeks a god like himself so that he can do the desires of his flesh with the approval of his conscience and his society.

IDOLATRY IS WRONG BECAUSE IT IS CRUEL AND DEGRADING. Idolatrous rites have included human sacrifice, ritual fornication, sensual dancing, torture of devotees, and sacrificial victims. Idolatry has cruelly crushed the masses of people under foot as the Hindu Brahmins have the Harijans (the low caste) people of India, treating them far worse than they treated their beasts and even vermin and insects. Multiplied millions yet cringe in fear of demons, evil spirits and shamen (witchdoctors) who claim to hold supernatural powers. People let rats and cows eat the grain with impunity while millions fight to cling to the thread of life and battle starvation in India. In Thailand, Buddhist women are told they cannot enter Nervana (the highest state) as women, they must be reincarnated as men. Polygamy is basically a product of corrupt religion that teaches that man's future happiness depends upon the number of spirits he can generate to take into eternity with him.

IDOLATRY IS WRONG BECAUSE IT LEADS MEN AWAY FROM THE TRUE GOD AND FARTHER AND FARTHER INTO REBELLION. Paul vividly portrays this downward path in Romans 1: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves. . . God gave them up unto vile passions (homosexual perversions). . . And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up into a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful. . ." (vss. 22-31). The author used to think that this sordid, morbid picture was only of the first century Romans. A trip into any pagan nation in Africa or Asia will be a living commentary on Paul's words. The road of idolatry is away from Jehovah and in the opposite direction of righteousness, justice, and truth. From Paul we learn that men first rejected God in their heart, then they are rejected by Him. Man becomes like the God or god which he

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Words Of Truth

Genesis And The Universe

(Continued From Page 1)

chance theory stands opposed to overwhelming odds. What are the chances of monkeys, blindly pecking on a typewriter eventually to hit on a Shakespearean sonnet? What are the probabilities of a kettle of water to begin boiling by chance? Since the universe is infinitely more complex, the odds are quite overwhelming that such order originated by divine design and not by chance forces.

Upon every hand the universe testifies to an intelligent First Cause (Psa. 19:1-3). The evidence is so convincing that for one to deny the creator leaves one (as Paul says) without excuse because he is suppressing the known truth (Rom. 1:18-20). But not only is it unbiblical to deny the Creator, it is also contrary to the spirit of scientific investigation. Science is precisely knowledge and to suppress or ignore factual information is unscientific. While one's concept of "origins" is a matter of faith it must be a faith founded upon facts, not prejudice or credulity. The Genesis account of "origins" does not violate any known scientific fact; and indeed it accords best with the complexity of the universe. For years the public has heard that Genesis is unscientific and therefore does not merit serious consideration. In recent years an organization entitled "Creation Research Society" has been formed, consisting of men of science who are fully committed to the acceptance of Biblical creation as opposed to evolution. The strong, conservative stand of these men of science would put to shame the compromising attitude of many within the Lords church. The Genesis account of origins is one that may be embraced with complete intellectual integrity. Absolute Divine creation accords with the facts of science and is most reasonable in the light of our orderly cosmos.

Faith in creation provides one with a most consistent world-view. The prophet Isaiah informs us: "For thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens, the God that formed the earth and made it, that established it and created it not a waste, **THAT FORMED IT TO BE INHABITED**: I am Jehovah; and there is none else" (Isa. 45:18). God created the world with man in mind. Though the original creation was perfect in nature (Gen. 1:31), the curse of death and decay (Gen. 3:17-24) produced dramatic changes, not only within man, but also the earth's structure underwent vast geological changes (Gen. 6-8). Though chances have occurred, the universe still has meaning, based upon the Genesis record of origins. Pain, suffering and evil were injected into the world when man sinned. If everything is the produce of chance no rational explanation can be offered for the harshness of nature. Man is subject to natural forces, but nature is totally indifferent to his needs. However, when one walks by the light of God's word, existence takes on meaning and purpose. Life is not the sum total of the pessimistic assertions of dismayed naturalists. Bertrand Russell, the English atheist expresses his dismal pessimism as he considers the conclusion of a Godless universe: "The life of man is a long march through the night, surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain towards a goal that few can hope to reach, and where none may tarry long." In contrast, based upon God's creative power, the Christian may confidently affirm with the Prophet: "He

giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:29-31). — 148 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, Calif. 94523.

The Breastplate Of Righteousness

(Continued From Page 2)

with, or settling down, in the muck and mire of the world. No man has the ability to serve God and Satan at the same time. But the righteous are invincible. They may die in battle but they cannot be conquered. The victors have on the breastplate of righteousness (Rom. 8:37-39).

SOME BLESSINGS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

It matters not how you look at it, it pays to serve God and our Lord Jesus Christ through the Spirit. A few general references on the subject of righteousness will help us capture a few of its blessings and characteristics. "Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the wicked shall perish" (Ps. 1:6). This entire Psalm sets forth a vivid contrast between the wicked and the righteous. "The way" of the wicked or the righteous is fully known of God, but as the word "way" is here used it must refer to the whole of one's life, thoughts, words and deeds, and the comforting thought is that Jehovah APPROVES. If this is correct, as I believe it to be, what God knows of the righteous is not merely intellectual. He looks with divine pleasure upon those who follow his word and approves what he sees.

In Psalms 37:25 David covers practically all his life span and writes, "I have been young, and now am old; Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." This suggests one of the great promises of the Lord Jesus: "But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). Here the Lord is speaking of the daily needs of food and raiment, not of the wants, or desires that we may have for things that might be classed as luxuries. Some Brother whose name I know not once said, "Our wants are many; our needs are few."

Though righteousness reflects an inner spirit and attitude it is in a most practical way set forth in Scripture as something we DO. "Blessed are they that keep justiced, and he that DOETH righteousness **AT ALL TIMES**" (Ps. 106:3). Doing right, for this is righteousness, is a full time job, not an avocation, but the vocation of every blessed child of God.

We are well aware that individuals and nations have perished on account of their unrighteousness. Babylon, Assyria, Egypt and Israel are some of the most notable examples of nations that fell through their iniquities and sins. Daniel the prophet urged the great Nebuchadnezzar to "break off thy sins by RIGHTEOUSNESS, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if there may be a lengthening of thy tranquility." But the king Nebuchadnezzar, like countless millions today, continued traveling the road of pride, arrogance and rebellion in a spirit prompted by delusions of grandeur. Hence, he was driven from the presence of men and lived like

the beasts of the field until seven years went by and he learned that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Dan. 4:19ff). And history, as well as words of truth, spells out that "righteousness exaleth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Pr. 14:34). How long will America stand? How long, O Lord? Think of the riots, greed, murders, sexual assaults, graft, lying and hypocrisy of the world, and the prospects are frightening.

It is high time that we take heed to the words of warning that came to Israel through Amos the prophet when he was striving to save them from destruction. His cry was, "Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos 5:24). So, let us remember that "if ye know that he is righteous, ye know that everyone that DOETH RIGHTEOUSNESS is begotten of him" (I Jn. 2:29).

DANGER OF FEIGNED RIGHTEOUSNESS

God Almighty, who knows the hearts of all men, holds hypocrisy in abomination as much so as murder, idolatry, drunkenness and such like. The Lord Jesus condemned in scathing words those who, like whited sepulchres, appeared beautiful outwardly but inwardly were full of hypocrisy and iniquity. They are likened unto the tombs full of dead men's bones. One can't fool the Lord, and it is not likely that we can fool our fellowmen very long. Self-righteousness is deceitful. We may easily think of our selves more highly than we ought to think. This is a dangerous situation, and such depended upon as a true breastplate for the soul's protection will surely be found faulty. Like king Ahab of olden times, such a situation will open up a "joint of the armor" and let the devil's darts come through (See Matt. 23:28; I Kgs. 22:34).

The Pharisees were outwardly righteous, made a great show of it by long, repetitious prayers, disfiguring their faces during a fast, etc. Of all such the Lord says, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20). It was all on the outside without the inward qualities that made for true righteousness in the sight of God. That righteousness is revealed in the gospel and brings the rewards of life, and peace here, and in the world to come everlasting life (Rom. 1:16-17). This is the "righteousness of God by faith" and we need not expect to develop it apart from sincere study and application of the word of God to our life. — Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

Paganism

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worships. The faithful Christian grows to be like the righteous Jehovah. The heathen is like the devil gods he worships.

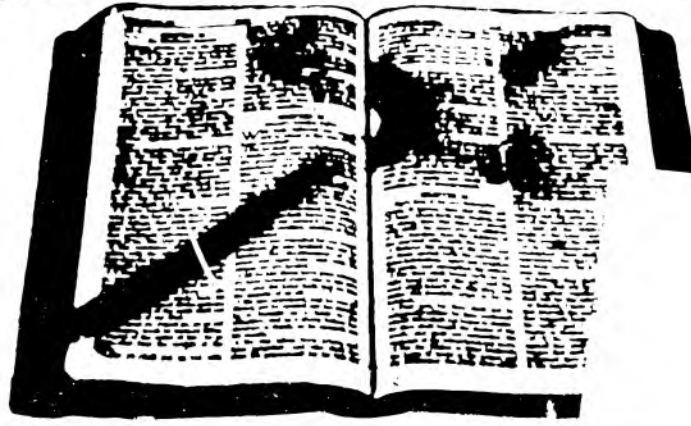
As these words are written I look out of my window here in New Delhi, India and see the situation as described above. What can we do to help these poor benighted souls who languish under the yoke of Satan's false religions? The answer is simple and plain. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. . ." (Mk. 16:15-16). No, this is not simplistic, for the Scripture tells us that the gospel of His Son Jesus is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth (Rom. 1:16).

Brethren in America, look around you and be grateful, look up and be thankful, and then send the blessed gospel light into all the world. — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921.

WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"...work forth the words of truth"

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, MAY 6, 1977

21

Can Morals Be Legislated?

Recently, in a conversation relative to alcoholic beverages, the observation was made that morals cannot be legislated. The conclusion is that if men are going to drink they will drink anyway.

I am well aware that people are going to do what they want to do. If men are going to do right consistently, it will be because they will to do so. But, should we say that since some are going to do wrong, no laws should be made to restrict wrong? This kind of thing will come up in almost every case where voters are asked to decide whether to legalize the sale of alcoholic beverages. They observe that men are going to do it, so we might as well make it legal and reap (?) the taxes. They don't look at the tax on decent people's sense of right. They don't think of the taxing of a wife's nerves because of a drunken husband.

But back to the matter of morals and legislation. In legislation there are laws made that govern conduct. Has God used any laws in the area of morals?

A casual look at the ten commandments will show that God did legislate in the area of morals. Read Exodus 20:3-17. Note verse 13. "Thou shalt not kill." This is a matter of legislation. A matter of law. Yes, men had been killing one another. It was not right when Cain killed Abel. Could God legislate a moral standard here? He did. Also, in the matter of adultery, stealing and lying. These are made a matter of law.

But, says one, we are under the New Testament. This is true and I agree wholeheartedly, but does the New Testament not legislate? Are there laws regulating man's conduct in the New Testament? Notice Eph. 4:28. Paul makes it a matter of law in the matter of stealing. He even goes a step further and tells the man to work so as to give. Yes, if he obeys the gospel and is regulated by the gospel he will not want to steal. He will want to work so as to aid others. But, the point remains, a matter of morals is here



WINFRED CLARK

legislated.

The moral code for the Christian is repeated time and again in the New Testament. Not only for the Christian, but also for those who should become such.

One area where this matter comes to the forefront today is in the area of marriage. God's laws regulating marriage have been legislated out of existence by conflicting laws in many states. They made void God's laws by man's laws. Matt. 19:3-9 allows remarriage for one cause, namely, fornication. Of course, all would agree that the death of either partner would allow for remarriage, all things being equal. Now, the matters concerning marriage are moral matters. They set moral standards. A violation of the standards of

morality in marriage would free the innocent party to remarry. But, the same law requires, legislates if you will, that a state of adultery exists if fornication is not present. God just meant that this state is to be protected by law. His law. To say he has no laws regarding marriage is to ignore the obvious.

Sad to say, men have stepped in and made void his law by their commandments or laws. Such laws allow immorality with legal sanction. The same can be said where the sale of alcoholic drinks or gambling is legalized (?). Such laws trample under foot God's laws and send a nation at high speed down the road to ruin. If more laws were passed to support the moral laws of the Bible, we would be a better nation. — P.O. Box 672, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

The Living God

JERRI MANASCO

God is the living God from several standpoints. In contrast to idols God is the living God. "They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat" (Psa. 115:5-7). God is the true and living God who made earth and all things therein, while idols are objects that are to perish from the earth that God has made (Jer. 10:10-16). The difference between God and idols was readily perceived by many in the first century. The Thessalonians, for example, had "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (I Thes. 1:9). Idols are dead things, and are therefore described as vanities (Acts 14:15). God is alive.

God is the living God in that He gives life. Idols are themselves lifeless things and cannot give life. It was God who created man and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (Gen. 2:7). The apostle affirmed that God gives to all life and breath and all things (Acts 17:25). God gives life to all that are in the earth (Isa. 42:5). He also gives all that is necessary to sustain life. "Nevertheless he

left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). All life springs from God and without God no life could ever be.

As the living God, Jehovah gives life from the dead. Abraham had faith in a God who was able to raise the dead (Heb. 11:19). Jesus gave assurance to Martha concerning Lazarus: "Thy brother shall rise again" (Jn. 11:23). Paul speaks confidently of the resurrection of the dead (Acts 24:15). Only a living God can have such power. Such a God is the God of the living (Matt. 22:32).

The living God drove out nations whose gods were not gods. Moses had promised Israel that their God would be mightier than any other and would drive out the nations, for "there is none else" (Deut. 4:37-39). The enemies of God had to confess His superiority. Rahab, a woman of Jericho, said, "for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath" (Josh. 2:11). The magicians of Egypt were compelled by their inability to duplicate the plagues to confess, "This is the finger of God" (Ex. 8:19). The

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FROM
THE EDITOR

The Roots Of Mormonism

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, better known as the Mormon Church, is one of the fastest growing religious organizations in the United States. It is not for this reason, however, that we write in refutation of the system. Neither is it because we consider the errors of Mormonism to be more damnable than



BOBBY DUNCAN

the errors of any other false religion. Every false religion is vain, and all of them will be "rooted up" (Matt. 15:8,9,13).

But Mormonism is a false religious system, and as such, should be exposed. It is the purpose of this article, and of others to follow in subsequent issues of WORDS OF TRUTH, to refute some of the errors of Mormonism. It is hoped that these articles will be helpful to those who may have been led into this false system, as well as to those who may need help in meeting the doctrine of the Mormons.

The Book of Mormon was originally published in 1830 by Joseph Smith. It does not tell a great deal about Mormonism, but is rather a story about some of the descendants of Joseph who fled from the city of Jerusalem and eventually wound up in America. In this country they had their priests and their temple worship, in spite of the fact that they were descendants of Joseph. They evidently didn't know that one could be a priest only if he descended from Aaron (Num. 3:10; 16:40); and that even Jesus, if He were on earth,

could not be a priest (Heb. 7:13). They also had a great and wonderful king Benjamin who was of the tribe of Joseph. And so the prophecy of Gen. 49:10 was mistaken in saying that "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah."

While it is claimed that both the Bible and the Book of Mormon are revelations from God, still the Book of Mormon contradicts the Bible on several points. Mormons deny this, but it is true nevertheless. For example, the name "Jesus" was not given to Christ until the announcement of His birth to Mary by the angel (Luke 1:31). Luke 2:21 says He was "so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb." Yet the Book of Mormon has some woman calling the Lord by the name "Jesus" some ninety years prior to the time of his birth (Alma 19:29).

The Book of Mormon has some of those Jewish people who lived around 500 B.C. being members of the church and wearing the name "Christian" (Alma 46:12-15). The New Testament, on the other hand, teaches that the church had not been established when Christ was on earth (Matt. 16:18), and that "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26).

The New Testament teaches abundantly that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea (Matt. 2:1,2) Luke 2:4-7). But the Book of Mormon records a prophecy that He was to have been born at Jerusalem (Alma 7:10).

In Moroni 10:9-17 the Book of Mormon contains a discussion of miraculous gifts of the Spirit almost identical to that part of Paul's discussion recorded in 1 Cor. 12:8-11. But the difference comes when the Mormon writer quotes a part of Heb. 13:8 (supposedly without ever having seen the book of Hebrews), and adds: "all these gifts of which I have spoken, which are spiritual, never will be done away. . ." (v. 17). You will remember, of course, that the apostle Paul discussed these spiritual gifts and then said, "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail: whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away" (I Cor. 13:8).

Mormonism ridicules the idea that our Bible is complete (II Nephi 29:3-10). This is

understandable in view of the fact that if our Bible is a complete revelation of God's will, no room is left for the Book of Mormon. But Paul pronounced a curse upon those who would preach a gospel other than that preached by the apostles and received by the Galatians (Gal. 1:8,9). He also points out that the Scriptures will completely furnish the man of God unto every good work (I Tim. 3:16,17). These things being true, there is no room for the Book of Mormon or any other revelation in addition to the Bible.

It is claimed that the Book of Mormon was produced by divine revelation and divine translation. Joseph Smith, Jr., as the story goes, was told by the angel Moroni where to look in order to find certain plates of gold upon which were written certain characters in the Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac, and Arabic languages. Smith found the plates, but was not allowed to possess them until several years later, at which time he was told by the angel to take them and translate them. This he did by the use of his hat and a very unusual stone. He would put the stone in his hat and put his hat up against his face so as to shut out all light. These characters would then appear and their translation with them. Smith would read the translation and it would be written down by his scribe, who would then read it back to him to see if it was correct. If so, these characters would disappear and the next would appear. If not, the first would remain until all necessary corrections were made.

Just exactly what part the plates played we have never quite understood, since both the original language and the translation thereof appeared in the hat. But then we suppose if it had not been for the plates it would have been difficult to convince the world that Joseph Smith really received a revelation. But the existence of these gold plates would indicate to some that he really did - IF THEY REALLY EXISTED.

In the next article we will examine the evidence for the existence of these gold plates. Supposedly, the plates were seen by eleven witnesses. We will take a look at the reliability of these witnesses, and at their testimony itself.

Russian Language To Be Fall Course At Alabama Christian College

ERNEST CLEVINGER, JR.

A decision by the elders of Hunter Station Church of Christ to bring Yvan Kolesnikow and his family to Montgomery has enabled Alabama Christian College to include the Russian Language in the fall '77 curriculum. Brother Kolesnikow, a native Russian and Canadian citizen, has been largely supported by Hunter Station the past five years.

The Hunter Station church has just completed printing a 30 lesson Russian Bible course written by Kolesnikow. The course, distributed around the world, is offered over the radio broadcasts, in Russian, prepared weekly by brother Kolesnikow.

Five different radio stations broadcast Kolesnikow's sermons in Russian six times a week. The programs, aired via shortwave from Spain, the Phillipines, and three other locations, generate responses world wide, many from the U.S.S.R. The programs will be taped in Montgomery, at Hunter Station, for

use by the shortwave stations.

As an expanding part of the ministry to Russian speaking people, brother Kolesnikow will teach a credit course at ACC for anyone wishing to take the language. He is especially hopeful of finding some young people in the church who want to learn the language for use in evangelizing those who use Russian.

The course will be designed and taught as any modern language such as French, Spanish or German and will be transferable toward a B.A. degree in a four-year college. It may be taken for audit as well as credit.

We believe Alabama Christian is the only Christian college to offer Russian as a foreign language at the present time. Students interested in this opportunity should contact the Admissions Office, Alabama Christian College, 5345 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery, Alabama 36109.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Is the promise of James 5:13-15 applicable to the church today?"

"Is any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall rise him up; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him." Requests are often received for an exposition of this passage; and, a most recent one from a faithful friend and beloved brother in the Lord, prompts this brief study of one of the most remarkable verses in the New Testament.

Sickness is a universal affliction of mankind; and James, having just admonished those to whom he wrote to pray when they suffered, and sing when they were cheerful, passed to the subject of physical illness, because it is the most common kind of affliction to which human beings are subjected.

The word "suffering," often appears in the sacred writings, being a generic term to designate sickness, bereavement, disappointment and trials, of every type. Thus, in the query, "Is any among you suffering?" James used a term designed to include every type of human affliction. Whatever the nature of the burden, his readers were instructed to pray. There is, in man, a natural inclination so to do; when all human remedies fail, even unbelievers instinctively turn to him whom they have little regarded; and Christians rejoice and gladly comply with his commands to do so (II Chron. 33:12; Psalm 34:4; 50:5).

Those who are "cheerful," are to "sing praise." The word *cheerful* is in contextual apposition to the word "suffering," earlier used. It denotes the disposition characteristic of a mind free of trouble. Those in such a state are to sing praise. Praise is indeed the highest form of prayer, and springs up from a thankful heart. Christians are, therefore, in affliction, to pray; in contentment, to sing praise; and, in either, to feel and express their innermost thoughts and desires to God. It is thus clearly apparent that there is no circumstances in which God's people are removed from him. Affliction encourages prayer; prosperity excites praise; and, since life consists of either pain or pleasure in some measure always, they are never without an awareness of need for him and for his blessing.

In the event of the sickness mentioned by James, (a) the elders of the church were to be called; (b) they would, on their arrival, anoint the sick with oil in the name of the Lord; (c) they would then pray; (d) this prayer of faith would lead to the recovery of the afflicted one; (e) the Lord would rise him up from his sick bed; and (f) if he had committed sins, they would be forgiven him.

It is evident that all New Testament churches, when fully organized, had a plurality of elders whose duty it was, in addition to that set out here, to feed the flock of God, and to superintend the work of the church (Acts 14:23; 15:2; 16:4; I Pet. 5:1-4). To these elders the saints were instructed to submit because the elders watched for their souls (Heb. 13:7, 17). It is also quite obvious that these men were of necessity miraculously

endowed; otherwise, in the absence of a *written revelation*, they would have been without instructions touching their duties as overseers of the flock. Inspiration was originally in *men*, and through them transferred to a *book* - the New Testament - from which elders may now ascertain their duties. And, while not all elders wrote New Testament books one, at least, did! (I Pet. 5:4). It would appear that all of them, in some measure, were qualified by the Lord for the duties assigned them, before the canon was completed. In view of this, let us note the following considerations as indicated in the text under study:

(1) The men sent for were elders, not *physicians*. Had the healing art, through the usual means, been under consideration here, the inspired writer would have bidden, "Send for the doctors!"

(2) These "elders" were to anoint the sick with oil in the name of the Lord. It seems clear that the oil was to be regarded as symbolic of the power which was to be miraculously exercised; for, (a) while oil (it was most likely olive oil), palliates and is thus beneficial in some instances, it is of no use whatsoever in others; and, (b) it was the "prayer of faith" and not the oil which was given credit for the healing, anyway.

(3) The sick person is said to have been healed following the "prayer of faith," - the faith being exercised by the elders who prayed - and not simply or solely that of the individual being healed, though we must assume that he believed the healing possible otherwise he would not have been a party thereto. However, faith on the part of the object of healing was not an indispensable requirement of the apostolic age; it would appear that any would have as much faith as Lazarus did while *dead and in the tomb in Bethany!* Acts 3:1-10, affords another instance - and there are many others - where healing occurred on the basis of faith in others rather than the object of the healing.

(4) No conditions are asserted other than those indicated herein; it is simply that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." Clearly, if this practice was applicable in our day, and the

elders of the churches did their duty, none in the church would ever die, thus contradicting the Hebrew writer's statement, "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Heb. 9:27). It seems, therefore, obvious that this passage deals with, and was thus limited to, the period of miraculous measures in the church when gifts of healing were exercised. Then, healing was accomplished miraculously; as, on occasion, people were fed miraculously. Such healing and feeding were done *without means*; the Lord still heals and feeds his people; but, he does so by means today. Medicine, surgery, all of the various healing techniques in use today are instruments in God's hand by which he heals. God feeds us, but today he does so through the instrumentality of the sunshine and the showers, the golden harvest and the mill and the baker. It is as unrealistic and unreasonable to ask God to heal today, *independently of means*, as it would be to bid him to send down from heaven a loaf of bread, already baked and wrapped.

Evidently, for a limited time, and for a special purpose, God ordained that when the foregoing conditions were met healing, in the apostolic age, occurred. That it was not widely followed or even then intended to apply to all saints, is clear from the fact that dear ones sickened and died, and others suffered great continuing affliction (Acts 9:32-43; Phil. 2:19-20; I Tim. 5:23). Paul was continually beset by a "thorn in the flesh," Timothy wrestled with a stomach ailment, and Trophimus was left behind at Miletus sick.

Is it proper to pray for the afflicted today? *Indeed so!* Will God hear and answer such prayer? We have the solemn assurance of Christ that he will (Matt. 7:7ff). Does this suggest that he will answer every prayer precisely in the manner in which we request it? No. What then, may we expect? Our loving Father will, in harmony with his divine plan, and for our good, work out every situation, to the ultimate triumph of his people, and to the glory of his name among men. To this end we should strive fully to comply with his will, and acquiesce in the judgment of him who doeth all things well!

Feet Shod For The Gospel Of Peace

(No. 4)

We are outfitting the "Christian soldier" for war (Eph. 6:10-20). It is a fight to the finish, Christ against Satan, the kingdom of God's dear Son against all the forces of the present evil world. This "war" is therefore not one of a fleshly nature, but is "against principalities, against the powers, against the



VIRGIL BRADFORD

world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." This surely suggests that our fight is against all evil, whether in the world of in the church (Cf. Ac. 20:29ff). The Roman soldier would be tremendously disadvantaged if he had on the helmet, the breastplate, the shield, the girdle and sword but had no shoes on his feet. He would be completely unable to advance against an enemy without his shoes.

So the well equipped soldier wore the hob-nailed shoes that he might be ready for any and every foe. He was thus PREPARED for battle.

PREPARATION A MUST

Just take a look at the world round about and you will see on every hand men and women, boys and girls, making preparation for things that are of importance to themselves. The student goes to school to prepare himself for life's secular occupation. In season and out those who excel in the games and sports of various kinds are constantly preparing themselves that they may win a victory over an opposing team. Mother spends many hours preparing for the arrival of her infant child, making clothes and all the necessities for the new arrival. Now note also a few brief references and be impressed with the absolute need of PREPARATION.

David wanted to build the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem but was denied because he had been a man who had shed blood in wars. But he "prepared abundantly before his death" the materials later used by

(Continued On Page 4)

The Living God

(Continued From Page 1)

living God is a mighty God.

The living God cannot be successfully defied. When Goliath challenged Israel, David asked, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (I Sam. 17:26). David was confident that as he had slain a lion and a bear, so the living God would insure Goliath's defeat (v. 36). The Philistine approached and cursed David by the Philistine gods (v. 43), but David approached in the name of the God of Israel (v. 45). The victory was David's, because his faith in the living God prevailed over the arrogant Goliath.

Later in Israel's history the Assyrians "reproached the living God." The result was that 185,000 of the Assyrian host was slain by the living God (II Kgs. 19:4,15-19).

Possibly some skeptic will object by contending that Egypt successfully defied god by holding Israel in bondage for so long. But let us hasten to observe that God had said this would happen many years before it came to pass!! (Gen. 15:13,14). Besides, God both saw and heard the groaning of Israel in their affliction and delivered them with a mighty hand (Ex. 3:7-10). God prevailed.

The church survives, the gospel lives, and the faith of multitudes of believers is steadfast today because they serve a living God. After all, is it not safer and wiser to submit to Him who offers life eternal? (Jn. 3:16; Tit. 1:2). — Rt. 2, Halesville, Al. 35565.

Hope In Christ

DALTON KEY

The apostle Paul reasoned, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (I Cor. 15:19). Again he declares to the saints and faithful brethren at Colosse, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Inseparable are the words "hope" and "Christ." One cannot have hope without Christ; one cannot have Christ without having hope.

Our hope in Christ is based upon His promises. To His disciple He promised, "I go to prepare a place for you. 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 14:2,3). Paul announced that he had hope of eternal life, "which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2). Any hope based upon Divine promise is assured of fulfillment, therefore, "hope maketh not ashamed" (Rom. 5:5).

Notice, please, that our hope must be "in Christ" (I Cor. 15:19). Outside of Christ there is no hope (Eph. 2:12). Furthermore, in order for one to experience the hope that is in Christ, he must be himself in Christ. Both salvation and "all spiritual blessings" can be found only in Christ (II Tim. 2:10; Eph. 1:3). To be in Christ is to be in His body (Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:24). Won't you today be "baptized into (His) one body"? (I Cor. 12:13). Only then can you stand proudly and firmly upon the unwavering promises of God. — Box 619, Douglass, Kansas 67039.

Feet Shod For The Gospel Of Peace

(Continued From Page 3)

Solomon in the construction of the house of God (1 Chron. 22:5). Consequently, when the time came the house was reared up without the sound of "hammer or ax or any tool of iron." It was a prefabricated house! (1 Kgs. 6:7). The Lord prepared a great fish that swallowed Jonah the prophet. The Lord Jesus Christ spent some three to four years preparing the apostles to carry on the work of the kingdom after his departure. And, on and on, preparation is a MUST, an absolute necessity in any worthwhile undertaking.

PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL

No matter how well prepared we may be in other fields of endeavor we are not fulfilling our chief mission in life unless, and until, we are able to instruct the lost of the world, giving an answer to every one that asks concerning the hope that is in us (Cf. 1 Pet. 3:15). Remember that the Ephesian epistle was directed to all the church, the saints in Christ, and by extension must apply to YOU AND ME if we are Christians. Many times we have heard, "I just can't teach." Unfortunately this is all too often a true statement, but bear in mind that the main reason for this is that we simply have not spent the time and energy necessary to learn WHAT to teach and HOW to teach. We should ask the Lord for wisdom (James 1:5), but there is no need to ask God for knowledge unless we are going to the source of all spiritual knowledge and search it out for ourselves (I Tim. 3:16f).

Of course, no two teachers are exactly alike in ability and performance. But according to the principle involved in the parable of the talents the Lord will surely hold us accountable for our ability and opportunity, which equal responsibility.

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

When Judaizers were making bold and continuous efforts to bind the old law upon the church the apostle Paul withstood them firmly and said concerning them, "To whom we gave place by way of subjection, no not for an hour, that the TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL might continue with you" (Gal. 2:5). Paul was PREPARED not only to stand against what was in error but also to present the TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL, knowing that the gospel is the POWER OF GOD unto salvation to those who believe (Rom. 1:16). "Gospel" means good tidings, or good news. The good news to be preached is the truth "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and was buried, and hath been raised from the dead the third day." These are the basic facts of the gospel that anyone can repeat to somebody else if he will. There are promises of the gospel, some of which are forgiveness of sin, the providential care of God and eternal life. There are commands of the gospel which include believing, repenting of sins, and being baptized upon a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus (I Cor. 15:3f; Mk. 16:15f; Matt. 6:33, etc.). But it seems to me that, though these things are true, we should not limit the gospel, believing and obeying it, to the alien sinner only. Why?

Paul says, "I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome" (Rom. 1:16). The Philippian Christians are told to "let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27). The brethren in Colossae are exhorted to "continue in

the faith—and not be moved away from the hope of the gospel" (Col. 1:23). The gospel Paul preached included the Judgment (Rom. 2:16). He also wrote the church in Rome, saying, "Now unto him that is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ" (Rom. 16:25). And last in this list, Paul preached the gospel unto Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all the nations be blessed" (Gal. 3:8). The gospel, then, in its fullness, must continue beyond the point of baptism. We must not only obey the gospel, but keep on obeying the gospel as long as we live in these earthly tabernacles. To "continue in the faith" is to continue in the gospel (Col. 1:23).

THE GOSPEL OF PEACE

We have here a wonderful paradox. The gospel of Christ is the gospel of peace, yet some are moved to a state of fury when truth is spoken and error exposed. But let us remember that Jesus said, "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). This is no contradiction. The gospel that saves is the same as that by which men will stand condemned in judgment. The difference is in the person, not in Christ. No one can truly be a Christian and not be at peace with God (Phil. 4:6). The sinner, having received and obeyed the gospel of Christ, is justified before God and has "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). It was in the great truth that Stephen could look up into the face of Jesus Christ, and pray for his murderers, and say Lord Jesus, receive my spirit (Ac. 7:59f). And as Paul laid his arms by he said in a state of perfect peace, "Henceforth, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day and not to me only, but to all them that have loved his appearing" (II Tim. 4:8).

Anyone need a new pair of shoes? Remember, there is a place prepared for the prepared people (Jn. 14:1-6; Matt. 25:34ff). — Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

Beware Of Haughtiness

G.F. RAINES

Much of the trouble in the world is traceable to the haughtiness manifested by people in their personal relationships.

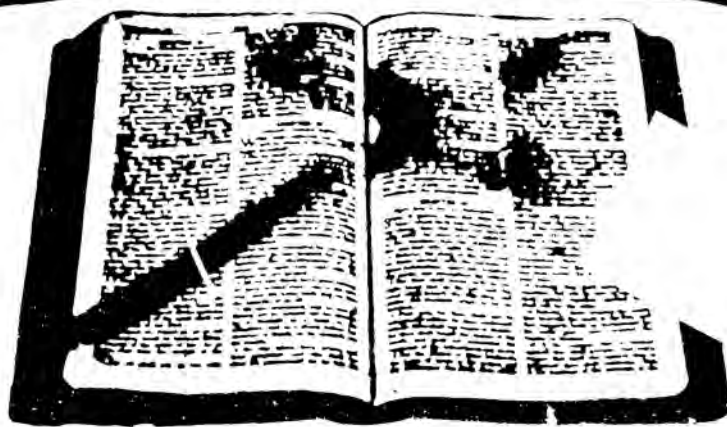
It is said that a certain husband told his bride shortly after their marriage that he did not want them to have any strife whatsoever in their home. He added: "We can avoid all trouble if you will just remember one thing. Whenever we have an argument or a disagreement, you just keep in mind the fact that you are wrong."

Peter says that we must "be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (I Pet. 5:5,6).

Solomon warns us that, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18).

Jesus says: "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). "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12:30, 31). — Newton, Miss. 39345.

WORDS of TRUTH



*"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32*

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

*Speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25
came by Jesus Christ"*

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, MAY 13, 1977

ER 22

God's Watchmen (Ezekiel 3:17,18)

In our text God made Ezekiel His watchman. He was to be the watchman unto the house of Israel. One of his responsibilities was to warn the people of their destiny. Our text places a great responsibility upon (1) those who are to warn, and (2) those who are warned. Christians today serve as God's watchmen and have the responsibility to warn both His people and the people of the world. Let us make some application from these inspired words to our own responsibility.



ARVEL CURTIS

EZEKIEL WAS TO WARN THE WICKED (V. 17). Men and women all over the world are now lost because of their sins and unrighteous acts. Perhaps we have never seen a greater need seriously to act as God's watchmen. It is today as it was when the apostle Paul wrote to the Romans! "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). In Romans, chapter one, he declares the Gentiles have sinned. In chapter two he points to the Jews and their sins. In chapter three he puts both together and declares all to be sinners. So it is today. The gospel of Christ is the only means of saving those in sin (Rom. 1:16). Those who do not obey the truth will be lost forever (II Thess. 1:7-9). This is why the great commission needs our immediate attention. Our Lord said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). While many of God's watchmen sit, millions die without Christ. If we do not warn them, their blood will be on our hands. God has laid this challenging, awesome responsibility at the hands of the church (Eph. 3:8-11; I Tim. 3:15). We are His watchmen.

EZEKIEL HAD TO WARN THE PEOPLE OR ELSE GIVE ACCOUNT FOR THEM. If he failed to warn them, their blood would be on his hands. The sinners would answer for their sins but so would Ezekiel (v. 18). How many have slipped through our hands into a devil's hell without any warning from us? How many of our own relatives? Sometimes people say,

"I just cannot talk to my own family." How hard have we tried? Would anyone doubt that the rich man of Luke 16 could have talked to his brothers if given another opportunity. Church members will sometimes even discourage others from talking with their family about their soul's salvation. How sad? What about our neighbors, work companions and school mates? How many of them will be lost eternally without any encouragement from us to be saved? What about foreign nations? While we surround ourselves with the luxuries of life, many die without ever having owned or even seen a New Testament. Do we care? What kind of watchmen are we today? One day we shall know, for we must give account. God said to Ezekiel, "his blood will I require at thine hand" (Eze. 3:18).

EZEKIEL WAS NOT COMMANDED TO FORCE MEN TO OBEY. The responsibility of the watchman was to teach and warn. So it is today (Matt. 28:18, 19). If they refused to hear the warning from Ezekiel, their blood would be on their own hands. They would be lost, but not Ezekiel. Jesus Christ did not command that we convert the whole world. This no doubt would be an impossible task.

But he did command that we teach the whole world. No man has the right to expect Christians to beg him to be saved. When he hears and understands the gospel, his blood is on his own hands (Jn. 12:48). Friend, church member or alien sinner, count yourself fortunate if others have encouraged you several times to be saved. They have gone beyond their call of duty. Millions have never had the **FIRST OPPORTUNITY** to be saved from sin by hearing and obeying the gospel of Christ.

As watchmen, we as Ezekiel, must warn men and women of their destiny if they do not obey God. We must do all within our power to turn them to the truth that heaven may be theirs. Friend, if you are not saved and understand the gospel, your blood will be on your own hands and you can blame no one for your soul's being lost. What a responsibility God places upon all of us either to teach and warn as watchmen, obey the gospel as alien sinners, or be lost for all eternity. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14). — P.O. Box 6477, Moore, Oklahoma 73160.

Evolution And War

ROGER E. DICKSON

What would happen if the philosophy of evolution was absorbed and practiced in a given society? To answer this question, let's use an example.

While Sir Archibald Geikie was traveling through Austria in 1868 and 1869, he observed a definite grasp by the German mind of evolutionary principles. He later remarked: ". . . what specially struck me was the universal sway which the writings of Darwin now exercises over the German mind" (NATURE, Nov. 4, 1869, Vol. 1, p. 22). In the following decades, evolutionary thinking also laid roots in other societies. Robert E. D. Clark wrote: "Mussolini's attitude was completely dominated by evolution. In public utterances, he repeatedly used the Darwin catchwords while he mocked at perpetual peace, lest it should hinder the evolutionary

process. For him, the reluctance of England to engage in war only proved the evolutionary decadence of the British Empire" (DARWIN: BEFORE AND AFTER, p. 109).

Mussolini was once accredited for originating the following statement, which is actually a quotation from Darwin: "Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object of which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life. . . ." (See the last few sentences of the ORIGIN OF SPECIES).

Adolf Hitler was also captivated by evolutionary teachings. Sir Arthur Keith, an evolutionist, rightly stated: "Hitler is an uncompromising evolutionist, and we must

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did not have the wherewith to finance the publishing of the Book of Mormon, and so they approached Joseph's parents to get help in this matter. Lucy Smith, Joseph's mother, wrote concerning the incident: "Soon after they came, all the male part of the company, with my husband, Samuel, and Hyrum, retired to a place where the family were in the habit of offering up their secret devotions to God. They went to this place, because it had been revealed to Joseph that the plates would be carried thither by one of the ancient Nephites. Here it was, that those eight witnesses, whose names are recorded in the Book of Mormon, looked upon them and handled them" (BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF JOSEPH SMITH THE PROPHET, 148-149).

It is strange that God would tell Joseph that there would be only three witnesses to the plates besides Joseph himself, and then go back on his word and show the plates to eight others. Just how do we account for this? Did God lie about the matter, or did He just change His mind when He learned that those with the money didn't have much confidence in the first three witnesses? Another strange thing is the circumstance under which these eleven witnesses saw the plates. They had to go off into a private place and be shown these plates by an angel. And yet there were days when Joseph Smith, Jr. would sit with the plates behind a curtain or sheet which was hung so as to hide him and the plates from view, and translate to his scribes. Would it not have been better simply to pull back the sheet and say, "Here, Cowdery, witness the plates"?

But just what kind of men were these witnesses? Were they upright, reliable, truthful men? Surely God would not have selected men who are otherwise to hear witness to the world of such magnanimous truths?! We certainly would not want to form an opinion of these men by hearing only the testimony of their enemies, and so let us ask Joseph Smith, Jr., the man whose integrity is to be determined by the truthfulness of these men, just what kind of men these were. "Joseph, what kind of man was Martin Harris, who was one of the three witnesses?"

His reply is: "As so far beneath contempt that a notice of him would be too great a sacrifice for a gentleman to make. The church exerted some restraint on him, but now he has given loose to all kinds of abominations. Lying, cheating, swindling, with all kinds of debauchery" (ELDERS JOURNAL, August 1836, p. 49).

Well, what about the other two, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer? Once again Smith replies: "About this time there were several persons living in the far west who

were cut off from the church. These characters were spuriously engaged in circulating false and slanderous reports against the saints to stir up our enemies to drive us from our homes and enjoy the spoils together. They were as follows. Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer. . ." (TIMES AND SEASONS, Vol. 1, p. 80).

Thus it is that Joseph Smith, Jr. impeaches his own witnesses, saying they were liars, cheats, swindlers, slanderers, circulators of false reports, etc. Yet we are asked to believe their testimony and to stake our eternal destiny upon their truthfulness concerning these gold plates.

Concerning the eight witnesses, be it remembered that they were not supposed to see the plates in the first place. For God had told Smith: "And to none else will I grant this power." But it seems that Smith must have conspired with the angel to show it to these eight in spite of what God had said. It is a fact of history recorded that five of these eight at one time or another were apostates from the Mormon Church.

Not only so, but a careful examination of the testimony of the three witnesses and of the eight witnesses will reveal that their testimony would not stand up in any court of our land, for their testimony involves things which they did not and could not know. The three witnesses, for example, testified that they had seen "the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi. . ." Assuming for the moment that these were honest men that had seen some plates, how could they have known that the plates contained a record of certain people, in view of the fact that they could not read the language inscribed on the plates?

The eight witnesses testified that they had handled "as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated." But since they could not read the language on the plates, how could they know that they had handled as many of the leaves as he had translated? They further testified "that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken." If this were true then why all the trouble trying to get the angel to show the plates to the first three witnesses? Why didn't Smith do it himself?

Look at the contrast between the Mormon account of these golden plates and the New Testament account of the resurrection of Jesus. The latter was "not done in a corner" (Acts 26:26). The witnesses to his resurrection were reliable men, and there were many of them (I Cor. 15:4-8). Their testimony would stand up in the courts.

Next we will look at the Mormons and the matter of Polygamy.

The Mormon Witnesses

In the close of our last article we referred to the claim of Joseph Smith that the BOOK OF MORMON was translated from certain golden plates to which he was directed by the angel, Moroni. The authenticity of Smith's "revelations" is predicated upon the existence of these golden plates. Did the plates really exist?



BOBBY DUNCAN

In order to "prove" that they did we are given the testimony of eleven witnesses in the preface of the Book of Mormon. There is first the testimony of three witnesses, and then the testimony of eight witnesses. The reason we have them in two groups is because a man by the name of Martin Harris seemed somewhat skeptical in the matter, and insisted on seeing the plates. In a "revelation" given to Smith at Harmony, Pennsylvania in March of 1829 the Lord severely rebuked Harris and strictly commanded him not to say anything else to the people about the fact that no one had witnessed the plates. The Lord also on this occasion stated that he would grant Harris and two others the privilege of seeing the plates. There were to be three witnesses to whom these plates would be shown. "And to none else will I grant this power" (DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS, 5:14). In other words, there were to be three witnesses, and three witnesses only. But it seems that these three

Will Zeal Destroy Us?

MICHAEL D. STONE

One genuine mark of a Christian is zeal. Not zeal for just anything but zeal for that which is right in the sight of God. Christians are a people "zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). We must "contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3).

A word of caution is in order regarding our zeal. The apostle Paul said concerning the Jews, "they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge" (Romans 10:2). Beloved, could it be possible that there are some among our ranks today who have a zeal "not according to knowledge"?

Some today are like the Athenians of old who spent their time in telling or hearing

some new thing (Acts 17:21). There are many new things being advocated by zealous people today which are not right. Let our congregations, ministers, colleges, elders and all Christians heed the warning. In everything that we do, let us have Bible authority for doing it. If we don't have the authority from the Bible, then let us not do it. Some of the things we condone today were condemned by us in years gone by. Brethren, let us be careful.

The changes that we make in the name of progress may not really be progress at all. Will our zeal destroy us? It does not have to if we act now. — P.O. Box 784, Brevard, N.C. 28712.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"In James 5:14, is the sickness of which James speaks physical or spiritual? If physical, please explain why it is not possible today for the sick to receive healing by asking the elders to pray for them to recover."

Both physical and spiritual illnesses are contemplated in the context to which the querist alludes. Verse 15 reads, ". . . and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick and the Lord shall raise him up," (this has reference to illness of the flesh) "and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him" (this refers to spiritual illness").

The second question above has an implication which does not follow from the text. More, far more, is involved here than prayers, by the elders, for the sick. Every member of the church, including, of course, the elders, may indeed pray for the sick; and, God, in harmony with his will, and by means of his natural laws (i.e., through his various healing techniques available today), does hear, and answer and heal. But, the implication that all that was involved in the promise of James 5:14 was healing through prayer by the elders if ar short of what is actually taught.

"Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him." The "prayer of faith," is prayer which results from faith; a prayer prayed because of the faith of those praying. This prayer, it is affirmed, "shall save him that is sick." Let it be carefully noted that James asserts that it is *the prayer of faith* which accomplishes this; not prayer and oil; not prayer and medical treatment; not prayer and the laying on of hands - the prayer of faith.

Faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17). It is not possible to exercise faith in the absence of divine testimony; unless, therefore, there is a specific promise that these powers were to attend the elders throughout the Christian age, in the New Testament, it is vain to expect such to be done today. Not only is there no such promise, the Holy Spirit expressly taught that all of these miraculous powers were of limited duration and were to terminate with the close of the apostolic age (I Cor. 12:28-31; 13:8-13; Eph. 4:11-16).

It follows, therefore, that James 5:14 was applicable to a situation existing in the day of miraculous gifts and terminated with these gifts. The alternative even the most avid defender of miraculous healing today cannot accept; for if the promise of this passage is today applicable, if the sick called for the elders as here directed, and if the elders did their duty, *no one in the church would ever die!* Yet, the Hebrew writer solemnly affirmed, "It is appointed unto men once to die. . ." (Heb. 9:27).

Evidently, for a limited period, and for special purposes, God ordained that the elders were thus to function; and, in every instance, the promise was realized. That it was not widely followed, however, nor intended to be

a universal practice even in the apostolic age follows from the fact that not infrequently saints were sick and often died from their illnesses (Acts 9:32-43; Phil. 2:19-30; I Tim. 5:23; II Tim. 4:8). While those to whom James 5:14 was applicable received the promised blessing without exception when the inspired instructions were followed, others in the same period was often afflicted without relief. Paul had a thorn in the flesh; Timothy had a stomach disorder; and, Trophimus was left by Paul in Miletus sick. (II Cor. 12:7-10; I Tim. 5:23; II Tim. 4:20).

It seems quite clear, from all the facts involved, that the elders under consideration in James 5:14 were miraculously endowed - through the laying on of apostle's hands - and were thus able to participate in miraculous acts of healing in the manner described. In the apostolic age, in a day of special gifts, conferred through apostle's hands, acts of healing were done independently of means; today, God still heals, but by means, and through the marvelous modern methods for which we should be so grateful. God once fed people miraculously, and independently of means; he still feeds us, but the seed, the sower, the sunshine, the harvest, the mill, the baker are all means to that end. It is as foreign to God's plan today to expect miraculous healing independently of means as

it is to expect him to feed us as Jesus did when he multiplied the loaves and the fishes. It is of course right and proper for us to pray for the sick; to pray that they may be healed; to pray that the Lord will raise them up and restore them to their proper places in life; but, we must recognize that he works *through means* today, and that he has chosen to accomplish his purposes in this manner. He who *rejects* these means today - such as medicine, surgery, and all other approved techniques - and alleges dependence upon God alone, actually *rejects* God who chooses to work in this way today. He who is raised up from death's door by modern drugs is as assuredly *healed by the power of God* as were those in the first century who were the recipients of Christ's healing ministry in that day. Let us be grateful for, and use without hesitation, these marvelous means which come to us from the hand of God.

The reader is referred to a detailed exegesis and verse exposition of James 5:14, 15, in my commentary on the Epistle of James, published by the Gospel Advocate Company, P.O. Box 150, Nashville, Tennessee.

For a more detailed discussion of some of the matters alluded to herein, see the answer to the question, "Is the promise of James 5:13-15, applicable to the church today?"

Coming To Terms With Sin

Sin is rampant in our society. It is daily increasing in both degree and frequency. The pollution of sin is daily encroaching upon the church through the lives of some of her weak, worldly members. Denominational churches are losing their influence and members in alarming proportions. Both Protestant and Catholic churches have repeatedly lowered their standards to accommodate their members' life-styles and convictions about worldly practices.

The Lord's church is growing in numbers, yet she is shrinking in proportion to the mushrooming population of the world. Some carnal minded brethren would lower the church's standards of moral conduct to encourage more people to come in and keep more of her present members.

There have always been some members of the church who lived far below the standard of godliness set forth in the Bible. They were usually a minority and kept their worldly views and practices quiet and hidden, fearing to bring them into open light. Then they were looked upon as an erring minority. Now we see a new boldness and a change in attitude in worldly, carnal church members. Many of them now openly practice their sin with no fear of reproof. Some men who serve as elders, deacons and preachers now engage in social drinking, smoking, mixed swimming, without shame or inhibition. Some of them openly approve of promiscuous divorce and remarriage. These compromisers now publish their views and attack those who oppose such conduct as being "unChristian, unloving, legalistic, without Bible authority, or troublemakers." Now we actually see brethren seeking to justify such conduct by

distorting the Scriptures to make them seem to uphold their aberrant practices.

Today, just as 1900 years ago, God expects a certain high level of moral conduct of those who would be His children. We must deny "ungodliness and worldly lust" and "live soberly, righteously and godly" lives (Tit. 2:11-12). Christians are expected to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul and to have their behavior seemly before their sinful neighbors (I Pet. 2:11-12). They cannot "conform" to the sinful habits of the world, rather they must be transformed into Christ-likeness (Rom. 12:1-2). Saints must never forget that pure religion involves keeping oneself unspotted from the world (Jas. 1:27). We are taught to "come out" of the sinful world and be different thereunto (II Cor. 6:17). Again, we are to "cleanse ourselves from every defilement of the flesh and spirit" and then strive to perfect holiness of life (II Cor. 7:1). Upon becoming Christians we must cease to live as sinners, putting off the deeds of the old man and replacing them with the godly habits of Christ (Eph. 4:17-24). Not only must we have no fellowship with the works of darkness, but we are obligated to reprove them (Eph. 5:11-12). Christians should be modest in dress and practice shamefastness and sobriety which becomes people professing godliness (I Tim. 2:9-13). In addition to correct doctrine and worship, we must pursue a godly course of living (I Tim. 6:11).

The man who accepts the sacred responsibility of a gospel preacher is obligated to proclaim the WHOLE counsel of God, including moral duties (Acts 20:26-27). He must "put the brethren in mind" of God's standards (I Tim. 4:6). His lessons must consist of reproof and rebuke as well as exhortation whether such is popular or not (II Tim. 4:2). BRETHREN must be forewarned that if they engage in the works of the flesh they will not inherit the kingdom of heaven (Gal. 5:21). Most important of all, a man of God must be a willing example of godly living

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JOHN WADDEY

Coming To Terms With Sin

(Continued From Page 3)

(I Tim. 4:11-12).

Our congregations are burdened with problems that not only are wrong in themselves, but which compromise and weaken the church before a lost world. We see some Christians dressed in shockingly immodest apparel. Others engage in social dancing. Many yet engage in the use of tobacco. Some even indulge in the social use of alcoholic beverages. Multitudes of God's people marry non-Christians. Marriages are broken by divorce and second marriages are entered into with little or no regard for God's divine regulations. Some saints are members of secret fraternal lodges that are competitive with the claims of Christ. All of these things and others are detrimental to godliness and ruinous to congregations. The shame of it all is that in hundreds of pulpits these topics are never discussed and no warning is ever given. Worse still, we are seeing some "relevant preachers" and elders daring to defend some or all of these sins as respectable and acceptable conduct for Christians. Some dare to stand in the pulpit of God's assembly while practicing some of these things in their daily life.

God speaks to such compromising men through His Word. Through Isaiah He thundered, "Woe to them that call evil good and good evil" (5:20). We are taught to imitate faithful Paul who preached the whole counsel of God (I Cor. 11:1; Acts 20:26-27). We are forbidden to "diminish from" God's message (Deut. 4:2). When Michaiiah was pressured to declare good words unto wicked Ahab, he responded, "As Jehovah saith unto me, that will I speak" (I Kings 22:13-14). He went to prison on bread and water rather than back down! May God raise up ten thousand of his tribe for our generation.

Congregations must never discourage faithful leaders who cry out against sin, neither should they tolerate spineless professionals who fear to stand up against sin and sinners. Jeremiah bemoaned the fact that "both prophet and priest (were) profane" in his day. They practiced wickedness even in Jehovah's sacred temple (23:11). He described the condition as astonishing and horrible when the prophets prophesied falsely, and the priests ruled by their means and God's "people loved to have it so" (5:30-31). Woe to that congregation who encourages delinquency in the pulpit and eldership! Isaiah scored the people of his day for daring to say to God's prophets, "Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things." Really they were saying "prophesy deceits" (30:10). The church of Christ in Thyatria was rebuked for tolerating a teacher in its midst who encouraged ungodliness (Rev. 2:20). How many of our congregations would receive a similar letter today? Remember, a preacher can encourage a sinful practice by never letting it be known it is wrong!

As Christians we must be prepared to be different from the sinful society about us. We must never conform to the ungodly standards of Satan's children (Rom. 12:1-2). Saints must make no provision at all for the sinful flesh (Rom. 13:14). When congregations become corrupt with sin, whether it be doctrinal or moral, and when we are unable to change

them for the better, we must be prepared to come out of them so that we do not have fellowship with their sin and share their judgment (Rev. 18:4). — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921.

Loving In Deed And In Faith

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (I John 3:18).

The book of I John is an interesting book on the subject of true love. John shows that his fellowship is with the Father and the Son (I John 1:3). To have fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son, one must follow that which John and the other apostles and prophets have delivered. To follow the writing of the apostles is to have full joy (I John 1:4), know his commandments (2:3,4), know we have passed from death unto life (3:14), know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error (4:6), know we dwell in him (4:13), and to know we have eternal life (5:13).

How can one know that he is of God? John said, "He that knoweth God *heareth us*; he that is not of God *heareth not us*" (I John 4:6). Who are the "us"? The apostles! We hear the apostles today by hearing (reading) the apostles' doctrine or New Testament (Acts 2:42). There were those in John's day who were members of the Lord's body, but were lost. They said they had no sin (1:8,10), kept not his commandments (2:4), hated their brethren (2:9,11; 3:10, 14, 15; 4:20), loved the world (2:15-17), were anti-Christ (2:18,22; 4:1-3), kept on committing sin (3:8, 10), were false prophets (4:1), and sinned the sin unto death (5:16).

Although God loves all men (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8), He still commands that certain men be marked (Rom. 16:17,18; 2 Thess. 3:6; 10-15). John was the apostle of love, yet in I, II and III John he still described those in the church who were not in fellowship with Jehovah. We can do no less.

Brother W. Carl Ketcherside, in a recent issue of INTEGRITY (March, 1977, pp. 119-120), had an article "The Scattered Sheep" in which he overlooks the very principle found in John's letters! Brother Ketcherside ended his article with these words: "And I shall try to love, not merely in word and in speech, but in deed and in truth!" Our brother thinks it is unloving to deny that sectarians are Christians and ridicules the idea of there being the true body of Christ. Our brother thinks we have painted ourselves into a corner. This is unwarranted on his part. We have neither painted ourselves into a corner nor build any walls. Those who reject the truth point themselves out of God's grace and build a wall to keep others from entering in!

Brother Ketcherside seems to think that if one teaches the one holy, apostolic, and catholic church of God he is a legalistic sect. I wonder if he is able to get his "scattered sheep" into one fold if that will be a legalistic

sect? Since Christians went back into Judaism in the first century, I wonder if brother Ketcherside would say the church was a legalistic sect because it taught salvation was found only within its fellowship?

I used to be a Methodist preacher, and brother Ketcherside is using the same arguments now that I espoused almost twenty years ago! It is nothing but Neo-Denominationalism! He accuses us of preaching ourselves, when in reality we preach Christ and his body, the church. Brother Ketcherside thinks he can preach Christ without preaching the doctrine of Christ, but he is as mistaken as were those John wrote against in his three epistles.

There may be Christians in the sectarian churches, but they are in error and should repent and return to God's fellowship. This is what our brother needs to do. — 4950 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.



RAY HAWK

Evolution And War

(Continued From Page 1)

seek for an evolutionary explanation if we are to understand his actions" (EVOLUTION AND ETHICS, p. 14). The MEIN KAMPF of Hitler is saturated with evolutionary thinking. His speeches were oratories of struggle, survival and war. In a speech in Nuremberg in 1933, Hitler said: "Thus there results the subjection of a number of people under the will, often of only a few persons, a subjection based simply upon the right of the stronger, a right which, as we see it in Nature, can be regarded as the sole conceivable right, because it is founded on reason." He also stated: "He who would live must fight. He who does not wish to fight in this world where permanent struggle is the law of life, has not the right to exist." And Hitler's extermination of the Jews, and his war will always be an epitome of the philosophy of "evolution in action."

And in his book entitled EVOLUTION IN ACTION, Julian Huxley, an atheistic evolutionist, stated: "Pain and suffering are part of the wastage involved in the workings of the selective process. We must not expect to find human values at work in nature's day-to-day operations" (p. 72). It is shocking to hear some evolutionists make statements to justify war in the evolutionary process. For example, read the following statement of Carl Wallace Miller, a theistic evolutionist:

Thus war, with its obvious violation of the sanctity of human life, may be an inescapable necessity for correcting evils present in the body politic, and may eventuate in the ultimate good of society. It may on occasion be viewed as the better of two alternatives, as a drastic but essential operation for the removal of intolerable obstacles from the pathway of human progress (A SCIENTIST'S APPROACH TO RELIGION, pp. 92,93).

Think about it. — Caixa Postal 30.543. 01000 - Sao Paulo, Brazil.

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"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

VOLUME 13

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(No. 1)

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first article in a rather lengthy series on this subject. In view of present day circumstances, we believe this discussion to be extremely important. We believe this will be one of the most comprehensive studies of evolution ever to be published in a brotherhood periodical. Many of our readers, especially preachers, will want to file this material for future reference. The author is well qualified to write on this theme. He holds a B.S. degree in biology from Abilene Christian College, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in the field of food microbiology from Texas A&M University. We commend this series of articles to your reading.)

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). With a quiet confidence the Bible begins. There is no cumbersome philosophical pondering, no burdensome philosophical speculation. The assertions are simply that GOD IS and GOD CREATED! The Bible makes absolutely no formal attempt to prove either the existence of God or the origin of God. His existence is assumed as a first truth, and His eternal nature is affirmed. The Bible makes it clear from cover to cover that it is GOD who says He is the Creator of the universe and the One who keeps it going. It is GOD who created man in His own image. It is GOD who tells man what he needs to know. It is GOD who gives man direction and purpose in his life.



BERT THOMPSON

"In the beginning God created. . ." Or did He? Many today would have us believe that "it all depends. . ." And so it does. It all depends on your point of view. Another way to say it is that it depends on your faith. Or, still another way of saying it is that it all depends

on whether or not you BELIEVE IN GOD. Make no mistake! Here the central issues are God's existence and the inerrant inspiration (verbal, plenary) of the Scriptures. If Scripture is true, then the Christian has a good case. If the Scriptures are false, the Christian has nothing more than a quaint religion equal to folklore.

ABOUT YOUR ORIGIN

Are you a descendant of a monkey or an ape-like beast that lived millions of years ago? Almost everyone is faced with this question at one time or another (either directly, or indirectly). And it is an important question. As Dr. Bernard Ramm has been known to say: "This is no weak tea or faded colors." And we agree. This question strikes at the very essence of man and his origin.

From the time we start to school, we are told by our teachers and our textbooks that man did descend by a process of evolution. We see TV specials on the "history of man," where, in living color we see mankind move from the swamp on all fours, slowly straighten up, shed his tail, grow hair, and learn to move and think. We see it in NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, TIME, LIFE, and other such prominent national magazines. Man is pictured as rolling up on some primeval ocean seashore - an amorphous mass which, through millions of years of "evolution" decided without a brain to have a brain and which, over a period of millions (?) of years evolved into man in his present state. Our question in this series of articles will be this: IS THIS ACTUALLY WHAT HAPPENED? We contend that the answer is both known and knowable. And we contend that every living person has a right (and obligation) to know.

YOUR TWO ALTERNATIVES

Today you have only two alternatives as to the origin of man. Either man is the result of the organic evolutionary process, or man was formed by God in special creation "in the beginning." If it is the case that (as per the Biblical account) the infinite God created the original human pair (male and female), then the question of God (and of His will for man) is all-important. On the other hand, if there is

no God, and if man did evolve (by blind, non-purposive forces) from some lower form(s) of life, then there are no absolutes. If there are no absolutes, then moral and spiritual affirmations are nothing more than man's own inventions, nothing more than mere expressions of his own likes and dislikes. Since this issue, then, is inextricably involved with the question of God, and since the question of God is without a doubt the most important question of all, the reader will surely see that this question of evolution versus creation is of vital importance.

At some point in every person's life, he must make a decision on what to believe - either creation or evolution. There is, in reality, no middle ground. (I am aware of the beliefs of some tending toward "theistic evolution," that will be discussed in one of the articles in this series - at great length.) Even the person who "votes" for neither is actually "voting" for one - evolution. For, you see, if you do not come out FOR God, you are automatically numbered with those who are AGAINST Him. There is no in-between. The New Testament writers made this crystal clear (cf: Revelation 3:16). God states unequivocally that He demands your allegiance. To withhold it for any reason is sufficient cause for God to abandon such a person to his own devices. In essence, no decision is the wrong decision. So is a "vote" in favor of evolution. Yet each person, as a free moral agent, must make up his own mind - creation or evolution.

FUNNY THING - MYSTERY

It is generally assumed nowadays that the Biblical record of origins is "pre-scientific," at best allegorical, and certainly not literal or historical. Many modern versions of the Bible begin Genesis 1:1 with "Once upon a time. . ." - thus making Genesis 1 (and the following subsequent chapters) no more than a fairy tale written by some senile old Hebrew storyteller, and nothing to be believed by anyone except small children who don't know any better.

Some people choose organic evolution (as opposed to Special Creation) as the

(Continued On Page 4)

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Mormons And Polygamy

In former articles we have given a brief history of Mormonism, and have shown cases in which the BOOK OF MORMON contradicts GOD'S BOOK, the Bible. In our last article, we showed that those eleven people who claimed to have witnessed the golden plates from which the BOOK OF MORMON was translated, were not reliable witnesses. Their testimony would not stand up in our courts.



BOBBY DUNCAN

In the beginning of this article we wish to emphasize that the things said herein are not said to indict any member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints living today. It is rather our purpose to show that the founders and early leaders of the Mormon Church were guilty of practicing and advocating some of the vilest sins known to mankind, and all of this, supposedly, in the name of God. We mention these things, not to gloat over the sins of others, but so that good, honest men and women might know something of the character of the founders of Mormonism. In this way it will be easier to judge wisely whether Mormonism is founded upon a revelation from God or upon a fraud, perpetrated for the express purpose of gratifying every desire in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

The average Mormon today will tell you that he does not believe polygamy is right. If pressed, he will explain that the civil law forbids such, and that we should abide by the

civil law. Joseph Smith, Jr., the Mormon prophet himself, had this to say as he spoke in a special "revelation from God" concerning the matter: "And again, as pertaining to the law of the priesthood--if any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent, and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else. And if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him; therefore is he justified" (Doctrine and Covenants 132:61-62). Fawn M. Brodie, in her book, NO MAN KNOWS MY HISTORY, lists the names of forty-eight women, beside his first wife, Emma, who were married to the Mormon "prophet."

It would seem that Emma Smith, Joseph's wife, might have been a little skeptical of this particular doctrine, for in this same "revelation" God exhorted: "And let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph . . ." (v. 52). She is again warned in verse 54: "But if she will not abide this commandment she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord: for I am the Lord thy God, and will destroy her if she abide not in my law."

But Emma Smith was not the only woman in the early Mormon Church who was displeased with the law regarding "plural marriages." Jedediah M. Grant, in a sermon delivered Sept. 21, 1856, and recorded in the DESERT NEWS, Vol. 6, page 235, said: "And we have women who like anything but the celestial law of God; and if they could, would break asunder the cable of the Church of Christ: there is scarcely a mother in Israel but would do it this day. And they talk it to their husbands, to their daughters, and to their neighbors, and say that they have not seen a week's happiness since they became acquainted with that law, or since their husband took a second wife. They want to break up the church of God, and to break it from their husbands, and from their family connections."

Brigham Young, in a sermon delivered the same day, reported in the same paper, said: "Now for my proposition; it is more particularly for my sisters, as it is frequently happening that women say that they are unhappy. Men will say, 'My wife, though a most excellent woman, has not seen a happy

day since I took my second wife;' 'Not a happy day for a year,' says one; and another has not seen a happy day for five years. It is sad that women are tied down and abused, that they are misused and have not the liberty they ought to have; that many of them are wading through a perfect flood of tears, because of the conduct of some men, together with their own folly.

"I wish my women to understand that what I am going to say is for them, as well as all others, and I want those who are here to tell their sisters, yes, all the women of this community, and then write it back to the States, and do as you please with it. I am going to give you from this until the sixth day of October next for reflection, that you may determine whether you wish to stay with your husbands or not, and then I am going to set every woman at liberty and say to them: Now go your way, my women with the rest, go your way. And my wives have got to do one of two things; either round up their shoulders to endure the afflictions of this world and live their religion, or they may leave, for I will not have them about me. I will go into heaven alone, rather than have scratching and fighting around me. I will set all at liberty. 'What, first wife too?' Yes, I will liberate you all."

Later on in the same speech he said: "If my wife had borne me all the children that she ever would bear, the celestial law would teach me to take young women that would have children." He further states that those women who will accept the law concerning plural wives and will "enter into it and are faithful, I will promise them that they shall be queens in heaven, and rulers to all eternity."

These are just a few of the statements that could be quoted to show that the early Mormon leaders taught and practiced the doctrine of plural wives.

A casual student of the Bible knows that this practice is contrary to the will of God. God's book says: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). The inspired Paul said: "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" (Rom. 7:2,3).

Problem Preachers

(No. 1)

church he serves.

To help elders and congregations to avoid such painful problems I would like to note several undesirable categories of preachers. May I hasten to say that I do not have in mind those men who faithfully proclaim God's truth in love and in so doing arouse opposition from worldly carnal-minded members (Eph. 4:15).

1. FALSE TEACHERS. Just because a man says "I am a gospel preacher" does not necessarily mean it is so. There have always been wolves in sheep's clothing in the preaching business (Matt. 7:15). No false teacher will ever announce himself as such. Nor will an apostate volunteer to admit his departure. The apostles repeatedly warned us of these poisonous preachers (Acts 20:28-31; II John 9-11). A congregation dare not tolerate such a man in its midst.

2. REBELS. Some men just cannot submit

(Continued On Page 4)



JOHN WADDEY

Without doubt one of the greatest assets of the Lord's church is her faithful gospel preachers. Churches with good preachers almost always are stable and growing. Good works flourish when consecrated, godly men of God put their hands to the task. Just as surely, however, problem preachers are the church's greatest bane. Most every

church has had at least one such misfit in its history. Because of the influence and position of a preacher in our congregations it is likely that a troublesome preacher will afflict the

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"What kind of oil did the elders, mentioned in James 5:14, 15, use, and what was the purpose of it?"

It was olive oil, an emollient used both medicinally and symbolically in Bible times. In the appointment, coronation and investiture of prophets, priests and kings they were often anointed and the action symbolized their acceptance and divine approval (I Sam. 10:1-9). Such oil also had therapeutic value an instance of which may be seen in Luke 10:34, when oil was poured into the wounds of the man who fell among thieves. In James 5:14, 15, the use was obviously symbolic, and served as a token of the fact that the healing was accomplished by the power of God. (1) Elders, *not doctors*, were to be called for, thus evidencing the fact that the action was achieved through miraculous means, and not by the ordinary processes of diagnosis, and treatment. Elders *as such*, are neither licensed nor qualified to practice medicine! (2) Were this an instance of illness being treated by usual means the patient would have been instructed to "call for the doctors and let them diagnose the case and prescribe the proper treatment." (3) The blessing came, not through the ministration of medicine, but through "the prayer of faith," and by the Lord's authority. The phrase, "in the name of the Lord," is to be construed with the anointing, and not with the verb "pray." The anointing of oil was symbolic of the power which the Lord would himself exercise in the healing and raising up of the afflicted man. (4) Olive oil, though useful and beneficial in some instances, and for some ailments, is useless in others. Obviously, the application of olive oil to the head, would not have medicinal and therapeutic benefit to a person suffering from a diseased gall bladder!

The allegation, made by Mormons, some Pentecostals and others, that anointing with oil is a necessary action along with prayer for the healing of the sick does not follow from an induction of passages dealing with such healing. Hezekiah, very near death's door, prayed and the Lord heard and answered his prayer and gave him fifteen more years of life.

Isaiah then prepared a cake of figs and applied it to "the boil" and he "recovered" (II Kings 20:1-7). Our Lord often healed without anointing with oil (Matt. 8:5; Mark 5:35-43; Luke 9:38-43; John 4:47-54).

Subscribe To
Words Of Truth

Jeremiah Preaches Repentance

(Jer. 2 (Jer. 26:1-16))



ARVEL CURTIS

It has been said by many that the hardest command of the Bible is the command to repent. Yet this is a positive and familiar command from Genesis through Revelation. Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk. 13:3). Many people will sit, listen, think and sometimes attend church services fully aware of their need but will not repent and turn to serve God. In our text Jeremiah's audience needed repentance badly. Let us observe some important facts from his challenge to Judah for repentance.

RELIGIOUS PEOPLE SOMETIMES NEED TO REPENT. This is true with the denominational world and also the church in many cases. Jeremiah was to speak to the people who came to worship in the Lord's House (v.2). How can God's people ever expect to bring outsiders to repentance without repentance in their own hearts and lives? Jeremiah's message was to inform God's own people that it is time for self-examination. We would do well to do the same. Many times our church pews may be filled but filled with empty hearts or unfit lives. Our pews may be filled with those who have not proper love for God and the church. Our pews may be filled with those who are physically alive but spiritually dead (Jas. 2:24,26). For example, does it bother us because we are not saving more lost souls? Are we really concerned about them? Many members of the body of Christ spend no time weekdays teaching the lost. On the Lord's Day they fill their pews for an hour or two and sleep the rest of the day or paint their houses or cut their grass or entertain themselves. Do not such people need to repent? How can we be so indifferent toward the Lord's work (Mk. 16:15; 1 Tim. 3:15)? Will we completely ignore our responsibility as Christians? Will we steal the Lord's own day (Acts 2:7; Rev. 1:10)? Jeremiah was to speak to the Lord's people, but they needed repentance in the worst way and so do many of us.

IN URGING REPENTANCE JEREMIAH WAS TO DECLARE THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD (v.2). He was to speak all that God commanded without diminishing a word. Some people who are comfortable in their sins do not like to hear plain forcetel preaching. They do not like to hear all that God has to say to them. Such was Jeremiah's audience. They were adhering to false prophets who were having a field day with Judah at that particular time. They were speaking lies. God said, they dream falsely, they speak lies in my name (Jer. 23:25). The people's attitude was, tell us more, tell us what we want to hear. When Jeremiah declared all the counsel of God unto them, they refused to repent. They were present for the preaching, but their attitude was all wrong. They did not wish rather hear of the false teachers since they had heard them speak their lies. Is this

not why men like Billy Graham and Oral Roberts are so popular today? They speak what the people want to hear. They speak lies. Jeremiah warned Judah that if they chose lies, destruction was ahead. The people decided that getting rid of Jeremiah would be much easier than repenting, and so they declared him worthy of death. How many times have faithful gospel preachers been fired when the church needed to repent instead? Jeremiah declared all that God commanded, the whole truth. But the people did not repent. They said, he is worthy of death.

JEREMIAH WARNED THAT THEIR REPENTANCE OR NONREPENTANCE WOULD DETERMINE HOW GOD WOULD DEAL WITH THEM (1. 3-6). God was set to destroy Judah because of her sin (Psa. 9:17). They were God's own people but He will not tolerate sin even among His own. The purpose of Jeremiah's preaching was to turn them from sin back to God. God's message to them was: if you will hearken and turn from your evil, I will repent from the evil I planned for you. But if you will not hearken to my prophets - destruction is ahead. We in the church must realize that God will deal with us as we deal with Him. It is not enough to go up to worship, to fill a pew. We must love God with all of our being and busily engage ourselves in His work of evangelizing, benevolence and edification.

JEREMIAH DEMANDED REPENTANCE FROM THE SMALL AND GREAT. When God's people feel they are above repenting and mending their ways, sure destruction is ahead (1 Jn. 1:7-9). Judah was to start at the top and go all the way down. The message was: clean up the house of God or face destruction. The princes, the people, the house, the city: they all needed to repent and mend their ways. Every church in the brotherhood needs to give heed to this warning. If we are not standing firm and without question for the truth of God and engaged in the work of the church to preach the gospel to a lost world, we need repentance from the top to the bottom. So determined was Jeremiah for God's people to repent and be saved that he preached the word to them even if it meant death. Some repented, some did not. Some said he must die while others said he is not worthy of death. May all of us who preach do so with the courage of Jeremiah, and may all who claim to belong to Christ use this text as a guide and exhortation to repent and mend our ways in all the areas where it is needed.

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Success And Failure

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

We live in a "Success and Failure" oriented society. A person must either produce or be produced. Numbers are important. Success is measured in favorable statistics. The economy is organized with the materialistic goal of the growth of an area or nation. The world is a battlefield.

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 1)

method of man's creation because they are "bothered" by the unknowns in Genesis - the "mystery" of Special Creation. They say they cannot possibly understand how or why God did what the book claims He did, and therefore it is not possible that He did what the Bible says He did.

Funny, how man deals with mystery. On one hand he claims he cannot understand something mysterious, and therefore he will not believe it or have anything to do with it. On the other hand, mystery doesn't seem to bother him at all.

For example, why is it mystery doesn't bother man in the dining room - only in the church? Consider the mystery of the egg: It is good for food, and has market value, when it is fresh. But not so when the hen sits on it for a week or so. And let her have it for 3 weeks and you get another chicken. Men may have trouble explaining this, yet they have very little trouble eating those eggs.¹

How is it possible that a BLACK cow can eat GREEN grass and give WHITE milk, from which we make YELLOW butter? Men may find this "mysterious" - yet all the while men drink milk and eat butter.¹

And how can a tiny watermelon seed gather from somewhere 200,000 times its own weight, and force that weight through a tiny stem to build a watermelon with a GREEN covering, a WHITE rind, and a RED core with BLACK seeds? How is all of this possible? Men may not understand these "mysteries," but they still eat watermelon!¹

Until someone can explain to me all of the mysteries of nature, he is not capable of convincing me there is no God. Funny, how mystery bothers us only in the church, and not at the dining table!

True, the Genesis account of creation requires faith to believe. But this is not ungrounded faith. It is based on facts. And it is but a drop in the proverbial bucket compared with the faith it takes to believe in the theory of organic evolution.

After all is said and done, there are still only two choices: organic evolution or Special Creation. Moses wrote in approximately 1500 B.C.: "in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Mr. Charles Smith, former president of the American Association For the Advancement of Atheism (AAAA), wrote:

"In the beginning was matter, which begat the ameba, which begat the worm, which begat the fish, which begat the amphibian, which begat the reptile, which begat the lower mammal, which begat the lemur, which begat the monkey, which begat man, who imagined God. This is the genealogy of man!"²

These are the two choices. Which do you prefer?

(more in next article)

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Problem Preachers

(Continued From Page 2)

themselves to the authority of others. Sometimes a preacher is found with this attitude. Jude warned rebellious disciples of judgment awaiting those who "rail at dignities" (vs. 8). Samuel reminded Saul that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (I Sam. 15:23). These preachers have forgotten or rejected the divine principle that God made elders the overseers of the church (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:2). The command to "obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them..." (Heb. 13:17) is applicable to all Christians, preachers included. Of course not one of the rebels will boldly declare his rejection of authority. He will attempt to discredit his elders or to intimidate them in some way. Some are even now attempting to prove that a preacher is not under elders' authority, that he is at least their equal. Such men are trouble just waiting to happen. We often see this class of men attempt to unseat and remove elders, and not a few succeed.

3. Then there are IMPENITENT PREACHERS. Like all other mortals, preachers sin and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Being of flesh and blood they occasionally fall victim to the temptations of life. Just as with other brethren there will sometimes be the stubborn impenitent preacher. Unable because of false pride to admit his error, he may draw away a small group of his disciple friends and start a new congregation rather than repent. How many congregations have had such an inglorious beginning. He may flee to a far city and pretend that nothing has ever happened, only to mar another congregation's life. Preachers, too, must repent or perish (Lk. 13:3). Those who will not must be delivered "unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (I Cor. 5:5).

4. Occasionally we hear of the DISHONEST PREACHER. Judas was one of these. He stole from the disciples' fund (John 12:6). What a tragedy to the cause of Jesus when so prominent a disciple as a minister is found mishandling church funds. It may be that he is dishonest in his own financial transactions. We have known of men who represented the kingdom of truth while being addicted to lying. All liars shall have their part in the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8), even men who preach with the eloquence of Apollos.

5. There are men who LOVE AND CRAVE POWER. Unable to find it elsewhere, they seek it in the pulpit. No one ever knows as much as they, none are so sound in their view.

They must run the show or ruin it. They trample on others' rights and crush all opposition. I once heard such a brother say, "If anybody runs this church, I will." Like Diotrefes they love to have the preeminence (III John 9). Wherever this type of brother works, the church will submit to his will or he will leave in a huff. If neither of these occur, they may have to ask him to leave rather than endure the continual striving which would result.

6. Now and again we find a preacher who just CANNOT SEEM TO GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE. He may be loyal to the truth. He may be a capable proclaimer. But he is always at odds with someone. This is an unfortunate case, because talented men are severely handicapped by this problem. It

actually forces many out of the field of preaching. This is usually a personality problem. Either they are too sensitive to other's criticisms or they are overly aggressive. For some it is a problem of communication. They know what to say, but they have not learned how to say it to achieve the desired end. Those with serious personality disorders will likely need professional counseling to master their problem. Some whose basic training was faulty can profit from books on human relations, such as Dale Carnegie's HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE. Solomon wrote, "He that hath friends must show himself friendly" (Prov. 18:24, K.J.V.). The golden rule of our Lord is the balance wheel of all good social relationships. A man whose chief business is working with people cannot afford to be deficient in this critical area. (More to follow.)

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Success And Failure

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complete success in any endeavor is considered a failure by the masses.

The church of our Lord has not been excluded from such an attitude. We often pray for the success of a gospel meeting and other righteous endeavors. Success in soul winning is generally thought of in numbers responding to the gospel. It is granted that every Christian should pray for and work toward the conversion of the sinner to Christ. But, the evangelist who preaches the same gospel to different people with some obeying and others refusing, cannot really be termed successful at one time and failing in another. But, we are prone to think in such a way. Even in personal evangelism, we may shun some whom we may consider poor prospects because of the fear of failing to convert them.

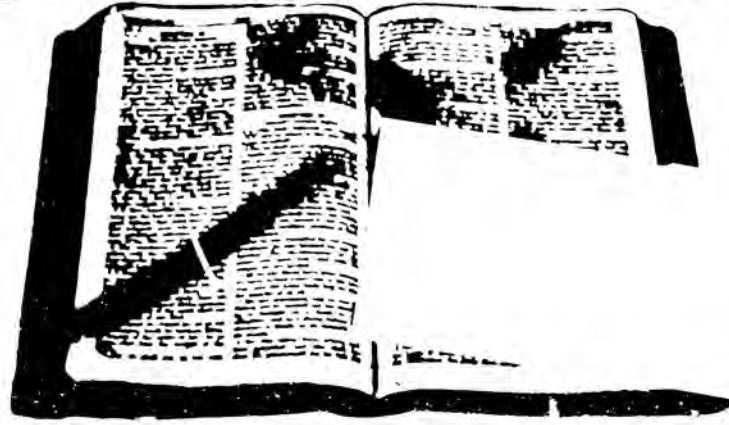
But, does the number responding to the gospel suggest success or failure? Would you say that Peter on Pentecost was successful while Noah was a failure? Paul was "successful" when many Corinthians obeyed the gospel (Acts 18:8), but was he a 'failure' in Antioch of Pisidia when the Jews "contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul and blasphemed" (Acts 13:45)? The masses from Jerusalem and surrounding areas were baptized of John in Jordan (Matt. 3:5,6). But, we disciples of Jesus baptized more than John (Jno. 4:1,2). Who are we to consider a "success" and/or a "failure"? Later we learn that "many of his (Jesus) disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (Jno. 6:66). Only the twelve remained. Was Jesus a "failure" then? Are we to consider Jesus a "failure" when he was unable to convert the rich young ruler (Mt. 19)?

Brethren, God requires faithfulness (Mt. 25:21; I Cor. 4:2) and not "success" of us. The Lord desires for us to "preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2). Our Father knows our desires, aims and motives. What we all need to do is to take (and make) every opportunity to sow the seed of the kingdom in the hearts of our fellowmen. In the fertile soil, such will bring forth "fruit a hundredfold" (Luke 8:8,15). God will give the increase (I Cor. 3:6) if we will do our part - teach the word. - East Hart Avenue, Opp, Ala. 36467.

WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"Do not speak forth the words of truth"
Mt. 26:25

"I came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NO. 2 EVOLUTION DEFINED

Were a Christian to be asked the question, "Do you believe in evolution," it would be impossible to answer without knowing exactly what was meant by the word "evolution." If the word was used in the context of its original definition, then the answer to the question would be a hearty YES! For, you see, our English word "evolution" is from the Latin word *EVOLVERE*, which means literally to evolve, roll forth, enroll, or change.



BERT THOMPSON

"In the 17th century, the Cambridge Neoplatonists used it to refer to the unrolling of the ages of history or time. As an unfolding process, evolution designated the bud's development into the flower and the pupa into the butterfly. What was latent unfolded and became actual. Evolution came to be used to refer to the process by which, it was assumed, one type or kind of living creature was transmuted into another type or kind."¹

Since the word has many meanings, it is important to make clear what the evolutionist is affirming and what the Christian is denying when the various explanations of life's origin are discussed. What are some of the different things which the word is used to describe? Dr. James D. Bales, writing in *THE SPIRITUAL SWORD*,² gives the following several definitions:

First, evolution describes the invention and development of a product. We speak of the evolution of the wheel, the battleship, and the airplane. These things are not the non-planned product of the blind movements of matter. Instead, the mind of man was involved at every stage.

Second, we speak of the evolution of the egg into the chicken and the seed into the plant. Jesus spoke of the seed, the

stalk, and the full-grown plant (Mark 4:26). This evolution is the unfolding of that which is latent with the seed; one starts with the seed which has life in itself, the unfolding process is within certain limits, and there is certain scientific proof that the life cycle of the seed is a reality.

Third, limited variation within the groups has also been called evolution. These are varieties of dogs, and there are small horses and large horses. G.A. Kerkut calls this the Special Theory of Evolution. In all such cases, we start with life, the seed produces after its basic kind, and there is a limit to the variations.

Fourth, theistic evolution is the term used by some to describe evolution as God's method of creation. God (theistic evolutionists say) set in motion the laws of nature which produced life and its manifold forms. Some theistic evolutionists call in God to bridge certain gaps. The consistent evolutionist, however, is as willing to call in God a dozen times as he is one time. He is not willing to call in God at all, and he does not consider theistic evolution as being any more "scientific" than he does Special Creation.

Fifth, evolution is the word which also describes the total explanation of life's origin and manifold forms. This General Theory of Evolution, as Kerkut calls it, maintains that our universe, our solar system, our earth, and life in its forms, have all become what they are as the result of natural forces, without any intelligent direction acting on matter.

Now if someone asks a Christian if he believes in evolution, and by the word "evolution" is meant "organic evolution" (i.e.: General Theory of Evolution), then the Christian must deny belief in evolution. Perhaps a good definition of organic evolution would be:

"All living matter as we know it today had its origin from one primitive source. From this spontaneously produced source, probably originating in the primeval ocean water from a combination of existing molecules and atoms, life began - and through eons of time, changes in this life form took place in a progressive manner. From unicellular life came the more complicated invertebrate multicellular life,

and from this, vertebrate life. Finally, primitive man made his appearance and evolved into the human species of today."

The common meaning to be found in all of these usages of the word "evolution" is that of change. Certainly change of one type or another is evident in the history of everything. When Christians deny evolution, they are not denying all change. They ARE denying the General Theory of Organic Evolution!

ASSUMPTION, HYPOTHESIS, OR THEORY?

When we talk about the beginning of our universe and the things in it, it is obvious that we cannot speak as an eyewitness or observer. None of us were there when it happened. Therefore, our discussion must be based on assumptions, hypotheses, and theories.

An ASSUMPTION is "taking something for granted." This can be the starting point for an investigation or discussion. An HYPOTHESIS is an "educated guess." It is a conclusion based upon facts and evidence at hand. A THEORY is an acceptable answer to explain something very unusual.²

There are two basic theories about the origin or beginning of our universe and its contents. One is the theory of organic evolution; the other is the theory of Special Creation.

The question which all interested parties should be asking is this: "Is evolution being taught in public (or private) schools and universities as a theory?" The answer is a resounding NO!! In fact, a recent manifesto, circulated by world-renowned geneticist Dr. H.J. Muller, and signed by 177 American biologists, asserts unequivocally that the organic evolution of all living things, man included, from primitive life forms, and even ultimately from non-living materials, is a FACT of science as well-established as the fact that the earth is round. (The manifesto, written by Muller, was entitled "Is Biological Evolution a Principle of Nature That Has Been Well-Established by Science?" It was privately duplicated and distributed by the author, and is dated May 2,

(Continued On Page 4)

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More On Mormon Morals

In our last article we discussed the matter of Mormons and polygamy, showing from their own records that polygamy is both condoned and encouraged, Joseph Smith himself having had dozens of wives. It shall be the purpose of this article to show that the founders of the Mormon religion actually encouraged other kinds of immorality as well. We would have it understood that we are not accusing any Mormon living today of immorality. We are rather trying to show them and others the kind of foundation upon which their religion rests.



BOBBY DUNCAN

It will be shown in this article that theft, robbery, and even murder were among the vices which early Mormon leaders taught in addition to the polygamy which we noted in our last article. President Heber C. Kimball, in a sermon delivered on September 15, 1857, proclaimed the coming overthrow of the enemies of Mormonism. Regarding the treatment of their enemies who would be subject to them, Kimball said: "'Now,' say the Lord, 'take that spoil, I consecrate it unto my people.' The Lord will provide for the Saints when necessary, and in his own way."

In the same sermon, and in order to support the idea that Mormons should "take that spoil" from their enemies, he quoted from their **BOOK OF DOCTRINES AND COVENANTS** as follows: "Behold, it is said in my laws, or forbidden to get in debt to thine

enemies; but behold it is not said at any time that the Lord **SHOULD NOT TAKE** (emphasis mine, B.D.) when He pleases, and pay as seemeth him good. Wherefore, as ye are agents, and on the Lord's errands, and whatever ye do according to the will of the Lord is the Lord's business, and he hath sent you to provide for the saints in these last days, that they may obtain an inheritance in the land of Zion" (Doctrine and Covenants 64:27-30).

Is this not a clear picture? The Lord can take as he pleases, and Mormons are the agents of the Lord, on the business of the Lord. If they want to rob and steal in the name of the Lord, then they are free to do so. What other interpretation can possibly be placed on this language?

But theft and robbery are not the worst crimes Mormon leaders encouraged their followers to commit. From the speeches of the very founders and early leaders of Mormonism it is quite plain that the duty of faithful members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints involved the actual murder of those who opposed them, and especially those who may leave the Mormon church.

Read carefully the following words spoken by Brigham Young in an address delivered on September 21, 1856: "There are sins that men commit for which they cannot receive forgiveness in this world, or in that which is to come, and if they had their eyes open to their true condition, they would be perfectly willing to have their blood spilt upon the ground, that the smoke thereof might ascend to heaven as an offering for their sins, and the smoking incense would atone for their sins; whereas, if such is not the case, they will stick to them and remain upon them in the spirit world.

"I know, when you hear my brethren telling about cutting people off from the earth that you consider it is a strong doctrine; but it is to save them, not to destroy them."

On March 12, 1854, Jedediah M. Grant, in speaking of those who leave the

Mormon church, said: "Then what ought this meek people who keep the commandments of God do unto them? 'Why', says one, 'they ought to pray to the Lord to kill them.' I want to know if you would wish the Lord to come down and do all your dirty work? Many of the Latter Day Saints will pray, and petition, and supplicate the Lord to do a thousand things they themselves would be ashamed to do."

Later in the same speech he said: "When a man prays for a thing, he ought to be willing to perform it himself." And again: "Putting to death the transgressors would exhibit the law of God, no matter by whom it was done."

In a speech delivered on February 8, 1857, Brigham Young argued that there are certain sins which one might commit which would "deprive him of that exaltation which he desires, and that he cannot attain to it without the shedding of his blood." He reasoned that the command to love one's neighbor as himself would, therefore, demand that one shed the blood of his neighbor, so that his neighbor might not be deprived. He asked his audience: "Will you love your brothers or sisters likewise, when they have committed a sin that cannot be atoned for without the shedding of their blood? Will you love that man or woman well enough to shed their blood?"

In the **DESERT NEWS** of September 21, 1856, Volume VI, page 235, J.M. Grant said: "I say there are men and women here that I would advise to go to the President immediately, and ask him to appoint a committee to attend to their case; and then let a place be selected, and let that committee shed their blood."

These are not all - not nearly all - the quotations that could be given to show that the early Mormon leaders advocated the murder of their enemies, but these are more than enough to establish the fact.

As a religious system, Mormonism is a corrupt organization; and those who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints would do well to examine early Mormon history.

Problem Preachers

(No. 2)

7. Churches are hurt by preachers who are sadistic in preaching, teaching and dealing with people. There are men who seem to enjoy brow-beating and up-braiding brethren. They feel it a pleasure publicly to humiliate brethren and sinners alike. They urge you to bring your Baptist neighbor and then they proceed to flail him and skin him alive. No consideration is given, no tact is used. To them, this is weakness. Ridicule of sectarians, undiplomatic name calling, vindictive language are all part of their pack. One brother used to say to his audience, "If you disagree with my preaching you are either mean or ignorant." Thank God that most brethren have outgrown this low type of preaching. How could it edify? How can it save souls? If one be saved through it, a score are driven away in disgust.



JOHN WADDEY

The truth must be preached in love (Eph. 4:15). In our work for Christ we must be wise as serpents and harmless as doves (Matt. 10:16). Paul advised Timothy, "The Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle toward all...in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves..." (II Tim. 4:24-25). With this ugly approach we may well win the argument, but we usually lose the soul. Such preaching should be labeled with skull and crossbones. It is harmful and destructive. Those saints who grow up under it are usually spiritually warped by its influence.

8. We sometimes see preachers who are status seekers. They can never stay with a congregation long enough to do a great work because they are continually seeking a chance to move up the ladder. Bigger salary, and bigger congregations, mean more than the welfare of the church they presently labor with. A congregation may have spent \$2,000 for moving him there and went to great expense to prepare his home. But he cannot afford to miss this step up, so he goes. There is always that haunting question, after one gets to be the greatest, where does a preacher go? Many leave the pulpit for a worldly

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Does II Pet. 3:8 teach that 'God's Day' is a thousand years long?"

No.

The passage should be considered in the light of its context. The material heavens and earth are to suffer destruction by fire, despite the mockers who scoff at such predictions and who allege, in the face of the earth's earlier destruction by water, that all things must continue as they are from the beginning (II Pet. 3:1-7). All such are "willingly ignorant," and refuse to accept the clear and obvious lessons of history. Faithful followers of the Lord are not to be influenced by these skeptics, but to remember "that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

By this the apostle meant that the passing of time does not, in any way, effect the performance of God's promises or threats. He is not influenced by the passing of the centuries; and the lapse of time, between the promise or threat, and the performance, is no factor, at all. With man, it definitely is. That which we promise to do tomorrow, we are much more likely to do, than that which we promise next year, or in the next century, since we may not be here then to fulfill the promise. But, this limitation, so characteristic of man, does not influence Deity. The passing of a thousand years, to God, does not alter his plans and purposes any more than a day, and he will carry them out as he has planned, regardless of the amount of time which is involved. This is affirmed in verse 9 and 10: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is long-suffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Reply To A False Teacher

Homer Duncan, editor of the "Missionary Crusader" and Baptist preacher of Lubbock, Texas, has just published an attractive but atrocious booklet entitled:

Some Observations Concerning The So-Called Church of Christ. This vituperative little attack upon the church of the Lord is designed to counteract the great in-roads that

New Testament Christianity has made among Baptist churches in recent decades. Since



WAYNE JACKSON

"sauce for the goose is good for the gander," this writer proposes to make some observations of his own regarding Homer Duncan's observations.

Mr. Duncan blunders in the very first sentence of his epistle. He begins by suggesting that just as the Lord had a word of commendation for each of the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 2-3), so there are some points on which he can commend members of the Churches of Christ (note: Christ did not commend all of the seven churches of Asia - see Rev. 3:14-22). He congratulates us, for instance, because we "believe that the Bible is the Word of God," yet he errs when he adds, "there are no liberals among them" (our friend is inaccurate even when trying to compliment us). He continues by praising our zeal and our "goal of restoring the Church to New Testament principles." Sadly, however, the balance of the booklet is a tirade against the church of Christ because of its attempt to effect such a noble goal.

The first error with which we are charged is that we do not believe in the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. He contends that Jesus promised the Holy Spirit as an enlightening influence (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:12-14) and accordingly that "it is utterly impossible to understand the Word of God apart from the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit..." Regarding this serious error, the following observations are in order.

(1) The application of such passages as John 14:26; 15:26; 16:12-14 totally ignores the original context in which the Lord seeks to instruct and comfort the apostles in the final hours prior to the crucifixion. Christ said, for example, "A little while, and ye behold me no more; and again a little while, and ye shall see me" (Jn. 16:16); surely no one would claim that this is applicable to twentieth century Christians.

(2) In the very nature of the case it is obvious that such texts as the foregoing, along with others of similar import, e.g. Matthew

10:19, 20, which promises that the divinely endowed speaker will need no fore-thought prior to teaching, are not applicable to today's teachers. No man today has the endowment perfectly to communicate God's will concerning past, present, and future events. Though some apparently are sincere in their claim to such apostolic promises (as evidenced by the fact that they "take no thought" before speaking or writing), the result of their endeavors is direct proof against such.

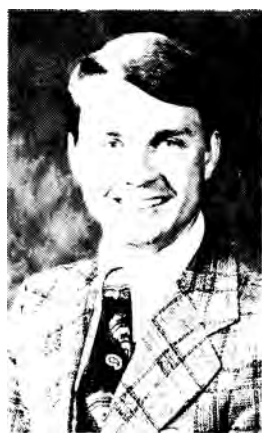
(3) Moreover, the Scriptures are the result of the Holy Spirit's work. If the Spirit of God was incapable of giving a verbal message understandable by man in the first instance (i.e., in the Scriptures), how do we know He would do any better in a further endeavor (e.g., a special enlightenment)? It is certainly interesting that Homer Duncan can write a book and send it abroad with the expectation that men everywhere can understand it, yet he contends the Spirit of the Lord was unable to accomplish such a feat! What a horrible implication that contains!

(4) Too, we are commanded to "understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). This injunction obviously depends upon the proper exercise of our minds, not some supernatural working of God. Paul plainly instructed these same brethren that by reading his message they could perceive his understanding of the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:4).

(5) Finally, if the Scriptures, as we presently have them, are incapable of being understood by the sincere, intelligent mind, how in the name of reason could it be accurately said that they are "complete", furnishing us completely unto every good work? And yet this is precisely the promise of II Timothy 3:16,17.

The theory that the Word of God cannot be understood without supernatural illumination is unscriptural, unreasonable, impractical, and insulting to God. -- 3906 East Main St., Stockton CA 95205

"The Use Of Your Life"



RAY DUTTON

Recently I read a statement by Mack R. Douglas that struck me as being profound. It said, "The greatest use of life is to so use your life that the use of your life will outlive your life."

How many of us have asked ourselves, "What am I really accomplishing in life?" "Where is my life headed?" The sad fact is that many, if not most, people cannot answer these questions. They have absolutely no definite purpose in life. Each day is just a repeat of the day before, and tomorrow promises to be no better. Life for them has no real direction; it's just existence. Many who claim to have some sort of purpose for their lives have nothing more noble than that of satisfying their own desires. All they know is that they want to be happy, and they want whatever they think it takes to make them that way.

But in the statement by Mr. Douglas there is the suggestion of a purpose much greater than that of mere self-gratification. There is a challenge in it to use

your life in such a way that its effect will continue on even after death.

It was this "greatest use of life" which Jesus had reference to when he said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Jesus came to bring men a "way of life" that would "outlive" their lives. It would be a life that the world would curse, yet crave. The things that continue to cause the people of this world to reject this new "way" of life is its demand that recognition of greatness be given to the "servant" rather than the one served (Matt. 20:27; 23:11; Mk. 10:44). This is why the apostle Paul said, ". . . 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). The Christian life demands that we "by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13).

In a world that has gone mad with pleasure seeking it is no wonder that Christianity has become unpopular. People who think only of themselves can never be impressed with an IDEAL which demands self-denial (Matt. 16:24) and sacrifice (Rom. 12:1). Yet the Christian life ALONE can bring the true happiness which the

(Continued On Page 4)

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 1)

1966).

The widely-accepted Biological Sciences Curriculum Study, financed by the National Science Foundation, has organized the entire treatment of biological science around the assumed evolutionary framework of life history. In fact, almost all the books published by secular publishers on biology for at least the past two generations have been written from evolutionary presuppositions. (Fortunately, the Creation Research Society has published a biology textbook entitled **BIOLOGY: A SEARCH FOR ORDER IN COMPLEXITY** which presents the creationist viewpoint as a viable alternative to the General Theory of Evolution. The book is edited and written by Dr. John N. Moore of Michigan State University and Mr. Harold S. Slusher of the University of Texas at El Paso. A teacher's guidebook and a laboratory manual are also currently available. The reader might be interested to know that the Dallas, Texas school board voted in a 6-3 decision to approve mandatory use of the textbook in the district's 60 biology classes - a decision that has brought much criticism to Superintendent, Dr. Nolan Estes. This decision was made in February, 1977).

The obvious fact that most scientists are committed to the evolutionary philosophy is, of course, a major factor in the reluctance of young Christians and of educated people generally to take a stand in favor of the Bible and Special Creation. In this modern scientific age, one just does not "oppose science." (Also, contrary to popular belief, not ALL scientists are evolutionists. Over 500 scientists, holding the masters degree or above, form the Creation Research Society in San Diego, California. These 500 represent seven scientific fields, and all believe in Special Creation!)

It is generally assumed nowadays by evolutionists that the Biblical record of origins is "pre-scientific," at best allegorical, and certainly not literal or historical. For example, the popular **WESTMINSTER DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE** asserts: "The recital of the facts of creation is obviously not a literal historical record. . . ." The Biblical teachings of man's responsibility to His Creator, the fact of sin and the fall of man, and the necessity of redemption and regeneration, have all been set aside in favor of the concepts of evolutionary progress, of universal struggle and natural selection, of man's genetic kinship with the animals, of a "this-life-only" approach to social problems, and of humanistic rather than theistic criteria for decision-making in every area of life.

The Genesis record is often not considered to be actual history, but rather a "cosmogonic myth" or perhaps an "allegory" or a "poem." The whole Bible is taken by many to be more than one religious book among many others, and containing nothing more than the religious and cultural evolution of the Hebrews and early Christians. It is said to contain much of lasting moral value, but

it is also said to be unacceptable in the light of "20th century scientific, technological knowledge." For these, among other reasons, the theory of evolution should be critically examined. So should the theory of Special Creation.

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Problem Preachers

(Continued From Page 2)

position. As one noted ex-preacher eloquently stated, "After you've preached for ----- (in Texas) where can you go?"

9. Every generation produces its attention seekers. The church gets its share of these, too. To feed their hungry ego, they resort to all sorts of tricks and gimmickry to win the oohs and aahs of the people. It may be extreme styles of clothing, it may be the flamboyant life style. It often is the bombastic pulpit style. For some it is the endless stream of funny stories to get the audience to respond, but which smothers and hides the precious Word of God. Such egotists need to study the inimitable Paul. "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:1-2). The braggart, the clown and the show off seem strangely out of place beside God's great men of the Bible.

10. We cannot overlook the hobbyist preacher. He is the man obsessed with one issue to the point that he drives it into the ground. This may even be a valid point he teaches but he becomes unbalanced and onesided in dealing with it. Most often it is a personal opinion or a matter of judgment that captures his mind. Sometimes he thinks he is the only man who sees that point, or that it is the key to the church's future. While he pounds away at his pet theme other important areas of teaching are neglected and his hearers lose their interest in coming to hear his preaching and classes. Often he becomes so inflamed that he imagines that all who do not share his excitement are enemies of Christ. Most anti preachers first suffered from this illness and then they launched into their peculiar issue. Sound preachers will preach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:28). They will never hold back anything profitable from their brethren. (Acts 20:29). But a hobby-riding preacher is like "a continuing dropping of water on a very rainy day." (Prov. 27:13)

11. Last of all, we notice the preacher who is a promoter. It is conceded that in a certain sense every preacher must promote the cause of Christ and all good works. But I think of the brother who promotes himself or his own

pet project. Some men use their church connections for opportunity to promote their own business interests. Some men always have a big project to promote and so zealous are they that if you do not support their pet you are suspect to say the least. I read recently of a notable brother a few years ago who in his zeal to promote a Christian college said that every church ought to put a certain college in their budget or be looked into. For shame. He caught a storm of protest and rightly so. Surely we do not object to a brother telling us a good work to help or his encouraging us to do so. We do not mind a brother selling his books, records or soul-winning kits. But when he takes advantage of a captive audience and uses subtle selling techniques to squeeze them into buying, he is out of place. It is wrong to make merchandise of brethren (II Pet. 2:3). Paul warns that "Men corrupt in mind and bereft of truth (suppose) that godliness is a way of gain" (I Tim. 6:5).

The church needs thousands of gospel preachers. But she does not need the kind who cause her hurt and shame. May God deliver her from those that do. May we who preach, daily "Prove our own selves" to see if we are truly in the faith (II Cor. 13:5). May we honor our Savior and respect his holy church and be good ministers of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith (I Tim. 4:6).

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Two Things To Think About

The phone company is reported to have shut down a phone service called "Dial an Atheist." The reason given was the use of "profane and foul" communication. The man operating the "service" had been named atheist of the year by the American Atheist Organization. I wonder if this is the best they can produce, but why not if you are really an atheist. We realize there will be some bad eggs in any group but when the group designates its leaders we tend to think they are the best among them.

Miss Kathryn Kuhlman, nationally known for her "faith healing" activities at her death recently left an estate valued at over \$700,000. Taxes and expenses will take up about half the estate with the remainder to be divided among relatives and employees.

The "do your own thing" atmosphere of the charismatic movement has made possible the accumulation of fortunes by many of their prominent leaders.

P.O. Box 672
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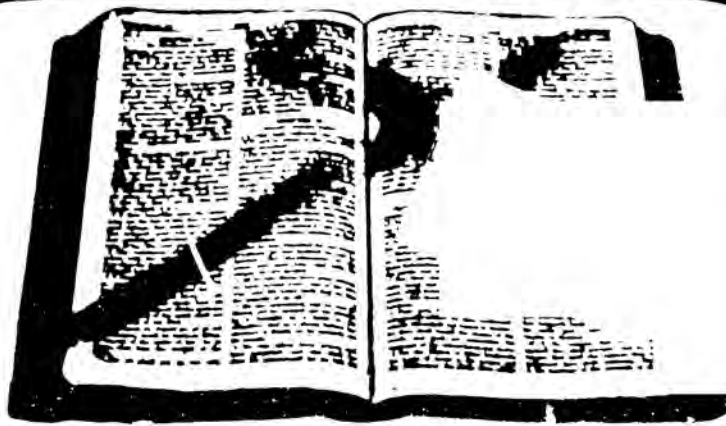
"The Use Of Your Life"

(Continued From Page 3)

pleasure-seekers long for.

If when you come to the end of YOUR life, you can look back and see many people wonderfully blessed, lifted up, and edified in the most holy faith, and if you can say confidently that you have contributed to the greatest way of life on earth, then, my friend, you can know you have made "the greatest use of your life." - 1501 Sixth Ave., Jasper, Ala. 35501.

WORDS of TRUTH



*"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"*
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"But speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"He came by Jesus Christ"
1:17

Where Little Is Much

Tommy Alexander

"Little grains of sand make the beautiful beach. Small drops of water, the mighty sea. Little acts of kindness bring sunshine into lonely lives. It is faithfulness in small things that prepares one for larger duties in life. Remember that life has more to do with little things than great things. Ignorance or neglect of this great truth leads to many failure" (A.G. Freed, Sermons, Chapel Talks, and Debates, p. 168).

How badly twentieth-century Christians need to follow this counsel! Living in an age that promotes the spectacular, we can easily become enamored of bigness and overlook the real value of small things. Individual Christian lives are often unproductive because of an unwillingness to perform simple acts of spiritual service. Congregations often never realize their collective potential because members refuse to use their abilities in any positive way.

With some the problem is pride. Do you recall these words? "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?" (II Kings 5:13). They were addressed to Naaman, a prominent Syrian soldier who sought healing from Elisha the prophet.

By messenger Elisha sent a simple prescription for curing Naaman's leprosy. Seven dips in the Jordan would, by the power of God, make him clean. "But Naaman was wrath, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of Jehovah his God, and wave his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abanah and Parpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?" (II Kings 5:11-12).

Naaman's servants knew their master well. They knew that he loved the spectacular. They knew that he loved the preeminence too much to do a little thing. They knew he was too proud to wash in the waters of Israel. So they buckled on some courage and confronted him. When Naaman heard their plea, he came to himself. His pride melted, and when he took that little bath in the Jordan, God brought him forth as clean as a baby!

When we catch ourselves thinking that we could do more for Christ if we could do

"some great thing," we need to remember the lesson Naaman learned. Often that which seems little and insignificant, that effort which does not thrust us into the limelight of human praise, might be the most monumental act in our lives! There isn't much public acclaim involved when we make a personal call or visit in the name of Jesus, or when we invite a friend to worship with us, or when we offer a word of encouragement to an elder, a preacher, a Bible teacher, or some struggling soul. Yet these things which are so simple are some of the hardest tasks for many to perform.

At the other extreme in the neglect of little things is the person who shrinks from involvement because he fears that his abilities are not good enough. The proud person thinks too much of himself; this person thinks too little.

This attitude is illustrated well in Jesus' parable of the talents (Mt. 25:14-30). A master, before leaving home to go to another country, called his servants in and gave each a sum of money. The amounts varied depending upon the ability of each servant. When the master returned he was pleased that two of his servants had diligently used the money and had doubled it. He praised them that their fidelity over little would result in their being given greater responsibilities in the future. However, he was very displeased with the third servant who failed to bear any increase. The master called him a "wicked and slothful servant" and decreed that he be cast out of his favor and service.

Here is an example of a man who failed to realize the value of what he had. When he compared his sum with the larger amounts of his fellow servants, he could only think in negative terms. He thought of all he could not do rather than thinking about what he could do. He did not understand that the master had distributed the money according to ability, and that his gift was proportionately no less significant than those of the other two.

"The first thing that strikes us here is that each man received something. Not a single servant was passed over, no one left the master's chamber with empty pockets. This is true of all of us. No person responsible to God is left out in the divine distribution of gifts. Each person receives something. Indeed, each person receives much. Even the

one-talent man received the large sum of a thousand dollars. So God has a work for every man, and God gives to every man enough capital to accomplish the work that He intends for him to do" (Neil R. Lightfoot, Lessons from the Parables, p. 173).

The unprofitable servant's ruin was not due to the size of his gift but to his own failure to use what he had. None of us is responsible for that which he does not have the ability to perform. Out native abilities differ, our opportunities are varied; but we each have ways of making a positive contribution to the ongoing of the kingdom. If we fail to exercise our abilities and do not use the opportunities before us, like the servant in Jesus' parable, we'll eventually lose them.

If you have been fearful and insecure about abilities which you have thought to be small and insignificant, don't despair! Remember that God has the power to use little things for great purposes. He used Bethlehem which was "little to be among the thousands of Judah" to present to the world the Messiah (Mic. 5:2). Jesus used a little boy's sack lunch to feed a multitude (John 6:1-14). The apostles that Jesus chose were only ordinary men. The rulers at Jerusalem perceived them as common men (Acts 4:13). Yet their labors launched the Lord's church among men.

So whatever your station in life, you are vital for the Master's work. These words of an old hymn say it well:

There is room in the kingdom of God, my brother,
For the small things that you can do;
Just a small, kindly deed that may cheer another
Is the work God has planned for you.

Just a cup of cold water in His name given
May the hope in some heart renew;
Do not wait to be told, nor by sorrow driven
To the work God has planned for you.

There is room, there's a place
In the kingdom of God for you;
There is room, there's a place,
There is work that we all can do.
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WORDS of TRUTH

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Judge Blames

Provocative Clothing

Last week in Madison, Wisconsin a county judge stirred up a "hornet's nest" by some remarks he made at a hearing for a fifteen year old boy who was charged with sexually assaulting a sixteen year old girl. According to news reports, Dane County Judge Archie Simonson said it is "normal for impressionable juveniles to react violently" to some of the clothing being worn by women and girls in our society. The local chapter of NOW (National Organization for Women) has demanded Judge Simonson's resignation, declaring that his usefulness as a judge is over.



BOBBY DUNCAN

It is not our purpose to pass judgment on this particular boy, or on the girl he allegedly assaulted; nor, for that matter, are we ready to pass judgment on the judge who made these particular remarks. However, it is not out of order for us to make some observations with regard to this matter.

In the first place, each person is responsible for his own deeds. He can choose to do right, or he can choose to do wrong, regardless of what others may do. The experiences of Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon establish this fact. It is the height of folly for us to transfer blame for sinful actions from the one who committed the sin to others, even though others may not be blameless. Sinful action is not justified on the basis that it was provoked by somebody else. No doubt, the disposition to shift the blame for crimes from the criminal to the society in which we live has done its part to encourage crime. After all, why should one make a point of doing only what is right, if his delinquencies are to be thought of as perfectly normal behavior?

In the second place, it is high time that

people in a civilized society pull their heads out of the sand and quit pretending they are so naive as to think there is nothing inherently wrong with women's wearing scanty clothing. When one tries to justify her wearing of scanty clothing by pretending she thinks such clothing cannot possibly incite lust, she is refusing to be realistic; or, more accurately, she is refusing to be honest. David looked upon the nakedness of Bathsheba and lusted. His lust led to overt adultery, and that to murder. Jesus recognized that there is such a thing as lusting because of looking (Matt. 5:32). We agree with the good judge that it is

unfair to punish severely one who commits crime against a scantily clad woman, while holding guiltless the woman who incited the crime by the indecent exposure of her body. Finally, we would suggest that the people of Dane County, Wisconsin consider themselves fortunate to have a man of such discernment as Judge Simonson. Whether the sentence meted out to the boy involved in the crime just or not, we do not pretend to know. But we do know this: He is right in saying that women who dress indecently share in the blame for such crimes as sexual assault.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

Contrary to popular belief, the idea of organic evolution did not originate with Charles Darwin. Its modern widespread acceptance does date from the publication of Darwin's **ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES**, but it was a doctrine held by many scientists and philosophers long before Darwin. In fact, belief in spontaneous generation of life was



BERT THOMPSON

well-nigh universal among the ancients. Among the early Greeks, for example, Anaximander taught that men had evolved from fish. Empedocles taught that animals had been derived from plants. It was commonly thought that not only insects and fishes, but probably also the higher animals and even man himself were on occasion generated directly from mud, slime, or other such inorganic media. For example, Babylonians and Egyptians believed that the mud and silt on the Nile River could produce worms, toads, snakes, and mice. Every year after the Nile River overflowed, the waters receded and the banks were filled with these animals, which were not there before the flooding occurred. Therefore, they must have been generated from the mud!!

The people of ancient China noticed that upon the beginning of Spring, as rains came and the weather warmed, tiny aphids (plant lice) appeared on bamboo shoots. Where did they come from? How did they simply appear? The Chinese thought the aphids must have been produced from the bamboo!

Even famous scientists of a few hundred years ago accepted the idea of spontaneous generation. William Harvey (1578-1657) was the English physician who proved the idea that blood circulated through the human body. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was an outstanding English philosopher who established certain important concepts about logic, reasoning, and experimental sciences. Rene Descartes (1596-1650) was the French mathematical genius who invented analytic geometry. These were hardly ignorant or uneducated men. Yet all three considered the origin of living forms from lifeless material to be perfectly plausible and beyond dispute.

Jan Baptista van Helmont (1577-1644), an outstanding Belgian scientist, physician, and chemist, brought forth experimental evidence to support his view that mice could develop from wheat. He performed an experiment in which he wrapped some wheat grains in a sweat-soaked shirt and stuffed the whole mass into an open container. When he examined the container some 20 days later, he noted that due to some "mysterious influence" of

the human sweat, the missing kernels of wheat had become mice. He did not consider whether his experiment had any loopholes which might cause him to draw any false conclusions from the results.

Francisco Redi's experiment using fish and meat did, however, take into consideration that some loopholes might exist. He used both covered and uncovered dishes. Obviously the covered dishes would not allow any insects (or mice) to reach the meat inside, and therefore no "spontaneous generation" took place. Redi placed fish and/or meat inside three jars. One jar he left completely open to the air. On another he placed an airtight cover, while on the third he placed a mesh net. He then waited and watched to see if flies would come from the meat (spontaneous generation). You know, of course, what he found. Only in the meat of the uncovered jar did the flies hatch. Redi's conclusion was correct--spontaneous generation was not true! These experiments show that van Helmont's experiments were incorrect.

The folly of accepting the theory of abiogenesis (i.e.: spontaneous generation) as the explanation of how life arises was effectively shown by Pasteur. Reputable men of science no longer entertain the idea that microbes arise in stagnant water from non-living material, that maggots form spontaneously in decaying meat, etc. Little did Pasteur realize that a century later theorists would still be reverting back to the theory he had so effectively laid to rest, in order to explain the origin of life. Many modern biologists today believe and teach as fact that life did arise spontaneously by chance from non-living matter. Milne and Milne state the conclusion well: "Unless a supernatural special creation did occur, spontaneous generation must have been possible in the remote past."

In the year 1859 Charles Darwin published his book, *Origin of the Species*, and introduced to the world the concept that some say had made man timeless. The concept of the origin of the species by natural selection introduced to the world what looked like a sound basis for the doctrine of evolution. As a result of his "voyage of the Beagle" Darwin had collected a great mass of knowledge which he hoped to tie together into some pattern which would provide the direct evidence for evolution. He knew that it was not possible for him to make one species from another, nor could he find fossil evidence of the transformation of one species into another. His only resource was to try to get evidence for evolution from the way in which plants and animals were distributed over the earth. Darwin withheld his ideas from the scientific world for about twenty years before he proposed his theories of natural selection, variation, change, and geographical distribu-

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

What, and Where, are the New Heavens and New Earth of which Peter writes in II Pet. 3:10-13?"

In studying this remarkable passage, it is important to note the contrast which the sacred writer draws between the present heavens and earth, and the new heavens and new earth yet to come: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up...But according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

John, in his remarkable experiences recorded in Rev. 21:1ff, was privileged to have a preview of the new heaven and new earth yet to appear, and, of this same new heaven and new earth Peter writes in the passage under study. There are two Greek words translated by our English word new in the New Testament; one is prospective and indicates that which is young as opposed to that which is old; the other is retrospective and points to that which is fresh in contrast to that which is worn and deteriorated. The second of these words (kainos) is used here. The heavens and earth, which Peter describes, are fresh and new, not worn and old, as are the heavens and the earth which now exist. In the new heavens and earth righteousness dwells. "Righteousness," is right-doing, the keeping of God's commandments (Psalm 119:172). Righteousness dwells wherever righteous people live. Thus, only the faithful and obedient will be privileged to enter into and dwell in that glorious abode.

The new heavens and new earth are not the present heavens and earth from the obvious fact that both shall perish in a mighty conflagration at the last day. This event, Peter tells us, will be attended by a "great noise," and the "elements" (rudimental portions-minute parts of the earth system) will melt with "fervent" (intensive) "heat." It is of interest to observe that the Greek word translated "noise" is an *onomatopoeic* term in which the sound denotes the meaning. A form of it was used in classical Greek of the whirring rush of wings, the sound of the wind, and the murmur of waters. Here, it denotes the crash of dissolving worlds and the roar of the flames as they consume this earth and the entire solar system. The present heavens and earth are to perish; they are to lose their form and to be returned to the original atoms out of which they were constructed.

Hence, the new heaven and earth of which Peter wrote, will not be available to man until after the destruction of the present heavens and earth. This mighty event will occur at the end of the present age, and will terminate the time of probation. The earth which will then be, and the heavens along with it, sustain no relationship to the heavens and earth with which we are acquainted.

The word "heaven" is used in three senses in the scriptures: (1) where birds fly (Matt. 8:20); (2) where the stars are (Heb. 11:12), and (3) where God dwells and Jesus reigns (Psalm 11:4; Heb. 1:3). Man is a creature of two worlds--not one. He lives on the earth

(from which he derives his food), and in the heavens, (from which he obtains the air he breathes) in the first of the three senses in which the word "heaven" is used. He is unable to live long in either environment exclusive of the other. The astronauts, in their travels to outer space, must carry their earth environment with them in order to survive. Man is neither a rodent nor a bird. Inasmuch as he is a creature of the heavens above him, and the earth below him, what is more fitting than to describe his future abode by the same terms, figuratively used?

The present heaven and earth serve as a figure of the heavens and earth to follow. Inasmuch as the words, "heaven and earth" which describe our present abode do not include all of the universe, but only that portion where people dwell, this limitation must be recognized in the antitype, and the

phrase "new heavens and a new earth" regarded as a metaphorical designation of the future abode of the righteous.

Heaven, "the Father's house" is the final and eternal home of the righteous. (1) Jesus left this earth in order to go and prepare "a place" for his disciples (John 14:2). He will return from "the place" where he went, at the end of this age, to claim his faithful followers, and will take them to the place which he went to prepare. (2) He ascended to heaven and to his "Father's House," when he left the earth (Acts 2:32-34; Psalm 11:4; John 14:2). Therefore, the "place" which he went to prepare is not on this earth, but is in heaven. The phrase, "The new heavens and new earth" thus figuratively describes the blissful abode of heaven, where our Lord now is, and from which place he will return to take his faithful disciples back with him.

A Little Leaven

RAY HAWK

When the apostle Paul wrote to Corinth he rebuked them for not withdrawing fellowship from a brother who was living with his father's wife. In 1 Cor. 5:4-6 he stated,

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"

To allow sin to continue in a congregation will ultimately destroy that church. After people get use to sin they soon embrace it themselves.

You've Come a Long Way Baby!

When I was a teenager in the 50s the movie, "Gone With The Wind" was considered a bad movie. In fact, if we had used the same classification then that is employed now, "Gone With The Wind" would have received an "R" rating! Yet, "Gone With The Wind" used only one curse word! In the late 60s movies began to have a few curse words until finally along came the shocker, "Whose Afraid Of Virginia Wolf?" That movie knocked down the floodgates and the trash poured in. Of course most people, Christians included, said, "I can watch movies like that without being affected because I hear the same thing every day at work." But, we've come along way since "Gone With The Wind" was considered a dirty movie. Now "Gone With The Wind" is regarded as a "classic" and of all things is rated "G"! Yes, we've come a long way and I am afraid the trip has not been for our good. Surely a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump!

If our children think "Gone With The Wind" is a "G" rated classic, I wonder what their children will think of "Whose Afraid Of Virginia Wolf?" in another fifteen years?

"Gay" Use To Be a Good Word!

It seems that when people live next to sin for any period of time, it begins to rub off. You cannot run with the goats without smelling like a goat. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:33. When I was a teenager, homosexuality was a shameful practice and few if any would tolerate it without severe rebuke. Nowadays we see the subject popularized on television movies, approved by personal appearances on celebrated talk shows, and made acceptable by the term "gay." Movies and television shows make homosexuality seem acceptable

and normal and those who reject the practice are cast in an unloving, ignorant, and bigoted role! Homosexuals now march for their "rights" and lobbyists try to get laws passed so two men or two women may not only "marry" but also adopt children! When respectful citizens, such as Anita Bryant, speak out against such perversions, pressure is brought to bear so that such people lose their jobs or are censored. Thank for those good people who stood up and wrote letters in Mrs. Bryant's defense.

Conclusion

Why have we reached the stage we are now in here in America? It is because we have sat silently by while sin came in. We have lived with it instead of speaking out against it. We have thought we could overlook it or perhaps hide our heads in the sand and it would go away. If we have not been affected, our children have! A little leaven does indeed leaven the whole lump. It is high time that Christians speak out. It is time Christians let their voices be heard in places where it will do the most good. We need some temple cleansing in our nation today!

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The Literature Gap

Winifred Clark

All of those who work with any program of teaching are faced with the problem of good material. That a gap exists in this matter is a fact. Sad to say, many teachers have to teach defensively. They have to spend much time weeding out this and that which is in error.

I have here on the desk before me thirteen sheets that are to be given to the student in the course "You Shall Receive Power, Part I". This is for the 8th grader. If Part II follows this pattern you can be assured that a Pentecostal preacher would be delighted.

Lesson 1 sets forth the following: It has the student to memorize Acts 1:8. This is in connection with the solution to mind pollution.

There is the statement God can work in you! Now note. Acts 1:8 is the promise that the apostles would receive power when the Holy Spirit came on them. Further in this same lesson Luke is made to say, "I have written them so that everyone might know God's power to change men's lives." The seed is

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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tion being the primordial factors in the origin of the species. According to Darwin, the environment would weed out organisms with unfavorable variations, but preserve those with favorable variations. Over long periods of time a group of organisms would accumulate new and favorable variations so that a new species would have, in effect, arisen from ancestral stock.

For many years after the publication of the *Origin of the Species*, Darwin's ideas were a source of much controversy, and still are today. During Darwin's lifetime the question arose as to what was the source of these variations. The idea of evolution by natural

selection was attacked by many, but more and more came to accept the ideas of natural selection. So-called "evolutionary trees" showing the relationships of plants and animals and the probable cause and course of evolution became popular. Around the turn of the century, some began to illustrate the idea of natural selection in living material.

Darwin had argued that species are always changing, the result of natural selection. His concept was that of descent with modification, with continual and gradual change. The question cannot help but come to mind, "Why was Darwin's theory ever accepted at all?" Surely, there must be several reasons. Perhaps the world was in a state of overall readiness for the acceptance of such a theory--the time may have been just right. But perhaps a better explanation is this one, given by Drs. James D. Bales and Robert T. Clark in their book, *Why Scientists Accept Evolution*: "Many false theories get crystallized by time and absorbed into the body of scientific knowledge through lack of adequate criticism when they are formulated." This is why Darwin's theory was accepted!

Why People Believe In Evolution

Why is it people believe in evolution? Why is evolution such a popular theory? There are three main reasons why people believe in evolution. Let us examine each of these reasons, and the people who hold to them.

The first reason why people believe in evolution is best expressed by Dr. Henry M. Morris in his book, *The Twilight of Evolution*, when he says: "The main reason most educated people believe in evolution is simply because they have been told that most educated people believe in evolution." Most people today fall into this category. For the past century evolution has been in the limelight. It has been taught in our elementary, junior high, and senior high schools, as well as in our universities as a fact which all reputable scientists believe. Therefore, people over the past century have been led to believe they should believe in evolution--and so they do! Without ever really looking into the theory, they simply accept it as fact, because "everyone's doing it." This, of course, is a poor reason for believing in anything--Christianity included. Neither Biblical nor scientific truth is ever really determined by popular opinion or approval!

There is, however, another reason why people believe in evolution. Perhaps this reason is best explained by no less of an eminent spokesman for evolution than Sir Arthur Keith of Great Britain, who said: "Evolution is unproved and unprovable. We

believe it because the only alternative is Special Creation, and that is unthinkable!" Professor D.M.S Watson of the University of London has echoed the same sentiments when he stated: "Evolution itself is accepted by zoologists, not because it has been observed to occur or can be proved by logically coherent evidence to be true, but because the only alternative, Special Creation, is incredible." Surely the reader will clearly see who the people are that believe in evolution because of this line of reasoning. These are the narrow-minded, close-minded folks who will not critically examine (with an open mind) both alternatives--evolution versus Special Creation. They have already made up their minds in favor of evolution simply because Special Creation is "unthinkable." There are more people who fall into this category than you would think!

There is one last reason why people believe in evolution. Some people believe in evolution because they are sincerely convinced that it is the right solution to the problem of origins. These people have examined the evidences and have, on the basis of those evidences, come to the conclusion that evolution is a tenable theory. These people are sincere and usually open-minded. They have simply made a choice (and, we believe, a wrong choice because the evidences they have examined are distorted and incorrect) in favor of evolution. Nevertheless, they firmly believe that evolution is true.

It is, we believe, for one of these three reasons that people believe in evolution. There are, of course, some people who wish to believe in both God and evolution. Those people will be the subject of our next article.

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Scientists Are Still Human

Roger E. Dickson

"I was so convinced of my ideas that I simply put them down on paper". So said a recent recentist who confessed that the results of his studies of the effects of opiates on nervalike cells were fraudulent. He thought his theories were fact and he so stated them as fact. In a letter to *Nature* magazine he confessed that his conclusions were fraudulent and "mere figments of my imagination" (*Time*, March 14, 1977, p. 13). In other words, he was so sure that his theories were true that he stated them as being true before they were proven false by the scientific method. His zeal for knowledge outran the facts.

Such should be another warning that scientists are still human. They many times claim that their theories are fact. And it seems

that whenever a scientist states a theory, the public gullibly accepts it as a fact. And they, the scientists, themselves are often the most gullible of all, sometimes believing that theories are facts. But wanting something to be true does not make it true. I believe evolutionists have fallen into this common and unfortunate error.

As the facts come in on the theory of evolution (that is, as the facts come in against the theory), the more devastated the theory becomes. But no matter what the facts say, it seems that evolutionists are going to hang on to their pet theory. Any study of the theory of evolution always shows the extent men will go in holding on to an unprovable theory. —Caixa Postal 30.543-01000, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

The Literature Gap

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planted that the power of the Holy Spirit in men's lives gives them power to overcome weaknesses.

Lesson 2 exhorts: "You've got to plug in to power! (God's Power). Prevent power failure - stay plugged in." Focusing in on God's promises will provide the "wiring" for the Spirit's power to operate in you during the day. Now that sounds like it might be an effort to get on the right track.

But look at Lesson 3. Here we are introduced to Simon Peter. He is made to say, "Hi, I'm Simon Peter. I used to be weak but God gave me a special source of Power, His Holy Spirit!" "Before his Spirit came I denied Christ: After his Spirit came I became a bold witness." Well what happened later when Paul withstood him Gal. 2:11-12? Was that because he lost the Holy Spirit? Certainly not. He failed then for the same reason he failed the first time - for not doing what was right according to God's will. The miraculous power of the Spirit did not make them better morally. This they had to do of their own will according to the teaching of God's word. The power they had was the revelation and confirmation of God's word.

Lesson 4 only confirms what we have been saying. Peter was "under new management." "He had let God transform him by the Power of the Holy Spirit! Have you given your life to God?" You couldn't find a difference in that statement and denominational teaching to save your life. Now, do we wonder why so many don't know the truth?

Lesson 5 doesn't give much help. A girl is seen pulling the string on an old fashioned light bulb, with the caption, "God's Power, reach up in prayer and turn it on." I thought the gospel was God's power to save (Romans 1:16).

Neither does Lesson 6 give any help. This is a lesson on Stephen. "Stephen started preaching and doing miracles among the people. Now, that doesn't mean God will want to do the same thing with you. He might have some very different things for you to do." Notice the term "He might." Does that leave a slight possibility that miracles might be one of them?

Lesson 13 gives Peter's release from prison. On the back the word "Worried?" appears. It then asks if Peter looked worried, and two other questions in the same vein. Then, "God's Power IS the same today." Shades of Heb. 13:8 from the lips of Pentecostals.

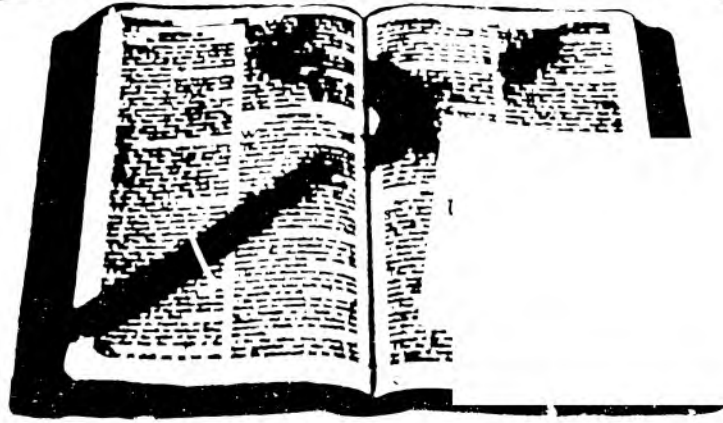
Brethren, there is a gap here a mile wide between this and the truth!

Somebody ought to put up a sign saying "Beward".

WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"the words of truth"
25
"by Jesus Christ"
17

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 1977

NUMBER 26

Knowledge Of Salvation: Fact Or Feeling?

I John 5:13 is a verse every Christian needs to know: "These things have I written unto you that believe that you may know that ye have eternal life." John informs us that knowledge of salvation is dependent upon acceptance of recorded facts of His Word. This concept is a distinguishing feature of churches of Christ in contrast with most of the denominational world. Few agree with us on this cardinal point. John plainly declares that knowledge of salvation is ours through what he has written rather than the unstable feelings of our minds.

General George B. McClellan later became an outspoken opponent of the policies and principles of Abraham Lincoln. But Lincoln earlier had great confidence in him and made him Major General of the Army and commander of the War in Virginia. Later, Lincoln came to feel that McClellan was all show and could not be depended on to carry the battle on to conclusion. But when McClellan first received his commission as Major General he wrote his wife: "I don't feel any different that I did yesterday. Indeed, I have not yet put on my new uniform. I am sure, however, that I am in command of the Union Army because President Lincoln's order to that effect now lies before me."

He had assurance of his commission because of the written document in which he placed his confidence. It had all the marks of authority and authenticity. It was clearly a word from his President. Surely the New Testament is a clear word from our Commander-In-Chief and, when obedient to it, we can be certain of our position of redemption in the sight of our Leader. When we have believed (Heb. 11:6), repented (Luke



MARTEL PACE

13:3) and been baptized (Acts 2:38) we have every assurance that we are His. When the Lord speaks, as He has in His Word, we can rest assured for He cannot lie!

Paul's assurance rested on a direct appearance of Jesus to him and continued direct revelations which we receive only indirectly. But our knowledge and confidence should be little less than his: "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12). Isn't it wonderful to have this kind of assurance rather than to rely on one's fleeting emotions? It's grand to have confidence we are bound for heaven. We have this confidence because we rest on scriptural facts rather than vacillating feelings.

Confidence In The Face of Death

Christianity is psychologically sound in all its principles. The pseudo-Christian religions of today often are not. Those who depend on emotional feelings are usually persuaded when some terminal illness overtakes them that "if you have enough faith you can be cured." What is the consequence when a person of this persuasion is not cured and death creeps steadily on?

There must gradually come a depression that cannot be relieved. As the pitiful person sees death near he must be persuaded that

"My faith is insufficient to heal me so it must be insufficient to save me as well." This is the result of confidence in non-Christian philosophies.

But the Christian who depends on the Word does not have illusions. Oh yes, he knows the Lord can cure if it is His will, but if not he can serenely say, "I will accept the will of God whatever it may be. I am not afraid to die because I know death and not miraculous healing is the will of the Lord for his saints. I am ready to meet my Redeemer!" As an old Christian sister often says in reference to Pentecostal feelings, "It may be a good faith to live by, but it isn't a good one to die by."

Let us examine a doctrine by its fruits (Matt. 7:20). Let us not be deceived by the temporary confident enthusiasm of the neo-Pentecostal in his claims for an assurance that overwhelms all doubt. The ultimate assurance of the child of God who trusts the infallible Word rests on the only solid foundation available in this changing world.

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His Word,
Just to rest upon His promise,
Just to know, "Thus saith the Lord."
--Stead.

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Sincerity And Good Conscience

Today, while in the post office, a gentleman asked me if I thought all the religious folk would be acceptable to God on the basis that they endeavor to serve Him out of sincerity and in all good conscience. He then proceeded to use Saul's (Paul) statement, "I have lived in all good conscience..." (Acts 23:1; see also Acts 24:16).

Although it is true that Saul was religiously sincere and in conscience "void of offence

toward God and toward man," nevertheless, Saul was lost! How do I know? In the twenty-second chapter of Acts, Paul recounts the events in his conversion, and he relates how Ananias instructed him to "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away they sins" (Acts 22:16). Please take note that Saul had sins which were removed in baptism, and that

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Reacting To Criticism

Elders of churches, college administrators, orphan home superintendents, editors of papers, etc., as well as all gospel preachers are in position to receive a great deal of criticism. And there are certainly those who are ready to do the criticizing. Some criticize because of envy, obviously feeling that their criticism will cause others to think more of them and less of the one criticized. Some criticize because of an inferiority complex, and their criticism of the actions of others helps boost their own ego. There are others, however, who criticize sincerely, and in love, with a genuine desire to be helpful.



BOBBY DUNCAN

No one enjoys having his shortcomings pointed out, even by one who loves him and wants to be helpful. It is somewhat frightening to face the cold reality that perhaps our critics are correct, and that we may fully be deserving of some dressing down. For this reason, the most natural reaction to criticism is to conclude that our critics are our enemies (Cf. Gal. 4:16), that they are envious of us, and that they are criticizing us unjustly. Our first inclination is to retaliate by criticizing the critics for their criticism of us. Perhaps we go further than that, and point out that the critics themselves are not perfect, and that their criticism of us is prompted by a lack of brotherly love or a small conception of the scheme of redemption. We may even go so far as to say that, if they were doing any thing

really worthwhile themselves, they would not find the time to criticize us. What a mistake it is for us to react to all criticism in this manner!

It is imperative that our reaction to the criticisms of those who love us and are concerned about us be commensurate with their love and concern. An improper reaction to criticism may be just as responsible for the alienation of brethren as improper criticism itself.

With regard to criticism of our actions or our decisions, we would do well to remember that we are human beings, and therefore, are short of perfection. Unless we claim for ourselves perfection in judgment, we would do well to acknowledge the fact that there is a possibility we may have erred. (We are talking about matters of judgment. Certainly there is no room for the acknowledgement of error in the teaching or practice of those things clearly revealed in the Bible.) Since we are talking about matters of judgment, it just could be that our critics are right and we are wrong. At least we should consider the possibility that there may be SOME merit in what our critics have said.

Furthermore, we would do well to remember that our reputation and our usefulness to the brotherhood does not depend upon a record of perfect judgments. Only Jesus never made a mistake

in judgment. Great men such as Gus Nichols and B.C. Goodpasture would have been the first to admit they made errors in judgment from time to time; but they would have been the last to retaliate violently against one who called into question their judgment. They were not as sensitive to criticism as men of smaller stature. They would fight to the last breath and the last stroke of the pen those who attacked God's word. But attacks against their own personal judgment they considered as matters of small concern.

While it is not pleasant to be criticized, we believe it is a healthy situation when we all know that our actions and our decisions are subject to the scrutiny of a somewhat critical brotherhood. It is unfortunate that some are too critical. It is unfortunate also that some are too sensitive to criticism.

CORRECTION

In our May 27 issue of WORDS OF TRUTH we printed an article entitled "Two Things To Think About." We failed to give credit to its author, and somehow, at the close of the article even gave the wrong address. The article was written by Roger Dill, who is the fine preacher at Auburn, Alabama. His address is P.O. Box 62, Auburn, Alabama 36830. Please pardon our oversight.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

No. 4

THEISTIC EVOLUTION

To bring the subject of evolution into a conversation is to excite in the participants some very strong emotions. It goes without saying that the theory of evolution has far-reaching effects into almost every aspect of our lives. Atheists rejoice in the theory and defend it eagerly and vigorously, while the more conservative Christians view it as a case against their belief in a living, all-powerful God.



BERT THOMPSON

There is a group of people, however, who take the position that it doesn't really matter whether or not the theory of organic evolution is true, and that their Biblical faith does not depend on the outcome of this "unimportant" issue. These are the "theistic evolutionists." Many prominent theologians, especially Catholics (though theistic evolution is by no means limited to Catholics' beliefs), have embraced theistic evolution, yet still insist that the Bible is absolutely trustworthy on theology and ethics and is substantially accurate on history.

What, exactly, is theistic evolution? To state it simply, we can say: "Theistic evolution is the belief that there is a God who created all things; but, He used evolution to perform that creation."

Can a Christian reasonably believe in evolution as the means by which God created all that is? Granted, this view does at first

seem to avoid certain problems. But upon further examination, it can be readily seen that theistic evolution and the Bible definitely do not agree. Theistic evolutionists are people who want to "ride the fence" as far as Special Creation and evolution are concerned. Theistic evolutionists do not want to have to "get involved" or "make a decision." They are content to accept both viewpoints (i.e.: Special Creation AND organic evolution).

Belief in theistic evolution presents serious consequences. Dr. J.D. Thomas, in his book, FACTS AND FAITH, evaluates the theistic evolutionists' position and presents a number of problems faced by this position:

"The real problem in considering theistic evolution is whether atheistic or naturalistic, mechanical evolution has been proved. . . The theory means that all known forms of life have developed into their present major classifications and minor classifications from one or two original cells or maybe even 'naked genes.' . . What are the arguments against theistic evolution, by way of summary?"

1. The atheists have no evidence or information about the beginning of life on the earth. . .
2. The suddenness of the appearance of fossil forms of life. . . well developed into major classifications or different phyla, which phyla still extend into the present time. . .
3. There are no transition fossils between the simpler and the more complex forms of life. . .
4. There is no evidence whatever of change from one phylum into another or crossing-over between phyla. . . Instead of a rare or occasional missing link, the whole chain is

(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"John, the apostle wrote: 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us' [I John 1:8]. These words of the inspired writer appear clearly to refute the assumption of some today that it is possible to live above sin. Yet, the same author wrote: 'Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God' [I John 3:9]. How may these passages be harmonized?"

In the sentence, "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin..." the words "doeth no sin," are translated from the phrase *hamartian ou poiei*, present active indicative of *poieo*, literally, "does not keep on committing sin." The present tense, in Greek, denotes action in progress at the present time. Had John intended to convey the idea that the one begotten of God cannot commit a single act of sin, the verb would have been in the aorist tense. The aorist tense is an action indefinitely conceived of, without regard to time. The difference between the present and the aorist, in Greek, will be seen by the following comparison:

The present tense: (-----) an action continuing

The aorist tense: (.) a single action

Thus, were the verb an aorist, the passage would indeed teach that it is impossible for a child of God to commit a single act of sin! However, such a construction would have put John in conflict with himself, in affirming, in I John 1:8, that it is a sin to deny sin in one's life: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." It was the apostle's purpose, therefore, to denote, by the use of the Greek present, persistent, continuous, and wilful sin.

Why does one begotten of God desist from habitual and persistent indulgence in sin? "Because his seed abideth in him..." Whose seed? God's seed. What is God's seed? "The seed is the word of God," (Luke 8:11). In whom does this seed abide, or remain? In the faithful child of God. What does the word "abide" signify? The word of God has made its home, as it were, in the heart of the one begotten. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom..." (Col. 3:16). When the word abides, in its fulness in the heart, what results? The child of God is effectively protected against sinning.

Do the words, "And he cannot sin," mean that it is impossible for a child of God to sin? No. The clause is translated from the words, *kai ou dunatai hamartanein*, literally, "he cannot keep on sinning," as a way of life. Why? The seed, which is the word of God, abiding in him, prohibits it. David recognized and applied the principle taught here, in his magnificent affirmation, "Thy word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against thee," (Psalm 119:11). Our Lord, on the Mount of Temptation, exhibited the same effective use of the word when he successfully resisted the seductions of Satan, in the recurring phrase, "It is written!"

Let us suppose that we are tempted to steal. We draw, from the word stored in our hearts, "Thou shalt not steal!" So long as this injunction remains in the mind and controls the life, we cannot steal. Two reasons are

assigned why the one begotten of God does not sin: (1) the seed, the restraining influence of the word, governs the heart; (2) a life of sin is inconsistent with the spiritual parentage of the one thus begotten. But, this does not mean that it is impossible for one so possessed, ever to sin. All, because of weakness, error, ignorance, and inadvertance, alas, occasionally sin; but children of God do not engage in sin, as a life principle, because its author-Satan-they have repudiated and his nature abandoned. When, in such tragic instances, sin does occur, it is a momentary lapse; it is due to an imperfect holding of the word in the heart; it is contrary to the higher impulses of the one thus sinning, and it is confessed in penitence, and put aside with shame.

Paul and John are in strictest harmony, of course, in their teaching on the difference between occasional lapses, and a life devoted to sin: "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that we should no longer be in bondage to sin," (Rom 6:6). We are no longer to live a life of sin, because, (a) we have died-separated ourselves-from the practice thereof; (b) we were raised from the baptismal waters to a new life (Rom. 6:4); (c) the body of sin has been done away (put away), and (d) we have been delivered from the power and pollution of sin in our lives.

The careful distinction which inspired

writers make between a life of continuous and habitual sin, and the infrequent deviations of children of God who, while they ever reach upward and onward in their earnest search for the nobler life, now and then sadly falter in their frailties, because of weakness, ignorance and error, may be seen by comparing Romans 6:1, "Shall we continue in sin...?" (*tepinomen tei harmariai*, present active subjunctive), with Romans 6:15, "Shall we sin...?" (*hamartesomen*, first aorist active subjunctive), "Shall we commit a single act of sin?" Carefully, and precisely, the apostle, by the direction of the Spirit, made it clear that even isolated acts of sin are not to be indulged in on the assumption that the grace under which we live, instead of the law, excuses such.

Sin, all sin, any sin, separates from God and all that is good, and is displeasing in his sight. All such we must avoid, to the extent of our ability. John wrote: "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin," (I John 2:1). "That ye may not sin," is a negative purpose clause in the aorist tense, thus warning us against isolated acts of sin. When such occur, through our ignorance and weakness, it is comforting to know that we have "an Advocate," (literally, a lawyer), now in heaven, Jesus Christ our Lord, now pleading our case, not on our merit, but on his'

Reply To A False Teacher

No. 2

In his newly published booklet, "Some Observations Concerning The So-Called Church of Christ," sectarian preacher Homer Duncan ignorantly, yet maliciously, charges that "Since they are not taught by the Holy Spirit, many Church of Christ ministers and people do not know the grace of God in truth." He avows that "it is impossible to believe in salvation by grace and salvation by works at the same time."

In a futile effort to prove that salvation by grace is independent of all works, Duncan quotes, through misapplies, Romans 11:5,6. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. But if it is by grace, it is no more of works; otherwise grace is NO MORE GRACE." One would be hard pressed to find a more classic example of the old saying, "A text out of context is a mere pretext." The context of this passage clearly reveals that the apostle is not excluding works of every kind; rather, he is discussing the type of work by which Israel was attempting to be justified. Note the very next verse: "What then? That which Israel seeketh for, that he obtained not. . ." A vast segment of the people of Israel were hardened; they had not acknowledged Jesus as their Messiah. They were still attempting justification by



WAYNE JACKSON

the works of the Law of Moses and in so doing they were rejecting the grace offered through Christ. Thus, clearly, the WORKS OF MOSES' LAW were under consideration in Romans 11:5,6.

There are some ridiculous ramifications in the notion that salvation is totally devoid of works. How could anyone possibly misunderstand the Lord's injunction: "Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him the Father, even God, hath sealed. They said therefore unto him, What must we do, that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:27-29)? Here Christ affirms: (a) One must work toward eternal life; and, (b) the work which God has appointed of man is believing on His Son.

In view of the foregoing, consider the following. (1) Salvation in no way depends upon a work of man (Duncan). (2) But believing is a work (John 6:29). (3) Thus, salvation in no way depends upon believing in Christ. If the conclusion of this syllogism is false, as it obviously is, where is the error? Certainly not in John 6:29. Clearly, it is in the major premise as advocated by Homer Duncan.

As members of the Lord's church and teachers of the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24), we emphatically do not claim that by our obedience to that gospel (II Thes. 1:8) we have earned or merit salvation. Even when we have done the things commanded, we must view ourselves as unprofitable servants (Luke 17:9,10); yet, surely this does not militate against genuine obedience to the Lord

(Continued On Page 4)

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 1)

missing. . .

5. There is no adequate theory of a mechanism to explain how evolution occurred.

6. The doctrine requires chance occurrence far beyond the range of reasonable probability. . .

7. The doctrine of evolution allows for no purpose or directiveness in the universe. . .

8. The evolutionists cannot explain mind, spirit, values, or conscience. . .

9. Biological evolution has ended. This is an embarrassing thought to an evolutionist today, for if the greatest thing in the world is the 'laws of nature,' then why have they changed course? Why are new forms not continually evolving? Why cannot we look around us today and see all kinds of in-between forms that are on their way up to something higher and better?" 1

Theistic evolutionists are treading on dangerous ground when they tend to believe in God using evolution to create the world.

The main, over-riding problem is that THE BIBLE AND EVOLUTION ARE NOT RECONCILABLE. The Bible itself explains that there is to be no "middle of the road" (c.f.: Revelation 3:16). Christians are expected to believe ALL the Bible, not just the parts they want to believe (in the case of theistic evolutionists, the beginning chapters of Genesis are excluded by the very nature of their beliefs). If a Christian accepts as fact the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible, then should settle the point. Theistic evolution then becomes unbelievable, since it cannot be made to coincide with the Genesis account of creation.

Either God created the world as He said He did (suddenly and miraculously in 6 literal 24-hour days) or the Bible is a pack of untrustworthy lies. If we cannot believe the first chapters of Genesis, how can we believe the remainder of Genesis (or the remainder of "the Book" as a whole)?

There are two major problems which must be dealt with in regard to theistic evolution. The first problem is that of correlating the Genesis account with the geological time periods (commonly called the "geologic timetable"). Since theistic evolutionists are wont to believe that God created the world using evolution, and since they "believe" in BOTH the Bible AND evolution, then obviously the Biblical account would agree with the geological account. The question is: does it?

The second problem is the problem of whether or not God did actually create the earth in 6 literal 24-hour days (as the Genesis account says he did). For, you see, if the days of Genesis 1 are literal 24-hour days, then obviously evolution could not have occurred, since by its very nature evolution requires great amounts of time.

If it can be proven that the geologic timetable does not agree with the Genesis account, or if it can be proven that the "days" of Genesis are indeed literal 24-hour days, then theistic evolutionists will be left without any base or foundation for their theory. Our next article will examine whether or not the Genesis account of Special Creation and the

Geologic Timetable are in harmony one with another.

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Sincerity And Good Conscience

(Continued From Page 1)

squares with what Jesus had said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be SAVED: but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

It follows, therefore, that in spite of Saul's sincerity and good conscience, had he rejected baptism Saul would have been lost eternally. Many sincere religious folk with conscience void of offence have rejected baptism. Why are they not saved? Because they have rejected the word of Christ! Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48).

The above affirms that God requires more than sincerity in religion. Indeed, man must not only be sincere, but must also obey, worship and serve God according to the specifications given in His word. To further confirm this please consider the following: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Pro. 14:12). "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn. 8:24). "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth" (Jn. 17:17).

Finally, consider what Paul wrote in Romans 10:1-2: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." The context shows that he was discussing the Jews who had thus far rejected the Christ. Yet, they were, said Paul, zealous for God; just as honest and sincere as we are. Here, then, is a clear cut case of zeal for God, but in a lost condition. Why? "But not according to knowledge." If more than sincerity was required in their case, so in our today. God would certainly not save us in zealous but mistaken religion, and destroy the zealous but mistaken Jew. Peter had learned, "...God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34, 35).

After reading the plain statements from God's word, we can know that it does make a difference what a person believes and does. We know, then, that God requires not only sincerity, but that we believe and practice the truth.

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Reply To A False Teacher

(Continued From Page 3)

God.

Again, Mr. Duncan reveals a woeful lack of information when he writes: "All men, even religious men, inevitably ask the question, 'What must I DO to be saved?' Man always thinks that he must DO something, that salvation depends in some measure on his effort, and in thus thinking he does not understand the grace of God."

On three NT occasions - once of Peter, once of Christ, and once of Paul (Acts 2:37; 22:10; 16:30) - the sincere query, "What must I (we) do?" was asked. And what a splendid opportunity the Lord and His apostles had to inform their auditors that they were ignorant of the matter of grace because there was nothing to be done! Just the reverse, as a matter of fact, occurred. Peter instructed the Jews on Pentecost to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38); Christ told the inquiring Saul to go into Damascus where he would be further taught what he ought to DO (Acts 9:6; 22:10); and, the jailor in Philippi, in response to his "What must I do?", was told to "believe on the Lord Jesus" (thus showing that even believing is DOING). Moreover, after he was further taught and baptized (along with his household), Scripture affirms that he "rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God" (Acts 16:30,31,32); and significantly, the expression "having believed in God", as used in this verse, obviously includes the jailor's response to the gospel in being baptized. To suggest therefore that human response to God's offer of salvation requires no "doing," is to reflect a real barrenness of biblical information.

Being a recipient of Jehovah's grace does not negate human responsibility. Noah was saved from the destruction visited upon the world of his day by the Lord's grace (Gen. 6:8); yet, he "prepared an ark to the saving of his house" (Heb. 11:7). Remember, though God's grace is freely offered, still, it must be "received" (cf. II Cor. 6:1). — 3906 E. Main Street, Stockton, CA. 95205.

Smile

Grandpa was strong on practicality. As a young minister, he preached a trial sermon in a village church, hoping to be called to that pulpit.

Later the elders met with him to question his abilities. Wanting to be sure they got an educated man, they, with the help of a school teacher, had worked up a few questions to test him. They asked him:

"Preacher, would you say a hen sets or sits?" The young sage from the hills said:

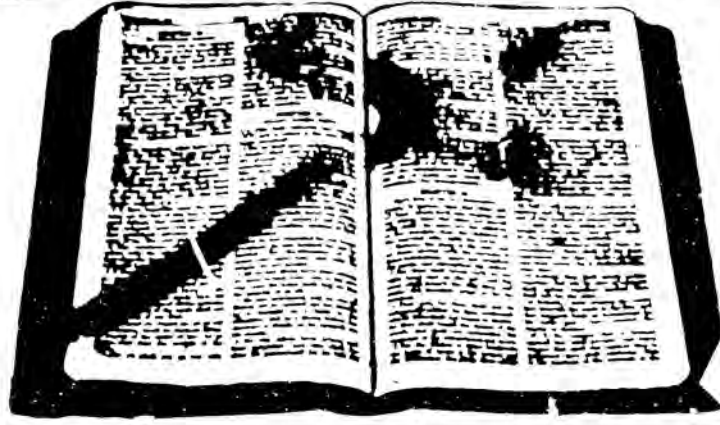
"I don't care whether she sits or sets. What I'm interested in is - When she cackles, is she laying or lying?"

He got the job!

— Selected

WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32
"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"But spe

Memphis

VOLUME 13

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A Dangerous Trend

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

The serious Bible student is acquainted with the New Testament teaching regarding the eldership. A person of experience realizes also the problems involved in the selecting and appointing of men to this work. Each mature congregation will have elders and deacons. Much time and effort should be given to the teaching and training of young men to desire and prepare for the work of a bishop. The attitude of respect and submission to God's plan of leadership should be developed among the local membership of any church of Jesus Christ. It has been encouraging to know of congregations growing spiritually in this matter. However, in recent times, we have heard of several incidents wherein the entire eldership have resigned. This, indeed, is disturbing.

The brethren of our acquaintance would fight to the very end to keep the instrument out of the worship. But, with the wave of the hand and a shrug of the shoulder, the eldership is dissolved. Why the difference? Do we respect God's authority relative to worship but not to church government? Of course, we do not know the "reasons" why entire elderships are dissolved. We cannot and really do not desire to know all the "whys". The point is, we who stress the divine pattern for the church as found in the New Testament should also practice what we preach as regards the local organization.

What have we accomplished if we push a "method" of evangelism to the point of dissolving God's form of government in a local congregation? Are we stronger in the

church when brethren resign from the eldership because of not being "perfect"? Shouldn't elders be allowed time to grow spiritually? Are we pleasing God when we revert back to having "leaders" and conducting church affairs by general business meetings and committees?

It is alarming to learn of this dangerous trend in the church of our Lord. The church is already suffering because of the lack of proper leadership and this dissolving of elderships only contributes to this problem.

Brethren, let's pray for our elders and manifest our love and respect for them by words and actions of moral support and encouragement. — East Hart Avenue, Opp, Al. 36467.

Hope For The Hopeless

DON JACKSON

"There is no hope". As the patient hears the doctor's words, he can only stare in disbelief. There must be some mistake, with all the great accomplishments of modern medical science, surely there is some hope. Organ transplant is a common procedure, surgical methods are advancing at a phenomenal rate, there MUST be hope! Yet the cold reality of the doctor's words remain: "There is no hope".

"No hope". Two more depressing words are not to be found in the English language. We never want to be in a situation in which there is "no hope".

Paul, writing for the "Great Physician", notes that without Christ there is no hope. Those who are alien to Christ are ones: "having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12). They are hopeless! Is this the final diagnosis? Is there no hope for the hopeless?

Paul's answer is a resounding: "Yes!" There is ONE hope (Ephesians 4:4). Just one? Is that all there is, one hope? The patient mentioned above would rejoice at the thought of having hope, even ONE hope. He will cling to that hope and will not be deprived of it.

The hope for the hopeless is grounded on

the gospel which, in turn, is centered on Jesus (Col. 1:23). As Paul reminds the Ephesians that they were once hopeless, he follows by writing: "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." It is through this sacrifice that we have the hope of salvation (Rom. 8:24).

Do you remember the story of Naaman? He was suffering from a disease which left him without hope. As he watched the disease spread without hope. As he watched the disease spread through his rotting body, he certainly must have wished for hope, any hope. He found that hope in the words of a servant: he could be cured by a prophet in the land of Samaria. As any hopeless man, he grasped this ray of hope.

As the story continues, we see that Naaman's pride almost deprived him of this hope. After first refusing, he consented to the command of the prophet to dip in the Jordan river seven times. As a result of his obedience, he was cleansed of leprosy.

This story would have had a tragic conclusion had Naaman not take advantage of his ONE hope. Without the cleansing of sin, the disease of the soul, we remain without

hope. But, through following the prescription of the Great Physician, there is hope. "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved". Will the story of your life have a tragic ending because you do not take advantage of your ONE hope, obedience to Jesus Christ. No longer remain as one "having no hope, and without God in the world". Let your obedience lead you to the "hope of eternal life". — Cuba, Mo. 65453.

Excuses

By DALTON KEY

Adam, while in the Garden, offered man's first excuse when he said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Eve, the "mother of all living", quickly followed suit and excused herself by saying, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat" (Gen. 3:12, 13). Men and women to this very hour are busily engaged in offering excuses to God according to the same repugnant pattern.

Pride is often a barrier to our admission

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WORDS of TRUTH

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things as mechanical instruments of music in worship and extending fellowship to denominational churches. Among other things, we asked this preacher if he believed that those who worship with a mechanical instrument of music sin in so doing. He replied that he would not say they did. However he made it plain that he would be against bringing a piano into the worship at Cahaba Valley. We asked him if he and the other members of the church at Cahaba Valley participated in the singing at the special Thanksgiving service, if the singing were accomplished by a mechanical instrument, and if they worshipped in so doing. To all three of these questions, the answer was yes.

A few weeks later, at the monthly preachers' luncheon in Birmingham, this preacher brought the subject up, and accused this writer of circulating false rumors concerning him and Cahaba Valley. At that time we had written an article in VIGIL reporting our conversation with this preacher; but that particular issue of VIGIL was not put in the mail until the day after this preachers' luncheon. When the subject came up at the luncheon, we again asked this brother the questions we had asked him in our previous conversation. All of those present on that occasion were witnesses to his answers—answers identical to the ones he had given me earlier, and which were published in VIGIL the next day after the luncheon. After the article was published, those preachers who were present in the luncheon agreed that the statements published in VIGIL properly represented the position Cahaba Valley's preacher took in their presence.

But some of the preachers in the Birmingham area had not been present at the luncheon. When the matter was later discussed in their presence, some of them

continued to insist that the things said at the luncheon may have been misunderstood, or else were statements made under pressure, and which did not really represent the position of the preacher or of Cahaba Valley. In order that all might have a clear understanding with regard to these matters, the preacher from Cahaba Valley was invited to come to the next luncheon prepared to discuss the matter. He came, but upon order of his elders, refused to discuss the matter, and walked out of the meeting. Still some thought that it was all just a break down in communications.

In the BIRMINGHAM NEWS, May 7, 1977, the Cahaba Valley Church of Christ has an announcement of a series of lectures by Leroy Garrett, editor of RESTORATION REVIEW. Those who know who Leroy Garrett is know now that what some of us were saying four years ago was true. Some of us are not in the least surprised at Garrett's coming to Cahaba Valley. This is exactly what we have expected from the very first.

We find no pleasure in saying, "I told you so." We wish our fears and our conclusions had been proved unfounded. But we call attention to these things in the hope that some might profit by these experiences. These developments should convince us that ignoring error will not correct it. Pretending that everything is all right does not make it all right. Hiding our heads in the sand and refusing to be aware of false positions will not do away with false positions.

It is sad to realize that some good people are at Cahaba Valley who likely would not be there today, had all the preachers and all the elders in Birmingham stood together in their opposition to this new congregation, which had all the earmarks of a liberal church when it began a little more than four years ago.



The Evolution Of A Liberal Church

The Cahaba Valley church in Birmingham, Alabama, had its first meeting on April 8, 1973. One week prior to that time, on Sunday morning, April 1, the elders of the church at Hoover read a statement to the Hoover church in which they expressed "a grave concern over the attitudes and views of some of those who have become involved" in



BOBBY DUNCAN

the efforts to establish this new congregation. Among other reasons cited in this statement for not giving endorsement to this new church was: "The liberal views of Carl Ketcherside regarding fellowship are known to have influenced some of those in the forefront as has been evidenced through private conversations and the reading and distribution of THE MISSION MESSENGER, a paper published by brother Ketcherside."

During this same week, at our monthly preachers' luncheon, the establishment of this new congregation and some of the alleged views of its members were discussed. Some present contended that these people are sound in the faith, and do not hold Ketcherside's views. We were urged not to "brand" them, but to be patient, and give them time to prove themselves.

Less than two years from that time it was learned that the Cahaba Valley church had participated with Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, and Presbyterian churches in a Thanksgiving service. When this service was announced in the newspaper, this writer called the preacher at Cahaba Valley to learn, if possible, where Cahaba Valley stood with reference to such

The Assemblies Of The Church Of Christ Salute You

The Acme church of Christ has recently completed their building campaign and occupied their new facilities. This church is making news all over the United States! Its membership has outgrown their old facilities long ago and the new building is a welcomed sight.



RAY HAWK

Due to their evangelistic outreach, this congregation has grown by leaps and bounds over the past five years. They have 4,000 people in their membership with an average of 7,000 in services on Sunday morning. The growth rate has been so tremendous that their old auditorium was not sufficient to handle the crowds. They decided that since they had Children's Worship and Adult Worship, there would be nothing wrong with dividing the church into several simultaneous assemblies to handle the crowd.

At first there were objections to the assembly arrangements made by the Acme church. No one had ever divided a congregation into 35 assemblies before. It was new, daring, and innovative! Many knew it must be unscriptural. The Acme preacher pointed out the scripturalness of the arrangement by directing the attention of all

to the practice of dividing the church into two assemblies: the Children's Worship and Adult Worship. He gave Matt. 28:19,20 and Mark 16:15,16 as his generic authority for such an arrangement. When asked if 1Cor. 11:20 and 14:23 were violated by such an arrangement he replied that the expression "together" and "one place" had nothing to do with it. He stated that these passages only teach what is involved when there is an assembly, not a demand that we meet in one place together.

The Acme preacher reminded his opponents that the only real reason they objected to his arrangement was due to traditional, American customs that had become doctrine for those churches of Christ. He referred to it as the "modern oral law" of the churches of Christ. He accused them of thinking more of their opinions than they did of saving souls. He compared the growth the Acme church was having to that experienced in the churches of those who objected and inferred that if a church wanted to grow they must have multiple, simultaneous worship services. When the Acme preacher was asked to debate it, either privately or publicly, he stated that he didn't have time to fool with such trivia, that he was too busy saving souls. However, it seems he did have enough time to denounce his detractors whenever he spoke at workshops and lectureships around the country without the objectors having an opportunity to reply. He usually reminded his audiences that the best way to overcome

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods.)

“What does it mean to ‘ask’ (pray) according to God’s will?” (I John 5:13-15.)

We can be assured that our prayers come within the area of his will when (1) we ask for those things which he has specifically said he will give us, i.e., food, clothing, shelter, comfort in trial, wisdom to direct our steps, deliverance from the evil one and all the many other rich blessings his inspired word promises. Spiritual blessings he bestows by means of his Word; temporal blessings he gives us through the operation of his natural laws. He expects us to live within the sphere of his will, and we have no right nor reason to suppose that he will circumvent either. It is idle, for example, to ask God to send us *down from heaven* a loaf of bread baked and wrapped; and yet, he does indeed give us our “daily bread,” through the medium of the soil, the sunshine and shower, the sower, the mill, and the baker. Not by miracle, but by the usual operations of his natural laws does he bless us in the bestowal of material things (Matt. 7:11).

(2) He also gives us the things which he sees are best for us, and we should always make our wills subservient to his in our petitions. Because of our weaknesses, our ignorance, oftentimes our stupidity, we are exceedingly poor judges of what is best for us; frequently, we ask for things which would not be conducive to our well-being to grant; and we should always be willing to acquiesce in his judgment in such matters. We should not desire to ask for things he does not want to grant. Many people, instead of petitioning God, order him to grant specific requests; and, when such requests are not immediately forthcoming, their faith in prayer fails them. Prayer, properly engaged in, is a humble request to God for blessings which we desire him to bestow if such bestowal is in harmony with his will. *We ought not to want him to give us something which is not within the sphere of his will; and he will not, anyway.*

(3) We have no right to expect God to answer our prayers, if we do not comply with those conditions on which he grants requests. God has ordained that men must work for their “daily bread,” it is therefore useless for a lazy, shiftless man to ask God to give him a bountiful harvest without work. Neither will he give men salvation short of compliance with the conditions on which salvation is bestowed. He will as readily send us bread, by-passing the seed, the sower, the harvest, the mill and the baker, as he will save men while they continue in rebellion to his will. To ask according to his will is to ask only for the things which he has promised, and to expect them in the way which he has will to provide them (James 4:2, 3).

How may we know when we should no longer continue to ask God for specific requests which we include in our prayers? *When he does not grant them!* Inasmuch as he has promised to answer our prayers when uttered in harmony with his will, it must follow that if, in any instance, the petition is not granted, it is because it is not the Lord’s at this particular time. We must learn to accept, without question, God’s will in all such matters, knowing that he does all things best (James 1:5-7).

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

Number 5

Genesis Versus Geologic Timetable

Theistic evolution can be absolutely disproven by comparing the Genesis account of Special Creation with the Geologic Timetable. If theistic evolution is correct in its assumption (VIZ.: God created the earth through evolution) the Genesis account must agree with the Geologic Timetable. But it does not!

Consider as proof the chart below! The Geologic Timetable is from the *ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA* (1971; article entitled “Geology”). The timetable has been set alongside the Genesis sequence of Creation. Even the most casual observer can easily notice that it becomes an impossibility to reconcile the Genesis account with the Geologic Timetable.



BERT THOMPSON

the GOSPEL ADVOCATE (August 12, 1976) reveals what a hoax the Geologic Timetable is. The reader is urged to read that article. It points out several obvious contradictions between the Genesis account of Special Creation and the Geologic Timetable. The article ends with this good bit of advice: “Let it be said again. The geologic timetable is a hoax! It was conceived to buttress the evolutionary view of origins as a substitute for the inspired Genesis record. And those who respect the Mosaic narrative will not endorse this anti-biblical scheme.”²

Obviously, those who believe in theistic evolution are blind to the facts mentioned above, and desire to continue in their beliefs (even though the beliefs are opposed one to another). It seems obvious that God did not create the world through evolution. Either the account of Special Creation is correct, or the Geologic Timetable is correct; but it is completely obvious that both cannot be correct. The question is: which one will you accept as right?

The “Days” Of Genesis 1

If it can be proven that the “days” of Genesis 1 were indeed 6, literal, 24-hour days,

System & Period	Distinctive Records of Life	Began (Millions of Years Ago)	Genesis
	I. CENOZOIC ERA (total 70m. years)		
Quaternary Tertiary	Early Man	2 Plus	Day 6
	Large Carnivores	10	Day 6
	Whales, apes	27	Day 5, 6
	Large Browsing animals	38	Day 6
	Flowering plants	55	Day 3
	First placental mammals	65-70	Day 6
	II. Mesozoic ERA (total 155m. years)		
Cretaceous Jurassic	Extinction of dinosaurs	130	
	Dinosaurs’ zenith		
Triassic	Primitive birds		Day 5
	first small mammals	180	Day 6
	Appearance of dinosaurs	225	Day 6
	III. PALAEOZOIC ERA (total 345m. years)		
Permian	Conifers abundant		Day 3
	Reptiles developed	260	Day 6
Carboniferous upper	First reptiles		Day 6
	Great Coal Forests	300	Day 3
lower Devonian	Sharks abundant	340	Day 5
	Amphibians appeared		
Silurian	Fishes abundant	405	Day 5
	Earliest land plants		
Ordovician Cambrian	And animals	435	Day 3, 6
	First primitive fishes	480	Day 5
No known basis for systematic division	Marine invertebrates (shellfish etc.)	550-570	Day 5
	IV. PRE-CAMBRIAN ERA (total 2920m. years)		
	Plants and animals with soft tissues	3490	Day 5

	Origin of the Earth	4500(?)	Day 1
	Origin of Solar System	?	Day 4

Theistic evolutionists want us to believe that God used evolution to create the world, yet their own timetables do not agree with their own Bibles. How is it that they expect us to believe in two theories which completely contradict each other?! It seems foolish to give two contrary viewpoints to someone and ask them to believe both of them!

Wayne Jackson, in an excellent article in

then that will be the death knell for theistic evolution. For, you see, in order to believe in theistic evolution, a person has to accept the “day-age” theory of Genesis 1 (this theory, for the information of the reader, states that the “days” of Genesis were not literal 24-hour days, but rather long periods of time).

(Continued On Page 4)

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 3)

Evolution, by its very nature, requires long periods of time. If the time is not available, evolution could not have occurred. The question is now: were the "days" of Genesis literal 24-hour days?

An old earth is a necessity for evolutionists. They must have time (of course, the same can be truthfully said of theistic evolutionists!) Let us examine the following quotation from the pen of Dr. George Wald in his article, THE ORIGIN OF LIFE:

"To make an organism demands the right substance in the right proportions and in the right arrangement. We do not think that anything more is needed—but that is problem enough. One has only to contemplate the magnitude of this task to concede that the spontaneous generation of living organisms is impossible. Yet here we are—as a result, I believe, of spontaneous generation. In such a problem as the spontaneous origin of life, we have no way of assessing probabilities beforehand, or even of deciding what we mean by trial. The origin of a living organism is undoubtedly a step-wise phenomenon, each step with its own probability and its own conditions of trial. Of one thing we can be sure, however; whatever constitutes a trial, more such trials occur the longer the interval of time.

"The important point is that since the origin of life belongs in the category of 'at-least-once' phenomena, time is on its side. However improbably we regard this event, or any of the steps it involves, GIVEN ENOUGH TIME it will almost certainly happen at least once. And for life as we know it, with its capability for growth and reproduction, once may be enough. TIME IS THE HERO OF THE PLOT. The time with which we have to deal here is of the order of 2 billion years. What we regard as impossible on the basis of human experience is meaningless here. Given so much time, the 'impossible becomes possible, the possible becomes probable, and the probable becomes virtually certain. One has only to wait; TIME ITSELF PERFORMS MIRACLES.'"3

So now the reader will be able to see not only how important time is to theistic evolutionists, but the stock they place in it as well. As Dr. Duane Gish has said in his book, EVOLUTION—THE FOSSILS SAY NO!: "The concept of a frog being turned into a prince in an instant is a fairy tale, but the assertion that a frog, given 300 million years, can turn into a man, is considered science."4 How true!

Time, which is the evolutionists' friend, may also be their deadliest enemy. Why? It is because without time there can be no evolution. Time, contrary to what the evolutionist believes, does not in and of itself perform miracles. Consider, if you will, the plight of a young man trying to pull himself up into the air by his shoestrings. How

desperately wrong would be the challenge given to the young man by an evolutionist (theistic or otherwise) to keep on trying, do not give up, because given enough time, it can be done. We should all recognize by now that any effort to contradict the basic laws of nature can only be frustrated by time. The young man, after a period of years, would lose the energy he had and collapse on the floor; over 150 years, all of his efforts would cease because of the inexorable experience we call death. This is the inevitable effect of time. Remember: a billion years with no creative power equals nothing times a billion years! On the other hand, infinite power with almost no duration of time equals a fantastic creation! Or, as professor O.T. Allis stated it:

"We need to remember that limitless time is a poor substitute for that Omnipotence which can dispense with time. The reason the account of creation is so simple and so impressive is that it speaks in terms of the creative acts of an omnipotent God, and not in terms of LIMITLESS space and INFINITE

time and ENDLESS process." 5

(Continued)

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1004 Hereford
College Station, Texas 77840

The Assemblies Of The Church Of Christ Salute You

(Continued From Page 2)

criticism was by silence, a smile, and love. When someone spoke up from the audience and asked if he ever used the Bible to silence his critics as did Jesus in Matt. 22, they loved the fellow all the way out the door!

The Acme church has grown so fast that the auditorium of their old building was not large enough to accommodate the crowd. The elders decided to allow everyone to remain in their classrooms and have worship there. They had thirty-five classes, so each class became a worship assembly at eleven o'clock. Soon these classes could not hold the numbers so a new building was needed with larger classrooms. Now that the Acme church is in its new building they have increased their assemblies to 40. A few people went to the elders and mentioned their specific needs so an assembly was formed for them too. Surely this must have been what the first century Jerusalem church was like! Weren't there twelve apostles? One apostle for each simultaneous assembly? The Acme church now has an assembly of your choice! Certainly, this must have been what Paul was saying when he wrote, "The assemblies of Christ salute you" (Rom. 16:16.)

The Acme church has been so successful and active in winning souls that other churches of Christ in the area have decided to dissolve their elderships, and merge with the Acme church, under the oversight of its elders. They decided to do this after reading several articles in a brotherhood paper arguing for such an arrangement. Just because the members of the one congregation did not meet in the same building did not lessen the fact that they were the Acme church of Christ. So the Acme church of Christ soon has forty assemblies in their building and another one hundred assemblies within a fifty mile radius of that building. This is what Paul meant when he recorded, "ordain elders in every city" (Tit. 1:5.) One eldership in each city, but many assemblies! Just think, here in Pensacola we could have one eldership and one church with that church assembling in ten different areas in the city! The collection from each one of these assemblies would go into one common treasury overseen by the one eldership. In fact, if this is scriptural, over a metropolitan area, why not over a county,

state, or even the world! One eldership over the one church of Christ with 34,000 plus assemblies!

Yes, the simple beginnings with the Children's Worship and Adult Worship have grown to gigantic proportions in the Acme church of Christ. But, the whole thing must be scriptural because there was a need, there was growth, Matt. 28:19,20 and Mark 16:15,16 were given as authority, objectors were called traditionalists, Pharisees, and followers of "oral law," and the Acme church was a success story.

The above is not a true story. But, give us five or ten years and everything I have described could be true among churches of Christ. The roots of such an effort could be traced back to the Children's Worship!

4868 LaVentana Terrace,
Pensacola, Fla. 32506

Excuses

(Continued From Page 1)

of sin. Daniel Boone was once asked, "Have you ever been lost?" To which he excusably replied, "No, but I was once bewildered three whole days." The widely publicized Watergate Scandal of a few years back gave us a remarkably accurate delineation of excuse making as motivated through pride. I don't suppose any country has ever been honest and humble enough to admit to being the cause of war.

One might expect behavior such as this from heathen peoples, but not from the people of God. Solomon warns us, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Pro. 16:18). Scripture encourages men to swallow their pride and confess their sins. Notice these Divine injunctions: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (James 5:16). "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). — Dalton Key, Box 619, Douglas, Kansas 67039.

EAST AFRICAN NEWSLETTER

KENYA, NAIROBI

P. O. BOX 48086. NAIROBI, KENYA

APRIL & MAY, 1977

Greetings from East Africa,

By the time you read this letter we will most likely be on our way back to America. We have not been home since April of 1974 and have spent seven years as missionaries. It is always so many changes and advancements that we'll have missed out on in Africa. Just seeing shopping centers, good roads and having telephones that work will be wonders to us that will take a few days to get use to again. Our biggest joy will, of course, be seeing all our family and friends from whom we have been separated for so long.

It is not without a note of sadness that we leave Africa. There are no other missionaries of the Church of Christ here to take my place when I am gone. The nearest lives over two hundred miles away. The African Christians are capable of carrying on, and will do so. Jesus is here in Africa and is with the Christians in Nairobi and surrounding areas. They can get along without Berkeley Hackett. While I'm counting on the church growing in my absence there is still a need for a foreign missionary. There remains a tremendous amount of teaching and leadership training to be done. There is no lack of zeal among the African Christians, but there is still a lack of knowledge. This is where I fit in, and where the current need lies.

We will spend about ten months in America. We plan to spend that time reporting to our supporting congregations on the progress of the work here in Kenya. Hopefully, we will also interest new congregations to take up the burden of the Gospel in East Africa. We are also praying that someone or two families might be interested in coming to Kenya to work in the unevangelized areas around Nairobi. There are millions who are unreached, yet who are "reachable." We just don't have the personnel to accomplish the task. Pray with us that these goals might be met.

All is going well with the local churches. The Nairobi congregations are growing as the Lord adds to their numbers. Sometimes the rate of numerical growth seems slow since some fall away and are lost in the maelstrom of the African city. The overall picture though does show a net growth and a great deal of growth spiritually of those who brave the difficulties of poverty, disease and temptation and remain firm. It is a satisfying feeling to observe this growth and to note the continuing maturing of the Christians here.

Our next newsletter will be written from "home" at which time I hope to look back over the past three years, assess our accomplishments, mark our mistakes and project what we all might do in the next



BERKELEY HACKETT

three years to bring men to Christ.

Bro. Hackett

Dear Friends,

This has been the most unusual month weatherwise that we have ever spent in Africa. Kenya is experiencing its heaviest rainy season in 21 years. One Sunday evening as we were coming back from church the second heaviest rainfall ever recorded accrued. Our small family car got caught in a swirl of water that within minutes reached above the wheels. The engine got wet and stalled out, so we sat there about 20 minutes hoping that the Lord hadn't called us to Africa to be swept away into the Nairobi river!

With so much unaccustomed water on the outside, the wells, pumps, and water mains are becoming clogged and polluted. For the last 48 hours we've had only the rain water that we can catch in barrels, cooking pots and our ice chest.

I've been going "out" with Berkeley quite a lot this month to the upcountry areas to say "Kwa Heri" (good-bye) to groups of Christians. It is always fun and up-lifting to visit in the reserves. I feel there that I'm in touch with the real heart-land and heart-beat of Kenya. How hard the Kikuyu women work! I feel torn between thinking they are ennobled by such dedication to work and then taking a second look and feeling they are brutalized. Well, which ever it is the Kikuyu tribe is on top in Kenya and one can't help feeling those strong-minded wives and mothers have something to do with their success.

The phenomenal rise of coffee prices has had a big impact in Kenya, a coffee growing country. Many of our Christians are the owners of small coffee farms and it is good to see them receiving a larger profit. However, claim jumping and thieves coming at night and stripping the coffee bushes are not unusual, so much of the profit is siphoned off to pay night watchmen and to erect fences.

On May 17th the Nairobi Christians are giving us a farewell Karamu (feast). The women barbeque meat, cook carrots, cabbage and potatoes and make hot tea.

On May 28th we are to celebrate the second wedding of a Christian young couple who met and got to know each other in the church (not to be construed as the meeting place!) Such marriages have been seven years in coming, but they are worth it.

If all goes well we plan to arrive in Birmingham on June 28th, probably in the afternoon. We'd love for as many as have time or would like to, to ride the 6th Avenue bus to the airport to meet us. We actually arrive in N.Y. on June 25th and hope to get over jet lag and get our time straightened out before we get involved in our work at home.

See you soon,
Charlotte

Outdoor Service

Frances Myers Hackett

We were going along the curved road of loose gravel. I had to sit in between my mother and father (which wasn't comfortable because there was no seat!) The back seat was full of African Christians.

Suddenly my father pulled off to the side of the road, "Here we are!" he said.

We got out walked along a slippery slidey patch of mud, crossed a plank bridge with a muddy red creek below, then slipped and slid back up the other side.

Two bull calves were lowing softly, seven puppies were playing by yelping at a chicken. There were hens, roosters and chicks all over. The puppies' mother was wandering about the church compound looking for food.

We had a prechurch windup and a girls' choir sang to us until it was time for real church.

In the middle of real church it started to rain hard so we got out our umbrellas we had brought to put over us.

After church I found where the toilet was; it was in what looked like a sheaf of corn stalks.

We got home late at night. It had been an exciting day.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Received Via 6th Avenue	\$2,000.00
Salary	800.00
Literature Center & Literature	350.00
House	250.00
Auto Fund	250.00
General Expenditures (Beneficence, Supplies, preacher's travel fund, etc.)	350.00
Total	\$2,000.00

Note **\$1,500 above the budget has been allocated to carry on programs for the coming year.

These Are Contributions For December 1976 That have Not Been Published.

Roscoe Kirkpatrick	10.00
Herman King	20.00
Lorene Farris	20.00
Farley E. Geddie	35.00
Fletcher Gurganus	20.00
A. L. McDonald	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. C. Eugene McMurray	40.00
Mrs. Ben L. Morris	20.00
Mary Frances Myers	25.00
Pearl F. Odom	5.00
Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Welch	10.00
Adamsville Church of Christ	50.00
Barn Creek Church of Christ	50.00
Berry Church of Christ	50.00
Brookside Church of Christ	20.00
Central (Tusc.) Church of Christ	100.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	50.00
Cottdon Church of Christ	75.00
Curry Church of Christ	50.00
Dilworth Church of Christ	40.00
E. Walker Church of Christ	25.00
Eldridge Church of Christ	50.00
Fayette Church of Christ	40.00
Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00
Macedonia Church (HGR) of Christ	25.00
Midway Church of Christ	105.00

Millport Church of Christ	50.00
Mtn. Home Church of Christ	15.00
Mt. Harmony Church of Christ	30.00
Northport Church of Christ	50.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Parrish Church of Christ	30.00
Pea Ridge Church of Christ	50.00
Pleasantfield Church of Christ	10.00
Pleasant Hill Church of Christ	35.00
Quintown Church of Christ	50.00
Robinwood Church of Christ	25.00
Sixth Avenue Church of Christ	700.00
W. Walker Church of Christ	20.00
White House Church of Christ	100.00
Winfield Church of Christ	50.00
Total	\$2,215.00

Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00
Macedonia (HGR) Church of Christ	25.00
Midway Church of Christ	105.00
Millport Church of Christ	50.00
Mtn. Home Church of Christ	15.00
Mt. Harmony Church of Christ	15.00
New Hope Church of Christ (Oakman)	20.00
Northport Church of Christ	75.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Parrish Church of Christ	30.00
Pea Ridge Church of Christ	40.00
Pleasantfield Church of Christ	10.00

Pleasant Hill Church of Christ	35.00
Quintown Church of Christ	25.00
6th Avenue Church of Christ	700.00
W. Walker Church of Christ	20.00
White House Church of Christ	100.00
Winfield Church of Christ	50.00
Mrs. Susie Evans	5.00
Mrs. Bruce Myers	20.00
Total	\$2,190.00

These Are Contributions For April That Have Not Been Published.

Herman King	20.00
Lorene Farris	10.00
A. L. McDonald	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. Ben L. Morris	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. C. Eugene McMurray	20.00
Mary Frances Myers	25.00
Pearl F. Odom	5.00
J. E. Terry	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Welch	10.00
Adamsville Church of Christ	50.00
Berry Church of Christ	50.00
Brookside Church of Christ	20.00
Central (Tusc.) Church of Christ	100.00
Cottondale Church of Christ	75.00
Curry Church of Christ	50.00
Eldridge Church of Christ	25.00
Fayette Church of Christ	40.00
Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00
Macedonia (HGR) Church of Christ	25.00
Midway Church of Christ	105.00
Millport Church of Christ	50.00
Mtn. Home Church of Christ	15.00
Northport Church of Christ	75.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Parrish Church of Christ	30.00
Pea Ridge Church of Christ	50.00
Pleasantfield Church of Christ	10.00
Pleasant Hill Church of Christ	35.00
Quintown Church of Christ	25.00
Robinwood Church of Christ	25.00
Sixth Avenue Church of Christ	700.00
W. Walker Church of Christ	20.00
White House Church of Christ	100.00
Winfield Church of Christ	50.00
Total	\$1,910.00

These Are Contributions For May, 1977 That Have Not Been Published.

Herman King	20.00
Farley E. Geddie	10.00
Fletcher Gurganus	10.00
Roscoe Kirkpatrick	10.00
A. L. McDonald	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. Ben L. Morris	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. C. Eugene McMurray	20.00
Mary Frances Myers	25.00
Pearl F. Odom	5.00
Mrs. Clement Swindle	25.00
(In Memory of Clement Swindle)	
J. E. Terry	5.00
Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Welch	10.00
Adamsville Church of Christ	50.00
Barn Creek Church of Christ	100.00
Berry Church of Christ	50.00
Brookside Church of Christ	20.00
Central (Tusc.) Church of Christ	100.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	50.00
Cottondale Church of Christ	75.00
Curry Church of Christ	50.00
Dilworth Church of Christ	40.00
E. Walker Church of Christ	25.00
Eldridge Church of Christ	25.00
Fayette Church of Christ	40.00



Charlotte has been giving Githigia cooking lessons. She is the wife of one of our Nairobi preachers.



John Mwangi, the church treasurer for Makongeni poses before a blackboard bearing the morning's Bible lesson.



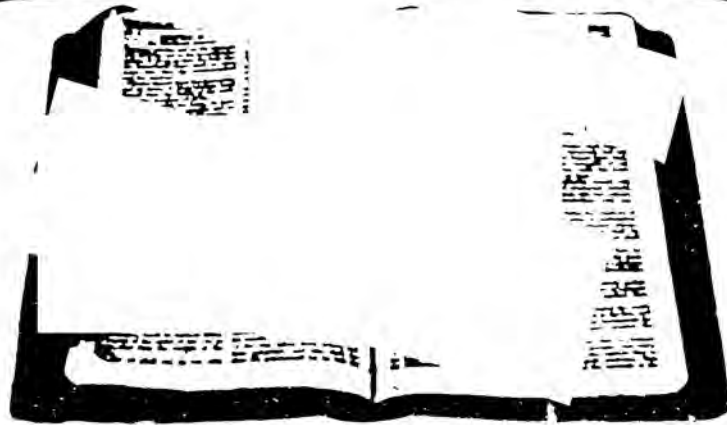
The one legged man is Gabriel Makumi who was recently converted. This day he walked over two miles to the meeting.

WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"

Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"But speak forth the words of truth"

Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"

Jn. 1:17

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 1977

NUMBER 28

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NO. 6

Day-Age Theory
Versus Literal
24-Hour Days

Why does the day-age theory exist? Why do people insist (remember, we are still discussing theistic evolution) on making the days of Genesis 1 into ages (i.e.: long periods of time)? Perhaps Dr. John Klotz, in his book, **GENES, GENESIS, & EVOLUTION**, has provided us with the very best answer:



BERT THOMPSON

"It is hardly conceivable that anyone would question the interpretation of these as ordinary days were it not for the fact that people are attempting to reconcile Genesis and evolution."¹

That, in essence, is the problem. People insist on making the literal, 24-hour days of Genesis 1 into ages in order to make theistic evolution "come true." And this problem is both within and without the brotherhood. Let me cite just two examples. First, consider this quote from Dr. Kenneth Taylor's book, **EVOLUTION AND THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT**:

"To me it appears that God's special creative acts occurred many times during 6 long geological periods capped by the creation of Adam and Eve perhaps more than 1 million years ago. This idea seems to do justice both to the Bible and to what geologists and anthropologists currently believe. If they change their dates up or down, it will make no difference to this belief, unless to move Adam's age forward or backward."²

Dr. Taylor, besides introducing the "day-age" theory into his book for young people to read and believe, has also introduced the same false theory into the Bible. The reader will remember that Dr. Taylor is the paraphraser of **THE LIVING BIBLE PARAPHRASED**. In the first chapter of Genesis, Dr. Taylor has introduced into the very text of the chapter, via his "explanatory footnotes", the day-age theory. Dr. Taylor has

"explained" in his footnotes that the Hebrew phrase "evening and morning" "literally means 'period of time' ". This is Dr. Taylor's way of explaining that a "day" was instead a "geological period of time." And this is in the "Bible" yet!! We shall see, within the confines of this article, if Dr. Taylor's assessment is correct (the cautious reader will notice already that it is not correct) about the days being ages.

Our second example, unfortunately, comes from within the brotherhood. John Clayton, a high school teacher from South Bend, Indiana is a converted atheist. Since brother Clayton's conversion, he has been active in presenting a number of seminars on "Does God Exist," as well as in publishing a monthly journal under the same name. Although brother Clayton's seminars do present much good material (and sound, logical reasons for God's existence), they also present an attack on so-called "church traditions." Some of these "traditions" were: (1) belief in a relatively young earth; (2) contention for a world-wide flood, and (3) emphasis on the geological significance of the Genesis flood. Hear, for example, a statement made in brother Clayton's **TEACHER'S MANUAL** for the "Does God Exist" series:

"If dinosaurs existed 200 million years before Adam and Eve it does not present any problem to a literal understanding of the Genesis account. . . ."³

In his "Does God Exist" course (No. 8), Clayton makes the following statements:

The most commonly used Biblical text to prove the Earth is very young in age is Exodus 20:11. 'For in six days the Lord made heaven and Earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested. . . . If this passage were all that existed in the Bible about creation, certainly we could conclude that the entire creation took place within six days, including everything that has ever existed on the Earth being formed during that time. This is a very shallow conclusion, however, and in the view of the writer is inconsistent with the Genesis record as well as other parts of the Bible."³

The reader will quickly see that brother Clayton does not believe in the six, literal, 24-hour days of Genesis 1. It should come as little surprise, however, since brother Clayton is an avid supporter of trying to correlate the geological timetable with the Genesis

account.⁸ The remainder of this article will be dedicated to concluding if theistic evolution is possible. The question we shall strive to answer is: Were the days of Genesis 1 literal 24-hour days? If they were, then theistic evolution is a practical impossibility, for there would be no time for evolution to have occurred.

Were the days of Genesis 1 literal, 24-hour days? To quote Dr. Henry Morris in his new book, **THE GENESIS RECORD**:

"Ask yourself this question: 'Suppose the writer of Genesis wished to teach his readers that all things were created and made in 6 literal days. Then what words would he use to best convey his thought?' Would he not have used the words we find in Genesis 1? If he had wished to convey the idea of long geological periods, however, he could have done it far more clearly and effectively in other words than in those which he selected. It was clearly his intent to teach creation in 6 literal days. Therefore, the only proper way to interpret Genesis 1 is not to 'interpret' it at all. That is, we accept the fact that it was meant to say exactly what it says. The 'days' are literal days, and the events described happened in just the way described."⁴

In his book, **BIBLICAL COSMOLOGY AND MODERN SCIENCE**, Dr. Morris gives an extensive list of contradictions between the day-age theory and the Genesis account. The reader is referred to that listing, as it is much too extensive to give at this point. Dr. Morris' list contains 23 such contradictions, and shows beyond the shadow of a doubt that the "days" of Genesis 1 could not have been "ages".⁵

To prove that theistic evolution is not correct, let us now disprove that the days of Genesis 1 were "ages". The following items are given in proof of the fact that the days of Genesis 1 were just that - days, of 24-hours in duration, and no more!

1. The phrase "evening and morning" is used over 100 times in the Old Testament with the word YOM. Each time it refers to a 24-hour day. Dr. Henry Morris, writing in **BIBLICAL COSMOLOGY AND MODERN SCIENCE**, makes the following statement: "The Hebrew words for 'evening' and 'morning' occur over 100 times each in the O.T. and always in a literal sense."⁶ Should we assume a different meaning in Genesis 1?

(Continued On Page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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"Ichabod"

Eli was the high priest. Israel took the ark of God into battle. The ark was captured by the enemy, the Philistines. Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were killed. When Eli received news of the capture of the ark, he fell over and died. The wife of Phinehas was "with child." When she received news of the battle, she went into labor, and gave birth to a son. When she was told she had born a son, "she answered not, neither did she regard it" (I Sam. 4:20). She named the child Ichabod, which means, "Where is the glory?" Certainly this was a fitting name for the child under the circumstances. She said, "The glory is departed from Israel" (I Sam. 4:21).



BOBBY DUNCAN

With the exception in chapter 14 of this book of one's being identified as 'Ichabod's brother,' this is the only mention of him in scripture. But the idea expressed in the name - "Where is the glory?" - may be found throughout the Old and New Testaments alike. On numerous occasions men have so departed from the way of the Lord as to warrant the naming of their children Ichabod. When Saul, the first king of Israel, disobeyed the voice of God, and refused to destroy the Amalekites, he had rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord rejected him (I Sam. 15:1-26). The same Saul who had been so humble and submissive when he was chosen king at Mizpeh, concerning whom the people had shouted, "God save the king," has now lost his lustre and his glory by forsaking God. One in the kingdom of Israel at this time might well have named her son Ichabod. Or some woman in the church at Corinth might well have named her son Ichabod during the time when the church at Corinth was tolerating - yea, even glorying in - a case

of fornication such as was not even named among the Gentiles. A man in the church had taken his father's wife (I Cor. 5). The glorious church of our Lord loses its glory when it chooses to ignore sin among its members. In order for the church to maintain its glory it must keep itself pure and unspotted (Eph. 5:27). Where is the glory either to God or to man in a congregation or a brotherhood that tolerates all kinds of sin?

It would not have been out of order for some woman in the church at Laodicea to name her son Ichabod. The lukewarm condition of that congregation made the Lord want to vomit them up (Rev. 3:16,17). They thought that they were a glorious congregation. They said: "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing" (v. 17). The Lord, however, nailed a sign over their meetinghouse door which read: "ICHABOD". No doubt, there are churches in this generation over whose door the Lord has already tacked a sign, reading: "ICHABOD." No doubt, there are churches in which it

would be in order for all the mothers to name their sons Ichabod. There are brotherhood projects in connection with which mothers would do well to name their sons Ichabod.

Churches that tolerate sin among their members, or that are lukewarm, or churches that have forsaken the way of the Lord, or that neglect the preaching of the simple word of God are churches that have lost their glory in the sight of God. It matters not how large crowds they may have attending their services, if they are not faithful and loyal to the truth, they have lost their glory.

There is certainly nothing wrong with large crowds and numerous responses. But compromising the truth, whether it be in a local congregation, or on a national network television program, is a shameful and inglorious thing to do.

PLEASE PARDON US... AGAIN

The fine article, SINCERITY AND GOOD CONSCIENCE, on the front page of our June 10 issue was written by Curtis Dowdy. We failed to name the author.

"Since The Bible Says We Are Saved By Faith, Why Do You People Say We Are Saved By Baptism"

A reader of Words of Truth asks the above question, and we are happy to answer. The apostle Peter wrote: "Be ready always to give answer, to every man that asketh you. . . ." (I Pet. 3:15). This we shall try to do "with meekness and fear" as the rest of the verse requires.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

The Bible does clearly state that we are saved "by faith," (Read Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 5:1; et al). However, not one of these texts say that our salvation is "by faith only," as so many religions today teach. In fact, Jas. 2:24 says salvation is "NOT by faith only." My brethren and I teach exactly what the Bible teaches: "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. 2:8). But the next question should be: WHEN does faith save us? Is it before and without any act of obedience on man's part? Or, is it after we have obeyed? Read Rom. 6:17-18: ". . . but ye have obeyed from the Heart. . . being then made free from sin. . ."

It surprises many to learn that Eph. 2:8-9 was written to people who had been baptized! In fact, some of them had to be re-baptized! When Paul came to Ephesus he found some had been baptized "unto John's baptism" (Acts 19:1-6) evidently after it was made void and was superceded by gospel baptism in the name of Christ (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:38). About twelve men were re-baptized - this time, in the name of the Lord, and they were among the 'charter members' at Ephesus. Later, to that very church Paul wrote: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10).

Instead of teaching that the Ephesians were

saved without baptism, this verse says they were made new creatures (or, were "created") "in Christ Jesus." You see, they had been "baptized INTO Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:3-5); and upon entering "into Christ" they were "created" OR MADE NEW CREATURES (II Cor. 5:17) by God the Father.

This is exactly in harmony with Gal. 3:26-27: "For ye are all. . ." (what?) ". . . Children of God. . ." (how?) ". . . by faith. . ." (where?) ". . . in Christ Jesus." (when?) ". . . For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." The converse of that statement must also be true: You are not children of God without faith, or out of Christ Jesus; for as many of you as have not been baptized into Jesus Christ have not put on Christ.

Let us ask Jesus how much faith we must have to be saved? Hear him answer: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk. 16:15-16).

We must take all that the Bible says on a subject. We in the church of Christ believe and teach the Bible passages which stipulate that faith is necessary to salvation. If faith "alone" saves, we are saved! But if faith must motivate one to obey Christ to be saved (Heb. 5:8-9), we still are saved! We are safe if our religious neighbors are; and we are safe if they are not! We are doubly safe!

Since the Bible says, "baptism doth also now save us" (I Pet. 3:21), how dare any man say, Baptism does NOT save us?

This no more means that baptism is our savior, than does those passages which teach that faith saves us, teach that faith is our savior. Christ saves those who obey him!

Tasting Our Words

JOHN B. TRACY

An elderly woman was asked what formula she used for keeping so many friends. She replied, "There's just one daily rule I follow. I'm always mighty careful to stop and taste

(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"What is the 'sin unto death?'"

"If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: not concerning this do I say that he shall make request" (I John 5:16). Persons primarily involved in this passage are (a) "any man," and (b) "his brother." Inasmuch as the relationship of the first to the second is that of a brother, it follows that the words "any man," must be understood of those who are members of the body of Christ, and approved of God; and that the brother contemplated here as sinning is an erring child of God.

Earlier, in the context, the inspired writer had penned these words, "These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him" (I John 5:13-15).

The connection between the latter statement (I John 5:13-15), and the former one (I John 5:16), is very close. Faithful children of God have great "boldness" (confidence) toward the Father. This confidence leads us to make our wants known with the assurance that if we ask according to his will, he hears us. Though we are unable to "see" the answer to our prayers, the confidence which we enjoy in him enables us to know that "we have the petitions which we have asked of him." As an example of this, if we see "a brother sin a sin not unto death," we are encouraged to ask in his behalf, assured that God will give us life for "them that sin not unto death." We must not from this assume, so the writer warns, that God will give us life for "them that sin unto death." There is much a sin; and, though we are not prohibited to pray in behalf of all men, we are not commanded to do so in this instance, there being no promise that God will hear and answer a petition in behalf of such a person.

An analysis of I John 5:16, shows that (1) a child of God can sin; (2) there is a sin not "unto death"; (3) we are admonished to pray for those thus sinning, assured that God will hear and answer our prayers; (4) there is a sin "unto death"; (5) for those thus guilty it is useless to pray.

What is the sin designated as "unto death" contemplated here?

It seems obvious that no specific transgression, no overt act of disobedience meets the demands of the case here. True, the sin was such that the brethren could "see" it, but the word is metaphorically used, signifying an awareness on the part of the brethren that sin is committed and is thus not limited to acts witnessed by the brethren. Few indeed are the sins which brethren commit in the presence of *Christian* witnesses! The sin is said to be "unto death." The "death" referred to was not bodily death, the loss of life; but, spiritual death, separation from God and all that is good. It was such a sin as only *children of God* may be guilty of. It is specifically declared to be the sin of a

"brother." Any correct interpretation must take into account these considerations and embrace them. The sin contemplated was not such as is usually designated as capital, i.e., such gross sins as idolatry, murder, adultery, blasphemy, etc. The effects thereof are visible and obvious. It is possible for one who prays to distinguish between the sin "unto death," and the sin "not unto death."

To what kind of sin does the apostle refer?

John wrote much about sin and forgiveness in the first of his Epistles. Sin, alas, is in the lives of us all (I John 1:8-10); it originates with the devil (3:8); Jesus died in order that forgiveness might be possible (3:16); when, through weakness, ignorance and inadvertance we sin, he is our "advocate" (heavenly lawyer), who intercedes in our behalf (I John 2:1); and his blood cleanses us, as we walk in the light, from all sin (I John 1:7). He has promised that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:8).

The teaching on these matters, by the beloved disciple, is abundant and its significance clear. It is possible to reduce it to the following logical form:

(1) The Lord will forgive every sin, of whatever nature, from which a brother turns in penitence and confesses (I John 1:8).

(2) There is a sin, however, which the Lord will not forgive (I John 5:16).

(3) Therefore, the sin which the Lord will

not forgive is a sin, any sin, every sin, all sin, that a brother will not confess.

If the proposition is valid, and the premises are true, the conclusion is irresistible. The proposition meets the requirements of validity; and the premises are obvious, being stated virtually in the words of the inspired text. Inasmuch then as the proposition is a valid one and the premises are true; and, since the Lord will forgive every sin which a brother confesses, and there is a sin which the Lord will not forgive, the sin which the Lord will not forgive is a sin which a brother will not confess.

The context supports and corroborates the foregoing conclusion. If my brother in Christ sins, and manifests penitence, I not only may, it is my duty to pray in his behalf under the divine injunction: "Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (James 5:16). However, if my brother exhibits stubborn impenitence and persistent rebellion, following the commission of sin, it is useless and vain to petition the Father in his behalf. The Lord, under no circumstance, forgives the sin of impenitent people.

The "sin unto death" is therefore, a disposition of heart, a perverseness of attitude, and an unwillingness of mind to acknowledge one's sin, and from it turn away. This attitude effectively closes heaven's door in one's face!

The Day Of The Fakes

ROGER E. DICKSON

The world is loaded with those who are claiming to perform miracles just as Jesus and the apostles in the first century. Faith-healers are found in every corner of the world. And it is easy to be deceived by their illustrious works. After all, Paul said that the man of sin would come working LYING wonders (II Thess. 2:9). And his works—the works of the man of sin—are just that, lying. Many deceitful works are performed today which lead many into deceitful religions. And let us remember that God will let one be deceived if he has not a love for the truth (II Thess. 2:10-12).

One of the most thorough studies of faith-healers which has been conducted in these modern times was carried out by a doctor William A. Nolen, author of the bestseller, *THE MAKING OF A SURGEON*. Dr. Nolen has written numerous medical articles in American magazines and journals. He writes a monthly article entitled "A Doctor's World" in the nationally known magazine *McCALLS*. Dr. Nolen is an internationally known surgeon and in his years of practice, he has performed over 5,500 surgeries.

Dr. Nolen is not a Christian and not too much of a believer in God. But in his search for a miracle he traveled many places in the United States and the Philipines. He wanted to find a real miracle, a modern-day miracle. It is most interesting to note the conclusions he drew from his study which he published in the book *HEALING: A DOCTOR IN SEARCH OF A MIRACLE*. Concerning faith-healers he wrote:

After doing my very best for eighteen months to find some shred of evidence that somewhere there was someone who had miraculous healing powers, I concluded that no such person existed

(p. 268).

Nolen goes on to explain that one can be cured of some psychosomatic illnesses by merely being convinced that he is cured. Such is not miraculous healing but a matter of mind over matter. He wrote:

Let me repeat: a chrismatic individual—a healer—can sometimes influence a patient and cure symptoms of a functional disease by suggestion with or without a laying on of hands. Physicians can do the same thing. These cures are not miraculous; they result from corrections made by the patient in the function of his autonomic system (nervous system not under the conscious control of an individual) (p. 282).

It may be stated that since Dr. Nolen is not a Christian he is not a justified witness of miracles. But we must remember that Jesus and His apostles performed miracles before those who did not accept His teaching throughout the entire New Testament there is not one denial of Jesus' miracles. The unbelievers just could not deny that they really happened.

Jesus warned that there would be false christs and false prophets who would even lead away some of His disciples (Matt. 7:15; 24:11,24; II Thess. 2:9). There will always be deceiving works of satan — false miracles. The Christian must always be on guard lest he be led astray by such deceiving works (I Cor. 10:12). Any man who claims to work miracles today has marked himself. He has marked himself as not being a man of God. He is a man of satan.

The miracles of God recorded in the Bible accomplished their purpose; they therefore ceased. Such miracles were recorded to provide sufficient evidence to prove Christianity true (John 20:30,31). And such are sufficient proofs today to those who are hungering and thirsting after truth (Matt. 5:6; Lk. 6:21). — Caixa Postal 30.543-01000, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 1)

Guy N. Woods says:

"And the evening and the morning were the first day. (Gen. 1:4,5). This simple and sublime statement is decisive of the matter. Of what was the first day composed? Evening and morning. Into what was it divided? Light and darkness. The Hebrew text is even more emphatic. The translation, 'And the evening and the morning were the first day,' is literally, 'And evening was, and day was, day one.' The two periods - evening and morning - made one day. The Jewish mode of reckoning the day was from sunset to sunset; i.e., evening and morning, the two periods combining to make one day."7

Some people, of course, are quick to affirm that the 24-hour day could not have begun until the 4th day with the creation of the sun (Genesis 1:14). But the same "evening and morning" is used with the word "day" before Genesis 1:14 as after. Why should there be 3 long eras of time before the appearing of the sun, and only 24-hour days after its appearing?? Insofar as the view is concerned that these could not be ordinary days because the sun had not been created, we should like to point out that we still measure time in terms of days even though the sun does not appear and is not visible. For instance, north of the Arctic Circle and south of the Antarctic Circle the sun does not appear for periods of time up to 6 months at the poles themselves. We would not think of measuring time in terms of the appearance (or lack of appearance) of the sun in these areas. No one would contend that at the north or south pole a day is the equivalent of 6 months elsewhere.1 As Guy N. Woods has said:

"If to this the objection is offered that the sun did not shine on the earth until the fourth day, it should be remembered that it is the function of the heavenly bodies to MARK the days, not MAKE them! It is night when no moon appears; and the day is the same whether the sun is seen or not."7

In fact, one could turn this objection against those who raise it. The longer the first 3 days, the more catastrophic it would be for the sun not to be on hand during those days. The vegetation created on the 3rd day might survive for a few hours without sunlight, but hardly for a geologic age! As Woods states:

"Botany, the field of plant-life, came into existence on the third day. Those who allege that the day of Genesis 1 may have been long geological ages, must accept the absurd hypothesis the plant-life survived in periods of total darkness through half of each geologic age, running into millions of years!"7

Others are quick to state that the plants must have lived by the "light" of Genesis 1:3. If this be true, how is it logical for us to assume that these plants lived for 3 "days" (ages) on this light and suddenly on the 4th "day (age) shifted to sunlight for their support. Is this logical?

(Continued)

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8. Note Concerning John Clayton: It is the firm opinion of this writer, and of several other writers in the brotherhood, that the teachings of John Clayton on the issues involved with evolution (especially theistic evolution) are totally in error. Men such as brother Clayton should be marked and not used as teachers until such time as they are grounded firmly in the teachings of the Bible. The reader is urged to beware of false teachings such as brother Clayton's. I would like to recommend to you two excellent articles concerning brother Clayton's teachings. First, Wayne Jackson printed in THE CHRISTIAN COURIER (August, 1975) a lengthy article by Larry Chouinard entitled "A Review of the 'Does God Exist' Series." The article deals effectively with brother Clayton's stand on the issues, and points out his false teachings. Brother Jackson's footnote at the end of the issue's article is worth reading and heeding.

In the November 26, 1976 issue of WORDS OF TRUTH (also CHRISTIAN COURIER, December, 1976 and THE DEFENDER April 1977) an excellent article appeared from the pen of brother Wayne Jackson entitled "Flat Earth Theology." The reader is referred to that article. It deals with brother John Clayton's attempts to harmonize the Genesis account of creation with the geological time periods, and gives some valuable material on brother Clayton's works and teachings.

I feel very strongly that brother Clayton's teachings are doing immeasurable damage to the battle so many of us are fighting against evolution (theistic or otherwise). I concur strongly with Wayne Jackson's footnote comment in the CHRISTIAN COURIER (August, 1975 p 15): "Until he (Clayton) comes to a better understanding of the Bible, we do not recommend him." This writer agrees wholeheartedly. — 1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840.

Tasting Our Words

(Continued From Page 2)

my words before I let 'em pass my teeth." That's sound advice for us all! Inspiration places a great deal of emphasis on man's speech. Two of the Ten Commandments refer to sins of the tongue (Exodus 20:7, 16). Of the seven things God hates, three have to do with the tongue (Proverbs 6:16-19). Our words will ultimately judge us for eternity (Matthew 12:36).

Why are the words we choose so important? Because they are mirrors of a person's heart. Just as a physician can examine the tongue of a patient to determine the diseases of the body, our Lord, by examining the words we speak, can diagnose diseases of the heart (Matthew 15:34). The tongue is like a thermometer in that it registers the temperature level of our spirituality. The tongue, however, is also like a thermostat in that it governs and regulates the temperature of our hearts.

Just as a highway is "slippery when wet" so is the tongue capable of slipping and causing irreparable damages. Sometimes we talk when we should be listening - maybe that is why we've been given two ears, but only one tongue. Edward Richards has said: "A wise old owl lived in an oak; the more he saw the less he spoke; the less he spoke the more he heard; why can't we all be like that bird?" At other times we are given too much to exaggeration. When our emotions are aroused we often think less but talk more. We're like the fellow who had his mind in neutral but his mouth in high gear!

Speaking too quickly is a temptation to many of us. We often "shoot from the hip" before having a chance to size up the situation. Through inspiration, James said, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:9). We need, therefore, to think twice before we speak once.

The tongue is capable of much good. The writer of Proverbs reminds us: "Pleasant words are an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones" (Proverbs 16:24). But, the tongue is also capable of great destruction. "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" (James 3:5). Let's taste our words to insure their sweetness.

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"A New Breed Of Preachers"

The above title was used by the late H.A. Dixon, beloved president of Freed-Hardeman College in an article which appeared in the October 1969 issue of "The Spiritual Sword." Brother Dixon said: "For some time we have heard of a generation gap. . . It reminds us of Rehoboam who appealed to young men for advice, MICHAEL D. STONE rejecting those who had years of experience behind them. The gap idea originated outside of the church but it has been brought into it. The emphasis upon it indicates that many do not know about the stalwarts who in the past have contended worthily for the faith and who with dedicated spirits have given reason for their hope against all who would challenge them. This group is not aware of what these battles have meant. In them they have overlooked that Paul needed a Timothy and Timothy needed a Paul, that older men needed younger men and the younger men needed to learn from the profit by the guidance of those who had experience. This is true in family, community, and national life or in the church of God and it accords with the teaching of God's word."

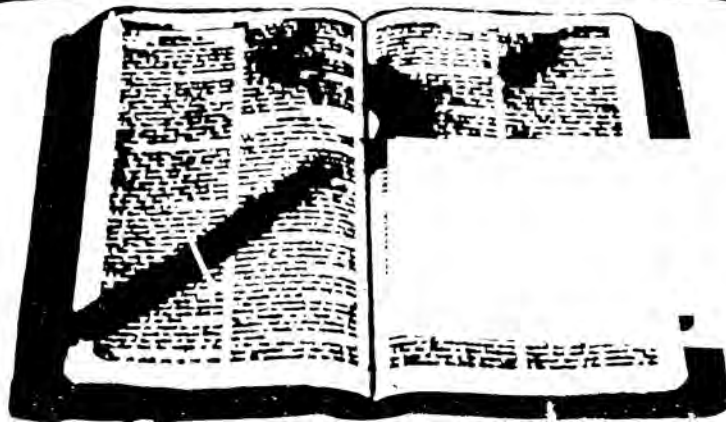
As a younger preacher (age 29), I personally am very thankful to those preachers who preceded me in the proclamation of the gospel. I realize there are some preachers today laboring under adverse circumstances; however, most of us don't really know what persecution is. About the only persecution some of us receive is when the air conditioner fails from the house to the meetinghouse on Sunday morning.

Preacher, when was the last time you prayed to God, thanking Him for the good men who "blazed the trail" for you? — 111 Piedmont Dr., Concord, N.C. 28025.



MICHAEL D. STONE

WORDS of TRUTH



*"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32*

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

*"The words of truth"
26:25*

*"I came by Jesus Christ"
1:17*

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Miracles Today???

ROGER E. DICKSON

Do Miracles occur today?

Certainly, we must confess that that is a relevant question today. It seems that every city has its "faith healer" claiming miracles of healing. And the number who have been deceived into believing their practice is not few by any means. Many have claimed to have been miraculously healed or have personally seen miracles performed.

It is this writer's contention that miracles, as defined in the Bible, do not occur today. This does not say that God does not work in a providential manner today. Providence, though, is not God's working as He worked in miracles. God does providentially work today. He works behind the veil of natural law to accomplish His purposes. But God does not work through miracles today as He did in Bible times. This does not say that He cannot perform miracles today, but that He has chosen not to do so. With this in mind, let us study the reasons the Bible says miracles are not occurring today.

The very nature of true miracles is evidence that there are no such happenings today.

RECOGNIZABLE CHARACTER OF TRUE MIRACLES IS PROOF. The miracles of the Bible could be clearly recognized as such. Peter healed a lame beggar and there was no question in the minds of the observers that he had been healed (Acts 3:4-14,16). None of the wonderful works of Jesus were performed without observers (Acts 26:26). And none denied His marvelous works. Faith healers today have observers, but these observers are different from those of the first century. None of those in the first century, even the unbelievers, ever denied the actual happening of a true miracle. They knew that a miracle had been performed (Acts 4:14-16). How different is this picture from the situation today. The audiences of modern-day healers are always full of those who are not convinced by the flimsy evidence of supposed miracles performed by the faith-healer. Those in the audience of Jesus never denied His works.

PRESENCE OF SUPERNATURAL IN TRUE MIRACLES AS PROOF. The presence of the supernatural was clearly seen in the miracles of the Bible. Those who performed the miracles proclaimed the Word of God in an

uncontradictory manner (Jer. 28:9,15; Deut. 18:20; Gal. 1:6-9; Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:3,4), and the miracles confirmed their word. The presence of the supernatural was shown in Jesus and was recognized by those who observed His work (John 4:19, 39-42; Lk. 7:11-17).

Obviously, the presence of the supernatural is not evident in the so-called miracles of modern-day faith healers. We must never confuse emotion and trickery for a miracle. A man may be convinced that he does not have a broken leg by the power of suggestion, but the first moment he tries to walk on it he will be convinced that he really does. The fake miracles of modern-day healers do not compare with the miracles of the Bible. They do not manifest the presence of the supernatural, but the presence of a super-fake.

THE MIRACLE'S RELATIONSHIP TO NATURAL LAWS AS PROOF. Miracles in the Bible were recognized as not being in accordance with the ordinary occurrence of natural laws. Jesus calmed a storm at sea (Matt. 8:23-27; Mk. 4:35-41). He brought sight to known blind persons (Matt. 20:29-34; Mk. 10:46-52). He walked on water (Mk. 6:45-52; John 6:16-31). He changed water to wine (John 2:1-11). He multiplied loaves and fishes (John 6:4-14). Let those who claim to perform miracles today match the miracles of the Bible. Let them convince their audiences as thoroughly as those in the first century were convinced when they witnessed an actual miracle of God (Matt. 21:18-20).

The characteristics of the miracles of Jesus and how He performed them is evidence that modern-day healers do not perform such deeds. Jesus healed what would be to modern-day healers the unhealable (John 9; Lk. 7:11,12). He healed completely and not partially, as is so characteristic of the so-called healings of modern-day healers (Matt. 15:29-31; Mk. 7:31-37). Jesus did not make a point of publicizing His healings as do modern-day healers (Matt. 8:1-4; 9:27-31). And Jesus never failed to heal anyone He intended to heal. Such is not the case with modern-day healers. Multitudes go from their meetings unhealed. Also, Jesus did not require faith of all those He healed (Lk. 7:11-12; John 5:2-13). Many modern-day healers do require that their subjects have

faith. If they do not have enough faith, they cannot be healed.

The miracles of the Bible were performed even before the eyes of unbelievers (Acts 4:14-16; 1 Kings 18:30-40; John 11:45,46). None of these ever denied the occurrence of the miracles they witnessed. There are no denials of Jesus' miracles found in the gospel records. None of those who were cured ever said that they really had not been cured. Such is not the case after the meetings of modern-day healings (cf. John 9:20-25). Many are on record stating that they were never really cured during a faith healing meeting, even though they claimed to be at the time.

The gift to heal people in a miraculous manner was one of the many miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit in I Corinthians 12:8-10. Miraculous gifts were received only by the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 18:8). Notice the following: (1) The ability to perform miracles of healing in the first century was received through the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 18:8; Rom. 1:11; II Tim. 1:6; cf. I Cor. 9:1,2; II Cor. 12:12; Gal. 3:2-5; 4:6). (2) But there are no apostles of Christ available today to lay hands on people. (3) Therefore, we must conclude that no one has the power to perform miracles of healing today, for none have received such a miraculous gift by the laying on of the apostles' hands. All the original apostles of Christ have died.

The purpose for the open manifestation of miracles in the Bible was to confirm the Word of God. In the first century, the purpose of miracles was to prove that the message preached by Christ and the first Christians was sent from God (Mk. 16:17-20; Heb. 2:3,4; cf. I Cor. 4:19,20; 12:8-11; Eph. 4:11-16; Acts 20:23; I Thess. 1:5). And the Word of God was firmly confirmed in the first century by the open manifestation of miracles (Heb. 2:3,4). Many of the miracles that confirmed the Word were recorded to confirm continually the Word during all ages of history (John 20:30,31; Mk. 16:20). We must conclude, therefore, that there is no need for an open manifestation for miracles today.

The purpose for an open manifestation of miracles has been accomplished. The Word of God has been confirmed. Some miracles were recorded to confirm the Bible for all ages. Why would we need more miracles today to

(Continued On Page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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Righteousness Without Works

That the gospel of Christ enables sinners to be made righteous without works is a fact agreed upon by all, or nearly all, Bible believing people. But just how sinners are made righteous without works is a matter of much disagreement. Some insist that the concept of righteousness without works would



BOBBY DUNCAN

exclude obedience to the commands of God in order to be saved. According to them, salvation by grace means unconditional salvation; and that if one does anything in order to be saved, he is making void the grace of God, and trying to be saved by his works. These insist that our acts of obedience have nothing to do with whether or not we will be saved. To others the concept of righteousness without works simply excludes the command to be baptized. Strangely enough, to the Bible believing, repenting, and confessing Christian, baptism is arbitrarily classified as a work. Therefore baptism is excluded, while faith, repentance and confession are not. Still others believe in a sort of transferred righteousness, whereby the righteousness of Christ is transferred to sinners, thus making sinners righteous. Neither of these ideas is taught in the Bible.

What, then, does the Bible mean when it says: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.

2:8,9)?

It has been said that the Bible is the best commentary on the Bible. If you want to understand the Bible, then read the Bible and let the Bible interpret itself. Does the Bible explain what is meant by the expression, "righteousness without works"? Indeed, it does! In Romans 4:6,7 Paul is discussing this very thing when he says: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Now, if you want to know what it means to be made righteous without works, look at this statement. How does David describe the man who is righteous without works? Does he describe him as one who has been saved without doing any thing, or as one who is unconditionally forgiven of his sins, or as one who has had the righteousness of Christ transferred to him? Oh, no! He rather describes him as one who has been forgiven of his sins, without regard to what he may have done in order to be forgiven.

You see, there are two conceivable ways by which one might be completely righteous: (1) by never becoming guilty of any sin, and (2) by being forgiven of all sin. One who has never committed any sin is righteous, because he has never done anything to make him unrighteous. He is righteous by works, that is, by his own good life of righteousness. But one who has ever committed a single sin can never be righteous in this manner. If he is ever to be declared righteous at all, it

must be by having all sins forgiven.

To illustrate, we may say that there are two classes of people who will never be punished for any crimes: (1) those who never become guilty of any crime, and (2) those who, though found guilty of crimes, are granted a full and complete pardon. Those in the first group have no need to beg for the mercy of the court, for their deeds warrant no punishment. But those in the second group are free from punishment, not because of their deeds, but in spite of their deeds.

Since all "have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), we cannot be declared righteous on the basis of our works. While it is true that a criminal may "pay his debt to society," we can never pay the price of a single act of sin. But when one obeys the gospel of Christ, he is forgiven of sins (Heb. 5:8,9). Having been forgiven of all sins, he is righteous - just as righteous as if he had never sinned the first time. He is really and truly righteous, because his sin has been paid for by the blood of Christ, he has been forgiven of every sin, and God has declared him righteous.

What a shallow concept of sin and of forgiveness a man must have to think that repenting and being baptized for the remission of sins would make void the grace of God, and would be to seek righteousness on the basis of works! Dear reader, when one complies with God's terms of pardon, he is acknowledging that he cannot be saved by works. If one could be saved by works, he would not need to comply with God's terms of pardon. He would need no pardon!

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 7

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of last week's article which began an extensive listing of reasons why the days of Genesis 1 are not "ages", thus disproving theistic evolution.)

2. The Hebrew word YOM is used and defined in Genesis 1:5 ("God called the light day"). As Dr. Henry M. Morris states:

"As added proof, the word is clearly defined the first time it is used. God defines His terms! 'And God called the light Day and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.' (Genesis 1:5). YOM is defined here as the light period in the regular succession of light and darkness, which, as the earth rotates on its axis, has continued ever since. This definition obviously precludes any possible interpretation as a geological age."

The Hebrew word YOM is used some 1284 times in the Old Testament alone. This writer will be the first to grant that there ARE a few exceptions in which it does not mean a literal 24-hour period, but the context clearly indicates the meaning as



BERT THOMPSON

being a longer period of time than 24 hours. In the context of Genesis 1 there is no support for the word's meaning a long period of time. It is a well-established hermeneutical principle that the student of Scripture should adhere to the original and literal meaning of a word unless there is compelling reason for adopting a figurative or derived interpretation. We repeat - in the context of Genesis 1 there is no support for the word's meaning a long period of time. Should principles of Biblical interpretation require that we accept this "day" as being an ordinary day.

Most reputable Hebrew dictionaries do not recognize or allow the interpretation of YOM as 'a period of time' that is to be understood as lasting millions of years. The Hebrew dictionaries of Buhl, Brown, Briggs, Driver, and Koenig do not record the interpretation of YOM in the hexaemeron as a long period of time.²

Examples of places in the Old Testament where YOM is used in the context to mean a period longer than a 24-hour day are: Genesis 26:8, Genesis 4:3, Genesis 2:4, Psalms 95:8-9, and Jeremiah 46:10. In Genesis 2:4 YOM has reference to the total of the 6 days of creation. In Psalms 95:8-9, the word YOM refers to the 40 years of wandering by the Jews. In Jeremiah 46:10, the prophet uses the word to refer to the time when Israel would be punished for her sins (This time of punishment was not limited to a single

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods.)

"Today in studying our lesson in the Adult Gospel Quarterly, I noticed in the historical setting--'Time - from the beginning to A.M. 1 (the first year of the world)' was given...I would be most unhappy going through the entire series of lessons and not have a clear understanding as to the meaning..."

In order that all the space possible may be given to explanation and exposition of the sacred text, the writers of the comments frequently use abbreviated forms and contractions in order to shorten words and phrases, and so reduce the space required. This practice is limited to those instances where long usage has established such contractions, abbreviations and forms as standard procedure.

The most common ones follow:

(1) A.M., the abbreviated form of the Latin phrase, *anno mundi* (an'no mun'di), which means "in the year of the world," and is used to fix the date of any given incident from creation. For example, "A.M. 1500," would signify, "fifteen hundred years after creation." Adam Clarke regularly uses this manner of reckoning, listing it at the head of all chapters in the Old Testament. His chronology is based on the system devised by Archbishop Ussher which few students would regard as absolute, particularly prior to the flood.

(2) A.D., the abbreviation for *anno Domini* (an'no dom'i-ni), "in the year of (our) Lord," i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ. This is used to designate the period specified within the Christian era, as A.D. 1959, nineteen hundred and fifty-nine years after the beginning of the Christian era. This date, however, is slightly misleading, because of a remarkable circumstance in connection with the formulation of the present system of chronology. Students of the birth of Christ are often perplexed to note that he was actually born *four years* before the time from which we count his birth. The reason is that centuries passed after his birth before anyone attempted to calculate dates *from* the birth of Christ; and, then, when the monk--Dionysius--did so in A.D. 256, he made a mistake of four years in his calculations. He placed the birth of our Lord in the year of Rome 754. But, it is known that Herod the Great who issued the decree for the slaughter of the male children at Bethlehem died in April of the year of Rome 750. Christ was born shortly before this event--and thus four years earlier than that designated by Dionysius. He was, therefore, five years old at the close of A.D.1. Many years passed before the error was widely discovered; and, inasmuch as the dates were scattered in records throughout the world, the matter was allowed to stand, being rectified, at least in part, by the designation of B.C. 4 or 5, for the actual birth of Jesus.

(3) B.C., designates the phrase, "before Christ." Thus 1500 B.C., means fifteen hundred years before the birth of Christ.

(4) Numerous other devices are used to shorten words and phrases to conserve space, common to all writers: viz., abbreviation of the Latin *videlicet--namely; i.e., for the Latin id est--that is; etc., et cetera--and so on, or and so forth; mms--manuscript; D.V., abbreviation for the Latin Deo volente--God willing, or, by God's will; ibid., for the Latin*

Ibidem--in the same place; cf.,--compare.

Every desk or study table should have a good dictionary of the English language. Judiciously used, it will be found to contain a vast gold mine of invaluable information to those who would be good students of the word. One of the major causes of poor and inadequate study is the failure fully to apprehend the meaning of English words. The wisdom of the ages is buried in marvelous translations in our mother tongue. Surely there is no endeavor so glorious for the mind of man as the industrious mining of this priceless ore.

It's About Time

For too many people the time to obey the gospel never comes.

Recently when I had finished a home study with an older couple and was pressing for a decision, the lady responded, "I am going to obey the gospel someday." I had heard that story many times before and nearly always with the same results: someday never came. A few weeks later I visited them again. This time she told me, "It's not going to be long now." A short time ago they came to service on Sunday morning. She had come prepared to obey the Lord in baptism. When I met her and spoke to her about the matter, she said, "It's about time." And so it was for her and so it is for many others.

Her statements caused me to think and to make the following observations:

It is about time to obey the gospel, regardless of who we are, if we have not done so already. Why should anyone wait? Today is the day of salvation. Now is the only time we have. God has not promised to save anyone tomorrow: for He has not promised a tomorrow. To wait is to take a terrible and unnecessary chance with the soul, the most precious entity in all the world. Thus to wait is not reasonable. The Lord wants to save everyone (Matt. 11:28-30), and He wants to do it now. But He cannot (or does not) save apart from His plan, the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God to save (Rom. 1:16). So it is time for everyone to obey the gospel plan of salvation.

It is about time for those who have obeyed the gospel to live faithful Christian lives. While this includes being faithful to the church, its assembly and work, I want to think here of purity. The Lord expects us to be faithful, our commitment demands it, and the world needs it. The philosophy of "everybody is doing it" is a blanket to cover all kinds of evil, to justify every form of immoral conduct. But the charge of Christ is for His people to live in the world but be no part of it, to live about it, and to keep oneself pure from the sins that constitute worldliness. James says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this. To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world (James 1:27). It is inconsistent for one to call himself a Christian while he is conformed to the world.

What would you think of a gardner who refuses to work in a garden? Or what about a barber who can never find time to cut hair? What then do you think of a Christian who does not follow Christ?

It is about time those who live faithful



HOWARD WINTERS

Christian lives wake up to their mission. The church of Christ is a teaching institution - it must teach or die. Each member is saved for a purpose, and a part of that purpose is to help save others - to help proclaim the gospel, God's power to save, to every living soul within his power. Of course everyone will not receive the message of truth. But the Lord's commission to us does not concern itself with the reception (the Lord is concerned with reception and it is shown elsewhere in the New Testament), but with the teaching. Teaching or preaching is thus our mission in the world. We are to preach the gospel to every creature, regardless of whether it is accepted or rejected, believed or disbelieved, obeyed or disobeyed. For some we have already waited too long - they died yesterday without Christ; for others, today will be the last chance; and for vast multitudes, it can be done only in our generation. So it is about time we got started on our mission - about time we started doing what we were saved to do.

Around the turn of the century Sam Jones, a flamboyant evangelist who was able to capture the imagination of his generation, was having what were called "Quittin' Meetings." During such meetings people were given special opportunities to confess their sins and repeat - to quit their meanness! Many quit swearing, quit gossiping, quit drinking, quit stealing, quit lying, quit smoking, etc. He asked one woman who responded to his appeals, "What do you plan to quit?" She replied, "I ain't been doing nothing, and I aim to quit it."

It is about time many of us quit doing nothing and got on with the business before us, preaching the glorious gospel of Christ to the whole world. — P.O. Box 5423, Station B, Greenville, S.C. 29606.

Assembling Regularly

God wants us to love his word. The Sweet Singer of Ancient Israel declared, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Psalm 119:97). In Ephesians 4:15 Paul commands that we speak the truth in love. It cannot be spoken in love or received in love unless we truly love it from the heart. We cannot love him and despise his word. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). The apostle of love wrote, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3). We cannot love his word and despise him.

Singing, praying and the study of his word form a prominent part of each of our public worship services. We sing, pray and study the word of the Lord each Sunday morning, each Sunday evening, each Wednesday evening and at every service of all gospel meetings.

The Father must be pleased that you assemble regularly and enthusiastically each Lord's day to remember the sufferings of his Son on Calvary. Do you really suppose there has been a Lord's Day since Pentecost but what our blessed Father has remembered what his Son did for lost humanity on "the old rugged cross?" God does not want us to forget the "sacrifice that was made, the love

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Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Miracles Today???

(Continued From Page 1)

confirm the Word of God when the Bible says that those miracles which are recorded are sufficient to produce faith and life (John 20:30,31)?

The revelation of the gospel was to be confirmed by an open manifestation of miracles in the first century (Mk. 16:20; I Cor. 14:22; Heb. 2:3,4; Acts 14:3), but when the revelation ceased (and it did, Jude 3; II Pet. 1:3), there would be no more need for the confirming miracles. We are receiving no more new revelations from God today. Therefore, we need no confirming miracles. The age of miracles has passed away.

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 2)

24-hour day, but a great period of captivity.). Genesis 1, however, does not lend itself to the idea that YOM indicates a period of greater than 24-hours, especially in light of the phrase "evening and morning" which is repeated so often.

We are in agreement with Marcus Dods, writing in the EXPOSITOR'S BIBLE, when he says: "If the word 'day' in these chapters does not mean a period of 24 hours, the interpretation of Scripture is hopeless."³

3. When the Hebrew word YOM is preceded by a numeral it always CARRIES the meaning of a 24-hour day. it occurs over 100 times in the Pentateuch alone in this manner, and ALWAYS the meaning of a 24-hour day is conveyed (e.g.: Genesis 8:3, Numbers 13:25, Exodus 20:11). Arthur Williams, writing in the CREATION RESEARCH ANNUAL, has stated: "We have failed to find a single example of the use of the word 'day' in the entire Scripture where it means other than a period of 24 hours when modified by the use of the numerical adjective."⁴ Why should our understanding of the word YOM in Genesis 1 be any different from the rest of the Old Testament?

Dr. Arthur C. Custance, author of the multi-volume set THE DOORWAY PAPERS, sent a letter to each of 9 contemporary Hebrew scholars, members of the faculties of 9 leading universities (3 in Canada, 3 in America, and 3 in England). He asked these men: "Do you consider the Hebrew YOM as used in Genesis 1 accompanied by a numeral to be properly understood as: (a) a day as commonly understood; (b) an age, or, (c) an age or day without preference for either?" Seven of the 9 responded; all 7 stated that it meant a day as commonly understood!⁵

4. When the plural for YOM (YAMIM) is used in the Old Testament, it ALWAYS has reference to the 24-hour period of time. YAMIM never refers to a long period of time. Dr. Henry Morris says:

"When the word 'days' appears in the plural (YAMIM) as it does over 700 times in the Old Testament, it ALWAYS refers to literal days. Thus, in Exodus 20:11 when the Scriptures say that in 'six days' the Lord made heaven and earth,

the sea, and all that is in them, there can be no doubt that 6 literal days are meant."⁶

5. The Hebrew word OLAM means a long period of time. Why did Moses not use this clearly understood term if he wanted to convey the meaning that the creation took place over long geological periods of time? Obviously he did not want us to understand Genesis 1 in this manner.

6. How could these "days" of Genesis 1 be long periods of time when the plants were created on the third "day" and the sun was not created until the fourth "day"? If there were geological periods of millions of years in duration, then how did the plants survive without the sun for these millions of years (see our comments on number one in this list). And consider the insects. Many species of plants need insects to reproduce, for these insects help cross-pollinate such plants (e.g.: yucca plants). How did these plants survive for millions of years without their needed friends, the insects?

7. The creation days were 24-hour days because of plain statements made about them in the Scriptures. "In six days Jehovah made heaven and earth" (Exodus 20:11). "For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (Psalms 33:9). "Let them praise the name of Jehovah; for He commanded and they were created" (Psalms 148:5). Do these verses infer a long period of evolutionary processes? Or do they instead speak of 6 literal 24-hour days and instantaneous creation? The thoughtful reader will

immediately notice that it is the latter, not the former.

8. God told Israel in Exodus 20 to observe the Sabbath Day. He said He chose this particular day for the memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage because for six days He labored and rested on the seventh day. God gave His people a 24-hour day to observe - not an eon!! This should settle the matter beyond the shadow of a doubt.

(More to follow)

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Assembling Regularly

(Continued From Page 3)

that was exhibited" on Calvary's cruel brow either. We may rest assured of this. By eating and drinking regularly of the bread and the fruit of the vine each Lord's Day you show tht Christ's body and blood still mean much to you. By doing this regularly you help form an extended chain of weekly links which connect Calvary with the second advent of his Son.

Brother G.E. Woods is a great and godly preacher of the gospel. I have known him for many years and consider him a very warm, personal friend. He was baptized on August 24, 1926. During the recent 1975 Freed-Hardeman College lectureship he presented a great lesson on "The Church Is." His biographical sketch suggested that he had never missed a Lord's Day worship since his baptism. That covers a fifty year period. That is really remarkable isn't it? If memory serves me correctly, I only remember missing the partaking of the Lord's Supper one time in the one third of a century I have been a Christian. There have been two or three times I had to miss the assembly due to severe illness but had each act of worship either at home or in my hospital room. The last time I had to miss the assembly on Sunday I shed tears because I was unable to be with the Lord's people in public worship. That is how much public worship should mean to all of us. I may miss heaven due to some other deficiency in my life but I do not intend for it to be due to church absenteeism!!

Since God has said so much about giving in the New Testament, he must be pleased when you show a willingness to give as he has prospered you. Such displays your interest in keeping alive his cause upon earth. Paul had much to say about giving in I Corinthians 16:1-2 and in the two chapters of II Corinthians 8 and 9.

Is the Father pleased that you believe and

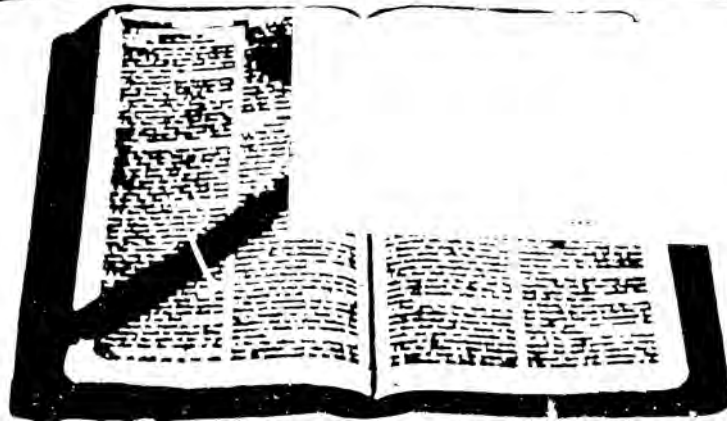
practice regular church attendance? Indeed he is. He loves the church and your attendance is suggestive that you also love the bride of his Son.

I close this short article with three or four powerful passages of Scripture. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." (Psalm 122:1). "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24). "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 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" (Heb. 10:14-15).

(Additional item: After typing the above material I recently had the opportunity of being a fellow speaker on a program with Brother G.E. Woods. It was the night we honored his illustrious brother at the Guy N. Woods Appreciation at Henderson, Tennessee, on February 7, 1977. I asked Brother Earl about this matter. He told me that he had not missed a Sunday assembly from the time of his baptism in 1926 to that night in 1977. He further suggested that Brother Guy had only missed one Sunday and that was due to surgery and a longer than anticipated stay in the hospital. These two brothers have been great and godly preachers and still are and how great stands their practice in matters of public worship!

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WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"Take forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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A Closer Evaluation: "Junior Church" Versus Training For Worship Classes

[Editor's Note: We believe this article by Martel Pace drives home an important point. The same may be said of the earlier article by Ray Hawk. There are extremes in both directions that need to be avoided. In this connection, please read this week's editorial, which is a reprint of an article we published last year.]

The June 17, 1977 issue of Words of Truth contained an article by brother Ray Hawk entitled "The Assemblies of the Church of Christ Salute You." I believe that more needs to be said on the matter he dealt with and to make a more careful distinction about what is currently being practiced by many growing congregations in the



MARTEL PACE

brotherhood. There would be a distinction, made between the dangerous practices of some in having a "Junior Church" and others who have training classes during the worship hour to prepare the children who are bussed in without a church background to teach them how to conduct themselves in worship.

By "Junior Church" I mean those few cases where brethren have decided to separate the youth of the congregation on Sunday morning during the worship hour into a continuing period of distinctive worship and where nonmembers are served the Lord's Supper as part of the "training." In addition, the report is that some have elected "junior elders and junior deacons" to function in this "junior church." I believe this is a mockery of God's scheme for the church and unnecessarily isolates youth on a continuing basis which cannot help but create a generation gap that may well be unbridgeable in later years.

By "Training For Worship Classes" I mean something different from the above. Many congregations who have experienced rapid growth in attendance by bussing have brought in children whose background is totally non-religious. They have no conception of

proper conduct in worship and would not act accordingly if they did. Their parents are not with them and when adults have been appointed to sit with them neither the adults nor the children could suitably engage in worship. There was a constant undercurrent of noise that was distracting and detrimental to worship. Consequently the elders would decide that something separate as a training device might be a wise expedient for the young children and for all those new ones being bussed to worship who had no acquaintance with what was being done in worship. The decision of our elders was to have this for four year olds through the fourth grade and the older new bus children for the first eight weeks. After eight weeks of instruction the older children for the first eight weeks. After eight weeks of instruction the older children are being put back into the regular worship (still with some supervision). Of course, parents who wish to permit their children to attend the "Youth Bible Hour" might do so. If Christian parents did not desire their children (below the fifth grade) to participate in that separate training class they need not do so.

We view this as an expedient means of solving a problem. We feel that any expedient could be taken to extremes as brother Hawk pointed out, but it need not do so! Having restrooms in the church building is an expedient; we could have gold-plated faucets in them but this would be carrying an expedient to a ridiculous extreme. Having a fellowship room attached to a worship edifice is an expedient; building it five hundred feet long for a congregation of 100 members would be a foolish extreme. Deciding to have a separate training class during worship to avoid confusion is an expedient; it would be foolish to continue dividing the congregation into separate assemblies for the aged, the fifties group, the forties group, etc.

However, I wonder if some think it unscriptural to have a separate service for the deaf who utilize the same building (while meeting in another part of the structure) at the same time the hearing meet for worship in the auditorium. Several congregations do this and I have heard no objections to it.

We have long isolated the infants in a nursery with ladies in attendance looking after

them. Brother Guy N. Woods (Questions and Answers, Open Forum, p. 293) justifies this on the grounds that "those capable of worship can both see and hear and thus participate in auditorium activities." The ladies who serve in such nurseries, however, say that when they have more than three babies, worship is impossible, that the women often end up talking among themselves and only quickly take of the communion when it is brought to them. Brother Woods defends the ideal, but the ideal is often impossible in nurseries. Should we not therefore condemn the nurseries on the same basis that some condemn all youth training classes?

I agree that there should be a time and place when the whole church should assemble for the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:20). But we have long recognized this is seldom possible and have provided evening communion in a separate room for those unable to attend on Sunday morning. I have heard no criticism of this in years.

I assume most brethren would agree with brother Woods that multiple services of the same congregation at different hours does not violate this principle (p. 293). Brother Woods states that this does not violate New Testament principles because "an assembly at another time does not provide opportunity to come together in one place." Our situation had become one of overcrowding; we had another auditorium in which some could be placed at the same time with some adult supervision for training to prepare them at an early age (fifth grade level) to return to the worship in the auditorium. Is this wrong because it occurred at the same hour but right if we had it one hour earlier? This writer has difficulty seeing that justification of separate assemblies separated by time would not also justify separate assemblies separated by space for the temporary solution of the problem of overcrowding. If one is justified on the grounds of overcrowding, why is not the other? Is the time factor the only criterion that justifies the one while condemning the other?

We oppose a "Junior Church" and what it implies. We believe our elders have the right, however, to have a class in which to train "un-churched" children and later move them into the worship at a set age or school level

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Let Us Be Careful

(Reprinted from November 26, 1976)

Those who are familiar with WORDS OF TRUTH and with us personally know that both it and we have done our best to stand firmly for truth and right, and against error and sin down through the years. We spoke out against anti-ism clearly and regularly a few years ago, when it was such a threat to the church; and we still do as the need arises. In more recent years we have spoken out against departures from the faith in the other direction. It has been our observation that those who refused to take a stand against right-wing anti-ism are also refusing to take a stand against left-wing liberalism. As for us, we cannot be a part of the great "silent majority". We plan to continue teaching truth and opposing error, whether on the right or the left. We are thankful that many others are doing the same, and many of them much more effectively than are we.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Having so said, we believe we will not be misunderstood when we urge that brethren exercise good judgment in the discussion about certain differences that have arisen in connection with our bus programs. Some of the speeches we have heard and articles we have read have manifested a good spirit and evidence of a great deal of forethought. Others, however, showed some signs of scorn for those who differed with them, and demonstrated what appeared to be a disposition to exclude from fellowship those whose judgment did not coincide with their own. May it be understood that we refer here

to those defending certain practices, as well as those opposing certain practices. As a matter of fact, some of the most scathing language we have heard in connection with this matter was in CRITICISM of those who had been CRITICAL of certain others.

It seems obvious, at least to this scribe, that, while some of our brethren are using extremely poor judgment in some areas, most of the differences centering around the bus program are in areas of judgment. We realize also that one may use such poor judgment as to sin, even in a matter of judgment. For example, Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). It is completely within the realm of human judgment as to how one is to GO. But it would have been a serious error in judgment for this writer to have walked to recent preaching appointments in Texas, Indiana, and Georgia. Had he done so, brethren would have been in order in pointing out the folly of such action. On the other hand, we could argue that many preachers live next door to their meetinghouses, and walk to their preaching appointments regularly. If it is in order to walk a short distance to preach, how can one be consistent and argue that it would be wrong to walk longer distances? Would it be Scriptural to walk a block, but not a mile? To walk a mile, but not two? To walk two, but not ten? We walk across the street every morning to the study to preach by means of radio.

If one were to try to establish that it is unscriptural for one to walk to the place where he is to preach, in order to be consistent, he would eventually be driven to the position that one could not walk across the street in order to

preach by means of radio. But if he were to admit that such is in the realm of human judgment, and then proceed to show that walking distances of many miles to preach is poor judgment under most modern circumstances, he would have less difficulty.

Even so, we believe that separate worship services and the giving away of ten-speed bicycles can be more consistently and successfully opposed by showing that they represent the abuse of a principle that is legitimate within the bounds of good judgment. Who opposes the giving of awards at Vacation Bible School? But this does not justify the abuse of the principle. Who opposes the hiring of someone to keep the nursery during the services? But this does not justify the abuse of the principle. It is the abuse of the principle, and not the principle itself, which we should oppose.

But the primary purpose of this article is to urge that brethren, in discussing these matters, do so with all prudence. Let us take care that we do not harshly judge one another. Let us not impugn one another's motives, or integrity, or respect for the authority of the Bible. Let us be willing to admit that our own judgment is not always perfect, and that we may have erred in matters pertaining thereto. Let us unite in standing firmly for truth and against error. Let us "love one another with a pure heart fervently" (I Pet. 1:22). Let us do everything that we can do, and that is right, to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27). And, finally, let us avoid an unnecessary division in the body of Christ, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

Number 8

[Note: This article is a continuation of last week's article and the article of the week before, listing reasons why the days of Genesis 1 are not "ages", thus disproving theistic evolution.]

9. If the 6 days of creation were long periods of time, then the 7th day would logically be the same. But consider these two items:

(A) Since Exodus 20:11 states that God rested on the 7th day, and since Genesis 2:1-3 states that God "finished" His creating and rested, and since many advocates of the "day-age" theory say that we are now in the 7th "day," then obviously God must still be resting. But Jesus worketh even until now." Obviously the 7th day is not a long period of time, and therefore the other 6 could not be either.

(B) Adam, the first man, was created on the 6th day, lived in Eden through the 7th day, and into at least a portion of the 8th day. Adam and Eve must have lived through the entire 7th day, before God drove them out of the garden. Surely God would not have cursed the earth during the 7th day, which He



BERT THOMPSON

blessed and sanctified! If these days were geologic periods of time of millions of years in length, we have the interesting situation of Adam having lived in a PORTION of one age, through the WHOLE of another age, and into at least a PART OF A THIRD AGE--in which case Adam was many millions of years old when he died!! But this is denied in Genesis 5:5.

(C) If the "day-age" theorists accept day seven as an age also, we ask, "What about day eight, or day nine, or day ten...?" On the ASSUMPTION that the earth is 7,000 years old (a most distinct possibility), let the day-age proclaimers put 2,555,000 days (7,000 years at 365 days per year) on a page. Now let them circle the day which began the normal 24-hour day. Let them also give just one scripture reference to substantiate the validity of that circle. Can they do it? No! Will they do it? No! They cannot do it and will not do it for the same reason you will not jump over your house. It is impossible!

10. In Genesis 1:16 we read that 2 great lights were made--one to rule the day and the lesser to rule the night. Since the days were divided into "evening and morning" we would have to assume (if the "days" were eons of time) that the sun came up but did not go down for millions (billions?) of years. Is this possible? It is not!

11. Genesis 1:14 says that God created the light to divide the day from the night, and that they were to be fore "signs, for seasons, for

Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods.)

"What is the difference, if any, in the meaning of the terms, 'fornication' and 'adultery'?"

Current English usage of the word *fornication* is indicated in the dictionary, is "illicit sexual intercourse on the part of an unmarried person," and *adultery* is "voluntary sexual intercourse by a married man with another than his wife or by a married woman with another than her husband." (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary) Thus, according to the foregoing definition, only single people may commit fornication, since this is the act of "an unmarried person."

However, the Greek word translated *fornication* in the New Testament (*porneia*), is of much broader significance, and cannot properly be limited to the dictionary definition above given. Inasmuch as the biblical meaning of the word is that which must be determined, we must dismiss the dictionary definition as inadequate, and deal with the term in its New Testament meaning.

Arndt and Gingrich define *porneia* (fornication) as "every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse," and Bagster includes, among its many meanings, fornication, whoredom, concubinage, adultery, lewdness, and uncleanness. Similarly, Thayer defines the word as "illicit sexual intercourse in general." *Adultery* is translated from the Greek word *moicheia*, and its meaning is correctly represented in the English dictionary definition given above.

Thus, the New Testament meaning of fornication is *any kind of wrong-doing involving sexual acts*; adultery is *sexual intercourse between two people one of whom is married*. Fornication is a generic term, in its biblical usage, signifying every type of sexual aberration; adultery is a specific word and when literally used, simply designates "illicit sexual intercourse." This distinction is highly significant in the light of our Lord's words in Matt. 19:9: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery..." Had he said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for adultery..." then the exception would have been limited to that embraced in the meaning of the word *moicheia* (adultery), the usual and normal act of sexual intercourse. By using *porneia* (fornication), however, he extended the exception to include every form of sexual deviation, such as homosexuality, incest, lewdness, bestiality, and perversion, as well as adultery. It is obvious, from these clear and unmistakable definitions that fornication, in the scriptures, means much, much more than is indicated in the dictionary definition, which merely reflects present-day usage, and that it cannot be limited to this. The theory, that the "fornication" mentioned in Matt. 19:9, alludes to sin prior to the beginning of the marriage relationship and permits re-marriage only in those instances where it is discovered that one's companion was not a virgin at marriage, cannot be sustained. The Jerusalem decree, sent out to Gentile churches, warned the people to "abstain...from fornication," and the edict embraced all Christians, not merely those who were unmarried. Moreover,

the prohibition included more than simple sexual intercourse because every person familiar with the significance of the term used

would understand it to include every kind of wrong-doing in this area (Acts 15:29).

Reply To A False Teacher

No. 3



Wayne Jackson

In our on-going review of Homer Duncan's graceless booklet "Some Observations Concerning the So-Called Church of Christ," we quote the following from the Texas editor's pen: "Church of Christ people do not understand the Biblical doctrine of salvation by grace because they do not understand what the Bible teaches about the depravity of man." He further suggests that the doctrine of total depravity "teaches that there is nothing in unregenerate man which is acceptable in the sight of a Holy God."

The doctrine of hereditary total depravity (also called "original sin" - especially by Catholics) originated in the writings of the "church fathers" of the post-apostolic age. Though it has no support in Scripture, a few Bible verses are perverted in its defense. The Westminster Confession of Faith (Art. VI) declared that by the fall of Adam and Eve, to all mankind was imputed the guilt of sin. So, we are allegedly born with a totally corrupt nature "whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil..."

Let us examine a few of the passages which are claimed as support of this doctrine.

PSALM 51:5 - "Behold I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." This is frequently cited in support of the inherited depravity concept. The following observations are in order. First, this passage is a part of highly figurative Hebrew poetry; it must not, therefore, be aligned against clear, literal portions of Scripture which affirm the innocence of children (Matt. 18:3; 19:14; I Cor. 14:20), and reveal that their knowledge of, and inclination toward, sin does not commence until "youth" (cf. Deut. 1:39; Isa. 7:15; Gen. 8:21).

In the second place, there are alternate reasonable views of Psalm 51:5. (a) Since the passage is a penitential psalm, growing out of David's sin with Bathsheba, some have felt that these words are figuratively put into the mouth of the conceived child (II Sam. 11:5) to stress that the conception was the result of a sinful act, as if one would say, "In anger my father beat me," the anger being attributed to the father, not the child. (b) Others suggest that David alludes to an incident in his ancestral lineage, an adulterous affair (Gen. 38), where by he was considered born ceremonially defiled (Deut. 23:2), because he was of the 10th generation of that illicit relationship.

It is possible, though, that David merely alludes to the environment into which he was born and the fact that he had sinned from a relatively early point in his life, that fact being dramatized by the figurative language. For example, in a similarly poetic section of Scripture, Job, in denying that he had neglected his benevolent responsibilities, affirmed that he had cared for the orphan and widow from his "mother's womb" (Job 31:18). The Hebrew parallelism clearly shows

he used the word "womb" in the sense of "youth".

ROMANS 5:19 - It is claimed that Paul taught "inherited depravity" when he declared that "through the one man's (Adam) disobedience the many (the human race) became sinners (i.e., were born in sin)." The verse teaches no such thing! The latter part of the passage announces that "through the obedience of the one (i.e., Christ) shall the many be made righteous." Does this declare that simply on the basis of Christ's obedience all men are now intrinsically righteous so that salvation will be universal? Of course not. This apostle teaches this: By Adam, sin was introduced upon the earth; all men, upon reaching a state of moral and spiritual responsibility, by their own free will, choose to sin, hence become sinners. Even so, through the work of Christ was a system (plan) introduced into the world, that responsible people might submit to and thereby become righteous (i.e., accounted righteous, forgiven of past sins). Any view of this, or any other passage, which negates man's personal responsibility, is erroneous.

ROMANS 1-3 - But Mr. Duncan urges his readers to "Study the first three chapters of the book of Romans and judge for yourself if the doctrine of total depravity is taught in the Bible." A brief summary of these chapters reveals the following: Paul, in chapter 1, indicts the ancient Gentiles as sinners. Chapter 2 argues that the Jews are equally guilty. In the 3rd chapter, the apostle concluded that ALL, therefore, are under sin (vs. 9), giving special emphasis to the fact that even the OT law affirmed such. Now note this fact: it is clearly stated that the Gentiles "became vain in their reasonings" (1:21). They BECAME, not, always had been, that way. Too, it is later said that men "have all TURNED aside, they are together BECOME unprofitable" (3:12). The passage simply does not say nor even imply that these men were "born away" or that they had always been unprofitable.

The Bible does not support the notion of an inherited, total depravity. And certainly one does not need to accept such a false doctrine to appreciate the salvation which results from the grace of God.

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God Gave Them Up

W.C. QUILLEN

Three times in the first chapter of the Roman letters, Paul says of men and women in the heathen world, "God gave them up."

First He gave them up to uncleanness because of their rebellion against God and their rejection of the truth. When they knew God they neither glorified Him nor gave Him thanks. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of God Almighty into idols and images, and changed the truth of God into a lie. They worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator. Through the lusts of their own hearts, they dishonored their own bodies among themselves.

Then God gave them up to vile affections,

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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days, and for years." Dr. John C. Whitcomb, writing in *AND GOD CREATED*, makes the following keen observation:

"Actually it is amazing when we begin to study Genesis, to discover that we have a built-in scheme of interpreting the length of these days, which shows that these must have been the same kind of days we know today. For example, Genesis 2:14 says that God created the lights to divide the day from the night, and that they were to be for signs, for seasons, for days, and for years. If the days are ages, then what are the years? If a day is an age, then what is a night? In other words, the whole passage becomes ridiculous when we begin to stretch or re-interpret the word 'day.'"

12. Genesis 2:1 reads, "And the heaven and the earth were FINISHED, and all the host of them." God finished His creation on the 6th day. If these were long periods of time and the means of creation was evolution, why does the Bible say that the evolutionary process ENDED with the 6th day?

A Word About II Peter 3:8

II Peter 3:8 says, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." This passage is often used by proponents of the "day-age" theory as "proof" that the days of Genesis 1 could very well have been "ages" (since a "day" can be equal to a thousand years, according to II Peter 3:8-????). But, as Dr. Henry Morris says:

"...The familiar verse in II Peter 3:8...has been badly misapplied when used to teach the day-age theory. In the context it teaches exactly the opposite, and one should remember that 'a text without a context is a pretext.' Peter is dealing with the conflict between uniformitarianism and creationism prophesied in the last days. Thus, he is saying that despite man's naturalistic scoffings, God can do in one day what, on uniformitarian premises, might seem to require a thousand years. God does not require aeons of time to accomplish His work of creating and redeeming all things. It is even interesting that on the above equation--one day for a thousand years or 365,000 days--the actual duration of God's work with the earth and man--say about 7,000 years--becomes about two and a half billion years, which is at least of the order of magnitude of the 'apparent age' of the world as calculated by uniformitarianism."

Or, to quote David C.C. Watson in his book, *THE GREAT BRAIN ROBBERY*,: "To toss II Peter 3:8 into the middle of Genesis One is about as sensible as to affirm that Matthew 27:63 means, "After three thousand years I shall rise again." The passage simply shows that time is of little essence with God! Peter's obvious intent is that in a short period of time, namely, a day, God can do work that would take man or nature a thousand years (if ever) to accomplish. Likewise, Peter says that God does not tire, although thousands of years

may pass, because with Him a thousand years are but as a day. This passage in II Peter serves to show the eternal nature and omnipotence of God--not that the days of Genesis 1 are "aeons of time." Furthermore, the passage makes no sense if we interpret that a day is a long period of time. If we understood by this passage that a long period of time is only one day in God's time, then Peter would have been saying, "A long period of time is with the Lord as a thousand years." This makes absolutely no sense at all! It is obvious that the days of Genesis 1 are not to be "interpreted" through false use of II Peter 3:8.

Can Theistic Evolution Be True?

Theistic evolution cannot be true! ALL EVOLUTION IS ATHEISM! We quote once again from the pen of Charles Smith, former President of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism: "Evolution is atheism!" Evolutionists have even referred to evolution as the "final nail in the coffin of God." Woolsey Teller, also of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, has perhaps said it best when he stated: "The God idea cannot be reconciled with our knowledge of evolution!" We are totally in

agreement. Revelation 3:16 is still the best answer to theistic evolutionists!

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A Closer Evaluation:

(Continued From Page 1)

when the elders deem it appropriate. For outside brethren to tell local elders what they cannot do as an expedient borders on an abridgement of local autonomy.

Let us not condemn every expedient because some have taken it to extreme. Let us consider always, "How would we deal with

the problem of overcrowding and constant noise in our congregation?" before condemning our brethren for actions they have taken.

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God Gave Them Up

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disgraceful passions and desires. When given up to this degree they sank deeper into sinful action and shameful behavior. "Even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lusts one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet."

This sordid sin is the same sodomy of ancient Sodom whose destruction was brought about by God. Fire and brimstone rained down upon that sinful city, and destroyed every person within it. The wicked people of the city not only brought destruction upon themselves, but also upon their own innocent children. Truly, "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness."

These sins described by the apostle are the

most indecent, indelicate, vile, shameful, disgraceful, filthy, ugly and nasty with which any one can be charged. Without ample evidence, no one should so charge another. Yet the apostle, as delicately and decently as he could, charges both men and women of the ancient Gentile world with this awful crime. The charge is verified by many writers of the ancient world, who say the sin was prevalent among people of all classes in many nations, and was approved by law in some countries.

It seems unthinkable that thousands of people, men and women in America, admit without shame or embarrassment, but with pride and open demonstrations that they are guilty of this sin of shame, homosexuality. Not only so, but they demand public approval and lawful protection in their conduct.

"God gave them up to a reprobate mind."
P.O. Box 212
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The Reunion Beyond The Grave

G.F. RAINES

I have read that when a native of the Fiji Islands dies, the mourners climb trees or cliffs, shouting the name of the deceased and crying, "Come back! Come back!"

A person who has read the Bible and believes it does not expect his dead relatives and friends to come back in the sense in which they are vainly bidden to by the Fiji Islanders, but God's faithful children can hope to be reunited with all their deceased loved ones who have died in the Lord when Jesus returns.

When David's son died, the sorrowful Hebrew king said: "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (II Sam. 12:23).

Paul says: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4:16, 17). — Newton, Ms. 39345.

WORDS of TRUTH

"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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The Greatness Of The Church

The church of Christ is the greatest institution the world has ever known. It is a divine institution and we should never think of it in terms of an ordinary worldly thing, nor should we act toward it as such. The church is Christ's Kingdom on earth over which he reigns (Matt. 16:16-18). One cannot be loyal to Christ without being loyal also to his kingdom, the church. Christians and the world need to appreciate the church more. We will notice some characteristics of its greatness.



JOHN WADDEY

The Church is Great Because of Its Founder. The founder is a most important factor in the merit of any organization. He sets it in order as to its functions. He gives it a code or standard of operation. His wealth and mentality furnishes the life-blood of the institution. An organization will usually reflect the spirit and ideals of its founder. Jesus founded the church (Matt. 16:18). He did all of these things for his church. It is our obligation to reflect his divine spirit and ideals in the life and conduct of the church. Paul exhorts us to "have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus..." (Phil. 2:5). Again, he writes, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I am of Christ" (I Cor. 11:1).

The Church is Great Because of the Price Paid for It. Most worldly concerns were founded to enrich the founder. Even many churches began for this purpose. The Lord's church was not established for financial gain. What could the Creator want to extract from the work of his own hands? (See John 1:3.) His purpose for the church was to benefit lost mankind. He purchased the church with his own blood when he died the accursed death on Calvary (Acts 20:28). To give us the church he humbled and emptied himself of his equality with the Father and

became a servant of men, willing even to die for humanity (Phil. 2:5-8). He taught mankind that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

The Church Is Great Because Of Its Relation to Christ. There are several ways of comparing or describing the church. It is the spiritual body of which Christ is head (Eph. 1:22). It is the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:22,32). The Church is the kingdom of Christ and he reigns as its only king and lawgiver (Matt. 16:18-19). It is his army and he is our captain and leader (Heb. 2:10; II Tim. 2:3-4). The church is his family, for they do the will of his Father in heaven (Matt. 12:50). There is a certain honor that comes from intimate association with great people. How much more honor is there to the church to be so wonderfully associated with King Jesus. While we ponder this point, ask yourself, "Can I be saved out of Christ's kingdom; out of his army; out of his family?" The obvious answer is no. But since to be in his church is to be in all of these, to be a member of his church is to be saved.

The Church Is Great Because of Its Mission. The great purpose of the church is to save lost men from sin and damnation by winning them to Jesus. It is charged with preaching the gospel to the whole creation (Mk. 16:15). It helps sinners reform their lives and be translated into God's kingdom on earth (Col. 1:13). It prepares men for heaven (Eph. 4:11-15; II Pet. 1:10-11).

Christ's church is not a political power like Catholicism, nor is it an economic power like the Latter Day Saints church. It is not war-like like Islam. Rather, the church evangelizes, telling all men the good news about Christ and salvation. It serves the unfortunate and keeps Christians in faithful service (Eph. 4:11-12). As a great beacon light it holds forth the word of life to a world lost in the darkness of sin and error (I Tim. 3:15).

The Church is Great Because of Its Blessings. James tells us that every good and perfect gift comes down from God (1:17). These blessings are available to humanity within the church. There are certain privileges and blessings available to

men in America. You may read of these blessings in a book or hear of them from others, but you will not receive them until you enter in. So with the church. You must become a member to enjoy the benefits. Salvation in heaven awaits faithful members of the church (Eph. 5:23). Every spiritual blessing is available in Christ, i.e., in his church (Eph. 1:3-7). There are such wonderful privileges as sonship to God, fellowship and brotherhood with all other Christians, Communion, prayer and providential care from God are yours. There are great opportunities to serve God and your fellow man in the greatest institution on planet Earth, as we work to make the world a better place in which to live. Really, there is no way to adequately measure these rich blessings.

The Church Is Great Because of the People Who Compose It. They are called Christians because they strive to be like Christ. They are called saints because they are the ones who are dedicated to God's service. They are in the world, yet they do not live like the sinful world. (John 17:14). True Christians are honorable, humble, generous, pure, well-informed, truthful, faithful, benevolent, devoted, diligent, and loyal. No, they are not perfect, nor are they angels. But with God's help they are daily growing into the image of Christ by the renewing of their minds (Rom. 12:1-2). What great joy it is to be a part of God's family on earth.

The Church is Great Because of Its Ultimate Goal. Paul taught the Ephesian Christians that Christ is the saviour of the body (the church) and that he will one day present the church to himself in glory (Eph. 5:23, 2e7). In I Cor. 15:24, the same writer says, "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God..." John in a glorious vision saw the new Jerusalem, the church, in the presence of God in the heavenly paradise (Rev. 21:1-4; Heb. 12:22-23).

We should realize that it is a matchless privilege to be a member of the greatest organization the world has ever known. Prophets predicted its coming. Kings and holy men desired to see the day. The rich and the poor, every devout God-

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FROM
THE EDITOR

A Perversion Of I Peter 5:3

Twice in recent months (June 4, 1976 and April 29, 1977) we have dealt with the false doctrine that the eldership of a congregation has no authority to make decisions respecting that congregation. This doctrine has become quite popular, not only among those who are generally considered extremely liberal, but also among some who



BOBBY DUNCAN

are not generally considered to be liberal. It is a doctrine that must be refuted; and its advocates - like the advocates of most false doctrines - choose to ignore the arguments made in refutation of their doctrine. It is difficult for us to believe that our articles in WORDS OF TRUTH have not come to the attention of those who have written on the other side of the question. Yet we have not seen attention given to a single argument we have made on the subject.

The editor of INTEGRITY (June, 1977) refers to what he calls "even the best efforts" at refuting his false position as "nothing more than some clever semantic hocus-pocus." Then he himself engages in some not-so-clever "semantic hocus-pocus," by calling attention to some "alternate translations of Peter's word 'lord it over'" in I Peter 5:3. His "alternate translations" remind us of the denominational debater who argued that a secondary meaning of the word baptize is "to sprinkle," to which his opponent replied that a secondary meaning of believe is "to have an opinion," and that a secondary meaning of saved is "to be

pickled." Mark 16:16 would then read: "He that hath and opinion, and is sprinkled, shall be pickled."

The good editor simply cannot see how an eldership can obey I Peter 5:3 ("Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock"), and at the same time have the authority to make any decisions respecting the congregation. He does say that he will "roll out the red carpet for a treatise which clearly explained how elders can claim 'power' and 'authority' over the church without violating both the spirit and the letter of the New Testament teaching."

We do not now, nor have we ever claimed to be smart; but it does not take a Solomon to see that Peter's admonition does not negate such passages as Hebrews 13:17. The argument against the authority of the eldership goes something like this: Elders are not to be "lords over" the flock. Since they are not to be "lords over" the flock, therefore, they can have no authority. This proves elders can have no authority! (?) Does it? Well, let us see. In Mark 10:42, 43 and in Matthew 20:25, 26 Jesus told the apostles that they were not to exercise "lordship" (same Greek word as in I Peter 5:3). Does this mean that there is no such thing as apostolic authority? What does

the good editor's nine lexicons have to say about this matter? Would he say: "In view of this list, it is a very risky business to try to claim 'power' and 'authority' for" apostles? We would "roll out the red carpet" to this editor if he would give us a treatise explaining why I Peter 5:3 precludes eldership authority, while Mark 10:42,43 and Matthew 20:25,26 do not preclude apostolic authority.

In connection with these statements in Matthew and Mark, Jesus used himself as an example of what he was teaching his apostles about "lordship". And in connection with the statement in I Peter 5:3 Jesus is used as an example of what Peter was teaching elders. Does this mean that Jesus has no authority? If not, why not?

The editor of INTEGRITY says in closing his remarks: "In the meantime, we welcome debate of the issue (even if it is occasionally more emotional than rational), for we are hardly likely to learn anything from those who say only what we already know and agree with." Well, there are some who are not likely to learn anything from anybody - not even from the inspired writers. You see, they already know everything! We trust the editor of INTEGRITY is not in this category.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 9

THE ALLEGED "PROOFS" OF EVOLUTION

Some people, as we have already discussed, believe in evolution because they believe they have substantial evidence to support their claims. Surely evolutionists feel that they have ample "proof" that their theory is both plausible and tenable. And

creationists, on the other hand, believe that they have ample "proof" that God is Creator. These two concepts need to be examined.

Neither evolution nor creation are "provable" as such. That is to say, no one can speak as an eye-witness. You cannot say that you can "prove" either evolution or creation to be true like you can "prove" a sack of potatoes weighs ten pounds. This simply is not possible. No empirical data are available actually to "prove" either to be true! This is exactly why creation and evolution must be viewed as "theories" and not fact. We have already discussed this in our section on "Assumptions, Hypotheses, and Theories."

Yet this is not to say there are no areas of science which can lend support to either evolution or creation. The thoughtful reader will immediately recognize that many areas of science (geology, archaeology, cytology, anatomy, biophysics, biochemistry, embryology, genetics, etc.) may be examined as both evolutionists and creationists seek logical, scientifically tenable data to support their theories. By definition a theory is "an acceptable answer to explain something

unusual." Creation and evolution are both "unusual." The question now is: "Which theory is the 'acceptable' answer?". Let us examine the "proof arguments most often used by evolutionists to establish the veracity of their theory.

EMBRYOLOGY

Evolutionists have been presenting evidence in support of their theory for as long as we can remember. Part of that evidence has come from embryology. Embryology, simply defined, is: the study of the development of an organism from the time the egg is fertilized at conception, until birth. The theory which links embryology to evolution is usually called in textbooks the theory of "embryonic recapitulation." It comes from a statement made by Charles Darwin in his book, ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES, published in 1859. Darwin strongly insisted that embryological development provided evidence for his theory. In fact, Darwin himself considered embryonic recapitulation his PRIMARY DEFENSE of the theory of evolution - "second to none" in importance, as he put it.

Darwin's ideas on embryology led Ernst Haeckel, the celebrated German anatomist, to state the "great Biogenetic Law," according to which the ONTOGENY RECAPITULATES THE PHYLOGENY. By this statement - the ontogeny (development of the individual) recapitulates (repeats) the phylogeny (development of the races), the evolutionists simply mean that as the embryo develops it "climbs up the ancestral tree." It is alleged by evolutionists that the embryo of man, during the nine-month gestation period, passes through all of the evolutionary stages characteristic of the race. In other words, the embryo, beginning as a single-celled creature, passes through a sort of jellyfish stage and

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BERT THOMPSON

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"What does the word 'Amen' mean?"

At the close of our petitions to Jehovah, and sometimes in endorsement and approval of a sentiment uttered, we give expression to the word "amen." Such usage, to many, exhausts its significance. These would, if asked regarding its proper meaning, answer "It means that we have finished our prayer. We have reached the end of our petition. The prayer is over. It serves the same design as the period at the end of the sentence. It is the 'finis' to the prayer, or, its English equivalent, 'the end'."

Though such is today popular usage, it is significant that in many of the New Testament Epistles the benediction comes at the beginning rather than at the end; and often Jesus used the double "amen," at the beginning of a sentence instead of at the close. Often, in the Gospel according to John, the words "verily, verily" occur at the beginning of a significant utterance by the Lord, and these words are translated from the same Greek word from which the word "amen" comes. In other instances it is left untranslated, and is Anglicized—given an English form and spelling—and transferred into the English text.

The word is usually an adverb, signifying "certainly, truly," though it is sometimes used as an adjective and at other times as a noun. It is derived from a Hebrew verb which means "to support," and, when passive, "to be a support, trustworthy, sure." It is often applied both to the word of man and to the word of God to indicate confidence in the veracity of their statements. It is sometimes an endorsement of what is said, in which case it means "so be it" and in others it is an affirmation in ratification, signifying "so it is." It is much more than a convenient-formula, indicating the end of a prayer, or the termination of a petition.

The word "amen" often fell from the lips of our Lord. He used it over one hundred times in the records which have come down to us in the books of the gospel—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In the book of John he said "verily, verily" ("amen, amen") about twenty-five times. As an ascription of praise, or in the giving of thanks, the word was often used in the worship of the early church: "How shall he that filleth the place of the unlearned say *the Amen* at thy giving of thanks, seeing he knoweth not what thou sayest?" (I Cor. 14:16.) Twice Paul, in his Epistle to the saints in Rome, blessed God, and added "amen" (Rom. 1:25; 9:5). In Rome, blessed God, 1:25; 9:5). In ascribing glory to God, the apostle followed the same practice (Rom. 11:36; 16:27). "Amens" are seen throughout his Epistles (Gal. 1:5; Eph. 3:21; Phil. 4:20; Col. 4:18; II Thess. 3:18; I Tim. 1:17; Tit. 3:16; and often elsewhere).

In the Revelation, John heard all created beings praising God, and the four living creatures about the throne shouted,

"Amen" (Rev. 5:14). In the vision of the vast multitudes praising God in heaven, "the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sitteth on the throne, saying, *Amen; Hallelujah*" (Rev. 19:4).

It occurs not only as the last word of the Bible, but, as a proper noun, it designates a name of the risen and triumphant Christ: "These things saith the *Amen*, the faithful and true witness" (Rev. 3:14). God was designated in similar fashion by the Old Testament prophets. "He who blesseth himself in the earth shall swear by the God of the *Amen*" (Isa. 65:16, A.V.). Every blessing vouchsafed to man is available through the Lord only: "For how many so ever be the promises of God, in him is the year: wherefore also *through him is the Amen*, unto the glory of God through us" (II Cor. 2:20).

At the end of the first four books of the Psalms the word "Amen" occurs. The first of these books, as arranged in the American Standard Version, ends: "Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen" (Psa. 41:13). The second book concludes: "And let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen" (Psa. 72:19). So, also, the third book: "Blessed be Jehovah forevermore. Amen and Amen" (Psa. 89:52). At the end of the fourth "book" these words appear: "And let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye Jehovah" (Psa. 106:48).

The law of Moses provided that in the test arranged for a wife accused of unfaithfulness, at the end of the speech delivered by the priest, she was required to say: "Amen, Amen" (Num. 5:22). In the solemn proceedings attending the pronouncement of curses from Mount Ebal, by the Levites, at the end of each curse pronounced, all the people answered and said, "Amen" (Deut. 27:11-26). When David brought the ark to Jerusalem, he had a service of praise, wherein a song of thanksgiving was sung, and "all the people said Amen, and praised Jehovah" (I Chron. 16:36). When the psalmist king was about to die, he sent for Zadok, the priest, Benaiah, an officer, and bade them make Solomon king in his stead, and Benaiah answered: "Amen: Jehovah, the God of my lord the king, say so too" (I Kings 1:36).

After the people had returned from the Babylonian captivity, Ezra, the priest, opened the book of the law and blessed

the Lord, "the great God; and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with the lifting up of their hands: and they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground" (Neh. 8:6).

In the first centuries following the close of the apostolic age, the people, accustomed to adhering closely to the phraseology of the Bible in their communications, continued to give utterance to a term with which they often met in their sacred writings. Justin Martyr says that in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, when the one conducting the service had concluded his prayer and thanksgiving, "all the people with one acclamation say, Amen" (Apo. 2:85). Jerome says that in his time, "at the end of every public utterance of prayer and praise, the 'Amen' of the people sounded like the loud murmur of the sea, or the voice of thunder, while the hollow idols, and their temples that were empty, did echo and rebound with the churches' 'Amen' so that their fabrics shaked." When Cyprian was condemned to die for his faith in Christ, the procounsul read in a loud voice: "Thascius Cyprian is to be put to death by the sword," and Cyprian lifted up his voice and said as loudly, "Amen." It was the triumph of faith, and a challenge to his enemies to do their worst. If it was God's will that he should suffer—Amen! He would not have it otherwise.

And so this little, but highly significant, word has come down to us from the tabernacle and synagogues and early church, and has been in use by the Lord's people in all ages. The Saviour gave utterance to it repeatedly, as did the saints of the apostolic church. It was on the lips of Christian martyrs as they went to the torch, to the dens, and to death. It has been translated into all the tongues of men, and is repeated today among all the races of the earth. In the ages to come it will be shouted by the redeemed of all ages until at last all creation shall join in the angels' song: "Amen: Blessing and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever" (Rev. 7:12).

The word "amen" should not be spoken lightly, flippantly, irreverently, but solemnly, fervently, and in the fear of Jehovah. It is man's reaction to all the truth there is in God. In it he affirms his faith in God and confesses to a sense of need of him. It is a renewal of allegiance and a pledge of continued devotion.

What Are You Preaching About Sunday?

Suppose a preacher announced a new series of sermons to begin next Sunday on the theme, "The Worthlessness of Our Christianity." Just imagine some of the topics as follows:

1. "The Uselessness Of Prayer"
2. "Spend Your Money on Your Pleasure, Do Not Give"
3. "Sleeping Late Is More Important Than The Lord's Supper"
4. "Ignore The Elders And Do As You Please, or, Do Your Own Thing"
5. "I Wouldn't Give Two Cents For The Opportunity To Attend Bible Classes"
6. "A Little Smoking, Drinking, And Cursing Never Hurt Anybody"
7. "Reasons For Non-Involvement"

8. "Better To Be Rich And Wicked Than To Be Poor In Spirit"

We could hardly imagine such gall, unmitigated brass and such unholy attitudes coming from the pulpit. But brethren, we preach by the way we live. And all the eloquence in the world becomes mere subterfuge when dedicated deeds are not present.

You, my fellow Christians, are preaching by your manner of life. Do you subscribe to one code of conduct in word and quite another in deed? What will your life be preaching about next Sunday?

(And what will you be preaching about during the week?)

—Author Unknown

The Greatness Of The Church

(Continued From Page 1)

fearing soul, even publicans and harlots, have eagerly sought to enter into the church of our Lord. We who are so privileged should constantly watch lest we by our conduct or speech shame or stain its holy reputation.

All men are invited to seek refuge within its sacred precincts. If you will but let God wash away your sins, He will add you to His Church (Acts 2:47; I Cor. 12:13).

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 2)

a worm stage, and finally becomes a chordate (i.e.: develops a backbone). The evolutionist assures us that this is merely a repetition of the human's evolutionary development. It is a "time-picture" which can be viewed, and construed as being an actual historical commentary on the development of mankind - so say the evolutionists! The "proof" of the embryological recapitulation theory is that the embryo of man, so it is said, begins as a single cell, passes into a fish, then into a reptile, then into a mammal, and finally ends in man. . . a moving picture of 500,000,000 (?) years or more of human history!

How, then, does the creationist deal with this recapitulation theory and this great "Biogenetic Law"? Before we arrive at our answer, let us first hear from Professor James W. Leach of Ohio State University when he says:

"The undeniable tendency of a complex animal to pass through some developmental stages reminiscent of the adult conditions of a selected and graduated series of lower forms has long been described as the 'Biogenetic Law.' But as a 'law' inscribed by nature it is perhaps more full of 'loopholes' and 'bypasses' than any law thus far inscribed by man."¹

How does the creationist deal with the "Biogenetic Law"? How does the creationist deal with the recapitulation theory? The answer is - HE DOESN'T!! That is correct. The creationist no longer even has to deal with embryology as a proof of evolution. Here is the reason: the theory that Darwin said was "second to none" in importance in establishing the fact of evolution has now been found to be untrue. We repeat: the great Biogenetic Law is false, and ontogeny does NOT recapitulate phylogeny!

Darwin's suggestion that embryology is proof of evolution and Haeckel's recapitulation theory are no longer held in high esteem by the reputable men of science, even in modified form, though these ideas are still presented in some textbooks as historical notes. Consider, if you will, this quote from the devout evolutionist, George Gaylord Simpson: "It is now established that ontogeny does not repeat phylogeny."² And in a footnote going along with the above quote, Simpson says:

"You may well ask why we bother you with principles that turned out to be wrong. There are two reasons. In the first place, belief in recapitulation became so widespread that it is still evident in some writings about biology

and evolution. You should know therefore what recapitulation is supposed to be, and YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT IT DOES NOT REALLY OCCUR."² (Emphasis mine-BT).

Consider also this quote from the recent (1974) high school biology textbook, BIOLOGY: A SEARCH FOR ORDER IN COMPLEXITY: "The recapitulation theory is essentially of interest from a historical point of view. In recent years the idea has been all but abandoned for several reasons."³

Byron C. Nelson, in his book, AFTER ITS KIND, says: "Today no evolutionist of any standing dares to repeat it in the form which Haeckel presented it."⁴ Kellogg, in his book, EVOLUTION - THE WAY OF MAN, says: "Haeckel saw in it (the evidence of embryology) more than the actual facts warranted and by his over-emphasis of its significance and his detailed interpretation of the evolutionary history brought it into some disrepute."⁵

That is Kellogg's way of nicely telling you what Dr. Russell C. Artist, Professor-Emeritus of biology at David Lipscomb College, tells you bluntly (through a quote by Thompson in his preface to Origin of the Species, 6th Edition) as he writes in THE SPIRITUAL SWORD, April 1971: ". . . Haeckel altered the illustrations of them (embryos) to fit his theory; the alterations were slight, but significant. The 'biogenetic law' as a proof of evolution is valueless."⁶ Ernst Haeckel wanted the great "Biogenetic Law" to be true so badly that he lied! He actually falsified information!

(Continued Next Week)

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Jerusalem And Her Idols



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Isaiah lived and prophesied during the eighth century. His prophetic work was done among people in Judah, the Southern Kingdom. Principally, his efforts were centered in Jerusalem, the capital and the most important city in the land. It was a period of widespread idolatry. The worship and service of many idols had turned the eyes of Judah from the true and living God to lifeless lords and iniquitous idols. The princely prophet relays Jehovah's mighty message of woe and stern warning in a stinging statement. He said, "Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?" (Isa. 10:11). Idolatry paved the way for Samaria's fall and the collapse of the Northern Kingdom. An equal fate awaited the idolatrous inhabitants of Jerusalem and the nation of Judah. This sure fate came in the sixth century and with the approach of the Babylonians.

It seems so strange for Jerusalem to have been connected with idols. Jerusalem was God's chosen spot for his own worship to be centrally located. Here David's generation had pitched the temporary tabernacle after taking this stronghold from the proud Jebusites. Here Solomon's temple had been erected. It had given the city on the four hills a glory never before equaled in her long history. What was scheduled to occur in the future when the Great King (the Messiah) came to Jerusalem would be without equal or parallel. Jerusalem is the only city on earth whose name is associated with the heavenly hereafter (Rev. 3:12; 21:2). No Biblical penman ever referred to heaven as the new Alexandria, the new Antioch, the new Athens, the new Ephesus or the new Rome. The new Jerusalem is a familiar appellation to every Biblical believer.

When Jerusalem became wedded to her idols she lost her glory. When the church of Jesus Christ becomes involved with the popular idols of our day she too loses her glory. She ceases to be the Lord's people. Remember that an idol is any person or object that comes between the human heart and God. It may be money; it may be pleasure; it may be ease and comfort; it may be power and prestige; it may be an ancestral religion; it may be subjective feelings within the realm of religion. To be an idol an object does not have to be carved of wood and overlaid with gold or silver. It does not have to be a stationary object; it may be one that moves.

The inspired counsel from Paul and John respectively is still quite apropos. Paul told the Corinthians: "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say" (I Cor. 10:14-15). The apostle of love closed his first epistle by saying, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen" (I John 5:21). In Ezekiel's day men were trying to come to God with an idol in the heart. It did not work then; it will not work twenty-six centuries later.

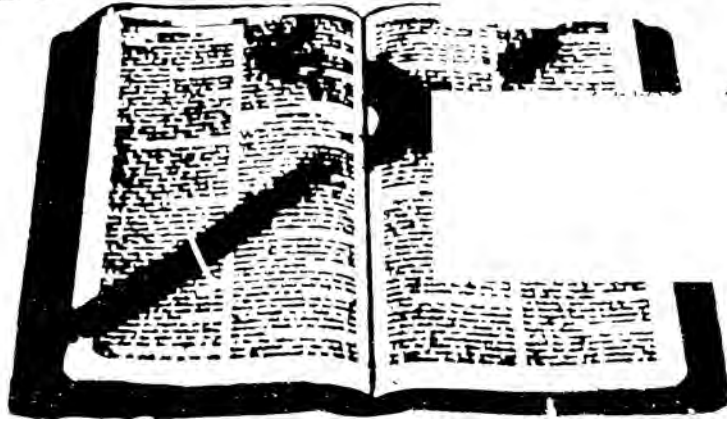
Some things should never be linked. An ancient example of this would have been Jerusalem and idols; a modern example would be the church of Christ and current idols.

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"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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VOLUME 13

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NUMBER 32

Duties Of God's Evangelists

God has appointed a work for his evangelists to do (II Tim. 4:5). However, confusion in the minds of the congregation as to just what the work and duty of an evangelist is often generates problems for both the preacher and the church. The words used by God to describe the preacher help us to understand his work.



JOHN WADDEY

He is an *evangelist* (II Tim. 4:5). The word *evangelistes* means "a messenger of good" (W.E. Vine). Thayer says that this is a name given to those heralds of salvation other than the apostles. Paul describes this aspect of his work in Rom. 10:15: "How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things." Preachers are evangelists because they bring the wonderful message of God and salvation to lost mankind.

The word *preacher* is itself descriptive. From the Greek *kerux*, it speaks of one who proclaims a message, a herald (*Vine*). He is thus a public teacher of God's Word (II Tim. 4:1-2). No matter what else his duties, he must ever be busy in proclaiming the Truth of God to saints and sinners alike.

A preacher is called a *minister* (I Tim. 4:6). The term minister is translated from the word *diakonos* which means "a laborer, a servant, an attendant" or one who ministers unto. He is a servant of God, even as the deacons are servants. His service is in the area of spiritual things and the teaching of God's word. It is not fit that he should leave the Word of God and serve tables (Acts 6:2).

A man who preaches is likewise a *teacher*. Paul describes himself as "one appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher" (II Tim. 1:11). A teacher is one who knows a given subject and who is capable of giving instruction in that field. He is one who is asked to instruct one or more in his field of knowledge.

A Gospel Preacher has some specific duties to the church with which he works. According

to Paul, the preacher is to "set in order things that are wanting" in his congregation (Tit. 1:5). This he does by teaching the Word of God, which thoroughly furnishes all saints unto every good work (II Tim. 3:16-17). Also he leads the church on to maturity by his own personal example (I Tim. 4:12). He calls upon them to imitate him as he imitates Christ (I Cor. 11:1).

He is to "ordain elders in every city" where he labors (Tit. 1:5). Thus a part of his work is to help develop local leadership in the congregation. This he does by teaching, training and example. It is not the preacher's prerogative high-handedly to appoint an eldership, rather he leads the congregation to the point where they can seek out from among themselves suitable men to be their spiritual leaders (Acts 6:3). He assists in the placing of these men in the posts of duty.

The evangelist must *proclaim the whole counsel of God* to the church (Acts 20:27). He must not shrink from declaring anything needful and profitable to his brethren (Acts 20:20). His ministry must be both public and from house to house. He must "preach the Word" and be urgent in season or out of season (II Tim. 4:1-2), if he is to fulfill his ministry. This often becomes the acid test of a man's faithfulness. It is easy to preach a message that people want to hear. But to preach it when they do not wish to hear it separates the men from the boys.

A preacher is a *watchman*. He must "watch. . . in all things" (II Tim. 4:5 K.J.V.). A watchman warns of dangers and gives the call to duty. Ezekiel was God's watchman to the house of Israel. God held him responsible if he failed to warn the sinners of their evil ways (Ezek. 3:17-21). So shall the preacher be held responsible if he fails to cry out the appropriate warnings.

God's preachers must be totally impartial in dealing with their fellow-Christians. There is no room in his field for racial prejudice, flattery of the wealthy and prominent or favoritism to special friends of one's family. With God there is no respect of persons (Acts 10:34), neither can God's servants allow such carnal attitudes to affect their judgment. A minister must present a faithful example of Christian faith, conduct and service. The words of the great preacher and apostle Paul should be heard daily by every man who

assumes this sacred post. "Be thou an example to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity" (I Tim. 4:12). His life must be a living demonstration of his message.

Every preacher has a duty to the erring. He must "reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and teaching" (II Tim. 4:2). He must not strive, but be gentle towards all. . . correcting them that oppose themselves. . ." (II Tim. 4:24-25). He may have to "reprove them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" (Tit. 1:13). If they become factious he must refuse to fellowship them and teach the church to do the same (Tit. 3:10).

HIS DUTIES TO HIMSELF

In Paul's instructions to Timothy, a young preacher, he dwelt at length on the minister's duties to himself before God. He is to follow the words of faith and the good doctrine and be nourished therein (I Tim. 4:6). He must refuse profane and old wives' fables (I Tim. 4:7). He should exercise himself unto godliness (I Tim. 4:7). He should also properly care for his physical body (I Tim. 4:7). He is to labor and strive, having his hope set on God (I Tim. 4:10). He must command and teach the words of God (I Tim. 4:11). He is to be a good example in his speech, his life style, in love, in faithfulness and in morality (I Tim. 4:12). He is to give heed to reading and studying the book of God and related themes (I Tim. 4:13, II Tim. 2:15). He must give heed to his exhortation and teaching, lest he neglect anything needful or mishandle any sacred truth (I Tim. 4:13). He is not to neglect his own gifts and talents which God has blessed him with (I Tim. 4:14). He shall be diligent and he must give himself wholly to his duties so that his progress may be manifest unto all (I Tim. 4:15). He is always to take heed to himself and to his teaching in order to save himself and his hearers (I Tim. 4:16).

As we study and understand the work that God has appointed for his preachers, may we join hands with every faithful man and work together to the glory of God and the saving of souls. Make it your personal duty to see that your preacher is allowed to do his God ordained work and is encouraged and supported in that holy task.

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FROM
THE EDITOR

The Church And The Meetinghouse

The New Testament says a great deal about the church. It does not say one word about what we call the meetinghouse. That the church met, and that it sometimes met in a house is obvious from a number of passages. But if churches in the days of the apostles owned houses in which to meet, there is no mention of it on the pages of holy writ.

Does this mean there is no New Testament authority for a church to build and maintain a meetinghouse? No, the meetinghouse is authorized in a generic way. By this we mean that the Bible teaches that the church is to assemble, but does not give the particulars concerning the place of assembly. The church is thus authorized to exercise its own judgment with regard to the place of assembly. Whether or not a church builds a meetinghouse is something that must be determined by human judgment. Divine injunction requires the church to assemble: human wisdom dictates the place of assembly.

Since human wisdom must determine the place of assembly, human wisdom must also determine the kind of meetinghouse to be built, if the church is to build a meetinghouse. How large shall the auditorium be? Shall the pews be padded? Shall there be a foyer? Shall there be classrooms; and if so, how many? What about restrooms, office space, storage space, space for printing equipment, etc.? All of these questions must be determined according to the best judgment available. And



BOBBY DUNCAN

it should be remembered that the judgment of one individual or of one congregation would likely differ from the judgment of another individual or congregation with regard to some of these matters. This is one reason why meetinghouses over the country are of all shapes, sizes, and descriptions.

In like manner, human wisdom must determine what use may be made of the meetinghouse. In addition to its being a place for the whole church to come together in one place (I Cor. 14:23), may it also be a place to conduct simultaneous Bible classes in different rooms? May it also be used for weddings, or for funerals? May it also be a center for dispensing food and clothing to those who are in need? May the preacher's library be housed therein, and may he do his studying there? May the meetinghouse be used as a place to counsel those who are in trouble, or who are having marriage problems, or who are planning to get married? May it be used as a place where Christians can get together for a period of fellowship, and eat together? Again, the answer must come from human wisdom. The Bible simply does not say what use is to be made of the meetinghouse.

Needless to say, there are those who have failed to understand that the use made of a meetinghouse must be dictated by human judgment. For this reason, some have sown discord among brethren over the matter of eating in the meetinghouse. It is argued that getting together for a meal is not within the scope of the command to assemble, and since the meetinghouse grows out of the command to assemble, we should use the meetinghouse only for whatever is in the scope of that

command. However, those who make this argument find themselves involved in many inconsistencies. For example, getting a drink of water is not within the scope of the command to assemble, but most brethren do not oppose installing a water fountain. Neither is counselling those about to be married, performing the ceremony, or preaching a funeral within the scope of this command, not to mention using the restrooms or dispensing food and clothing to the needy. Yet most people would oppose none of these. Why, then, oppose eating a meal together in the meetinghouse?

We realize there are those who sincerely think that Paul's discussion in I Cor. 11:17-22 precludes eating in the meetinghouse. We would remind these, however, that Paul was discussing the assembly, and not the meetinghouse. For Paul to be discussing the meetinghouse in these verses, the word *church* would have to mean "meetinghouse." And the word *church* is not used in the Bible to refer to a meetinghouse. The context of the passage under consideration will show that the assembly is under consideration, and not the meetinghouse.

What we have said may be summarized as follows: The command to assemble (Heb. 10:25) requires that human wisdom devise a place to assemble. The meetinghouse, its description, what goes in it, and what may be done therein all must be dictated by human judgment. Certainly we should always try to exercise the very best judgment. And certainly one should not cause division in the body of Christ over a matter of human judgment.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 10

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of last week's article which began an examination of embryology as "proof" of evolution.)

We know today that not only does ontogeny not recapitulate phylogeny (*viz.*: the great "biogenetic law" is not a "law" at all) but Ernst Haeckel, the German anatomist, falsified information concerning the theory of embryonic recapitulation in order to make it appear true. But we need to make one or two concluding statements concerning this theory of embryonic recapitulation.

Whenever the theory is mentioned, you are certain to hear about the controversial "gill slits." For as many years as evolutionists taught the false theory of embryonic recapitulation, they also taught (and falsely so) that the human embryo, as it develops, has gill slits in its throat region. This, of course, was supposed to have been offered as "proof" that the human came from the fish. For years and years evolutionists taught that these gill slits actually were to be found in the embryo, and that they were "concrete proof" that evolution had actually occurred. Is this

true? Do gill slits actually form in the neck of the human embryo? **NO, THEY DO NOT!** During embryonic development human beings have blood vessels lying parallel to each other in the region of the neck. The skin dips down between these blood vessels, forming grooves. These grooves do not become slits, and there are no gills. In fact, the 1974 biology textbook, *Biology: A Search For Order In Complexity* points this out.

"Actually these 'gills' are alternating ridges and furrows on the right and left sides of the neck. They *never* develop into gills. They remain covered by a thin membrane and *never* have respiratory function."1

Since the recapitulation theory has been abandoned by many scientists as an evidence favoring evolution, it follows that such things as "gill slits" should now become an embarrassment to evolutionists. Since the "gill slits" were previously considered to be such a strong evidence for evolution, and since this kind of evidence is now being described as invalid, the "gill slits" should be especially embarrassing to the evolutionists.

Since embryonic recapitulation is not a valid evidence that evolution has taken place, it is evident that it cannot be employed, as had been hoped by evolutionists of earlier days, to clear up evolutionary history in cases of dispute. Experts today say that it is impossible for anyone to mistake a human embryo for any other creature, especially after the 49th day. There is never a time when an

(Continued On Page 4)



BERT THOMPSON

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"What is the Apocrypha? Who do 'Catholic Bibles' have in them certain books not appearing in other Bibles?"

The *Apocrypha* is a collection of ancient writings dating from the period between the Testaments - b.c. 400 to the beginning of the Christian era - composed by Jews of Alexandria. They are of varied form and style, some historical, some poetic and others dramatic and apocalyptic. The word *apocrypha* derives from the preposition *apo*, "from," and *kruptees*, "hidden", thus, something hid or concealed, and so designated because the authorship of these books is uncertain, their origin obscure, and their authority questioned. The collection consists of the books of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruk, and two books of Maccabees. Some add six chapters to the book of Esther; there is a prefix to the book of Daniel, called the "History of Susannah," and, other additions are Song of the Three Children, and Bel and the Dragon. Others, sometimes included, but regarded by the Catholic Church as spurious, are the third and fourth books of Esdras, the third book of Maccabees, a 151 Psalm, an appendix to Job and a preface to Lamentations.

The books in the first of these lists are included between Malachi and Matthew in Bibles published by Catholics, who regard them as inspired and thus worthy of a place in the canon of scripture along with the rest of the Old Testament. They were included in the Septuagint Translation (The Greek Version of the Old Testament), and in early Latin Versions. "Protestants" uniformly reject them as inspired books and regard them as wholly unworthy of a place in the sacred writings for the following reasons:

1. There are approximately *two hundred and seventy-five* quotations from the Old Testament in the New Testament; dozens of times our Lord, and his divinely instructed apotles cited Old Testament scripture, but *not once* did they ever quote or refer to any matter in any one of these apocryphal books, notwithstanding the fact that they were in existence, and known to the Jews of that day. The apostolic church never used them as scripture.

2. They were never accorded a place in the Jewish or Hebrew scriptures, and the famed Jewish religious writers Philo and Josephus, both of whom lived and wrote in the first century, make no mention of the apocryphal writings, and the latter expressly disavows any inspiration for writings other than those books now making up our Old Testament. His words, in this respect, are remarkable: "And how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do: for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, or take anything from them, or to make any change in them; but it is become natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and if it be necessary, willingly die for them" (Josephus Against Apion, book 1, sec. 8).

3. The Jews were the divinely appointed custodians of the "oracles of God" (Rom

3:2), and though they were charged with making the commandment of God void by their traditions (Matt. 15:1-9), they were never accused of corrupting the records themselves. The apostasy was in full bloom and hundreds of years passed before they were received by any as scripture.

4. They contain statements which are in conflict with known facts, which involve absurdities and impossibilities. They do not claim inspiration, and some of them expressly disavow it. The level of morality, taught in some, is far below that of the New Testament; e.g., in the book of Tobit, an angel is represented as telling a deliberate lie, without condemnation. An example of fables, misrepresentations and contradictions will be seen in I Macc. 6:4, 16; II Macc. 1:13, 16; and 9:28.

The *Apocrypha* is a collection of uninspired writings with no claim to inclusion in scriptures but of value in providing (1) a vocabulary helpful in ascertaining current usage of words in that day; (2) information

regarding the customs, the habits and activities of the people; and (3) a history of the times. It is especially valuable in giving us a look at civil and religious conditions of that day in the same way that all ancient writings do. Were it not for these books, we would know little regarding the struggles of the people against Roman and pagan rule, and these books are especially interesting in their dramatic portrayal of the efforts of the Maccabean patriots to maintain the Jewish faith against almost insurmountable odds. When I was a student in Freed-Hardeman College, brother Hardeman taught a course in the history of this period, and the text was entitled, "Between The Testaments," by Grant, an exciting and extremely well-written summary of the history of the period between Malachi and Matthew and taken principally from apocryphal sources. I highly recommend this book to all who would like to study in detail the history of that distant and obscure period immediately preceding the beginning of the Christian era.

Evangelism Taking Christ To The World

J.R. SULLINS

As of 1977, according to Cornell's Mission Handbook, the churches of Christ rank third in missionaries working in foreign fields. Southern Baptist and the Wycliff Bible Translator churches rank one and two respectively in most missionaries sent to foreign fields. In third and fourth positions are the Seventh Day Adventists and Assembly's of God. Mormonism and the Jehovah's Witnesses are not listed because of their methods of evangelism.

What is disturbing about the figure representing foreign missionaries now in the fields for the churches of Christ is that the number have taken quite a decline since last tallied. In 1972-1973 we are said to have had 1623 foreign missionaries whereas today the number has declined to 1269.

Why is the church losing ground in evangelizing the world? Can we blame it on the condition of the world such as: the seemingly never ending conflicts and wars; immorality and increased ungodliness; or the decline in the respect for man as a whole? NO!! If the condition of the world is our excuse, why is it that most denominational groups showed an increase in the past four years in the number of those they sent to foreign fields to evangelize?

It is my conviction that the reason we are not taking Christ to the World as we have in the past is because we have lost sight of the charge of the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus. He said, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20, ASV). This charge did not end with the apostles and has not been rescinded.

Every child of God who strives to put on Christ and exemplify Him, who diligently tries to imitate Christ, and who strives to pattern himself after 1st Century Christianity will not only see the need of taking Christ to the world but will be actively involved himself in seeing

that the job is being done.

How can we as the church, individually or collectively, see men lost, helpless, ungodly, and dying by the thousands each day all over the world and still sit and do nothing about their knowing of the Christ. How can the church knowing of the certain fact that Jesus is coming again and possibly soon and knowing that all nations will be judged before Him (Matthew 25:31-46; Hebrews 9:27) continue to feel no real urgency to get the gospel to every creature? How can we sit in our comfortable buildings, keeping house for the Lord, and feel we are pleasing to Him, if we continue to ignore His cry to take His gospel to the millions upon millions dying in sin?

The nature of the gospel itself demands that we take it to every creature. Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). If it truly is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, don't we have an obligation to see that everyone has an opportunity to hear the gospel? If we have the love of God in us, we will do everything in our power to see that everyone on this earth will hear the gospel!

It is a known fact that 87 percent of the people of this world that we must reach with the gospel are not of our own culture. If we as individual Christians do not renew the Lord's charge in our hearts to take the gospel to every creature and if the churches of Christ do not respond to the need to reach out as far as to train and support workers in foreign fields, we will continue to see a decline in the Lord's workers in foreign fields and millions upon millions will continue to die without Christ.

One of our missionaries stated, "the one Creator who saves is God of all and His salvation applies to all." The fact still remains that we as God's children are His only instruments today to present His Son's gospel to all peoples of the world. Can you truly say you are a part of this great work? May the Lord help us to regain what we have lost in our desire to evangelize the world!!! — Route 1, Box 184A, Nauvoo, Ala. 35578.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 2)

unborn mammal could be mistaken for a fish or reptile.

Darwin's theory, as it turns out, is of little consequence in trying to prove evolution through embryology. This is one area where science has cleared up an evolutionary claim, instead of making it worse.

COMPARATIVE ANATOMY

Evolutionists firmly believe that one of the strongest evidences for their theory comes from a comparison of the structure of the various animals. Comparison is one of the best methods of study, especially when there are numbers of similar objects and systems of various complexities, as is the case with living things. Comparative anatomy is a very practical thing. The student of comparative anatomy goes the whole round of living things, from those that live in the air to those that live in the sea, and finds the same general plan underlying the structures of vast numbers of these creatures. For example:

1. The giraffe and the mouse both have only 7 vertebrae in their necks, although the giraffe's neck is over 8 feet long and the mouse's neck is less than an inch long.
2. The horse and the mouse both have well-developed muscles to move their ears; man has a similar set of muscles, though somewhat less-developed.
3. The muscles which the horse uses to twitch the skin of his forehead correspond closely to those by which man slightly moves his scalp.
4. The wing of a bat, the forefoot of a turtle, the forefoot of a frog, and the arm of a man all have the same general structure.
5. The forefoot of the dog, the flipper of a whale, and the hand of a man contain essentially the same bones and muscles.

On and on we could go. Seeing this similarity of pattern or design in so large a number of living things, the student, if he is an evolutionist, says to be creationist: "How can you account for this similarity in so many creatures, except on the basis of evolution; except on the basis that one living organism grew out of another, so that all had a common ancestor?"

If the creationist is not able to see how it could be otherwise, he becomes an evolutionist, or at best, a bewildered creationist. It is the fact of the similarity, in the structures of so many animals, together with the suggestion that this similarity is to be accounted for only on the basis of a common evolutionary descent, that constitutes what is said to be one of the strongest arguments for evolution having occurred. Consider this quote from the pen of Charles Darwin:

"How inexplicable is the similar pattern of the hand of man, the foot of a dog, the wing of a bat, the flipper of a seal, on the doctrine of independent acts of creation! How simply explained on the principle of natural selection of successive slight variations in the diverging descendants from a single progenitor."²

The criticism of this "proof" does not consist in denying the similarity in plan or structure that comparative anatomy reveals. The likenesses can be admitted in as great a detail as the evolutionist cares to have them asserted. It is undeniably true that as we compare the bodies of human beings and

certain animals to each other we can point out a great number of similarities. No one among us would deny that!

The criticism of the argument from comparative anatomy from the creation point of view consists in *admitting* the similarity of structure but in *denying* the interpretation put on it, and offering instead another interpretation equally as reasonable and perfectly in harmony with the doctrine of special creation!

(Continued Next Week)

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The Existence Of God

G.F. RAINES

Napoleon I (Bonaparte), the famous Corsican-born French general, said: "All things proclaim the existence of a God."

William Cowper, the great British poet, said: "In all the vast and the minute, we see the unambiguous footsteps of . . . God."

Emerson wrote: "Nature is too thin a screen; the glory of the omnipresent God bursts through everywhere."

And the Holy Bible says: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psa. 14:1).

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20).

" . . . without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

When I look into the star-spangled sky, there is no doubt in my mind that, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (Psa. 19:1). — Newton, Miss. 39345.

Who Shall Live, Who Shall Die

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

These words were the topic of an article recently in an area newspaper. The subject matter discussed was the moral dilemma that officials were facing in the country of Biafra in Africa where war, bloodshed and starvation have abounded during the past several months. Actually, the story was dealing with the decision of whether to give food and aid to nearly starved children or those children that had not suffered from malnutrition. For sometime now, we have read news account of the horrible conditions which exists in Biafra and we are moved emotionally with compassion and sympathy for the inhabitants of this war torn area of the world.

But, we are also moved with compassion as we contemplate a worse condition which exists, not only in Africa but in practically every country on this globe, and, that is the spiritually starved people who face a death which is more terrible than a physical one. Each child of God is faced with the moral and

spiritual decision. "Who shall live; who shall die?" As Christians, we have no right to withhold the gospel of salvation from any people. Jesus was impartial in his great worldwide commission whenever he said, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations" and "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." If we fail to utilize all of our resources and every media to reach the lost in our own nation, as

as the far flung corners of the earth, with the message of Christ, are we not in a sense making the decision "who shall live and who shall die?" Our problem and privilege is to teach, preach and persuade. The decision to accept or reject Christ is the persons' whom we have taught. There is a religious cult in existence which makes the claim that "Millions now living shall never die." But, the sad truth is that there are "Millions now dying who shall never live" - eternally.

MY brethren, are we truly sharing the "living water" and the "bread of life" with our fellowmen so that they shall hunger nor thirst anymore? — East Hart Avenue, Opp, Al. 36467.

The Unchanging Christ

We are definitely living in a changing world. We have gone from narrow dirt roads to super highways. Years ago transportation was by buggies, but today it is by jets and missiles. Years ago mothers of a house hold had a certain day of the week set aside to wash and dry the family laundry and a wood stove was used to cook the food, but today we are living in a push button age. We merely push a button to perform many of the above mentioned tasks. Yes, we have come a long way, and we are definitely living in a changing world.

Inasmuch as we are living in a changing world people believe that human beings have changed, but that is not true. Man is the same today as he was yesterday. III John 9 tells of Diotrephes who "loveth to have the preeminence". There are people today who still want preeminence to the extend that they will cause division within the Lord's body. Yesterday Adam and Eve suffered from lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life (Genesis 3:6), and today the love of the world is a problem of man (I John 2:15-17). Yes, we are living in a changing world, but man today still needs guidance (Jeremiah 10:23), salvation from sin (Romans 3:23), encouragement (Galatians 6:1-2), and hope after death (I Corinthians 15:58).

Man has not changed even though we are living in a changing world, and neither has Jesus Christ changed. Jesus still has all authority or power (Matthew 28:18). The conditions of salvation have not changed; for Jesus still requires man to be "born again" (John 3:3-5). Jesus has the same attitude toward sin today as he did when he was upon the earth (John 8:34). Christ has not changed His attitude toward error (Matthew 15:8-9).

Yes, man is living in a changing world, but we note "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). Reader, won't you let Christ change your life by obeying His word? "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3). — P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580.



JERRY T. BRAMLETT



Words Of



"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the *Words of Truth* and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

Real Live Elders!

I began preaching the gospel in May, 1957. This past May I have been a gospel preacher for 20 years. In October, 1976 the Bellview church ordained me as one of their elders. It is not the first time an evangelist served as an elder; Peter did many years ago (I Pet. 5:1). However, it is the first time that I have served as an elder!



RAY HAWK

When I was much younger I preached many sermons to the elderships I worked with. I wanted to see these men function as elders. Too often, preachers do the work of elders, elders do the work of deacons, and deacons don't do anything! If the Bible means what it says, and I believe it does, some elderships may lose their souls because they are not truly pastoring!

Most elderships expect the preacher to do his job. They want him to preach the truth. They want him to preach against forsaking the assembly (Heb. 10:25). Yet, how many visits do elders make into the homes of those who forsake the assembly? How many of these delinquents have been withdrawn from because they will not repent and return to the Lord? How many people have you, brother elder, sat down with and told they were lost unless they repented? How many have you told would be disfellowshipped unless they repented and were restored? Are you an elder? Does the Bible give you a responsibility to those under your oversight (Heb. 13:7,17)?

One of the qualifications for an elder is, "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)" (I Tim. 3:4,5). Can a man be an elder if his children are unruly, undisciplined, and disobedient? We would expect any Christian parent to spare NOT the rod! Then can a man be an elder if he has no intentions of carrying

out disciplinary action upon unruly, undisciplined, and disobedient members of the house of God who are under the oversight of the eldership?

A new member of the Bellview Church was surprised that we discipline those who forsake the assembly wilfully. She had never seen such a practice. After studying the scriptures and seeing that is what the Bible teaches, she called an elder of the church she previously attended in Texas, which has recently been in the brotherhood news, and asked this bishop when was the last time someone had been withdrawn from. He as much as said that although he had been an elder in that church for twenty years, he had never seen anyone withdrawn from. No discipline was practiced! When is the last time you have known of anyone's being withdrawn from in your congregation? Is it ever preached on from the pulpit?

Some elders try to excuse themselves from their God given responsibility by lamely stating, "We can't discipline because it would cause too much trouble." Or, one might hear, "If we practiced discipline here, we would have to withdraw from half of the congregation." Yet still another excuse would be, "We can't withdraw from John Doe because if we do he is related to the John Q. Public family and it would hurt our contribution if they pulled out." I have heard this kind of excuse, "Well, I wasn't an elder when that came up, and it should have been settled back then. Since it wasn't, it isn't my responsibility." Some elders flatly state, "I don't believe in discipline." At least they are

truthful about it. Those who make excuses are trying to hide from their responsibility and God will deal with them as He did with the shepherds or elders of the Old Testament!

CONCLUSION

Most of the problems, if not all of them, which are plaguing the church today may be traced to the eldership! When elders refuse to carry out their responsibility; sin enters, festers, and grows. When it reaches the critical stage, the church has a crisis. Inactivity, fear, apathy, or whatever it was, may all be traced back to the eldership not acting as it should.

Since becoming an elder I find it is easier being a preacher. A preacher can get up, preach against the sin, leave the pulpit and know he has discharged his duty regardless of whether he is fired or not. However, the elders have the responsibility of going to those who sin and putting the sinner on the spot or repent or be withdrawn from. Some elders will not do this. They excuse themselves and open the door to the sin. After ten, fifteen, or twenty years that one sin they should have acted on grows to such proportions that what was a mole hill now grows into an almost unsurpassable mountain! Yet, in spite of the difficulties that might be encountered, elders need to reexamine their position, roll up their sleeves, and get their feet wet. If they don't, those who are affected by the sin will go to hell and so will those elders!

Yes, what we need in the churches of Christ today are real live elders! — 4868 La Ventana Terrace, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.

"This Just Can't Be Little Mary!"


EDSEL BURLESON

Have you been to a family reunion lately? One of the "highlights" of such occasions, for the grown-ups, and the "lowlight" for the young people is the continual, "Is this your Tom?" or, "this just can't be little Mary!" Though growth is a normal thing, and children delight in being taller this year than last, they

despise being embarrassed about it.

Someone has said, "If some men grew physically at the rate they grow spiritually, they would spent their lives in a play-pen." God expects his children to grow. ". . . desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Pet. 2:2). "But grow

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." —Acts 26:25

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truthfully say that I had deposited all my money in a bank. Since it is a fact that all my money would be deposited in the bank of the river, I will have told the truth by saying that my money is deposited in a bank. But even though technically I have told the truth, those who hear what I say would not properly understand. Who is to blame if they think my money is in a financial institution designed for the deposit of money? I could argue that I am not to blame for the fact that they did not properly understand what was said, for everything I said was true. But we all know that I would be to blame for the misunderstanding; for even though what I have said is technically correct, the language I have used does not normally convey the idea I had in mind.

In a similar manner some are trying to justify the use of "the speech of Ashdod" (Neh. 13:24) in connection with things pertaining to the Lord's church. We hear about "joining the church," "witnessing for Christ," "the Christian church" (when speaking of the Lord's church), "letting the spirit of Christ enter our hearts," etc. By going to the dictionary it might not be difficult to show that each of these expressions is technically accurate. But when we use them, do we convey the idea to our hearers that we have in mind? No, we do not! To practically

every denominational person, "joining the church" is something done by one who is already saved that puts him into some man-made church. "Witnessing for Christ" refers to telling some human experience that makes one know he is saved. In the Bible sense it means to testify that one has seen Jesus after he was raised from the dead. The term "Christian church" is never used in the Bible to refer to the church. To "let the spirit of Christ enter our hearts" today means to allow the Holy Spirit to operate directly upon the heart of an individual.

One may argue that it is not his fault if people do not properly understand his language. But it is, if he uses language to mean something different from what they ordinarily understand that language to mean. To go to the dictionary to show that there is a sense in which this language is accurate would be equal to my showing that there is a sense in which the Bible teaches Holy Ghost baptism for people today. After all, does not I Corinthians 12:13 teach that it is "by one Spirit" that we are all baptized into one body? You may reply that this passage means that it is by the direction of the Spirit that we are baptized in water. True, but this would be Holy Ghost baptism in the sense that it is the baptism prescribed by the Holy Ghost in the Bible.



The Proper Use Of Words

Words are symbols of ideas. The extent to which one is properly understood is determined by his ability to use words to convey his ideas. Though one may correctly use a word to convey a particular idea, unless those to whom he is speaking understand that word or words, and know what he uses it to mean, they will not receive the idea the speaker intended to convey.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Needless to say, words do not always mean the same thing every time they are used. A word may be used to mean one thing in one place, and something else in another. The word "bank," for example, may refer to the side of a river, or it may refer to a place where money is kept on deposit. Generally the context in which a word is used will determine its meaning.

Not only so, but there are always those who have no proper understanding of the meaning of certain words and phrases. We certainly do not expect the things we write or say to be properly understood by these. While those of us who preach and write should strive to use language capable of being understood by as many as possible, we must realize that some simply will not understand.

But there is a grievous error into which some have fallen with regard to the use of words and phrases, i.e., the use of words and phrases in such a way as to be most certainly misunderstood by those who hear. For example, if I were to dig a hole beside the river and bury all my money, I could then

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 11

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of last week's article which began an examination of comparative anatomy as "proof" of evolution.)

Similarity of plan, pattern, or design may well be proof of special creation! Dr. C. Nelson in his book *Man: His Origin* writes:



BERT THOMPSON

"...He might have created the dog with four legs, the horse with five, the cow with six, the elephant with ten. He might have shown His ingenuity by making man with three legs and nineteen arms. He might have so constructed sheep that the species might have its nostrils in its back and its ears on its legs. He might have put one kind of nerves or digestive system in man and a totally different system in all of the apes. Is there any reason why He would not do so? Yes. Since all creatures were to live on the same earth under similar conditions, breathing the same kind of air, drinking the same kinds of water, eating the same kind of food - it seems reasonable that a Creator would have conceived of one good and excellent plan for all creatures to be constructed upon, the crown of His creation as well as the dumb brutes over which man was to rule, and then modified this plan when modification was wise or necessary. *The common plan observable in all creatures may with as good grounds point to one great, economical, and wise Creator as to any*

evolutionary process." (Emphasis mine, BT).

Rubel Shelly, writing in his excellent book, *Simple Studies In Christian Evidences*, writes:

"Evolutionists contend that similarities of this kind prove that all living things have descended from a common source. They will likely say that the nearer alike certain animals are in structure, the more nearly related they are in evolutionary descent.

"But such similarities do not prove the theory of evolution. It could be more reasonably argued they point to a common plan in the mind of God as He created all things. It could be only natural to expect that a Creator would use a common plan to construct the entire animal kingdom. All these elements should have similar characteristics. Why should He do that and what was obligated to create each living thing totally different from everything else? God could have made everything in creation totally unique, but He evidently chose to create plants and animals according to a general plan and gave them certain similarities at the time of their creation.

"The fact is that *similarity does not prove relationship!* Two men may resemble each other so much that they are frequently mistaken for each other. But that does not mean that they are necessarily related. A man would be foolish indeed who argued that all men who have blond hair and blue eyes are offspring of the same parents! It is equally foolish to argue that since two organisms in nature resemble each other they must be descended from a common ancestor." 2

Which is easier to believe: that an intelligent God created all living things using the same basic blueprint, but varying it as He saw fit, or to believe that each separate species "evolved" from a similar ancestor? Similarity, if it proves anything, proves there was a Designer behind the affair who

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods.)

"Of what value are the so-called Apocryphal Gospels? Do they contribute any information of value regarding the earthly life of our Lord? How may these writings be identified, and how are they distinguished from the genuine production of inspired men?"

Soon after the completion of the New Testament canon, and after the close of the apostolic age, numerous writings bearing the names of the apostles or other well-known men as authors and purporting to give additional details regarding the life and teaching of Christ and those associated with him appeared. Some of these productions were pious frauds; others were deliberate forgeries, bearing famous names for the purpose of deceiving. The pious frauds resulted from well-intentioned efforts to preserve in writing traditional statements, alleged facts and teaching of the Lord, and they were attributed to famous men for the purpose of gaining for them greater and more respectable circulation. The forgeries were documents which were written, for the most part, in the fourth century - long after they claimed to have been written - for the purpose of opposing some teaching of the New Testament, or for the advocacy of some doctrine not found therein.

The Holy Spirit warned repeatedly of such efforts, some of which were in circulation before the end of the first century. Luke mentioned certain "gospels" which were in circulation when he wrote (Luke 1:1), and Paul warned the Galatians of "gospels" other than that received from him (Gal. 1:6-9). The Thessalonians had a letter purposed to be from Paul which taught that the day of the Lord was close at hand and which the apostle repudiated (II Thess. 2:2). Many of these are known to have existed only from the fact that references are made to them in writings which have been preserved and others remain.

The most prominent works of this nature, at least those most often referred to are the following: The Gospel of the Infancy of Our Saviour; The Gospel of the Birth of Mary; the Gospel of Thomas; the Gospel of Nicodemus; the Protevangelion of James; the Martyrdom of Thecla or Acts of Paul; the Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans; the Gospel of Marcion; the Six Epistles of Christ and Abgarus. This latter work contains a letter which Abgarus, the monarch of Edessa, wrote to Jesus, and the Lord's reply! They often attempt to controvert some plain doctrine of the New Testament, e.g., the "Gospel of the Nativity," denies the diety of Jesus before his baptism, or to support some heretical doctrine then taught. They often deal with frivolous, unimportant and absurd details; they frequently contradict history both sacred and profane; they are obvious imitations of New Testament books; and they have a style wholly foreign to the authentic writings of inspiration.

Ample evidence obtains to prove their unworthiness. They were never acknowledged as genuine productions by faithful disciples of the Lord who lived immediately following the close of the apostolic age. The "apostolic fathers," (Clement of Rome, Ignatius,

Polycarp and Hermas) make no mention of them, nor are they alluded to in any of the lists of divine writings coming to us from the period in which these "church fathers" lived. Enemies of the truth, as early as the second century, sought to controvert the teaching of Christ and the apostles, and they often cited the books of the gospel and the writings of Paul and Peter for the purpose of opposing them, but in no instance did they refer to any of these spurious and fraudulent works, in their attacks at Christianity.

Much publicity in recent years was given to the *Oxyrhynchus papyri*, so designated from the place in Egypt where they were found about a century ago, and containing hitherto unknown "sayings of Jesus." Near the middle of this century excavations near Luxor in Egypt brought to light similar documents. These, though found long after they were written are of the same character, and sprang from the same sources as those long known to exist. Numerous scholarly researches into this type of literature has led to the conclusion that there are no extra-canonical sayings of Jesus which are not in the Bible.

Only One

While using the Bible as our authoritative guide, we must, of necessity, refuse and refute all other "standards". Man-made creeds, doctrines, theologues, and philosophies have no place in the heart of God's children. God commanded through Peter, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11). Surely our attitude would be in full agreement with the words of Thomas Campbell spoken in the fall of 1808 at the house of Abraham Altars between Mt. Pleasant and Washington, Pennsylvania. On that memorable occasion, he made an impressive speech, always read at the commemoration of any funeral of a Christian, and which is a fitting summary of the "Only One" and "Campbell's speech, chosen with the famous motto: "Where the Bible speaks, we speak, where the Bible is silent, we are silent."

Only a God-breathed message should be accepted, believed, and obeyed. The writer of Hebrews informs us that "in these last days," Christ is serving as the messenger of God (Heb. 1:1,2). What our Lord has said, then, originated with God. Can any mortal alive today make this claim? On two recorded occasions, the Father's voice boomed down from the lofty heights of heaven and referred to Christ as "My only begotten Son" (Matt. 3:17; 17:5). Can anyone now make this claim of themselves? Christ proclaimed prior to His ascension, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth". (Matt. 28:18). Could we boast this of ourselves? I think not! Christ, and Christ alone, was made "in the likeness of men" for the purpose of relating God's message of salvation to mortal men.

After our Savior's death, and before "the cloud received Him out of their sight," the Son of God left His apostles a sublime commission. After receiving the "promise of the Father," or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they were to "Go . . . into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.

16:15). Notice, please, that they were not sent to preach Calvin, Wesley, Smith, Eddy, or Cranmer; they were not even commissioned to preach Paul, Cephas, Apollos, John, or Barnabas; they were divinely instructed to preach the GOSPEL. What is this gospel? The next verse explains it: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mk. 16:16). The gospel, therefore, using this context as our guide, must consist of (1) belief in Christ, (2) baptism into Christ, and (3) salvation through Christ. No wonder Peter proclaimed, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Two chapters later we find him exclaiming, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Only through Christ can this salvation be obtained, and only by obeying His message can our pardon be granted.

Men may be full of talk concerning salvation through their hand-crafted "gospel", but very rarely are they full of scripture. The reason is as simple as it is obvious: Only the gospel of Christ is taught within the scriptures. Why don't we strive to remain a "peculiar people" and preach simply "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (Tit. 2:14; 1 Cor. 2:2). — Box 619, Douglass, Kansas 67039.

The Action Gap

MICHAEL D. STONE

In James 4:17, the Bible says, "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Whether we realize it or not, James is talking about the action gap. What is the action gap? It is the gap that sometimes exists between our knowing to do something and then doing it. For one to deny the existence of the action gap is to deny two things. First of all, it is to deny the obvious implication of James 4:17. Secondly, it is to deny the reality of the action gap in our own lives. Most of us at one time or another knew that we should be doing something, but we did not do that which we knew we should have done.

The action gap is hindering the growth of many individual Christians and congregations today. Let us notice a few areas in which there may be an action gap in our lives. The Bible commands us not to forsake the assembly of the church (Heb. 10:25). Yet how many of us deliberately absent ourselves from the assembly? If a person is really a Christian, where else in the world would he rather be than with God's people in worship? The Bible commands us to give something back to God on each Sunday as we have been prospered (I Cor. 16:2). Think of the good that could be accomplished for Christ if each one gave as he should. We have the resources today to take the gospel to all of the world if only we wanted to badly enough. The Bible commands that we as Christians must contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 3). How many times have we not supported and encouraged those who were earnestly contending for the faith? The Lord's church today would not have many of the problems it has if more of us would be concerned with sound doctrine.

Many in the church don't attend, don't give and don't contend for the faith. Why? It's because of the action gap. Beloved, there is no virtue in acquiring a great knowledge of the Bible unless we do what it says. To know and not do is to sin. — 111 Piedmont Drive, Concord, N.C. 28025.



DALTON KEY

"This Just Can't Be Little Mary!"

(Continued From Page 1)

in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 3:18). The knowledge, understanding, and appropriation of God's word are the means by which a Christian grows.

There is no situation that touches the heart of man more quickly than to observe an undernourished child. A whole town or a whole country will be aroused when such neglect is brought to light, and rightly so. However, many in the church can watch their neighbors, or friends, or even members of their own families actually perish, spiritually, and seemingly be unconcerned.

As we eat of the "bread of life" daily we grow taller and taller spiritually. However, the Apostle Paul warned that some had had time to be receiving a diet of stronger food but still had to be fed on milk (Heb. 5:12-14).

It is tragic when one commits a few passages to memory and assumes he is "grown" now and can "convert" the whole world. Spiritual growth is a process that never ceases. A few meals of "milk" will not make one full-grown. No matter how tall grandpa was, you have to do your own growing. Some people grow up and still remain both juvenile and delinquent.

Longfellow, when very old, was asked how he was able to keep so vigorous. Pointing to a nearby apple tree, he replied: "That apple tree is very old, but I never saw prettier blossoms upon it than those it now bears. The tree grows new wood every year, and I suppose it is out of that new wood that those blossoms come. Like the apple tree, I try to grow a little new wood every year."

We never get too old to grow or to produce beautiful blossoms if we continue to "study to show ourselves approved unto God" (II Timothy 2:15). — 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, Al. 35211.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 2)

fashioned living organisms after a master plan. After all, if living organisms are to inhabit the same earth and utilize the same elements, why shouldn't they be similar?

Consideration of the argument from comparative anatomy might well be left with what has already been said. There remains, however, another angle from which the faultiness of the reasoning underlying it can be seen. Quoting Bryon Nelson again:

"If, as is said, similarity proves that different species have had a common ancestor, then it follows that the greater the similarity between two species, the more closely they are related, and that, conversely, the more unlike two species are, the more distantly they are related. To illustrate, sheep and goats are more closely related than sheep and cats, since there is a greater similarity between sheep and goats than between sheep and cats. But sheep and cats are more closely related than sheep and ostriches, since sheep and cats are more alike than sheep and ostriches.

"But here, in getting away from

generalities and down to concrete facts, is where the evolutionary theorist meets his difficulties, for it is utterly impossible very often for him to decide what particular point of similarity in species he shall choose as the basis of their supposed relationships, and the more he studies and becomes familiar with the complexities of living things the more tangled and confused does the situation become for him.

"Biologists are continually altering the 'genera' and even the 'families' to which many species belong, which in other words means that they are changing the species back and forth from one branch of the mythical tree of evolution to another. They are unable to agree among themselves on which branch vast numbers of species belong because these species are similar to species on one branch in one respect and similar to species on another branch in another respect. The great difficulty for the evolutionary treemakers is that, on the basis of their own argument for evolution from comparative anatomy, species have, as has been said, 'too many ancestors.'"³

This presents some serious problems for the evolutionists. For example, the aquatic animals - whales, dolphins, porpoises, and fish - because of their basic similarity, must have evolved from one common ancestor. Yet consider this: whales, porpoises, and dolphins are mammals, like cats, horses, and apes. Fish are cold-blooded creatures, laying eggs. Dolphins, porpoises, and whales are warm-blooded animals which develop their young within their own bodies and suckle them on milk. From whence, then, did whales, porpoises, and dolphins come? Land animals or sea creatures? And why are they so different from fish, when they supposedly came from a common ancestor??

Or, consider this, our last example: the Australian duck-billed platypus. It has a bill, webbed feet, makes a nest, lays eggs, and hatches them. It is thus similar to a bird. Yet it has four feet, fur, a tail, teeth, claws, and nurses its young. It is therefore similar to a mammal. From which did it evolve? The evolutionists do not know!

A better explanation, taken from the high school biology textbook, *Biology: A Search For Order In Complexity*, is this: "Creationists believe that when God created the vertebrates, He used a single blueprint for the body plan, but varied the plan so that each 'kind' would be perfectly equipped to take its place in the world."⁴ We could not agree more!!

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Set Thy Heart

CURTIS DOWDY

The connotation of "SET THY HEART" is "be determined in purpose." This idea is clearly seen at Ezra 7:10, "For Ezra had SET HIS HEART to seek the law of Jehovah, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and ordinances."

The above quote is from the ASV of 1901.

However, when we compare that with the KJV of 1611 we see the "determined" aspect, "For Ezra had PREPARED his heart. . . ." When one PREPARES to accomplish a given task it can be said of him that he is "determined in purpose."

While comparing translations note Moffatt's rendering: "Ezra had SET HIS HEART upon studying the law of God, upon obeying it, and upon teaching its rules and regulations in Israel."

Thus a comparison of the three looks like this:

KJV	ASV	MOFFATT
prepared heart to seek, to do, to teach. . .	set heart to seek, to do, to teach. . .	set heart upon studying, obeying, teaching. . .

The same idea of "determined in purpose" is seen in Jesus: "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly SET his face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51).

Both of these examples come from periods long removed from those of us living in the 20th century. Nevertheless, we are reminded, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning. . ." (Rom. 15:4). Let us, therefore, learn to "set our heart" to:

SEEK GOD'S WILL. How is this accomplished? Not by dream, vision, miracle, etc., but just like Ezra "studying" that which the Lord God has given (Ezra 7:6). The reason, then, for Paul's admonition, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

LIVE GOD'S WILL. There are so many scriptures that bear upon this theme. One could illustrate the need by looking at Matthew chapter 23, as it relates to the scribes and Pharisees (I recommend you read the entire chapter).

Too, the entire Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5; 6; 7), but particularly 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." Only by living it can we". . . lay hold upon the hope SET before us" (Heb. 6:18).

TEACH GOD'S WILL. Christianity is primarily a taught religion, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (Jn. 6:45).

While Paul and Barnabas preached in Antioch of Pisidia, the Jews rejected the word of God and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life. Paul then turned to the Gentiles by quoting from Isa. 49:6 "I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles. . ." What is the meaning? None other than that he was to TEACH God's will to the Gentiles.

You and I, brethren, are here for the same purpose (see Mark 16:15, 16; 2 Tim. 2:2). But there is one other thought we should press.

DEFEND GOD'S WILL. Paul remarked, ". . . I am set for the defence of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). Jude exhorts, ". . . earnestly contend for the faith. . ." (Jude 3). One remarked in my presence, "You can't earnestly contend for the faith without being contentious." I did not believe it then: I do not believe it now. I know brethren who contend for the faith contentiously. Too, I know brethren who just as earnestly contend uncontentiously (I may have coined a new word), the latter group has the best results. It would be well for us to remember a statement made by John Morley, "You have not converted a man because you have silenced him."

By all means PREPARE thy heart (set, determine) to SEEK, TO LIVE, to PREACH and to defend God's "perfect will." — P.O. Box 456, Obion, Tenn. 38240.



Words Of

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the *Words of Truth* and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

At Millport, Nobody Misses Sunday School

I preached in a revival at Millport, Ala. July 17-22, 1977. W.A. Black is in his tenth year as the beloved minister. We had chairs in the aisle three nights of the meeting, with our largest crowd the last night.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Brother Black grew up about five miles away, and probably preaches more funerals than any other preacher in the area. He and his wife are held in the highest regard wherever they are known, because of the purity of their lives and his sound preaching.

I was in the first grade when we moved to Millport (1926), and went to school there seven years. Be assured it was a deep inward joy on my part to be with that congregation in a series of services. In addition to my wife, my mother also accompanied me to this revival, and it made us "feel glad all over" to renew old acquaintances and form new friendships.

EXAMPLE OF THE BELIEVERS

On Sunday morning not one person missed the Bible classes and came only for the eleven o'clock preaching service! All who were present for preaching, were also there for Bible study an hour earlier. Commenting about this as unusual, I learned that it is NOT unusual at Millport! This is the RULE there, and in other congregations in Lamar County: **NOBODY MISSES BIBLE SCHOOL!** Brother Jesse Phillips, who preaches nearby at Christian Chapel, told me this is true at that congregation, and also at Kingville, Bethel, and Vernon. If anyone comes after Bible school, they know either (1) he is a visitor, or (2) he was sick at Bible class time!

Another noticeable feature of the Millport congregation is: They are punctual. None of the members came after the first song, neither on Sunday morning, nor at the night services.

They were on time!

Brethren everywhere need to cultivate these two habits! Paul wrote of the generosity of the Macedonians (II Cor. 8:1-8) to stimulate similar liberality at Corinth. By "the forwardness of others" he admonished the Corinthians to show the "sincerity of your love," and give liberally. May the example of Millport prod other congregations to improve (1) Bible school attendance, and (2)

punctuality.

After all, if one truly loves God with "all thine heart" (Matt. 22:37), where would he rather be while other saints are in Bible classes? And why would he prefer to miss the first song? Or, do those Christians in Lamar County simply love God and the church more than you do? — 1000 St. John Road, Rt. 9, Elizabethtown, Ky. 42701.

Preachers And Courage

RAYMOND ALLEN HAGOOD

After Jeroboam had violated the will of God in building two calves of gold, one at Dan and one at Bethel, God spoke to a young prophet in Judah and instructed the young prophet to go down to Bethel and cry against the altar that Jeroboam had made. This young prophet courageously and wonderfully obeyed the will of God in crying against the altar and in speaking out against the great evil Jeroboam had wrought.

This young man exhibited qualities which should characterize every proclaimer of the word of God. He possessed, first, a deep respect for the word of God; second, a disregard for his own safety in doing the will of the Lord; and, third, courage that would prompt him to stand before the power of a great king and do the bidding of the Lord. We are certainly aware of the fact that later this young man did believe a lie and sinned against God, but his dealings with Jeroboam were impeccable.

There was also in Judah at this time an older prophet who was the very opposite of this young prophet. He lacked courage and unflinching dedication to God. As a result of that, he, though aware of the great sin of Jeroboam, refused to speak against it.

It is unfortunate that there are teachers and preachers who are fully aware of sin and factions and evil, and yet, often because they lack courage, they are afraid to speak against what they know is wrong. Satan often brings

to bear subtle pressures on preachers. If preachers are not careful, they will bend with these pressures and refuse to preach all the truth. We have discovered that often cowardly preachers will pursue one of two courses. They will either refuse outright to preach on needed matters within the local congregation and the brotherhood, or their sermons will be so general in nature and so shrouded in apologies that their hearers will not really know where they stand after they have finished preaching on a given subject.

We are thankful that such men as Steven were not afraid to speak the truth, even in the face of death. We are thankful for men like the apostle Paul who suffered great punishments and torments and imprisonments, and yet did not compromise the truth or fail to deal with any needed matter. We are thankful finally for faithful gospel preachers everywhere who are willing to preach the truth in its plenary form, despite criticism, anonymous letters and midnight phone calls, threats of unemployment and eviction, and other devices often employed.

It is this writer's humble opinion that, unless we develop more preachers with an undying love for truth and an unquenchable desire to preach it, the church is on a long and rocky path that will most surely end in great heartache and tribulation. — 25 Union Place, Vicksburg, Ms. 39180.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
—Acts 26:25

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Mark 16:17. In I Corinthians 14:22 Paul said, "tongues are for a sign. . . to them that believe not."

This explanation of tongues would apply without difficulty to every occurrence of tongues in the New Testament. Yet some have insisted on muddying the water by a vain effort to prove that the "unknown tongue" of I Corinthians 14 is some unintelligible utterance which is altogether different from the "tongues" of Acts 2. One writer even went so far as to say that Paul, in I Corinthians 14, discusses two different kinds of tongues. He says: "When he uses the singular form (a tongue), he refers to ecstatic utterances. . . When he uses the plural form (tongues) with a singular subject, he definitely refers to known languages such as he and any linguist could learn and use. . ." This idea is without any foundation in Scripture, and does a terrible injustice to the apostle's discussion in I Corinthians 14. This same author tries to prove his point by saying that in connection with these known human languages: "No interpretation was needed." But in listing some spiritual gifts, Paul says: ". . . to

another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues" (I Cor. 12:10). Here we have some who possess the gift of tongues (plural), and some others who possess the gift of interpretation of tongues (plural). If tongues (plural) mean human languages, and if human languages need no interpretation, then some were given a gift which they did not need.

Certainly no interpreter would be needed in cases (such as Acts 2) in which the tongue being spoken was native to those who heard. But in cases such as Paul described in I Corinthians 14 an interpreter would be needed - not because a different kind of tongue was being spoken, but because a different kind of audience was hearing, i.e., an audience to which the tongue being spoken was not native. In such cases, one was forbidden to speak in a tongue without the presence of an interpreter (14:28).

If we will allow the Bible to explain itself, Acts 2 will explain what it means to speak in tongues (verse 4) or in a tongue (verse 8). Why create a difficulty where there is none?



A Tongue, Tongues And Unknown Tongues

The matter of speaking in tongues as is mentioned in the Bible would not be at all difficult to understand if all would simply read the Bible without any position of practice to defend. The very first occurrence of tongues in the New Testament serves as a key to the understanding of this gift of the Spirit throughout the New Testament. The first occurrence of tongues is in connection with the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles in the second chapter of Acts. Verse four says that the apostles "began to speak with *other tongues*, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Verse six says the multitude "were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own *language*." Verse eight says they asked the question: "how hear we every man in our own *tongue*, wherein we were born?" Verse eleven quotes them as saying, "we do hear them speak in our *tongues* the wonderful works of God."



BOBBY DUNCAN

From the record in Acts 2 it is obvious that the tongues spoken were actually languages which were native to those who heard, but foreign to those who spoke. This is the thing that made the multitude certain that a sign had been given to them. They knew that what they were witnessing had a meaning, and so they asked: "What meaneth this?" (verse 12). It is a miracle when one speaks a language which he has not learned, and speaks it so as to be understood by those to whom the language is native. Miracles, including speaking with tongues, are called *signs* in

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col. 4:6). God's people have always been those who have come out of and been separated from the World (II Cor. 6:17). They are characterized by good works (Tit. 2:14), because they are a peculiar people (I Pet. 2:9), confessing that they are strangers and pilgrims in this world (Heb. 11:13), thus having no fellowship with the works of darkness but rather reproofing them (Eph. 5:11). Christians have no desire to be brought under the power of anything that is wrong (I Cor. 6:12).



TOMMY VERNON

Almost every Christian and every gospel preacher has been, directly or indirectly, connected with radio in one form or another. Many of us are aware that dirty lyrics have become a major problem in country music radio today. Just a few months ago, Billboard Magazine, the international music-record newsweekly, made a very broad survey of 554 country music radio stations from coast-to-coast in order to determine how listeners felt, as well as radio station program directors, about the dirty lyrics in the country music being played on their stations.

More than half of the stations reported listener complaints ranging from the use of four-letter words in records to "blatant sexuality." Of the stations responding to the survey, 50.2 percent had listener complaints on the lyrics of the country records they played and another 2.1 percent of the stations reported several complaints, while another 2.1 percent stated that they screened all records and would not allow any would not allow any objectionable country songs to be aired over their stations. (God bless these!)

Cyril G. Brennan, manager of WBAM in Birmingham, Ala., says, "Many records are too suggestive. Four-letter words are not a big complaint here, but I will go on the air with another record with no foul language in it

Dirty Lyrics In Country Radio

before I go with one with dirt in it."

Larry H. Campbell, general manager of WSJW in Woodruff, S.C., says there's "too much emphasis on sex and drinking, plus unwarranted use of four-letter words. Many times I toss a great song by a major artist in the trash simply because of an unneeded ----- or -----." I'm a diehard country music fan, as are many of our listeners. But I wish the artists and the producers would make an effort to clean some of it up."

Brad Hosford, operations manager of WDTM in Selmer, Tennessee, says that some "of our little ol' lady listeners have complaints about the lyrics, but most of our listeners can live through the lyrics, if not thrive on them." The writer of this article happens to have known others besides the "little ol' lady listeners" who called WDTM in Selmer and absolutely requested that no dirty music be played on that station. One record that was played four to ten times daily was cut from air play because of the call on the part of a great Christian family in Selmer.

Station managers make the boast that their listeners "thrive" on dirty lyrics and can live through them - when, in fact, their stations are greedy for money and the stations "thrive" on such filth.

Believe you me, when the complaint about dirty lyrics in country music are made by the listeners, they are loud. Glen Corbin at KMAD in Madill, Okla., says, "We feel the lyric content of many of the current records is ridiculous, especially in light of the fact that not one suggestive songs was a hit because of the words, but because of the music sound. This trend has gone too far and needs to stop. We are playing more classics than ever so we can avoid some of the current stuff which is too raunchy to play on radio."

Dave Morris of KNUZ in Huston comments that the station's major complaints refer to "blatant sexuality" in the lyrics. "We're not prudes, but a little imagination could convey the thought. If the industry won't police itself, the FCC will."

Another station in Red Wing, Minn., KCUE, has received calls from listeners with such questions as: "Does the devil have all the good tunes?" And it's a hard question to answer, says a spokesman for the station,

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Brother Woods, I have a friend who is an atheist. He rejects the Scriptures as an authoritative revelation. How may I prove to him that God exists other than by an appeal to the Bible?"

(1) Every effect must have a cause. Rain falls. Rain is condensed moisture. Condensed moisture results from the release of tiny moisture particles lifted into the air from the earth by evaporation. There can be no rain without such suspension of moisture particles. Thus, rain is the *effect*, of which evaporation of such moisture, and its change into condensed moisture, is the immediate *cause*. Every effect *must* have a cause.

(2) Every effect must have an adequate and sufficient cause. A watch necessitates a watchmaker; a house implies a builder, an engine must have energy to run it. The watchmaker is the cause, the watch the effect; the builder of the house is the cause, the house he builds is the effect; the engine runs; the energy (fuel) is the cause, which makes the engine to produce power (the effect). Were we to say that the watchmaker is a monkey, reasonable men would reject our affirmation on the ground that a monkey is incapable of making a watch. Similarly, were it alleged that an infant can design and build a multi-storied building the claim would be denied on the ground that such is beyond the capability of an infant. Every effect must have an *adequate* and *sufficient* cause. This is self-evident truth, recognized and admitted by all thoughtful and observing people.

(3) We have sensible evidence of our existence, and of the reality of the material world about us. But one of two conclusions, which follow, can be true: (a) the world, of which we are a part, has *always* existed - in which case it and we are eternal; or (b) in some way and at some time all such began. Our own observations lead us to the conclusions that all material matters are constantly changing; that which undergoes change is not eternal; therefore, neither we, nor the material universe in which we live, are eternal. This conclusion necessarily follows from the fact that it is self-evident that all eternal matters are self-existent, and there can be no change in that which is self-existent. Thus, all matters which we see, including ourselves, *began* to exist.

(4) Things that have begun to exist must have done so in one of three, and *only* three, possible ways: (a) they are their own makers, having created themselves; or, (b) they began by accident, or chance; or, (c) they were brought into existence by some all-wise, all-powerful, and eternal Being.

(a) Are we our own creators? Did the earth and all it contains, make itself? The answer is obvious: "Of course not." Such a conclusion, that the creature is its own creator, is palpably false. (1) We did not exist before we existed. (2) We could not have acted before we were actors! (3) We could not produce an effect until we first existed as a cause. Self-creation is thus an utter impossibility - an obvious contradiction of terms. If we made ourselves we were made before we were made - an absurdity.

(b) Did the earth, and its inhabitants, begin

by accident or chance? Here, again, the answer is clearly and obviously, "No." To affirm that it thus began, is to resort to the ridiculous conclusion that an effect can exist without any cause whatsoever; it is to say that a thing can be an effect which is effected by nothing, that is, without being effected at all. That which is not effected does not exist; therefore, material matters and human life did not begin by chance or accident.

(c) Did creation result from the action of an all-wise, and all-powerful, and eternal being? The answer is "Yes," a conclusion which the foregoing premises necessitates, and the following facts confirm:

(1) He who created the worlds, and all things therein, must be possessed of *limitless and inexhaustible wisdom and knowledge*; he must know all there is to know about everything. That the earth and all it contains were made by such a being is obvious in the rich beauty, the orderly operation, and the amazing perfection of creation. The skill and the wisdom requisite to such a task as creation involves, point to one perfect in knowledge, in wisdom and skill. Flawless in content, perfect in operation, harmonious in every detail, it is inevitable that the universe, and man, sprang from the hand of a being without limitation.

(2) The creator must have been *all-powerful*. How else could he have made the towering mountains, the mighty oceans, the giant forests, and the vast multitudes of men and of beasts which inhabit the earth? Only one possessed of infinite power could be

the cause of which these stupendous works are the effect. Men, with the accumulated knowledge of the ages, are incapable of producing one tiny building block of matter - the atom; deity built, in one mighty fiat, an infinite system of worlds, peopling this earth with creatures still below the level of angels. Only an all-powerful being could have performed such acts.

(3) He who did all this must be *eternal*. He must always have existed. If ever there was a time when he did not exist, he could not exist *now*; for as we have seen, in our reasonings regarding material things, that which is without existence cannot make itself to exist; cannot being by accident; and, must be created. Hence, if every God did not exist, he could not have created himself; he could not have begun by chance, and he could not have been created by some other supreme being, *because there was no other!* God must, therefore, have always existed.

By a simple and direct manner, without appealing to the sacred writings, we have established the existence of Deity - an all-powerful, all-wise, and eternal Being. This is the God of the Bible, the attributes of whom must be learned from that sacred volume. Reason, logic, observation prompt reasonable and thoughtful men to the obvious conclusion that God exists. In the light of these facts does anyone doubt the existence of a divine being? Yes. David identifies him who does so in this fashion: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 14:1).

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 12

(Note: This article is a continuation of those in weeks gone by discussing the "proofs" of evolution.)

CYTOLOGY

Cytology may be defined as the brand of science that deals with the morphology and physiology of the cell. The cell is the fundamental structure of the living organism, just as the atom is in the molecular structure of chemical compounds. Cells, of course, are extremely small, being between 10-100 MM in diameter. The

science of cytology has had to await first the development of the optical, and second, the development of the electron microscopes. As recently as 125 years ago, Schleiden (a botanist) and Schwann (an anatomist) set forth, independently of each other, the "Cell Theory" from their homes in Germany. This famous "Cell Theory" states that all living organisms are composed of aggregates of cells. Today, of course, we recognize their theory as being a true statement of fact.

Evolutionists, of course, have capitalized on the Cell Theory, and have stated that primitive, single-celled creatures arose from the primeval ocean soup and through binary fission and geometric progression became the living animals (and let's not forget plants) of today. Some people believe that because cells are so similar in their construction, life must have started with one cell and evolved through great periods of time to the billions of cells that now make up the human body. However, *despite all claims, there is still no evidence that single cells appeared first, or that they*

*ever developed into multi-celled animals.*¹

This theory of life starting with one cell which in turn divided into 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, *ad infinitum* until there were structures composed of great numbers of cells, seems painfully logical and orderly to the human mind. However, consider these serious drawbacks.

In reality, the cell is not simple, but complex, and highly organized, this being essential to enable it to perform so many vital processes. For example, in the metazoan body (metazoan - many celled) each cell is specialized for a particular purpose. Even in one of the apparently simplest of the multi-cellular animals - the Hydra - there are no less than 7 different types of cells. In the mammal, there are no less than 30 cell types - each one quite obviously fitted to its own specific function.² Thus, skin, blood, bone, muscle, and nerve all have their own specialized type of cell. All cells are not the same; neither do they serve the same purpose.

The cell membrane is only 4 molecules thick (6/100 - 8/100 MM thick). Yet this lipo-protein membrane in effect allows only certain chemicals to enter or leave the cell. The cytoplasm (inner cell material) consists of a 3-dimensional maze of membranes and vacuoles - the endoplasmic reticulum (which connects the outer cell membrane to the nucleus). The cytoplasm provides a means whereby the hundreds of different chemical reactions going on inside a cell are kept separate from one another. The mitochondria in the cell (there may be several hundred in one cell) are where enzymes are located in each cell. These enzymes release from carbohydrates the energy required by the cell. At least 20 different chemical reactions are to be found in the release of this energy.

The nucleus, of course, is where the

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BERT THOMPSON

Dirty Lyrics In Country Radio

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"when you hear lyrics of people who live like animals."

To our readers: complaints about dirt in country music songs are not new - even though this survey is the first national survey that has an impact on both pop and country music. From the foregoing information it is easy to discern that there is wide spread concern among Christians and non-Christians about these matters. Don Nelson, manager of WIRE in Indianapolis, has long campaigned against dirty lyrics in both pop and country music.

Strange as it may seem, country music has, for a number of years, contained elements of suggestiveness. Any individual has only to listen to some older tunes fully to get the message. As musicologist Paul Ackerman, former music director of Billboard, once said, country music concerned "sex, sin, and religion." We have, over the past twenty-five years, been able to read a great many things into country music lyrics, things contrary to the mind of Christ.

The future looks good for country music because there's a new moral sound in the country today. People are calling radio stations; sponsors are refusing to buy time on stations which play suggestive music and congregations of the Lord's people are threatening to take their radio programs off stations - and this is going on all over the country. It seems now that country music artists and record producers will have to react to it or suffer decreasing airplay and decreasing record sales.

"It should also be noted that singles are currently selling more to jukebox operators than anywhere else and lyric content isn't too much of a problem in bars where many jukeboxes are located. STILL, THE COMPLAINTS ARE THERE AND THEY ARE EXTENSIVE" (emphasis mine - T.V.).

Jerry Marvin on station KNHN in Dimmitt, Texas, says, "Song lyrics are too suggestive, profanity is unacceptable. Lyrics dealing too explicitly with sex cannot be programmed. There is too much material dealing with drinking and sex. There is a great need for bright, uptempo, positive material - material uplifting in its nature. Lyrics of things bright, beautiful and creative are the desperate needs of the dark hours in which we live." Mr. Marvin goes on to say, "The excessive amount of material dealing with sex, alcohol and illicit love and the tremendous number of slow ballads forces radio to seek material outside the standard country field.

"Here, all records are reviewed individually and selected on merit. However, those records which deal with negative subjects matter never receive more than a few weeks of airplay. Records that deal explicitly with sex or profanity receive NO AIRPLAY."

Wynn Ably of WYDE in Birmingham, Alabama, states that his station receives complaints on sex-oriented lyrics.

WSM radio, home of the Grand Ole Opry, in Nashville, Tennessee, with Mary Catherine Murphy, states that the station gets obscenity complaints, but, "many listeners read obscenity into the lyrics. We won't program an obscene record, but there is a thin line between obscene and non-obscene lyrics."

Country music boasts more than 50 million fans across these United States of America and it seems to this writer that since Nashville is the international industrial center that grosses more than 500 million dollars yearly, that WSM, the home of the 'Opry' should be able to see the "thin line between obscene

and non-obscene lyrics" or else get someone to head the station that can see the difference. WSM is a great radio station reaching millions of country music fans around the country and from coast to coast. It seems to me that this great station should lead the way in cleaning up country music. Grant Turner, a great announcer and a personal friend, has for a number of years been a leader in trying to clean up the filth that has drifted into the country music field. He is an outstanding American and gentlemen in every sense of the word.

But some will say that the environment and times in which we live are changing and this is true. Radio has also changed and helped to bring about the times and the environment in which we now live. It has, to some extent, turned the living room into a tavern, dance hall, battleground, the bedroom of a harlot, or simply the home of a materialistic worldly people. Christians, there is A CONNECTION BETWEEN WHAT WE HEAR AND WHAT

WE DO. This certainly reinforces the Bible truth that the heart is deceitful above all things (Jer. 117:9), and that it takes diligence on our part to keep our hearts (Prov. 4:23).

Yes, radio in the field of pop and country music has changed and it could get worse. So if you are lukewarm toward dirty lyrics in songs, it is time that you do something about it now.

All quotes in the above article are from; Billboard, The International Music - Record - Tape Newsweekly, April 16, 1977, pages 3, 79, 86.

Cashbox, Cashbox Publications: April 9, 1977 issue, Radnor, Pa. Pages 10, 27, 68.

The Country Music Story, by Robert Shelton and Burt Goldblatt, Published by The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., Indianapolis - Kansas City - New York.

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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chromosomes are housed. These chromosomes are rich in DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid), which is a double helix in configuration. The nucleus controls biochemical activities of the cell, as well as division. The male and female gametes (each containing half the normal number of chromosomes, or 23) meet during reproduction to form a zygote, with 46 chromosomes. Normal cell division - mitosis - is nothing short of fantastic. But special cell division - meiosis - is incredible! Meiosis, which produces gametes, somehow halves the chromosome number in each gamete, so that when two gametes are joined, the normal chromosome number - 46 - is restored. How could evolution have ever known to half the chromosome number in meiosis? The concept of chance evolution's producing the orderly process of mitosis or meiosis is non-sensical!

Scientists tell us that the average adult body contains 100 trillion cells. These cells are not alike, either. White blood cells live about 13 days; red blood cells live about 120 days; some nerve cells can live up to 100 years! The cells are so minute that 250 arranged end-to-end would cover only one inch. Yet your 100 trillion cells, laid end-to-end, would circle the earth some 200 times or more.

It is said that there are over 3 billion people on our earth. It took two living reproductive cells to start each of these human beings. If all these reproductive cells were counted, it would be about 6 billion cells. If all the DNA from these cells could be extracted, and put into a container, that container would measure 1/8 square inch! Think how powerful DNA must be!

Is it any wonder the Hebrew writer exclaimed: "Every house is builded by someone; but He that built all things is God" (Hebrews 3:4)? Is it any wonder the psalmist exclaimed that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalms 139:14)?

This "simple cell" that everyone is always talking about is not so "simple." In fact, it is most complex. As Dr. Richard Belkengren of Oregon State University has been known to tell his classes in plant physiology: "Just one simple cell, and look what it can do:

1. It can take in nutrients (food), first 'deciding' which nutrients to take and which ones to reject.
2. It can absorb or give off water according to its need.
3. It can manufacture all the materials of which it is made.
4. It can put those materials together in

proper fashion to construct a new cell.

5. It can harness the energy needed for all of its activities.

6. It can store energy, raw materials, and finished products for future use.

7. In many cases it can manufacture chemicals to be used elsewhere, such as antibiotics and exoenzymes.

8. It can give off these chemicals, along with waste materials."3.

And this is the "simple cell" that the evolutionists want us to believe "just happened" - by "chance and non - purposive forces through blind nature." (??)

(More next week)

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"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the *Words of Truth* and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 13

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NUMBER 35

A Famine In The Land

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

The prophet from Tekoa, Amos, spoke out against the sins of slothfulness, indulgence, arrogance, idolatry, injustice and indifference in no uncertain terms. It was during the latter part of the reign of Jeroboam II that this herdsman and a dresser of Sycomore - trees received his commission from God. The age was one relative peace and of great prosperity. The rich became richer and the poor became poorer. The powerful wealthy class of people oppressed the less fortunate. Seemingly, there was no interest in nor time for adhering to the law of God. Though there was a form of religion, it was empty and vain. The populace did not want to hear the message of doom as delivered by Amos. The situation grew worse. There was no love for the truth, righteousness nor justice in the land.

It was in this carnal setting that the spokesman for God uttered these words: "Behold, the day come, saith the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah. . . They shall run to and fro to seek the word of Jehovah, and shall not find it" (Amos 8:11,12).

Today, in spiritual Israel, matters are just about the same. We are blessed with the abundance of physical and material wealth. We have become rather well respected by our religious neighbors. We possess the best church buildings ever in our history. We drive the finest automobiles and wear expensive attire. We enjoy more leisure time now than ever before. We have the methods and the means to teach others. But, generally speaking, we are a people that do not know God's word. While we feast upon the best of the flocks and pluck the fruits of over-abundance, we suffer spiritually because of a dire shortage of knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. We stretch ourselves upon our couches and watch endless TV programs and fill our minds with earthly and sensuous knowledge. We instruct our youth in every facet of worldly wisdom. Inwardly, our souls are being starved to death. There is a famine in Israel. A famine not of food for the physical but of the bread of life for the inner man.

While we are at ease in Zion, many are leaving the Lord and others are left to die in their sins because we have failed to preach the gospel due to the fact that we have feasted upon the fleshly instead of the spiritual.

Another prophet of doom was Hosea. This man of God exclaimed: "Hear the word of Jehovah, ye children of Israel; for Jehovah hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor goodness, nor knowledge of God in the land." Also, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee. . ." (Hosea 4:1,6). A people void of a knowledge of God and his word cannot continue to exist as a nation (Rom. 1:18-31).

The church of our Lord will suffer terribly if the word is not known in the hearts of individual Christians. What you don't know can hurt you - eternally. We shall be judged according to the standard of divine truth (Jno. 12:48).

It behooves us then to learn the Holy Scriptures. Here are some suggestions that will aid us in this endeavor.

1. **STUDY THE BIBLE REGULARLY.** Notice I didn't say just be a daily Bible reader. There is a difference. One person might, for conscience sake, read swiftly over a few passages just before retiring at night and not study seriously enough to learn anything. A sincere study of the Scriptures takes time, energy and effort. There is no short cut in the obtaining of a good knowledge of the Bible.

2. **ATTEND ALL THE PERIODS OF BIBLE STUDY AND WORSHIP OF THE LOCAL**

CONGREGATION. Class discussions and sermons can motivate a deeper study and understanding of God's word.

3. **ENROLL IN THE VARIOUS BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSES OFFERED BY OUR BRETHERN.** This method is excellent in the utilization of one's time and the obtaining of a greater degree of Biblical knowledge.

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5. **READ THE VARIOUS PERIODICALS PUBLISHED BY FAITHFUL BRETHERN.** Some of the best Bible centered material can be found in these papers. Also, you will have a broader view of our fellowship, missionary efforts and the like.

6. **BUILD UP A GOOD PERSONAL LIBRARY IN YOUR HOME.** There is no substitute for excellent reading material related to the Holy Scriptures. A man becomes what he reads.

The church can only mature spiritually as the individual disciple studies, prays and practices. We all can strengthen the body of Christ by growing "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (II Pet. 3:18). And let us be careful that while we bask in a time of peace and prosperity that we do not meet our doom in a depression - an absence of the knowledge of God's Eternal Truth. — Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Al. 36467.

Two New Books

By Robert R. Taylor Jr.

RAYMOND ALLEN HAGOOD

Robert R. Taylor, Jr., evangelist for twenty-seven years, has recently had two more excellent books published by Lambert Book House: *The Bible Doctrine of Final Things* and *Studies In I and II Thessalonians*. These books are readable and abound richly in brother Taylor's picturesque and vivid style. One cannot help but become caught up in

beautiful imagery, so common from his pen, and feel the power and reality of his subjects.

The Bible Doctrine of Final Things contains sections dealing with death, the second coming, the resurrection, the final judgment, heaven and hell. The first section sets the tone of the book - establishing the difference

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." - Acts 26:25

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Withdrawing From The Disorderly

Several times recently we have been asked if the church can withdraw fellowship from one because that one has simply quit attending the services. It is suggested by some that the church cannot withdraw from one who has already withdrawn himself from the church. This kind of reasoning evidences three errors: (1) a failure to appreciate the gravity of the sin of non-attendance, (2) a lack of understanding of what it means to walk disorderly, and (3) an obvious misunderstanding of what withdrawing fellowship actually is. Let us look briefly at these three things.



BOBBY DUNCAN

The sin of non-attendance is not a small sin; and those who think it is need to think again. It is disobedience to a clear command of God - the doing of a thing which God plainly says not to do (Heb. 10:25). Not only so, but it is a sin directly against God Himself. Of course, there is a sense in which every sin is a sin against God; but some sins are more directly against God than are others. For illustration, look at the ten commandments (Ex. 20). The first four commandments have to do with man's duty to God, while the last six have to do with man's duty to his fellow man. In Matthew 22:37 Jesus states that loving God is the first and greatest commandment. God has generally punished more severely those who sinned directly against God. Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10) and the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath day (Num. 15) are examples of

this. The man who quits attending has committed a sin directly against God, and the gravity of this sin should not be minimized.

In the second place, the expression, "walketh disorderly," in II Thess. 3:6 more nearly describes the sin of non-attendance than any other one sin. The Greek word which is translated "disorderly" is an adverbial form of the Greek verb **ATAKTEO**, which is said by J.H. Thayer to be a word used "of soldiers marching out of order or **QUITTING THE RANKS**" (Emphasis mine, B.D.). This is the group that the inspired apostle commanded that the church withdraw from, i.e., those who have quit the ranks. To argue that the church

cannot withdraw from one who has quit the ranks is to take issue with a plain statement of the inspired writer.

Finally, the withdrawal of fellowship is not the announcement that takes place in the assembly on Sunday morning. It is rather the subsequent refusal of every faithful Christian to have any social intercourse with the person concerning whom the announcement was made. This is the actual withdrawal of fellowship; and the effect of such is the same, whether the sin be one of gross immorality, the causing of division by false teaching, or the failure to attend services.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 13

(NOTE: This is the conclusion of last week's article dealing with cytology as a "proof" of evolution).

Although the psalmist probably did not have one single cell in mind when he penned this statement, it certainly would not be out of context to use it in our discussion of the "simple cell": "I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well" (Psalms 139:14). Much is still not known about the cell. For example, although all cells possess the complete set of coded instructions for the whole organism, there are widely different cell types. But surely this much is clear: such a complex structure as the cell could never have "evolved" from a crude broth of chemical substances (assuming these to have been given in the first place). Years ago scientists thought of the cell as a mere "blob" of jelly. Then it was easy to imagine that the first living cell sprang to life in some warm primeval pool. But now that we know the complexity of each tiny cell, we can no longer place such implicit faith in chance events occurring in primeval pools. As J.B. Roberts has said: "The possibility that the ingredients we have described could spontaneously arrange themselves into self-reproducing cells is so incredibly remote that I cannot stretch my faith far enough to believe such a thing."¹



BERT THOMPSON

What, then, is the logical alternative? The alternative is that this "simple cell" - this sophisticated factory - is a produce of matchless Intellect! "This 'simple' cell, this highly sophisticated and diversified factory, containing precision machines so delicately tooled and intricately regulated, can only be the product of an incomparable Intellect whom we call God, the Creator."¹

"To declare that plenty of 'time' was needed - and sufficed - is of no avail, for time in itself can achieve nothing. Time cannot explain the alleged evolution of the DNA molecule with its built-in code. The idea that random chance could produce the cell, so complex and so indisputably designed - as has been shown - to fulfill its many functions, must be utterly rejected."²

Before we leave the subject of cytology (not wishing to bore the reader with an in-depth biology lesson on RNA, DNA, and all their myriad forms), this writer would like to

recommend to the reader two good articles from the pen of Allen Cornell. The first article appeared in **FIRM FOUNDATION** on October 7, 1975, and was entitled "Every House Is Built By Someone." The second article entitled "Journey Into A Living Cell" was published in **FIRM FOUNDATION** on December 7, 1976. I commend these two articles to your reading. The latter article will give you some idea of just how complex the "simple cell" really is. It speaks highly of an intelligent Maker. I would also like to leave the reader with this quote from the first article:

"A billion mighty voices shout that there is a Maker. More and more voices are heard as our realm of view increases with microscope and telescope. God has not left himself without a powerful witness in the natural realm. Things which are exceeded in beauty and fascination only by the spiritual realm bear clear testimony to the fact of his existence and of his nature.

"Every house is built by someone. An effect demands a sufficient cause. We should now, more clearly than ever before, be able to realize that design demands a designer. But we are being told a lie. We have heard it so many times that some of us will start to believe it unless we are frequently reminded that it is a lie. We are supposed to know that certain rather crudely chipped rocks are positive proof of a designer, but not even suspect that the intricate pattern of a flower demands a designer. While we must believe that a simple sketch on a cave wall was made by someone, we are scorned as superstitious if we believe in a maker of the fabulous human mind. We are taught to know that a certain design in a rock is the track of an animal that walked there when that rock was soft material. We are supposed to be as certain that the foot stepping there and even the whole animal was just the result of the chance interacting of molecules over a long period of time and natural selection.

"The predominant philosophy of our age has led millions mentally to goose-step to the concept that a little design demands a designer and that a very complex design resulted from chance. No hundred-story building is as complex as the simplest, one-celled, free-living organism, but I do not have to tell you which one we are supposed to believe originated by chance. . . .

"But should not the builder of the house have more honor than the house (Heb. 3:3)? We are taught that each species of bird builds its own kind of nest by instinct passed from generation to generation in a code system known as genes. These genes have to have at least as complex a design as the behavior they

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods.)

"The 'Oneness' people of the Pentecostal Church contend that baptism may be scripturally administered 'in the name of Jesus' only. We baptize into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, yet all instances in acts where baptism is performed follow no such formula. Instead, baptism was administered 'in the name of Jesus,' or some variation of his name. Please explain."

Their theory that baptism is to be administered in the name of Jesus only assumes a degree of plausibility from the fact that, despite the nature of the command to baptize in the Great Commission as recorded by Matthew, there is no clear-cut instance of its being thus administered in Luke's account of the preaching of the gospel in the apostolic age. Adherents of the theory make much of the fact that this arrangement is nowhere to be found in that record. On the contrary, they forcefully point out that it is repeatedly asserted that baptism was done in the name of Jesus. Examples of this are:

Acts 2:38 — "Be baptized. . . in the name of Jesus Christ."

Acts 8:16 — "Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Acts 10:48 — "Baptize in the name of the Lord."

Acts 19:5 — "Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

From which fact it is alleged that this was the uniform formula of the apostolic age, and the pattern intended for us today.

An examination of these passages, however, leads us to the conclusion that the uniformity claimed for them is lacking. If the first instance adduced - Acts 2:38, "be baptized. . . in the name of Jesus Christ" — be the proper arrangement, it follows that Peter and John in Samaria (Acts 8:16), Peter at Caesarea (Acts 10:48), and Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:5) did not adhere to the prescribed formula. In the four instances found in the Scriptures where baptism and the name of Jesus are associated, there are *three different arrangements* of the name, thus indicating conclusively that no definite design for the order of the words was intended. Obvious even to the English scholar, the variety is more striking in the Greek:

Acts 2:38 — *kai baptisheto. . . epi to onomati Iesou Christou.*

Acts 8:16 — *bebaptismenoi. . . eis to onoma tou Kuriou Iesou.*

Acts 10:48 — *baptishenai en to onomati tou Kuriou.*

Acts 19:5 — *ebaptisthesan eis to onoma tou Kuriou Iesou.*

Note the absence of uniformity in the use of the name:

Acts 2:38 — Jesus Christ.

Acts 8:16 — The Lord Jesus.

Acts 10:48 — The Lord.

Acts 19:5 — The Lord Jesus.

Note too, the variation in the prepositions used to show relation between the name and

the baptismal act:

Acts 2:38 — *epi to onomati* (literally, upon the name).

Acts 8:16 — *eis to onoma* (into the name).

Acts 10:48 — *en to onomati* (in the name).

Acts 19:5 — *eis to onoma* (into the name).

Thus out of four occurrences where baptism is said to have been in the name of Jesus, there are three variations in the Greek: *epi to onomati* (upon the name); *eis to onoma* (into the name); *en to onomati* (in the name).

From this induction of passages touching the relation of baptism to the name of Jesus, it is clear that no uniformity in the use of terms occurs, and the conclusion from such alleged uniformity is fallacious.

The Great Commission, under which the apostles were sent forth to labor, is clear and explicit touching the manner in which they were to baptize: "And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, *baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20). The instructions thus

issued were enforced by "all authority," and to last until the "end of the world." The Lord authorized baptism to be performed in this manner only; any other way is without his authority. Inasmuch as it was to last to the end of the age, any other arrangement is unauthorized, and an officious intermeddling with the will and the way of the Lord himself. Those who insist that baptism is to be administered in the name of Jesus only are in the position of denying that this manner of procedure *ever began*, that the Pentecostians were not baptized thus, and that the apostles and early evangelists invariably violated these words of the Lord! It is idle to deny this. Our practice today is to adhere without variation to the arrangement thus prescribed - a practice those whose position we are reviewing say is unscriptural. If so, it follows that the apostles never obeyed the command as recorded by Matthew.

One act in the name of another only when his acts are authorized. To baptize *in the name of Jesus* is, therefore, to baptize in the manner he authorized. We have seen that he directed that it be "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:18-20). Hence, only those who baptize *into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit* baptize in the name of Jesus! Any variation thereof is unauthorized, and, therefore, not in his name.

Roots



TOM CHILDERS

"Roots", a novel for television, has been viewed by more people than any other program. The program consisted of eight straight nights on television. The story is about a black man who attempted to trace his ancestry back to Africa. We saw several nights of the program and wish to draw the following lessons.

"Roots" underlined the truth of the Bible, "the love of money is the root of all evil" (I Timothy 6:10). Free men became slaves because other men had the wrong attitude toward the acquisition of money.

"Roots" showed us how sin can hurt innocent people for several generations. No man is an island. The sins he commits hurts him and others around him. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself" (Romans 14:7).

"Roots" displayed the ugliness of prejudice. "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin" (James 2:9).

"Roots" emphasized that sin has a pay day. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). Many of the problems that are eating away at America, all started many years ago when slavery was introduced.

"Roots" depicted the importance of our heritage. "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children" (Proverbs 13:22). "Children's children are the crown of old men: and the glory of children are their fathers" (Proverbs 17:6).

"Roots" showed the importance of teaching our children. The slaves were proud, strong-willed and desired freedom because of the teaching they received. We would do no greater task than to teach our children the way of the Lord. "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in

the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

"Roots" remind us of the often forgotten truth that freedom is precious and if it is to be maintained, it must be loved and sought after. If it is ever lost, it can be obtained again only through "blood, sweat and tears."

"Roots" assured us that amidst the heartaches and disappointments, there can be brighter days ahead. Only Christians can say as did Paul, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Corinthians 4:17). — 624 Ridgeway, Bolivar, Tn. 38008.

Two New Books

Continued from page 1

between human authority and authority of God. This treatise is not only a powerful presentation of precious Biblical precepts, but it is also an expose of evil errors often associated with such a study. In a clear and thorough exposition of Matthew 24 brother Taylor destroys the foundation of premillennialism, which stems from human misunderstandings and perversions of this passage, and certainly erases many of the misconceptions concerning the second coming of Christ.

Every reader will survey his life carefully in light of the chapters on death and hell, and, after reading the chapters on heaven, will live in anticipation of that glorious home. None among us could help but have our faith renewed and built up by careful examination of brother Taylor's section on the resurrection of our dear Lord.

The workbook on I and II Thessalonians, one of the finest that this writer has ever seen, contains thirteen lessons and 119 pages. It is amazing that in 119 pages a writer could deal so thoroughly with these two great New Testament epistles. That book is an exciting and absorbing Biblical study that will profit all who use it.

You may order these books from Lambert Book House, Box 4007, Shreveport, La. 71104. — 25 Union Place, Vicksburg, Ms. 39180.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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produce, yet we are told that chance produced these and every other gene in our oriole. To say that the house had to be produced by a builder, but that the builder originated by chance certainly does not give more honor to the builder than to the house.

"Again we are taught that a little design must have a designer, but that a much more complex design just happened. The design of the bird nest leads us to something greater than the nest - namely the bird. Logically the design of the bird demands a greater designer. Ultimately we must reason back to the eternal, self-existent Designer or God. The Hebrew author expresses this truth in the words, "The builder of all things is God" (Heb. 3:4). Is not the wisdom of the world at times a little foolish?"³

Automobiles, television sets, and skyscrapers do not just happen. Yet we (and our children) are asked simply to believe that chance, and blind chance at that, has produced something so intricately complex

and delicate as the cell. Is not the wisdom of the world at times a little foolish? Cytology, if anything, stands as veritable proof of the supremacy of God and His creation. One thing is for sure: the complexity and beauty of the "simple cell" cannot be construed in any form or fashion as a "proof" of evolution. If anything, it is just the opposite!

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Manna and Miracles Have Ceased

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

Jehovah God provided abundantly for His children while they were wandering in the wilderness. In Exodus, chapter 16, we learn that God instructed and informed Moses of the manna that He intended to give the people. And, for six days of every week while Israel journeyed in the wilderness for forty years (Exo. 16:4, 35), God rained bread from heaven until they came into the promised land. After Israel crossed Jordan, they encamped in Gilgal and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month. The Holy Scriptures clearly state that "the manna CEASED on the morrow after they had eaten of the produce of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Caanan that year" (Joshua 5:10-12).

Therefore, we know definitely and beyond a shadow of a doubt the fact that manna ceased. No need to speculate about the matter. The Bible informs us that manna ceased and when manna ceased. That should be evident for anyone. And yet, I can't help but wonder if years later, while Israel dwelt in the land of Caanan, that a group of young folk didn't approach the elders of the people and make some inquiries about this miraculous matter of manna. You can just about hear them saying something like, "Why, brother, Jehovah is the same today as He was yesterday". Or, Brother elder, you are just too steeped in church (Acts 7:38) tradition". And they might have said, "You don't believe in the Spirit of God strong enough." Or, "If you elders 'felt' the Spirit like we do, you would know that manna will come down out of heaven in these days."

We read in the New Testament of the miracles of our Lord, the miraculous powers of the apostles, and, of the imparting of the spiritual gifts upon members of the first century church (I Cor. 12:28-31). All Bible believing people accept the miracles, wonders and signs recorded in Holy Writ. Basically speaking, these miracles confirmed the sonship of Christ, the spoken word of God, and, guided the infant church in the absence of the complete written testament of Jesus Christ (Jno. 20:30,31; Hebrews 2:1-4; Eph. 4:11-16). But, in I Corinthians 13 we read that a time was coming when the miraculous would end. Paul declared that

"love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues they shall CEASE; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away." These three miraculous gifts stood for the whole of the nine mentioned in chapter twelve. Paul is simply saying that there was coming a time when miracles would "be done away" and would "cease". Furthermore, Paul tells us in no uncertain terms when the miracles would cease. He continued, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." The revelation of the New Testament was fragmentary. In the beginning of the church age, the word of God was in the inspired man. Later, as these inspired men wrote epistles to various congregations and individuals, the word of God was partly in man and partly in written form. It was during this time that miracles continued, at least to some degree. However, Paul said when "that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." There is no doubt that Paul speaks of the cessation of the miraculous "when that which is perfect is come." The "perfect" is in contrast with "that which is in part". That which was "in part" was the incompleting written word of the Lord. Therefore, we must conclude that that which is "perfect" had to be the complete written word of God, that is, the New Testament of Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:15-17; II Tim. 3:16,17; II Pet. 1:3; Jude 3). Also, the word "perfect" from the Greek, *teleion*, means "to bring an end by completing or perfecting. . . of accomplishing. . . of bringing to completion." Perfect "signifies having reached its end [telos] finished, complete, perfect" (Vine). The word "perfect" is an adjective which is here used as a noun. It is in the neuter gender and nothing in the context suggests that it refers to a person. And it does not in any way refer to the second advent of our Lord.

Miracles ceased just as surely as manna ceased. And yet, there are religionists who "feel" that the miraculous still lingers away. There are those apostates who have left us who have written books relating the miraculous workings of the Holy Spirit for us today. The most dangerous are those who choose not to leave us but who influence the young

unlearned, the "tired of the book only in religious matters" folk, and sow seeds of unrest and discord. The threat of pure Pentecostalism is rampant in religion and even prominent among many of our own people.

May God continue to bless elders, Bible teachers and evangelists who labor diligently in the fight against such error, and, who teach sound doctrine for a healthy, spiritual growth in the church of Jesus Christ. — E. Hart Avenue, Opp, Ala. 36467.

"Brother's Keepers"

Christians must "by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13). We are taught to "consider one another. . . exhorting one another. . ." (Heb. 10:24-25). Because we love our neighbors as ourselves (Matt. 22:37), we seek to convert as many as possible. (Matt. 28:18-20; I Cor. 9:22), both alien sinners and erring children of God (Jas. 5:19-20).



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

When any "fall from their own steadfastness" (II Pet. 3:17), genuine Christian love must be manifest toward them. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1). James wrote: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas. 5:19-20).

In the long ago, God said: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: Therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked man from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; BUT HIS BLOOD WILL I REQUIRE AT THINE HAND. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from the wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; BUT THOU HAST DELIVERED THY SOUL" (Ezek. 3:17-19). In view of this, we warn and seek to rescue others for two reasons: (1) to save THEM if possible, and (2) to save OUR OWN souls.

A failure to warn and rescue all whom we can is hazardous to them and us. "Again, when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die: BECAUSE THOU HAST NOT GIVEN HIM WARNING, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; BUT HIS BLOOD WILL I REQUIRE AT THINE HAND (Ezek. 3:20).

Truly, we are our "Brother's Keepers". Hence each congregation - from the eldership on down - should strive to recover and regain every "sheep" that has gone astray.

(Subsequent articles will tell about a program we have started where I preach.) — 100 St. John Road, Rt. 9, Elizabethtown, Ky. 42701.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the *Words of Truth* and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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"Skoodawabskooksis" Or "Nashwaaksis"

EDSEL BURLESON

George E. Simpson said the three (3) hardest words to say are not Indian names like "Skoodawabskooksis, Nashwaaksis, or Meduxnekeag," but, "I have sinned" or "I was wrong."

It isn't difficult for us to see our mistakes but being humble enough to admit them is another matter. When faced with the reality of an offense we usually try to justify our action by some rationalization. If you are willing to admit you are all wrong when you are all wrong, you are all right.

The Prodigal (Luke 15) was too proud to consider his actions as sinful until circumstances were such that he "came to himself" (verse 15). He then said: "I will

arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee. And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants" (verses 18 and 19). Not only did he resolve to say to his father, "I have sinned," but he carried out that resolution (verse 21).

Many, today, are in that "far country" but few ever "come to themselves." The main difference between a wise man and a fool is that a fool's mistakes never teach him anything. Benjamin Franklin said, "How few there are who have courage enough to own their faults, or resolution enough to mend them."

David (Psalm 51) also traveled into that "far country," but he lived the rest of his life regretting those moments of pleasure. The agony he experienced is repeated again and

again as Satan succeeds in deceiving unsuspecting souls. Sadly, Satan's most effective work is too often done among those who claim to love the Lord.

The unusual thing about David and the Prodigal, they said those three hardest words, "I have sinned." Our pride says, "Don't say it." But, never be too proud to say "I was wrong." We should never be ashamed to admit a mistake, in so doing we are saying we are wiser today than we were yesterday. Defending our faults and errors only proves that we have no intention of quitting or correcting them. We can never minimize our own mistakes by magnifying those of others. Learn to say those three hardest words, "I have sinned," or "I was wrong." — 420 Seventh St. S.W., Birmingham, Al. 35211.

Almost A Forgotten Command

KEN TYLER

The command is this: "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 he received of us" [II Thess. 3:6]. "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy but admonish him as a brother" [II Thess. 3:14-15]. "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother, but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" [Matt. 18:15-17]. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" [Rom. 16:17]. Concerning the fornicator at Corinth, Paul wrote, "In the

name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" [I Cor. 5:4-5].

These passages make it plain that withdrawal from those who walk disorderly is a command of God. And yet, so many congregations of the Lord are neglecting this command. It takes courage, diligence, and most of all tremendous love for souls to practice what is taught in these passages.


The primary purpose of withdrawal of fellowship is to save the soul of the erring one (I Cor. 5:5). In most cases withdrawal of fellowship will never have to take place if the proper effort to restore the disorderly to Christ is put forth. However, if the withdrawal has to take place it is to the intent to make the person ashamed and turn from his way of destruction (II Thess. 3:14). There are many souls in Paradise today because the church was willing to follow God's plan of discipline. However, there are far more souls who are in hell this very moment, many of which would have been saved if God's people had not

forgotten His command.

This is something to which we had better give much thought. Can we expect to go to heaven if we refuse to follow the command to withdraw ourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, with our primary purpose being to save that soul? If you really love souls, then follow what God has said. If you do not, then I don't believe you will follow this command.

This article only touches the surface of church discipline. It is my prayer the things which have been said will stir you to a much deeper study of the subject. James Meadows has an excellent study book entitled, *Withdraw Yourselves*. James Pilgrim has an outstanding tract entitled, *Withdrawing From The Disorderly*. Both of these will be helpful to you. (Editor's Note: John Robinson also has an excellent tract on the subject. It is entitled, *God's Woodshed*.)

Members of the church are dying unprepared to meet God — members who could be reached if the church would follow God's plan of discipline. Withdrawal from those who walk disorderly is almost a forgotten command. May it not be. — Route 1, Union Grove, Al. 35175.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." —Acts 26:25

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What Next?

One never knows when he picks up a church bulletin or a brotherhood publication what he might read. Some have now actually taken the position that it is wrong for colleges to have choruses - or at least that it is wrong for college choruses to sing religious songs, or for anyone to listen to them sing. Three articles in brotherhood papers within the past few weeks have taken such positions. We must admit that it was somewhat difficult for us to believe that some are actually opposing a chorus' singing religious songs at any time under any circumstances with anyone listening. If it is argued that the articles did not say that, we would respond that this is the logical conclusion of the positions taken; and we would further ask under what circumstances would it be permissible for a chorus to sing religious songs and for anyone to listen?



BOBBY DUNCAN

One writer insists that the first question to be settled with regard to this matter is whether it is worship or entertainment when a chorus sings. he admits of no other possibilities, and then proves (?) on this basis that it is wrong for a chorus to sing. Another writer, trying to prove the same thing, admits at least four possible reasons for a chorus to sing. Nevertheless, his conclusion is the same - that it is a sin for a chorus to sing, at least so that anyone might hear. It is interesting to note that one of these writers insists that it is *either* worship or entertainment, while the other takes the position that everything a Christian does is worship. To this latter, picking a banjo and singing "O, Suzanna" would be worship. But he says there is some

worship that "would be inappropriate in the assembly." Believe it or not, this same writer says, "I have wondered why it is proper to worship after the (closing) prayer in a way we would oppose before the prayer." Would he worship before the closing prayer by picking a banjo and singing "O, Suzanna"?

Must everything be either worship or entertainment? Was Jesus worshipping when He spoke the words of the model prayer, or was He entertaining? When a preacher is going over and over a passage of Scripture to memorize it for use in a sermon, is he worshipping or entertaining? When a song leader is going over an unfamiliar song in preparation to use it during the service, is he worshipping or entertaining? When a housewife washing dishes, or a mechanic working on his car, or a teen-ager in the shower unconsciously sings a few lines of a familiar religious hymn, is he worshipping or entertaining?

My mother bore a quartet of sons, all of whom loved to sing. (One now sings base in the heavenly chorus). For some time one was a fireman in the town of Jacksonville, Alabama. When he had to be on duty at night, the other three of us would often take our song books and go sit with him and sing for an hour or two. More often than not we would have an "audience" of a policeman or two, one of the two bums, and something even a prisoner or two in the jail. I do not believe we were irreverent or flippant with sacred things. Neither were we worshipping God. We were singing for the sheer love of singing. Those who listened did so because they enjoyed listening. Was this wrong?

How long will it be before some writer writes an article against having singing schools? He could use the same arguments to oppose singing schools that he uses to oppose choruses.

We realize that common practice does not prove a thing to be scriptural. But the fact that men such as brother Gus Nichols, brother B.C. Goodpasture, brother H.A. Dixon,

brother N.B. Hardeman and other giants of the faith now gone on to their reward never opposed this kind of thing, but actually encouraged it, should cause us to think. Also these things have not been called into question by recognized scholars who are still living. As stated earlier, this fact does not prove a practice scriptural, but it should certainly cause one to think twice before attacking violently.

It is our understanding that Florida College (formerly Florida Christian College), a college under the control of those who are opposed to church support of orphan homes, will not now permit its chorus to sing in a meetinghouse. When it sings, it does so in a school gymnasium, a city auditorium, or some other public building. (If we have been misinformed about this, we will be happy to make correction). This is simply another silly little "anti" law which God has not made. Now some of our brethren have gone one up on them, and take the position that it is wrong for a chorus to sing religious songs anywhere at any time. One even wrote: "If such is . . . wrong in the church building, it is wrong elsewhere."

As most of our readers know, WORDS OF TRUTH is dedicated to the teaching of truth and the defense against all error. We are concerned about liberalism in the church, and have been known to call the names of false teachers. We will continue to oppose those who advocate instrumental music, tongues speaking, open fellowship, liberal translations, etc. But we will also pause and take the time and space to oppose those who would splinter the church into a thousand factions pressing their opinions as if they were divinely ordained.

No particular harm is done by one's having private scruples about such things as we have discussed in this article, provided he does not introduce these private scruples as matters of faith, and then expect the entire brotherhood to abide by them.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 14
(NOTE: This is a continuation of our articles examining the "proofs" of evolution.)

VESTIGIAL ORGANS

Still another source from which evolutionists seek to draw support for their theory is the presence of what are called "vestigial organs" in certain organisms. Vestigial organs or structures are those parts of an organism for which no function has been demonstrated.

According to the apostles of evolution, man has within his body numerous organs which are entirely useless. They are said to be simply remnants of a former phase of man's ancestry, which are now functionless. A listing from some of the evolutionistic literature from the past decades will include as vestigial the following: the appendix, the tonsils, the thyroid, the pituitary gland, the thymus, and a host of others. In fact, the evolutionists tell us that more than 100 organs used by lower mammals are useless in man. In the human body, for example, evolutionists tell us that the ear muscles, the coccyx bones, and others are

good examples of vestigial organs. Darwin compared these vestigial organs to the "b" in the word "doubt," which is silent and functionless, yet reveals the word's past origin and history.

But what is the truth about all of these vestigial organs? The truth is that these "vestigial organs" are now being seen to be not "vestigial" at all. As Byron C. Nelson states in his book, *After Its Kind*:

It is certainly not reasonable that the Creator would put into any one of His creatures parts that are of absolutely no use to it. Certainly He would not put in detrimental parts. The only way of determining the value of this argument, therefore, is to determine whether there are in any creature parts that serve no purpose. It makes no difference what degree of functional importance the parts may have. It is not to be expected that all parts of a body should have equally important functions. The thumb could better be dispensed with than the heart. If a part serves any function whatever, whether it is only in the embryonic period, in the years of childhood growth, or later, that part is useful and cannot reasonably be considered a proof of evolution.¹

The reader is asked to consider the following quote from Dr. Robert G. Taylor, (M.D., specialist in internal medicine):

"The once loudly proclaimed useless part, the thyroid gland, is now known to be vitally

Continued on page 4

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BERT THOMPSON

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods.)

"Please give what you regard as the most practical method of studying the Bible."

Much of the indifference that obtains in matters religious is not, we are led to believe, due to any perverseness of nature or lack of regard for God, but stems from an uncertainty as to the proper manner in which to approach the subject. Many have little conception of the proper manner of Bible study. Lacking a systematic approach, and thus made to feel that their efforts are largely unavailing, they lapse into an attitude of general indifference toward the Scriptures. We shall attempt to set forth some of the simpler and more obvious rules for Bible study, with the suggestion that the reader give them a fair trial by familiarizing himself with them until he is able to follow them without difficulty. We make bold to assert that if the conscientious student will do this for a sufficient length of time he will become proficient in the art of studying the Bible. Our first rule is:

1. *Study the words of the text!* The unit of thought and the element of the sentence is the *word*. Obviously, then, there must be a thorough conception of the words of the text before the text itself is grasped. Hence, *the first step in Bible study is to obtain a clear-cut conception of all the words in the sentence.* As obvious as this rule is, it is the one most often disregarded by the casual student, who thus at the beginning of his efforts commits a fatal error that renders it impossible for him to grasp the meaning of the text, however diligently he may go on from there. In our view, the average person fails to grasp the significance of the text in most instances because he does not obtain a complete mastery of the words of the text. If the reader is inclined to dispute this, let him sit in the average Bible class that will be taught next Lord's day and note the vagueness and indecision that arises with reference to the meaning of many words. It is possible for one to have a vague conception of the meaning of a term - a conception sufficiently clear to enable him to use it in a sentence - and yet lack a crystal-clear understanding that hinders his full comprehensions of the term as used. Moreover, words undergo a modification of meaning and become obsolete with the passing of the years, and their present-day significance, or obvious meaning being by no means that which characterizes it in the text. As examples of this, observe the use of "let" in Rom. 1:13; II Thess. 2:7; and "prevent" in I Thess. 4:15. An authoritative English dictionary, is therefore, an indispensable tool for every study table. Without it, one can never hope to gain proficiency in the art of Biblical interpretation; with it, one may go far in the mastery of the sacred text, however defective his learning may be in other respects. Webster's Unabridged Dictionary is the final word in English lexicography. However, for all practical purposes, Webster's Collegiate will do. With the caution to bear in mind the difference between present-day usage and the meaning inherent in words from their root, facts which may be easily gathered from the dictionary, our first rule is: *Interpret lexically, or by word!*

2. *Study the sentence!* The second larger

element of the text is the sentence. A sentence is a group of words containing a complete thought. Logically, having ascertained the meaning of each word in the sentence, the sum of them should be the significance of the sentence; but this is not always, or even seldom, true. They suffer modification through their relationship to each other, and from their position in the sentence. A fruitful source of much error in Bible study is the failure to note the grammatical significance. Advocates of baby baptism frequently point to the Great Commission, which bids us to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them" (Matt. 28:18-20), alleging that Jesus here bids us to baptize "nations", of which infants are a part, on the supposition that the antecedent of "them" is "nations." Their error grows out of an improper grammatical analysis of this passage. "Disciples" is the antecedent of "them," not "nations." Disciples are made by teaching; infants are incapable of being taught; hence, cannot be disciples. Those disciples were to be baptized; infants cannot be baptized; hence, infants are not to be baptized. (Further evidence that this is the correct exegesis of this passage is seen from the fact that "them" and "nations" are not of the same gender in Greek. Since pronouns must agree with their antecedents in gender, "nations" is not the antecedent of "them".

This fact, while not obvious to the English reader, makes certain the conclusion arrived at above.) Another example of the essentiality of grammatical analysis will be seen in Eph. 2:8: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and *that* not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Calvinists, those who advocate the doctrine of unconditional salvation, urge that the "that" and "it" of this passage refer to *faith*, and hence insist that faith is a "gift of God" and not an act of the creature. But the demonstrative *that* does not refer to *faith*. The demonstratives *this* and *that* carry a distinct difference in meaning. We speak of *this* paper (which I hold in my hand) and *that* magazine (on the table), *this* being used to point to that which is near; *that* to something more distant. Had Paul intended to make *faith* in this passage the "it" which is the gift of God, he would have said: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and this (i.e., faith) is not of yourselves: it is the gift of God". Hence, *that* refers not to faith, but to the salvation earlier mentioned. Salvation is (1) by grace through faith; (2) it is not of works (of human merit), but is (3) a gift of God; and (4) thus precludes boasting. It is obvious, then, that the second rule for Bible study is: *Interpret grammatically!*

(To be continued next week)

The Shield Of Faith

No. 1

Based on the immortal words of Paul the apostle, Charles Wesley wrote a soul-stirring song the first stanza of which is "Soldier of Christ arise and put your armor on: Strong in the strength which God supplies, through his beloved Son" (The hymn, Soldiers Of Christ, Arise). The Christian soldier girded with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace is still vulnerable to the "fiery darts of the evil one."



VIRGIL BRADFORD

Continuing a survey of the "Christian Armor" we read in the Scripture, "Withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one" (Eph. 6:10ff). Here again the word of God emphasizes the necessity of the WHOLE ARMOR of God as it assures us that ALL the fiery darts of the devil shall be quenched through faith. Many times the word "all" does not embrace totality in the subject under discussion. For instance, God said, "The end of all flesh is come before me" (Gen. 6:13). Noah's family with the beasts, birds and creeping things that went into the ark are exceptions. But not so with the impenetrable shield of faith in the Living God, "For whatsoever is begotten of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I Jn. 5:4).

The fiery darts of the devil are evidently the temptations hurled at us daily in every possible way, from every conceivable angle. Satan first busied himself in presumptuously assuring Eve that she might do contrary to the will of God and yet not suffer the consequences which the Lord has already

decreed (Gen. 3:1ff). He was highly successful in leading mother Eve by his deceitful approach, which in turn led the way for Adam's wilful violation of God's commandment (Gen. 2:16f., I Tim. 2:14). However, the Old Serpent was put to flight in the temptations of Job because that great man steadfastly refused to blame God, but maintained his faith and supreme integrity in spite of all the "fiery darts of the devil" (See Job 1:2). It mattered not that he lost his servants, his children, his great wealth, and his friends and was stricken with sore boils over his whole body, head to foot. He believed that whatever Jehovah did was right, and in the end was blessed above all that he had previous to the time of his afflictions.

The individual, the nation as well, that knows the enemy is best prepared to cope with him. Trusting that the following may not prove boresome or tedious I list a number of terms which indicate the "fellow" we are contending with. I am talking about THE DEVIL.

The evil one (Eph. 6:16); Satan, or adversary (Matt. 4:10); the devil (Eph. 6:11); An enemy (Matt. 13:39); Belzebub (Mk. 3:22); Prince of demons (Mk. 3:22); A murderer, liar, father of lies (Jn. 8:44); Prince of this world (Jn. 12:31); God of the world (II Cor. 4:4); Beliel (II Cor. 6:15); The old Serpent (Rev. 12:9); The spirit of evil (Eph. 2:2); The tempter (I Thes. 3:15); Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion (I Pet. 5:8); Angel of light (II Cor. 11:14); The angel of the abyss, Abaddon, Apollyon (destroyer) (Rev. 9:11); The great red dragon (Rev. 12:3,7,9); The accuser of our brethren (Rev. 12:10); and the deceiver of the whole world (Rev. 12:9). Not a very pretty picture but one designed by the Almighty to let us know what foe we face, and therefore let us see how hopeless and helpless we are, or would be, without the SHIELD OF FAITH.

Clearly, these darts are from the enemy and are directed toward every responsible person, saint or sinner. Various sources describe the

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important in the normal body growth, and over-supply or under-supply of this gland's hormone, thyroxine, will result in over-activity or underactivity of all body organs. . . . Another's 'vestigial' part, whose lack of function has been discovered, is the pituitary gland. On the functioning of this gland depends the proper growth of the skeleton and the proper functioning of the thyroid, the adrenal, and the sex glands.

"The function of the thymus and the human appendix are beginning to be understood in the 1960's. Possibly working with these two organs in similar function are lymphoid tissues in the upper throat which we know as tonsils. These three tissues are all a type of lymphoid or lymphatic tissue. Lymphatic tissues whenever they are found have been recognized for years as a 'chain of fortresses protecting the body against invasion of pathogenic organisms.' In other words, the tonsils and the appendix help to prevent disease germs from entering the system."²

In other words, many organs which were thought to be "vestigial" are now known NOT TO BE VESTIGIAL! Many physicians, for example, believe that the appendix has something to do with embryonic life and early infancy. For this reason, they are reluctant to perform an appendectomy on an infant. Still other physicians believe that the appendix has a major role in the formation of antibodies.

James Jauncey, writing in his book, *Science Returns To God*, states in relation to vestigial organs: "Recent works on evolution have given only scant treatment to the theory of vestigial remains. Apparently it is not regarded any longer as being of serious evidential value."³ It is true that present-day works on evolution do not consider vestigial organs to be as important a "proof" of evolution as works of evolutionists from years gone by. The list of "100 vestigial organs" given to us by evolutionary proponents when vestigial organs first came into the limelight has dwindled considerably in the last few years ("dwindled considerably" in an understatement!).

Furthermore, it need not be assumed that simply because the function of a particular organ or structure is unknown that it is useless. This is unmitigated stupidity!! Suppose a primitive man in South Africa were to find a watch in the jungle. Would the fact that he might be unable to comprehend the function of the time-pince mean that it was worthless or useless? Certainly not! And so it is with vestigial organs in man and animals. Perhaps we should let a recent biology textbook say it for us:

"... A list of close to 100 such organs could be found in textbooks when the idea was first proposed. Now, very few organs are called vestigial organs. This is because man has discovered the functions for many of these structures. Possibly, the term 'vestigial' is really a word biologists use in place of admitting their ignorance of the function of some organ"⁴ (emphasis mine-BT).

In closing this section on vestigial organs, let us leave the reader with the following quote:

"There are major weaknesses in the

vestigial organ argument. First, as has been pointed out, just because no function is known for an organ does not necessarily mean that it is useless. That its removal causes no apparent damage may be because its function is taken over by other organs. This is known to occur in some cases. Second, why would disuse cause deterioration of an organ? This is Lamarckian reasoning and has certainly not been demonstrated. Even if an organ was never used, this would not change the formation of an organ by the genes. Supposed deteriorations occur because of 'loss mutations', but why would these individuals be selected when they were losing the use of an organ that if not beneficial was certainly not harmful? Would any of the 'vestigial organs' mentioned above have a harmful effect on their possessor? It should be remembered that mutants tend to have less vigor than normal individuals. All things considered then, the mutant would have less chance of survival, not more. If vestigial organs do exist, they cannot be used to support evolution toward increasing complexity because the individual is thereby simplified by having fewer functional organs. Rather, existence of vestigial organs would seem to support application of the Second Law of Thermodynamics rather than evolution. The Second Law of Thermodynamics relates to the idea that all natural systems degenerate. Are not all vestigial organs evidence of degeneration rather than progress or evolution toward complexity?"⁵

These are valid points. And they raise questions which need to be answered by evolutionists.

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The Shield Of Faith

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darts or arrows alluded to in our text. They seemed to have been made with metal tips wrapped with a piece of tow saturated with pitch. The burning missile might conceivably pierce the leather shielding causing the soldier to discard it, in which case he was defenseless. Hence, a weakness of faith makes one vulnerable to the darts of Satan. The Lipscomb Shepherd Commentary suggests that these "darts" are not temptations but the fiery hatred of Satan toward the liars of Christ. Others hold that the "darts" are the temptations hurled against us by Satan whether directly or indirectly. It is my conviction that the latter is

more nearly a correct appraisal of the situation. Consider:

"All that is in the world, the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the vain glory of life is not of the Father but of the world" (I Jn. 2:16). Then we read, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but each man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin; and the sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death" (Jas.

1:13-15). These avenues of temptation Satan used on the unsuspecting Eve, and tried them on the Lord shortly after he was baptized in Jordan (Gen. 3; Matt. 4:1ff). Sometimes a combination occurs, that is, one may be tempted to sin by both the vision and the fleshly lust. The former often leads to the latter. Since we are all subject to temptations, hence, to sin, let us remember that we have "ONE WHO WAS TEMPTED IN ALL POINTS like as we are" yet without sin (Heb. 4:15). He who was thus tempted can therefore appear in the presence of God for us, being able to succor those who are tempted. His intercessions at the throne of God are powerfully effective, for when he speaks in our behalf he does so as one who has actually experienced every form of temptation that man can suffer. If we fail it is due to the weakness of our own faith and not to the ability of the Lord. He will "make a way of escape" in every temptation, but if we close our eyes to the way of escape provided, there is nothing else to ward off the enemy's darts (I Cor. 10:12-13).

It appears that a fallacy in human thinking has been the idea that we can live successfully and victoriously by means of human wisdom, human achievements and military power. Not so. The "more abundant life" is achieved only through faith in the Lord and in the power of his might. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts" (Zech. 4:6). To the Philistine challenger of Israel David said as he went to meet him in battle: "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear and with a javelin: but I come to thee in the name of Jehovah of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel" (I Sam. 17:45). The result is well known: by the faith of young David the giant came down in defeat and death.

All the armed might of all the nations of all the world cannot shield us from the darts of the devil. But faith, sufficiently strong, guards the heart and conscience from corruption (Ac. 15:8-9; I Tim. 1:18-19). Great giants of faith from the distant past, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Daniel and Job all exultantly cry out, "We have overcome through faith. You can do it, too." — Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

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Words Of Truth



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, but
forth the Words of Truth

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Who Are These Of Romans 8:28-30?



WINFRED CLARK

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that Love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified he also glorified." Then in Verse 33 you will note that these are called the elect.

Now if we ask some who these are they will say, "those who are passive in salvation." These, they would tell us, are those elected before creation to be God's people. This would of necessity place some in the position of unconditional non-election. While others would be unconditionally elected. Is this true?

Would you classify these so described as being saved? This you must do if they are said to be justified. Are the justified, the glorified, the called, the elect, the predestinated, the foreknown all of the same group in this chapter? You surely would not agree that the justified is one group and the called another, and the glorified another. So we have various terms that describe the same group. Now if we can determine how one becomes one of the justified that ought to help to clear away some of the smoke around these passages.

Take note of Romans 5:1. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Now would the people described here fit into the group described in Romans 8:28-30? If not, you have two groups of those said to be justified in the same book. But note carefully this is said to be

by faith. Chapter 4 gives an example of Abraham's faith (Romans 4:17-22). Now a question is in order. Is faith here a gift from God or how does it come? How did Abraham's come? Abraham's came from what God said (Romans 4:21), just as ours comes by hearing and hearing of the word of God (Romans 10:17). Note that Paul places himself in the group with those justified by faith. Did he do anything? Was he told that there was nothing he could do? Was he totally passive? Did God do it all to justify him? Read Acts 22:16. He had been told that he would be told what to do (Acts 9:4-6). He is told to raise, and be baptized, washing away his sins "calling on the name of the Lord." Was that an act of faith? Was this involved in his becoming one of the justified?

But note again. Romans 3:24 says, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Now when one has been justified, where is he? You

say, "in Christ Jesus because that is where redemption and justification are found." Well now, this will bring on something else. Turn to Romans 6:3-5. Read those verses and tell me how does one get into Christ? You say he is baptized into Christ. What tells him to be baptized? The gospel (Acts 2:38). That is what Peter was preaching when he told them to be baptized. So they are in Christ, having arrived there by faith and obedience to the gospel.

They are justified. They have been CALLED by the gospel (II Thess. 2:14), that God foreknew he would save men, and by which he predetermined that men would be saved in Christ, or in the church, wherein his glory resides (Eph. 3:21). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. . ." (Rom. 8:1). This is what God planned by the gospel to accomplish. These are those people. — P.O. Box 672, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

We Must Conform To Christ And His Way

G.F. RAINES

A story is told of a man who came one day to James Abbott McNeill Whistler, probably the most original American artist of the 1800's, and requested his help in arranging a picture in a certain room. The man complained that the picture did not seem to fit the room. The famous artist replied: "Man, you're beginning at the wrong end. You can't make the painting fit the room. You will have to make the room fit the painting."


Analogously, when we look at God through Christ, we cannot make him fit into this sordid world or into our lives, but we must earnestly endeavor to make the world and ourselves fit

into him and his way!

In Matt. 7:21, Jesus says: "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."

In Acts 10:34, 35, Peter says: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." In Prov. 8:13, Solomon says: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." In Psa. 119:172, an inspired psalmist says that to work righteousness is to obey the commandments

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 26:25

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a magazine such as the Ensign Fair could come out of this area of legalism will probably be more amazed to learn that there is a 'free' church in our vicinity. . . By 'free church' I mean one that understands what freedom in Christ means. . ." Now, brethren, this is what I call exclusivism. We personally know of several faithful churches of Christ in the vicinity of the church named as being the "free" church in the area. But, according to this author, none of them - not even one - understands what freedom in Christ means. Would you say that is being narrow? For a publication that is supposed to be so broadminded, I would say that this is being just a little bit exclusive. As a matter of fact, it seems extremely close to saying: "We have him and you don't."

Science and Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 15

Note: This article is a continuation of our series examining the "proof" arguments of evolution.

GENETICS

Darwin had argued that species are always changing, the result of natural selection (the concept we know today as "survival of the fittest"). His concept was that of descent with modification, with continual and gradual change. At the turn of the century, the science of genetics began to appear on the scene.



BERT THOMPSON

As the science of genetics grew and matured, geneticists began to state that they had many of the answers as to how variation and change occurred. The answer at which they arrived, and the theory which we are asked to believe even today is that it was all done through genetic mutation. Geneticists came to believe that natural selection played a role in evolution, but should not have the prominence that Darwin had assigned to it. The geneticists' idea was that species arose suddenly and abruptly by mutations.

Today most textbooks of genetics (and even general biology!) use this science to support the general concept of evolution. If creation is mentioned at all (and it rarely is), it is regarded as a discarded theory of the pre-scientific era and is rejected because it conflicts with "laws of heredity" and the "facts" of evolution. This, however, is an unfair and biased attack upon Scripture and the science of genetics! Let us examine why.

Genesis records that "in the beginning God created" the earth and filled it with all manner of plants and animals, each reproducing after its kind (Genesis 1). The account is a simple, straight-forward, narrative. It is plain in its statement of fact. For centuries the Genesis account was accepted without question as a factual account of what actually happened "in the beginning." But, since the account did not completely satisfy man's curiosity, human ideas were added to fill in "here and there" - often without the realization of those who were doing the adding. For example, in the scientific world of the pre-Darwin era, biologists believed that species did not change. This concept was first taught, not

because of Biblical statement, but because no biologist had ever seen a species change. The concept was then taken and made a "statement of Scripture." When the idea was combined with the Genesis statements, "kinds" became the biologists' "species" and "after its kind" meant "fixity of species." Again, as in the case of the Ptolemaic concept of our universe, a theory of science was made a statement of Scripture. Is it any wonder, then, that the publication of *Origin of the Species* caused such an uproar? Science and religion were at battle again!

The record of Genesis is not a scientific account. It is not written in the language of science. As Dr. Bernard Ramm has so well pointed out, the language of Scripture, when it deals with natural matters, is the language of the common man, not that of scientists. It does not deal with mechanisms of science as science does, but simply goes back to the cause - God Almighty! The language of the Bible is not anti-scientific any more than the weather report each evening on TV, when the weatherman says, "Sun rise 5:45, sun set 6:54," is anti-scientific. It is foolish to equate the terms of Scripture with scientific terms. The "kinds" of Genesis are not to be confused with the biologists' "species." The Genesis account does not contain the concept of fixity of species!! At most, it only says that dogs reproduce after dogs, cats reproduce after cats, and elephants reproduce after elephants. This is in harmony with the facts of genetics as they are now understood. Moses and other human messengers writing God's inspired word (verbal and plenary!) may not have understood the mechanisms behind the facts, but they, like we, had seen it with their own eyes.

Why are many convinced by genetics that the Bible is wrong and evolution is true? Perhaps this is because of a confusion of terms and a confusion of our thinking. People, scientists included, have been "brain-washed" into thinking if *any* variability or change could be demonstrated as occurring in living organisms, that this would be "proof positive" of the theory of evolution. This is not so! Evolution from "ameba to man" is not proved by the demonstration of change in organisms - even over a very long period of time! (Note: The careful reader will immediately recognize this discussion as leading into the concepts of "horizontal" versus "vertical" evolution. It is a common ploy these days to line up horizontally different "kinds" of horses, elephants, dogs, *ad infinitum* - to "prove" that evolution did really occur. We are asked to believe that when, on one end of the spectrum we see a Shetland pony and on the other end we see a Clydsdale, that is proof that evolution has occurred. Or, we are asked to believe that when we line up elephants from the 25 inch *Moeritherium* to the 100 inch *Elephas* we see "proof" of evolution's having occurred. These concepts are generally referred to as "horizontal evolution". Furthermore, horizontal evolution is commonly used by proponents of evolution in their debates with creationists. Dr. Henry Morris and Dr. Duane Gish from the Institute for Creation Research located in California are constantly on the debate platform, debating against men who use horizontal evolution as the basis of their entire argument.² Horizontal versus vertical evolution is much "in the news" these days. Let it be said here that horizontal evolution is *not* a proof of evolution. In fact, if anything, it is proof of the Biblical account, since "kinds" reproduce after their own. That is to say, the elephant kind reproduces after the elephant kind. The dog kind reproduces after the dog kind. And so on. Horizontal evolution, in

(Continued On Page 4)



Talk About Exclusivism!

A recent issue of a liberal religious magazine published in North Alabama had a great amount to say about how some of us insist that the church of Christ is not a denomination. One writer bemoaned the fact that some refer to the church in a given city as "the Lord's church," when talking about a local congregation. He says that such is



BOBBY DUNCAN

"inappropriate," and that it is "an attempt to hide our *sectarian exclusiveness*" (Emphasis mine - BD). I suppose Paul was trying to hide his *sectarian exclusiveness* when he referred to a local congregation in Acts 20:28 as "the church of the Lord" (ASV).

Another author in the same magazine said: "We are a 'category' of people bearing the designation 'Church of Christ' with a *narrow emphasizing of denominational differences*" (Emphasis not mine-BD). This same author, in a lengthy discussion trying to show that the church of Christ is a denomination, said: "It is factious, sectarian, and extremely denominational" to insist that the church of Christ is not a denomination. He goes on then to say some things about what he calls "the creed of exclusivism and alienation." He sharply criticizes those who might say: "We have him (Christ) and you don't," and others who might reply: "No, *we* have him, *you* don't." Such terrible exclusivism!

But on the last page of the magazine appears a real example of exclusivism. The author says: "Those who appear amazed that

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Please give what you regard as the most practical method of studying the Bible". [See article last week for Numbers 1 and 2].

3. Having ascertained the meaning of the words of the text through lexical interpretation, and having noted their grammatical significance, it by no means follows that we have completed our task. We may have a clear conception of all the words of the passage and a thorough understanding of their relationship in the sentence, and yet reach a conclusion wholly foreign to that which was in the sacred writer's mind when the words were penned. It is never right to lift a passage from its context and make it to teach things not in the mind of the writer who wrote it. With the exception of certain prophecies which have a primary and then a secondary fulfillment, any given passage can mean only one thing - that which was in the mind of the writer as he was led by the Holy Spirit to pen it. Any other conception is, in fact, a misconception. Hence, let us determine (1) the meaning of all the words in the passage; (2) the relationship they sustain to each other and to the passage; and (3) their contextual force. Our third rule is, therefore, *Interpret contextually!*

4. Having correctly followed the process above outlined, and having reached a definite conclusion regarding the significance of the passage, our task is not yet complete. We must now check our conclusion against the general teaching of the Scriptures. To illustrate: A study of Rev. 20:4ff, has led some to the conclusion that there will be *two literal* resurrections (the passage does not say so!) and that between them Christ will reign on earth for a period of a thousand years. Were this the only passage in the Bible touching the matter of *the resurrection* and the *reign of Christ*, one might conceivably draw this conclusion. An examination of all the passages in the New Testament touching the matter leads irresistibly to the conclusion that there will be but *one literal* resurrection from the dead (John 5:18, 19); *all* will participate in it, both righteous and wicked; Christ is *now* reigning, and will *cease* his reign, not begin it, when he returns (I Cor. 15:23-28). It follows, therefore, that the position of the premillennialists, based on an *ex parte* examination, is erroneous, being shown to be so by an analytical study of the Scriptures. The conclusion we draw must, then, be checked, in every instance, with the general teaching of the Scriptures on the subject under consideration. To do so is to *Interpret Analogically!* A good concordance is indispensable for this purpose; by it one may at a glance gather up all that has been said touching any given matter.

5. Finally, we should draw on all the rich sources that have been made available by painstaking and exhaustive study of the Bible by others. Much light is shed on the meaning of the text by a consideration of political, social, economical, and historical considerations of the apostolic age and ages preceding it. Obviously being unable to do the independent research such a study would entail, we can, nevertheless, avail ourselves of

the results of such study done by others. Much of this will be found in the commentaries. With discrimination we can sift through the error that inevitably creeps into the efforts of men and find much help for ourselves in the study of the sacred text. True, there are those who affect an overwhelming prejudice against commentaries as such, alleging that the Bible "is good enough for me", but we have never known one of this stripe who was not only abysmally ignorant of the Bible, but of nearly everything else! From whatever source it may come, we should welcome any and all that will enable us the better to "know what is the mind of the Spirit." To this worthy end every good thing should be made contributory.

Be Careful What You Give To

MARTEL PACE

Fundraising has become a major industry in America and much of the money given goes for projects a Christian ought not to contribute to. *Christianity Today* (June 17, 1977) reports that the "Church of Compassion" has gone broke. This group was headed by "the Reverend" James Eugene Ewing who was formerly associated with Oral Roberts. He gave Roberts advice that saved the healer from financial disaster some years ago. Roberts and his university were in trouble until Ewing advised sending out a letter saying that Roberts would take all mail prayer requests into his prayer tower for 3 days and then write replies. Roberts' contributions doubled that year (1969) to \$12.3 million! Ewing once composed a letter for Rex Humbard that brought in \$64 per copy!

Ewing until recently worked for others, but the taste of his fund-raising abilities was heady wine. Therefore, he launched out into his own "Church of Compassion." It was quite successful. He was soon the owner of a Beverly Hills mansion, a dozen expensive cars and a yearly take of \$3-4 million! However, all that is allegedly gone and Ewing has filed bankruptcy. But, under some new name he will soon be open again (probably in Florida) and ranking in millions more!

Why do we write about this? The person of the denominational world who is duped by this is no concern of ours, but we believe it sinful in the extreme for members of the Lord's church to contribute to organizations of which they know little and have no real conception of how the money is spent. The local church is another matter; our books are open, monthly statements are given to all members and there is little (if any) waste for extraneous matters. Certainly no one is getting rich through church contributions (if the elders didn't see to that, the deacons would!).

Ewing has helped, in addition to Humbard and Roberts, Billy James Hargis, T.L. Osborn, Don Stewart (A.A. Allen's successor) and others. I'm sure Ewing received a sizable fee for his services. I must admit some degree of envy: How I wish that I could write such letters that would arouse the Lord's people to such generosity. How badly the church needs such a letter writer! Give where you can get a direct report and are able to check carefully on how much good your offering is doing.

I read in the *Arkansas Gazette* of June 27, 1977, a report that the Billy Graham Association has investments valued at \$23 million! When asked about this, Graham replied that if they had not kept secret the organization's worth, contributions might have fallen off! — Kennett, Mo. 63857.

The Shield Of Faith

No. 2

"The shield to which reference is made was four feet long and two and one-half feet wide. It was held on the left arm and could be used to protect the whole body, and was very essential to the safety of the combatant. Joined together, these large shields formed a wall, behind which a whole body of troops could hide themselves from



VIRGIL BRADFORD

the rain of the enemies' missiles. (Such is the office of faith in the conflicts of life; it is the Christian soldier's main defense.)" (Lipscomb and Shepherd, Vol. IV, p. 132).

We have heretofore described the "fiery darts of the evil one" as the barrage of temptations daily aimed at the soldiers of Jesus, the Captain of our salvation. The shield of faith is a spiritual defense without which we are not only endangered but without which we are lost for ever (Cf. Heb. 11:6). The amount, degree or size of our "shield" depends directly upon two particular points: the one is a regular and continuous study of the word of God, and the other is our attitude toward that which we study. It is not enough to study to be able to put up a good argument. Neither should it be our aim to impress our fellows with our knowledge of the Scriptures. It is a matter of serving the Lord acceptably while we ward off the temptations to do evil or to neglect our duties and responsibilities. Without faith there is no salvation.

It would be a matter of utmost folly for a battalion of soldiers to line up against the enemy with each holding a shield about the size of a silver dollar. It is evident on every hand that our faith-shields are insufficient in size, and what is even worse, completely missing in many cases. The reason is simply this: we are not studying the Scriptures as we ought. The preacher cannot study for you and cannot therefore build faith in your life. Only YOU can do this.

As familiar as you may be with Hebrews, Chapter 11, you should spend a few minutes reviewing that marvelous record of the giants of faith, both men and women, that are set before us there. It is remarkable that this chapter follows this statement in the last of Hebrews, chapter 10:37-39: "For yet a very little while, He that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry. But my righteous one shall live perform" (Rom. 4:20f). This same great man stands out as one who had a PERFECT FAITH. His works were not perfect, as yours and mine are not perfect. If God Almighty should demand of us perfection in our works we would all fail. Our failure would be based upon the same principle as applied to those who lived under the law. They could not be justified by the works of the law, for one infraction of that law made one a sinner. Now let us read from James 2:21-23: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and by works was FAITH MADE PERFECT; and the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, And Abraham believed God, and it was by faith: and if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him. But we are not of them

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Science and Nature: Two Votes For God

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reality, only proves one thing - change within a kind. And when all is said and done, an elephant is an elephant is an elephant is an elephant. A dog is a dog is a dog. A horse is a horse is a horse. They are still the same kind - none have changed "kind.")

The account of Genesis apparently seems to be in harmony with the facts as we now know them. The basic laws and established facts of genetics are in harmony with the statements of the Bible and in harmony with the concept of creation.

There are over 4 billion people on the earth today. No two are exactly alike. Yet all are of the same kind. And even though they are made of the same chemicals as other kinds of animals, their children are always human. And the offspring of other animals are always the same kind as their parents. What is it that allows these differences within a kind, but forever keeps the kinds separated? This will be our study for the next article, especially as we delve into the subject of genetic mutations.

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1. Ramm, Bernard. *The Christian View of Science and the Scripture*. W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 1954. pp 45-54.

2. NOTE: The Institute for Creation Research (ICR) is a non-profit organization which receives no support from governmental or denominational agencies. Its purpose is to bring about a revival of belief in special creation as the true explanation of the origin of the world. The following statement is taken from the ICR information bulletin: "The

evolutionary philosophy has dominated the world's scientific and political establishments for several generations, and there is urgent need for our nation to return to a belief in a personal omnipotent Creator, who has a purpose for His creation and to Whom all people must eventually give account." Dr. Henry Morris is Director of the Institute; Dr. Duane Gish is Associate Director. The ICR publishes many books and educational materials in the field of creationism - many of which are excellent. Also, Drs. Morris and Gish, along with other members of the ICR, debate monthly on college and university campuses all across the nation on the subject of evolution. News of these debates, as well as other pertinent information, is published monthly in a small bulletin entitled ACTS AND FACTS. The bulletin is available free of charge from: ICR, 2716 Madison Avenue, San Diego, Ca. 92116. The June, 1977 issue of ACTS AND FACTS tells, for example of a debate conducted on the campus of San Diego State University in which horizontal versus vertical evolution was a major issue. Dr. Henry Morris and Dr. Duane Gish met two SDSU geneticists, Drs. Frank Awbrey and William Thwaites. In his first affirmative, Dr. Morris referred to (and documented) the facts that vertical evolution has never been observed to occur, and horizontal evolution is irrelevant. I recommend ACTS AND FACTS to you, as well as most of the ICR books dealing with evolution. A free listing is available for the asking from the above address. - 1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840.

The Shield Of Faith

(Continued From Page 3)

that shrink back into perdition; but of them that HAVE FAITH UNTO THE SAVING OF THE SOUL." Then follows chapter 11 citing the great faith of those who lived and served God in olden times. They have been immortalized upon the pages of God's holy word.

We can determine the size of our "shield of faith." Those who read WORDS OF TRUTH are likely those who do study regularly, but you and I should study these matters in order to try to encourage and motivate others to do the same. The Scripture speaks of Stephen as a man "full of faith" (Ac. 6:5). Abraham, the friend of God and father of the faithful, was one "who waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what he had promised, he was able also to reckon unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God."

Let us keep in mind that Jehovah God knows that "There is not a righteous man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not" (Eccl. 7:20). And "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). These things but give emphasis to the need of increasing our faith, for that is the one thing that can grow to full strength and appropriate the grace of God (Eph. 2:8). There is absolutely no substitute for regular, honest study of God's word. All of your worship, benevolence and good works of whatever nature will not suffice for your own personal, diligent study of the eternal word (II Pet. 1:10-11; Ac. 17:11; II Tim. 2:15). Even though the great apostle to the Gentiles was inspired of God in preaching the glorious gospel of our Lord, when in prison, and shortly before his

execution he wrote to Timothy requesting that he bring a cloak from Troas, and the books, but "especially the parchments" (II Tim. 4:13). And here we are, uninspired, with printed Bibles made easy to read, and yet many of us "never crack a book." WE AS A PEOPLE ARE NOT STUDYING. This is the principal reason that when Mormons or Watch Tower distributors knock on the door we turn them away instead of inviting them in for study. As brother Taylor recently wrote in another connection, Shame, Shame, Shame!!! All too many of US have placed ourselves in the class of the man who attended the wedding feast and was found not having on the wedding garment, unprepared (Cf. Matt. 22:1-14). So shall it be in the judgment, we will be without excuse, speechless.

For years I have both published and received church bulletins. It is almost impossible to find one that is not stressing the need of improved church attendance and contributions. Brethren absent themselves from the assembly for the flimsiest excuses! Occasionally there is good reason for being absent, but with some this becomes habitual in direct violation of Hebrews 10:25, First Corinthians 16, etc. I remember well a gospel meeting in Mississippi where one of the elders (?) was not present the first Sunday of the meeting. We learned that he had chosen to attend a singing at the local Methodist church! Later the rest of the elders (!!!) made a visit to see me personally and cancelled a return engagement in spite of the fact that that was one of the best meetings I ever held, response wise. The lack of discipline in the

church is definitely a lack of faith.

When members of the body of Christ are guilty of vulgarity, obscenity, gossip and slander the cause is a woeful lack of faith in God and the Lord Jesus Christ. The gambling, drinking, dancing, carousing crowd are in the same group; the devil's darts have pierced the armor of thousands.

There are some who will hang their heads in shame when sins are publicly renounced. They want to "slide under the seat." And this even when the truth is spoken in love for the souls of the sinful. Let us all increase our faith. Put on the whole armor of God, for there is no other way to stand against the wiles of the devil. - Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

We Must Conform To Christ And His Way

(Continued From Page 1)

of God.

The prophet Isaiah says:

"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever" (32:17).

"But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (57:20,21).

In Heb. 5:8,9, the Bible says concerning Jesus our savior: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

James says: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (2:24). "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (2:26). We are not justified by works of which man is the originator, to which Paul refers in Eph. 2:8,9, but the Bible does not say in any passage that obedience to the commandments of God is not essential to salvation.

Our souls are purified "in obeying the truth" (I Pet. 1:22). "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3). "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2:4).

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14). - Newton, Miss. 39345.

Beyond Today

JOE DAVID NEELY

Most of us sit up and pay attention to a discussion of "What Lies Beyond Today." In this great theme we are interested to a great degree. The things we prize so highly on earth will not exist beyond today. Tomorrow never comes; all we have is today to use in service to God and man. We shall not take anything with us but our soul to that world beyond. The body is a temporary dwelling place, only a tent of clay. If you can't take it with you then that thing should not be of great importance to you. Your soul or spirit is THE IMPORTANT POSSESSION! It is worth more than all the wealth of the universe (Matt. 16:26). You CAN TAKE IT WITH YOU! Where will you take it? Will it be eternal life or eternal death? This depends on you. HOW you live today determines WHERE you live beyond today! (Rev. 22:14). - P.O. Box 2005, East Gadsden, Al. 35903.



Words Of

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"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the *Words of Truth* and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

Do You Want A Gospel Preacher?

As I reflect back over the past twelve years of preaching the gospel I have observed several brethren, preachers included, who have the "pastor concept" of the preacher and his work. Since these brethren honestly do not know what the gospel preacher's work is, they have adopted the pastor concept from associations with friends in the denominational world. I remember a brother who called me into an elders' meeting to complain because I had failed to be present at the hospital during minor surgery of one of the members. While rebuking me for this oversight he also was offended because I had not invited him into my home for social visits as often as he thought I should. I would not be afraid to say that this incident or one similar has happened far too often among our brethren.



JIMMY R. VEST

If an eldership does not understand the work of the preacher as set forth in the Scriptures they need to be taught. If they have been taught correctly in this vital area but have lost respect for the Bible they may demand a denominational pastor rather than a gospel preacher. Preachers should know exactly where the eldership stands in reference to the work of the preacher before accepting a job under their oversight.

I am thankful that I work with an eldership who has a Biblical understanding of the preacher and his work. It is sinful for brethren to expect gospel preachers to fit roles of their own invention. I have long believed that God's word on any subject is the final word and will settle our problems providing we apply the Scriptures properly. With this in mind I offer the following suggestions concerning the preacher and his work.

Surely the most important part of his work is preaching the Word (II Timothy 4:1-5). Timothy was to be urgent, to press on, to exercise diligence, to give immediate attention to the matter at hand (here the preaching of

the Word). "In season, out of season," means all the time. In this preaching, he was to reprove or convince his hearers of their real condition; to rebuke or show them their sinful state; exhort or urge them to accept the truth which he preached, as he had warned them to avoid their former errors. All of this was to be done with "longsuffering and teaching". Patient handling and genuine forbearance are essential characteristics of successful gospel preachers. All this is done by teaching, the medium by which the truth can be brought to bear upon the consciences of men. (Gospel Advocate, Guy N. Woods, PREACH THE WORD, March 29, 1973).

Roy Deaver in his BIBLICAL NOTES February, 1977, listed eighteen characteristics relating to the work of the Gospel preachers as set forth in First Corinthians. "Gospel preachers are (1) speakers of the inspired message; (2) feeders; (3) ministers; (4) planters; (5) waterers; (6) God's fellow workers; (7) builders; (8) stewards; (9) men who work to solve problems; (10) men who practice what they preach; (11) imitators of the Christ; (12) men who endure suffering and persecution; (13) men who do not insist upon their "rights" in matters of Christian liberty; (14) men who do all things for the gospel's sake; (15) men who are anxious to be simple and clear in their preaching; (16) men who are always concerned about saving souls; (17) men who practice self-discipline; (18) men who are determined to preach Christ crucified.

The preacher should make his preaching simple and intelligible. There is a great deal of preaching which might as well be in a foreign tongue as in the language which is actually employed. The preaching of the Lord Jesus was simple and intelligible and the most successful preachers have been those who have been most remarkable for their simplicity and clearness. Such preaching is not inconsistent with bright thought and profound sentiments. A river may run deep, and yet its water be so pure that the bottom may be seen at great depths. On the other hand a very shallow stream may be very muddy and because the bottom cannot be seen does not mean that it is deep. So in preaching the Word of God, if the purpose is to convey God's will, to enlighten and save the soul, the style should be plain, simple and pure. If the preacher's purpose is to bewilder or confound,

be admired or profound, perhaps a flowery manner would best suit the purpose. (BARNES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT I Corinthians, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Edited by Robert Frew, pages 278-279).

Some good preachers have been "fired" because they spent too much time doing what the Bible commands them to do (II Timothy 2:15), while others who conform to the "pastor concept" starve the church by inadequate preparation only to hear the brethren say "we've got a wonderful preacher, he mixes well, makes social calls often, sits in the waiting room while a member undergoes surgery, and is always on hand when needed." This sounds good for a public relations man but when he preaches what does he say? And what are the long-range effects of such a preacher?

I received a call recently from an eldership looking for a "dynamic preacher". I believe it would have been to their credit to look for a preacher who is willing to preach the dynamic Gospel rather than finding a man to dazzle or excite admiration to himself. Albert Barnes has this to say on the subject: "Ministers of the Gospel should not aim to be admired. They should seek to be useful. Their aim should not be to excite the admiration of their acute and profound talent for reasoning; of their clear and striking power of observation; or their graceful manner; of their glowing and fervid eloquence; of the beauty of their words, or of the eloquence of their well turned periods. They should seek to build up the people of God in Holy faith, and so to present truth so that it shall make a deep impression on mankind. No work is so important, and so serious in its nature and results, as the ministry of the Gospel; and in no work on earth should there be more seriousness, simplicity, exactness, and correctness of statement, and invincible and unwavering adherence to simple and unvarnished truth. Of all places, the pulpit is the last, in which to seek to excite admiration, or where to display argumentation, for the sake of securing a reputation." BARNES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT, I Corinthians, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Edited by Robert Frew, pages 278,279). — 3531 Chestnut Drive, Atlanta, Ga. 30340.



Words Of Truth

"I am the true and most noble Feast. Let us speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 2:42

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"It Is Easier"

In Luke 18:25 Jesus said: "For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God!" Jesus then added: "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God" (verse 27).



BOBBY DUNCAN

We are living in a time when it seems the majority of people are seeking for that which is easy. An easier job with shorter hours and higher pay seems to be the ultimate goal of so many. Many gadgets and products are advertized which are designed to make house work easier. Some seem to be doing all they can to find some easier way to make the church grow.

In the above cited text Jesus mentions one thing that is easier than another. He 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 God. But just how much value would there be in getting a camel through a needle's eye? You see, it is not always that which is easier that is more valuable.

IT IS EASIER for one to be conformed to the world than to be transformed by the renewing of his mind (Rom. 12:2). But the friendship of the world is enmity with God (Jas. 4:4); and those who love the world do not have the love of the Father in them (I Jno. 2:15-17).

IT IS EASIER to travel the broad way than it is to travel the narrow way. But the broad way leads to destruction, and the narrow way leads to life (Matt. 7:13,14).

IT IS EASIER to criticize and complain about the mistakes of those who are sincerely doing their best in serving the Lord than it is to join with them in the work. But those who

do nothing but criticize and complain will never get the job done, and certainly can hope for no reward in the judgment (Cf. Matt. 25:31ff).

IT IS EASIER to ignore religious error than it is to refute it. But to ignore religious error is not to follow in the steps of Christ or His apostles. Preaching the word involves reproving, rebuking, and exhorting (II Tim. 4:2). The word of God itself "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16). There are some who pride themselves in the fact that they do not have time to do the very thing that it is their duty as gospel preachers to do. But somehow or another they manage to find plenty of time to reprove and rebuke those who do reprove and rebuke religious error. They have mistaken a lack of real courage and conviction for tolerance.

IT IS EASIER to condone sin than it is to rebuke it. When Ananias and Saphira sinned, they were rebuked by the inspired apostle and punished by God (Acts 5). The courageous Stephen rebuked his audience because of their sins, even when it cost him his life to do so (Acts 7). Sin in the church is often condoned

because that is the easiest thing to do.

IT IS EASIER to be baptized than it is to live the Christian life. The fact that about six in seven (according to one study) become unfaithful should be sufficient evidence to prove this point. If the church today could restore all the backslidden in every community, none of our buildings would be large enough. Just being baptized will not take one to heaven without faithfulness on his part.

IT IS EASIER for a backslider to confess his sins than it is for him to repent of them. It takes courage for one to say he has sinned; but it takes a great deal more courage for him to repent of his sins, and fixedly to determine to live the Christian life. But without such determination one cannot be faithful to Christ, and cannot expect to go to heaven.

In serving the Lord, as in other matters, the easy way is not the best way. Jesus never promised that the Christian life would be easy. But He has promised his disciples the strength to overcome the difficulties that come to them, and a reward in the end (I Cor. 10:13; Rev. 2:10).

Two Votes For God Science and Nature:

NUMBER 16

(NOTE: This is a continuation of last week's article examining genetics as a proof of evolution).

There is a substance in all living creatures that makes sure that each reproduce "after its kind." Scientists call it DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid). Each DNA molecule is a tape-like coil made up of sugar, phosphate, and nitrogen compounds. Its long slender form is able to store the vast amount of information needed in a lifetime. There are about 60 thousand billion of these scattered throughout the body of an average adult.



BERT THOMPSON

DNA is like a microscopic computer with built-in memory. It stores fantastic numbers of "blueprints" which it uses at the right time to build all the cells and structures of every plant and animal. DNA also gives orders that will cause growth, digestion, heartbeat, thinking, and feeling. In fact, perhaps the complexity and beauty of the DNA molecule is best described by this quotation from LIFE magazine:

"All the DNA in a fertilized human egg weighs about two ten-trillionths of an ounce - half provided by the father's sperm, half by the mother's ovum. In this neat package DNA crams the know-how to create a full-grown man, a man with blue eyes and a tendency to baldness, a man with a heart that can beat and a brain that can think. These instructions, spelled out in English, would require several 24-volume sets of the Encyclopedia Britannica."¹

The blueprints of the DNA molecule determine the outcome of the finished product. When we see blueprints for the building of a beautiful bridge, or magnificent skyscraper, or complex machines, do we think for a moment that the blueprints came into being without an intelligent designer? Of course not! This would be unmitigated stupidity! Then what about the far more

complicated DNA blueprints??? These DNA blueprints keep all forms of life within their "kinds". They allow no changes in the blueprint except those made by accidents or external forces acting unnaturally on the cell (e.g.: man-imposed radiation). These accidents or purposeful changes in the blueprint we call "mutations". It is to mutations that we now turn our attention.

WHAT ABOUT MUTATIONS?

Since it is obvious that neither ordinary variations nor recombinations of existing characters can account for "upward" evolution, some extraordinary mechanism must be found for this purpose. In the modern synthetic theory of evolution (neo-Darwinism) the mechanism universally adopted for this purpose is that of MUTATION. A mutation is assumed to be a real structural change in a gene, of such character that something novel is produced, not merely a reworking of something already there. In some way, the linkages in a segment of the DNA molecule are changed, so that different "information" is conveyed via the genetic code in the formation of the structure of the descendant.

The phenomenon of mutation, therefore, is a most important component of the evolution model. The evolution model must postulate SOME mechanism to produce the required upward progress in complexity which characterizes the model in its broadest dimension. Mutation is supposedly that mechanism. The basic evolution model would predict, therefore, that mutations must be primarily beneficial, generating a "vertical" change upward toward higher degrees of order. Each such change must be positively helpful in the environment if it is to be preserved by natural selection and contribute to the evolutionary process. (The creation model, on the other hand, would predict that, if there are any such things as real mutations, causing "vertical" changes in complexity and order of the kinds, they would be harmful, not beneficial!)

With these two models in mind, let us now examine the facts from experimental data.

MUTATIONS ARE RANDOM, NOT DIRECTED

"It remains true to say that we know of no way other than random mutations by which new hereditary variations comes into being,

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

"Who wrote the Bible?"

Amid all the conflicting and contradictory claims advanced by both friends and enemies of the Bible, one fact emerges crystal clear and conceded by all: *The Bible is here, and must be accounted for.* At some time and in some place somebody wrote it! Who? Until this question has been satisfactorily answered, its origin must continue to be shrouded in mystery and its authorship uncertain. We may, however, by a process of elimination, easily reach some conclusions regarding certain sources from which it *did not* come.

1. *The atheist did not write it.* The word "atheist" is from *theos*, God, and *A* (privative), not; hence, one who denies the existence of God. The Scriptures begin with an assumption of God: "In the beginning God" (Gen. 1:1). Moreover, on more than one occasion the Scriptures say that "the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. 14:1). Obviously, men whose one desire is to rid the world of the assumption of God's existence would not pen a volume designed to establish that concept in the hearts of men and prompt them ever thereafter to adhere tenaciously to it. The conclusion is, therefore, irresistible that the atheists are not responsible for the Bible's existence, and did not, therefore, write it.

2. *The infidel did not write it.* An "infidel" is one who concedes the existence of God, but denies that the Bible is a revelation from him. He is, especially, a disbeliever in the claims of the Christian religion. To him the Bible is a legendary volume, a relic of superstitious ages, and unworthy of credence in an enlightened age. The Bible asserts its heavenly origin, and affects to be a product of God. Certainly men who deny these claims are not responsible for their origin. Denying that the Bible is of God, they are surely not to be held responsible for the production of a volume that affirms the proposition they so strenuously deny. We may, therefore, acquit them of any connection with the production of the divine volume. No, the infidels did not write the Bible!

3. *The modernist did not write it.* A modernist is one who, though professing to be a friend of the Bible, seeks to eliminate from it every trace of the supernatural and assign to it a human origin. Far from believing that God created man in his image, the modernist reverses the order and teaches that *man created God in his [man's] image!* It is his conviction that there is in man an inherent desire for idealism that finds expression in the worship of a Superior Being; hence, man simply formulated such a concept, and worships it. It is not difficult to conclude, therefore, that a book which affirms the personality of God, attributes to him an existence prior to man, and makes him man's creator, was not conceived in a mind that reasons in the foregoing fashion. *The modernist did not write the Bible!*

4. *The Catholics did not write it.* The basic assumption of Catholicism is the *primacy of Peter*. Starting with the theory that he occupied the See of Rome and transmitted to successors, equally empowered with the right to open and close, the apostolic office, they

reason that the church of Rome is thus divinely constituted and the only true church. Essential to their claims in this respect are two propositions - viz., Peter actually did live in Rome and did occupy the "Holy See", and he was an *unmarried* man, from which they infer the celibacy of the popes. Unfortunately for their claims, however, there is no evidence of a reliable nature that Peter was ever in Rome, much less served as they allege. Moreover, the Scriptures definitely assert that Peter was a married man. (See Matt. 8:14; I Cor. 9:5). No Catholic in his right mind would ever have penned the words establishing beyond all doubt Peter's marital state, as do the Scriptures. Further, had it originated with them, they would have taken pains to put Peter in Rome and have him occupying the position they ascribe to him now. No, by no process of reasoning can the Catholics be held responsible for the existence of the divine volume. They never would have written it in its present form.

5. *The Adventists did not write it.* Imagine an Adventist writing the following words: "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). No Adventist would ever have written thus disparagingly of the Sabbath as did Paul on this occasion. Neither would one of them ever have warned us against allowing someone to judge us in respect of it, or assert that it is merely a shadow of things to come. Furthermore, had an Adventist penned it, he surely would have inserted somewhere in the sacred writings a command to Christians to keep the Sabbath - a command conspicuously absent from it now. No, the Adventists did not write the Bible.

6. *The Methodists did not write it.* Article IX of the Methodist "Discipline" says: "Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort" (Section 69, "Articles of Religion,"

Disciple of the Methodist Church, 1944). The inspired James, however, said: "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. *Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*" (James 2:20-24). This statement of James is in hopeless conflict with the authoritative statement of the Methodist Church regarding the means of justification. The Scriptures assert that we are not justified by faith only; the discipline says that we are. Obviously, no informed Methodist would, therefore, be responsible for a statement in conflict with the doctrine he has espoused. We may, therefore, eliminate the Methodists as the source from which the Bible sprang.

7. *The Baptists did not write it.* This writer has often engaged in public debate with those of this denomination, and the propositions have not infrequently dealt with the question of apostasy. Baptist debaters often affirm that it is impossible for a child of God to apostatize and fall away from the grace of God so as finally to be lost in hell. It is their contention that, following one's conversion, one *cannot* so sin as to be eternally lost in hell. In view of this position, consider for a moment the following passages: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: *ye are fallen from grace*" (Gal. 5:4). Question: Would a Baptist ever have penned the final clause of the foregoing passage? Note this: "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but *if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever*" (I Chron. 28:9). Baptists do not believe that the Lord will cast those who forsake him off forever; they did not, therefore, write this or any other portion of the Scriptures!

(More Next Week)

Who Am I?

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

The other morning, I was reading the death notices in a daily newspaper and observed something unusual. Some lady had recently died, and, in mentioning her kindred, the point was clearly made that she was the great, great, great, granddaughter of a woman who was a descendant of George Washington. It was evident that loved ones wanted the fact of this lady's ancestry known.

It seems that a basic need we have is to know who we are and where we came from. Alex Haley's deep desire to know his family's background and ancestry led him over several years of research and travel. He then wrote the book, "Roots". In recent times, groups of adults have appeared on TV talk shows manifesting a keen interest in learning their true identification. As infants, these people had been given over to adoption for one reason or another. While these people loved and appreciated their adopted parents, they still wanted to know where they came from and who they really are.

Even in Biblical times, we learn of the Jews' great pride in being the offspring of Abraham. They would proudly exclaim, "Our

father is Abraham" (Jno. 8:39). They seemed always to be involved in tracing their lineage back to the great Patriarch. Paul warned Timothy not to give heed to "endless genealogies" (I Tim. 1:4).

The most important family relation however is not the physical but the spiritual. Most of us cannot gloat in a "blue blood" ancestry. But, in Christ, we have a far greater heritage. By faith, having been baptized into Christ, we are children of God (Gal. 3:26-27). "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise" (Gal. 3:29). Jesus is our elder brother and we are "joint-heirs" with him (Rom. 8:17). It is more important also to know where we are going than to know where we came from. This earthly pilgrimage will soon end and eternity will be before us. The question might be asked, "Where will you be a million years from now?" The child of God possesses confidence through faith that he will be with his Father. But, my friend, if you have never been born again, you do not

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Science and Nature: Two Votes For God

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nor any process other than natural selection by which the hereditary constitution of a population changes from one generation to the next."2 Or, as Dr. Henry M. Morris states: "There is no way to control mutations to make them produce characteristics which might be needed. Natural selection must simply take what comes."3 It is an established fact of science that mutations are random. The question now becomes: "How often do these random mutations occur?"

MUTATIONS ARE VERY RARE, NOT COMMON

How often do random mutations occur? Let us hear the evolutionists on this matter. Remember that this is an evolutionist speaking: Mutations occur very rarely; "perhaps once in a million animals or once in a million lifetimes."4 Ayala, in his book, *PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE*, has stated: "It is probably fair to estimate the frequency of a majority of mutations in higher organisms between one in ten thousand and one in a million per gene per generation."5 Mutations occur very rarely!

GOOD MUTATIONS ARE VERY, VERY RARE!!

The man who has probably devoted more study than any other man to experimental observation of mutations, Dr. H.J. Muller, the world renowned geneticist, has stated: "But mutations are found to be of a random nature, so far as their utility is concerned. Accordingly, the great majority of mutations, certainly well over 99 percent, are harmful in some way, as is to be expected of the effects of accidental occurrences."6 Dr. Muller repeated himself in an article in *TIME* magazine when he said: "Most mutations are bad; in fact good ones are so rare that we may consider them all as bad."7 The man probably more responsible than any other for the modern view of evolution known as neo-Darwinism, which says evolution proceeds by the accumulation of small mutations preserved by natural selection, is even less confident in the frequency of beneficial mutations. Julian Huxley is his name, and his statement is this: "A proportion of favorable mutations of one in a thousand does not sound like much, but is probably generous, since so many mutations are lethal, preventing the organism living at all, and the great majority of the rest throw the machinery slightly out of gear."8

Dr. Henry M. Morris, writing in *SCIENTIFIC CREATIONISM*, has stated regarding the detrimental effects of mutations:

"As a matter of fact, the phenomenon of a truly beneficial mutation, one which is KNOWN to be a mutation and not merely a latent characteristic already present in the genetic material but lacking previous opportunity for expression, and one which is permanently beneficial in the natural environment, has yet to be documented. Some evolutionists doubt that they occur at all."9

Dr. Morris is correct indeed in his assessment. Writing in the *AMERICAN SCIENTIST*, Dr. C.P. Martin has written:

"Accordingly, mutations are more than just sudden changes in heredity: they also affect viability, and, to the best of our knowledge, invariably affect it adversely. Does not this fact show that mutations are real? ... mutations on the organisms' genetic being, the basic capacity to be a living thing?"10 (emphasis

mine, BT).

THE OVERALL, NET EFFECT OF MUTATIONS IS HARMFUL

Even if the mutations are not harmful enough to cause their carriers to be eliminated completely by natural selection, the over-all effect is to gradually lower the viability of the population.

"The large majority of mutations, however, are harmful or even lethal to the individual in whom they are expressed. Such mutations can be regarded as introducing a 'load' or genetic burden, into the pool. The term 'genetic load' was first used by the late H.J. Muller, who recognized that the rate of mutations is increased by numerous agents man has introduced into his environment, notably ionizing radiation and mutagenic chemicals."11

As Dr. Morris concludes: "That the net effect of mutations is harmful, rather than beneficial, to the supposed progress of evolution is made transparently clear by the zeal with which evolutionists for decades have been trying to get mutation-producing radiations removed from the environment!"12

"The most important actions that needed to be taken, however, are in the area of minimizing the addition of new mutagens to those already present in the environment. Any increase in the mutational load is harmful, if not immediately, then certainly to future generations."13

It does seem logical that if evolutionists really believed that evolution is due to mutations, they would favor all measures which could increase the rate of mutations and thus facilitate further evolution. Instead, they have been for decades opposing nuclear testing for the very purpose of preventing mutations!

(To be continued)

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Who Am I?

(Continued From Page 3)

and cannot manifest that hope. Only eternal darkness, despair and damnation await you (Mt. 25:30). You must understand that the ending is better than the beginning. If one dies in Christ, he will live with the Lord throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity (Rev. 14:13).

You can be a child of God by obeying his Son (Heb. 5:8,9). The promise of eternal life will then be yours (Rev. 2:10). Children of God, remain faithful and look for the eternal redemption that shall be given you when Christ shall come again (II Tim. 4:6-8; II Pet. 3:11-13). — East Hart Avenue, Opp, Ala. 36467.

Why Speak In Parables

W.C. QUILLEN

Jesus "spake many things unto them in parables." There were times when "without a parable spake he not unto them." He was a master in the use of parables and figures, and most of the features of the kingdom of heaven were taught by Him in parables.

"The disciples came, and said unto Him, why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom, of heaven, but unto them it is not given" (Matt. 13:10-11).

Thus Christ gave two reasons for speaking in parables. First, His miracles were to reveal the truth, with which men were not familiar, by using illustrations with which they were familiar. One of the best definitions of a parable we have heard was given by a little Bible school student. She said, "A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." And so it is.

Christ likened the kingdom of heaven, about which men knew nothing with certain earthly things about which they did know. He said the kingdom of heaven is likened to a man which sowed good seed in his field, and it is likened to mustard seed, or it is like leaven, or a pearl of great price, or a man seeking goodly pearls, or a king making a marriage for his son, etc. All these parables teach different aspects and phases of the kingdom of God. If a person knew the earthly illustration used, then he could understand something of its spiritual application.

Second, Christ used parables to conceal the truth. This is a paradox, and seems a contradiction. But is true. For those persons who do not want the truth, a parable may confuse them more, and they make their own application of it.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "If I have told you of earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things" (Jno. 3:12). He was trying to teach Nicodemus that men enter the kingdom of God by a birth of water and the spirit, just as one enters into physical life by a physical birth. But if he would not accept the known and obvious truth in a natural birth, he could not accept the parallel truth in the spiritual. — P.O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tenn. 38464.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the *Words of Truth* and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

You Are What You Think

Someone has rightly said, "You are not what you **THINK YOU ARE**, but what you **THINK - you ARE!!**" The biblical equivalent of this idea is given in proverbs 23:7, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." In this simple observation there is given one of the most significant factors in the success or failure of human beings in becoming what they ought to become. The obvious truth revealed here is that every man is a product of his past thinking. We are, in essence, what our thoughts have made us, whether good or bad.



RAY DUTTON

Although the wise men and philosophers of the ages have disagreed on many things, this is the one point in which there is almost perfect agreement. Marcus Aereleus, one of the great Roman emperors, said "A man's life is what his thoughts make of it." Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "A man is what he thinks about all day long." William James wrote, "The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind." Paul J. Meyer put it this way, "What you ardently desire, sincerely believe in, vividly imagine, enthusiastically act on must inevitably come to pass."

HOW THE PRINCIPLE WORKS

In order to understand how this powerful principle works I will tell you about something which parallels the human mind. Let us imagine that you own a garden that is rich and fertile. The soil in your garden doesn't care what you plant in it. You must make the choice. In the same sense your mind, which is like rich and fertile soil, doesn't care what you plant in it. It will return whatever you plant,

but it doesn't care **WHAT** you plant.

Now let us suppose that you have two seeds in your hand. One is a seed of corn; the other is nightshade, a deadly poison. If in one hole you plant the corn and in another you plant the nightshade, what will happen? Invariably the soil will return what is planted. Just as surely as the land will bring forth corn as it was sown, so will it also bring forth nightshade in just as much abundance.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). This law is both unchangeable and unbreakable. God cannot be mocked by someone who plants nightshade expecting to reap corn. Neither can God be mocked by a man who sows ugly, indecent, ungodly, and impure thoughts into his heart expecting them to reap righteousness and godliness in his life.

Regardless of how hard it may be for some to accept, one fact is certain. Whatever you are today, you are exactly what you have chosen to become. The totality of your life is the product of the thoughts and purposes you have sown into your character as the years have gone by.

YOU CAN BE WHAT YOU WANT TO BE

The realization that we are the result of our past thinking is certainly very disturbing, but it is also tremendously exciting when you consider that we have the power to become whatever we want to become simply by controlling what we think about. William James said, "If you only care enough for a result you will almost certainly attain it. If you wish to be rich, you will be rich; if you wish to be learned, you will be learned; if you wish to be good, you will be good. Only you must then really wish these things, and wish them exclusively, and not wish at the same time a hundred other incompatible things just as strongly."

If you wish to eliminate some sinful habit from your life, then "cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, **THAT** the outside of them may be clean also" (Matt. 15:19). A man has to clean up his thoughts, or his life will continue to be filled with lapses,

back into sinful habits.

If, on the other hand, you want to begin living a dynamic, joyful, and exciting life for Christ, then you must begin **NOW** to center your thoughts on holy and righteous things. Why not spend more time reading the Bible and less time watching the one-eyed monster? Why not spend more time in prayer and meditation and less time gossiping and backbiting? Remember that blessed is the man whose "delight is in the law of the Lord: and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Psa. 1:2). Determine in your heart to bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:5).

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, **THINK ON THESE THINGS**. Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4:8,9). — 2004 Miller St., Montgomery, Ala. 36107.

First Things First

JOE DAVID NEELY

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). What must I put first? This is a major problem in life. Tragedy comes to him who puts the wrong things first. In the two parts of this lesson we shall study: (1) some of the wrong things, and (2) what must be put first.

A great list could be made of the wrong things men are putting first today but we shall list only a few. Social prominence, pleasing men, money, and self are among the most common. Now, none of these things are wrong if put in the proper place in life, but any one of them would be wrong if put first. Study the following passages carefully: John 12:42-43; Acts 5:29; Luke 12:16-21; I Timothy 6:10; Luke

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

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FROM
THE EDITOR

"The King Has Gone"

Elvis Presley, the "King of Rock and Roll", had not been dead much more than a week, if that long, when some recording artist came out with a song about the "king" and the fact that he is now gone. The artist himself has a voice and a style much like those of Elvis; and by the time you read these words, his record will likely be a top seller.



BOBBY DUNCAN

It is not our purpose in this article to criticize - and certainly not to eulogize - Elvis Presley. To say that he was great in his field would be an understatement. No doubt, he had some good personal qualities, as do nearly all people, even though their lives overall may leave much to be desired. If anyone ever claimed Elvis Presley was a Christian, we never heard it. However, we were not an ardent fan of Elvis, and many things doubtless were said by him and about him that we never heard.

The point we want to make is this: the above mentioned song has a line in it in which the artist indicates that the ambition of his life is to sing before large audiences, and to cause them to come to him and tell him that he sounds just like Elvis. No doubt, for a rock and roll singer, this is a lofty goal. If Elvis is the king of rock and roll, then it seems only natural that rock and roll singers should want to be like him.

Christians have a King also - an undisputed King. As a matter of fact, He is the "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (I Tim. 6:15). Furthermore, His kingdom is a kingdom "which shall never be destroyed," but which "shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44). "His

dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:14).

If ever a people wanted to become like their king, Christians should be that people. Our King is certainly worth of imitation, because He "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (I Pet. 2:22). He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8,9). Our King "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38) - even to his enemies - while He was upon this earth. As He was being crucified, He prayed for those who were crucifying Him; and even as He died he made provision for them to be forgiven (Luke 23:34).

From all reports, Elvis Presley lived a lonely and miserable life upon this earth. He had everything that money could buy; but money cannot buy joy, peace and happiness. If he

could speak to those who are trying to become just like him, he would say, "Don't do it!" If he were given the opportunity to live his life over again, he likely would be content to go through life without ever picking up a guitar.

Our King, however, offers a more abundant life while we live here in this world (Jno. 10:10); and He offers eternal life beyond the grave (Matt. 25:46). He has promised never to leave us nor forsake us (Heb. 13:6), even though He is not with us bodily. With Him as our mediator, we can approach the Father in heaven (I Tim. 2:5). And whatever happens to us, He overrules to our good (Rom. 8:28).

It is good to have lofty ambitions and high goals. But before you set your goal, be sure that it is a worthy goal, and one that will bring happiness here and eternal bliss in the life to come. The only way to do this is to "set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1).

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (I Tim. 1:17).

Science and Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 17

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of the last two weeks, examining genetics as a "proof" of evolution.)

A CONCLUDING LOOK AT THE EFFECTS OF MUTATIONS

Mutations, as we have shown, occur rarely - once in a million animals or once in a million lifetimes. And, equally as important, is the fact that good mutations occur even more rarely. We even are safe in saying that "all mutations are harmful."¹ The overall effect of mutations are damaging, not helpful. The effects are "downgrading" not "upbuilding."



BERT THOMPSON

Mutations can be compared with car accidents. They are more like wrecking a car, not building one. An accident is usually thought of as debilitating, not improving. So it is with mutations. When the car is wrecked, what is left? It may be a piece of twisted metal and shattered glass - BUT IT IS STILL A CAR AND NOT SOMETHING ELSE!

A good example of what we are trying to say here would be the example of what happened in Japan in 1945 when the atomic bombs were exploded. No one among us would doubt or question the fact that these bombs caused many mutations among the people in Japan. Even today they are visible. None of these mutations were good! *Mutations create a weaker plant or animal. But they never create a new kind!* The one-eyed fish is still a fish. The two-headed calf is still a calf. Siamese twins are still human.

"The facts fail to give any information regarding the origin of actual species, not to mention higher categories. . . Nowhere have the limits of the species been transgressed. . ."² (Emphasis mine, BT).

Evolutionists claim that "nature" keeps selecting good mutations and rejecting bad mutations, so that one kind of life gradually becomes another kind of life, with improvements. Since more than 99% of all

mutations are harmful,³ what is there to select? If an organism did have a good mutation (which is highly unlikely) followed by bad mutations, "nature" - if it did anything at all - would reject this organism because it would be "unfit."

"Natural selection" or "survival of the fittest" never produces anything NEW! Because a plant or animal survives, that does not necessarily mean it evolved. If a hen hatches a number of chickens and some are killed or die, does it mean that the others evolved? Certainly not! It simply means that some survived while others did not. Those that did survive are still chickens!!

Evolution by random mutation requires incredible accidents, like flipping heads a million times in a row, and then flipping tails a million times in a row. The idea that, given enough time, we could expect this to happen, necessitates being given enough time. The time with which we are dealing here - 2,3,4, or 5 billion years as proposed by evolutionists - is but the blink of an eye in comparison to the amount of time that would be needed for mutations to be responsible for mankind.

"The probability of life originating by accident is comparable to the probability of the unabridged dictionary resulting from an explosion in a print shop."⁴ We couldn't agree any more. Another scholar suggests that the theory gets uncomfortably close to the view that "an adequate number of monkeys, tapping typewriters for an adequate length of time, will inevitably produce an encyclopedia."⁵ Or, as professor C.H. Waddington put it in his own colorful language: "This is really the theory that if you start with any fourteen lines of coherent English and change it one letter at a time, keeping only those things that still make sense, you will eventually finish up with one of the sonnets of Shakespeare. . . it strikes me as a lunatic sort of logic, and I think we should be able to do better."⁶

Let the reader realize that since the only genetic changes that occur do so by mutations which have no correlation to environmental needs, and since by the most radical estimate of the age of the earth there has not been enough time for all possible arrangements to have occurred, in fact, only an infinitesimally small percentage of these has had the time to have occurred, then the evolutionist is asking

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods.)

"Who wrote the Bible?"

(Continued from last week)

8. *The digressives did not write it.* Instrumental music in worship is taught in the New Testament neither by precept, example, nor necessary inference. The Lord did not authorize it; no apostle sanctioned it; no New Testament writer commanded it; no apostolic church practiced it. Moreover, the Lord, through the prophet Amos, expressed in no uncertain terms his displeasure with those who followed in the footsteps of David and bring instrumental music into his worship. "Woe to them. . . that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music like David" (Amos 6:1-5). No person, enamored of the use of instrumental music, would have neglected to set forth authority therefor in the New Testament, or penned the words of Amos 6:5, which prohibit its use. We may, therefore, with reason conclude that the Scriptures did not originate with our digressive brethren!

9. *None of my brethren, living today, can be held responsible for its authorship!* One has not far to search to find numerous passages therein which never would have been penned by any of them today, and many others that would have been considerably revised. Consider, for example, Heb. 10:25: "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." Subscribing, as many of them do, to the view that the eleven o'clock hour on Lord's day is the *only* time one *must* assemble for worship, they never would have left the passage without designating the Lord's day as the day of meeting there contemplated. From their pens it most surely would have read, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together on Lord's-day morning at eleven o'clock;" or if not that, at least this, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together on Sunday," a possibility less likely than the first, however; for the latter revision would necessitate the Sunday-evening *meeting*, and this, of course, would never do! No, none of our brethren living today can be blamed with having written Heb. 10:25.

A phrase that could never have originated among us today is in I Cor. 16:1,2. The words italicized would most likely have been stricken out in that event: "Now concerning the collection. . . upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God hath prospered him*, that there be no gatherings when I come." Were these words substituted for some such statement as, "Let every one of you lay by him in store a *dollar bill*, whether times be prosperous or not, in good times and bad, in affluence and in adversity," there would be *prima facie* evidence that one of them might be guilty! Never, however, in its present form.

Further, James 3, Ps. 15:3, and a hundred other passages, would never have occurred in a production from such a source. Our brethren love the juicy morsel of slanderous gossip far too well ever to have written such severe condemnation of such practices as appear

again and again in the Sacred Writings. No, none of my brethren, living today, wrote the Bible!

Who, then, wrote the Bible? Here again, by a process of elimination, we may arrive at a conclusion regarding its authorship. A canvass of all the possibilities in the case will reveal that there are but three possible sources from which it might have come: (1) It was written by good men, or angels; or (2) bad men, or devils; or (3) inspiration. One cannot think of additional sources from which it might have come. From which of the three did it come? We may at once eliminate (1). The Scriptures affect to be from God. If they did not thus originate, they constitute a fraud, and those who produced it were guilty of forgery. Good men and angels cannot be good and be guilty of the perpetration of a fraud. Good men do

not deal thus with their fellows. Did bad men or devils write it? It is a characteristic of men to justify themselves in their deeds, not condemn themselves. The Scriptures contain the most severe denunciation of fraud, decent, and deception to be found on record. The assumption that the Book originated in this manner is contrary to the settled habits of men, and in conflict with tendencies universally recognized. No, it was not written by bad men or devils. But one hypothesis remains. *It was produced by Inspiration!* To this end the Scriptures themselves testify (John 16:13; I Cor. 2:10-16; II Pet. 1:20, 21; II Tim. 3:16, 17; Gal. 1:11), and our reason concurs. Of a higher origin than us all, may we accept it unreservedly and allow it to find expression in our lives.

The Decline Of Jehovah's Witnesses Has Begun

The militancy and evangelistic fervor of the Jehovah's Witnesses Organization resulted in rapid growth in the fifties and sixties of this century. Often persecuted in some foreign countries they have had freedom in America to propagate their peculiar views and have done so with marked success. Many have praised the tirelessness of their workers (however, this was mandatory even to be considered a faithful member of the organization).



MARTEL PACE

Their diligence was evidenced by a total of 740 visits to people's homes for every single baptism in 1976 (as reported in TIME, July 11, 1977, p. 69). I am convinced that with our plea of a return to the Bible for all authority and a restoration of the New Testament church pattern we would have far greater results with the same amount of work.

Beginning in 1968 AWAKE! magazine (a Witness publication) unabashedly announced:

Today we have the evidence required, ALL OF IT. And it is overwhelming! All the many, many parts of the great sign of the 'last days' are here, together with verifying Bible chronology.

The modesty of Watchtower claims has never been their long suit! It sounds much like what J.F. Rutherford wrote in 1920: "Therefore we may confidently expect the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the faithful prophets of old, particularly those named in Hebrews chapter eleven, to the condition of human perfection" (MILLIONS NOW LIVING WILL NEVER DIE!, pp. 89-90). One would think they would learn to be more humble in what they "confidently expect." Their predictions were quite strong that the beginning of the millennium would occur in 1975. A Watchtower publication entitled "Is Time Running Out for Mankind?" was widely spread in that year stating that the generation of 1914 began the fulfillment of Matthew 24:34 (Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur"). Many of us predicted that if the Lord did not come in 1975 a decline in Witness growth would occur. It has begun!

TIME reported that since 1972 335,000 people have left the Witnesses. TIME also

stated:

And since the End mysteriously failed to materialize in 1975, the number of new Witnesses being baptized has suddenly dropped by a third.

We should make the most of Witness failures as interpreters of Biblical prophecy since this is the basis of their impressiveness on people. Their memory is so short of failures in 1914 and now 1975.

A further outstanding point of weakness to show is the dictatorial power of Witness leadership over their following. A Committee of Fourteen sitting in Brooklyn headed by an 83 year old "Pope" tells Witnesses what to think and believe. Frederick Franz became the fourth leader of the Jehovah's Witnesses on June 22 of this year (1977). At 83, he believes he will live to see "Armageddon." He has been THE theologian for years of the Society. However, even he admits past mistakes. Regarding Charles Taze Russell's announcement of October 1, 1914 as the date for Christ's second coming, Franz now admits: "We expect the end of this system of things, that God's kingdom would take over the earth and that we would be glorified in heaven" (TIME, 7-11-77, p. 64). It would appear that simple honesty would cause an open statement of apology for their previous errors. Rather than do this the Watchtower Society always comes up with a lame explanation. The 1914 blunder was taken care of by Joseph Rutherford (Russell's successor) by explaining the "last days" began in 1914 but that Christ's rule was established only in heaven! The latest blunder (of 1975) has been lamely explained by assuming that the 6 days of creation represents 6,000 years of history soon to end, but that the time of Adam's creation and that of Eve were separated in time. The time of Eve's creation began the seventh day; therefore, the date of the End must be extended from the time of Adam's creation until Eve was created (however, they have not yet announced how long that interval of time was, whereas previously Witness publications said it was in the same year). They have blundered again.

If we could hear from them, "We made a mistake and will try to be less brazen in our claims to be the only infallible interpreters of prophecy in the future" we might be less caustic in our criticism of Witnesses. But, to this writer's knowledge, they have never made a public apology for misinterpreting the time element of prophecy in the past. Their conceit bars such a statement of contribution and admission of error. — P.O. Box 722, Kennett, Mo. 63857.

Science and Nature: Two Votes For God

Continued from page 2

us to believe that we are the result of an **INCREDIBLE** number of **INCREDIBLE** accidents, which, of course, makes his theory **INCREDIBLE!**

The unbiased reader should be able to see that the evidence for the mechanism of evolution from genetics is totally lacking, and that the whole scheme is an attempt to escape the obvious alternative - the creation of the world by the one and only living God.

Let us close our look at genetic mutations as the source of living organisms by reminding the reader of this very important point: *Mutations are unable to CREATE anything!* They may in the minds of some people explain how existing structures change, but they do not explain in any form or fashion the origin of matter or the universe. As Professor H.G. Cannon has said: "A fact that has been obvious for many years is that Mendelian mutations deal only with changes in existing characteristics, never with the appearance of a new functioning character."⁷

In view of the facts that mutations rarely occur, are harmful 99% of the time, and create nothing new, doesn't it seem a bit odd that "Evolutionists depend on such a negative mechanism for the forward progress of

evolution that the theory demands?"⁸

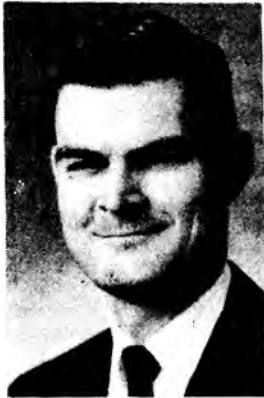
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The Consequences Of Sin

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Emphasis mine, RH; Hos. 4:6).

Israel sinned (Hos. 4:1,2) and Jehovah punished them with the Assyrian-



RAY HAWK

Babylonian captivity for 70 years. The sins of the fathers affected their children and those children suffered the consequences of their parents' sins. We need to learn this lesson today. One who engages in sin must pay the wages of sin (Rom. 6:23). He may repent and escape the guilt of sin, but will still have to suffer the physical consequences. Also, his children and others may have to suffer the consequences too.

When men decide to overlook the scriptures, they not only hurt themselves, but do untold damage to future generations. Take the case of those elders and preachers who close their eyes to unscriptural divorce and remarriages. Soon the congregation is full of such couples who are living in adulterous unions. The sin becomes so established that eventually the sin is not only condoned, but justified and defended as right. Finally, brethren become so accustomed to such unions that they feel such are right. If anyone objects, they accuse them of teaching false doctrine! In their eyes truth becomes error, and error becomes truth (Isa. 5:20). Sin not only brings death, but we see the consequences of the sin in the above illustration.

Again, look at the lack of discipline in the

Lord's church. Not only is it a sin for elders to fail to discipline (Rom. 16:17, 18; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10-15), but they foster a great injustice upon future generations. Most of our problems with antism and liberalism are results of a refusal to acknowledge God's word on discipline. Every soul lost in antism or liberalism will require an answer of those elders who failed to carry out their responsibility (Heb. 13:7,17).

If you have a strong eldership and preacher, an interview among the membership will turn up a goodly number who would rather have it otherwise. Quantity at any price is the goal before the eyes of some. If the worldly members leave and go where they can openly sin without rebuke, the congregation they left is ostracized as a "dying congregation" because it is "too unloving and strict." Pressures that are unbelievable are brought to bear against that eldership to become like the elderships of sister churches. The consequences of such actions takes us deeper and deeper into Satan's playground and future generations arise who believe a lie and think it is the truth (II Thess. 2:10-12).

Sin becomes too entrenched in churches that to rid a congregation of sin would mean the annihilation of that congregation! It is easier for most elders to overlook sin than to try to correct it. Excuses are much easier than pastoring the flock. All of us have Cain's words in our bag of excuses and some know how readily to use them. How many preachers have buttoned their lips and convinced themselves that the sin happened before they arrived and therefore it is none of their business? Preachers, do you not have an obligation to preach against that sin? If your elders do not practice discipline, why preach on Heb. 10:25? Why get upset with the absentees when it is your elders' fault for not pastoring the flock? Why not talk with them? Is your paycheck more important than your soul. . . and theirs? If you hold back that which is profitable (Acts 20:20), will it not

affect generations to come?

We can already see the consequences of sin in our society and in the church. Shall we abandon the battlefield and surrender completely to Satan or shall we continue to be like Jeremiah and plead for a return to God's word even though much of what we say will fall on deaf ears (II Tim. 4:2-4)? We must continue to preach the word. We can do no less (Jer. 20:9; I Cor. 9:16). — 4868 La Ventana Terrace, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.

First Things First

(Continued From Page 1)

9:23.

What must I put first in my life? Our Lord says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." The word "kingdom" here has reference to the church. It cost the blood of God's Son (Acts 20:28), and has the right to be first in our lives. The kingdom should be first with us every day. When other things such as pleasure, company, or business could seem to claim us, let us remember the words of our Lord. A man is indeed foolish to put something else first because it will cost him his soul. If we gain the world and lose our soul - all is lost (Matthew 16:26). Let us then put God's kingdom and his righteousness first in our lives. — P.O. Box 2005, East Gadsden, Al. 35903.

The Bond Of Peace

W.C. QUILLEN

PEACE! Who among us does not desire peace? "Peace, peace, sweet peace the gift of God's love." Peace within ourselves; peace among ourselves. Such peace is possible because it is accessible. Our Lord promises peace, provides for peace, and prescribes peace.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you" (Jno. 14:27). This is the promise.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye might have peace" (Jno. 16:33). This is the means by which peace is provided. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jno. 6:63). "Be anxious for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7). This is heaven's prescription for personal, inward peace; peace within ourselves.

"Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). This is the Lord's prescription for peace among ourselves: Unity-the unity of the Spirit; the unity the Spirit teaches, prescribes and orders in the Word of God. Keep this, and we have peace.

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with all long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1-3).

"Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." And we are called into this vocation by the glorious gospel of Christ (II Thes. 2:13). The vocation is the way of life which Christ prescribes for us in the gospel. "Only let your conversation (manner of life) be as it becometh the gospel of Christ. . . that ye stand fast, in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 2:27).

When we lose this oneness of spirit and mind, and destroy the unity of the Spirit, we destroy the peace of the church. We are not walking worthy of our vocation, nor living as it becomes the gospel.

Let us keep unity of the Spirit, and maintain peace. — P.O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tenn. 38464.



Words of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the *Words of Truth* and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

The Problem Of Suffering

No one likes to suffer... or see suffering in others. But suffering is a fact of life, one that each of us must grapple with. There are those who think that it cannot be reconciled with the Biblical concept of God. But whether we can reconcile the two concepts in our own mind or not, two facts are before us:



Howard Winters

1. God is. This truth is certain and sure. It is the foundation upon which everything else in the universe is built. And while it is susceptible of absolute proof (as far as human reason can prove a thing), to deny it, to the vast majority of people, is unscriptural, unthinkable, unreasonable, illogical, and impossible. Even the proclaimed atheists often curse, deny, and defy God, whom they say does not exist. Why defy and curse a non-entity? Why deny God if He is not?

2. Human suffering is also a fact. Those who say that suffering cannot be reconciled with the Scriptural concept of God reason that if God is absolutely good He could not permit suffering, and that if He were all-powerful He would not permit it. Thus they conclude that since suffering is, God is not. However I believe that it is just as reasonable (and probably far easier) to deny suffering. One could just as logically reason that it is an illusion. Personally I would rather disbelieve in suffering than to deny God.

Here we have an immutable truth (God is) and an undeniable fact (human suffering). Whether we are able to reconcile the two or not will not change them. But the matter is too serious for surface skimming. We need to look deeper. To say that the goodness and power of God cannot be reconciled with human suffering is to base a conclusion on profound assumptions—

assumptions that can never be established as true. For example, it must be assumed:

First, that man can know, by his own powers of reason, all the ends God has in view for the suffering—that man can see the end and know that the means to that end are wrong.

Second, that all pleasure is good and all suffering is evil—that there is no vice in pleasure and no virtue in suffering. (All of us know that there is some good in suffering and some evil in pleasures).

Third, That man was made for uninterrupted pleasure—that pleasure is the highest and only good.

Fourth, that pleasure cannot be attained through suffering (which is contrary to many cases where suffering has been the means of bringing out the very best in man).

God is. Suffering is. Whether we can explain them or not is of little consequence, but whether we accept them or not makes all the difference both in this world and in the world to come. While it is certain that no one can explain everything to the satisfaction of everyone, I think too many of us have the wrong attitude toward the problem of suffering (and other human difficulties). We look at the wrong side, and the wrong side can be deeply depressing. But there is another side. Suffering can be valuable—it can be a stepping stone to higher things. An unknown poet put it:

*Oh, holden eyes and slow of faith!
Ye miss the vision and the call!
When up ye climb on Sorrow's path
Lose not the glory of it all!*

Suffering may have a purpose when it is viewed from the right angle. And even if there were no purpose, God could use it to bring about something good. Paul made a beautiful statement on this when he said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). With this attitude the problem of suffering can be seen as a blessing, as the means to a good end.

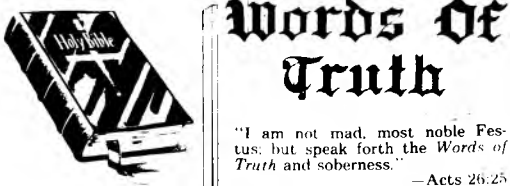
My son, Jimmy, was in a very serious car-bicycle accident when he was 10 years old. The whole family feel extremely

fortunae that he was not killed instantly. He was bruised and scarred all over but his worst injury was his left leg. It was broken, crushed, and permanently damaged. With all the medical skill available to work with him he still almost lost it. It took nearly two years for it to heal. And even when it did it remained deeply scarred. Compared to its former state, it was not a pretty sight to see. At first, Jimmy was embarrassed about it (he is still a little sensitive about it in public), but we tried to convince him that it was beautiful to our eyes—that he should be proud of it. It is a constant reminder that he is alive and that God has richly blessed him with two good legs instead of just one, even if one is not as handsome as the other.

This reminds me of an old legend which has come down to us telling of a prince who proclaimed that he would marry the maiden with the most beautiful hands. His subjects sought to preserve the beauty of the hands of their daughters by not allowing them to do any form of manual service. One day a beautiful girl saw an animal in need of rescue from pain and death. She looked at her hands which she had kept soft and unblemished. Then she looked at the helpless animal. She knew that if she rescued it she would run the risk of marring her hands and thus destroy her chance of marrying the prince. But she chose to place her hands in peril rather than neglect the animal. In the rescue her hands were so cruelly torn and damaged that the scars would never be removed.

But when the prince saw her hands and learned why they had become so scarred, he loved her and made her his queen. To his eyes and heart the scarred hands were the most beautiful in his kingdom, beautiful because they revealed the unselfish character of the young maiden.

While life is not a fairy tale, and there is no guarantee that the sufferer will always marry the prince, it is certain that suffering can be the means to a higher end. When viewed in this light the problem of suffering ceases to be a problem.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus: but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 26:25

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doctrine (singular) of Christ" (II Jno. 9). To violate one command of the gospel is to violate the gospel. A religion containing one unscriptural practice is an unscriptural religion.

We are not, neither was the inspired James, discussing the matter of sinless perfection. We understand that no one is sinlessly perfect, "but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I Jno. 1:7). The point is that we must have the proper attitude toward the commands of God - all of them. A failure to have the proper attitude toward any single command of God is a failure to have the proper attitude toward God's gospel.

Suppose, for example, that a person deliberately and obstinately uses the name of God in vain. Does this make him a murderer, a liar, and an adulterer? No, it does not. But if you should ask him why he does not kill, and lie, and commit adultery, he could not

truthfully say that it is because God's law forbids it. He has already shown his contempt for the law of God by his willful violation of it in another area.

To be contemptuous of any one of God's requirements is to be contemptuous of the entire gospel. This should cause some in the religious world to re-examine their attitudes toward such things as baptism, instrumental music in worship, the frequency of the Lord's supper, the organization of the church, the names they wear, etc. It should also cause some in the church of Christ, to re-examine their attitudes toward such things as worldliness, attendance, giving, forgiving, prayer, Bible study, gossip, visiting, teaching, etc.

It should be the desire and the intention of every child of God to do the will of God in every thing and at all times. Anything short of such a desire and intention can mean only that one holds in contempt the entire gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 18
 PALEONTOLOGY & GEOLOGY

If the theory of evolution is a true account of the origin of life on the earth, it is obvious that the record of gradual development of plant and animal life from lower forms to higher forms should be found embedded in the crust of the earth in successive layers. This record should directly correspond to the evolutionary development of the various species up to our present time. The evolutionist claims that geological research does indeed provide proof that life has developed gradually. He claims that the fossils can be arranged to show that the theory of evolution is undeniably true.



BERT THOMPSON

Creationists have, for generations, backed fearfully away from any investigation of the fossil record due to their fear that the evolutionist has too strong a case here. But, hopefully, that time is past. Why should we fear the truth? We should study the fossil record as well as all the other types of evidences which bear on our study. The truth is that fossils do not prove the theory of evolution by any stretch of the imagination. The actual facts that are gleaned from a study of the fossils rather serve to confirm our faith in the Genesis account of creation, as we shall see in this article (and those to follow).

The question which the reader must ask himself at this point is this: *has God written in the rocks what God has written in "The Book"?* The evolutionists says "Definitely Not!"; the creationist says "Definitely!". Who is right in their affirmations? This writer wholly and unashamedly contends that indeed, God has written in the rocks what He has written in "The Book!" We shall attempt to examine, during the course of this article, and those which shall follow, the following items: fossils, and how they are made; where fossils are found, and the significance of their locations; the complete absence of any transitional forms (the proverbial "missing link"); dinosaurs; fossil man; the biblical flood; the ark of Noah, and; the age of the

earth and its relationship to the supposed "geologic time table."

HOW ARE FOSSILS MADE?

People should be made to realize in this day and time that it is not easy to form fossils. In fact, as Thomas F. Heinze has stated it in his book *Creation Versus Evolution*: "I am sorry, but it is awfully hard to become a fossil anymore. To be fossilized, you must be preserved in some way from the decomposition which starts immediately after death and continues until an organism is completely decomposed. A glance at the methods by which fossils have been preserved is enough to show that there have been some changes in the circumstances which don't go well with the uniformitarian viewpoint of geology."¹

Does a fish die, sink to the bottom of the ocean, and become a fossil? NO! Certainly not! Bacteria decompose it or scavengers devour it long before it can fossilize. What about the buffalo that were killed in such large numbers on the prairies and plains of the United States those many years ago by buffalo hunters? Did they become fossils? NOT AT ALL! Enzymatic and bacterial degradation laid waste the carcasses, and predators ate the flesh and carried away the bones. And what about feral dogs and cats living and dying in the wild - do they die and become fossils? ABSOLUTELY NOT! Natural decomposition occurs and their remains are scattered to the four winds.

It is increasingly difficult to become a fossil!! That is to say: *fossils are not now being made in any great numbers [if at all]!* Dr. Henry M. Morris, writing in his book entitled, *The Bible Has The Answer*, explains about fossils in this way:

"It is significant that fossils, especially of large animals, such as the dinosaur, must be buried quickly or they will not be preserved at all. Furthermore, the sediments entrapping them must harden into stone fairly quickly, inhibiting the action of air, bacteria, etc., or else they will soon be decomposed and disappear. *The very nature of fossilization thus seems to require catastrophism.* Most certainly must this be true of the great dinosaur beds, the massive fish-bearing shales, the tremendous deposits of elephants and other animals in the arctic regions, and the great numbers of other 'fossil graveyards' with which the geologic column abounds."²

In an effort to prove this point, consider, if

(Continued On Page 4)



FROM
THE EDITOR

Guilty Of All

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas. 2:10).

The foregoing passage has been misunderstood by some to mean that one who commits one sin is also guilty thereby of committing every other sin. They erroneously conclude that if one steals, he thereby becomes guilty of murder, adultery, and every other sin. Such is not the meaning of the passage. If it were, God would be charging man with sin which he did not commit.

The meaning of the passage is that God's law is one law. When one violates one command of God, he thereby becomes a transgressor of God's law - the same law that contains all of God's other commands to us. One does not have to commit every sin in the book to be a transgressor of God's law, any more than one has to violate every criminal law to be a criminal. The late beloved brother Gus Nichols illustrated the principle by using the cow in the pasture. At how many points does the cow have to come through the fence to get on the outside of the pasture? She is just as much on the outside by coming through the fence at one point as she would be if she should come through the fence at every fence post. It is this principle that James is considering. One who violates the law of God in one point is an outlaw.

It is significant that words such as DOCTRINE, TRUTH, GOSPEL, and FAITH are always used in the singular number when referring to God's will toward man. For example, we may read of "doctrines (plural) of devils" (I Tim. 4:1), but we read of "the



BOBBY DUNCAN

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods.)

By GUY N. WOODS

"Why do you believe the Bible?"

Because I want to believe it! A thousand logical reasons compel me, a person of reason, to accept it as that which it affects to be: the infallible, inerrant, all-sufficient Word of God. Its prophecies, detailed and minute, and their fulfillment; its propositions, based on premises tested and true; and its characteristics, possible only in a divine production, lead me irresistibly to the conclusion that this is a Book unique, the only one of its kind ever to appear in the world. With me, persuasion has ripened into faith; and, so long as reason sits enthroned, I could no more repudiate it than I could denounce the multiplication table or deny the law of gravity.

There are other reasons, in addition to, and apart from those resulting from inferences, evidences and formal proofs, why I believe the Bible, *why I want to believe it*. In it is the solution of life. Here, and here alone, is there meaningful direction and guidance — the only real assurance of ultimate triumph and a happy destiny. From it I have learned things I could not possibly know from any other source. How, for example, would I know where I came from, why I am here, and where I shall go when I pass, as all of us must eventually do, from earthly scenes, but for this remarkable document? Where else can I find my history and my prophecy, my origin and my destiny, and a detailed guide and handbook through life? All of us, at one time or another, in serious mood and sober thought, reflect on the fact we are rational and accountable beings and must one day appear before a solemn tribunal! Whether we shall be approved by the Judge of all men, and welcomed into the eternal habitations, or be rejected to share the destiny of the damned will depend solely on what we do about this blessed Book, here and now. In view of these facts, how may thoughtful men be indifferent to such a document? The motive of self-interest, not to speak of vastly higher incentives, prompts serious consideration of its claims.

I want to believe the Bible because *the best people I ever knew* have accepted it without question and have ever regarded it as a divine document. My father and mother, from my earliest conscious moments, instilled in me utmost respect for, and complete dedication to, its principles, its precepts, and its institutions, and from these convictions I have never wavered. My teachers (how could I possibly list them all), beginning with the eloquent N. B. Hardeman, and including such other giants of the Word as L. L. Brigance, D. D. Woody, and C. P. Roland, gave purpose and direction to my efforts; and their warm and abiding friendship, along with that of G. C. Brewer, Joe S. Warlick and N. B. Hardeman, kept me always mindful of the weighty obligation to preach the Word without addition or subtraction, and

to defend it always and everywhere with vigor and love. And, no words of mine could possibly express the appreciation I feel for the late illustrious editor of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, B. C. Goodpasture, on whose staff I was privileged to serve for well over a quarter of a century, and who, without exception, kept open the pages of the ADVOCATE for me in every battle we have fought for a pure faith and a faultless practice. No man has done more for the cause of Christ in the twentieth century than the scholarly Goodpasture.

In the last twenty-five years, I have preached in about one thousand gospel meetings; I have been associated with hundreds of gospel preachers, and elderships. Exceedingly rare have been those instances when I detected any deviation from the truth, and in less than a *half-dozen instances*, have elders acted unethically or dealt dishonestly with me. What prompts so many men to give so unstintingly of their lives to a cause but the conviction that it is divine? Tens of thousands of consecrated Christians, from coast to coast, and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, believe implicitly in the Bible, and regard it as the embodiment of the mind and message of the Holy Spirit for all mankind today. Why should I question a book which those whose opinions I value most regard it as infallible?

I want to believe the Bible because it teaches me that the grave is not the goal of man, and that there is life, glorious, unending life, after death. I shrink from the thought that the tomb is the terminus of us all; and that we, like the beasts of the earth, simply die and are no more. This sentiment of hope has been shared by millions from Pentecost to the present. Agreement so universal, of all the saints

of all the nations of all the ages, will not be dismissed, by the thoughtful, as a delusive fantasy, but they confidently believe that it rests on the massive bedrock of truth, which is Christianity. I need this assurance; all of us do; and the Lord recognized this common want of humanity and has fully supplied it in the Sacred Scriptures. Here, and here alone, may grief be assuaged, tears of sorrow wiped away, and the light of heaven be seen in the dark valley. So, I want to believe the Bible because it assures me that if I live faithfully here, I shall one day be privileged to live forever in the Land of Delight, where sorrow, suffering and death can never come. I shall resist, with all the powers of my being, any effort which would take from me this unspeakable hope.

I want to believe the Bible because the most profound thinkers, the wisest philosophers, and the greatest benefactors of mankind have all believed that the Book, when properly taught, provides the only way to real and genuine happiness here or hereafter. Conversely, where opposite opinions have held sway, the basic principles of purity, goodness, kindness, and mercy have vanished, and the light which leads men onward and upward, has flickered, grown pale and has finally gone out to leave men in darkness and death. Men who would rob me of my faith are not my friends. They would take from me faith and replace it with doubt; they would deprive me of hope and leave me in despair. With the great Reformer I am thankful to be able to say: "My strength and my consolation are in a place where neither men nor devils can reach them." There I shall confidently leave them—where faith provides a barrier no false teacher can ever breach.

The Problem Of Drinking



MICHAEL D. STONE

The drinking of intoxicating drinks is becoming more and more a serious problem within the church. For years, preachers preached against strong drink because they believed it to be wrong. Today, some preachers and elders condone drinking members within their congregations. If drinking was wrong years ago, it ought to be wrong now. If now, why not? It is the conviction of this writer that the drinking of strong drink is wrong. Furthermore, those preachers and those elders who condone drinking should resign immediately.

The sin of strong drink begins much like other sins. It has a small beginning. Man is challenged to "go with the crowd" or to "be a good sport". The challenge is accepted. No man ever became a drunkard on purpose. But, because he took the first drink, it is now easier to take the next one. In due time, the mental opposition is broken down, a thirst for the drink is established, and now you have a life in ruin.

When we think of those who have a drinking problem we usually think of the man, stone drunk in some back alley of a city. This may come as a surprise to you but this type of drunk is only a very small percentage of those who have a drinking problem. Many

"respectable, law abiding" people, men and women, are drinkers. Businessmen at work, housewives at home, young boys and girls in middle school and high school and others often have the problem.

We live in a drug-oriented society. We are told that we need a pill to wake us up, to help us through the day and to put us to sleep at night. This is just not true. People who must depend upon drinking or pills to get them through life have something seriously wrong with them.

The solution to the drinking problem is to realize how serious it is. Read Proverbs 23:29-35. Paul said in Romans 1:16, "... the gospel is the power of God unto salvation." There is great power in the gospel - power to put precious lives that have lived in sin back together again. The gospel of Jesus is that powerful. That's more power than in the Atom Bomb. If you have or if you know of someone who has a drinking problem, please encourage him to worship regularly and to seek professional help. This is serious because the drunkard will not inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:10).

Next time you see an advertisement for a brand of strong drink, realize that the truth is not being told. You and I are told by the drink promoters that we are just not with it, that we are not enjoying life unless we drink. They don't tell us about the car accidents, the broken homes, the financial disaster, etc., that comes to those who drink. In Proverbs 23:21, the Bible says, "the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." Let us each be wise and not be a part of the drinking problem. — 503 Plymouth St., Kannapolis, N.C.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 2)

you will, an example with which you are probably already familiar. Consider the example of the people of Pompeii, those many years ago, who were killed when Mt. Vesuvius erupted on them without prior warning. Many years later we found their remains - fossilized. And how did we find them? Were they running or walking? YES! Were they lying down or standing erect? YES! Were they playing or working? YES! But there is something else of great importance to our case. The fact is that these people were so well-fossilized that even their expressions of fear could be seen in the fossils which were dug up from the ruins. How did they die? And how were they fossilized? The answer - *Catastrophically!!! It takes catastrophism to make fossils!* This, of course, is in perfect agreement with the Biblical account of the Genesis flood (which we shall cover at great length in this series of articles). A world-wide flood, such as is recorded in Genesis, chapters 6-8, would certainly account for the world-wide distribution of fossils as we now have them.

THE HOW AND WHERE OF FOSSILS

Consider how and where fossils began. Life began, according to the evolutionists, in the Archeozoic Era (the reader is referred to our installment No. 5, 6/17/77, which contains the geologic timetable; the Archeozoic Era is not labelled as such on that time table, because it is considered as the "Pre-Cambrian" Era; they are, however, the same, the term Archeozoic simply being more specific). When we examine the Archeozoic layers and the Proterozoic layers of strata (the Proterozoic layer immediately follows the Archeozoic) we find no undisputed evidence of life. But when one examines the next layer - the Cambrian strata - what is to be found?

BANG! The Cambrian layer is filled with thousands of fossils - and all of those creatures diversified and complex. Life immediately and suddenly appears. As Dr. John W. Klotz puts it:

"All of the animal phyla are represented already in the Cambrian period except two minor soft bodied phyla (which may have been present without leaving fossil evidence), and the chordates. Even the chordates may have been present, since an object which looks like a fish scale has been discovered in Cambrian rock. It is hardly conceivable that all these forms should have originated in this period; and yet there is no evidence for the existence of many of them prior to the Cambrian period."³

Dr. W.A. Criswell, in his book, *Did Man Just Happen?* says:

"Then come to the Cambrian layer and there life bursts suddenly into this world - without transition, without evolution. So all kinds of life, when you see them in geological strata, appear suddenly and then they all appear complete. The first bat is a true bat. The first whale is a true whale. The first shark is a true shark. The first anything is a true whatever kind it is. And it shows no evolving at all, no gradual change from previous kinds. When you see it in the geological record, there it is, just the same as you see it today!"⁴

The obvious question is, then: How is it that, if everything evolved slowly and gradually, we find no record of it? In fact, we find life suddenly appearing in the geological

strata? And, where are the transitional forms? (To Be Continued)

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The Lord Can Wait

CLEON LYLES

This is the attitude many, who expect special favors from the Lord, are prone to assume. We do not deny that there is work we need to be doing for the Lord. Neither do we say we will not do it. We intend to get around to it in our own time and we expect the Lord to wait until we do, regardless of how long He is forced to wait.

"WHEN I LEARN MORE" is the reason often given for asking the Lord to wait. Those with this attitude feel that they must know much more than they do now before doing anything in the Lord's service. They do not stop to realize that the Lord expects us to use what we have and know. Many times the person who makes this statement is making no effort to learn. He does not take advantage of the classes that are designed to help him learn. He will not meet with those who are working and allow them to show him how he can serve. Some day he expects to learn. . . at least he believes he will. Until then the Lord can wait.

"WHEN I FEEL BETTER" is another reason for delay. It seems that we have the idea that we must feel like turning the world upside down before we can render any service to the Lord. We do not feel this way about going to work. Neither do we feel this way about going visiting. And we do not feel that we should give up recreation when we do not feel well. In fact we think the recreation will make us feel better. But when it comes to serving the Lord we want to wait until there are no headaches, no tired feelings, no difficulties of any kind, and especially until we are not sleepy. Until we get this good feeling the Lord can wait.

"WHEN I GET TIME" is a most frequently used statement concerning our waiting. Time seems to be a very scarce item these days. By the time we work forty hours a week, attend all the club and lodge meetings of which we are members, see our special TV programs, take two or three coffee breaks a day, and read the papers and magazines that we receive each week, there isn't much time left for the Lord and His work. Since these things seem to be of first importance, we do not know just when we will get any more time. Perhaps someone will invent a ten day week, or a 76 hour day. But until we can get more time then we need for these things the Lord can wait.

"WHEN I RETIRE" is still another statement often used for waiting. The person who uses this excuse wants to wait until he has nothing else to do, or until he is too old to do anything else. But come that day the Lord can expect great things.

Will the Lord wait? Time has a way of going by without being noticed. People have a way

of getting involved in more things that demand time. And there is always a tendency to believe that a good intention is equal to serving. Thus we are lulled into carelessness until it is too late to do anything for the Lord. All the time we were excusing ourselves from serving, the Lord was saying, "Seek first the kingdom of God", but we would not listen. Other things were sought first. The Lord is pushed into the background. The time comes to stand before the Lord in judgment and our record of service is blank except for what we intended to do if only the Lord would wait. — 100 W. Church St., Morrilton, Ark. 72110.

Weakness In The Church

JOHNNY RAMSEY

Certainly, from the divine standpoint, there is no weakness. However, the human element in the church always needs improvement. That is why II Peter 3:18 tells us to "grow in the grace and knowledge" of the Lord. There are several constant weak points in our spiritual endeavors that need to be improved upon if the church would fully accomplish its glorious purpose on earth.

First of all we must put an end to our lack of knowledge of the Bible. Nothing retards our spiritual advancement so abruptly as does our shallow approach, due to ignorance, in spiritual pursuits (Hosea 4:6). Most of the error, schism and unrest within the body of Christ would be erased if we knew - and put into practice - the Bible's sacred teaching (Heb. 5:12-14).

Another glaring weakness in the church is our failure to use and develop the talents of various members within each congregation. The Devil's work is quite evident in the "inferiority complexes" so many hide behind. Since each one of us will give account to God (Romans 14:12) for the deeds we do in our own body (II Cor. 5:10) we must live up to our abilities and responsibilities (Matt. 25:23). Provisions must be made to utilize the absolute maximum of our capability. However, no one can make us do our very best. We must sincerely desire to seek the Lord with our whole heart as Psalms 119:2 directs! Without doubt one of our weakest areas in the church has to do with losing babes in Christ. We often spend hours teaching the lost (Mark 16:15) and then rejoice over their conversion (Acts 3:19) and then lose them back to the world because we were not as concerned and careful about their growth as we ought to be. To be "barren and unfruitful" in the life of a Christian is a real tragedy (II Peter 1:8; 2:21).

Lack of faith which reflects itself in poor attitudes toward giving (II Cor. 10:15) and in a life devoid of peace (Phil. 4:7-13) is a definite weakness in the church. Folk converted to a formula instead of to a Friend will not last long in the area of trust and devotion.

It is also evident that a failure to be serious in worship and homage will drain one's strength in the divine realm. To worship "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24) takes preparation, thought and determination. The joyful anticipation of such moments (Psalms 100) and reverence for Diety accelerate proper participation, also. If the only time we ever worship is in the public assembly we will miss a lot of power.

When congregations realize the grand challenge the Savior has placed before us to be the bulwark of truth (I Tim. 3:15) we will use the pulpit, the written word and the daily conduct of our lives to be a shining light in the midst of a darkened world (Phil. 2:15-16). — 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Tex. 78745.



Words Of Truth.

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but I say the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

What Will You Bring To The Marriage Altar?

Two of the most important days in any person's life are the day he is married to Christ by gospel obedience (Romans 7:4) and the day he is married to one of the opposite sex. In regard to the latter institution the Bible says, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4). Since marriage is an honorable institution, according to a direct declaration of Inspiration, then it makes good sense to suggest that this worthy institution should be entered with honor, integrity and dignity. A good marriage should be preceded by cleanness in courtship. The cleanness we have in mind is moral cleanness or sexual purity. A plea for that moral purity in courtship constitutes the gist of the message in this current article.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Relative to some who read this article the dating game and the marital institution may be a number of years in your future. Yet sooner than you currently think you will fall in love and think seriously about a mate for marriage, the establishment of a home and the formation of a family framework. These are honorable intentions for any young person.

Have you ever projected your thinking to the point of what you will bring to the marital altar? Your current attitudes and actions in word and deed form the background ingredients of what you will place as a dowry upon the marriage altar. The number seven has great impact and import throughout the Bible. It was a noble number of completeness

among both Hebrews and Christians. We now list seven gifts you should bring to the marriage altar. If you and prospective mate each can bring these great gifts as a definite dowry to give each other, then bright and blessed indeed are your marital hopes for a marvelous marriage and the establishment of a happy home.

PURITY OF PERSON

You should bring PURITY OF PERSON to the marriage altar. The holy Hebrew youth Joseph refused to commit fornication in Genesis 39 with a woman who sought to seduce him into a highly immoral web. He resisted the power packed passions of her subtle proposition by saying, "... how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9). The marvelous morality he practiced in Genesis 39 permitted him to bring that prized purity of person to his marriage with Asenatha in Genesis 41. Relative to purity Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see 'God'" (Matt. 5:8). Paul told Timothy to be an example of purity in I Timothy 4:12, to treat "the younger (women) as sisters, with all purity" in I Timothy 5:2, to "keep thyself pure" in I Timothy 5:22 and to be one of "then that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" in II Timothy 2:22. In I John 3:3 the apostle of love encourages us to purify ourselves "even as he is pure." Jehovah has no double standards. It is just as important for a boy to be pure at the marital altar as it is for the girl to be pure and virginal in character. If not, WHY NOT? One of two thoughts will be present the first night of the honeymoon for every Christian couple: (1) "We are glad now we waited." (2) "We wish now we had waited." Surely this will be so for those who possess any kind of Christian consciousness of morality.

MATURITY OF MIND

You should bring MATURITY OF MIND to the marriage altar. Marriage is for the mature; it is not for the immature. It is an

institution that calls for adults to enter it and to maintain it for life. It is not for little boys and girls. It is not for those who are just infatuated momentarily with each other by the pull of physical chemistry. It is for those who have established a mature love for each other within the courtship period. The Bible frequently speaks of men and women who marry. It never speaks of little children as proper people for marital entrance. If so, where? Growing up precedes matrimony.

PERMANENCY OF PURPOSE

You should bring PERMANENCY OF PURPOSE to the marital altar. Jesus said it clearly in Matthew 19:6, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." This means the husband should not put it asunder. It means the wife should not put it asunder. It means that both of them should form such a cemented unit in marriage that no interfering third party, whether an in-law or an outlaw, will be able to sever the tie that binds marital hearts together. Paul taught that marriage is to last until death in Romans 7:1-3 and I Corinthians 7:39. The masses of people do not believe it is that way. They do not practice marriage as an institution that is permanent in its duration. Nevertheless the Bible still teaches it precisely that way.

SPIRIT OF SELFLESSNESS

You should bring the SPIRIT OF SELFLESSNESS to the marital altar. The Golden Rule of Matthew 7:12 says it so eloquently. Paul's "be ye kind" philosophy is an imperative in marital relationships (Eph. 4:32). In that same sterling statement he urges tenderhearted compassion and the free flowing spirit of forgiveness. Peter's admonition of "be courteous" in I Peter 3:8 is given immediately subsequent to his discussion of wives and husbands in I Peter 3:1-7. The constant cultivation of courtesy is a must in marriage. Think not just what this

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus: but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

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More On Choruses

In this column recently (August 19, 1977) we dealt with the idea being taught by some that it is a sin for a congregation to invite a college chorus to sing religious songs before the audience following the worship on Sunday evening. In order to be consistent, and make the arguments they make, these would have to take the position that it is sinful for any person or group to sing religious songs for others to hear, or for any one to listen to religious songs being sung by others. Their reasoning is that singing religious songs is either worship, or it is not worship. If it is worship, then all are to participate by singing together; and if it is not worship, it is a flippant and irreverent use of sacred things. For a brief discussion of why this reasoning is erroneous see the previous article.

It would be interesting for us to know if these brethren would be willing to say that it is unscriptural for a quartet or small group to sing at a funeral. Is it scriptural to introduce a gospel radio program with a recorded selection of some spiritual song? Is it scriptural to tape record a Sunday afternoon singing, and then play the tape over for one's own listening enjoyment at home? Who would oppose either of these things? Yet the arguments being used to try to show it is wrong for a chorus to sing to the audience following the Sunday evening service (or any other time) would apply with equal force to the above mentioned practices.

One of our readers has asked that we



BOBBY DUNCAN

comment on two things in connection with this matter: (1) the practice of one's singing while the others in the group are humming, and (2) the practice of a woman's singing a solo part while the rest of the group are singing in the background.

With regard to the first, please keep in mind the fact that we are not discussing the matter of worshiping God in song. We are discussing singing for our own personal enjoyment, enrichment and entertainment. If we were discussing the matter of worship, we would oppose humming, for it does not fall within the scope of that which is authorized as worship. We believe those who place humming in the same category with the playing of mechanical instruments of music are correct in so doing. Neither is authorized for Christian worship, and those who do either in worship do that for which there is no Bible authority. But we find no scriptural grounds to oppose humming for one's own personal enjoyment or for the enjoyment of those who listen.

With reference to the practice of a woman's singing a solo part while the rest of the group are singing in the background, we would observe that the entire chorus is still under the direction of the chorus director. We believe, even in worship, it is scriptural for women's voices to be heard during certain

parts of some songs. Think of the many beautiful songs of praise in which, for example, the altos sing the melody in certain places, and the sopranos, tenors and basses echo a refrain. This is scriptural, because the entire congregation - including the altos - is under the direction of the song leader. In our view this is quite similar to the practice of allowing a woman to read a verse or make comments in a Bible class being taught by a man. While her voice is the only voice being heard at certain moments, still the whole class is under the authority and direction of the one teaching the class. We see no reason why the same principle does not govern in both cases.

We realize that scriptural principles are sometimes abused; and we would emphasize the fact that we would not seek to justify the abuse of any principle. Neither would we seek to justify everything that all of the choruses may practice. We are concerned, however, that several articles have appeared in which the mere practice of allowing a chorus to sing to an audience was criticized. We feel that something needs to be said in refutation of this idea, lest the time come when faithful congregations be stigmatized simply because they allowed their members to hear the beautiful singing of some Christian college chorus.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 19

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of our examination of paleontology as a proof of evolution.)

MISSING LINKS — THOSE EVER ELUSIVE TRANSITIONAL FORMS

Evolutionists put much stock in geology as a proof of evolution. As Mr. Charles Smith, former president of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism has stated it:

"The first serious break in Bible belief was made by Geology. Nature's museum, the layers of the earth, contains incontrovertible evidence of the truth of Evolution.

"In the stratified rocks one finds the remains of animals and plants which lived in the period when these rocks were formed. In the lower layers, there are no fossil remains. In the successive higher layers appear first, the remains of the lower forms of life - early shell fish, snails, and coral, then fish, and on, in gradation, up to and including primitive man. The close relation between the fossil remains of successive layers cannot be accounted for except by direct descent. . .

"Anti-Evolutionists offer no explanation. . .

"Coal is the fossil remains of dense forests. Who denies it, when the impressions of leaves and ferns are plainly visible? Who believes that coal veins a mile underground have formed within 6,000 years? *A lump of coal contains enough factual dynamite to blow the Bible to pieces.* The sun is the source of life. If you must worship, worship the sun."¹ (Emphasis mine-BT).

If life did evolve gradually, we should find in the fossil records the intermediate forms between one stage and another. Yet, as



BERT THOMPSON

everyone knows, we do not. These things which we do not find - these ever-so-important "transitional forms" - are the "missing links" which could supposedly tie the chain of evolution together. Where, for example, is a fossil form of the "ape-to-man" transformation? Where in the fossil record is there proof of a lemur turning into a monkey? As you, and even evolutionists, know - *there are no transitional forms!* The most important things imaginable to the evolutionist for the absolute proof of his theory - **AND THEY ARE NOWHERE TO BE FOUND!!**

Even the great French scientist (and ardent evolutionist), LeComte duNouy, said in his book, *Human Destiny*:

"Each group, order, or family seems to be born suddenly and we hardly ever find the forms which link them to the preceding strain. When we discover them they are already differentiated. Not only do we find practically no transitional forms, but in general it is impossible to authentically connect a new group with an old one."²

This great French scientist admitted in his book that the reptiles appear suddenly, that they cannot be linked with any of their terrestrial ancestors, and he even makes the same admission regarding mammals. Concerning birds, he stated: "They have all the unsatisfactory characteristics of *absolute creation.*"³ (Emphasis mine-BT).

Professor Caullery of the Chair of Evolution of the University of Paris, acknowledged the lack of transitional forms when he stated in his article in *Science*: "The general fact that paleontology shows us few transitional forms, and still fewer primitive forms, is very disturbing."⁴

Dr. Austin H. Clark of the United States National Museum made the following statements in 1929, and caused no little furor in the evolutionary camps:

"... gaps are found in all these evolutionary lines, and many of these gaps appear to be real - that is, they were never, so far as we have been able to learn, bridged by

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED—HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods).

"Why is the birth of Jesus dated from 5 B. C. rather than A. D. 1, since the Christian era is supposed to have begun at his birth?"

The "chronology of the New Testament," is that department or classification of knowledge which deals with the dates of composition of the various books of which the New Testament is composed, and with the historicity of the facts recorded. By "historicity," is meant the *historic quality* or characteristic of the events described, and the effort to assign them definite dates. The student of the New Testament is confronted at the very outset with serious difficulties in attempting to determine the chronology thereof, the exact date of birth of Jesus Christ, the basis of present-day computation, being unknown.

The difficulty exists from the fact that his Birth is announced in dateless documents of considerable antiquity — from a period when little attention was given to chronology. Neither sacred nor profane writers of the period alluded to felt it necessary to record the facts about which they wrote under distinct and definite dates. They regarded the matter as sufficiently definite when events were ascribed to definite periods, or to certain generations, or to the reign of a given emperor, or special dynasty already familiar to the people originally addressed. Modern calendar making was to them wholly unknown. An excellent illustration of the manner in which events were attributed to certain periods may be seen in Luke 3:1, 2, where it is said that "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, in the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came unto John the son of Sacharias in the wilderness."

In the foregoing historic recitation there is compacted and synchronized in a single sentence the name of the ruling caesar at Rome, the several political rulers of Palestine, the territories over which they governed, and even the high priests in Jerusalem. But, notwithstanding the minuteness of detail in this chronological and political account, it sheds no light on *when* the events mentioned occurred; for this information we must look to sources outside the New Testament.

Scholars have resorted to at least three methods in an effort to assign a definite date to the birth of Christ, and the beginning of the Christian era. There are, (1) The star of the ancient Wise men who came "from the east" bearing gifts for the Christ-child; (2) a statement from the Jewish historian Josephus touching the date of the death of Herod the Great; and (3) the enrollment of the Jewish population by decree of Quirinius, which provided the occasion of Joseph and Mary's visit to

Bethlehem, when Jesus was born.

With reference to the first of these, the star which led the Magi to the cradle of Jesus, the effort to find in history a phenomenon to be identified with this star, is based on a misunderstanding of the event itself. It is assumed that the celestial object was visible to others in addition to the Magi; that historians have recorded its appearance; and that these records point to the time and place corresponding to the inspired narrative. Careful and constructive students must regard the effort, at least with our present supply of information, a failure.

More reliable, and far more creditable is the effort based on a statement of Josephus touching the death of Herod the Great. This Jewish writer asserts that Herod the Great died in Jericho, in the valley of the Jordon, in A. U. 750, corresponding with the year 4 B. C. (Antiquities, book 17, 6, sec. 4.) In Matt. 2:1, it is said that Jesus was "born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king." When the Wise men inquired of Herod regarding him "born King of the Jews," the monarch had visions of a rival to his throne, and he "was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him". Fearing that the newborn babe would supplant him, he issued his infamous decree that all male infants two years old and under, should be slain. Joseph, meanwhile, had fled to Egypt with his family, "until the death of Herod," when an angel bade him return to "the land of Israel: for they are dead that sought the young child's life" (Matt. 2:20). Josephus relates that just five days before Herod died he slew his own son Antipater, who might have succeeded him to the throne, thus explaining the allusion to more than one who would seek the death of Jesus in the words, "*they are dead which sought the young child's life.*" From the facts thus compiled from the sacred narrative, and the reference to Herod in Josephus, the conclusion is drawn that Jesus was born some months before the death of Herod; that the slaying of the children in Bethlehem occurred between the birth of the Lord and the death of Herod; and that Herod died in the year of the building of Rome, 750, corresponding to 4 B. C.

In response to a decree from Caesar Augustus, that an enrollment should be made, Joseph and Mary journeyed to Bethlehem, the ancestral home of Joseph, to be registered. Luke says that such was the "first enrollment made when Quirinius was governor." It is known from Roman historians that this census was begun in A. U. 749-5 B. C. — and continued down to A. D. 1. The second enrollment, distinguished from the first by Luke, occurred A. D. 10-14. It is highly significant that Julian, "the Apostate," so called because though raised under influence of Christianity (born A. D. 331), he repudiated it when he ascended the throne of Rome, said, "Jesus, whom you celebrate, was one of Caesar's subjects. If you dispute it I will prove it. . . For yourselves allow that he was enrolled with his father and mother in the time of Cyrenius." In the foregoing quotation the name *Cyrenius* is the Greek form of the Roman *Quirinius*, the form occurring in the text.

Thus, on the basis of computations arrived at in the foregoing fashion, the conclusion is drawn that Jesus was born in the year 749, after the building of Rome — 5 B. C., according to the accepted chronology. The fact that the birth of Jesus is dated from 5 B. C., rather than

A. D. 1, is due to an error that was made in determining the beginning of the "Christian Era," and has been perpetuated in subsequent calendars. The present method of computing time did not originate with the commencement of the Christian Era, but some hundreds of years later. It was originated by an abbot named Dionysius Exiguus, in A.D. 532. In his day, the system of dates in common use began from the time of the Roman Emperor, Diocletian, A. D. 284. The monk Dionysius felt it highly incongruous to associate his system of dates with that unholy and infamous tyrant and persecutor; hence conceived the idea of dating all events from the birth of Jesus. In a letter to a bishop of his day he expressed his design thus: "To the end that the commencement of our hope might be better known to us, and that the cause of man's restoration, namely, our Redeemer's passion, might appear with clearer evidence."

To carry out his plan, it was necessary for Dionysius to fix the date of the birth of Jesus in harmony with the chronological system then in vogue. In these calculations, he fixed 754 after the building of Rome as the date of Jesus' birth. Later, it was discovered that he erred by approximately five years in his calculations, the date of our Lord's birth corresponding to the year 749, or 750, instead of 754, as designated by Dionysius Exiguus. Thus, the "Christian Era," begins four or five years too late; i.e., A.D. 1, is in reality, four or five years after the actual birth of Christ. Though the error has long been recognized, it has never been corrected in popular usage, and is perpetuated in our calendars.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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so-called missing links. To take concrete examples, it is quite obvious that the gap between cats and dogs is broad, and it remains broad throughout the fossil record. Cats never became dogs, nor dogs cats; but both are carnivorous mammals. Between the backbones in animals and the invertebrates the gaps are very wide, and those peculiar types which are intermediate between them are widely different from either. Between the various invertebrate groups, as the arthropods, echinoderms, nemerteans, and so forth, the gaps are still wider. Indeed, so broad are the gaps between these various types of lower animals that they can not be arranged in any sort of evolutionary line. . . The gaps between the various invertebrate phyla go back quite unchanged to the very earliest fossils that are adequately known, those of the Cambrian time."⁵

Hear now, if you will, no less than Charles Darwin, writing in his *Origin of the Species*:

"Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely-graded organic chain; and this perhaps is the most obvious and serious objection which can be urged against the theory. The explanation lies, however, in the extreme imperfection of the geological record."⁶

Concerning Darwin's statement, Dr. Byron C. Nelson remarked: "It should be noted *where* this great champion puts the blame when conditions are not right for the theory which he made famous."⁷ (Emphasis mine-BT; note that Dr. Nelson is speaking to the fact that

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What Will You Bring To The Marriage Altar?

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marriage can do for you but climb to a higher height of selflessness and think what you can do for this marriage. Marital felicity comes from majoring in seeking the happiness and satisfaction of the mate in matrimony. This will increase substantially your own happiness in the marvels of marriage. Happiness is making someone else happy!

TONE OF TRUST

You should bring the TONE OF TRUST to the marital altar. Inspiration states in Proverbs 31:11-12, "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." This states the intense imperative so marvelously and magnificently. No marriage can live in the fatal framework of deep jealousy and malicious mistrust. A great preacher recently said of his thirty-nine-year-old marriage, "My wife has not had a perfect husband but she has had a FAITHFUL husband." How wonderful. A couple who has been wed for nearly fifty years once wrote this writer and said as a unit, "Neither of us has ever been unfaithful to the other." Even in these loose and tax times marriage can live in the majesty of faithfulness. Marry someone you can trust. Be worthy of marital trust yourself if you expect it of another.

LOYALTY OF LOVE

You should bring the LOYALTY OF LOVE to the marriage altar. It should be the high type of love that Jesus had for the church (Eph. 5:25). It should be the kind of love that Jesus had for his apostles (John 13:34-35). It should be the kind of love described in I Corinthians 13 - a valued love, a virtuous love, a victorious love. It should be the kind of love that is "the bond of perfectness" (Col. 3:14). It should be a fervent love and one that freely pays its binding obligations (I Pet. 4:8; Rom. 13:8-10). There is no known substitute for love in marriage. Without it marriage will fail; with it marriage can succeed and be a beautiful and breathtaking institution.

STANCE OF SPIRITUALITY

You should bring the STANCE OF SPIRITUALITY to the marital altar. Marriage is not a twosome arrangement; it is a threesome arrangement. The title of Thomas B. Warren's classic book on marriage says it so well, "Marriage is for those who love God and one another." There is a triangle to marital felicity. God should be at the top angle; husband should be at one of the base angles; wife should be at the other base angle. A young man once said of his choice for a marital mate, "I want to marry her because I think she will help me go home to heaven." Obviously, he desired to aid her eternal salvation as well. But alas, how few think of this as one of the guidelines for choosing a marital mate!

CONCLUSION

What Jehovah said about his marriage (relationship) with physical Israel contains some golden gems for marital attitudes and actions between men and women in marriage. The Bible says in Hosea 2:19-20, "And I will betroth thee unto me for ever: yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord." May the Lord bless richly our young people as they prepare for that wonderful day of

marvelous, majestic matrimony. May your marriage be a bond of beauty. May it be for a realm of righteousness. May it be blessed with the jewel of judgment. May it be built upon the level of loving-kindness. May it be a matrimony of mercy. May the two of you form the fervent framework of faithfulness. Together may you know the Lord and one day live with him on high.

(NOTE: I have this material in a tract which can be ordered from Yokefellow Publications, P.O. Box 129, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan 49783. The cost is 5 cents each, \$4.00 per hundred or \$35.00 per thousand.) — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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Darwin put the blame at the feet of geology - that science which is supposedly the best in proving evolution to be true).

To say that the geological record is "imperfect" is putting it mildly. Dr. Duane Gish, biochemist and associate director of the Institute for Creation Research in San Diego, California, made a speech to a group of creation scientists in 1976 in Wichita, Kansas. In his speech, Dr. Gish made the following statements:

"A lot of scientific law tends to support the creationist theory better than the theory of evolution. Fossil records show a remarkable absence of transitional forms. *These forms are demanded by evolution theory, but are absent everywhere.*"⁸ (Emphasis mine-BT).

Dr. Ruell Lemmons, editor of *Firm Foundation*, wrote in his editorial of October 19, 1976 these remarks concerning Dr. Gish's statements: "This renowned scientist said what every scientist knows - *it isn't just the link that is missing, it is the whole chain!*"⁹ (Emphasis mine-BT).

Why, if evolution has occurred, are we continually unable to locate any missing links? Could it be that it is because evolution did not occur? Yes - that is the answer!

Let us close our discussion, for the time being, of missing links and transitional forms with two very classic quotes. The first, in response to Darwin's accusation that the geological record is "imperfect" (that being the reason that we do not find transitional forms), is from the very capable pen of Dr. Byron C. Nelson, writing in his book, *After Its Kind*:

Imperfection as an excuse for the absence of links, however, leaves a dangerous hole in the geological argument. If the record is so imperfect that the necessary connecting links are not found, what assurance can the evolutionists give that the same imperfection does not hide more important facts - such, for example, as that horses lived in the "age of reptiles" and apes in the "age of fishes"? If the record is imperfect, how do they know that the bones of such "higher" types of animals as deer or pigs will not some day be found in strata supposed to have been deposited millions of years before those types were evolved? How do they know that the remains of the modern horse will not be found in so-called "Cretaceous" stratum (Cretaceous strata being the deposits supposed to have been made when reptilian forms were ruling in world as the highest forms of life)? If the record is imperfect they do not know, and therefore horses may have roved in one part of the earth in "Cretaceous" time while reptiles lived in another part. Apes may have lived as early as the "Devonian" age, the so-called

"age of fishes." Bateson pointed to this hole in the geological "proof" when he said to the assembled scientists of America, "It has been asked how we know that there were no mammals (e.g. rabbits, sheep, horses) in the Paleozoic time. May there not have been mammals somewhere on the earth, though no vestige of them has come down to us?"

Of course, mammals will never be found in "Paleozoic" strata - not for very long. Of that we are absolutely positive for this reason: Mammals did not live in "Paleozoic" time (i.e. when fishes are supposed to have been the most advanced form of life) according to the evolutionists. Mammals evolved later. If remains of any mammal should ever be found in a layer that had previously been called "Paleozoic," the evolutionists would say a mistake had been made, and the age-name would be changed. Such renaming of strata has been done again and again in the last seventy-five years, and the evolutionists now have the strata labelled about as they want. The evolutionary labellers of the rocks simply will not let things get out of order for their theory, and to keep the order right an astonishing method is sometimes used, i.e. the order of the strata is said to have been reversed.

No one need expect that such a thing - a mammal being found in "Paleozoic" rock or a horse in "Cretaceous" - will ever occur so long as the evolutionists are in control of the labelling of the rocks.¹⁰

Our second quote is from George Klingman, writing in his book, *God Is*:

"Possibly one lump of coal contains enough factual dynamite to blow to pieces all the copies of the Bible in existence and set fire to the pieces of cardboard, leather, paper, and vellum, and consume them; but there is not enough factual dynamite in all the coal beds of the earth to shatter the truth which the Bible reveals. . . 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God' (Psalms 14:1).¹¹

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...; but speak forth
s."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1977

NUMBER 42

Evils Of Alcoholic Beverages

"Alcohol is a great remover!" Someone has said, "It will remove stain from clothes." It will also remove clothes, furniture, food, smiles and happiness from homes! It causes murder, rape, adultery, broken homes, children orphaned, jobs lost and lives snuffed out. Consider the high cost of low



GLANN M. LEE

living. Alcohol contributes to the high rise and cost of crime. The Northwestern University Journal of Criminal Law, reporting on 882 cases studied, reported that on the average 72.7% of those committing the following crimes had alcohol in their blood stream: rape, felonious assault, cutting, concealed weapons, other assault, murder, shooting, robbery, burglary, larceny, auto theft, and forgery. The individual often wants to commit the crime when sober, but his conscience and inhibitions hold him back, and he drinks to build up his "courage."

Alcoholism is the third largest health problem in the United States. It is the number one social problem! The United States has the highest known rate of alcoholism in the world. It is said that more than 75% of men in the United States use some alcoholic beverages and a high percentage of women do also. Think about this - one out of every five or six drinkers will become a problem drinker and an alcoholic. There has never been an alcoholic who did not begin with the first drink.

Alcohol is the greatest contributor to traffic accidents. Former Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller, in an article in the magazine, TRAFFIC SAFETY, reporting on alcohol caused accidents in New York, said, "It was determined that fully 73 percent of the drivers killed in such accidents

... had concentrations of alcohol in the blood. . . alcohol was a possible factor in at least three-fourths of these single-vehicle accidents." There are more alcohol caused casualties each year than all the casualties of World War II!

Alcohol has a dangerous effect upon the brain. It is an addictive drug. "Alcohol is a drug, belonging in the same class with opium, with heroin, and with cocaine" (Dr. William T. Evans, former Health Commissioner of Chicago). It has addiction - producing properties. It puts the brain to sleep. It is not a stimulant, but a depressant. It causes one to forget the things he learned last, first. It causes one to act childish, to "show-off", to fight, and/or whine for sympathy. It impairs one's sense of caution and judgment.

The Bible condemns drinking. There are over 160 verses in the Bible dealing with the sin of drinking and drunkenness. "At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:32). "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). ". . . Drunkards. . . shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven" (I Cor. 6:9-10; Cf. Gal. 5:21). "Woe to him that giveth his neighbor drink" (Habakkuk 2:15).

Someone may ask, "But what about social drinking?" The only way to be moderate in the use of poison is to avoid the poison altogether. To contend for "moderation" in the use of alcoholic beverages is as logical as contending for "moderation" in the use of heroin. Dr. Robert V. Seliger, Psychiatrist of John Hopkins Hospital, said: "It is my personal conviction that our social drinkers as a group actually cause more trouble of more kinds than true alcoholics". Solomon asked: "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?" (Prov. 6:27).

Dr. Albert Schweitzer said: "Drink is commercially our greatest waste, socially our greatest criminal, morally and religiously our greatest enemy." Every time a mad dog kills a person, more than 10,000 people are killed by liquor - yet some want to shoot the dog and license the liquor! Read carefully I Thess. 5:22 and Tit. 2:11-12. — 3645 Leslie Ann Road, Birmingham, Al. 35243.

Are You Guilty Of Overwork?

CURTIS DOWDY

Recently a good sister came forward to confess sin and ask her brethren to pray with her. The sin was that of "over-work." She said that often she worked to such a point that her body was exhausted and when she arrived for worship it was impossible. At other times she would absent herself from assemblies because of weariness. I believe that this confession is one that many could make.

Worship is something that requires energy. The mind is deeply involved when one worships. However, the mind's energy, that should be channeled toward thinking upon spiritual things, must be used in an effort to

stay awake and alert when the body is bone weary.

The Bible does not applaud laziness; just the reverse. "If any would not work, neither should he eat," Paul tells us (II Thess. 3:10).

Labor was not unknown to the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul wrote, "And labor, working with our own hands" (I Cor. 4:12a).

There is a real blessing for those who work. "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus: but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 26:25

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Dr. Graham And Instrumental Music

We find no special joy in calling attention to religious error, except the joy of knowing we have discharged our duty with regard to the matter, and that some are honest, and may turn away from error when it is pointed out to them. We realize that to attack the position of one so popular as Dr. Billy Graham will not increase our popularity in the religious world; but then we are not in a popularity contest anyway. We love the souls of those who teach error, including Dr. Graham, but we "hate every false way" (Ps. 119:104).



BOBBY DUNCAN

In a recent "My Answer" column, Dr. Graham said: "It is true that the New Testament does not command the use of musical instruments in worship, but then it does not forbid it either." This statement says a great deal; in fact, it probably says more than Dr. Graham intended for it to say. It says that a religious practice does not have to be authorized in scripture to be right, just so long as it is not specifically forbidden. Does this mean that there is nothing wrong with serving Coke and hamburgers in the Lord's supper? The New Testament does not specifically forbid. The truth of the matter is that we are to worship God only in the way that is authorized in the New Testament. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (Jno.

4:24). "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (II Jno. 9).

What Dr. Graham said is the New Testament does not **COMMAND** the use of musical instruments in worship; but he could just as truthfully have said that the New Testament does not **AUTHORIZE** the use of musical instruments in worship. Whether or not one uses them depends upon his attitude toward the authority of the New Testament. If he believes that what he does in religion must be authorized, then he will not use them. On the other hand, if he holds to the view that religious acts do not need to be authorized, then he will feel free to use them. This is obviously the view held by Dr. Graham.

He continues by saying: "The Old Testament... says a great deal about using musical instruments in praising God." We agree with this statement, and believe that it proves a point—but not the point Dr. Graham is trying to prove. The point it proves is this: that the Jews who were living under the Old Testament had scriptural authority for using mechanical instruments in their worship. Why was it right for those living under the law of Moses to use the instrument in worship? Because that law "says a great deal about using musical instruments in praising God". That is quite simple, isn't it? It was right to do it because their scriptures authorized it. Now, what makes it right for those of us who live under the New Testament to do it?

Dr. Graham further states: "We know from Jewish sources that the Temple worship of Jesus' day included the use of musical instruments." If this statement could be proved, it would not add one bit of strength to the contention that it is right to use mechanical instruments in Christian worship. But the statement is without one shred of proof. Remember that the temple of Jesus' day was not the one built by Solomon in 1050 B.C., nor the one built by Zerubbabel in 536 B. C. It was the one built by Herod the Great about twenty years before Christ was

born. Where is the proof, either from the Bible or secular history, that there ever was an instrument of music in the temple built by Herod the Great? Where is the proof that Christ ever heard one strain of instrumental music in the temple of his day?

In concluding his article, Dr., Graham quotes Colossians 3:16. That is as close as he can get to a passage that authorizes instrumental music in worship; and that's not even close. The verse doesn't even mention playing an instrument. It mentions singing; and if he were trying to produce scriptural authority for singing, this one verse would be all he needs. All the discussion would not be necessary. If he wanted to produce scriptural authority for eating the Lord's supper upon the first day of the week, simply quoting Acts 20:7 would be sufficient. If he wanted to prove that it is right to give of one's material prosperity upon the first day of the week, all he would need to do is to quote I Corinthians 16:2. It is not so difficult to show that a religious practice is authorized—if it is authorized. Just give the passage that authorizes it.

But the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship is not authorized. If it were, the good doctor would have given us the passage. Instead, he appealed to Old Testament passages, imaginary Jewish sources concerning the temple worship, and one New Testament passage that authorizes singing. Don't you know that, if there were a passage in the New Testament that authorizes instrumental music in worship, Dr. Billy Graham would have produced it in this article?

The name of Dr. Billy Graham's column in the daily newspaper is "My Answer". Sometimes the answers he gives are correct. But when they are, they are not HIS answers at all; they are God's. Sometimes the answers he gives are really HIS, as in the article we have discussed. And in such cases the reader simply must choose whether to put his faith and confidence in Dr. Graham's answer, or in the word of the Lord. The choice for us is not a difficult one.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 20

NOTE: This article is a continuation of the last two articles examining paleontology as a "proof" of evolution.)

A WORD ABOUT DINOSAURS

Before we continue our examination of the myriad of fossil forms which are alleged proofs of the theory of evolution, let us take time here to say a few words about a subject of much interest to many people, especially young people and their parents. . . **DINOSAURS.** This writer is often asked the question by young people and their parents (whenever evolution is being discussed): "But what about the dinosaurs?" So many of us have heard so much for so long about dinosaurs that we have begun to feel if evolution is ever to be proved, it will be the dinosaurs that do it. But this



BERT THOMPSON

conclusion is brought about by haste and ignorance. Let us examine the dinosaurs as we consider paleontology as a "proof" of evolution.

What about the dinosaurs? Do we have fossils of dinosaurs? Indeed we do!! Let it be stated here and now that we should not be found negating the presence of dinosaurs during certain periods of the earth's history. It is a well-established fact that dinosaurs lived and died on the earth some years ago. There is no reason to doubt their existence. In fact, the existence of the dinosaurs actually helps the creationist's case against evolution, rather than hindering it. Then how do we explain the fossils of the dinosaurs?

WHAT IS TO EXPLAIN?? Anyone who has any understanding of the Noachian Flood should have absolutely no trouble at all with the dinosaurs. Since we do have fossils of them, then they obviously lived before the flood, and Noah obviously took them onto the ark with him. (Remember our discussion on *how* to become a fossil - it requires catastrophism!) People are often aghast that Noah might take dinosaurs onto the ark - more because of their size than anything else. The

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods).

"Jesus took bread and 'blessed' it (Matt. 26:26, 27); He also took bread and 'gave thanks' for it (Luke 22:19). What is the difference in these actions?"

If the frequency with which questions are raised regarding it is any dependable criterion, considerable confusion evidently obtains in the minds of many today regarding the significance of, and difference (if any) in our Lord's action in blessing and giving thanks on the occasion of the institution of the supper.

Matthew records the event thus: "And as they were eating (the passover supper—G.N.W.), Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it" (Matt. 26:26, 27). It will be observed that the *it* (in italics) which follows the word *blessed* in the King James' or Authorized Version, the Translators of which set off the word "blessed" from the phrase which follows with a comma. This is a decided improvement over the older Version, inasmuch as the verb *blessed* is not to be construed with the antecedent *it* (the bread, in the King James' Translation), but God (understood).

Luke's report of the institution of the supper omits all reference to "a blessing," merely declaring: "and he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them" (Luke 22:19). With a slight variation, Mark declares: "And as they were eating, he took bread, and when he had blessed, he brake it, and gave to them" (Mark 14:22). All of these quotations regarding the institution of the supper are from the American Standard Version.

It is, therefore, obvious that the phrase, "and blessed," of Matthew and Mark is exactly equivalent to Luke's "and had given thanks." To *bless* is simply and merely to *give thanks*. Jesus did not bless the bread—he blessed God, just as he did not give thanks to the bread, but to God. The word *bless* is used of God's favors toward us, and of our praise and thanksgiving to him for such favors; and these ideas are involved in his action here.

The Lord's utterances in connection with the miracles of the loaves and fishes is illustrative of this usage. "And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake the loaves; and he gave to the disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all" (Mark 6:41). So, also, Matthew and Luke. John, however, narrates the matter thus: "Jesus therefore took the loaves; and *having given thanks*, he distributed to them that were set down" (John 6:11). Clearly, the words, "he blessed," as transcribed by Matthew and Luke are of exactly the same significance as "and having given thanks," of John. The Greek construction of Mark's report reveals that the verb *blessed* is not to be construed with *loaves*,

but is used to designate the Father (understood). This blessing was, therefore, an expression of thanksgiving, and serves as an example for us when we approach our meals today.

Thus, to bless, and to give thanks, for our food, mean precisely the same thing. Though provincial, and susceptible of being misunderstood, because of the widespread feeling that to *bless* conveys some mystic grace to the object blessed, properly conceived of, the familiar *say the blessing* often requested at the table is not unsuitable or unscriptural. We should, however, understand that it is not the food,

but God, who is to be blessed, as it is God whom we thank for our food. It is inconceivable that people can daily enjoy the bounties of God's grace, and not feel the urge to thank him for such. Many, alas, are likepigs, who feed greedily on the acorns, but never lift their heads in the direction from which they fall. This writer heard of a family which boasted that on Christmas day (but on no other) they always offered thanks for their food! It was an ancient Jewish proverb that "He who partakes of anything without giving thanks acts as if he were stealing it from God."

God And The Nations



JOHN WADDEY

Our God not only created the universe, he rules it to this day. Haughty King Nebuchadnezzar learned the hard way that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Dan. 4:25). Much wild speculation about modern nations and prophecy is seen in religious literature and broadcasting today. Virtually all of it is false and misleading. God does not specifically prophesy of Russia, China, the United States, or any other modern nation, but certain principles of how God deals with nations in every age are set forth in Scripture.

I. Righteousness exalts a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people (Prov. 14:34). In every age those nations that were basically righteous have prospered under God's providential care. Conversely those societies that chose to ignore the moral and spiritual standards of the Creator have languished and not a few have died.

II. God chastens nations that are rebellious towards him in order to recover them. Assyria was the rod of God's anger and the staff of his indignation which he sent against a profane nation of Judah (Is. 10:5-12). Joel interpreted the locust plague and the drought which struck his land as "a day of Jehovah" (1-15-20). Later he urged the people to repent that God might lift his sore judgments from their land (2-12-20). The economic depression which stalked post exile Judah was said to be because they had neglected God's house while selfishly pursuing their own interest (Hag. 1:3-10).

III. God has no "chosen nation" in the world today. "In every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34-35). Contrary to the idea that the Jewish people are yet God's favored people, Paul affirms, "There is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him (Rom. 10:12). God has "cast away" Israel as a political nation yet he is anxious to save every Jew who will accept Christ as Lord (Rom. 11:15, 20, 23). God's kingdom today is the spiritual kingdom of Christ which transcends all national boundaries and racial groupings. The church is a kingdom not of this world (John 18:36).

IV. Nations can become so wicked as to fill the cup of iniquity and ultimately be destroyed. God could not deliver the land of Canaan to faithful Abraham during his life

because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full (Gen. 15:17). The Hebrews had to wait some 400 years before a just God could eject the Amorites and give their land to Abraham's heirs (Gen. 15:14). When Moses led Israel out of Egyptian bondage, God warned, "Defile not ye yourself in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you; and the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land vomiteth out her inhabitants" (Lev. 18:24-25). So wicked were they that the sovereign Creator ordered them to be exterminated with no mercy (Josh. 6:17). At a later date the Amalekites reached the same depth of moral degradation and they too were consigned to annihilation (I Sam. 15:1-4,12).

V. A righteous remnant will preserve a nation from destruction. When Sodom and Gomorrah had become vile in their sexual corruption, God commissioned three heavenly messengers to investigate the condition. In conversation with Abraham, one of these agreed that if ten righteous souls were found, God would spare the whole. Jesus described his disciples as "the light of the world" and "the salt of the earth" (Matt. 4:13-16). So long as there is a reasonable segment of society left to honor God, to work for improvement, God will be tolerant in withholding judgment. But woe to the land whose righteous remnant vanishes. The nation's funeral is not far off.

VI. God wants all men of all nations to be saved and citizens in his spiritual kingdom. Peter reminds us that God is not willing for any to perish but wishes all to come to repentance (II Pet. 3:9).

VII. Our task as Christians is to be busy fulfilling the Lord's commission by taking the gospel invitation to every man and woman on planet Earth (Matt. 28:19-20). Christ promises to open doors for us which no man can close (Rev. 3:8). No nation can successfully keep the leaven of Christ out, when God's people commit themselves to his holy cause.

VIII. All the kingdoms of this earth will pass away at that day appointed by Jehovah when he sends his illustrious Son back to consummate all things. The day and hour is unknown to mortal man (Matt. 24:42). Therefore, we must always be ready for the event (Matt. 24:44). The Earth and the works therein shall be burned up (II Pet. 3:10) and the inhabitants of all the ages will be gathered before the judgment throne of Christ (John 5:28-29).

Let all of the King's children remember that their citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). May we always view our life here as strangers and pilgrims who look for a better country at home with the Father (Heb. 11:13-16). Daily we should strive to be the light of the world holding forth the word of life to a lost and dying world (Phil. 2:15-16). And though the

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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ark and the flood will be discussed in a later series of articles. Suffice it for now that the ark *was* large enough to hold the dinosaurs. (We shall present empirical data to prove this in our later articles.)

We have found, and can see today in museums, fossils of dinosaurs. We even have skeletons (in part and in whole) of dinosaurs which can be viewed in various museums of natural history. The Christian has no reason to doubt the true-to-life existence of dinosaurs. Dinosaurs did exist at one time. But that is not the question. Let us leave peripheral issues and arrive at the heart of the matter.

WHEN DID DINOSAURS LIVE AND WHAT DOES THEIR PRESENCE PROVE? Evolutionists tell us that dinosaurs lived 70 million years before man. Is this true? NO, IT IS NOT!! We have fossilized proof that dinosaurs and man were contemporary. Consider this information from Wayne Jackson:

"Numerous and thorough investigations by competent scientists have documented the discovery of human footprints in the same bedrock that contains dinosaur footprints (some only a few feet apart) in the Paluxy River near Glen Rose, Texas. Though some evolutionists have attempted to dismiss the footprints as clever Indian carvings, a trail of these tracks was found back from the river bank under an eight foot depth of solid rock and dirt. The tracks are neither carvings nor erosion; they are human prints! (See Whitcomb & Morris, *The Genesis Flood*, p 174; Seagraves, *The Great Dinosaur Mistake*, p. 34f.) Also in Rhodesia there are cave paintings of the ancient brontosaurus left by a race of tribesmen who lived about 1500 B.C. (Bible-Science Newsletter, 4-15-70). Perhaps their primitive ignorance can be excused for not knowing that no such creature was then alive."1

This is proof - positive proof - that dinosaurs and man lived at the same time. The reader is asked to examine the pictures of these footprints in *The Genesis Flood* (page 174).2 Both sets of footprints (dinosaur and man) occur in the same Cretaceous strata. As Dr. A.E. Wilder - Smith has aptly stated:

"Fine clear tracks of dinosaurs, brontosaurus, and also probably of tyrannosaurs have been found in the Paluxy River bed near Glen Rose, Texas, which identify the formation there as Cretaceous. It is difficult to believe that such beautifully preserved tracks (I have seen them myself) could be so old, but the dating stands firm in geologists' eyes. In the same riverbed, at the same depth, only a few yards away from the dinosaur tracks, unmistakably human tracks have also been discovered by Dr. Roland T. Bird of the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology, The American Museum of Natural History."3

Dr. Wilder-Smith continues when he states:

"How may we interpret such facts? It would seem to be clear that a human being made the tracks at about the same time as the dinosaur. Even Dr. Roland T. Bird admits that the tracks are perfect human ones. At least we might interpret the tracks in this way, if theories did not stand in the way, producing mental blocks. . . "If this one observation were true, the whole structure of Darwinism, and a good deal of modern geological theory too, would fall to pieces. For Darwinistic theory could not possibly admit a human to have lived contemporaneously with a dinosaur!

Man could never be 140 million years old. Even his supposed primate ancestors had scarcely started to evolve then! But if man appeared only in recent geological times, then the dinosaur must have lived in recent geological times, too, which Darwinism again cannot permit."4

The dinosaur-man tracks from the Paluxy River bed are proof positive that dinosaurs did live at the same time as man. But there is more.

"But there is biblical evidence - both indirect and perhaps direct - that man was contemporary with the great dinosaurs ('terrible lizards'). In the first place: (1) Man has existed since the beginning of creation (Mark 10:6); (2) But dinosaurs were a part of that creation; (3) Thus, the two species were contemporary. In the second place: (1) All basic 'kinds' of living creatures came into being during the same creative week (Exodus 20:11). Man, therefore, lived together with the huge 'terrible lizards' of the pre-flood world. In the third place: (1) Man was given dominion over all lower inhabitants of the earth (Genesis 1:26). (2) Dinosaurs were a part of that ancient world. Man was either contemporary with the dinosaurs, or a part of the creation was never subjected to him."5

Obviously evolutionists do not (cannot!) accept the dinosaur and man footprints as genuine. As Whitcomb and Morris state: "Geologists have rejected this evidence, however, preferring to believe that the human footprints were carved by some modern artist, while at the same time accepting the dinosaur prints as genuine. If anything, the dinosaur prints look more 'artificial' than the human, but the genuineness of neither would be questioned were it not for the geologically sacrosanct evolutionary time-scale."6

In concluding, let us make the following

Are You Guilty Of Overwork?

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sleep" (Eccl. 5:12).

Many rewards accrue to those who find glory in honest labor. There is joy, profit, fulfillment, release of tension, etc. These benefits have been lost by those who want something for nothing. Paul admonished, "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you" (I Thess. 4:11). But we labor not for self alone. "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28). Jesus said that it is "more blessed to give than to receive." This will help us to overcome that ever growing temptation to materialism.

The glory and honor of labor is recognized by those who are approaching retirement age. The system that calls for people of a certain age to be placed on a shelf has recently been called into question, and rightly so.

When we have said all of the above regarding the dignity of work, we must not lose sight of the value of "preparing" to worship. There are several things one can do to be refreshed for worship:

1. Get enough rest on Saturday night. This will brighten your eyes, sharpen your ears and soften the pew.

2. Get up thirty minutes earlier on Sunday morning. This will do away with the tensions that rob us of useful energy. In many households Sunday morning is so hectic that by the time the family arrives to Bible school all are worn out from rushing and fussing. That extra thirty minutes will help solve the

observations: (1) Dinosaurs did live; we do have their fossil remains; (2) The question is not "did dinosaurs live" but rather "when did dinosaurs live"? (3) Proof from paleontology indicates that man and dinosaur lived contemporaneously; (4) An unbiased mind should readily observe that if this is true, the geological time table is a hoax - not to be followed because it is in grievous error; (5) Since it has been proved that dinosaurs and man lived contemporaneously, it has likewise been proved that evolution (i.e.: organic evolution) is false!

It may be that there remain some questions in the minds of the reader concerning the dinosaurs. For example, could it be possible for Noah to take these gigantic animals on the ark? Why is it that after the Cretaceous strata we find no more fossils dinosaurs? What was responsible for causing the dinosaurs to become extinct? These questions will be answered in the articles which are to follow, especially those that deal with the Noachian Flood. It is hoped that the reader will bear with us until that point. The lessons on the Flood should explain many things, and tie many loose ends together.

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1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840.

problem. Fathers cooperate with mother and help with the kids, you can wait to read that paper.

3. Relax an hour prior to Sunday evening worship. This time could be used for a nap or meditation and prayer.

4. Arrange your schedule on Wednesday so you can be finished with schoolwork, housework, yardwork, etc. at least an hour prior to assembly time. Use that last hour to close your eyes, let your mind and body relax.

Since God seeks people who will worship Him in "spirit and in truth" (John 4:23), it may very well be that others need to join with the above sister who confessed to the sin of OVERWORK. — P.O. Box 456, Obion, Tn. 38240.

God And The Nations

(Continued From Page 3)

kingdoms of earth may pass one by one, our great kingdom will never be shaken (Heb. 12:28). It shall stand forever (Dan. 2:44). — Rt. 22, Beaver Ridge road, Knoxville, Tn. 37921.

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad,
the Words of Truth.

but speak forth

Acts 26:25

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1977

NUMBER 43

Warfare

Paul, being led by the Holy Spirit, writes that the Christian is involved in a warfare of deciding whether to live the Christian life or serve the devil (Eph. 6:10-17). There have been many wars fought and crucial battles won or lost, but there is no war or battle as great as the war of the soul. Reader, are you a soldier for Christ, exalting His blessed name, or are you a follower of the devil engaging in sin?



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

Many people do not believe there is a devil. Paul exhorts Christians to stand against the devil, and gave the young evangelist Timothy instructions not to fall into the reproach and snare of the devil (Eph. 6:10; I Tim. 3:7; II Tim. 2:26). Peter knew the devil was real because he described him as follows: "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8). James instructs us to "resist the devil" (Jas. 4:7). How can one resist something that does not exist? Yes, the devil is real, and if we follow his devices we will go with him to a devil's hell (Matt. 25:41). The same Bible that teaches there is a God teaches there is a devil, and it is impossible to be consistent and believe there is a God and not believe in the devil.

God and the devil stand opposite each other. It is impossible to be for God and live for the devil, or to follow the devil and be saved with God. It is also impossible to serve both God and the devil at the same time. A person is either saved or lost - there is no middle ground (Matt. 7:13-14, 6:14, 12:30).

The devil tempts man by saying that sin is not bad. The devil influences people to believe that preachers only preach on sin in order to keep their job. The devil would have us believe that if we think something is alright then we can do whatever our heart dictates just so long as we believe it is right. If the

devil can get people to believe this, then they will sin and disobey God and do just what the devil wants them to do. God speaking through His Son says, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. Jesus answered them, verily, verily I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8:24,34). Sin will separate a person from God (Isa. 59:1-2). Sin will not only bring physical death but also spiritual death, which is the eternal separation from God (Rom. 6:23, Jas. 1:15). If you live in willful sin then the devil has your soul; for a child of God will not continue in sin (Rom. 6:1-2).

People who have been influenced by the devil believe one can be saved and never be a member of the Lord's church. Thousands of people believe they are saved and claim to have Christ while rejecting the church that cost the blood of Jesus Christ.

God's word teaches that the church is the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23), and Christ is the head of the body (Col. 1:18). It is impossible to have a living body without a head or a living head without the body. One cannot have Christ as head without being in the body, and one cannot be in the body without Christ as head. The inevitable conclusion is that one cannot be saved outside of the body, the church (Eph. 5:23). The church meant so much to Christ that He gave himself for it. We need to be thankful that we are members of the Lord's church and live a life that will bring glory to Christ and the church (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25; Matt. 5:16).

The devil wants man to believe (and many do) that the Bible cannot be understood and that we need to have creeds written by men that man may understand how to be saved. Creeds of men change as the thoughts of men change, but the word of Christ never changes (Matt. 24:35). Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Jesus prayed to God the Father that His followers would be sanctified in truth, and God's word is truth (John 17:17). The Bible is God's revealed will, it is complete, final and absolute (Jude 3; II Peter 1:21; I Tim. 4:13; II Tim. 3:16-17). We will be judged

by the word of God, and therefore the Bible is the sure foundation of our faith (John 12:48).

The devil has been so successful in teaching that church attendance is not essential that in just about every congregation the evening service has less in attendance than the morning service, and Wednesday evening Bible study attendance is even worse than the evening service on the first day of the week. Many people claim that Hebrews 10:25 specifies only the morning worship service on the first day of the week. The text does not specify the day, and to teach it means the first day of the week only is saying what the text does not say, and one is thereby adding to the word of God. The Lord's day is certainly included, but other days are not excluded (Acts 5:42). It is impossible to obey Hebrews 10:24 when a person disobeys Hebrews 10:25. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords" (Rev. 19:16). And the kingdom of which Jesus is the King is the church of Christ. Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. . ." (Matt. 6:33). Reader, it is impossible to seek the kingdom of God first and willfully neglect the services of the church. How the church could grow and exert a lasting influence upon a sinful world if we had the attitude of the Psalmist in Psalms 122:1!


Who has your soul - God or the devil? Are you in the army of the devil or the army of God? Let us all resolve to carry out the command of Paul to Timothy when he wrote, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Tim. 2:3). — P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580.

"Football & Churches"

CHARLES HODGE

We went to see the Cowboys' fiasco a few Monday nights past. How stupid can people be! It cost someone \$10.00 per person to

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

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might be more readily recognized by observing the terrible catalog of sins in which it is listed. I Peter 4:15 says, "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters." In this passage the busybody is listed alongside the murderer, the thief, and the evildoer. The word "busybody," incidentally, is from a Greek expression which means ONE WHO

OVERSEES OR TENDS TO ANOTHER'S BUSINESS. In Romans 1:29, 30 we have what is probably the blackest list of sins in all the Bible; and in this list we find "whisperers" and "backbiters."

No doubt, there are many reasons why people gossip. Some gossip because of idleness (II Thess. 3:11; I Tim. 5:13). Some gossip because of enmity in the heart

(Ps. 64:1-3; 140:1-3). No doubt jealousy and envy, coupled with a lack of love, cause some to gossip. Others gossip because they failed to get their facts straight, and jumped to erroneous conclusions. But perhaps more than any other reason, those who gossip do so because they suffer from a feeling of insecurity. They use gossip to bring themselves into the good favor of those to whom they gossip. A realization of this fact would help those who are tempted to gossip to resist the temptation.

The sin of gossip should not be taken lightly. In I Peter 4:15, 16 it is placed in contrast with being a Christian. Those who are Christians should avoid this terrible sin; and those who are guilty of the sin should repent. Any sin, unrepented of, will send one to torment.

Bent to Backsliding

W.C. QUILLEN

"My people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him" (Hos. 11:7).

Isn't this an awful indictment for the Lord to bring against His own people? Yet it must be true, since the Lord Himself made the charge. In Hos. 4:16, God said, "Israel hath behaved himself stubbornly as a backsliding heifer."

Backsliding is not peculiar to Israel of old. God's people are still "bent on backsliding from him." Today people are "called to the Most High" in the most sacred way conceivable, and by the Son of God Himself; yet many so called are "bent on backsliding." After commanding Christians not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, Paul then says, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:38-39). Either we keep on faithfully believing unto the ultimate salvation of our souls, or we draw back unto perdition.

A backslider is one who turns back and quits the Lord's cause: he is a quitter, a turn-coat, a traitor; he is a drifter, a defector, a deserter, a drop-out: he is an "Ex-". It may

be an honor to be an ex-president, or an ex-governor, but it is a deplorable thing to be an ex-Christian. Christ not only calls us to the Most High in Himself, but He insists that we be faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10).

When we enlist in the Lord's service, the Captain of our salvation grants us no honorable discharge. If, while we live, we leave His service, it must be dishonorably.

God alone knows, but eternity will reveal to us the vast numbers of people who entered the church of our Lord, and started toward heaven with high hopes, and then quit, turned back and fell by the wayside.

Some people quit because of stubbornness and perverseness: they couldn't get their own way. Others backslide because of weakness: they can't throw off some of the spiritual diseases of our times. Still others quit through carelessness: they are just indifferent and unconcerned and have lost interest in the Lord's work and their own salvation. But whatever the cause, they have backslidden, and drawn back unto perdition, and share the fate of Judas Iscariot. When one begins to neglect the service of the Church, he is well on his way to backsliding. — P.O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tn. 38464.



Gossip

The word "gossip" itself is not found in the Bible, but the idea is abundantly present. Webster says a gossip is: "a person who chatters or repeats idle talk and rumors about others" (New Twentieth Century Dictionary). Please observe that, according to this definition, one does



BOBBY DUNCAN

not have to originate the story to be a gossip. Observe also that one might be guilty of gossip, even though he does not tell any lies. However, this latter is not usually the case; for those who repeat idle talk and rumors about others nearly always repeat some things that are not true.

We are sure there would be fewer gossips if people could be made to see the ugliness and the danger of such a sin. Perhaps the sin of gossip is more dangerous than some other sins because it is most difficult to recognize in oneself. Often those who come forward to make confession of sins will say, "I have said things I should not have said;" but seldom does one confess: "I have gossiped." And it seems also that those most guilty of the sin are the ones most easily offended by references to it.

The danger of gossip may further be seen by observing the harm it is known to have done. Churches have been split, families divided, murders committed, confidences destroyed, friends alienated, and souls lost because of gossip. Yet some persist in referring to it as "harmless gossip".

The seriousness of the sin of gossip

True Greatness

CLEON LYLES

Someone has said, "Greatness is a by-product of usefulness."

When Jesus was on earth with his disciples they were concerned about who would be the greatest in the kingdom. They did not understand the nature of the Lord's kingdom. Neither did they fully comprehend what he had been teaching them. They were still thinking of an earthly kingdom and the rewards and honors that would come from holding a high position in the kingdom. As yet they had not noticed that Jesus was not concerned about such matters. There was more than enough concern about these things before Jesus came to earth. Positions of earth had not gained man any favor from God because God looks on the heart. So Jesus told his disciples that those who would be great must become servants. I am sure they did not understand what he was saying but they understood later. The work they did proved

their complete understanding.

Living in the world, we find it difficult to keep from measuring men as they are measured by the world. The possession of wealth is often considered a sign of greatness. The wealth possessed may not have been earned, but little consideration is given to this fact. If one is wealthy he is a symbol of greatness in the eyes of many people. More than average knowledge is also considered a sign of greatness among some people. To them scholastic knowledge represents the sign of intelligence. Every other weakness or failure can be overlooked if sufficient knowledge of some specific subjects is enjoyed. Social or political position is another sign of greatness before which many people worship. All of this has always been with us and perhaps always will be, unless people who hold such ideas learn what the Lord taught

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED—HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods).

"Does the term 'unleavened bread' refer only to the absence of yeast? What about salt?"

The basic meaning of the word *leaven*, whether in its various appearances in the Old Testament, or in the New Testament, is "ferment". Leavened bread is that which has a fermenting agent in it. The law of Moses strictly forbade the use of leaven in the altar services: "No meal offering, which ye shall offer unto Jehovah, shall be made with leaven. . . ." (Lev. 2:11). The reason for this was that the offering thus made was regarded as a type of purity and freedom from all moral corrupting influences; whereas, leaven, whose very nature is to lead to disintegration and corruption, was considered wholly inconsistent with the nature and purpose of the sacrificial acts. Prohibition of leaven, in the sacrifice, was made for the same reason that sick, crippled and unsound animals were not to be used in sacrifice, on the ground that such devotions should typify soundness and wholesomeness expected of those for whom the offerings were made. Inherent in these concepts was the feeling that anything in a process of decay had no place in an action designed to symbolize a better and purer life. These concepts often appear in the figurative use of the term in the Bible.

While it is too much to say (though it is often done), that leaven is *always* used in the scriptures to signify that which is wrong (cf. Matt. 13:33; Luke 13:21), such is often the case, e.g., the false doctrines of the Pharisees (Matt. 16:6, 12), wicked and insincere men (I Cor. 5:6, 7), false teachers (Gal. 5:8, 9) malice and wickedness (I Cor. 5:8).

Salt was not regarded as leaven as is evident from the fact that in the instance alluded to above where leaven is prohibited in the altar service, it is commanded: "And every oblation of thy meal-offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meal-offering; with all thine obligations thou shalt offer salt," (Lev. 2:13). It is thus not wrong to use salt in the preparation of the unleavened bread for the Lord's table.

A Cake Not Turned

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

"Ephraim, he mixeth himself among the peoples; Ephraim is a cake not turned" (Hosea 7:8). Or, as the Geneva Bible has this verse: "Baked on one side and raw on the other, he is neither through hot nor through cold, but partly a Jew and partly a Gentile." Ephraim (or Israel) was mixing with the uncircumcised and unclean Gentile nations and was the worse for such social intercourse. Hosea illustrated such a condition by depicting a scene wherein a person was

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 21

(NOTE: This is a continuation of the preceding articles dealing with paleontology as a proof of evolution.)

FOSSILS WHICH PROVE SPECIAL CREATION

We begin this article by asking the reader to remember our original question in regard to paleontology: HAS GOD WRITTEN IN THE ROCKS WHAT GOD HAS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK?? Time was, we have already mentioned, when Christians feared the fossils - thinking that perhaps it would eventually prove evolution to be true. But hopefully those times are in our distant past. Let it be said here and now - the fossil record ("earth's museum") vindicates the Bible record once and again. In our last article we showed proof that dinosaurs and man co-inhabited the earth *together, at the same time!* The dinosaur-man footprints in the Cretaceous are enough to expose the geological time table for the hoax that it is. But there is more! Much more!



BERT THOMPSON

TRILOBITES

Trilobites are, according to Webster, "extinct Paleozoic marine arthropods (group Trilobita) having the segments of the body divided by furrows on the dorsal surface into three lobes." Trilobites supposedly evolved during the Ordovician period of the Paleozoic Era - some 200,000,000 to 500,000,000 years ago (by evolutionary geologists timetables). Trilobites fossils are with us today, and are quite common in some areas. On June 1, 1968 near Antelope Springs, Utah, Mr. William J. Meister (a "rockhound" and trilobite collector) discovered in rock the fossils of several trilobites.

Now this would not be such an unusual discovery were it not for one thing: these trilobites were found inside the footprints of a man! And not only that, but the man was wearing sandals! What we have here is the simultaneous occurrence of trilobites and man - which geologists say is utterly impossible. Yet Mr. Meister found just that. Listen to Mr. Meister as he tells the story in his own words:

"As a trilobite collector and 'rockhound' I have often enjoyed searching the 'trilobite beds' of Antelope Springs, about 43 miles northwest of Delta, Utah, for my favorite fossil. Although I had previously found many excellent trilobite specimens in this so-called Cambrian formation, none can compare with my astonishing discovery of June 1, 1968.

"I arrived at Antelope Springs on Decoration Day in company with my wife and two daughters. . . We all remained at this location four days. Upon arrival we immediately began chiseling at the rock in search of trilobites.

"On the third day. . . I broke off a large, approximately two-inch-thick slab of rock. Upon hitting it on the edge with my hammer, it fell open like a book. To my great astonishment I saw on one side the footprint of a human with trilobites *right in the footprint itself.* (Italics are Mr. Meister's). The other half of the rock showed an almost perfect mold of the footprint and fossils,

amazingly the human was wearing a sandal!

"The footprint measured 10½ inches in length, 3½ inches in width at the sole, and 3 inches in width at the heel. The heel print was indented in the rock about an eighth of an inch more than the sole. The footprint was clearly that of the right foot because the sandal was well worn on the right heel in characteristic fashion."¹

Surely the reader is impressed by this account. It is analogous to finding dinosaur footprints and man's footprints in the same strata. IT HAPPENED, YET GEOLOGISTS AND THEIR TIMETABLE SAY IT IS IMPOSSIBLE! Therefore, evolutionists are forced to do one of two things: (1) accept the evidence as real and discard the geological timetable, or; (2) brand the evidence as false. They have chosen the latter, not the former. In that regard (lest evolutionists say that the man's sandalprint is "carved" as they have claimed that the man's footprints were in the Paluxy River bed in Glen Rose, Texas) let us hear from Walter E. Lammerts, former editor of the Creation Research Society Quarterly. Mr. Lammerts has this footnote underneath Mr. Meister's account:

" . . . the trilobite beds are located about halfway up a 2,000 foot, fairly high, mountain face. The strata are horizontal. Meister was forced to stop many times as he climbed up the face of the mountain. He had to make footholds in order to climb and to work in the area which was about halfway up the side. There was a ledge-like protrusion from the face below the working area. Quite obviously this footprint could not be the result of any carving, since, until found by Meister, it was covered by the strata above."²

It seems obvious that these footprints (with sandals) were not "carved." They are genuine. It is the geological time table which is the hoax - not the footprints!

MOSQUITOES

Consider this evidence. Evolutionists tell us that during the Cambrian period moss agates were formed. These moss agates are mixtures of iron, zinc, or lead oxides which formed beautiful patterns through a process of water evaporation. Anyone who has ever seen one of these moss agates can tell you of their beauty. In one of these moss agates, perfectly formed and perfectly preserved, what has been discovered but. . . a mosquito! A mosquito from the Cambrian period?? Impossible say the geologists and their time table. This is long before insects were supposed to have "evolved." Yet here it is - tangible, real evidence which cannot be disputed. And there is more. The mosquito is exactly like its pestiferous progeny of today!

Evolution, so we are told, goes from the simple to the complex. I don't know about you, but I'm certainly glad the mosquito didn't "evolve". In a hundred million years or so (if mosquitoes had been "evolving" all that time), just think what the mosquitoes of today would be like!? We would have mosquitoes *as big as eagles!* Now, aren't you glad that mosquitoes stopped "evolving." But can you explain why they have?!

POLYPS, ANTS, AND CRAYFISH

There is still more. We are told by evolutionists that coral polys evolved in the Silurian period of the Paleozoic Era (200,000,000 to 500,000,000 years ago), along with the algae. But what about the coral polyps and algae of today? They are exactly the same as those whose fossils we have. They

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True Greatness

(Continued From Page 2)

about true greatness.

The greatness of which the Lord spoke is within the reach of every person. It is true that the world provides many things that can help us in our work for the Lord if we will properly use them and not allow them to get in our way. But even those who have not obtained these advantages, by proper use of their abilities, can become great in the eyes of the Lord. Let's notice a few people to whom the Lord pointed as examples.

On one occasion Jesus had gone to a feast. A certain woman came in and poured ointment on the Lord. It was expensive ointment, and even some of the disciples thought it was a waste. Jesus said wherever the gospel was preached this woman would be remembered. He said nothing about the man who prepared the feast as having done anything outstanding.

Jesus watched as people contributed as they came into the temple. A widow came in and gave a very small amount but it represented all she had. Jesus told his disciples she had given more than anyone. Others had cast in of their wealth but she had given all. She had nothing left. She was a great woman in the eyes of the Lord.

In the early days of the church a certain man parted with all he had and made himself available to preach the gospel. He is one of the few men the Bible says was a good man.

These examples point out the fact that true greatness does come from being useful. We become great in serving and not in being served. Greatness comes from giving and not from receiving. In these matters the road to true greatness is open to all of us. And the fairness of Jesus is represented in his parable of the talents. Each was expected to become useful and live up to his ability. The one who was condemned was not punished because what had been given him did not compare with that given to others, but because he refused to become useful with what we had. The same announcement of success and blessings that the others received could have been his had he only used what he had to the glory of God.

We need to turn our minds away from what the world calls greatness and listen to the Master so that we can know true greatness, which will result in eternal life. — 100 W. Church St., Morrilton, Ark. 72110.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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haven't changed one iota. Why?

Or consider the Jurassic period in the Mesozoic era when ants "evolved." We have ants, perfectly preserved in amber, from that period - and it is the same kind of insect today that it was then. Why?

Or consider the crayfish - we have a multitude of fossils of them, and they are the same today as they were then. Why? What is the explanation for all of these things?

Could the explanation be found in Genesis 2:1-2 when Moses said:

"And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made."

Yes, that is the explanation. The earth and its

various myriads of animals and plants were formed in 6 literal, 24-hour days, just as the text says. These insects (ants, mosquitoes, etc.) did not continue evolving because they were not "evolving" to begin with. The fossils, if they are anything at all, are proof - positive for Special Creation.

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"Football & Churches"

(Continued From Page 1)

attend. The traffic long before game time was terrible. You are not furnished decent parking so you park and walk and walk and walk! Crossing two freeways people were risking their lives dodging cars as they crossed. It was hectic just to arrive in one piece.

No one welcomed us. I didn't meet Tom Landry nor Roger Staubach. They probably were unaware I was there. Cigarette smoke and beer were the order of the night. The game went on and on - 3½ hours until nearly midnight. The play was pitiful; nothing was professional. . . junior high teams would have had more pride! It was an insult to a sportsman's intelligence. To make bad matters worse Howie Cosell was there! Then bedlam when the game ended - noise - traffic jams - couldn't sleep when home because of jangled nerves!

Yes, 65,000 were there! The stadium is already sold out for December! WHY? We have a beautiful building, adequate parking, friendly handshakes, tremendous singing, competent Bible classes, adequate preaching, Jesus Christ and love - yet few attend!

Can anyone explain this? I am confused! By the way, do you have any extra tickets for the 13th?

A Cake Not Turned

(Continued From Page 3)

cooking a circular pancake over the scorching heat of red-hot stones. The cake had to be quickly turned or else the cake would be burnt on one side while still moist and raw on the other side. The bread would neither roast, nor raw. It would be unfit to eat in such a condition.

Israel seemed to be plagued with the perpetual problem of a divided allegiance. Joshua exclaimed in the long ago, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve. . ." (Jos. 24:15). In the days of King Ahab, Elijah the prophet asked on Mount Carmel, "How long go ye limping between the two sides? If Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (I Kings 18:21).

Ephraim was guilty of hypocrisy and inconsistency. While extolling God, he was addicted to Baalism. Today, many members of the Lord's church claim faithfulness to Christ while seeking the company and the pleasures of the world. They need to "come ye out from among them and be ye separate", and "be not fashioned according to this world" (II Cor. 6:17; Rom. 12:2). A Christian cannot "run both with the hare and the hound." He must make a choice. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt. 6:24). The church in Laodicea tried to hold hands with the Lord and with the devil at the same time. For such, they

received the words of condemnation, "I will spew thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16).

Man is still much like a cake unturned. He has his warm side to the earth and his cold side towards heaven. Some members are not necessarily wicked sinners but neither are they devoted saints. One has said that this type of person is "too good for hell, but not really good enough for heaven." How miserable such a life must be!

The Rhine and the Arno Rivers flow side by side in the same channel without mingling their waters; but though the swifter stream keeps clear for awhile, at last it is defiled; and it is the turbid stream that conquers. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13:20). — East Hart Avenue, Opp, Al. 36467.

Deaver-Hogland Debate

On July 18-21, 1977, brother Roy Deaver met brother Ward Hogland in a public debate in Pensacola, Fla. on the cooperation issue. Brother Hogland affirmed, "The scriptures teach that congregation 'A' may not (does not have the right to) contribute to (send money to) congregation 'B' for the purpose of preaching the gospel of Christ."



RAY HAWK

On both Monday and Tuesday nights this proposition was affirmed by brother Hogland with brother Deaver in the negative. Brother Hogland kept trying to get brother Deaver in the affirmative, but failed to do so. Brother Deaver kept calling upon brother Hogland to prove his proposition rather than give passages and assert that the passages taught his pattern.

The discussion was marked by a sour note in that both brother Hogland and his moderator, brother Ron Mosby, kept demonstrating to the audience from their table while brother Deaver was speaking. Finally, on the third night of the debate brother Deaver reminded the audience what was taking place at Hogland's table while brother Deaver was up speaking. Also, on other occasions, brother Deaver found himself debating brother Hogland AND his moderator, Ron Mosby.

On the last two nights of the discussion, brother Deaver affirmed, "The scriptures teach that congregation 'A' may (has the right to) contribute to (send money to) congregation 'B' for the purpose of preaching the gospel of Christ." Brother Hogland was in the negative.

Brother Deaver plainly set forth that one congregation has a right to send money to another church for evangelistic purposes. He set forth a chart showing Corinth sending money to Jerusalem for the poor saints from I Cor. 16:2. From this contribution brother Hogland takes his salary! Therefore, you have one church sending to another church so a preacher may be paid to evangelize. Brother Deaver provided his proposition. Brother Hogland never did deal with the chart.

As a result of the debate, one sister who was leaning toward the anti position saw its error and forsook it. — 4850 Saufley Rd., Pensacola, Fla. 32506.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, n
the Words of Truth a"

but speak forth

Acts 26:25

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1977

NUMBER 44

The Sword Of The Spirit

In previous articles we have endeavored to outfit the "Christian Soldier" from head to foot with the whole armor of God as described in Ephesians 6:10ff. Yet one part is lacking, namely the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. This passage alone should convince us that the word of God is not the Holy Spirit. Neither is the Holy Spirit the word of God, for the word is the instrument of the Spirit and they are no more the same than a soldier and his hand grenade.



sophisticated modern weapons, have been designed to kill and to maim. Though the results stagger the imagination the time could well come when the H-bomb is loosed and millions of lives snuffed out. That is what they were built for. How the world needs to learn the truth of Zechariah 4:6: "This is the word of Jehovah. . . not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts." Let us as Christians be aware of the truth that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:3-5).

The nature of the Christian warfare is also shown in a negative way in the parable of the Tares. When tares were discovered among the wheat the servants wanted to root them up, that is, get rid of them by physical force. But the householder responded, "Let them both grow until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn" (Matt. 13:24-30). This is nothing but the last day when Christ shall come, the dead shall be raised and we shall all be judged (Jn. 14:1ff; 5:28ff; II Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11ff).

**KINGDOM OF CHRIST
NOT OF THE WORLD**

Because the kingdom of Christ is not of this

world (see Jn. 18:36) the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, can and does bring peace to the soldier of the cross while at the same time it is the means of destroying and bringing to naught the enemies of Christ. The gospel that saves is the gospel that condemns (II Cor. 2:14-15). To a Christian it is the savor of life unto life; to the sinner the savor of death unto death. A most vivid and familiar illustration of this is found in the waters of the flood. The same water that saved Noah destroyed the rest of the world. The outcome depended upon the attitudes and actions of the respective groups. Which group are we in, the one that rejects the word or the one that accepts and acts upon it?

A SOLDIER MUST KNOW HIS WEAPON

I am told that a soldier in the armed forces must learn to take his gun completely apart and put it together again in the dark. The knowledge of the Christian's weapon, the sword, is infinitely more important. Yet, the tragedy of our time is that the church is not studying the Scriptures. Practically every preacher in the nation will attest to this sad fact. Israel was destroyed through ignorance; Jews crucified Jesus in ignorance; ignorance of the truth will destroy both congregations and individuals. It has been oft told that brother Gus Nichols studied five hours a day, and you could tell it! Many of "us" are studying the Bible not at all - **AND YOU CAN TELL IT.**

Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064

The use of "sword" here is metaphorical; the word of God in some respects is like a sword. The sword, literally considered, is an ancient instrument designed for battle and is used both defensively and offensively. The same is true of God's word. Let us notice a few brief references in which the sword is used figuratively:

"Think not that I came to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). Then, this comparison: "The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12). In a majestic vision of Jesus in his glorified state John saw him in awesome form, "and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword" (Rev. 1:12-16). "And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations" (Rev. 19:15).

CARNAL WEAPONS FOR DESTRUCTION

Most, if not all, premillennialists imagine that "the battle of Armageddon" is to be a carnal conflict between the forces of Christ and Satan in which Christ will be victorious and Satan defeated, the Christ then setting up a materialistic kingdom on earth and ruling in Jerusalem for 1000 years. But the sword of Jesus is spiritual, not physical and material as we have shown above.

Everything that man has designed for warfare, from the club to the most


People who owe their particular religious outlook to E. G. White or Herbert W. Armstrong are very vocal in maintaining that the law-even the ten commandments written on two tables of stone (Deut. 4:13) -is a Christian obligation. Yet, II Cor. 3:7 calls the law "written and engraven on stones" "the ministration of death," and again II Cor. 3:9 calls it "the ministration of condemnation". **TO BIND THE TEN**

COMMANDMENT LAW ON THE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST IS TO BIND A MINISTRATION OF DEATH AND CONDEMNATION UPON THEM. Thus the Holy Spirit plainly declared in Rom. 7:4, "wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another"

Sunday Is Not The Sabbath

JIM E. WALDRON

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus: but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 26:25

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Church Buildings and Mission Work

It is true, Jesus did not say, "Go ye into all the world and build meeting-houses." No doubt there are many who have lost sight of the mission of the church, and who place undue emphasis upon the meetinghouse. Certainly we need to realize that the meetinghouse is not the church. In fact, it is no part of the church. It is no more than a tool, an expedient, or a convenience in carrying on the work of the congregation. The church can exist without a meetinghouse, and does so in some places. Perhaps in some places the church would be better off if it did not even own a meetinghouse.

Having so said, we now address ourselves to an attitude toward meetinghouses which we believe to be dangerous. It is the disposition to be critical of congregations which spend thousands of dollars on buildings while there are many people in the world who have never heard the gospel. We certainly believe that some need to re-evaluate their priorities, if they are being extravagant and wasteful in their spending on buildings. But we do not believe it is a sin for congregations to have comfortable and commodious buildings, including carpeted floors and padded pews. Those who do so are often criticized, and it is suggested that instead of building fine buildings, the money should be sent in the



BOBBY DUNCAN

mission field.

We believe those missionaries who know us personally will testify that, through the years, we have tried to be a friend to mission work. The church at Adamsville, Alabama where we preached for nearly eighteen years, and the Sixth Avenue Church in Jasper, Alabama where we now preach both are known for their generosity with regard to mission work. We have done what we could to encourage this generosity. It is our observation that these two great congregations could not have made the contribution to mission efforts they have made if they had not been careful to see that their own physical facilities were comfortable and

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 22

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of those articles during the past several weeks on geology and paleontology as proofs of evolution).

FOSSIL MEN - FRAUDS OF EVOLUTION

Evolutionists are constantly looking for their "missing link." They search frantically for it all over the world. It is essential to the final disposition of their case. Yet to this very day, this very hour, that elusive missing link is still missing. We suspect it shall never be found.

Yet many attempts have been made to foist upon the minds of an unsuspecting public "fossil men" which are said to have been the missing link. The reader is urged to be extremely careful in regard to "revelation" from evolutionists regarding fossil man. So many hoaxes, so many frauds, have been perpetrated that the situation is becoming analogous to the one which existed when the little boy yelled "Wolf" so many times. Eventually no one paid him any mind. The same might correctly be said in regard to fossil man. Why? We urge you to examine the following evidence for yourself. As Frank W. Cousins states in his book, *Fossil Man*: "... let us turn to indecent haste in publishing wholly misleading accounts of fossil man and to the final stage in deception - outright fraud itself."¹

NEBRASKA MAN

"The most flagrant case of indecent haste in the publication of information directed to fossil man is that of *Hesperopithecus*."² *Hesperos* is the Greek word for "western." *Pithecus* is the Greek word for "ape." The entire genus and species name of Nebraska Man is *Hesperopithecus haroldcookii*. As you may have already guessed, *haroldcookii* is taken from the man's name who originally found the piece of fossil made into Nebraska Man. *Hesperopithecus* is based on the solitary finding by Harold J. Cook, a consulting geologist, of a molar tooth in the Pliocene deposit of the Snake Creek beds of Western Nebraska. Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn hailed the tooth as belonging to a new genus and species - *Hesperopithecus haroldcookii*!

The *Illustrated London News* (June 24, 1922; pages 942, 943, 944) carried pictures of the male and the female of the species - all fabricated from one tooth! "The entire spread of this glossy magazine is devoted to *Hesperopithecus*, Ape Man of the Western

World, by no less a luminary than the late Professor Sir Grafton Elliot Smith, F.R.S., then Professor of Anatomy in the University of London."³ No student of evolution and its claims should deny himself the pleasure of turning to the *Illustrated London News* of June 24, 1922 to view the "missing links" of Harold Cook.

And what because of *Hesperopithecus*? Dr. W.K. Gregory subsequently proved that the "Ape Man of the Western World" was fabricated from the tooth of a peccary, *Prosthennops serus*, a pig now extinct in the United States. *Hesperopithecus haroldcookii* was not an ape, not a man - but a PIG! And the *Illustrated London News* has carried a feature article on the male and female of this new species of the "missing link."

Later, along these same lines, Southwest Colorado Man was also fabricated from a tooth - this time the tooth of a horse! "Give us a tooth" cry the expert evolutionists, "and we will create a whole race of fossilized humanity - the missing links!"

JAVA MAN

The widely-hailed discovery of *Pithecanthropus erectus* by Dr. Eugene Dubois leaves very much to be desired from the point of view of objectivity. The genus and species name combined mean literally "the ape man who stands up." As Frank W. Cousins tells us:

"No one was more dedicated to the idea of man's evolution from the ape than Dubois. From the outset he believed he would find evidence for man's evolution in the warm countries of the East where there were indigenous anthropoid apes. He gave up his lectureship at Amsterdam University and enlisted in the Royal Dutch East Indonesian Army so as to be able to use his leave to search for Haeckel's Missing Links. His hunt originally was on the island of Sumatra, but he found little and had himself posted to the more promising Island of Java."⁴

It was in 1891 that Dr. Dubois found a small piece of skull (brain-cap), a fragment of a left thigh bone (femur), and 3 molar teeth. They were not found together, but in a range of some 75 feet. They were not found at the same time, but within the space of a year. Twenty-four of the most eminent scientists in Europe met to examine the bones. Their results - 10 said the bones belonged to an ape; 7 to a man; 7 said they were a missing link. The complete model of *Pithecanthropus erectus* which Dubois figured himself is in the vaults of the museum at Leiden. This figure, which was exhibited at the Paris exhibition some years ago carries a forked implement in its right hand (even though Dubois stated plainly that *P. erectus* did not make tools). Perhaps it was this unwarranted artistic license which caused G.K. Chesterton to pen

(Continued On Page 4)



BERT THOMPSON

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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"I understand that many common 'by-words' are derived from sacred persons and things. Please list those most often in use and indicate their origins."

Jehovah has ever regarded, with the greatest displeasure, any disposition on the part of man to use his name in flippant, frivolous and profane fashion. The first commandment of the decalogue was designed to protect the sanctity of God's being; the second forbade man to approach him through some human device; and, the third ("Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain: for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain"), was formulated to guarantee respect and reverence for his name (Deut. 5:7-11).

One is *profane* who uses sacred things in an irreverent and a blasphemous manner. The word *vain*, in the third commandment of the decalogue, is translated from a word which means in a light, flippant, and contemptuous fashion. It is of serious consequence that many members of the church have allowed to creep into their phraseology words and phrases the use of which amounts to profanity. Others, who would not dare use the holy names God, Christ, Jesus, Jerusalem, Heaven, Hell, Hades, as interjections ("An ejaculatory word or form of speech, usually thrown in without grammatical connection"-Webster), and for emphasis, will nevertheless, use *euphemisms* (the substitution of a word or phrase less offensive or objectionable), the derivation of which goes back to one of the foregoing forms. Were those who thus do aware of the origin of many of these common by-words they would be shocked! It is therefore important that we obtain a clear conception of the significance of such words and phrases and avoid all which even indirectly border on the profane.

(1) Gee Whiz.

Gee is an euphemistic contraction of the name Jesus. It is slang, and has no proper use in our language. It is used as an interjection and to express surprise. It is, in effect, to say: *Jesus!* (Cf. Webster's New World Dictionary.) Webster's Unabridged Dictionary says that it is "A minced form of *Jesus*, used in mild oaths."

Whiz is slang for anything excellent, "A corker, sometimes applied to a clever person or thing of excellence. Something or someone of exceptional ability or quality." The words *Gee Whiz!* are, therefore an oath in which Jesus and something extraordinary or unusual are joined. *Whiz* originally signified something of a humming or whirring sound, and then anything unusual or exceptional. A *whizzer* denotes in slang that which is above and beyond the ordinary.

(2) Gosh

This, to, is an interjection and used euphemistically, and for *God*. It is an exclamatory slang expression indicating surprise. The Century Dictionary says that it

is "A minced form of God: often used interjectionally as a mild oath." Webster's Unabridged Dictionary says that it is "a softened form of God, used as a mild oath." It is occasionally used in hyphenated fashion such as Gosh-awful, which means, literally, God-awful. In this form it is often used as an adjective and euphemistically.

(3) Gad, Egad, etc.

These words are interjections, and are used euphemistically for the word *God* in mild oaths. They indicate surprise, disgust, dismay, and similar emotions; and are ejaculatory in character. Gee, Gosh, Gad, Egad, and similar forms are used synonymously. They are often joined with other terms for further emphasis, such as Gee Whilikins, Gad Bodkins, of which usage, the Unabridged Dictionary says, "A softened form of the word God as used in mild oaths of which the second element is often a corruption or made up word."

(4) Golly

This word, of extremely common use, is described by the New World Dictionary as "an exclamation of surprise, a euphemism for God. It is often used in conjunction with the word 'by,' i.e., By golly!" sometimes as a noun and at other times as an interjection for the word *God*.

(5) Good gracious! Good grief! My goodness! etc.

These are all mild oaths, where the word good or goodness, is used euphemistically for God. (See Webster's New World Dictionary.) There are many forms of this us-

age, such as Goodness sake! Goodness knows! Thank goodness!—all ejaculatory and exclamatory expressions in reference to the goodness of God, but used slangily and for emphasis. One who thus speaks calls God to witness to the statement with which the oath is associated. In "goodness knows who it could have been", it means God knows it and could confirm my statement. (American English Usage, Nicholson).

(6) Heavens! Good Heavens! For Heaven's Sake! are all statements of exclamatory character, in which the heavens are called to witness to the truth of the statement made, or to support the affirmation. All such expressions when used as by-words, as slang, and in flippant, frivolous fashion, violate our Lord's injunction: "Swear not at all: neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King" (Matt. 5:34).

We are not to suppose that it is wrong to use the various names of God in our conversation when such usage is reverent, respectful and sober. We have, indeed, numerous instances of such usage in the scriptures. (Cf. God forbid, If God wills, The Lord grant mercy, etc.) The Jews regarded the name of Jehovah as ineffable and to this day refuse to pronounce it in Hebrew. It is the *profane* use of sacred things and names against which the Bible inveighs, and all such expressions as these we have above analyzed should be rigidly excluded from our vocabularies.

The Broken Home An American Tragedy

Just how bad is the broken home in America today? It is plenty bad. It has reached and greatly exceeded the home failures of the past. Only a few years back we were registered about a half million divorces annually in our nation. Now we have about one million plus annually. Be it recalled that one million divorces involve two million people - two people per divorce - a husband and wife. But also involved rather heavily are an untold number of innocent children who love both parents, who want the home to stay together, who want and surely deserve to have two parents to love them and rear them to maturity. In a recent year we also had one million separations. Though these did not go quite as far as to obtain the permanence of a deadly divorce yet each of these meant a broken home. Some will ultimately get back together just as in the case of divorces some will marry a former mate. But many of them will stay separated upon a permanent basis. Even among homes that barely remain together they are really broken homes for all practical purposes for there is no security, no harmony, no happiness, no spirituality, no sharing and no togetherness. They are together in name only and not in actual essence.

The broken home means violated marital



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

vows. The broken home means broken - hearted and handicapped children for life perhaps. The broken home means an adulterous marriage or promiscuous behaviour may well be in the future for both parties of the final divorce. Broken homes mean a mighty slap at the basic unit of human society - the home. Broken homes often mean a total severing of each participant from any type of religious life. Broken homes are a breeding ground for a greater population in hell. Broken homes constitute the disgrace of our era.

The words of the sweet singer of Israel come to mind, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Psalm 127:1). "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart" (Psalm 101:2). MARRIAGE IS FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOD AND ONE ANOTHER and CHRIST IN THE HOME still say it well.

The Poor In Spirit

BYRON NICHOLS

When Jesus, in Matthew 5:3, says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit..." of whom is He speaking?

I am told that the Greek word used here and translated "poor" is a word that

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Science and Nature: Two Votes For God

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these famous lines:

"People talked of *Pithecanthropus* as of Pitt or Fox or Napoleon. Popular histories published portraits of him like the portraits of Charles the First and George the Fourth. A detailed drawing was reproduced, carefully shaded, to show the very hairs of his head were all numbered. *No uninformed person looking at its carefully-limned face would imagine for a moment that this was the portrait of a thigh-bone, of a few teeth, and a fragment of a cranium.*"⁵ (Emphasis mine-BT).

And what was the origin of *P. erectus*? Four years before his death in 1940, Dubois stated that the remains of *P. erectus* were those of a silver gibbon - a small, tailless ape! The statement of Dr. Cousins is apropos here: "From over-eagerness in forcing the case of evolution, it is no great step to downright fraud."⁶

But there is more. Immediately a search was begun for more *Pithecanthropus* in Java. And, another "man" was found. It was announced that he was the brother of the first *Pithecanthropus*. Then the real truth was discovered - the "brother" was made (fabricated, like all the rest) from the knee-cap of an extinct elephant!

(Next week, more about frauds and fossil man).

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1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840.

Sunday Is Not The Sabbath

(Continued From Page 1)

er, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God."

The law those brethren had become dead to was the decalogue (ten commandment law), because in Rom. 7:7 Paul mentions the tenth commandment (Thou shalt not covet) as a part of the law to which they had become dead. Christians today walk morally upright, leaving off stealing, coveting, etc. not because of the decalogue, but because they walk worthy of the gospel, (Eph. 4:1; I Thess. 2:12; II Thess. 2:14). The Christian rule of life is the gospel, which is the perfect law of liberty (Jas. 1:25). The New Testament of Jesus is not a ministration of death or condemnation, but is the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2).

The Old Testament with its decalogue "written and engraven on stones" was inspired of God (II Pet. 1:21) and is to be

learned by Christians (Rom. 15:4), but as HISTORY to teach patience and give comfort, not to be bound as law. For Eph. 2:15 plainly declares the law codified in "ordinance" was abolished; "having abolished in his flesh the enmity (between Jew and Gentile), even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man so making peace."

When people from various denominations call Sunday the Sabbath they are carelessly falling into the hands of law binders who play on the idea that the

Sabbath was changed. Sunday is the first day of the week, and Christ was founded on the first day of the week. The church at Troas broke bread on the first day of the week, and the church at Corinth was commanded to give for the poor saints' needs on that day (I Cor. 16:1-2). Every day Christians should live for God and not just on Sundays, but the first day of the week is the day Christians must meet around the Lord's table (Acts 20:8; Heb. 10:25). Beaver Ridge Road, Route 22, Knoxville, Tn. 37921.

The Poor In Spirit

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describes utter and absolute poverty. It doesn't describe the man who does not have luxury; it describes the man who has nothing at all. Jesus then is saying, "Blessed is he who is completely poverty-stricken."

The Lord actually spoke the beautitudes in Aramaic rather than Greek. The word that He spoke here that we read as "poor" was to the Jews a description of a man who had absolutely no earthly resources and who thus placed his entire trust in God.

As we put the Greek and Aramaic backgrounds together we see that Jesus is talking about the man who completely

trusts in God because he realizes that he himself is totally helpless and that God can help him to become something meaningful.

We all need to look closely at our attitudes toward ourselves and toward God. Do we really view ourselves as being totally helpless without God? Is it our spirit or attitude that we put God first, that we acknowledge our own lack of significance and brilliance, that we "seek first His kingdom and His righteousness?"

May God grant us the spiritual fortitude and humility necessary to be "poor in spirit."—P. O. Box 757, Harrison, Arkansas 72601.

Human Titles And Pride

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

Several years ago, one of the disagreements that existed between the church of the Lord and other religious bodies was the wearing of human titles and misused scriptural names for leaders and preachers. Today, in the church of Jesus Christ, that disagreement is dissolving and disappearing. Now we have a more highly educated array of preachers, teachers and leaders. It is with a great deal of pride that we point out such progress to our peers in religious circles. And, we should never deride education that profits, nor, exalt ignorance that hinders. However, there is the ever present danger of placing certain persons on pinnacles above their fellowman, which God never intended. While we should be grateful for individuals among us who have excelled in various areas of education, secular and religious, let us beware of making distinctions among members of the church, a practice that is both detrimental and dangerous.

In times past, we would not have referred to our preachers in the pulpits as "Doctor". While the person may have earned the right to such a title, there remained the danger of the use of such titles encouraging the clergy-laity idea in the brotherhood. Yet, some preachers today will even enjoy being referred to as being a Doctor when such has been conferred upon them simply as an honorary degree. We know of one preacher who received a Ph.D degree by mail. His philosophy is that with such diplomas and certificates hanging on his wall, he could "get any church in the brotherhood". Is this not a

prevalence of human pride and a passion to be exalted among men? An acquaintance of ours used to conclude his articles in a brotherhood paper by signing his name and then adding the letters "R.F.D." His sarcasm was much needed and understood.

Even well meaning brethren will introduce a preacher and his believing wife as "Brother and Mrs. John Doe". We try so hard to give preachers titles.

Jesus deals with this problem in Matthew 23:8-12. Notice the expression in verse eight when our Lord said, "... and ALL YE ARE BROTHERS." While we may differ in our abilities and offices or works, we are still brethren on the same level. Let's keep it that way.—Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Al. 36467.

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noble Festus; but speak forth
'soberness.'

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1977

NUMBER 45

More On "Who Calls The Shots?"

The *Firm Foundation* editorial of August 2, 1977 ("Who Calls The Shots?") opened with an admission that it would likely be unpopular. This writer sincerely hopes and prays that it is! While we value our friendship with the editor of the *Firm Foundation*, we feel compelled to take sharp issue with his position.



DUB McCLISH

COMMENTS ON "WHO CALLS THE SHOTS?"

We disagree with the statement that the church is suffering an "authority syndrome." The editorial in question indicates that the opposite is nearer the truth. The criticism of the term "eldership" is vergal shadow-boxing. Of the five usages of the suffix "-ship" listed in *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*, p. 801, none of them conveys the idea of a "body politic." The term does refer to office or profession, which is a scriptural view of elders (1 Ti. 3:1). *Presbuterion* (1 Ti. 4:14) actually means "eldership" and is so translated in the American Bible Union Version. Our brother asks, "Where do we find an 'eldership' in the New Testament church? Everywhere we find elders! It is carelessly inferred that church elders are not mentioned before Acts 15, and then "accidentally." However, the Jerusalem elders are first mentioned in Acts 11:30, and elders in the Asia Minor churches are referred to in Acts 14:23. We would fear to call their appearance "accidental."

The first two examples of decision-making cited by our brother (Ac. 6, 13) involved churches without elders. We fail to see the logic of using as examples, situations that do not even include elders, to show that elders were not decision-makers! What about the "Jerusalem Conference" (a term "you cannot find in the New Testament")? As far as we know there were still no elders at Antioch when Paul and Barnabas were sent. Our

brother strongly emphasizes the role of the "whole church" in the decisions reached in Jerusalem, but was it really so? Paul and Barnabas were sent primarily to the "apostles and elders" to settle the question of circumcision (Ac. 15:2). They first reported on their work to the whole church (Ac. 15:4), but when the legalists raised the issue of circumcision, Luke states that the "apostles and elders" gathered to consider the matter (Ac. 15:5-6). Clearly, this is a separate meeting from that of verse 4. Paul's record supports this conclusion (Ga. 2:2, 9). "The multitude" again listened to Paul and Barnabas (Ac. 15:12) and the "whole church" was in agreement with the letter that was to be circulated (Ac. 15:22). Luke describes the letter as "ordained of the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem" (Ac. 16:4). This decision was not left to a majority vote of the whole membership! Contrary to our brother's denial, there *was* a separate, "private" meeting involving the elders in Jerusalem!

Decisions made in elders' meetings are sometimes the cause of the church problems, but this does not make them unscriptural. It could as well be argued that decisions made by the "whole church" cause problems, so the whole church can't meet! Elders sometimes get blamed for causing problems created by an unholy rebellion against their authority.

The statement that none of the qualifications of elders have to do with decision-making is incredible. How about being temperate, sober-minded, orderly, not contentious, ruling well his own house so he can take care of the church (1 Ti. 3:2-5)? Or how about not self-willed, not soon-angry, sober-minded, just, self-controlled, holding to the faithful word, able to exhort in the sound doctrine, convict the gainsayers and stop the mouths of the unruly deceivers (Ti. 1:7-11)? Granted, all of the qualifications relate to *what* these men are. It is because of *what* they are that God made them the principal decision-makers in the local church.

SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

The question is asked: "Did any of us ever consider where we get New Testament authority for elders making decisions?" Let us seek the answer. Consider the words used in reference to elders in the New Testament: (All

page numbers refer to Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, American Book Co., 1889.)

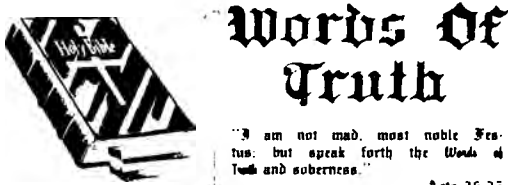
1. *EPISKOPOS* (and kindred forms), translated "bishop," "overseer," "oversight" (Ac. 20:28, Ph. 1:1, 1 Ti. 3:1-2; Ti. 1:7; 1 Pe. 5:2): "An overseer, a man charged with. . . seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian, or superintendent; . . . specifically the superintendent, head or overseer of any Christian church" (p. 243).

2. *OIKONOMOS*, translated "steward" (Ti. 1:7): "the manager of a household or of household affairs; especially a steward, manager, superintendent. . . to whom the head of the house or proprietor has intrusted the management of his affairs, the care of receipts and expenditures. . . a bishop (or overseer) is called *oikonomos theou*, of God as the head and master of the Christian theocracy" (pp. 440-441). These two terms (*episkopos*, *oikonomos*) clearly indicate authority. If elders are not decision-makers, then they can hardly be overseers, superintendents, managers, or stewards.

3. *POIMAINO* (and the related noun, *poimen*), translated "feed," "pastor" (Ac. 20:28; Ep. 4:11; 1 Pe. 5:2): "to feed, to tend a flock, keep sheep; . . . to rule, govern: of rulers, . . . of the overseers (pastors) of the church, . . . to furnish pasturage or food; to nourish" (p. 527). Have shepherds no authority over their flocks? When they see one of the flock straying toward a precipice, have they no authority to prevent a fatal fall? When they see a wolf devouring the lambs must they call all of the flock together before they can decide that he must be stopped and how to stop him (Jn. 10:12)? Notice the use of *poimaino* in Re. 2:26-27: ". . . to him will I give *authority over* the nations: and he shall rule [*poimaino*] them with a rod of iron. . ." (emphasis ours, DM). Admittedly, the word includes the element of feeding and tending. Rather than excluding the exercise of authority, these elements require it!

4. *POISTEMI*, translated "over," "rule": "to set or place before; to set over; to be over, to superintend, preside over, rule: 1 Ti. 5:17;

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Beware False Prophets

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15). The word "beware" always signifies danger. It is never used except in cases where there is some impending harm. It should arouse our attention, and cause us to be especially watchful with reference to the thing mentioned - in this verse, false prophets.



BOBBY DUNCAN

False prophets are dangerous because of their deceptive manner. They come in sheep's clothing, "but inwardly they are ravening wolves." The gentleness of one's manner or the kindness of his speech will cause many to believe his false doctrine. False prophets in the church are often successful in deceiving those who could not be deceived by an outsider. Paul warned that "of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30).

Naturally false teachers do not come to those they wish to draw away and tell them they are teachers of error. Instead, they give every assurance that they are teaching only the truth. As the inspired writer put it, they are "transformed as the ministers of righteousness" (II Cor. 11:13-15). The very fact that we are warned of the deceptive nature of false prophets should cause us to be completely aware of the fact that one is not to be trusted as a faithful teacher just because he claims to be such, or even because he appears to be such, or is thought to be such by the masses.

It is sad, but true, that some actually prefer

false prophets. Ahab loved the words of the false prophets, but he hated Micaiah, because Micaiah refused to lie to him and tell him the things he wanted to hear (I Kings 22:5-18). Paul referred to some who would have "itching ears," and would turn away from the truth unto fables (II Tim. 4:2-4). Many there are today who do not love the truth (II Thess. 2:10), and who, therefore, prefer false prophets who tell them what they enjoy hearing. Instead of the truth, some prefer to hear that they should continue in their religious error, or that their ungodliness will not damn them, or that their negligence is not sin. Unfortunately, there are always those who are anxious to tell people exactly what they want to hear.

Believing false prophets will cause one to be damned. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thess. 2:11,12). It is a terrible thing to teach false doctrine; but it is also a terrible thing to believe false doctrine. No person has to be deceived by false teachers. The Bible is sufficient to keep us from being "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14). Using the Bible as our rule of faith, we are to "try the spirits whether they are of God" (I Jno. 4:1).

God's attitude toward false teachers may be clearly seen from the statement by the apostle Paul in Galatians 1:8,9: "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." Those who think doctrine is not important should read these verses over and over again.

Furthermore, what our attitude toward false doctrine should be is clearly stated in II Jno. 10,11: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

"BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS!"

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 23

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of last week's article on fossil man and "missing links.")

HEIDELBERG MAN

In 1907, six miles southeast of Heidelberg, near the village of Mauer, the owner of a sandpit and one of his workers found a jawbone. The jawbone was well-preserved, with all the teeth in place. The jawbone is very large, thick, deep, and chinless. HOMO HEIDELBERGENSIS, as it was called, was first described by Dr. Otto Schoetensack.

The suggested dates of the jawbone vary from 250,000 years old to 476,000 years old. Dr. H.F. Osborn made a "reconstruction" from the jawbone. Publications dispensed by the American Museum of Natural History reveal this ancient mythical worthy with a slain boar thrown over his shoulder! And this is from a



BERT THOMPSON

jawbone!

Is HOMO HEIDELBERGENSIS the "missing link"? No, it is not. Even though the jawbone is uncommon because of its rounding chin, we do know that its shape can be duplicated even among living human beings today. The renowned evolutionary anthropologist, Hrdlicka, stated: "The teeth of the Mauer (i.e.: Heidelberg) jaw are perfectly preserved and... they are unquestionably human teeth. They force the conclusion that their possessor... had already stepped over the line above which the being would be termed human." So, rather than a "missing link", all we have is a human jaw. Again!

PEKING MAN

A number of fossil finds have been made in China. The first of these was discovered at Choukoutien, about 25 miles from Peking, in 1921. This find consisted of several teeth. Later, in the late 1920's and early 1930's, lower jaws and a number of skulls were discovered. The site of the find was a partially collapsed cave used as a dwelling place near Choukoutien. In 1927, with only the teeth to work with, Dr. Davidson Black, professor of anatomy at Union Medical College, Peking, declared that the teeth established evidence for the existence of an ancient hominid, or man-like creature, in China.

Black designated this creature SINANTHROPUS PEKINENSIS (which soon came to be known as Peking Man). It is interesting to note that all of the fossils except two teeth disappeared sometime during the period 1941-1945 - never to be recovered. Many stories have been circulated about the disappearance, but it seems that no living person knows exactly what happened. As a result, investigators are totally dependent on models and descriptions of the materials which have been left by others who preceded them (all of whom, by the way, were evolutionists). Even if a scientist is completely honest and as objective as humanly possible, the model or description he fashions on the basis of scanty evidence and incomplete material will reflect to a critical degree what he THINKS the evidence ought to show. A "reconstruction" of SINANTHROPUS was made by Dr. Franz Weidenreich, which makes SINANTHROPUS look like some sort of intermediate creature ("missing link").

The remainder of the story is a lengthy one. For that story (which is extremely interesting) the reader is referred to Dr. Duane Gish's book, EVOLUTION: THE FOSSILS SAY NO.2. In the end, however, it may be safely stated that "if the type of evidence we have today relating to Peking Man was brought into a court of law, it would be ruled as heresy and inadmissible as evidence." It was the final opinion of some of the anthropologists who worked on the case, as well as others knowledgeable of the facts of the matter, that SINANTHROPUS was merely a macaque (large monkey) or perhaps a baboon. "We believe at the very least a combination of prejudice, preconceived ideas, and a zeal for fame have been responsible for elevating a monkey-like creature to the status of an ape-like man." Another "missing link" which wasn't!

PILTDOWN MAN

In 1912 Charles Dawson, an amateur fossilologist, brought to Dr. A.S. Woodward, paleontologist at the British Museum, some bones and primitive implements which he had discovered in a gravel pit along the side of the road leading up to Barkham Manor, an English farmhouse near Sussex, England. He brought two molar teeth, a piece of a skull, and a piece of a jaw. The "find" was named EOANTHROPUS DAWSONI (the "dawn man"). The "missing link" was named

(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods).

"Where did Cain get his wife?"

It would appear from the frequency with which this question is raised that many people today are much more interested in some body else's wife or husband than they are in their own.

Many assume that Cain discovered his wife in the "land of Nod," from the fact that it is said that "Cain went out from the presence of Jehovah, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived and bare Enoch" (Gen. 4:16). But, the word "knew" as used here does not mean this; it is a euphemism for marital relations, the result of which, in this instance, was the conception of Enoch. The "land of Nod," said to be "east of Eden," simply means a place or area of *wandering* and is a reference to the general direction which characterized Cain when he was driven out as a fugitive and wanderer on the face of the earth.

Adam and Eve had other children born to them in addition to Cain and Abel. The birth of Seth followed the murder of Abel (Gen. 4:25), and it is later affirmed of Adam that he lived eight hundred years after he begat Seth and "he begat sons and daughters" (Gen. 5:5). Thus, there was a considerable progeny of Adam during his lifetime; and, in a few generations, the number of his descendants had increased astronomically. From among Adam's children, grandchildren, etc. undoubtedly came Cain's wife. Strange indeed that any should feel that there is any problem associated with this matter. If we are disposed to shrink from the idea of such close marriages, we should remember (a) Abraham married his half-sister (Gen. 20:12); and (b) traced far enough back, all people are kinfolks, (directly descended from Eve), and the difference between the actions of Cain and Abraham, in finding wives, and that of men in our day is one of degree, and not kind!

9 May be Old Fashioned, But . . .

I still like to hear an audible "amen" by the men in the congregation after a public prayer.

I still like to hear men use plenty of scripture when they preach.

I still like to hear a congregation of people lift their voices when they sing God's praises together!

I still like to hear the terms, "Brother and Sister" used when addressing members of the body of Christ, instead of "Mr. and Mrs."

I still like to see people who are so obsessed



PAUL TARENCE

with the work of Christ in the community that they develop a sense of LOYALTY TO THE HOME CONGREGATION.

I still like to see young people sit at the front of the building when they come to worship.

I still like to see youngsters respect and be polite to their elders.

I still like to hear young people, even teenagers, say "Yes Sir and No Sir" when addressing adults.

I still like to hear people say, "If God wills" I will do this or that, suggesting a conscious realization of their dependence upon Him at all times.

I still like to see people who are so much in love with Christ and His church that they are persistent in inviting others to share with them in the grace of God by participating in the worship services and Bible classes.

And it still saddens me to see many who are miserable with their religion, because of a lack of real commitment. - 3903 Kileen Dr., Amarillo, Tex. 79109.

The Sword Of The Spirit

NO. 2

Without a doubt the word of God, the sword of the Spirit, serves both defensively and offensively at the same time. That Satan may advance now and then as an angel of light no one would deny. He may speak through his representatives in pious tones and wear an outfit unlike the rest in order to deceive the people. Jesus so warned in the great sermon on the Mount, saying, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15). Satan and his assistants work in devious ways to mislead the unsuspecting. He may even read and quote many Scriptures and in misapplying them lead us to think that the truth is being preached. The teaching of false prophets is the teaching of demons; Satan working through men (Cf. 1 Tim. 4:1ff). Therefore, we must be prepared to defend ourselves and defend the truth by the careful study of the word, giving heed to Paul's urgent instruction to "give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Otherwise we are sure to be beaten down by the sheer force of the fiery darts of the evil one.

JESUS SETS EXAMPLE

In the Lord's first encounter with Satan he was sorely tempted to give way to the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the vain glory of life (Matt. 4; I Jn. 2:15-17). Each time the devil proposed a wrong course of action on the part of the Saviour he received a blow of the "sword", all three times from the book of Deuteronomy (chapters 6:13, 16 and 8:3). In what other way could the Lord have put Satan to flight so effectively while defending himself from these sore temptations?

The word of God can dissolve doubts, drive away our fears and bring comfort to our hearts as nothing else can do. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26:3). The Old Testament Scriptures serve well, as does the New Testament, which fact is set



VIRGIL BRADFORD

forth in Romans 15:4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and thought comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." The reading, studying and memorizing of the Old Testament should not be neglected.

THE SWORD GUARDING THE CHURCH

Since the "sword of the Spirit" is defensive I want to observe that the congregations that are thriving spiritually and numerically are those who are busy in the effort to save the souls of men and women who are lost in sin, whether they be brethren or the aliens of the world. Every Christian thus occupied would do more to guard the church of the Lord from sectarianism and divisions than all the sermons that the preacher could deliver on the subject of unity. In centering our attention upon soul-saving we automatically set our affections upon the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God (Col. 3:1-4). So, if you are following the Good Shepherd and if I am following him we will have no time for private battles among ourselves.

NO HUMAN CREEDS

It is easy to condemn religious groups for writing and following the creeds of men. We know that they are wrong. But a human creed is wrong whether written or unwritten. Hence, we are relentlessly driven to the conclusion that our only hope is to "receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls" (Jas. 1:21). There are ominous reports that many congregations are being fed just about everything but the gospel and as a result the least misunderstanding causes the flock to be scattered and devoured. How long has it been since you heard a sermon on these subjects: WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED? THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH? LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO? SINNING AGAINST GOD? HOW MAY WE KNOW WE LOVE GOD? CAN WE BE SURE WE ARE SAVED? HELL, AND WHO IS GOING THERE? THE GREAT COMMISSION? RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD? WORKS OF THE FLESH AND THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT? How long? Have we reached the point where we want to be entertained for an hour on Sunday morning or do we long for the pure word of God which should mean more to us than our necessary daily food (Cf. Job 23:12).

But back to the first intent of the above paragraph: Our study of the word and an interest in using the "sword of the Spirit" to do battle against the darkness of the world would do more to build us up in spiritual strength and unite us in the "faith once for all delivered unto the saints" than anything I can think of.

Elders of the church of the Living God should know not only what is being preached from the pulpit but in classes and personal work groups as well. This is not only their right, it is their solemn obligation as shepherds of the flock. When they find that the church is being turned into a social club, an entertainment center or "just another denomination" it is time to "stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jer. 6:16).

I close this section with a fine comment from the Lipscomb - Shepherd Commentary, on First Corinthians, pages 55-56: "Men become infidels by introducing their own opinions into the service and worship of God. It is done first with a view to adding interest and efficiency to the service. This trains men to rely more and more upon their opinions and judgment, less and less upon the institutions

(Continued On Page 4)

More On "Who Calls The Shots?"

(Continued From Page 1)

1 Th. 5:12; 1 Ti. 3:4" (p. 539).

5. *PEITHESTHE*, translated "obey" (He. 13:17). The form in this passage is in the middle voice, meaning: "to listen to, obey, yield to; comply with. . . He. 13:17; Ja. 3:3." (p. 497). James 3:3 speaks of the response of the horse to the bridle, a response to authority.

6. *HEGOMAI*, translated "rule over" (He. 13:17): "to lead, to go before; to be a leader; to rule, command; to have authority over: a prince, of regal power; a governor, viceroy, chief; leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel; . . . the overseers or leaders of Christian churches" (p. 276). Admittedly, this word includes the persuasion of one's influence, but it is also translated "governor" (Mt. 27:2; Ac. 7:10).

7. *HUPEIKO*, translated "submit to," (He. 13:17): "to resist no longer, but to give away, yield; to yield to authority and admonition, to submit" (p. 638). This is what saints are to do in relation to their spiritual rulers.

Each of the foregoing terms is laden with authority. If there are no other argument, this would be sufficient to authorize elders to meet and make decisions in the local churches.

There are three key passages of scripture that place the responsibility of leadership in discipline in the local church upon elders. Paul warns the Ephesian elders: "grievous wolves, . . . speaking perverse things, will draw away the disciples after them. "Wherefore, watch ye" (Ac. 20:28-31). A qualification of every elder requires that he know how to "rule" his own house so that he may "take care" of the church (1 Ti. 3:5). Also, in the setting of the qualifications of elders, Paul speaks of unruly, vain talkers and deceivers, "whose mouths must be stopped" (Ti. 1:9-11). Such responsibilities cannot be fulfilled without some sober, prayerful, decision-making meetings.

There is further implication that in the first century, as elders were appointed, they became the decision-makers. Otherwise, why is it specifically stated that when Antioch sent Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem with a contribution for the poor, they sent it to the elders (Ac. 11:30)? Obviously, it was delivered to the elders for proper administration, which required some decision-making! As previously mentioned, Paul and Barnabas met separately with the apostles and elders in Jerusalem to settle the question of circumcision (Ac. 15:4-6). When Paul returned to Jerusalem from his third preaching trip he was first received by the brethren, but the day following he met separately with the elders (Ac. 21:18). According to our brother, Paul was wrong in doing this; he should have rebuked them for meeting apart from the whole church!

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Churches do manage to function without the leadership of qualified elders, but they are usually hamstrung. Churches without elders have generally, and correctly, been considered by most of us, as existing in an immature, temporary state. The ideal is to have scripturally qualified elders who function as true spiritual leaders. This leadership innately includes decision-making. Doesn't our brother regularly preach where elders make the decisions? Doesn't he preach all over the nation where he was invited because of a decision of elders? Doesn't he send the *Firm Foundation* to many churches whose elders met and decide to subscribe for the whole

church? Doesn't he urge "elderships" to decide to let more "missionaries" appeal for support [*Firm Foundation*, 3-29-77, p. 2]? It is neither practical nor logical to leave indefinitely the fate of a church in the hands of a "majority vote" arrangement where a twelve year-old boy has as much voice as a seasoned saint. This is why the Lord placed the local church under men who must meet strict qualifications, thereby proving their loyalty to Christ and his word.

Here it is appropriate to mention the favorite verse of the authority termites. Peter warns elders: "neither as lording it over the charge allotted you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock" (1 Pe. 5:3). The warning in this verse is given to keep elders aware of the temptations to abuse their power. Anyone who works under several different elderships over a period of years will likely encounter some elders who have a tyrannical spirit. In spite of the warning against the abuse of authority, it will likely continue. But an abuse can never be rightly used to offset the proper use of authority. The editor of *The Firm Foundation* fears the "lordship" of elders. However, more disturbing to us is the kind of "lordship" he may exercise over the churches in his editorial. There is already confusion in many churches over this question; his article will doubtless cause more, all the while bringing joy to the errorists who would cast the whole concept of scriptural elders out of the churches. We know already of one church that has been circularized with copies of his editorial, causing great upheaval. We shudder to think how many brethren might embrace what this brother has written, just because he wrote it and it was in the *Firm Foundation*, failing to reflect on either the truth or the consequences of it!

Indeed, elders must be great servants and they must lead by example. Wise elders will certainly counsel with members of the church so as to weigh their wishes in making decisions about expedients. They will also delegate much of the practical, detailed decision-making to deacons and to others. However, the final responsibility of making decisions in the local church and moving the church forward will always reside in the God-given authority of elders.

Box 396, Granbury, Tx. 76048

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 2)

"Piltdown Man" (Charles Dawson was from Piltdown, England). The age of the fossil was said by geologist and archaeologists to be from 200,000 to 1,000,000 years. Ever since its discovery, *EOANTHROPUS* has been the center of controversy. The geologists and paleontologists could not agree on many things. Some insisted the bones were those of an orangutan, or a chimpanzee. Some felt the bones were those of a female; others said they were of a male. Woodward said the brain capacity was 1,070 cc; Keith said it was 1,500 (Later they got together and compromised with 1,358 cc!). Woodward thought it was a male; Keith thought it was a female. For the remainder of the long, but extremely interesting story, the reader is referred to Dr. John Klotz' book, *GENES, GENESIS, AND EVOLUTION*.⁵ Dr. Klotz does a fine job of telling the saga in its entirety.

The literature written about *EOANTHROPUS* (Piltdown Man) would fill many multi-volumed sets. His picture was put in encyclopedias, dictionaries, and science

books of all kinds. And then it was discovered. *PILTDOWN MAN WAS AN OUTRIGHT HOAX*. The teeth had been filed down *ON PURPOSE* - and planted! The bones had been colored with bichromate of potash to make them appear old. The jaw and teeth had been artificially colored to match the cranium!! And then all of the bones had been planted (we do not know by whom, even to this day!) And this hoax fooled the distinguished archaeologists and paleontologists (who took part in the excavations at Piltdown) for over 40 years!! From the total evidence, it appears that the Piltdown bones and teeth were assembled from a wide variety of sources, some of them outside Britain itself."⁶

In the October, 1956 issue of *READER'S DIGEST*, there was an article entitled "The Great Piltdown Hoax." It told the gruesome story of how the most eminent scientists of the day were completely "fooled" by this hoax. And all of this to perpetrate a hoax in order to further a cause! As Dr. Klotz points out, "Further studies have indicated the extent of the hoax to be even greater than was at first believed."⁷ You can say that again!

CONCLUSION

These are only a few of the instances which could be listed which describe the finds of "missing links." Again we urge the reader to be leery of "revelations" from evolutionists about the finds of so-called "missing links." Caution is in order, in light of so many of the "finds" in the past, made from pigs' teeth, kneecaps of elephants, and apes' jaws. We leave the reader with this concise summation by Mark Twain: "There is something fascinating about science. One gets such wholesale returns of conjectures out of such a trifling investment of facts."⁸

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1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840.

The Sword Of The Spirit

(Continued From Page 3)

of God until they erect their own judgment and opinions into the standard of right, and whatever in the word of God does not agree with this standard of their own, they reject. **WHENEVER MEN REJECT THE WORD OF GOD, OR ANY PART OF IT, BECAUSE IT DOES NOT AGREE WITH THEIR OWN CONCEPTIONS OF WHAT IS RIGHT, THEY ARE IN ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS INFIDELS. . . . GOD HAS ORDAINED THAT THOSE WHO THUS WALK SHALL COME TO RUIN. HE SHALL FALL INTO THE PIT HE HAS DIGGED.**" (Emphasis mine, with a hearty, Amen. VB).

Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

EAST AFRICAN NEWS LETTER

KENYA, NAIROBI

P.O. BOX 48086

OCTOBER, 1977

Greetings,

As in the last two newsletters we will continue to give an account of our travels and visits with our various supporting congregations. We are thoroughly enjoying our time here in the States and part of what makes for this enjoyable time is the opportunity to visit so many congregations. We have over the years made many friends in many different places and traveling as we do giving reports on the progress of the East African Church gives us a chance to renew these acquaintances.



BERKLEY HACKETT

Since our last newsletter was written I have the happy news to share with you that we have completed our round trip travel fund and our shipping fund. These costs have been met through the many donations made by our brothers and sisters at the various churches we have visited. We are, at this point, only lacking the purchase price of certain pieces of equipment such as a paper folder, paper cutter, automobile parts, loud speakers, etc. These things will make our work more effective. I hope to report in the next newsletter that these costs will also be met. We thank the Lord that those milestones of travel and shipping funds are behind us.

We are still seeking additional congregations to take up monthly support of this work. East Africa is a fruitful missionfield and a work that should be readily backed by any congregations. We are asking for a raise in funding for the East African work so as to make up for the depredations made by inflation over the last few years. If all those congregations that now support this work would increase their level of support, and some new Congregations join the effort, we could easily surpass the goal we have established of a 50% increase.

Sunday Morning, September 4 — This rainy morning found us at the MACEDONIA BLACKWATER church in Walker County, Alabama. You would to a long way before finding a finer congregation than the one at Blackwater. Four years ago this congregation bought an International Scout and presented it to us for use in Africa. Every time I drive that car I think of them. The preacher there is Jerry Sullins, we were students together at Harding College several years ago. On the morning we visited Blackwater we collected \$453.00 toward the shipping fund.

Grady Barker	100.00
Rachel Sullins	1.00
Jane Conally	4.00
Howard Windham	10.00
Jimmy Windham	10.00
Anon	5.00
Roger Myers	20.00
Ethbert Hayes	20.00
Dale Reeves	20.00
Eunice Allison	20.00
Diane Carol	2.00
Sis. G. S. Barker	1.00
Asbury Myers	15.00
Anon	5.00
Anon	5.00
Wisa Benson	5.00
R. C. Carroll	20.00
Louie & Marie Helton	25.00
Jimmy & Marie Veal	10.00
Dennis Warren	10.00
Dearl & Jane Barker	10.00
Billy B. Odom	10.00
Virginia Norris	10.00
Shepherd Tubbs	10.00
Clara Barker	10.00
Harold Barker	10.00
Isaac Barker	10.00
Marquret Roden & Jo Odom	5.00
Sarah Carroll	5.00
Lee & Dorothy Bickel	60.00
Betty Burns	5.00
Eugene Moon	10.00

Sunday night, September 4 - We visited with the good brethren at the PLEASANT HILL church in northern Jefferson County, Alabama. Pleasant Hill joined the East African effort in 1974 and have been exemplary in their faithfulness in backing the work ever since. We had a good visit together and collected \$144.00 toward the shipping fund.

John & Eloise Florence	25.00
Charles & Shirley Dickerson	25.00
Charles London	25.00
Brice Crane	5.00
Dennis Ship	10.00
Anon	20.00
Tim Shaddix	10.00
Anon	2.00
Richard Pinion	5.00
Carl Trice	17.00

Wednesday, September 7 — was the day we showed our slides and gave our report to the church in Fayette, Alabama. FAYETTE is a church that is really "on fire for the Lord." Great things are happening at Fayette that I would like to see happen everywhere in the brotherhood. Don McWhorter preaches there, but the congregation is full of "ministers" each doing their part for the building up of the body. We received \$495.00 toward our shipping fund this evening.

James M. Barton	50.00
Jerry Killingsworth	25.00
William & Peggy Blackburn	10.00
Guerry Pirkle	10.00
Charles B. Glenbury	10.00
Lomax & Bettye Greene	25.00
Vera H. Harris	5.00
L. R. Wiggins	5.00
Era & W. O. McCaleb	20.00
B. B. Steward	10.00
William Connor	25.00
Hubert Anthony	10.00
Linwood Smith	5.00
Carlos Killingsworth	20.00
Grace Taylor	5.00
Mary H. Smith	10.00
R. B. Dolly	25.00
Atha Christian	20.00
Zoe Hilliard	5.00
Verna Karrh	5.00
B. W. Newton	10.00
Brodie Drearden	25.00
I. V. Freeman	15.00
Ray Bobo	25.00
J. R. Webster	50.00
Clyde Hocutt	5.00
R. N. Mauldren	10.00
Josephene Dobbs	10.00

September 11, Sunday morning - was spent with our friends at ELDRIDGE, Alabama. We were given \$442.00 toward meeting our shipping costs on this morning. Eldridge is a congregation that has been backing our work since its conception. We appreciate their good works and workers. Neil Myers, a distant cousin of my wife's, is the preacher at Eldridge. They are preparing to build a new building and will be in it by the time we get back from Africa next time.

Woodrow Wyers	20.00
T. L. McClusky	20.00
Alan Patton	5.00
Pat Edwards	5.00
Anon	1.00
Oveta Farris	20.00
Tommy & Patsy Tucker	25.00
Leslie & Brenda East	25.00
Wm. Earl Tucker	25.00
Clyde & Marie Welch	50.00
Johnny & Shelby Tucker	10.00
Frances Tucker	5.00
LeeAnn Farris	1.00
Mr. and Mrs. Oniel Baughn	20.00
Dennis & Patsy Collins	10.00
U.L. & Glenda Long	25.00
Donald & Johnnie Wyers	25.00
Jerry Aultman	25.00
Randy & Janice Townsend	50.00
Ellis & Geneva Long	5.00
Ila T. Johnson & Winnie Tucker	15.00
Wallace Farris	5.00
Mr. and Mrs. Neil Myers	20.00

Claude C. Webb	25.00
Delbert Handy	5.00

Sunday night, September 11 - found us at the GOODSPRING church in Walker County. Since Goodsprings has been involved on a very personal level in mission work on the island of Trinidad, we feel even closer to them than ever. Many of their members have a first hand knowledge of the exhilarations and disappointments of work in a foreign field. We had an enjoyable visit in the home of Paul Wylie and his good family. We received \$234.50 toward meeting our shipping costs.

Nona May Brown	10.00
Ethel Gilbert	5.00
Dan Kimbrell	5.00
Rudolph Stanford	20.00
John Delenne	5.00
R. N. Smith	4.50
Rebecca A. Woods	10.00
Ollie Mae Snow	25.00
Raymond E. Wallace	10.00
Mary D. Key	20.00
Mrs. C. N. Copefield	5.00
Jessie Alexander	5.00
Roy Strivling	5.00
Evelyn Kimbrell	5.00
Dick Deason	5.00
J. O. Delenne	10.00
Chalmers Laurent	20.00
Edith L. Norris	10.00
Edna Blackwood	20.00
Daniel T. Kimbrell	30.00

Wednesday, September 14 - was the evening we visited with the BROOKSIDE congregation at Brookside, Alabama. There was a storm that evening and the electricity was out, so this prevented the showing of the slides concerning the African work, but we were able to share many things together and were invited to come again for the slides. We received \$112.00 on that evening.

Anon	20.00
Anon	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. Yerby	40.00
Ed Roberts	4.00
Henry Cruse	2.00
Rodney & Linda Atkinson	5.00
John Collier	10.00
Anon	1.00
H. H. Billingsley	10.00
Beth Shaffer	5.00
Dennis & Elizabeth Whitehead	5.00

Sunday morning, September 18 — I spoke at the QUINTOWN Church of Christ. We have had a long association with the brethren there at Quintown, and an enjoyable fellowship with them. They have a zealous new preacher, Randy Bailey. Quintown has supported our work since 1973. We received \$180.00 toward our shipping needs on this morning.

Ned Moore	10.00
Bobbie Alexander	10.00
Evelyn Florida	5.00
M. F. Greer	5.00
W. E. Alexander	20.00
Luramae Enis	5.00
Lon Shackleford	5.00
Vann Brasfield	20.00
Sam Gibbs	5.00
Melanie Weaver	2.00
Randy Bailey	5.00
Agnes Swindle	1.00
Thomas Harrell	10.00
Charles N. Tuggle	10.00
Mrs. B. P. Webb	5.00
RaNae & Lynn Odom	25.00
W. L. Roy	5.00
Alice McCarthy	5.00
Denice Hubbert	5.00
J. W. Lantrip	10.00
Anon	2.00
Jonathan Bailey	1.00
Mildred Alexander	4.00
Mrs. Rivers	5.00

Sunday evening, September 18 — Charlotte and I visited the MOUNTAIN HOME Church of Christ in Marion County. This church joined us in bringing the Good News to Africa two and one half years ago. On this evening we had a big storm during the showing of the slides. Lightening struck nearby, ran into the house wiring, through the slide projector and gave me a strong shock, so that my arm hurt

for two days afterwards. On this evening we received \$95.00.

Wayne and Jane Phillips	50.00
Admiral Tidwell	10.00
Tom Lauderdale	10.00
Kenneth & Janice Palmer	10.00
Hugh Don Hill	5.00
Nathan Mann	10.00

Tuesday evening, September 20 - was the evening we visited at EARNEST CHAPEL church just outside of Oakman, Alabama. They have recently had their house completely destroyed by fire, but have rebuilt a fine block structure to replace the old wooden building. I will hold a gospel meeting there November 6-8. On this evening we received \$112.00 toward shipping costs.

Oville Martin	3.00
Annie Brown	1.00
Marshall King	10.00
Ozella H. Swindle	5.00
Earnest Chapel Church	50.00
Trudie Swindle	10.00
Joe Wheeler	20.00
Jerry Sherer	15.00

Wednesday, September 21 - I gave the African report to our supports at the MT. HARMONY Church in Jasper, Alabama. Mt. Harmony is like a friendly "country" church in the town. W. C. Calloway preaches here. We were given \$100.00 on that evening toward some equipment costs.

Joe Hubbard	10.00
Thomas Edwards	10.00
Alvin Tyree	20.00
W. C. & Eula Calloway	25.00
J. C. & Betty Calloway	25.00
Robert Tyree	10.00

Sunday morning, September 25 - On this morning I spoke to our good friends and supporters at ROBINWOOD near Tarrant, Alabama. After service we had dinner on the grounds and enjoyed a good period of fellowship. The brethren at Robinwood have been faithful supporters of the work for many years. The women have been especially thoughtful in sending us boxes of hard to obtain items. On this morning we received \$115.00 toward equipment costs.

B. G. Jones	10.00
Anon	5.00
T. S. George	10.00
Cecil & Betty Hewitt	5.00
Sheila Gray	10.00
Robinwood Ch. of Christ	50.00
Grady Ellis	5.00
Sarah Hollingsworth	5.00
Devon & Bonnie Gray	10.00
Rena M. Neill	10.00

Sunday night, September 25 - this Sunday night's service was spent with the brethren at WHITES CHAPEL in northern Fayette County. We were given \$211.00 on this evening toward meeting equipment costs. The congregation there has decided to join in the backing of the African work \$100.00 a month. We are very happy about this as it allows us to expand our efforts there.

Johnnie McCaleb	10.00
Cindy Webster	2.00
Flora McCaleb	5.00
T. C. Fowler	5.00
Pam Webster	5.00
Ethel Hollingsworth	5.00
Charlie Sayre	10.00
Charlene Hollingsworth	10.00
Milton Hollingsworth	20.00
Pervy Tucker	1.00
Anon	3.00
Annie Hiten	5.00
W. L. Dodd	10.00
James Ramsey	5.00
Jesse McCollum	5.00
Roy McDonald	20.00
Shannan Tucker	10.00
Doris Hubbert	10.00
Cleburn Hollingsworth	20.00
Larry & Janice Alexander	10.00
Bobby & June Whitehead	5.00
Wheeler Tucker	10.00
Tony & Margene Butler	25.00

Wednesday, September 28 - This last service of the month of September was spent with the church at Cordova, Alabama. CORDOVA has meant a lot to us over the years. They regularly supported the work from 1969 to 1973. They have determined to again back the effort in Africa starting this year. God bless them for this resolve. On this evening we received \$412.00 toward equipment costs.

Cora Lewis	20.00
E. L. Short	20.00
Wanda Short	5.00
Belma Howell	5.00
James Bagwell	20.00
Sid Wallace	5.00
Max Cooper	50.00

J. P. Huffman	25.00
Mrs. Ethel Jones	10.00
Walter & Ruth Parson	25.00
Bradley Brasfield	50.00
Viola Odom	25.00
Ray Drummond	20.00
Herman King	20.00
Felma Daniel	3.00
Maggie King	4.00
Anon	10.00
Mrs. Geo. Salter	15.00
Herbert Rice	30.00
David & Barbara Cooper	20.00
Mrs. Julia Woods	5.00
Raymond & Ruby Odom	5.00
Gilbert Odom	20.00

Thus ended the month of September. We will soon be traveling out of State for a few weeks visiting congregations and colleges in Michigan, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Our schedule will be announced on 6th Avenue Church's gospel broadcast on WWWB at 8:00.

In Him,
Bro. Hackett

The following are regular individual supporters and several whose names were not listed under their representative congregation:

Roscoe Kirkpatrick	10.00
Herman King	20.00
Mrs. Ben Morris	10.00
Eugene & Eilen McMurray	20.00
Velma & Stephen Adkins	5.00
Mr. and Mrs. T. R. Hubbert	10.00
Sis. Beuhla Wright	20.00
Mary Frances Myers	25.00
Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Welch	10.00
Mr. Fletcher Gurganus	10.00

Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Terry	10.00
Mrs. C. B. Ellenburg	10.00
George R. Lolley	25.00
Mrs. B. P. Weems	5.00

List of Contributors To African Mission Fund For
Month of September 1977
Contributions From Congregations

Berry Church of Christ	50.00
Brookside Church of Christ	20.00
Central (Tuscaloosa) Church of Christ	100.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	50.00
Cottdale Church of Christ	75.00
Curry Church of Christ	50.00
East Walker Church of Christ	25.00
Eldridge Church of Christ	25.00
Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00
Macedonia (Holly Grove Rd) Church of Christ	25.00
Midway Church of Christ	105.00
Millport Church of Christ	50.00
Millport Church of Christ	300.00
Mt. Harmony Church of Christ	30.00
Mountain Home Church of Christ	15.00
New Hope (Oakman) Church of Christ	20.00
Northport Church of Christ	75.00
Oakman Church of Christ	830.00
Parrish Church of Christ	50.00
Parrish Church of Christ	50.00
Pleasantfield Church of Christ	10.00
Pleasant Hill Church of Christ	35.00
Sixth Ave. Church of Christ	700.00
West Walker Church of Christ	20.00
Whitehouse Church of Christ	200.00
Winfield Church of Christ (Jul-Aug-Sept.)	200.00
Total Congregations Contributions	*3,135.00



Words Of Truth

...; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1977

NUMBER 46

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 24

GEOLOGY AND THE AGE OF THE EARTH

Away out there alone, above,
Without a thing to make it of,
The world was made without a flaw,
Without a hammer or a saw,
Without a bit of wood or stone,
Without a bit of flesh or bone,
Without a board or nail or screw,
Or anything to nail it to.
Without a foothold or a trace
Of anything at all but space.
The only thing the Lord could do
Wash simply speak a word or two
And if the story told is true,
The world came boldly into view.1

According to a straightforward reading of the Biblical account, the world was created in six literal 24-hour days only a few thousand years ago. On the other hand, modern cosmologists insist that the earth and the solar system developed about 5 billion years ago, that primitive life forms evolved from non-living chemicals about one or two



BERT THOMPSON

billion years ago, that all other forms of life have gradually developed during the subsequent geologic ages and that, finally man evolved into essentially his present form about one or two million years ago.

Thus the Biblical chronology is about a million times shorter than the evolutionary chronology. And a million-fold mistake is no small matter. Surely Biblical scholars need to give primary attention to resolving this tremendous discrepancy right at the very foundation of our entire Biblical cosmology. This is not a mere "peripheral" issue which

can be simply dismissed with some fancy exegetical twist. This is the central core of the very integrity to Scriptural theology.

How old, exactly, is the earth? One of the greatest mysteries of mankind is the age of the earth. When did the earth start? How old is the earth? We think these are fair and intriguing questions. A quote from Dr. John Klotz is appropriate at this time:

"What shall we say about the age of the earth? We shall have to say that Scripture gives us no exact dates before the time of Abraham. It is impossible to give an exact date for the creation, and we cannot say on the basis of Scripture how old the earth really is. God simply did not feel that it was necessary for us to know its exact age. Apparently the age of the earth has no bearing on our salvation. This is not to be regarded as a plea for the acceptance of the figures some geologists and evolutionists use; it is merely a statement that on the basis of Scripture we cannot establish definitely how old the earth is."²

For many folks, Christians especially, that seems to be enough. They feel that since the Bible doesn't give any indication of how old the earth really is, there's no need to investigate any further. Drop the subject, we are told, and go on to something else.

But this will not do! Granted, no one has the right to add to (or, for that matter, to take from) the Biblical text. And to "add to" is certainly not our intention here.

But, on the other hand, *no one* has the right to ignore completely what the Bible says; nor do we have the right to ignore plain and simple evidences given to us by God Himself. For example, the Bible tells me that a man can go down from Jerusalem to Jericho (Luke 10:30 - this is a scientifically correct statement as there is a drop in altitude of some 4,000 feet as one travels *down* from Jerusalem to Jericho), yet the Bible doesn't tell me how far it is. If I go out and measure the distance, and find it to be 15 miles (which, by the way, it is), am I adding to the text if I say that the distance from Jerusalem to Jericho is 15

miles? Or am I observing simple evidence and making use of my observations?

The Bible tells us that Moses spent 40 years of his life in Egypt. But the Bible makes absolutely no attempt to tell me exactly where Egypt is. Now if I go out looking for Egypt and I find it to be located at the top of the African continent, and I state that it is located there, have I added to the Biblical text? Surely not!! All I have done is used basic scientific evidence to state a known fact.

Now what about the age of the earth? It is a well-known fact that geologists and evolutionists *need* (must have!) eons of time (see our article in *Words of Truth*, 6-17-77). Do they have it? And, is the age of the earth an important issue at all in the first place? And can we discuss this issue without being accused of "adding to" the Biblical text? Our answers are: NO, YES, & YES! No, the evolutionists do not have the eons they claim to have. Yes, it is an important topic, and yes, we can study it without "adding to" the text.

Wayne Jackson, in his book, *Fortify Your Faith In An Age Of Doubt*, remarks:

"Undoubtedly the most popular argument advanced against the credibility of the Mosaic narrative in Genesis is the apparent conflict between the biblical record and the claims of modern geology. The Bible clearly suggests that the earth was created but a few thousand years ago, while some scientists contend that it has been in existence for some four and one-half to five billion years. The solution to this problem has usually been either to simply dismiss Genesis as an uninformed account of what ancient men believed regarding the origin of things, or else, by exegetical hocus-pocus Genesis is forced into harmony with the assumptions of evolutionary geology. Neither of these methods gives satisfaction to the sincere inquirer of truth."³

We can prove, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that the earth is *at least* 4,000 years old - simply by using secular and religious historical writings which are now extant. Now

(Continued On Page 4)



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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demand that his child do his homework when he would rather be watching television; or to require him to eat his vegetables when he would rather eat his candy. Love causes parents to take their children to the doctor when they are sick, even though the children would rather not go. Love does that which it deems best - not necessarily that which is most pleasant - for its object. It was love that caused our Lord to rebuke sharply the sinners of His day. For some of the most scathing language ever used in denouncing sin, read the twenty-third chapter of Matthew. The language was strong, but who would say that it was from a heart lacking in love?

Some are using the word "love" to refer to a very strange disposition characteristic of a certain segment of our brotherhood. This disposition causes them to spend a great deal of their time talking about how most Christians do not have enough love. They make it plain that they themselves do have an abundance of love in their own hearts by telling us that they love us. Their "love" is also manifested in their disposition to criticize sharply those who teach the truth and refute error with regard to controversial matters; while they are very uncritical of those who teach error and deny the truth with regard to these matters. Their special brand of "love" qualifies them to know more about the kind of preaching that is needed than the preacher, the elders, or anyone else. They are generally very negative toward what they call negative preaching - and any preaching is negative, if it does not suit them.

This brand of "love" causes one to despise the Bible verses that tell what love really is. I John 5:3 says, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." In response to this verse, one who has the kind of "love" we are talking about is likely to say: "I've heard that verse until I'm sick of it." It has always been our opinion that the only reason a person ever became sick of any portion of the Bible is because he either did not believe it, or else he did not like it.

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (I Jno. 3:18).

BOOK NOTICE

Serious Bible students will be interested to learn that Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506 has recently published a new edition of Thayer's *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*. This edition is unique in that it enables one who knows absolutely no Greek at all to use the lexicon with ease. In such cases it must be used in conjunction with Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance*, which lists every Greek word in the New Testament by number. These numbers are used as keys which are coded into the margin of Thayer's lexicon, thus enabling anyone who can use a concordance to use Thayer's monumental work.

In paperback, it retails for \$9.95.

FELLOWSHIP RESTORED AT ATHENS

In 1972, the devil laughed as news of the beauty contest, the firing of the preacher, and division among God's people spread throughout the civilized world. The Hobbs Street church, acting upon the authority of the Bible, withdrew fellowship from those who pulled away to begin what is now the Central church.

According to a letter we have received from brother Gene Lindsey, local evangelist for the Hobbs Street Church, those guilty of sin in connection with this division have repented and asked for forgiveness, and fellowship has been restored. Brother Lindsey's letter said in part: "The Central church asked for forgiveness for sins which brought about the division of the Hobbs Street church. We have

forgiven them and have restored our fellowship with them." He further stated: "Also, Brother Charles Marshall has repented of the sins he committed in bringing about the division."

Brother Marshall's statement is as follows: "I wish to express repentance for my wrongdoing in regard to the division in the Hobbs Street Church. I realize that decisions and actions on my part were wrong, and I ask forgiveness from the Lord, the Elders at Hobbs Street, and the brotherhood.

"I sincerely regret the publicity of the matter and the grief that resulted.

"I am deeply grateful that the Central Church and the Hobbs Street Church will now be in full fellowship and unity."

We realize that the news of repentance and restoration could never receive the same publicity that the problems originally received, but we are happy to give space for this announcement. We commend brethren who have had the courage to repent. We commend also those who had the courage to stand for right five years ago. Our brotherhood should rejoice because of these recent developments.

Debate Set For November 7 - 8

Eugene Britnell and Paul Kidwell Sr., will debate the right of churches to help those who are not Christians in the field of benevolence.

On Monday evening, November 7, the proposition is:

Resolved; The scriptures teach that the local congregation, as directed and overseen by its elders (Phil. 1:1) may assist those who are not Christians in the field of benevolence. Paul Kidwell Sr. will affirm, Eugene Britnell will deny.

On Tuesday evening, November 8, the proposition is:

Resolved: The scriptures teach that the local congregation, as directed and overseen by its elders (Phil. 1:1) may not assist those who are not Christians in the field of benevolence. Eugene Britnell affirms, Paul Kidwell Sr. denies.

Each session will begin at 7 p.m. Each speaker will have three twenty minute speeches, beginning on each evening with the affirmative. The discussion will be held in the building of the Mabelvale Church of Christ, 10820 Mabelvale West Road. Take exit 128 off Interstate 30 W and proceed one-half mile east on Mabelvale Road West.

NEED HELP!

If You Receive The WOT As An Individual (Not With A Church) Please Fill Out The Following Form

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The Northwest Alabamian
P.O. Box 430
Haleyville, Al. 35565



"What Is This Thing Called Love?"

It would be impossible for the finite mind to comprehend the magnanimous love of the infinite God, and it would be impossible for us to over-emphasize the importance of loving God and fellow human beings. Several years ago, the late beloved brother Gus Nichols gave his preachers' class a sermon outline on love, and the sermon was appropriately entitled, "The Greatest Thing In The World." The great love chapter of the Bible (I Corinthians 13) makes obvious the fact that, separated from love, all the good that one may do is vain and unprofitable.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Someone has defined the word "love" as meaning *active goodwill*. It is that which causes a father and husband to arise early in the morning and go to his job, perhaps even subjecting himself to great dangers and hardships, so that he might provide bread for his wife and children. It is that which causes a mother to sit beside the bed of a sick child through the night, without a wink of sleep, to be sure every need of the child is supplied; and also because her concern for the child will not allow her to sleep. It is that which causes Christians to sacrifice for the cause of the Lord.

But the manifestations of love are not always sweet and beneficent; sometimes they are harsh and unpleasant. It is love that causes a parent to punish a child for misbehaviour. It is love that causes a parent to

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED—HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods).

"What does the phrase, 'canon of scripture,' signify?"

The word "canon," (Greek, *kanoon*), originally meant a staff, then a measuring rod, and finally, in the New Testament, a rule of conduct and doctrine. Beginning with the second century after Christ, and thenceforth, the phrase, "canon of scripture" means the Word of God, the whole of it, composed of every inspired book, or writing, in existence. Gal. 6:16, and Phil. 3:16, are instances of the New Testament usage of the word *canon*, where it signifies a standard of teaching and conduct determined by inspiration. The phrase, "canon of scripture," was not, and could not have been used prior to the close of the apostolic age, in view of the fact that it designates the final, complete and all-sufficient revelation of God to man. Inasmuch as the word "canon" denotes the divine rule of faith and practice, the adjective *canonical* designates that which is right in conformity to the infallible standard.

"How was the 'canon of scripture' determined?"

By establishing the fact that the New Testament, as we have it, was written under divine guidance, by men to whom the various books are attributed; that it has been preserved uncontaminated and uncorrupted to our day; and, that no other books have any valid or proper claim to a place in this unique collection.

"What do the words 'genuineness,' and 'authenticity' mean when applied to the books of the New Testament?"

A book is *genuine* when it was written by the man whose name it bears. It is *authentic* when its contents are true and in concord with other similar writings. A book not genuine is *spurious*; a book not authentic is *false*. Hence, it is possible for a written production to be both spurious and false; to be genuine (written by the man whose name it bears) but false; authentic (truthful), but not genuine. Fictitious works, such as novels, may be genuine (bear the name of their actual authors), though their contents are not true; books composed by ghost-writers, though their contents are true, are not genuine, because they were not actually composed by the men to whom they are attributed. Books of the Bible, insofar as they carry the names of their authors, are all genuine; and, every one of them is authentic.

"How may it be shown that the books of the New Testament were, in fact, written by the men whose names they bear?"

The sources are abundant, the evidence is clear and convincing, to reasonable minds, and the proofs thereof extend to the apostolic age. Proof of their genuineness may be arranged under two heads; (1) *internal*; and (2) *external*. The former deals with the character of the writings, the style in which they are cast, the language in which they were written, and the undesigned coincidences which may be accounted for on other basis than an inspired origin; and the external evidences involve the testimony of Christian writers who lived very near the close of the New Testament period; quotations appearing in works equally ancient; manuscripts which

come down to us from the centuries following their appearance; and ancient versions which are yet in existence and which were prepared during the life-times of people contemporary with the apostles. When, to this are added to ancient catalogues of New Testament books which date from the middle of the first century following the close of the New Testament period, the evidence, to thoughtful and reasonable minds, is irresistible.

(To Be Continued Next Week)

A Firm Foundation

Without a firm foundation a building is sure to crumble. Such is true within spiritual realms. A Christian, whose life is built upon a shaky, flimsy, or non-existent foundation will be highly susceptible to (1) temptations, and (2) the results thereof (James 1:15). Furthermore, a structure, whether it be a temporal building or a "temple of God" (I Cor. 6:19), can grow only so high as its foundation will allow. For these reasons, we must take heed as to the firmness of our spiritual foundation.

One's foundation is that upon which he builds or bases his love, his life, his attitudes, and his actions. The foundation of a liar would be deception; or an adulterer, immorality. The Christian's foundation, however, must be Christ (1 Cor. 3:11), for Christ is the first-love (Rev. 2:4), yea, his whole life (Lk. 9:23). Christ is firm and solid as one's foundation, for he is said to be "the rock" (Mt. 16:18) and the "chief corner stone" (1 Pet. 2:6) upon which the church rests. Nothing can be firmer than that which is rock; no foundation can be firmer than that one which is called the Christ. Indeed, "All other ground is sinking sand."

The foundation of Christ is more firm for some than it is for others. This is due not to Christ's inability but to man's ignorance. The more one knows and learns of Christ, the firmer his foundation; the more one obeys His teaching, and makes them a part of his life, the higher his structure. We must, by all means, believe the teaching of our Savior and obey the same, but first we must become acquainted with His words. These words, and all knowledge of Him, may be found only within the word of God (II Pet. 1:3; 1 John 1:1,2; John 20:30,31). Furthermore, this word is to be diligently studied (Acts 17:11; II Tim. 2:15).

The firmness of one's spiritual foundation, then, is proportionate to the extent of his spiritual (biblical) knowledge. Is your foundation as firm as it should be? — Box 619, Douglass, Kansas 67039.

The Purpose Of Baptism

KEN TYLER

The purpose of baptism is a subject about which there is much confusion. Yet, the scriptures speak very plainly concerning what baptism is for. What do you believe the purpose of baptism is? See if what you believe is in harmony with these scriptures.

Peter on the day of Pentecost told believers to "repent, and be baptized every one of you

(Continued On Page 4)

Why Stress Immersion?

Quite frequently our religious friends ask of us such questions as the following: "Why do you people in the church of Christ stress that one MUST be immersed and not receive sprinkling or pouring? Does the action merit all the importance and attention you give this matter?" Indeed it does. It is a momentous matter of



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

doing what the Bible commands. I stress immersion because the Bible stresses immersion. The Greek word from which we derive baptism means to dip or to immerse. The Greek speaking people had a different word for sprinkling and another for pouring. Neither in the Greek nor in the English are these three concepts synonymous. Here is why.

Bible baptism demanded much water (John 3:23). Sprinkling and pouring demand but little water. Bible baptism demands a going TO the water (Acts 8:36). In sprinkling and pouring the water is brought to the candidate. No going TO the water is required in either sprinkling or pouring. In Bible baptism there was a going INTO the water and a COMING UP AGAIN out of the water (Matt. 3:16; Acts 8:36). In sprinkling and pouring there is neither a GOING DOWN INTO nor a COMING UP OUT of the water. In Romans 6:4 Paul says, "We were buried together with him through baptism into death. . . ." In Colossians 2:12 the same noble penman wrote, ". . . having been buried with him in baptism wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead." In sprinkling and pouring there is neither a burial nor a rising therefrom. In Bible baptism people are spoken of as having been "raised together with Christ" (Col. 3:1). But in sprinkling or pouring there is no being raised again for there has been nothing performed that demands a rising therefrom. If so, what would it be?

I stress immersion because the Bible stresses immersion. When the Bible ceases to stress it, then shall I cease to stress it. "The Bible said it. I believe it. That settles it!" Should not that be your sentiment also? If not, WHY NOT?

Alabama Christian School Of Religion Annual Lecture Program

Theme: "The Church Forty Years Ago and Now — Things Both Good and Bad".

November 7 - 11, 1977

All lectures to be held in the Landmark Church of Christ building, 6020 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery, Alabama.

(One hour of college credit will be allowed for each full day's attendance. Tuition: \$19.00 per hour. Each student will be required to register in advance and submit an outline of each session.)

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 1)

suppose there were scientific evidence which could prove that the earth is very young - not 4-5 billion years old as claimed by evolutionary geologists, but instead *less than 10,000 years old*?! Obviously that would be the death knell to the theory of evolution, for evolution without time is not evolution!! Let us now consider the evidence for a young earth.

FIRST, A WORD ABOUT DATING AND ASSUMPTIONS

It is well-known today that most scientists accept the age of the earth as 4-5 billion years old. And the methods used to date the earth (geological dating, radio-carbon dating, tree-ring analysis, solar radiation, potassium-argon, etc.) are well-known. *What is not well-known is that all of these methods of dating the earth are based on nothing but assumptions!* Now, if all of the dating methods were based on FACT, that would be an entirely different story. But, such is not the case. And that makes the whole matter even more intriguing.

First, we should agree on what we expect in a usable, reliable dating method - or "timer." Anybody who has ever used a timer in cooking eggs or in timing a race can easily understand the importance of having a reliable timer. In order for the timer to be reliable, the following criteria are essential:

1. The timer must be readable in units of time. It must have an understandable scale.
2. The timer must be sufficiently accurate and sensitive to measure the time interval in question, whether it be thousands of years, or a fraction of a second.
3. We must know when the timer was started: for example, was it last Thursday at 4:00 p.m., or 5 years ago at 5:30 p.m. on March 5th?
4. We must know not only when the timer was started, but what the reading on the timer scale was when it was started. For example, did the timer read zero when it was started, or did it read 5 hours 10 minutes?
5. The timer must run at a uniform rate; if it does not, then in order to use such a timer, we must have accurate information about any changes in the timer rate so we can correct for it.
6. The timer must not have been disturbed in any way, or reset, since it was started.

Any events that have taken place before recorded history must be deduced indirectly by extrapolating some present-day process (e.g.: radioactive decay, soil erosion, etc.) back into the distant past to arrive at an approximate date when those events took place. But to do this, several assumptions must be made: (1) the condition of the components of the process when it first began to operate has to be known (but this is impossible, since there were no observers present); (2) the system must always have been a "closed system" (but this is impossible!); (3) uniformitarianism must be applied, by which the process is assumed to have always operated at the same, uniform rate, throughout all the ages (this, too, is impossible, as we shall shortly see). Now let us examine these assumptions in light of the current-day dating methods, to see if the assumptions will stand up to testing in order to create a reliable "timer" which we can use

to date the earth.

—Continued—

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1. Author and source of this beautiful poem are unknown. The writer would appreciate any reader who knows its source advising him of it.
2. Klotz, John. *Genes, Genesis, and Evolution*. Concordia Publishing House. St. Louis, Missouri. 1955. p. 92.
3. Jackson, Wayne. *Fortify Your Faith In An Age Of Doubt*. 3906 E. Main, Stockton, California, 1974. p 28.
4. Boardman, W.W., R.F. Koontz, and H.M. Morris. *Science And Creation*. Creation-Science Research Center. San Diego, California, 1973, p. 143.
5. See in this regard Dr. Henry M. Morris' comments in his book, *The Troubled Waters Of Evolution*, Creation-Life Publishers, San Diego, California, 1974, p 21.

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The Purpose Of Baptism

(Continued From Page 3)

in the name of Jesus Christ *for the remission of sins*, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). The inspired Peter said baptism is for the remission of sins.

Ananias told Saul of Tarsus, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be *baptized*, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). Ananias told Saul to be baptized for the purpose of washing away his sins.

Peter further stated in his first epistle, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us* (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 3:20,21). If sins are forgiven before baptism and one is already saved before baptism then how can baptism save him? Yet, Peter said, "the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us."

Our Lord said in giving the great commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that *believeth and is baptized shall be saved*; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16). In view of this passage how can anyone say, "He that believeth is saved and then baptized," when Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved?"

These passages teach plainly that we are to be baptized for the remission of sins. This is the purpose of baptism.

But consider the following quotes: "Baptism for the remission of sins is essentially Romish," and "Baptism for (in order to) the remission of sins is from the Roman Catholic church, not from the Bible." The minds behind these two quotes say you are saved without baptism and baptism does not have anything to do with the remission of sins and anyone who teaches baptism for the remission of sins got it from the Roman Catholic church and not from the Bible. But what did Peter say on the day of Pentecost? He said, "repent, and be *baptized* every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ *for the remission of sins*, and ye shall receive the gift

of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). These men say baptism for the remission of sins came from the Roman Catholic church. You judge where it came from.

Now the next question must be, "Have you been baptized for the remission of sins?" Many people have been baptized, who were not baptized to have their sins washed away. They got "saved" and then were baptized. But the Bible teaches one cannot be saved before baptism.

My mother and grandmother thought they were saved before baptism and that baptism did not have anything to do with washing away their sins. Therefore, they obeyed man and not God. But when they learned the true teaching of the Bible and were convicted of their disobedience they were baptized for the remission of sins. They realized they had never become Christians because they had never obeyed God. My grandmother was 75 years old when she realized this fact and became a Christian.

Could this be your identical situation? If so will you not right now "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord?" You cannot go to heaven without it. — Box 376, Arab, Alabama 35016.

Bible Teachers

JOE DAVID NEELY

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations. . . ." These are the beginning words of the Great Commission of our Lord. These words spoken first to the Lord's close associates or Apostles, now are spoken to us. Those of us who claim to be Christians have this task to perform. All of us in this sense must be Bible Teachers, however, we need special Bible Teachers for classes when we assemble. These, we now consider. Are you qualified to teach? There are two main qualifications: (1) Be a Christian, and (2) Know your lessons. If you do those things or say those things which are not Christians you are not fit to teach a Bible Class. If your dress is not modest or decent you should not be allowed to teach. If you are not a regular attendant or in any way show a lack of interest you won't make a good teacher and should not be allowed to teach. One must live what he or she teaches to be an effective teacher in the Bible Class. He must be a Christian. Now, under number 2 - Do you really study your lessons? One cannot teach that which he does not know. We can never learn it all, but we can die trying! Use every opportunity to learn more, that you may teach more. Teach only the Word of God, Pure and Unchanged! May God give us more teachers for our Bible classes who measure up to the standards God gave! — P.O. Box 2005, East Gadsden, Ala. 35903.

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— Acts 26:25

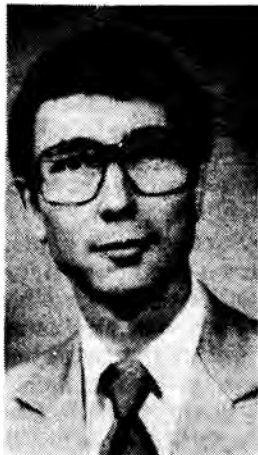
VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1977

NUMBER 47

What About Judging Others?

Some among us today contend that we, as God's people, are never to condemn the doctrine or action of others. That it is wrong for the church to discipline a brother who is living in sin is stated by not a few. Those who take such a position usually go to Matthew 7:1 for justification of their position. Matthew 7:1 says, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."



MICHAEL D. STONE

First of all, I submit that to say Matthew 7:1 forbids the judging of others is to misunderstand the verse. If we carefully read the first five verses of the chapter, we will notice that our Lord is condemning the self-righteous person who would criticize others for their faults while overlooking his own. If Matthew 7:1 means that we are never to judge others, then our exposition of other sections in the chapter is most difficult. In verse six, Jesus told us not to give that which is holy unto dogs. Now, how can that be obeyed without judging who are dogs? Furthermore, Jesus warned in verse fifteen of false prophets and told us to beware of them. Now, how can we obey that without judging who are false prophets? In verse sixteen, the proper basis of our judging others is given: "By their fruits ye shall know them." In John 7:24 the Bible says, "judge righteous judgment."

Secondly, to say that we are never to judge others overlooks other scriptures that make judging necessary. The apostle Paul, in Romans 16:17, commanded us to mark those who cause division. Does that not imply that someone must judge who is causing the division? Also, II John 9-11 makes it necessary

for us to judge who does not have the doctrine of Christ. What about II Thessalonians 3:6? To obey that, we must judge who is walking disorderly. Paul, in Galatians 6:1, told us to restore the one overtaken in a fault. But, you cannot even begin to obey that command without first determining (judging) the brother

to be at fault.

There is a right way and a wrong way to judge others. We need to be careful not to judge the wrong way. Also, let us be careful not to contend that judging is wrong. We must understand and not misrepresent the teaching of the Bible. — 503 Plymouth Street, Kannapolis, N.C. 28081.

Instrumental Music In Worship - Right Or Wrong?

J.R. SULLINS

Many members of the Lord's church today seem to be very confused over the issue of whether it is right or wrong to use an instrument of music in worship to God our Father. It is estimated that as high as 50 per cent of the members of the churches of Christ really would not go as far as to say that it is scripturally wrong to use mechanical instruments of music in worship periods. This same group would generally feel that they would rather not use it but they would not say anyone else was wrong by using it and certainly would not go as far as to say these individuals would be lost because of their using it. Again we are looking at a problem that has and is developed from a lack of respect for the authority of God's Word.

Some people have gone so far as to say, "You mean you church of Christ people don't believe in music in the church." To which we would reply, "Yes we believe in music in the church. But vocal music is the only divinely authorized music to be used in worship in the Lord's church." Nowhere in the early church, as recorded in God's Word or secular history, do we find instruments of music being used in a worship period, PUBLIC or PRIVATE. The first mention of instrumental music's being used was in the Roman Catholic assemblies. "Pope Vitalian is related to have introduced

organs into some of the churches of southern Europe first about A.D. 670, but the only trustworthy account is that of the one sent as a present by the Greek Emperor, Constantine Copronymus, to Pepin, king of the Franks (France) in 775." (The American Encyclopedia. Vol. XII, page 688).

It is interesting to note that church historians such as Eusebius, Neander, Jones, Schaff, and Fisher make no mention of it for hundreds of years after Christ. Many of the early reformers such as John Knox, John Calvin, John Wesley and others stood opposed to mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship.

Some think we are "odd-balls" because we do not use instrumental music in worship. My friend, we are not the only religious group that has not used or does not use instrumental music in worship. For many years the Baptists, church of the Brethren, one group of the church of God, the Greek Orthodox church, Mennonites, Methodists, Episcopal church, Presbyterians, Quakers and Roman Catholics, refused to use the instrument and some still do not use it! Why is this so? Because they could not find scriptural authority for doing so!

Alexander Campbell once wrote: "So to

(Continued On Page 4)



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus: but speak fairly the Words of Truth and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

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A Free Church

Recently in this column we made some comments on an article published in ENSIGN FAIR about a so-called "free" church in Alabama. The article implied that the church under consideration was the only free church in that entire section of Alabama. We pointed out that this seemed to be a case of "exclusivism," a practice strongly condemned by another article in the same issue of ENSIGN FAIR.



BOBBY DUNCAN

In the most recent issue of that paper the editor has some things to say about our comments. Among other things, he points out the fact that we have erred in equating "free" churches to faithful churches. You see, the two are not the same! And, according to this brother, one who does not know this is under "bondage to the brotherhood System."

In other words, this particular editor is saying that a church may be faithful, and yet be in "bondage to FEAR resulting from legalistic teachings and bondage to the brotherhood system of 'conformity.'"

Now, if you don't understand what this means, just read on. He sets about to prove that the Sixth Avenue Church is under bondage by saying: "If this preacher thinks he is a free church, then let's ask him if the elders where he preaches would permit brethren like Leroy Garrett or Carl Ketcherside to hold one of their 'gospel meetings.'" So, there you have it. If a church will not let Leroy Garrett or Carl Ketcherside come for a meeting, it is not a "free" church. In order to become a "free" church all a

church has to do is relinquish its freedom not to invite false teachers to preach in gospel meetings. This nonsense is plainly condemned in II Jno. 10: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

According to another article in the same issue of this paper, a "free" church is one that is "spirit led." Those who think that the Holy Spirit leads only "through words already recorded" are not "free". This idea of the direct leadings of the Holy Spirit is part and parcel of practically every false religion. It has to be; for a false religion simply cannot be sustained by the word of God alone. To sustain Mormonism, Joseph Smith had to have his special revelations given by the angel Moroni. To sustain Roman Catholicism, the Pope has to have his church traditions and his EX CATHEDRA infallibility. To sustain Pentecostalism, there must be the movings and urgings of the spirit, separate and apart from the word. And when our brethren begin to claim some leadings and guidings of the Holy Spirit, separate and apart from the written word, you can put it down: they have some position they are trying to sustain which cannot be sustained by the written word.

We are also told that "free" people are not limited in their worship to five acts, "but are

free to take some liberty with the man-made forms and rituals." Singing, praying, preaching, eating the Lord's supper, and giving of our means are "man-made forms and rituals," according to the article. Each "free" individual is to "express his own praise in his chosen way. . ." Notice these next two sentences: "There is absolutely no format, no ritual, and no formalities bound upon Christians by the word of God. In this case we are free to work out our own procedures."

Now, in the Bible we can read about freedom in Christ; but we can also read that those who are free in Christ are his servants, and the servants of righteousness (Rom. 6:1-18). We see that the editor and those who write for ENSIGN FAIR use the word "free" in a sense altogether different from that in which it is used in the New Testament; and we agree that we made a terrible mistake in equating "free" churches to faithful churches. Nothing could be further from the truth.

However, we are still correct in our contention that the Grassy church is not the only "free" church in that section of Alabama. Why, there are denominational churches all over the hills and hollows of Marshall County.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 25

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of our last article dealing with geology and the age of the earth.)

MORE ON DATING AND ASSUMPTIONS

First, we wish to go on record again as stating that there are no precise biblical data for determining the exact time of creation. This writer does not (nor does he know any creationist who does) accept the oft-quoted date of 4004 B.C. as the "date of creation." The date of 4004 B.C. was, of course, made popular by James Ussher (1581-1656).



BERT THOMPSON

Ussher's date of 4004 B.C. for creation was published in his work, *Annales Veteris et Novi Testamenti* (1650-1654), and was consequently published in the margin of the King James Version of the Bible beginning in 1701. It gained widespread acceptance from that time, and has been considered by many to be "doctrine". Ussher's date of 4004 B.C. was based on work he did using the genealogies of Genesis and the rest of the Bible. We shall comment on these genealogies and their usefulness and purpose in a later article. At this point let us simply say that we now know the genealogies are not always direct father-son relationships as Ussher thought them to be. There are some "gaps" in the genealogies which must be dealt with. Lightfoot (1602-1675), famed Hebraist of Cambridge, followed through with Ussher's work and figured out that creation took place the week of October 18 to 24, 4004 B.C., with Adam created on October 23 at 9:00 a.m. forty-fifth meridian time!! Needless to say, there is no scriptural substantiation for either Ussher's date or Lightfoot's. So, we repeat: there are no precise biblical data for determining the exact time of creation.

Until recent years, most Christians accepted

uncritically the dictums of scientists that the earth (and therefore the universe) is very old. This has been considered a FACT by most. In the past two decades, however, Christian scientists and biblical scholars have begun to ask a very penetrating question: *do scientific data really indicate an ancient earth?* Year by year indication after indication that the earth is very young is being investigated by creationists, with the result that a very strong case can now be made for a *young earth* and a *recent creation!* "But scientists have sure-fine methods for determining the age of the earth" we are told. This is not a true statement!! It never has been; it never will be. "Scientists make many guesses and do quite a lot of assuming and spin fanciful theories, but that's about the size of it."² There are few "facts" in regard to dating methods. As Dr. Henry M. Morris has well stated the issue:

". . . for a system to be dependable in

(Continued On Page 4)

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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"What does the phrase, 'canon of scripture,' signify?"

(Continued From Last Week)

"By what rule, or standard, was the canonicity of the New Testament books determined?"

(1) Any production from the pen of an apostle of Christ is obviously entitled to a place in the canon inasmuch as the apostles are expressly declared to be inspired (John 16:7-13). (2) Any writing, such as Mark or Luke, written while in association with an apostle, is equally entitled to inclusion. (3) All writings attributed to inspiration by the early Christians, by the first Christian writers and by the scholars of the ancient church, are to be regarded as canonical, since these people were in position to determine by personal investigation and documentary research the reliability of the claims of each book to a place in the canon. (4) Soon after the close of the inspired period catalogues circulated bearing the names of the books which the early church accepted as of divine origin. It is remarkable that the majority of these documents, (catalogues listing the inspired books of the New Testament), were in circulation in about a hundred years after the death of John, the apostle, and they agree with the collection composing our New Testament.

"What are the sources from which we derive the text of the New Testament, and what assurance do we have that it has been preserved to our day?"

It is significant that there is no ancient writing that can claim such abundant proof of its integrity and preservation as the Bible. The writings of ancient Greek and Latin historians are today accepted as reliable by classical scholars who do not have one tenth of the evidence to support the reliability of the text available to biblical scholars. It has been preserved to us in old *manuscripts* - priceless documents containing the text of the New Testament in Greek, and dating from the early centuries after Christ; in the *ancient versions* - translations of the text from Greek into the various dialects and tongues of those who lived in the first century after the end of the age of inspiration; in *quotations* from "church fathers" some of whose writings, though uninspired, were current during the last days of John, the apostle, or soon thereafter, and which contain much of the New Testament which they cited in support of the views which they advocated.

These early writers were neither few nor obscure; there were dozens of them who possessed the finest scholarship available; and from them the New Testament could be substantially reproduced from references they cited, were the originals lost.

The New Testament was provided that man might find his way to God; its message was designed to be proclaimed to the end of the age (Matt. 28:18-20), and its power and potency would never fail (I Pet. 1:22-25). It thus affirms its own perpetuity; and, the same reasons which prompted the Lord to provide it would require its continuance until it has achieved its purpose. We may reasonably expect it to be preserved for ever. The following excellent summary by Buck

expresses my unquestioning faith in the genuineness, authenticity, and reliability of the New Testament books: "These books were written at different times, and they were authenticated not by the decrees of councils, or infallible authority, but by such evidence as is thought sufficient in the case of any other ancient writings. They were extensively diffused, and read in every Christian society; they were valued and preserved with care by the first Christians; they were cited by Christian writers of the second, third and fourth centuries, as Irenaus, Clement, the Alexandrian, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, etc., and their genuineness is proved by the testimony of those who were contemporary with the apostles themselves. The four Gospels, and most of the other books of the New Testament, were collected by one of the apostles, or some of their disciples and successors before the end of the first century. The catalogue of canonical books furnished by the more ancient Christian writers, as Origen, about A.D. 210, Eusebius and Athanasius in 315, Epiphanius in 370, Jerome in 382, Austin in 394, and many others, agrees with that which is now received among Christians."

"When, and by whom, was the canon of the Old Testament settled?"

God directly delivered to Moses the law, the commandments and statutes of Israel (Deut. 5:1ff). When Moses had committed all of these matters to writing, this ancient scroll was placed in the ark of the covenant beside that historical document. Conservative scholars think that the five books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, were all deposited there. At any rate, they are equally inspired. About 547 B.C., Ezra collected and arranged the Old Testament books of his day in harmony with the catalogue which had been acceptable to the prophets and the canon was complete long before our Lord came to the earth.

"On what grounds may we accept the Old Testament canon as accurate and complete?"

Again and again, our Lord referred to them as being divine and authoritative (John 5:39; 10:35). He recognized and used the division long prevailing, the law, the prophets and the Psalms (Luke 24:44), an analysis also mentioned by the Jewish historian Josephus, indicating that this was a common and acceptable arrangement. The apostles, and other New Testament writers, often had occasion to cite the Old Testament scriptures; and they did so in a manner indicating that they regarded them as of divine origin and authoritative, even as our Lord Jesus severely rebuked the Jews for disregarding the Old Testament; but, he never hinted that they had changed or corrupted the text, because they would have regarded such an attempt as a cardinal sin. Most Old Testament books are cited, either directly or indirectly, in the New Testament. The Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Greek about 285 B.C., and this translation - the Septuagint - contains every book in our Old Testament, thus evidencing the fact that *three hundred years* before our Lord came to the earth, the Old Testament books in our Bible were regarded as canonical. Josephus, and many other ancient writers, bear testimony to this fact. No event in the ancient past, and no document descriptive of such, can remotely equal the evidence which obtains regarding the truth of the events set out in the sacred writings. How very thankful we should be that God, in his goodness, has not left us in doubt regarding these matters so essential to our happiness and well-being here, and our salvation hereafter!

Indecisiveness In The Church Today

Indecisiveness concerning the day to day issues of life characterizes far too many in the Church today. What a terrible harvest is reaped because of a failure to be decisive. (Gal. 6:7-8). Decisive means having the ability, the power or quality of deciding - conclusive, marked by decision. It doesn't mean to be stubborn or self-willed or "bull-headed."



DEMAR ELAM

(We don't need any more of this than we already have.) Consider I Kings 18:21: "And Elijah came unto all the people and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." They were indecisive! They were not conclusive nor marked by decision. What about us in the church today? Do we know where we stand? Do our children know? How long will God's people continue to be indecisive?

We must teach our young people to be decisive for themselves. Daniel was one who triumphed over temptation because he was decisive (Dan. 1:8). "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank. . . ." Daniel was prepared when temptation came because he had already decided what he would do ahead of time! What about our young people today? There was a time when the home, school and church worked together and reinforced one another in upholding righteousness and discouraging wrong-doing. Such things as stealing, cursing, destroying property, engaging in pre-marital sex, etc., were CLEARLY marked as wrong-doing. The home, school and church worked together to teach the child that it was wrong to do these things. But it is not so today and the child is torn between. Young people are confused today when they hear the preacher teach against dancing, mixed bathing, sexual immorality and immodesty only to have their parents hedge on what they think the Bible teaches on these issues and thereby reveal their own indecision regarding such matters.

Not only are many parents indecisive, but so are many elders today. Thank God for the many great elders we have in the church today. Thank God for those who are capable and willing to make decisions. Indecisive elders confuse entire congregations. We need elders who will take their stand with Christ and the Word and not with the devil and the world! There are some elders who seem to be only decisive to be indecisive. Elders, where do you stand? You need to be like Joshua of old who said, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). Indecisiveness has killed church discipline in most places today. Elders need to stand up and speak words of endorsement to Bible

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 2)

measuring geologic time; for example, it must satisfy at least two basic criteria: (1) its process rate must be constant and unchangeable; (2) it must be a 'closed system,' not capable of being affected by influences extraneous to the system.

"Now we come up against a very significant fact of nature. There is actually no natural process which has an unchangeable process rate and there is actually no such thing in nature as a truly isolated system! Consequently, there is no geochronometer which is really able to prove anything about the duration of geologic time. To be specific, it is absolutely impossible to prove that the earth is older than the few thousand years of the *Biblical chronology!*"³ (Emphasis mine, BT).

Dr. R.L. Wysong, in his book, *The Creation-Evolution Controversy*, remarks: "All dating methods designed to date objects beyond the point of direct verification - beyond the time of historic man (three to four thousand years B.C.) - are dependent upon a set of assumptions. The evolutionist would be expected to play down the assumptions used in his dating methods and headline the factualness of the calculated huge age."⁴

Contrary to what we all have been told, there is no genuine scientific evidence against the concept of a young earth and a relatively infant human race! Dr. Donald Chittick, writing in *A Symposium On Creation*, uses the following illustration to emphasize the assumptions inherent in present-day dating methods:

"Let us choose a burning candle to be similar to an element undergoing radioactive decay. Further, let us suppose that our candle burns at the rate of one inch every hour. This is analogous to the half-life for radioactivity. When we measure the candle we find that it is exactly six inches high (analogous to the present amount of radioactivity). Now the burning candle is six inches high and disappearing at the rate of one inch every hour. We ask the question, how long has the candle been burning? It is impossible to answer this question unless we know how long the candle was to start with. Starting conditions must be known or we cannot say when zero time was. There is no absolute way of calibrating our 'clock.'

"As in the case of radioactive decay, a burning candle forms 'decay' products. Carbon dioxide is formed when the candle burns. But carbon dioxide is also naturally present in the air so that measuring the decay products (carbon dioxide) will hardly help us either in finding how long the candle has been burning. We do not know the amount of CO₂ in the air when the candle started burning. If we make the assumption that all the CO₂ in the atmosphere came from our burning candle, we would arrive at the answer that our candle has been burning for a very long time, indeed!

"Estimates of the age of the earth, based on radioactive decay methods, do not give ages independent of certain assumptions. *The 'ages' so obtained are only as accurate as the assumptions on which they are based.* . . ."⁵ (Emphasis mine, BT).

Dr. Wysong observes: "Any dating method dealing with events in the remote past is like a chain. All of the links represent assumptions. The date that the links are fastened to will only be as strong as the weakest of the

links."⁶ Dr. Paul A. Zimmerman states: "The scientist . . . can make certain interesting calculations, but his computations are often interlarded with slippery assumptions, and the results are beclouded by serious questions that rise in the research."⁷

Dr. Henry M. Morris speaks of 3 basic assumptions which accompany dating methods, and then states: ". . . the highly speculative nature of all methods of geochronometry becomes apparent when one realizes that *not one* of the above assumptions is valid! None are provable or testable, or even reasonable. (1) There is no such thing in nature as a closed system. . . (2) It is impossible ever to know the initial components of a system formed in pre-historic times. . . (3) No process rate is unchangeable. Thus, at best, apparent ages determined by means of any physical process are educated guesses and may well be completely unrelated to the true ages."⁸ (Emphasis his)

The observant reader will quickly see (if not from this article, then from an ensuing study into dating methods) that *all* dating methods are based on nothing more than assumptions!! That is the very nature of the case, since no one was present "in the beginning" as an eye-witness. And the scientific method cannot correctly (or logically) investigate pre-historic matters, since they are beyond the scope of experimental observation. Our next article will deal with some of the dating methods themselves, and their errors. Future articles will deal with evidences for a young earth.

1. E.T. Brewster, in his book, *Creation: A History of Non-Evolutionary Theories*, (1927, p 109) sarcastically remarked about Lightfoot's date and time for creation: "Closer than this, as a cautious scholar, the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University did not venture to commit himself."

2. Jackson, Wayne. *Fortify Your Faith In An Age Of Doubt*. 3906 E. Main St., Stockton, California, 1974. p 28.

3. Morris, Henry M. *Biblical Cosmology And Modern Science*. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1970. p 69.

4. Wysong, R.L. *The Creation-Evolution Controversy*. Inquiry Press, East Lansing, Mich. 1976, p 147.

5. Chittick, Donald. "Dating The Earth and Fossils." *IN: A Symposium On Creation (Volume II)*. Donald W. Patten, editor. Baker Book House. Grand Rapids, Mich., 1970. pp 66,57.

6. Wysong, R.L. *op cit.* p. 148.

7. Zimmerman, Paul A., "The Age Of The Earth." *IN: Darwin, Evolution, And Creation*. Concordia Press, St. Louis, Missouri, p 145.

8. Morris, Henry M. *Scientific Creationism*. Creation-Life Publishers. San Diego, California, 1974. pp 138-139.

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Indecisiveness In The Church Today

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based sermons preached by God-fearing preachers and thereby aid the pulpit in its message. They need to follow-through by withdrawing from the erring ones who will not repent. Elders, are you decisive enough that the congregation where you have the oversight knows where you stand on the issues today? We need to say like Elijah, "How long halt ye between two opinions?"

What about preachers? The sound coming from our pulpits should be clear and easily understood. Every pulpit in the land should

condemn worldliness, ungodliness and immorality in no uncertain terms. Preachers, do you know where you stand? If not, when will you decide?

It is the firm conviction of this writer that worldliness is the greatest threat facing the church today. Worldliness is permeating our ranks because of indecisive elders, preachers, parents and Bible School teachers. Many of these are saying, "Where do we draw the line?" By this they mean that we cannot take a stand on the issues today. Oh yes, we can, but many have not the righteous courage to dare.

Indecisiveness is killing us today. It's time we learn the word of God and take our stand based on it and it alone. Our world is filled with corruption. John summed it up when he said, "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (I John 5:17). Decisiveness is a must for elders, preachers, Bible School teachers, parents and young people.

In closing, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" — P.O. Box 376, Arab, Ala. 35016.

Instrumental Music In Worship - Right Or Wrong?

Continued from Page 1

those who have no real devotion or spirituality in them, and whose animal nature flags under the oppression of the church service, I think that instrumental music would be not only a desideratum, but an essential prerequisite to fire up their souls to even animal devotion. But I presume to all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids would be as a cowbell in a concert."

The new Testament (thus the teaching of Christ) calls for vocal music in such passages as: I Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12.

The basic principle involved is that we do not have a right to ADD TO or TAKE FROM the scripture. God has told us what He requires of us and what He wants of us in worship. One such desire of His is for us to sing and make melody in our hearts in worship to Him. We have the obligation as His children to obey. — Rt. 1, Box 163AA, Nauvoo, Ala. 35578.

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"I am not
the Words of Truth"

to speak forth

— Acts 26:25

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 26

We live in an amazing age. We are truly in the age of scientific discovery. One indication of our expanding curiosity can be seen in the fact that between 1907 and 1966 over three and one-half million technical reports were listed in *Chemical Abstracts*. And it is expected that the number of technical reports will have doubled by 1978. Similar information explosions are typical of every scientific field. With all of this amazing input of scientific knowledge on matters largely concerning the planet earth, one would think that such an apparently elementary matter as uncovering reliable methods of determining essential dates in the earth's history would long ago have been settled. Yet the dating of prehistoric earth events has proven to be most illusive. Dr. A.E. J. Engle, Professor of Geology of California Institute of Technology commented once that the age of the earth accepted by most geologists rose from a value of 50 million years in 1900 to about 5 billion years by 1960.¹ He also suggested facetiously that "if we just relax and wait another decade, the earth may not be 4.5 to 5 aeons, as now suggested, but some 6 to 8 or even 10 aeons in age."² It appears that, in spite of all of our scientific knowledge, we cannot seem to agree on a reliable method for dating the earth.



BERT THOMPSON

There are, basically, two broad types of methods used in trying to date the earth and its contents. These two types of methods are: non-radiometric dating and radio-metric dating. We would like to examine, in this article and in those to follow, some of these types of dating methods. Let us begin with the non-radiometric dating methods.

POPULATION GROWTH

Most people today have heard of Dr.

Leakey's discoveries of bones which appear to be of a man-like creature who lived (according to dates given to us by evolutionists) 2.5 million years ago. Of course, in terms of actual written records, history only goes back a few thousand years. Calculations of any earlier dates must be based on uniformitarianism (applied to selected natural processes).

Calculations based on population statistics indicate that the human race is quite young.³

"For instance, assuming the average life span to be 70 years and the average generation length to be 35 years, then, starting with one family, the present world population would result in about 30 generations, or 1050 years, if the average family had four children growing to maturity. If the average number of children was only 2.5 per family, the average generation was 43 years and the average life-span only 43 years, a population of 3 billion people would have resulted in 100 generations, or 4300 years. That these calculations are based on fairly reliable assumptions is evident when this method of calculation is applied to the Jewish race. It is known that the nation Israel began about 3700 years ago with the patriarch, Jacob, and now numbers about 14 million Jewish people. In spite of mass persecutions and exterminations, a population of 13,900,000 people would result in 3700 years, assuming 2.4 children per family, and an average generation and life-span of 43 years.

"Now if the first man appeared 1 million years ago or 2.5 times less than is suggested by the evolutionist, and these very conservative growth rates applied during that period, the world population would be at present 102700 people. However, no more than 10100 people could be crammed into the known universe. . ."⁴

It is thus self-evident that if the world is as old as evolutionists claim, and if man has been on the earth as long as Dr. Leakey and his associates claim, the world should contain a conservative figure of 102700 people (that is 1 with 2700 zeroes behind it!). Yet the world has only 4 billion people in it. Does this not speak of a young earth?

AGE OF THE OCEANS

Evolutionists tell us that the age of the earth can be determined by the various elements in the oceans. Studies conducted by evolutionary scientists have found that according to the elements in the oceans, an age of 2.6 billion years can safely be attached to the oceans (this figure is based on the residence time in the ocean of sodium). What is not commonly made public information is that using these same elements and the same exact schemes used to calculate the 2.6 billion years (in the case of sodium), it is also possible to date the oceans as being (are you ready for this??) - 80 years old (in the case of cesium in the oceans).⁶

In Dr. Melvin A. Cook's classic work, *Prehistory And Earth Models*, Dr. Cook points out that uranium salts are being carried into the oceans over 100 times as fast as they are being removed via salt spray and other means.⁷ According to Sverdrup, about 6x10¹⁰ grams of uranium flow into the ocean each year. Data presented by Holland and Kulp suggest that the total uranium in the oceans is less than 1017 grams.⁸

"If we assume that the uranium has been carried into the oceans at this same rate and that there was no uranium in the oceans at time zero (this assumption of unchanging rates is commonly known as the principle of 'uniformitarianism'), then an upper limit of one million years is obtained for the age of the oceans. This value is much smaller than the age of the oceans, 3.5-4.0 billion years, accepted by the evolutionist."⁹

"The uranium, sodium, nickel, magnesium, silicon, potassium, copper, gold, silver, mercury, lead, tin, aluminum, carbonate, sulfate, chlorine, calcium, lithium, titanium, chromium, manganese, antimony, tungsten, barium, molybdenum, and bicarbonate concentrations (and many others) in the oceans are much less than would be expected if these elements and compounds were being added to the oceans at the present rate for thousands of millions of years. Some, for

(Continued On Page 4)



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 26:25

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FROM THE EDITOR

The Real Difference In Translations

When Solomon said, "Of making many books there is no end," he likely did not have in mind the multiplicity of so-called translations of the Bible; but his words seem to fit the situation with respect to this matter. As little as we like to admit it, the real Hebrew and Greek scholars among us are few; and the rest of us must depend largely upon them for



BOBBY DUNCAN

our understanding of the original text, and of how it should be translated. This is not to say that one who is familiar with the teachings of the Bible cannot recognize error that it taught in a so-called translation. It is for this reason that serious Bible students reject such works as *The Living Bible* and *Good News For Modern Man*. It is also the reason that - generally to a lesser degree - the Revised Standard Version is rejected by many conservative Bible students. To read "young woman" in Isaiah 7:14, instead of "virgin" is enough within itself to cause the most serious Bible student to become disenchanted with the RSV. This is especially true since the inspired quotation of this verse in Matthew 1:23 uses a word which can only be translated "virgin." It can be shown, of course, that there are also some errors of translation in the Authorized Version (such as the use of the word "Easter" in Acts 12:4).

However, it is the firm conviction of this writer that the difference between translations is not merely which one contains the fewest errors, or which one is easiest to read. Assuming the translators are scholars who are

capable of doing the job, the most important thing is the attitude of the translator toward the text and toward his work as translator. It is in this area that we believe the Authorized Version and the American Standard Version excel. Their translators were committed to the proposition that the original text of Scripture is the verbally inspired word of God; and that it was their job as translators to set forth in English the equivalent of the original text, without regard to the meaning of the text.

This attitude is demonstrated in the AV and the ASV by the use of italicized words. In translating from one language to another it is often necessary for the translator to supply one or more words for which there are no corresponding words in the original. It is these words supplied by the translators that we read in italics. These italicized words indicate an attitude. It is an attitude on the part of the translators - an attitude which says to the reader: "We want you to know, as much as is possible, the exact words recorded by the inspired writers. And when it becomes necessary for us to supply a word, we want you to know exactly which words we ourselves have supplied, even though we believe these words essential to the clear understanding of the text."

Contrast this with the attitude of the RSV translators. They saw no need to italicize

words which they themselves supplied. When one reads the RSV he has no way of knowing which words are supplied by the translators and which words were translated from corresponding words in the original text. Granted, there may be some cases where the practice of italicizing is a little misleading. But the point we are making is that the practice itself demonstrates the attitude of the translators toward the original text and toward their work as translators. We can understand this, even though we might not know and aleph from an acorn.

Having so said, we add the following: We do not believe preachers should be branded as liberal just because they may prefer to use the RSV. We strongly question their wisdom in doing so, but we do not believe that this alone proves them liberal. We hate to see brethren alienated and fellowship destroyed over the matter of translations. We believe elders have the right to insist that their Bible teachers use only the AV or the ASV. We believe college administrations and editors of papers have the same right. (In WORDS OF TRUTH, quotations are from these two, unless otherwise noted, and then only to emphasize a certain point.) But in matters of judgment, there should be liberty. All do not have to follow the same policy.

Sex Perversion Promoted By Local Media

LEONARD WILSON

On October 25th at 6:30 p.m. WAPI-TV in Birmingham opened "a new can of worms" in the realm of media propaganda at the local level. In presenting a friendly interview with an avowed homosexual they have perhaps unwittingly promoted acceptance of this abnormal behavior.

While they suggested that discretion be used as to children's being allowed to watch the presentation, they knew assuredly this was an hour of day (just at dark) when more children would be viewing television than at any other time.

When the public media presents this type program they are in essence promoting the subject advocated. They should know that even in this day of openness and promiscuity there are some subjects best not discussed.

Granted I may have been brought up in a sheltered environment; however, I never heard of a sex pervert until I was a freshman in college. I certainly have not suffered any damage in being so sheltered and submit that the present young generation would be better off if so sheltered.

The homosexual who was featured on WAPI-TV was promoting the line of "sex preference" and yet at the same time stated that by age five it is already determined if one is to be a sex pervert. How obviously contradictory! Surely if it's just a matter of preference the choice would be made by a sexually responsive person, which no one is at age five.

There is no escaping the morality of the question of sex perversion for God has spoken on this subject. The very first commandment given to man by God was to ". . . be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. . ." (Gen. 1:28). No homosexual, be it man or woman, can keep this command of God while practicing his perversion.

In Bible history there are examples of God's people's violating his laws pertaining to the normal male-female relationship but no example of his followers participating in sex perversion. Both the Mosaic Law and

Christianity condemn perversion.

The ancient city of Sodom was destroyed by God because the people were so exceedingly wicked. It is from the very name of this place that the definitive term for sex perversion is derived. See Genesis 19 for a clear picture of the perversion there and the resulting destruction. God gives up people to vile affections and reprobate minds in the area of changing the natural use to that which is against nature (Romans 1:22-32). We also know that there is no inheritance of the kingdom for the unrighteous, and specifically the effeminate and the abusers with mankind (I Cor. 6:9). It also should be noted that the law is made for the disobedient and specifically for them that defile themselves with mankind (I Tim. 1:9). In Jude 7 there is the reminder that the Lord destroys unbelievers and specifically those as in Sodom who go after strange flesh.

The pervert on WAPI-TV did allude to the religious question and stated that it was a matter of interpretation. No, in light of the scripture, it is not a matter of interpretation but a matter of whether one believes what God has said on the subject and, indeed, demonstrated in the case of Sodom.

Morality is not the only aspect of the perversion question, because those who have raised the issue have made it into a political controversy also. On this, as on any other subject touching morality, Christians should use their influence in whatever forum the issue may be presented, including the political arena.

I conclude that sex perversion is not a matter of "preference" or "civil rights," as the media and those practicing this type debauchery would indicate; but, rather it is a matter of good morals and simple obedience to God. All who profess to be decent should take a stand on this issue and, in addition, should protest the news media's promotion of this obvious sin. — Box 947, Jasper, Al. 35501.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods).

"When, and by whom, were the chapter-and-verse divisions inserted into our Bible?"

Some sort of recognized and acceptable arrangement and classification of the books of the Bible, and of the books themselves is obviously essential to an orderly and effective study thereof, and as a matter of convenience various systems have been utilized from an early period for this purpose. Difficulties of studying, in detail, the sacred writings, other than merely reading them consecutively, is apparent - their study by subjects would be virtually impossible - without some system of division.

The familiar chapter-and-verse arrangement was unknown in the first century; and our Lord makes mention of a division of the old Testament into "the law, the prophets and the psalms" (Luke 24:44). This followed the common Jewish arrangement of that day which consisted of *The Law* (the five books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), *The Prophets*, divided into the "former" and the "later," the former being the books of Joshua, Judges, first and second Samuel, first and second Kings; the latter including the major and minor prophets; and *The Hagiographa*, (Holy writings, the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah, and the Chronicles). Incidentally, first and second Kings were regarded as one book as were first and second Chronicles.

These divisions were subdivided into a small section, and these, in turn, into still smaller ones, so that it was possible to locate with comparative ease any portion and to identify it by its sub-section. For example, far back in an early day in Israel the law - the books of Moses - was divided into *Parashahs*, and the prophets into *Haphtarahs*, and these were subdivided into smaller sections called *Psukim*, roughly comparable to our verse divisions.

Thus, the division of the Bible, for purposes of study and reference is very ancient, and grew out of the necessity of the case. When originally written, the scriptures were not only without such division, there were no spaces between words, and the text would appear to us to be one word continued indefinitely! To illustrate: Gen. 1:1 would read,

INTHEBEGINNINGGODCREATEDTHE HEAVENSANDTHEEARTH.

Imagine, therefore, the problems involved in such study without the marks of distinction now characteristic of our Bibles.

The difficulties facing students of the Old Testament text, in this respect, were also true of New Testament readers, and early in the second century efforts were begun to work out some acceptable arrangement. Jerome divided the book of Matthew into "breves" (long chapters) and "capitula" short chapters; Titian (born in 172 A.D.), in his Harmony of the books of the gospel, had a similar arrangement. It was the thirteenth century, however, before the chapter divisions, as we know them, were made. There is uncertainty regarding the identity of him who did this;

some attribute it to cardinal Hugo de Sancto Caro; others, to Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, about 1215 A.D. The verse divisions were inserted by Robert Stephens in 1551, while riding horseback from Paris to Lyons, France. It is said that as he rode along, he had his Greek Testament open and amused himself by dividing the chapters into verse - a division which he later incorporated into an edition of the Greek Testament which he published in 1551. On occasion, *the horse must have jogged in the wrong place*, because his divisions were not always properly made, many instances of which may be cited. Such was also true of the chapter divisions made three hundred years earlier. Examples of this

are very numerous (Matt. 9:38 and 10:1; Acts 7:60 and 8:1). It was to avoid the obvious defects resulting from such unfortunate divisions that the American Standard Version utilized the paragraph system by which an attempt was made to present the subject matter in a fashion more in harmony with the original text. It is important for students of the Bible to keep in mind that the chapter and verse divisions, the paragraphs, the chapter headings, the center references and the chronological data appearing in some editions of the Bible are of human and not divine origin, and should be utilized with this in mind. As aids to study, they are beneficial but they are no part of the inspired text.

The Greatness Of The Church

The church of Christ is the greatest institution the world has ever known. It is a divine institution and we should never think of it in terms of an ordinary worldly thing, nor should we act toward it as such. The church is Christ's Kingdom on earth over which he reigns (Matt. 16:16-18). One cannot be loyal to Christ without being loyal also to his kingdom, the church. Christians and the world need to appreciate the church more. We will now notice some characteristics of its greatness.



JOHN WADDEY

The Church is Great Because of Its Founder. The founder is a most important factor in the merit of any organization. He sets it in order as to its functions. He gives it a code or standard of operation. His wealth and manliness furnished the life-blood of the institution. An organization will usually reflect the spirit and ideals of its founder. Jesus founded the church (Matt. 16:18). He did all of these things for his church. It is our obligation to reflect his divine spirit and ideals in the life and conduct of the church. Paul exhorts us to "have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. . ." (Phil. 2:5). Again, he writes, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I am of Christ" (I Cor. 11:1).

The Church is Great Because of the Price Paid for It. Most worldly concerns were founded to enrich the founder. Even many churches began for this purpose. The Lord's church was not established for financial gain. What could the Creator want to extract from the work of his own hands? (See John 1:3) His purpose for the church was to benefit lost mankind. He purchased the church with his own blood when he died the accursed death on Calvary (Acts 20:28). To give us the church he humbled and emptied himself of his equality with the Father and became a servant of men, willing even to die for humanity (Phil. 2:5-8). He taught mankind that "it is more blessed to give them to receive" (Acts 20:35).

The Church Is Great Because of Its Relation to Christ. There are several ways of comparing or describing the church. It is the spiritual body of which Christ is head. (Eph. 1:22). It is the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:22, 32). The Church is the kingdom of Christ and he reigns as its only king and lawgiver (Matt. 16:18-19). It is his army and he is our captain and leader (Heb. 2:10; II Tim. 2:3-4). The church is his family, for they do the will of his Father in heaven (Matt. 12:50). There is a certain honor that comes from intimate association with great people. How much

more honor is there to the church to be so wonderfully associated with King Jesus! While we ponder this point, ask yourself, "Can I be saved out of Christ's kingdom; out of his army; out of his family?" The obvious answer is no. But since to be in his church is to be in all of these, to be a member of his church is to be saved.

The Church is Great Because of Its Mission. The great purpose of the church is to save lost men from sin and damnation by winning them to Jesus. It is charged with preaching the gospel to the whole creation (Mk. 16:15). It helps sinners reform their lives and be translated into God's kingdom on earth (Col. 1:13). It prepares men for heaven (Eph. 4:11-15; II Pet. 1:10-11).

Christ's church is not a political power like Catholicism, nor is it an economic power like the Latter Day Saints church. It is not war-like like Islam. Rather, the church evangelizes, telling all men the good news about Christ and salvation. It serves the unfortunate and keeps Christians in faithful service (Eph. 4:11-12). As a great beacon light, it holds forth the word of life to a world lost in the darkness of sin and error (I Tim. 3:15).

The Church is Great Because of Its Blessings. James tells us that every good and perfect gift comes down from God (I:17). These blessings are available to humanity WITHIN the church. There are certain privileges and blessings available to men in America. You may read of these blessings in a book or hear of them from others, but you will not receive them until you enter in. So with the church. You must become a member to enjoy the benefits. Salvation in heaven awaits faithful members of the church (Eph. 5:23). Every spiritual blessing is available in Christ, i.e., in his church (Eph. 1:3-7). There are such wonderful privileges as sonship to God, fellowship and providential care from God. There are great opportunities to serve God and your fellow man in the greatest institution on Earth, as we work to make the world a better place in which to live. Really, there is no way adequately to measure these rich blessings.

The Church Is Great Because of the People Who Compose It. They are called Christians because they strive to be like Christ. They are called saints because they are the ones who are dedicated to God's service. They are in the world, yet they do not live like the sinful world (John 17:14). True Christians are honorable, humble, generous, pure, well-informed, truthful, faithful, benevolent, devoted, diligent, and loyal. No, they are not perfect, nor are they angels. But with God's help they are daily growing into the image of Christ by the renewing of their minds (Rom. 12:1-2). What great joy it is to be a part of God's

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Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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example, nitrates and uranium, do not break down or recycle like salt. Their small concentrations are then taken as an accurate indicator that the oceans are a few thousand years old."10

When the creationist sees figures ranging from 80 years to 2.6 billion years using the elements in the oceans, he insists that these discordant rates demonstrate: (1) uniformity is erroneous, and/or; (2) short age can be argued with equal scientific ease. According to evolutionary uniformitarianism, the oceans should have much greater quantities of these elements in them. But they do not. In fact, the amounts of these elements which we *do find* in the oceans are strong evidence for a young earth - are they not??

ACCUMULATION OF WATER IN THE OCEANS

Evolutionary scientists who suppose the earth has "evolved" over 4-5 billion years' time, agree that most of the water in the ocean has originated from under the earth's surface due to volcanic action. Many volcanologists believe that it is probable that all of the water in the ocean was accumulated in this way.

Just how much time would it take to produce 315 million cubic miles of water, which is the total water in the ocean, by volcanic action alone?

"If only seventy volcanoes the size of the Mexican volcano, Paricutin, had produced 0.001 cubic mile of water per year all of the water in the ocean would accumulate in 4.5 billion years.

"There are over 600 active and 10,000 dormant known volcanoes in the world at present, not including those under the oceans. It would have taken 600 active volcanoes of the activity of Paricutin about one half billion years to fill the oceans, instead of the assumed 4.5 billion years.

"Many geologists, such as Engle and Fenneman, agree that volcanic activity has been much greater in the past than at present. For instance, Fenneman states that the Columbian Plateau of the northwestern United States, which covers over 200,000 square miles, resulted from a 'lava flood at least several thousand feet deep.' The vast Canadian Shield is believed to have been formed by volcanic activity 'during vast mountain making upheavals.' There are other evidences of titanic volcanism and earth movement in the distant past all around the world on a scale not known today. We may safely assume that water was spewed forth out of the earth at an enormously greater rate than the present rate during the age when the vast lava shields were being formed. Also, it seems probable that much water was in the ocean since the beginning. Thus the creationist model, which postulates a recent creation of the oceans as well as the land, seems to agree, better than the evolutionary model, with the observed facts."11

If we assumed all of the water on this planet was produced through volcanic eruptions bringing water to the surface, by this means alone the present oceans would have been produced (even assuming no water to start with) in a much shorter time than evolutionists assume for the age of the earth. In like manner, if we extrapolate backwards billions of years using the present rate of rock accretion from volcanic activity, there would have been in the past a volume of rocks much larger than all of the rocks on all of the present continents. Is this not sound evidence

for a young earth???

(More next week)

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The Greatness Of The Church

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family on earth!

The Church is Great Because of Its Ultimate Goal. Paul taught the Ephesian Christians that Christ is the savior of the body (the church) and that he will one day present the church to himself in glory (Eph. 5:23, 27). In I Cor. 15:24, the same writer says, "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God. . . ." John, in a glorious vision, saw the new Jerusalem, the church, in the presence of God in the heavenly paradise. (Rev. 21:1-4; Heb. 12:22-23). Throughout eternity the church of Jesus Christ will reign in holy triumph with the loving Father, the victorious Son and the Holy Spirit.

Open Forum At The Fort Worth Lectures

WENDELL WINKLER

The Fort Worth Lectures, under the direction of the Brown Trail Church of Christ, 1801 Brown Trail, Bedford (Fort Worth), Texas 76021, home of the Brown Trail Preacher Training School, will be conducted January 15-19, 1978, with the theme being, "Premillennialism, True or False."

From 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. each day during the lectureship, there will be an Open Forum conducted. Hardeman Nichols will moderate the Forum on Monday with the topic being, "Questions on the Holy Spirit and Fellowship." Then on Tuesday, Flavil Nichols of Elizabethtown, Kentucky, will moderate the Open Forum with the theme being, "Questions on Difficult Texts of the Bible." On Wednesday, Roy Deaver will moderate the Forum on, "Divorce and Remarriage and Women's Work in The Church." On Thursday, Roy Lanier, Sr., from the Bear Valley School of Preaching will moderate the Open Forum with the theme again being,

We should realize that it is a matchless privilege to be a member of the greatest organization the world has ever known. Prophets predicted its coming. Kings and holy men desired to see the day. The rich and the poor, every devout God-fearing soul, even publicans and harlots, have eagerly sought to enter into the church of our Lord. We who are so privileged should constantly watch lest we by our conduct or speech shame or stain its holy reputation.

All men are invited to seek refuge within its sacred precincts. If you will let God wash away your sins, he will add you to His Church (Acts 2:47; I Cor. 12:13).

"Questions on Difficult Texts of the Bible."

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"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

A Letter From Gus Nichols About Fornication And Adultery

(Editor's Note: The following letter, written by the late, beloved brother Gus Nichols to his son, Flavil Nichols, was in reply to a question about fornication and adultery. Brother Gus Nichols was in a meeting at Lancaster, Ky. when he wrote the letter on June 25, 1941. Our sincere thanks to brother Flavil Nichols for making the letter available to us for publication. Incidentally, this week marks the second anniversary of the death of brother Nichols.)

Dear Son:

I have never accepted the idea that fornication could be committed with a married person, or that adultery was between married couples only. I have never believed this.

If fornication is only committed between unmarried couples, Paul was wrong when he charged that the act committed with a married woman was "fornication" (I Cor. 5). When this man had relations with his father's "wife" it is called "fornication," and therefore, the act is fornication, as well as adultery. The terms are sometimes used interchangeably in the Bible. To look on any woman, whether married or single, and whether the man be married or single, if the look is to lust, it is to commit adultery with her in his own heart (Mat. 5). If there is such a difference as some try to make, then to look upon a single woman would not be to commit adultery at all, but fornication; and this is not what Jesus said. The facts are, if one looks on a woman to lust after her, even if she be single and he also unmarried, he has committed "adultery" with her in his heart; and this proves that the word ADULTERY is sometimes applied to the act whether it be committed by a married or single person. James had in mind ANY WOMAN, when he said what he did about looking upon "a woman" to lust after her - it is ADULTERY whether she be married or single; and when

he said, "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her" has committed ADULTERY with her in his heart, he means "whosoever" - whether he be married or single. According to the theory, it would not be wrong for a single man to look upon a single woman to lust after her. This is absurd! And to say such an one would not be guilty of adultery is to deny the words of Jesus, just as it is a rejection of Paul's words to say the act committed with a married woman is not fornication (I Cor. 5). So, whether the act be committed with the married or unmarried, it is adultery or fornication. Where the King James Version gives the two words in Gal. 5:19-21 the A.S.V. gives only one of the terms to cover the whole ground.


Then the idea that fornication, and the right to divorce and remarriage, is only the act committed before marriage, and not the act if committed after marriage, is a foolish theory and too absurd to need serious reply. It is based on the false theory that "fornication" is the name of the act for the unmarried, and "adultery" the word to describe the act for married couples. This is not always true, as shown above.

Thayer presents the truth when he says "fornication" means first of all and properly "illicit sexual intercourse IN GENERAL." This settles the matter with all who regard scholarship, and the Bible arguments above presented. When Thayer says later in defining the word ADULTERY that it is distinguished from that other word, he does not mean the "not used of the same act, just as the word 'Christ' is distinguished from the word 'Savior,' yet both are applied to the Son of God: Since PORNE is the feminine form of the word - the form used of or to denote that a woman committed the act - Thayer says, "In the New Testament, ANY WOMAN INDULGING IN UNLAWFUL

SEXUAL INTERCOURSE." "Any woman," would include a married woman. If you will see Bagster's Analytical Greek-English Lexicon, you will see, I think, that only one definition will be given for all forms of the word - that changing to the feminine does not change the root idea of its being committed by "any woman," not just a married woman.

Now, it will be admitted that the two words ("adultery" and "fornication") do not mean the same in all places; but this is just as true of thousands of other words. The word in the Greek for "church" is applied to a mob in Acts 19, and not to the church of God. But the word does not always mean a mob by any means. This is not its primary meaning - not its proper meaning. But Thayer says of fornication under "A" which means its first meaning, that its proper meaning, its primary meaning, or its general meaning, is "Of illicit sexual intercourse IN GENERAL" - meaning between married or unmarried. This is its "proper" meaning, its primary or general meaning. Then, of course, its secondary meaning would differ from this, its restricted or limited meaning would be such act committed by the unmarried, just as the restricted meaning of the Greek for "church" is a mob. The rule of interpretation forces the honest reader to accept and use the "proper" or primary meaning of a word, unless such a meaning is absurd or contradictory to the context and general teaching on the subject.

Brother G.C. Brewer wrote an article to the Advocate some years ago in which he discussed the theory of speculation under consideration and exposed it from the lexicons and scripture. I wish you had that article at hand for the use of the references given. (Being in Kentucky, I am a way from my books and have only a few notes with me.) If



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sake of realism that these objectionable things are presented so vividly. Such a suggestion is an insult to the intelligence of the viewing audience. Is it to be assumed that the viewers are so stupid that they will not be able to understand what is taking place unless every detail is explicitly portrayed? But even more important, such a suggestion is a reflection upon the intelligence of the writers and producers of the program. It is to be assumed that those who write and produce these programs are not intelligent enough to make the point they wish to make without wallowing in the garbage dump? Those who wrote and produced programs in the early days of television could do it; and those who wrote and produced movies before the days of television could do it. Why can't it be done

now? (This is not to say that everything produced in the earlier days was clean and wholesome; but we all recognize a difference.) If it were really true that the American viewer is demanding all the crime, violence, sex, and filthy language that is on television, then the studios of Walt Disney would have gone bankrupt a long time ago. It might be interesting to observe that, while many of the major studios were struggling for survival just a few years ago, Disney continued to enjoy great prosperity.

THANK YOU, WYUR! Thank you for accepting your responsibility to refuse, in this particular case, to air a program which, in your judgment, had no contribution to make toward the general well-being of your viewing audience.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 27

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of our examination of the age of the earth).

AGE OF THE ATMOSPHERE

Another of the methods of non-radiometric dating included in our list concerns the age of the atmosphere. Just as the uranium content is building up in the oceans via drain-off of continental rivers, in an analogous manner helium-4, the most abundant isotope of helium, is flowing into the atmosphere.



BERT THOMPSON

This helium-4 is coming from at least three sources: (1) the radioactive decay of uranium and thorium in the earth's crust and oceans adds a large amount of helium-4 to the atmosphere; (2) cosmic helium, mainly from the sun's corona, is constantly being added to the atmosphere; (3) almost as much helium is produced by cosmic ray-caused nuclear reactions in the earth's crust as is produced by the uranium and thorium radioactive decay.¹

The atmosphere now contains approximately 3.5×10^{-15} grams of helium-4.² And the rate of helium formation is about 3.0×10^{-11} grams per year.³ If this rate of 3.0×10^{-11} grams/year is used to calculate the age of the earth, *the age of the earth becomes 12,000 years!!* Now for those folks who do not find that acceptable, let us examine the alternative.

"If we only consider the radioactive decay of uranium and thorium as the source of helium, if we assume that the decay rate of uranium and thorium has not changed during earth-history, if we assume that the rate of release of He-4 from earth's crust has been constant and if we assume a zero content of He-4 in the original atmosphere, the *maximum age of our atmosphere is 400 thousand years.*"⁴

However, suppose we assume (and these assumptions are not at all out of the question - rather, they are quite feasible) that: (1) the atmosphere is as old as the earth; (2) the atmosphere was created with a certain initial helium-4 content; (3) the normal annual influx of helium-4 from the sun's corona has added to the helium inventory, and; (4) one or more cataclysms in the solar system or within the earth may have added to the atmospheric helium content - then an age of about 10,000 years for the age of the earth is well within

reason.⁵

However, if (as evolutionists and uniformitarians claim) the earth is 4-plus billion years old, the atmosphere should contain at least 30 times more helium than it does at present. If it is assumed that the atmosphere is 4 billion years old, then a lot of helium-4 must have somehow escaped. Yet Dr. Ferguson of the Environmental Science Services Administration says, "The whole problem of how helium manages to escape from the earth's atmosphere remains unsolved. All of the suggested mechanisms are still highly speculative."⁶ Saunders points out that, "All of these mechanisms, however, have been seriously challenged."⁷ It would appear, then, that the theory of evolution is seriously challenged as well, would it not? And it would seem, at least to the informed reader, that uniformitarianism, which is supposed always to hold true, does not. It would also appear that the lack of helium-4 in the atmosphere speaks highly of a young earth - or so it would seem!

EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION

Many evolutionary geologists assume(!) that volcanic action and erosion of soil from hills and mountains and sedimentation into lakes, deltas, and oceans has been going on at more or less the same rate on the average as we have observed over the present period since scientists have been measuring these rates. B.F. Howell states:

"By many such measurements, it is possible to obtain average rates of deposition for the different types of sediment. . . Further evidence can be obtained by studying the rate of accumulation in alluvial fans, delta deposits, and elsewhere today. By studying exposed rocks all over the world, it is possible to draw up a universal stratigraphic column. In this, gaps in sedimentation at one locality are filled by entering the sections from other regions. When the thickness of each formation is divided by the normal rate of accumulation of that type of sediment, the time span represented by each unit (or type of a sediment) can be estimated. Addition of these times gives a figure for approximate age of any individual rock back to the beginning of the Cambrian period."⁸

So here we find the evolutionary geologist has attempted to set up a hypothetical "sediments" clock. What shall we say about this clock?

"There are many flaws in the 'sediments' clock. We should point out that not all geologists are happy with this 'clock.' But without question the great majority of the geologists and other earth scientists hold to

(Continued On Page 4)



A Salute To WYUR-TV

Several nights ago television station WYUR in Huntsville, Alabama announced that a certain regularly scheduled program would not be shown that night, "because of mature subject matter." We salute WYUR for this action. We believe it is in keeping with the best interests of the viewing audience, as well as sound



BOBBY DUNCAN

business practice. We believe this kind of action on the part of local television stations will do more to improve the quality of programs than anything that could be done by the viewers. Certainly every viewer should let his feelings be known to local stations, and to the networks and sponsors as well.

It has been demonstrated that the major networks and most local stations refuse to accept the responsibility for seeing that only decent shows are presented. In fact, it has reached the point that a good, clean television program is the exception, and not the rule.

The networks and the local stations may respond by saying that they show what the viewing audience wants to see. We question this! Are we to believe that the great majority of people cannot enjoy a program as much unless it is filled with scenes of violence and sex, and unless the characters use vile and filthy language? We challenge the networks to produce the names and addresses of those responsible Americans who complained that there was not enough violence, crime, sex, and filthy language on television.

It is sometimes suggested that it is for the

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by Guy N. Woods).

"How does God chastise his people? Please explain Heb. 12:5,6."

Some, among the Hebrew Christians to whom the author of the book of Hebrews wrote, were apparently becoming faint of heart and discouraged in the face of the fiery trials and bitter persecutions already falling upon them (Heb. 12:4, 5). They were either unmindful of, or were overlooking the fact that it is the lot of all who faithfully serve the Lord to suffer (II Tim. 3:12). They ought to have recalled the "exhortation" of the wise man who pointed out that God deals with Christians *as sons*: "My son regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, nor faith when thou art reproved of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he received" (Heb. 12:5, 6). This is a quotation from Proverbs 3:11, 12. This affirmation embodies a truth applicable in all times and places; and, the author of Hebrews cites it here in support of the premise that the burdens which the suffering saints were then being called upon to bear were actually proofs of God's love, not evidences of his indifference. We thus learn (a) God chastens his children; (b) this chastening has, as its object, our welfare, and it ought not to be lightly regarded; (c) it is one of the many evidences of God's love for us.

The word 'chastening' is from a Greek term (*paideia*) which describes the discipline and correction which wise parents regard as essential to the well-being and proper training of their children. That such is administered by parents is itself evidence of the parent-child relationship; and, the administration of discipline (chastisement) by the heavenly Father points to our sonship: "It is for chastening that ye endure; God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father chasteneth not? But if ye are without chastening, whereof all have been partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Heb. 12:8). Inasmuch as it is a characteristic of an earthly father to discipline and to correct his sons, we ought not to feel surprised when God does this for his children! Indeed, in the absence of such chastisement, there is the question whether one is really a true child or not. Since all legitimate children whose parents love them need correction, and are often punished for deviations from the right course; and, since this discipline is proof of the regard which the parents have for their children thus being corrected, were we without similar discipline from God, such would prompt serious questions regarding the genuineness of our sonship. God, in disciplining (chastening) us, is but following a course which even earthly fathers concede to be proper, wise, and necessary for their own offspring;

"Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" We respect and honor the memories of our fathers and mothers, even in those painful moments of chastisement, because we know that they did this for our good; therefore, we ought not to shrink from chastisement, as Christians,

since such chastisement has as its object our spiritual world to come. The object and end of the Lord's chastisement is vastly superior to that characteristic of earthly parents, worthy though such is:

"For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed good to them; but he for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness" (Heb. 12:10). Brief, indeed, was the period in which we received correction from our earthly parents; in the nature of the case, the period of the chastisements, and the benefits resulting therefrom, were necessarily limited; but, the chastening which we receive from God is not limited to our present existence, because it prepares us, by enabling us to become "partakers of his holiness," to live with him forever in the world to come.

Here, as always, where comparisons are drawn between the earthly and the heavenly, between what man does and what God does, care must be exercised in not pressing the comparison beyond the point intended. It was the apostle's purpose in this section of the Hebrew treatise to establish the premise that the corrective discipline which parents administer to their children is for the good of the children, and should be regarded as proof of the parents' love; similarly, when children of God feel his chastening hand they should not resent it, but accept it as a manifestation of love and fatherly concern.

But, how does God chasten us?

Does he send sorrow, suffering and bitter trial upon those whom he loves? Is he the actual author of the evil which often befalls our way? Surely not (Lam. 3:33; John 3:20). God does not afflict us willingly; he is tender and compassionate toward all of his children; and evil is not of God, but of the devil. We have seen that it was the design of the sacred writer to indicate a similarity between the need for, and the chastening received by, the children of earthly fathers, and that which God administers.

Why are children disciplined and corrected?

Children require periodic discipline because they have not conformed to the expressed will of their parents. In such instances, who provides the *occasion* for the discipline, the parents or the children? Who does the chastening? The parents. For whose failures? The children's. We, too, as children of the heavenly Father, are often thoughtless, frequently wayward, sometimes openly disobedient; thus, when God *allows* the natural and necessary consequences of violations of his laws, whether in the natural or spiritual realms, which follow poor judgment, unwise decisions, and, alas, overt acts of evil, to fall upon us, and we suffer the consequences thereof, God who is often said to do things, which he *allows* or *permits* (cf.

the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, which God is said to have done, and which he did by making demands on the king which Pharaoh, because of his rebellious heart, was unwilling to accede to, the fault being his, Ex. 4:21), wants us to see in these experiences the hand of divine wisdom, and the importance of avoiding those actions which must lead to such. If we are wise enough to see in the trials of life the importance of faithful obedience, then these trials are used of God as chastening instruments to bring us up to the divine standard. It is in these senses that we suffer chastisement in this life. It is an exceedingly wicked attribution to charge God with *sending* disease, death and physical destruction upon the children arbitrarily; earthly parents do not punish their children for disobedience done by others, or when the children have not been bad; and the assumption that God sometimes takes the lives of innocent children to punish wicked parents is utterly and completely false. God is good, not despotic, in his dealings with his children.

When we violate his law, walk contrary to his precepts, and live in disobedience to his will as, indeed, in some measure, all of us do, and we suffer the natural and inevitable consequences of the violation of the laws of God, we ought to see in the suffering which results there from God's will, an observation having the disciplinary effect of keeping us from engaging in such in future. In such instances, the just and proper penalties which attend disobedience will become chastening influences bringing us back to God. Such, the apostle affirms: "All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness" (Heb. 12:11). Thus, the lessons of chastisement - corrective discipline - though at the moment painful will, when properly learned, bear blessed fruit in our hearts and lives, and lead us into a life of righteousness.

But is there not some implication, in Hebrews 12:4-11, that persecution and oppression from evil-doers, *because Christians are good rather than bad*, is to be regarded as a form of divine chastisement? Yes, God suffers (not *sends*) bitter trials and persecution to come upon his children and uses such as a furnace to separate from them every element of character and disposition not good. It is in this way that "all things" work (out) to our good (Rom. 8:28) and we are "to count it all joy" when we fall into "manifold trials" (James 1:2). From these experiences, if we love God and do his will, we shall emerge strengthened, refined, and made fit for the Master's use!

The Fort Worth Lectures

WENDELL WINKLER

For years, the Fort Worth Christian College lectures and books were considered to be among the very finest in our brotherhood. When the college closed, the lectures, as such, ceased. Now, after several intervening years, though the college is no longer in operation, these lectures are being revived under the caption, "The Fort Worth Lectures," with the lectures being conducted by the Brown Trail congregation in Bedford, Texas, (which operates the Brown Trail Preacher Training School). This event will be ANNUAL.

PERTINENT DATA

(1) DATE. The first of the annual lectures will be conducted January 15-19, 1978. This time has been selected inasmuch as it does not conflict with any other college or schools of preaching lectureships.

(2) PLACE. The lectures will be conducted

in the very spacious meeting house of the Brown Trail congregation, located at 1801 Brown Trail, Bedford (greater Fort Worth), Texas.

(3) THEME. The theme for this first year's lectureship will be, "Premillennialism, True or False." This is a very live and relevant theme. There is hardly a denomination in existence, with a fundamental slant, that does not espouse this theory. Too, there is some misunderstanding, or a lack of understanding, concerning these matters even among us.

(4) OVERSIGHT. The lectureship will be conducted under the supervision of the Brown Trail eldership, with Wendell Winkler, local evangelist at Brown Trail, being the director. Sister congregations of the area are being asked to cooperate in this effort.

For further information write: Brown Trail Church of Christ, 1801 Brown Trail, Bedford, Texas 76021.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 2)

the view that the sedimentary rocks were laid down by volcanic and sedimentary processes over billions of years and that fossil remains of living plants and animals have been trapped and preserved in these sediments. But we have just noted that, quoting Howell, there are 'gaps in sedimentation.' There are not only 'gaps', but as one goes from place to place in the world, the order of recognizable sedimentation layers becomes disarranged. The geologist then keeps track of the 'age' of the sedimentary layer by studying 'index fossils.' At this point he assumes that plants and animals 'evolved' in slow stepwise fashion from one-celled beginnings up to the varieties found today. Thus, he concludes, when he finds an 'older' stratum on top of a 'younger' one according to the fossil evidence, that the order of the strata was changed by thrusting or folding after deposition, along with local erosion by floods and glaciers. When the actual local order of the strata does *not* confirm the theory of evolution, processes are postulated, sometimes plausible but often-times very implausible, which reconstructs an initial sediment (and fossil) order which does conform to the evolutionary theory. There is considerable evidence in the rocks contradictory to the theory of evolution."⁹

Since we have already covered in great detail in earlier articles the gaps in the fossil record, and the paucity of information regarding the "missing links," we will not dwell on that here. But we do want to point out that there are inconsistencies in regard to these "sediment clocks" which give the theory of evolution much problem. For example, Albrecht and Ourisson found unsaturated alcohol in the geological column dated at about 50 million years. This alcohol is found only in certain tropical plants and easily reacts with oxygen and acids. It is apodictically impossible for the alcohol to have existed that long without reacting chemically with acidic water or oxygen - yet evolutionary geologists say that it has.¹⁰

Meteorite showers have generally been believed to occur throughout earth history. However, W.H. Twenhofel makes the following startling assertion: "No meteorites have ever been found in the geologic column."¹¹ Other authorities concur. Ralph Stair states: "Neither tektites (glassy meteorites) nor other meteorites have been found in any of the ancient geological formations." Yet if the geological strata had been laid down over billions of years, then one would expect to find meteorites imbedded in each layer. Since this is not the case, the creationist model which visualizes the strata being deposited rapidly within a period of one or two years perhaps 5,000 years ago during the great flood fits the facts very well.

Furthermore, the Mississippi River dumps about 300 million cubic yards of sediment into the Gulf of Mexico each year. If that river were millions of years old, the Gulf would have long since been filled. Yet by measuring the rate of growth of the delta (about 250 feet per year), its age calculates to about 4,000 years.¹² If erosion has been occurring for thousands of millions of years, why are there still sharp cliffs? Why have not the continents been leveled, the oceans filled, and fossils dispersed? Why not - if the earth is 4-5 billion years old? Is not this evidence of a young earth??

(More Later)
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A Letter From Gus Nichols About Fornication And Adultery

(Continued From Page 1)

you are interested further you may read I Cor. 7 and see that Paul tells married men and women how to be true and satisfy each other because of the danger of "fornication" (I Cor. 7:1-5). The warnings against the danger of, and the awful sin of, fornication certainly include the idea of the act committed with the married as well as the act with the unmarried. To say the warnings against fornication are only to the unmarried in the church is ridiculous. (See Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25; I Cor. 5:1; 6:13, 18; I Thess. 4:3).

Note, too, that Jezebel, A MARRIED WOMAN, AHAB'S WIFE, is said to have committed "fornication" (Rev. 2:20-21). To fit this theory under review, it should have said

she committed "adultery," that a married woman cannot commit "fornication." This would be misleading if a married woman cannot commit FORNICATION, that is, if she only commits ADULTERY. See?

But enough about this matter. I mean to leave here early Saturday morning, and drive home in one day so as to preach Sunday, if the Lord wills. Will tell you more of the joy of this visit when I see you, and about seeing the graves of McGarvey, "Raccoon" John Smith, and Barton W. Stone, together with Cane Ridge Meeting House. Our meeting here is good.

Yours with much love,
Gus Nichols

Salt

REG ROGERS

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Colossians 4:6). Grace, here, is "charis", meaning, "attractiveness" (Arndt & Gingrich). Seasoned with salt means that your speech, words, conversations, remarks, talk, discourses - everything you utter, is savory, palatable to the ear, delicious to hear. It is very much like you had gone into a restaurant and ordered a steak: it is served and you reach for the salt only to be told that there is no salt on the plate! Nutrition is not the problem, taste is. You just don't eat steaks without salt. What if the waiter said, "No, we have no salt but we have cans and cans of garbage out back, I can smear your steak with that." Impossible? Yes, but that's exactly what many folk do: their conversations are full of information that is needed, but lacks savor: they substitute the garbage of dirty expletives, filthy epithets, risque quips and a little cussin' here and a little cussin' there. They have heard that such talk is salt speech, but it isn't. Salty speech is savory, fascinating, beautiful, interesting, unique, full of character, full of personality. Season your speech with this salt, and you will never lack hearers. - 17691 Pesante Rd., Salinas, Cal. 93907.

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"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

Please Remember The International Gospel Hour In Your 1978 Budget

During the latter part of 1977 many congregations will be making their congregational budgets for 1978. May I suggest some cogent reasons why you should consider the placement of The International Gospel Hour into your 78 budget? I believe everyone of these is potent in its scope.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The International Gospel Hour features the preaching of Brother V.E. Howard. He speaks on the weekly thirty minute, the weekly twenty-five minute, the weekly fifteen minute and the daily fifteen minute programs. The word gospel appears in the title of his program and quite appropriately and fittingly. The gospel of God's Son is the holy heartbeat of his program. He is pre-eminently a preacher of the gospel and has been for forty-five years. Most of these years have witnessed his pioneering work in radio evangelization. No one, absolutely no one, among us has done as much to reach the masses by radio as has V.E. Howard and much of it has been done at his own expense. He has majored in this type of work both in talents and time; both in money and means. He is a book, chapter and verse preacher. The day of the proof-text is not gone from his distinctive brand of gospel preaching. He does not fear the controversial. During the recently passed month of October he presented five courageous and clarion messages on Dangers of Modern Versions of the Bible. Very soon he will be presenting lessons on homosexuality. He and I are already working on this series. I will soon be sending him these scripts and he will add to, delete and accomodate them to fit

his style and the time allowed for their presentation. The name of Brother V.E. Howard is a synonym for soundness.

Brother Thomas B. Warren is speaker on the rapidly growing program of Five Gospel Minutes. The term gospel is the middle word in the name of his program. I hear his program hundreds of times annually since we have it daily in our listening area. His sermons are gospel motivated, gospel oriented and gospel filled. At the time this article is written he is discussing Proof of Pardon. Within recent weeks he has discussed lessons on the conversion of Saul, building a great marriage and Declarations from Calvary. Here is a five minute program that is distinctive and dynamic. Brother Warren is a man of tremendous depth and vast learning and yet he fills Five Gospel Minutes with the beauty of gospel simplicity. Like his fellow speaker, Brother V.E. Howard, Thomas B. Warren is a book, chapter and verse preacher. He is a Bible preacher. Both he and Brother Howard are good preachers; they are truly great preachers in every sense of that term.

Brethren Howard and Warren are men of Christian courage, of generous goodness, of intense integrity and of spotless reputation. They are men who recognize the vast value of the tremendous trust that is theirs. They know souls are at stake. They realize impressions are going to be made by what they say on each program for the potential for reaching millions is there. They desire those impressions to be on the side of truth, never on the side of error. Both of them know the truth; they believe the truth; they love the truth; they are capable of defending the truth against any and all opposition.

Eldershops want to know the character of the men they support in their mission work and rightly so. Here are two men who have been tried and tested over the years. In no sense of the term has either one come up deficient in the vastly important realm of real

Christian character. Here is a work you can put your congregational heart into with full confidence that congregational funds sent this direction will not be misplaced or misused.

The International Gospel Hour is under the able direction of the dedicated Nash congregation in Texarkana, Texas. This program is in sound hands. No question mark hangs over this good congregation or its fine eldership. They are set for the defense of the gospel. They want Brethren Howard and Warren to tell it like it is. In all my relationships with them as a script writer for Brother Howard I have found them to be men of honor and integrity. To date they have offered no criticism of any of the hard hitting and straightforward script material I have prepared and sent to Brother Howard.

I admire this great congregation because they have been loyal to the program even though expenses usually exceed intake of funds. Right now the program is in the red for 1977. It is not nearly as much as it was when I wrote relative to the program in 1975 and 1976 and this is due largely to all the added help, both congregationally and individually, that has been received during this current year of 1977. But stations are being added all the time and production costs continue to go up. Why not send Nash a \$10, \$25, \$50 or \$100 last-of-the-year congregational or individual contribution to help end 1977 in the black? My family and I are going to do this. Then why not send them a regular amount from your congregation during all of 1978? You will be glad you did when 1978 is ended, and we of the program will be glad also.

Since I wrote an article about this program in 1975 for some of our gospel publications the program has about doubled. Now the program is on 165 to 170 stations every week. Some 300 tapes are sent out weekly. That means 15,000 programs will have been aired for the year of

(Continued On Page 4)



Words Of Truth

"I am not made, must noble fee-
tus, but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness."
— Acts 20:25

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FROM THE EDITOR

An Often Perverted Passage

To pervert a passage is to turn it from its true meaning, or misapply it. There are many passages which have been perverted in an effort to sustain some doctrine which is not true. A curse rests upon those who would pervert the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:7-9). Hence we should be scrupulously careful not to become guilty of turning a passage from its true meaning.



BOBBY DUNCAN

One passage which is often perverted by members of the church of Christ is I Cor. 8:13, which says: "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." This passage is often used in an effort to sustain the idea that, in the realm of expedience, whatever displeases or angers a brother should be left off. Hence, the elders of a congregation may unanimously agree to do a thing, but when some good brother or sister registers his objection to the thing, there will be a change of plans and this passage will be quoted to try to justify the change.

When a thing like this takes place, at least two sins have been committed. One is the sin of perverting the word of God. Paul did not in this passage, or any other, imply that any good work should be left off simply because it offends some brother. The offending of a brother was not under discussion in this passage. Rather Paul was discussing causing a brother to offend. It is one thing to make a brother angry or displease him, but it is another to cause a brother to "offend" or sin

against God. It is a perversion of this passage to use it to justify leaving off some good work simply because it displeases some brother or makes him angry.

The second sin which is committed in a case like that described above is the sin of yielding to those who would legislate where God has not legislated. Paul forbade such when he said: "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 sabbeth days" (Col. 2:16). To allow men to "judge" us respecting these optional matters is a violation of this passage, and is, therefore, sin.

Paul practiced what he preached in regard to this matter. Concerning those who tried to

take away the liberty of the Gentile Christians and bring them into bondage to their own laws, Paul said: "To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" (Gal. 2:5). Notice why Paul refused to give place to the legislations of men: "that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." To have yielded to the demands of those who would legislate where God has not would have been a hindrance to the progress of the gospel.

Is it any greater sin for those in the denominational world to pervert Eph. 2:8,9 than it is for members of the Lord's church to pervert I Cor. 8:13?

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 28

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of our examination of the age of the earth).

AGE OF EARTH AS DETERMINED BY INFLUX OF COSMIC DUST

Cosmic dust is presently filtering down to the earth from interplanetary space at the rate of about 14 million tons per year.¹ Hans Pettersson of the Swedish Oceanographic Institute calculated, in fact, that approximately 14.3 million tons of meteoritic dust (of the type which contains nickel) settles to earth each



BERT THOMPSON

year.² The nickel content of this cosmic material is much higher than nickel concentration in earthly material. On this basis the amount of cosmic dust on the earth and in the oceans can be determined.

If the earth has been here 5 billion years, then, according to Isaac Asimov, if the rate has continued at 14.3 million tons of dust per year (i.e.: uniformitarianism) there should be a layer of meteoritic dust at least 54 feet thick all over the earth.³ Yet no such layer is to be found!

"Since meteorites contain, on the average, more than 300 times more nickel than earth rocks, the meteoritic dust would have to be dispersed or mixed throughout the upper three miles of crust to yield the present crustal nickel content, - assuming, of course, that the crust contained no nickel initially and that the rate of fall-out has been constant for 5 billion years. Employing the same assumptions, Asimov states, ' . . . the dust would account for all the iron in the upper 1½ miles of the earth's solid crust, which certainly accounts, too, for all the iron we've managed to dig up.' Again, since it is quite reasonable to suppose that the meteorite fall-out rate has been higher in the past, and that the earth was created with a certain iron and nickel crustal content, we may conclude that the earth is much younger than 5 billion years - even younger than 100,000 years."⁴

Since this "cosmic dust layer" should be present in-depth, but is not, does this not speak to the failure of uniformitarianism - and to the distinct possibility of a young earth?

AGE OF EARTH AND VOLCANIC ACTIVITY

The reader may be surprised to discover that if only 4 volcanoes of the same size and activity as the Mexican volcano, Paricutin, had been erupting here and there each year for the past 5 billion years, about 7.2 x 10⁻⁸ cubic miles of lava would have been produced.⁵

This is approximately the volume of the continental crusts (7.9x10⁻⁸ cubic miles). But, if 1,000 volcanoes had been producing lava at the rate Paracutin did, then the earth's crust would have taken just 20 million years to be formed by volcanic action alone!

Yet geologists tell us that there is evidence of much greater volcanic activity in the past than we experience at present. There are, we are told, a great many types of rock and ash which are of volcanic origin. However, only a small percentage of crustal rocks are obviously lavas! If we extrapolate backwards billions of years using the present rate of rock accretion from volcanic activity, there would have been in the past a volume of rocks much larger than all of the rocks on all the present continents! Yet there is not. WHY?

It appears that an origin of the earth some 10,000 or less years ago is not at all unreasonable in light of the volcanic activity discussed here. In fact, a young earth is what the data seem to indicate!

AGE OF EARTH AND PRESSURES IN OIL DEPOSITS

The scholarly and capable Wayne Jackson, in an article under the title of "Evidence Of A Young Earth" in the *Christian Courier* (October, 1973, pp 21,23) gives a review of one of the most telling arguments in regard to the earth's relative youth. We would like to quote him here in this regard:

"Deep under the crust of the earth lie huge reservoirs of oil and water. Many of these reservoirs are characterized by extremely high fluid pressures. It is this high pressure that produces the 'gushers' with which well-drillers are so familiar. Now scientists are aware of the fact that these underground pressures are gradually diminishing (much like air seeping from the tire of an automobile). What intrigues them is this: If this seepage has been going on for eons (and they assume these reservoirs are millions of years old) why hasn't the pressure been completely diminished? It is an acknowledged fact that the rock above these pressure pools is, even under the strictest conditions, porous enough to allow the pressure to escape in a matter of a few thousand years. Dr. Melvin A. Cook (Professor at the University of Utah, President of IRECO Chemicals and 1968 winner of the Nitro Nobel Award) declares: ' . . . the permeability of the rock above the trapped high pressure fluid zone. . . is so high even in the tightest traps that the fluid will leak out of the formation at the prevailing pressures in only a few thousand years.' ('Formation and Dating of Oil and Coal Deposits,' *Bible-Science Newsletter*, Jan. 15, 1970).

"This phenomenon is quite puzzling to many scientists who honestly concede: 'We don't understand it.' We believe these men of

(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods).

"What were the basic causes of digression which led to the introduction of instrumental music into the worship, and other departures from the truth resulting in the formation of the Christian Church denomination?"

Shortly before the turn of the present century a movement originated in the church of Christ that resulted in what is commonly known as the Christian Church. The view is widespread that the cause of this schism and resultant division was instrumental music in the worship and societies in the work of the church. Technically speaking, this is incorrect. True, these were major differences between those who adhered to the original pattern of things and those who went out from us; yet instrumental music and the societies were *affects* rather than *causes* - symptoms of a spiritual malady chronic and fatal in its nature.

Dr. A.W. Fortune, sometime professor in the College of the Bible, Lexington, Ky., and "pastor" of the Central Christian Church of that city, in his book, "The Disciples in Kentucky," sets forth the factors which led to the division as follows: "The controversies through which the Disciples have passed from the beginning to the present time have been the result of two different interpretations of their mission. There have been those who believed it is the spirit of the New Testament church that should be restored, and in our method of worship the church must adapt itself to changing conditions. There have been those who regarded the New Testament church as a fixed pattern for all time, and our business is to hold rigidly to that pattern regardless of consequences. Because of these attitudes, conflicts were inevitable" (Page 383).

This is, we believe, a fair and impartial statement of the divergence of views that obtained then, and are now characteristic of the two groups. Because of these differences in attitude toward the Scriptures, it was, as Dr. Fortune suggests, inevitable that division should come; and it came shortly before the turn of the present century. Those who had worked and worshipped together in an effort to plant again the cause of primitive Christianity in a land torn by division and cursed by denominationalism, divided among themselves, and the result was that another denomination came into existence! Ironically enough, those whose avowed mission in life was the utter destruction of all denominations became but another denomination, and thus built again the things they had once destroyed! Today the Christian Church admits its denominational status, and glories in the fact!

Instrumental music and the societies were, therefore, simply symptoms of the disease which lurked unseen - outward manifestations of an inward attitude wholly foreign to that which had characterized the Restoration Movement in its inception. Nor did this difference in attitude toward the Scriptures originate with this movement. It is the same as that which occasioned the famous controversy between Luther and Zwingli: whether we are at liberty to do anything not

expressly forbidden, as Luther contended, or are bound by what is written, and must, therefore, do nothing for which there is not a "thus saith the Lord," or an approved apostolic precedent, as Zwingli argued. This, too, is the point of issue between those who insist that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is a sufficient rule of faith and practice, and those who consider it a book of raw principles only, and therefore, adapted to changing times and conditions. The former have always repudiated creeds, confessions of faith, and church manuals, while the latter have not hesitated to advocate them - indeed, to urge them as legitimate instruments to adopt the truth to present-day conditions. This is the door through which instrumental music, missionary societies, creeds, infant sprinkling, sprinkling and pouring as substitutes for baptism, and many other things admittedly not taught in the New Testament, were brought in. While all have not been as frank as Mr. Beecher, the eminent denominational preacher of an earlier generation, who said he practiced infant baptism for the same reason that he used an ox yoke - *he had tried them and both worked* - it is yet a fact that this is the real reason why so many things unauthorized by the Scriptures are practiced without question today.

Such an attitude is, of course, wholly foreign to that which characterized those who launched and fought the early battles of the Restoration Movement. Those pioneers of the faith were determined to do nothing for which there is no express command or approved precedent; and they are willing to speak only when the Scriptures speak and remain silent where the Scriptures are silent. So long as these principles were adhered to, unity prevailed, and the cause of primitive Christianity spread with a rapidity equaled only by that of the apostolic age. The Christian Church of today, is therefore, a total apostasy from the teaching of Campbell, Stone, Scott, Lard, and the others who were in

the forefront of the effort to restore New Testament Christianity to the world. This, we believe, will not be seriously questioned by many of those who belong to that institution. Certainly those who boast of their denominational status will not insist on maintaining harmonious views with a man who required a daily paper in New Orleans to publish a correction of a statement representing him as the "head and founder" of a great denomination! Declaring that they did him too much honor - that he had always repudiated all human heads and names for the people of the Lord - Alexander Campbell demanded and received a correction of the notice erroneously inserted. Contrast Mr. Campbell's attitude with that of "Dr. Harwood Miller," the "permanent pastor" of the National City Christian Church: "Denominations and sects are not wholly or even largely the product of human pride and prejudice and unbrotherliness - a thing entirely wrong could not long endure by the devotion of men - it is unthinkable to condemn all sectarianism as sinful."

The real cause of division in the body of Christ was, therefore, an abandonment of the principles which had hitherto motivated us. Those who no longer looked upon the New Testament as an all-sufficient guide and rule of faith and practice did not scruple to demand things unauthorized therein, while those who clung tenaciously to the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures as stoutly resisted them; and division was, therefore, inevitable. This, indeed, has been the cause of all departures from the faith since the days of the apostles. Those who regard the Bible as a complete revelation for all time cannot, in conscience, add to or take from its teaching in the smallest particular; while those who consider it as only a mass of raw principles to be worked into shape to fit changing conditions are not restrained by the injunctions it contains against adding to or taking from the holy word, and do not hesitate to do so when the exigencies of the hour seem to suggest it.

Honor

JERRI MANASCO

The greatest honor that any man can receive is that which God gives. "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth" (II Cor. 10:18). When men seek to be honored by other men, they likely will fall into shame and ridicule. There are some who are undeserving of honor. "Honor is not seemly for a fool" (Prov. 26:1,8). God certainly does not grant divine favor to a fool, that is, one whose mind is closed to the nobler spiritual things of life (Lk. 12:20,21). Many are those individuals who, through arrogance, have sought highest esteem only to come under the awful judgment of God (Prov. 29:23).

God is the giver of true honor. This is a fact overlooked by far too many of us. The king of Babylon did not consider this. This man, while walking through his palace one day, boasted of his "great Babylon" that he had built for the honor of his majesty (Dan. 4:30). Following his self praise the king was presented with a voice from heaven with the pronouncement that he would go on all fours and eat grass in the fields like a beast. This came to pass. After he came to himself, however, the Babylonian monarch was compelled to confess that it is the King of heaven who deserves to be extolled and honored (v. 37). Babylon as a mighty and independent empire faded and died - but God lives forever!

Without doubt men receive many honors in this world. But we should face the reality that

earthly honors fade with the generations. "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever" (Eccl. 1:4). That man who achieves his desired honors may rest comfortably as he drinks in the praise of his contemporaries. But if he is lacking in his understanding of spiritual things, he is among those who perish dishonorably and with eternal shame upon his soul (Psa. 49:11, 12, 20). Worldly honors cannot earn a place in heaven. God does not accept the person of any (Acts 10:34; Gal. 2:6; 2 Sam. 14:14). How we do need to learn this!!

The most expedient thing is for a person to strive to be honorable in things pertaining to God. The servant of the Lord is one who will remove the dishonorable things in order to be "a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use. . ." (II Tim. 2:21). This demands a strong faith in those eternal things which far outweigh the present earthly things, no matter how great they may seem. Such a faith is a faith that will be found honorable (I Pet. 1:7).

Who is it that shall obtain the true honor? The answer is clear: those who are wise (Prov. 3:16), those who are humble (Prov. 15:33), the righteous and merciful (Prov. 21:21), he that regards reproof (Prov. 13:18), and he that serves Christ (Jn. 12:26). If these are the characteristics of YOUR life, then you may rest with divine assurance that you will partake of those honors that only God can and will give. — Rt. 2, Haleyville, Al. 35565.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

(Continued From Page 2)

science would arrive at the solution if they were to reassess their assumption that these underground lakes have been under this pressure for *millions of years*. An abandonment of the theory of evolution would solve innumerable mysteries which presently baffle many scientists."6 (Emphasis his).

Dr. Cook further stated, in his book, *Prehistory and Earth Models*,

"Such high pressures require sudden deep burial. Moreover, to retain them for periods greater than 10,000 to 100,000 years is apparently impossible under the observed permeabilities (ability to permit leakage of fluids) of the (oil) reservoirs and trap formation."7

Since the pressures are still very high, it would seem that the deposits were formed many years sooner than evolutionists would lead us to believe. Evolutionists tell us that oil formed more than 25 million years ago. Yet it is impossible for the pressure to have remained that long. It would seem, to be the honest inquirer, that perhaps the earth is much younger than we are being asked to believe!

CONCLUSION

We have attempted, in these few articles, to examine some of the non-radiometric methods of dating the earth. Our list is by no means exhaustive. We have attempted only to examine a few of the methods we thought to be interesting and revealing. For the reader who would like to examine a much more comprehensive list than ours, we refer you to *The Creation-Evolution Controversy* by R.L. Wysong, D.V.M., Inquiry Press. East Lansing, Michigan. 1976, pp 158-179. Dr. Wysong gives an extensive listing (the best we have ever seen) on this subject.

Dr. Wysong investigates and explains such things as earth heat, the mutation load, stellar radiation, cosmic dust velocity, comet decay, the Poynting-Robertson effect, and others.

In our next article, we shall begin to examine radio-dating methods. We shall examine, in-depth, the assumptions on which they are based, and the reasons for their inability to give exact dates. We will also examine some of the "errors" and "contradictions" which have come from these methods of dating. Let us close this section of our study with this quote from the capable pen of Wayne Jackson: "In addition to the above, there are many other scientific evidences which indicate that we are living on a young earth. And we ought not to be intimidated by unbelievers into resorting to exegetical wizardry in an attempt at harmonizing Genesis with the unsupported assertions of 'ape-theology.'"8

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1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840

Please Remember The International Gospel Hour

(Continued From Page 1)

1977 by the end of December. The program is heard throughout the United States, in Canada, in Central America and in much of South America. It is truly INTERNATIONAL in its scope or outreach. A powerful station in Sierra Leone, Africa is interested in airing the program. It will require \$125 for a thirty minute weekly or about \$200 for a daily fifteen minute program. This would be a great mission work for some congregation interested in African missions to assume and say, "We will underwrite this program." Unless funds are soon forthcoming this opportunity will have to be turned down.

Is radio effective? Absolutely! During the recent Spiritual Sword Lectureship at Getwell in Memphis, Tennessee, a man told Brother Howard, "You converted my mother in Florida by means of radio." Brother Howard recently baptized a man. When the newly baptized Christian came out of the water he told Brother Howard, "You planted the seed in my heart by means of radio 37 years ago." Radio is a seed planter. Congregations who realize this will be enthusiastic for radio evangelization. The last issue of INTERNATIONAL GOSPEL HOUR NEWS told about a thrilling case of conversion. The lady had been a church of God preacher. Radio taught her the truth. She listened to both Brethren Howard and Warren and learned the truth. She is now a member of the Central congregation in Bastrop, Louisiana.

Nearly all of every dollar you send The International Gospel Hour goes directly to the actual preaching of the gospel by means of radio. There is very little in the way of actual overhead. There are only two full time paid employees who work with the program. Hence, very, very little of what you send goes into salaries. Almost all of it goes into the actual radio production of the program and the services that are offered, such as Bible Correspondence Courses, printed sermons, etc. This but means that The International Gospel Hour is an excellent mission investment for your congregation. We think you will appreciate this added plus of our program.

Lack of funds keeps the program from reaching out into even greater territory. Will your congregation be one of the many which will help us in 1978? Please allow your answer to be in the affirmative. That affirmative means a reaching of additional souls by means of The International Gospel Hour and Five Gospel Minutes. — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

It Always Pays To Get The Story Straight

EDSEL BURLESON

It never ceases to be amazing how many stories are passed along without any efforts being made to determine the accuracy of the account. Solomon said, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise" (Proverbs 10:19).

Too many folks, seemingly, have to say something, rather than having something to say.

Years ago, there was a report that made the rounds in a certain town that a local preacher had gone to a meeting his wife was attending against his will and had made quite a scene as he forced her to leave and go home. When he heard the gossip that was going around, he inserted the following announcement in the local paper:

"In the first place I have never tried to influence my wife's choice in her attendance of a meeting."

"In the second place my wife did not attend the reported meeting."

"In the third place I did not go to the building where the meeting was held."

"In the fourth place my wife did not have any inclination to go to the meeting."

"In the fifth place I do not now have and never have had a wife."

Henry Van Dyke once said, "There are two good rules which ought to be written on every heart:

1. Never believe anything bad about anybody unless you positively know it is true.

2. Never tell that, unless you feel it is absolutely necessary, and remember that God is listening while you tell it!

One of the greatest problems many people have is recognizing the power of the tongue. "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" (James 3:5,6). One has become mature when keeping a secret gives him more satisfaction than passing it along.

Someone has placed gossips into three different groups: the vest-button group - always popping off; the vacuum cleaner group - always picking up dirt; the liniment group - they rub it in.

Be very careful about encouraging gossipers, they will talk about you too. "When a little bird tells you something, don't repeat it until you find out whether or not the little bird is a cuckoo." A lot of trouble is caused by combining a narrow mind with a wide mouth.
— 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, Al. 35211.

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"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 13

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1977

NUMBER 51

Christian Discipleship

The value of discipleship is the value one places upon his own eternal soul (Matt. 16:26). The term disciple is a name given to the followers of any teacher; however, since we claim to be followers of Christ ours would be Christian Discipleship.

Christ requires whole hearted commitment of his disciples. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 16:24-25). The rationale for his demands centers in his sacrifice: "Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (John 13:1). Thus, the Lord has made demands based upon his sacrifice at Calvary. Nothing less than full allegiance could ever be fitting as a response to His love. Yet, many think of discipleship as the gift of spare time to the Master rather than the giving of first place in their lives. We will note several marks of Christian Discipleship.

"If any man will come after me let him DENY HIMSELF. . ." (Matt. 16:24). There is a difference in self - denial and denial of self. The Lord is not talking about the giving up of a few things that one might like (some favorite food or possession), which is self - denial. Rather denial of self means total submission to the Lordship of Christ. That means self has no right of his own but is slave to the Christ. In short, self has been removed from the throne and Christ reigns. Is this true in your



CURTIS DOWDY

life?

"If any man come to me, and HATE not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and HIS OWN LIFE also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). This does not mean that we are to harbor ill will toward our loved ones, but it does present the supreme love the disciple has for Christ. This supreme love reaches far beyond that of others. The reason being that should a choice have to be made Christ would come first. But do we understand the clause, "yea, and his own life also?" Self love is the number one obstacle to discipleship. Have you come to the place where even love for self comes far behind love for Christ?

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have LOVE ONE TO ANOTHER" (John 13:35). This is the love so much needed in Christ's great "brotherhood" today. It esteems another better than oneself; yea, and covers a multitude of sins. "It's the kind of love graphically explained by Paul: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not believe itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (I Cor. 13:4-7). Without this element Christian Discipleship would appear harsh, cold and legalistic. Although this love will never condone sin, nevertheless, it will bring a river of tears over the sinner. Do you have this ingredient in your life?

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). The cross is not some mental or physical problem. It is a way of life, a life of endurance. It may mean enduring shame, reproach, persecution; for sure it means standing against the offerings of the world. The cross must be taken up daily by avoiding the pressure to conform to this world (see Romans 12:1-2). Are you taking up your

cross daily as the Lord's disciple?

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and FOLLOW ME" (Matt. 16:24). What was it above all other things that characterized the life and attitude of Jesus? Simply to do the Father's will; a life of obedience (Heb. 5:8). To follow Christ is to devote oneself to a life of service and humility. Christian Discipleship demands the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23). One can not follow Christ and the god of this world, the choice is yours!

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye CONTINUE IN MY WORD, then are ye my disciples indeed" (John 8:31). Christian Discipleship can't exist without continuance and that in the WORD. To start is not to finish! How many have claimed discipleship with a rush of zeal that would seem to carry them all the way, but, alas, the daily cross that at the beginning was a sign of devotion has now been cast aside for something less costly. If the would be disciple could only see that what he carries is just a cheap imitation surely he would repent and continue in the word of Christ. Dear brother or sister, do you continue in the word of Christ?

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that FORSAKETH not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).

The true test will come to all who claim Christian Discipleship just as it did to the young man who had great riches. Jesus knew the heart of that young man. Riches were more important to him than anything else. Jesus was being kind when he told him to get rid of his problem (Luke 18:22, 23). Disciples who have turned it all over to the Lord will have little trouble with materialism. By proving himself master over mammon the disciple will be entrusted with ever greater riches.

Here, then, are seven clear marks of Christian Discipleship and what a challenge to

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble King, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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under such circumstances?

Brethren, let's be realistic. What makes it wrong for a woman to wear short shorts to the shopping center, but right for her to parade publicly in a bathing suit at the beach? What makes it wrong for a young lady to wear her

bathing suit to the supermarket, but right for her to perform in front of a band in a costume just as skimpy? Why would a Christian college have a rule against girls wearing shorts on the campus, and then permit its cheerleaders to expose their bodies all the way up to the hips

while leading cheers at a ball game?

The time has come when very little is being said from the pulpit or written in the papers concerning modest apparel. Some preachers and writers have, no doubt, been frightened away from the subject by those who pretend to be so naive as to accuse those who appose immodest apparel of having a dirty mind. This writer will not be intimidated by such accusations. No doubt the devil is laughing at those who have adopted a "situation ethics" philosophy with reference to the matter of immodest apparel.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 29

RADIOMETRIC DATING OF THE EARTH

The cautious and careful reader will have realized, long before we have arrived at this point, that the non-radiometric dating methods which we have been discussing all have one thing in common. That one common denominator is this: they are based on assumptions. This we admit; this we affirm. We have said that IF people reproduce at a certain rate for a certain



BERT THOMPSON

length of time, then the world population would be a certain number. We have stated that IF volcanoes gushed forth lava at a certain rate for a certain length of time, then a certain amount of lava rocks would be present. And so on. Let it be understood that dating methods such as we have been discussing in previous articles are all open to serious question, because in each case the rates may have been different in the past than they are at the present. That is why, in each of the discussions we presented, we used the most CONSERVATIVE figures in any calculations - so that we would not be accused of in any way "stretching" the matter out of proportion. Yet still these dating systems are based on assumptions to greater or lesser degrees.

The question which then bothers us is this: Is there a dating method which is free of the above objections? Is it possible to obtain ages by some "independent dating method" - a method which is "absolute"?

Many scientists believe that RADIO-METRIC DATING METHODS are truly "absolute methods." In the words of H.J. Saunders, "Before the advent of radioactive methods, determining the age of rocks was more or less a matter of educated guesswork."¹ Saunders cites the development of radioactive methods of dating rocks and minerals as "one of the most impressive advances in geochemistry in the last 50 years."² In fact, he states: "Now scientists can determine with remarkable accuracy the age of the rocks. . ."³ It will be the full-fledged intent of this article, and of those which are to follow, to see if Saunders' statement is decisive of the matter.

The suggested idea of dating the age of the earth's crust by means of radioisotopes was first proposed by Dr. Bertran B. Boltwood of Yale University. He suggested that this could be done by measuring the ratio of uranium - 238 to its decay product lead - 206 in uranium ores (the reader is reminded that

uranium-238, or U-238, signifies the isotope of uranium having a mass number of 238). But it was not until later, in 1937, when Dr. A.D.C. Nier developed a high-precision/high-speed spectrometer, that the necessary accurate isotope abundance data could be obtained. At first the method was confined to minerals containing high concentrations of uranium, but as more sophisticated and sensitive instruments become available rocks containing only traces of uranium or other radioactive elements could be dated by this method - or by one of its derivatives.

HOW DOES RADIO-METRIC DATING WORK?

Let us take "time-out" in our discussion to explain, for the benefit of the reader, how radiometric dating works. We do not intend to engage in a long, scientific discourse on the technicalities of radiometric dating, but a quick look and a few summary statements are certainly in order here.

In its basic principles, radiometric dating works similarly to an hourglass for telling time. If we know that it takes 60 minutes for the sand in the top of the hourglass to reach the bottom chamber, then we know that on the average 1/3600 of the sand falls from one chamber to the other in one second (there are 3600 seconds in an hour). In order to obtain the approximate number of seconds that had elapsed (or, the time since the sand started falling during the hour), we could measure the amount of sand which had fallen up to that time and divide it by the amount that falls in a second.

The following, though lengthy, is a good explanation of how the radiometric dating system works:

" . . . In the case of radioactive decay, rates of decay are not usually given; instead a number proportional to the reciprocal of the rate, known as the half-life ($t_{1/2}$) is presented as the quantitative expression of the slowness of the reaction, that is, the larger the half-life the slower the reaction, or the smaller the specific rate. To illustrate, let us place 10 grams of pure metallic rubidium-87 in a box. This isotope of rubidium has a half-life ($t_{1/2}$) measured at 47 billion years. When an atom of rubidium-87 releases a high speed electron it changes into an atom of strontium-87. So, if nothing occurs during the next 47 billion years to change the rate of decay of rubidium-87 or to interfere with its contents, then in 47 billion years from now when some future scientist opens the box, he will find a mixture containing five grams of rubidium-87 and five grams of strontium-87, a non-radioactive isotope of strontium. If the box had remained unopened for 94 billion years, analysis of its contents would reveal a mixture of 2½ grams of rubidium-87 and 7½ grams of strontium-87. Thus, one can understand that the ratio of rubidium-87 to strontium-87 decreases as time

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Modest Apparel And Situation Ethics

We would not take the position that whatever dress is proper and fitting on one occasion would be proper and fitting on another. What one would wear to worship God might not be fitting to wear to work in a coal mine; or what one might wear on a hike through the country might not be fitting to wear to a funeral. Certainly circumstances dictate what is proper attire.

However, it seems there is a serious error in the thinking of some Christians with reference to this matter. They think that there are circumstances under which it is altogether in order for Christian ladies and girls to appear in public dressed in a way that very likely will tempt some men to lust. If a young lady is a cheerleader, or a majorette, or if she goes swimming, it is considered perfectly in order for her to peel off every thread that covers her legs, and parade herself before the eyes of all who care to look. AND BECAUSE OF THE SITUATION, NOBODY IS SUPPOSED TO BE CAUSED TO LUST! Furthermore, one who would be critical of such practices is considered evil-minded or somewhat immature.

Is there such a thing as a need for women to dress so as to avoid inciting lust? If so, does this need exist only in places other than along the sidelines at football games, around swimming pools, or in front of bands? Does not the statement of Jesus in Matthew 5:28, or Paul's admonition in I Timothy 2:9 apply



BOBBY DUNCAN

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from the book
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods).

"Please give scriptural proof that Christian colleges have a right to exist."

No. 1. *It is the responsibility of parents to provide for the needs of their children.* This responsibility extends to, and includes the provision of food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and education. These obligations are clearly taught throughout the sacred writings. In a positive declaration to this end, Paul wrote: "If any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever" (I Tim. 5:8).

In discharging the obligation to provide an education for their offspring, there are three alternatives open to parents? (1) *Educate their children at home.* This, however, is hardly feasible, and for the following reasons: (a) lack of time; (b) want of ability; (c) desire that the children have an accredited education. (2) *Send them to public schools* supported and maintained by public funds and tax money. Though such was the purpose for which the public school system was originally established, it is becoming more and more objectionable for these reasons: (a) The teaching being done in the public schools is becoming more and more irreligious, indeed, anti-religious. Much of it is directly opposed to the principles which Christian parents desire to have inculcated in their children. (b) The moral standards characteristic of the public schools fall lower with each decade. Dancing, petting parties, free love, the use of dope, liquor, etc., are becoming more and more prevalent. (c) Where these conditions do not obtain, the general level of worldliness is high and opposed to the interests of Christian character. (3) *Build and support Christian schools* where the Bible is taught. God's name is respected and honored, and the teachers are Christian men and women. On the assumption that the third of these possible courses is, by far, the preferable one, good brethren have sacrificially labored in the establishment and support of the Christian schools, and parents strive to keep their children in them.

No. 2. *Parents, in discharging the obligation to provide their children with a Christian education, may scripturally place them in the hands of qualified instructors.* "Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father" (Gal. 4:1,2). (1) A Parent may, therefore, place his children under tutors and governors for the purpose of educating them, and preparing them for maturity. (2) The work of the Christian school is identical with the work of the tutors and governors mentioned in this passage, insofar as the training and instruction are concerned. (3) Therefore, the Christian school is scriptural.

No. 3. *Parents are under the highest and most weighty obligation to nurture their children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord* (Eph. 6:4). The word "nurture" means "breeding; education; training. To educate" (Webster). The Greek term signifying this responsibility - *paideia* - is

defined by Mr. Thayer: "The whole training and education of children (which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment): Eph. 6:4. In Gk. writers from Aeschyl. on, it includes also the care and training of the body" (Greek Lexicon, p. 473). It will be observed that this eminent Lexicographer declares that the word includes "the whole training and education of children;" and that in Greek writers from Aeschylus on it "includes also the care and training of the body!" Parents are obligated to cultivate the mind and morals of their children, and also to provide such exercises as will properly develop the body. (2) But parents, in the discharge of these obligations, may properly delegate this responsibility to TUTORS and GOVERNORS who will, in turn, provide such training in lieu of the parents (Gal. 4:1-2). (3). Therefore, tutors and governors may be utilized to supply mental, moral, spiritual and physical training for children committed to their care. We regard this argument as demonstrative of the proposition in issue: as absolutely irresistible in its nature, and impossible of successful contradiction. It is conclusive in establishing the fact that Christians may establish schools, schools operated by tutors and governors, schools engaged in providing mental, moral, spiritual and physical training for their children. And,

inasmuch as this training extends even to the care and training of the body, *let us hear no more objections against athletics in our Christian schools!*

To deny the right of Christians to establish schools wherein the Bible is taught, one must either (a) challenge the right of parents to do what Paul says they can do (Gal. 4:1, 2); or, (b) question the definition which the scholars give the word translated "nurture" above. The first impeaches inspiration; the second betrays ignorance of recognized scholarship.

No. 4. *It is the function of the home to provide mental, moral, spiritual and physical training for its children.* (1) The Christian school, in sharing in this responsibility, does not usurp the function of the church, because this is a work delegated to the home (Eph. 6:4). (2) The school, in performing this function does not usurp the function of the home, because the home can, as the previous argument shows, properly and scripturally delegate the responsibility of providing mental, moral, spiritual and physical training of the children to those fitted to engaged in such work (Gal. 4:1,2). (a) Christian schools exist for the purpose of providing mental, moral, spiritual and physical training for those committed to their care. (b) Christians may scripturally commit their children to these schools to receive such training. Therefore, (c) Christian schools may scripturally exist!

God Needs Faithful Women

MRS. PERVIE (EVELYN) NICHOLS

(The following is the summary of a ladies' class at the workshop at Magnolia Bible College, Kosciusko, Mississippi, August 1976).

Since the beginning of time, woman has had an important role in the history of mankind. God saw it was not good for man to be alone, so He created woman to be an help meet, a suitable companion and a compliment to him (Gen. 2:19-20). Paul, writing in I Corinthians 9:11, said, "For neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." Here we see God's purpose, or plan, was for woman to be a faithful companion. To be faithful to God and man, a woman must be true and trustworthy in her performance of duty; must fulfill her vows; must be worthy of confidence and must be true in detail as were the early christians who were strong and firm in their faith.

Woman has always been a molder of public morality. It has been said: "The hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world." So we see what a tremendous influence woman has over man. The very first woman, Eve, gave to her husband, Adam, the forbidden fruit, which he ate in disobedience to God. Delilah caused her husband, Samson, to reveal the secret of his strength, causing him to lose his life along with many others. Jezebel's wicked influence caused King Ahab to lead Israel to sin.

There are many examples of good influence in God's word, such as Bathsheba, who influenced King David to place Solomon on the throne before his death. Sarah, the wife of Abraham, revered and obeyed her husband, calling him "lord."

These are just a few examples showing that woman can be either a bad or good influence. Her place and mission is irreplaceable; it is of paramount value to the human race. Someone has said, "No nation, no church, and no home can stand without the woman there as its molder of all that is excellent, refined and beautiful." An ancient proverb says, "If there be righteousness within the individual, there will be happiness in the home; if there be

happiness in the home there will be harmony in the nation; if there be harmony in the nation, there will be peace in the world."

This shows the good influence woman can wield and how far-reaching it can extend. God needs faithful women for their good influence.

INFLUENCE IN THE SOCIAL REALM

God needs faithful women to mold public morality. Good mothers are scarce in our affluent society. Faithful women should be good examples and should teach others, especially children, the importance of choosing the right associates. In I Cor. 15:33, Paul said, "Evil companions corrupt good morals." It is an undeniable fact that many have reaped consequences of evil, because of their choice of friends.

Good women can speak out against any evil in the community, and banded together can accomplish much. If one woman can stop prayers in our schools, surely faithful women (working together) can do whatever they undertake - such as writing to congressmen who make laws, writing to television stations about undesirable programs or any thing that is harmful to society as a whole. Another way to wield a good influence is to work in local schools teaching children good principles, and standing for those things which build character.

Someone has said that man makes machines and money, but godly women mold character, personality and morality. Women have a great influence in society, whether bad or good; and so there is a great need for faithful women.

INFLUENCE IN THE HOME

Wilford and Frances Tyler say a home (as well as a country) must have a "Bill of Rights." For this reason, Paul wrote to the Ephesians in chapter five and six and pleads for: the husband to love his wife as Christ loved the church; the wife to reverence her husband; parents to appreciate the child; the child to give appropriate honor to parents. If these principles were carried out in homes today, it would eliminate wife-beaters and

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Christian Discipleship

(Continued From Page 2)

those of us who wear His name. If you tend toward pessimism upon reading the foregoing, remember the statement of Paul: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). Would you permit my paraphrase, "Whatever God requires of me I can accomplish, because through Christ I am assured of the power to do it." A good starting place is on your knees! — Obion, Tn. 38240.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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increases. Without going into the exact mathematical formula relating time and the Rb-87/Sr-87 ratio, one can obtain a concept of this relationship by plotting a simple graph of these two quantities.

"Let us suppose that a scientist opens our box containing the mixture of radioactive RB-87 and Sr-87 at some date in the future, and his analysis reveals that the mixture contains 0.3 grams of Rb-87 to one gram of Sr-87, or a ratio of 0.3.

"By reference to the plotted curve of rubidium versus radiogenic strontium, he would find that if the 10 gram sample had been placed in the box as pure Rb-87, then the sample had been producing Sr-87 for about 100 billion years. So, he concludes that the box is at least 100 billion years old. If our scientist had analyzed a rock and found it to contain a ratio of 0.3 of Rb-87 to Sr-87, he might reason in like manner and conclude that the rock was at least 100 billion years old. OF COURSE, IN THE CASE OF DATING EITHER THE BOX OR THE ROCK, THE SCIENTISTS WOULD HAVE TO PROVE THAT THE ORIGINAL Rb-87 WAS UNCONTAMINATED WITH Sr-87. As far as our scientist knows, the rock may have been formed by volcanic action a thousand years ago, and it contained enough Sr-87 when formed to have the 'appearance of age.' THE SCIENTIST WHO ASSUMED THAT THE ROCK CONTAINED PURE Rb-87 WHEN IT FIRST CAME FORTH FROM THE DEPTHS OF A VOLCANO IS GUESSING. . . '4 (Emphasis mine - BT).

Radiometric dating is in common use in our day and time to date many items. It is not at all uncommon to find scientists dating fossil finds, geological strata, etc. using radiometric methods. In fact, it is a safe statement to say that radiometric dating methods are in much more common use than non-radiometric dating methods. They therefore bear investigation. The question before us is this: Are radiometric dating methods absolute? That is to say - are they entirely accurate? Or, are they, too, like the non-radiometric dating methods, based on assumptions? In our next articles we will examine this matter, as well as several of the most widely-used radiometric dating techniques and methods.

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God Needs Faithful Women

(Continued From Page 3)

child abusers. There would be no divorce laws if Gods principles were carried out in our homes.

In Proverbs 31:1-10, there is a description of a worthy woman, whose price is far above rubies. All women would do well to imitate her in these characteristics. Her goal in life was to be a good homemaker. She was: industrious; ambitious, thrifty; creative; helpful to the poor and need; physically alert; careful for her household; full of wisdom. From the characteristics shown above, we see her as a busy person. She did her husband good and not evil all the days of her life. Her children respected her. Her own works praised her.

In I Peter 3:6, we find some ways God tells woman to be faithful: 1. Be in subjection of one's own husband. 2. Have chaste behavior coupled with fear. 3. Adorn the inward man and not dress to attract attention. 4. Have a meek and quiet spirit which is a great price in God's sight.

In I Timothy 3:11, we find women must: Be grave; not slanderous; temperate; faithful in all things.

Titus 2:4-5 also tells us that older women are to train the younger women to love and to be in subjection to their own husbands, (in order that the word of God be not blasphamed). They are to love their children, be sober-minded, chaste, workers (or keepers) at home, kind, rule the household, bear children, and teach that which is good. A good example of this is found in II Tim. 1:5, where his grandmother, Lois, and his Mother, Eunice, had instilled in Timothy from childhood the holy scriptures, which produced in him unfeigned faith in God.

Training in the home is a continuous, consistent process; but the reward is great, and we dare not neglect this responsibility/opportunity while the child is young. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

God needs faithful women to have a good influence in the home as good wives, mothers, mothers-in-law, daughters-in-law and grandmothers. This is the role God designated for woman, and truly happiness and fulfillment will come when we are faithful in obeying His word.

INFLUENCE IN THE CHURCH

Phil. 4:3 says, "And I entreat thee, also true yokefellows, help those women who laboured with me in the gospel. . . and with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life." Phebe was one by name that Paul said laboured with him in the gospel. He did not specify the way those women helped, but we do know it was in accordance with God's word, because their names were written in the book of life.

Women are limited in their work in the church in that they are not to usurp authority over man. They are not to be such as: elders, deacons, preachers or public leaders. Private teaching is required of faithful women as the opportunity arises. Priscilla, along with her husband, is an example of teaching the ways of the Lord more perfectly (Acts 18:26). Since much of the teaching in the church (other than in the pulpit) is done by women, it is imperative that they remain faithful to God's word in teaching children, younger women, and others in their God given sphere. What an influence faithful women can have in our Lord's church as elders' wives, deacons'

wives, preachers' wives and teachers of God's word!

Other ways faithful women can have a good influence in the church are: (1) Pray for the elders, deacons, teachers and preachers. (2) Encourage young preachers, (3) Comfort the bereaved and visit the sick, (4) Sew for the needy - Dorcas is an excellent example (Acts 9). (5) Encourage the weak in faith, (6) Care for the communion service, (7) Keep the visiting preacher or feed him meals, (8) Use the home for hospitality - Lydia's example (Acts 16), (9) Visit newcomers, (10) Be faithful in the attendance to all public services, (11) Have Bible classes for children or adults in the home, (12) Weep with those that weep, (13) Rejoice with those that rejoice, and (14) Pray without ceasing.

To the church at Smyrna, John wrote, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). What a reward for the faithful! A CROWN OF LIFE!

Yes, God needs faithful women in the social world, in the home and in the community, as well as in the church. — Midway Church of Christ, Jasper, Al. 35501.

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Words of Truth

"I am not
the Words

s: but speak forth

— Acts 26:25

Will The Real ERA Stand Up?

On a television program called "To Tell the Truth" three contestants all claim to be the same person. After a series of questions by the panelists, the master of ceremony requests that the "real" person stand up. Many times both the panelists and audience are thrown off the tracks by deception.



WINFRED CLARK

Before me I have a copy of *The Atlanta Constitution*, Saturday, November 26, 1977. A lady takes a look at the Houston Meeting. To her, it is just matter of time before ERA is ratified. But even she admits that there is a problem. This problem is the "sexual preference" plank in their 25 point "plan of action". One of the Georgia delegates, Doris Holmes, said it had "long been the albatross around the neck of the feminist movement".

Another said, "I have less trouble with homosexual rights than with 'lesbian rights'. I don't know why that is. Maybe it's because I have never known any lesbians. I only know that I wish this question would go away until after we've gotten ERA safely ratified. The ERA is more important."

Another lady from Georgia said, "If the 'sexual preference' resolution is endorsed, the ERA is doomed."

Now the cat is out of the bag. When the vote finally came, the majority of the people voted for the plank calling it a matter of "human rights". So what they are saying is: "Let the homosexual have the right to corrupt and pervert. Let the lesbian have the right to trample underfoot all that is right". Since when did humans have the right to crush into the ground all that is right? One can easily see that the leaders of this movement have been trying to soft pedal this matter of ERA until

they could get it ratified. "Just don't rock the boat," they would say," lest you run off some conservative congressmen".

To those who say ERA will not encourage such as the lesbian or homosexual, we say, how do you answer now? Here are your bed fellows. They are there with you. They support abortion and all that is Godless. Some want the lesbians to go away. Well, have they stopped to ask what attracted them to Houston and ERA? Wonder why a fly is attracted to sugar? They know in ERA what the lesbians know—that ERA is fighting their battle.

Look at the statement of Gloria Steinem. She called the matter of sexual preference a question of "human rights". Isn't that what women have been saying about ERA? You had better believe the chickens are coming home to roost.

The real ERA supporters now stand exposed to the world as being opposed to the

Bible. They don't believe it. This includes every senator and congressman. The Bible condemns such as was supported by those who met with our tax money in Houston. You think not? Then take your sexual preference plank and reconcile it with Romans 1:21-31. They, the lesbian and homosexual, go against the natural. That is male and female. They burn in lust, they work that which is unseemly. They receive recompense of their error. They are given over to a reprobate mind. Now try to insert somewhere here the phrase "human rights". You might as well talk of "murderers' rights" or "drunkards' rights".

Yes, the real ERA finally stood up. I'd be ashamed to be anywhere in the vicinity. Brethren, America needs your prayers and your stand for Truth. — P. O. Box 672, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

Supporting Congregations Needed

Anyone who has subscribed to the Words of Truth for any length of time should be familiar with the East African Newsletter, since it has been a part of the Words of Truth for several years. This newsletter has chronicled the growth of the church in Kenya over an eight year period, and I trust that all readers have taken the opportunity to keep abreast of the developments there.



Berkeley Hackett

If the Lord wills, my family and I will return to Nairobi, Kenya, East Africa in five months'

time to resume the work. While in this country we are looking for other Christian families who will come to Africa to join in the effort there.

Nairobi is the largest, most progressive city in East Africa. The population will soon number over one million souls. The city sits in the homeland of Kenya's largest and most advanced tribe, Kikuyu. The Kikuyu tribe numbers three and a third million. These numbers mean little if they are not matched with receptivity of the gospel message. A place where millions of people are lost makes a good mission field, but if they are not willing to be taught, little will be accomplished. Here is where the work in Kenya is exciting. I feel that there is not a place on Earth where there is any greater acceptance of the gospel than Kenya. We are having marked success in the city of Nairobi and in the Kikuyu tribal areas.

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble King, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness.

— Acts 26:25

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that He had ascended to heaven. All of this, he said, was in fulfillment of God's oath to David that "of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne" (Acts 2:30). Please observe that the prophecy of christ on David's throne is said to have been fulfilled when Jesus was raised from the dead and ascended to heaven. This is the inspired application of the prophecy. Why do some ignore this, and say that Christ will occupy David's throne when he comes again?

Jesus will sit upon the throne until He comes again, and then He will *Cease to reign* — not *begin to reign*. In speaking of the time when Jesus will come again, the inspired apostle Paul said: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (I Cor. 15:24-26). Please note that when Jesus comes again, (1) the dead will be raised, and (2) Jesus will deliver the kingdom of God the Father, himself

putting down all rule, authority and power. What we call his second coming will mark the end—not the beginning —of Christ's reign on David's throne.

If Jesus were to come back to this earth, and sit on David's throne in Jerusalem, and have a prosperous reign, he would prove Jeremiah to be a false prophet and the Bible to be untrue. The prophet Jeremiah said concerning Coniah: "No man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. 22:28-30). Coniah is the same as Jechonias of Matthew 1:12, and is plainly in the genealogy of Jesus. In other words, Jesus is of the seed of Coniah! But no man of the seed of Coniah "shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah". If Jeremiah told the truth (and there is no IF), then Jesus can never prosper sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem.

These plain passages concerning Christ and the throne of David should settle the matter once for all for those who really believe the Bible.



Jesus On

David's Throne

When the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that Jesus was to be born, he told her, among other things: "the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:32). The very familiar prophecy of Isaiah 9:6, 7 had foretold that the one who was to be called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," would occupy the throne of David.



BOBBY DUNCAN

In II Samuel 7:12-16, God promised David that He would establish his (David's) throne forever. Reference is made to this in Psalm 89:3, 4, where the Lord says: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations."

All Bible students know that the idea of Christ on David's throne is abundantly taught in holy writ. A vast majority of those in conservative denominational churches, however, believe that the occupancy of David's throne by the Christ will take place in Jerusalem after his second appearing. The Bible teaches otherwise; and it teaches otherwise in plain, literal language that is easy to be understood.

On the day the church was established, Peter made it plain to his hearers that Jesus of Nazareth had been raised from the dead, and

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ASSUMPTIONS OF RADIOMETRIC DATING

In our search for an "absolute" dating method (we have already freely admitted that non-radiometric dating methods are all based on assumptions) which is not based on assumptions, we have arrived at an examination of radiometric dating methods. The question before us now is this: are radiometric dating methods based on assumptions? Consider this quote from Dr. R. L. Wysong, in his book, *The Creation-Evolution Controversy* (speaking of the C-14 dating method):



BERT THOMPSON

"Can you see the assumptions in this method? They're there — oodles of them. Here are a few:

1. Since C-14 is formed as a result of cosmic ray influx, how do we know cosmic ray influx has always been constant, thus yielding a constant concentration of C-14 in the atmosphere over the time period in question?
2. A corollary of (1) is: Can we be sure that the concentration of C-14 in life is the same today as it has been in the past?
3. Has the 1/2 life of C-14 been accurately determined?
4. Has the decay of C-14 varied in rate?
5. Has there been contamination of the sample by extraneous C-14?
6. Has atmospheric nitrogen, the precursor of C-14, been constant?
7. Has any of the original C-14 been leached out by physical agencies?
8. Is the instrumentation precise and does the technique always yield uniform results?"¹

Dr. Ernst Antevs, specialist in varved clay chronology, criticized the C-14 dating methods because of their assumptions, using these words: "In appraising C-14 dates, it is essential always to discriminate between the C-14 age and the actual age of the sample. The laboratory analysis determines only the amount of radiocarbon present. . . However, the laboratory analysis does not determine

whether the radioactive carbon is all original or is in part secondary, intrusive, or whether the amount has been altered in still other irregular ways besides by natural decay."²

Dr. Willard F. Libby first suggested the radiocarbon clock in 1946, and in 1960 was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in recognition of this contribution. It is interesting to note that Dr. Libby's laboratory at the University of California at Los Angeles had this to say about the C-14 dating method:

"Recent elaborate studies have now demonstrated conclusively that the initial activity of C-14 samples and thus the rate of C-14 production has varied with time. Most recently the work of Suess [1965, *J. GEOPHYSICS RESEARCH*, Vol. 70, pp 5937, 5952] has clearly pointed out these variations."³

The one major, underlying assumption in radiometric dating systems is UNIFORMITARIANISM (which is the basis as well for all evolutionary geology). In order for any of the radiometric dating systems to be accurate, uniformitarianism MUST BE TRUE. Yet there is mounting evidence on every hand that UNIFORMITARIANISM IS BY NO MEANS TRUE! And there are, in fact, many uncertainties about the radiocarbon clocks. Drs. Boardman, Koontz, and Morris list just a few of them in their book, *Science and Creation*:

1. The cause of instability of the nucleus of a radioactive atom is poorly understood.
2. That decay rates may have been higher sometime in the past has not been disproved. In fact, there is evidence that increase in rate may have occurred. For example, during the catastrophic destruction or collapse of a nearby star or galaxy, the earth would have been subjected to a sudden increase of radioactivity causing nuclear instability. . . .

3. Chemical leaching or extraction may have occurred in the past either as the radioactive elements or daughter products came initially to the earth's surface or during subsequent lava flows or erosion by surface waters. For example, preferential leaching of Rb-87 would make the Rb-87/Sb-87 ratio lower and thus cause the 'age' of the rock appear older. The opposite process would

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM,
FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, by
Guy N. Woods).

"What do you regard as an effective approach in a discussion with a skeptic on the divine origin of Christianity?"

That which I followed myself as set out in the following letter:

Dear-----. You will, not doubt, experience some surprise at this missive from me, and a word of explanation is in order.

I have lately been in a meeting with the-----congregation, and while in those parts talked with your father and brother-----, and from them learned of your espousal of skeptical ideas from Thomas Paine. They are, as you perhaps know, greatly distressed over this development and have appealed to me for assistance.

This letter is being written for two reasons: (a) because of my regard for them; and (b) from a sincere desire, if possible, to turn you from a course which can only result in your destruction. This, at the present time, you do not believe; it is my hope tht you can be brought to realize it before it is too late.

From letters which they placed in my hands and which are now before me written by you, I gather that you are not averse to, in fact, welcome, a discussion of the soundness of your position. Insofar as time will allow, and my heavy schedule permit, I shall be glad to do so, in harmony with the following conditions: (1) only one point shall be discussed at the time; (2) there shall be no avoidance and evasion of the issue; (3) each question submitted shall be answered fully, candidly and sincerely.

Further, I am not interested in any long-drawn-out discussion of the alleged contradictions and discrepancies with which you have filled your letter of June 9, to----- (1) These were, without exception, originated by infidels in the second and third centuries, and have been answered hundreds of times in the past and sued for the reward, *in every instance* the Bible was vindicated. In the last of such efforts known to me, and infidel lawyer in Dallas, Texas, sued on the basis of an alleged best men in seventeen hundred centuries have examined these alleged contradictions, and have seen in them n othing to warrant the conclusion that the Bible is an unreliable document. (3) Dr. Harry Rimmer, and his Research Science Bureau, for a number of years, kept a standing offer of \$1,000 in cash to anybody who could sustain a single contradiction, and though men went into court and sued for the reward, *in every instance* the Bible was vindicated. In the last of such efforts known to me, and infidel lawyer in Dallas, Texas, sued on the basis of an alleged difficulty in the Old Testament, and when the matter came to trial, the judge delivered what is known in legal parlance as an "instructed verdict," i.e., he threw it out of court for lack of evidence. (4) Haley's *Alleged Contradictions*, a standard work on the subject, as well as all of the exhaustive works on Christian evidences supplies, to the candid mind, a complete refutation of every one offered. You are surely aware of the fact that Thomas Paine did not originate these objections, but

plagiarized them from ancient infidels.

Nor would it be profitable or feasible to range over the whole field of evidences in this discussion. (1) There is not sufficient time for this. (2) Were this the method of discussion, the issue could never be sharply joined. (3) So soon as your objections were met on one point, it would be possible for you to raise others, and the matter would thus become interminable.

I shall, therefore, expect you to confine your efforts to the express point in issue raised, and in this, the introductory letter, I shall submit the conversion of Paul as the basis on which I shall defend the divine origin of Christianity. You are familiar with the details of his conversion recorded in Acts, and often alluded to in the epistles. You know, of course, of his former manner of life as persecutor of the church, which was suddenly terminated on the road to Damascus. Henceforth, he became Christianity's most valiant defender. Now, in explaining the marvelous transformation which came over the eminent Jew, one of the following four propositions must be accepted:

1. He deliberately launched a course of deception, and henceforth stated that which *he knew* was false; or,
2. He was the victim of hallucinations; or,

3. He was deceived by others; or,

4. What was alleged to have happened, in fact did happen, and Christianity is, therefore, genuine.

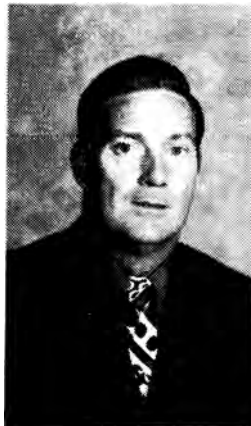
In dealing with this, you must (a) advance other hypotheses; or (b) explain the events which occurred on the Damascus road by one or the other propositions announced.

As to (a), there are no other hypotheses. You must, therefore, concede one or the other of the four propositions advanced. If the *first*, please give me the motives which influenced him, whether wealth, reputation, power, ease, or some other worldly incentive. If the *second*, explain what produced it, and why it remained with him through life. If the *third*, tell who deceived him, what the method was, and why those who journeyed with him saw the light and heard the voice from heaven.

I hope that you will deal with this matter candidly and honestly. Surely you have all to gain and nothing to lose by weighing the evidence fairly, fully and sincerely, and accepting such conclusions as irresistibly follow. I shall await your reply with interest. Sincerely yours, Guy N. Woods.

The young man involved wrote me a very brief note declining any discussion on the foregoing grounds.

A Habit



Jerry T. Bramlett

As the year 1977 is coming to a close and the new year is approaching there will be many resolutions made; and some will be kept, while others are not. Perhaps if we better understand what causes us to make our resolutions effective, we will be more successful in keeping them. In this brief article we shall discuss making a resolution to stop smoking and be more useful in the work of the Lord.

What is smoking? It is a vile, odorous and disgusting habit. It is a habit that has led many people to the point where tobacco is their God. A definition of the word GOD is: "whatever thy heart clings to and relies upon, that is properly thy God." With this definition in mind, we know there are many people who spend more money on tobacco than they do in giving to the Lord. Therefore tobacco has become their god. There are many people who will defend smoking, but will not say one word for the God of heaven; and therefore tobacco has become their god.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Smoking is not a good work, and it doesn't glorify God the Father. In my fifteen years of preaching I have never been told by anyone who has obeyed the gospel or been restored back into covenant relationship with God, that they had been influenced for good by the habit of smoking.

Why do some people quit smoking while others do not? It is the inward man or the heart of man that will determine what man

will do. When a person quits this habit it is because this person has a heart to quit. If a person continues to smoke it is because this person has a weak heart and won't quit. Jesus said, "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man." (Matthew 15:18). Solomon wrote, "keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it are the issues of life". (Proverbs 4:23). Again we read, "For as he thinketh in his heart so is he." (Proverbs 23:7). We react outwardly by the way that the heart thinks inwardly. If a person has a strong heart and wants to quit smoking, this person will quit smoking. If a person has a weak heart, he will continue to smoke.

Will you quit smoking as we begin a new year? Is your heart weak or strong? Let me encourage you to make your resolution to stop this terrible habit and not let anything hinder you from keeping this resolution. "But that on the good ground are they, which in an HONEST and GOOD HEART, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15). — P. O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580.

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yield lower 'ages'...

4. Differences in isotope concentrations [concentrations of Rb-87 and Sr-87] as found in a given rock and as applied to calculating a radiometric age of the rock are often less than variations in non-radiometric elements. Dr. Cook reports that variations in isotopic concentration of 12 such isotopes is almost 7%. He also points out that such a variation would mean uncertainties of a billion years or so when calculating 'ages' of rocks by radiometric methods involving the use of the Rb-87/Sr-87, the potassium-40/Argon-40 or the uranium-thorium-lead 'long-time clocks.' "4.

Radiometric dating systems, like non-radiometric dating systems, are all based on ASSUMPTIONS! C. A. Reed, writing in SCIENCE, remarked concerning the C-14 method:

"Although it was hailed as the answer to the prehistorian's prayer when it was first announced, there has been increasing disillusion with the method because of the chronological uncertainties — in some cases absurdities — that would follow a strict adherence to published C-14 dates. . . . "5

One could rightly ask WHY we should believe dates that have not had their assumptions validated when SO MANY dates that CAN BE checked for accuracy ARE WRONG — sometimes ludicrously so. And that brings us to our next section.

ERRORS IN RADIOMETRIC DATING

Radiometric dating methods do not always provide accurate ages. There are numerous examples, a few of which are given below:

1. LIVING mollusks have had their shells

dated by the C-14 method up to 2,300 years.6

2. New wood from actively growing trees has been dated by the same method at 10,000 years old.7

3. Mortar from the Oxford Castle in England was assigned an age by C-14 of 7,370 years, but the castle was built only 785 years ago.8

4. Freshly killed seals have been dated at 1,300 years, and mummified seals dead no longer than 30 years have been dated up to 4,600 years.9

5. Lava rocks, formed in 1800 and 1801 and therefore known to be only 170 years old, when dated by the potassium-argon method showed an age of 160 million to 3 billion years old.10

6. Volcanic rocks, known to be less than 200 years old, revealed dates of 12,000,000 to 21,000,000 years.11

7. A solid rock stratum, when dated by the potassium-argon method, gave a date of 1,750,000 years. But when the stratum was opened, mammal bones were found and dated by the C-14 method at 10,000 years. Yet the bones MUST have been older than the stratum in which they were contained!!12

As Wayne Jackson has so well stated: "If the underlying assumptions which are involved in the several earth-dating techniques were not enough to make them suspect, then certainly the colossal blunders connected therewith ought to be. The age-time factor, so necessary for giving credibility to the theory of evolution, is as full of holes as a trainer."13 We could not agree more!

The radiometric methods of dating are not

the absolute methods which so many people feel they are. They are based on unproved, unvalidated assumptions, and in many cases have been shown to be quite wrong. In our next article we shall examine more of the errors of the dating methods.

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Supporting Congregations Needed

Continued from page 1

Nowhere have we met with anything but the very best reception. The only bad news concerning the work there is that currently I am the only missionary laboring in the city of Nairobi and the Kikuyu tribal areas. Here are millions of receptive people and yet only one voice to proclaim the gospel. We are blessed in that over the years we have been able to train up able gospel preachers who are shouldering much of the preaching responsibilities, but still many fine opportunities for teaching and for preacher training go untaken due to lack of workers. The Great Commission remains unfulfilled in Kenya. One missionary amongst several million people does not make an evangelized nation. There is no easy way to carry out Christ's great charge to the disciples. You cannot evangelize a country by sending over Bibles, or even a Bible correspondence course. God has chosen preaching as the medium of instruction. He has placed the great treasure of the gospel in earthen vessels. We then are to go into all the world, give the message to others that some hearing might be saved. Then we are to trust the message to faithful men that they may teach others.

In the last months I have bent my efforts in the search for two or three good families to come to Kenya to fill the need for gospel teachers and workers. God has blessed these efforts so far, in that one family has determined to go and two others are

considering the move should supporting and sponsoring congregations be found. All these men are sound in the faith, well qualified and experienced, and are just the kind of Christian soliders we need for "front line" duty in Africa.

Can your congregation support a gospel preacher in Africa? It is our duty to take advantage of every opportunity to preach the gospel that we possibly can; AND the Kenya work is one of the great opportunities of our day. We are looking for supporting and sponsoring congregations. All of these workers will need monthly support. Some of them need sponsoring congregations who can provide all or part of their salary, and can oversee their work. All of them need funds for travel, shipping, transportation while in Africa, and support budgeted monthly to establish their work funds. Time will not allow us to come personally and ask each congregation that receives this paper whether or not they are able to contribute to the spreading of the gospel in Kenya. Let this letter suffice to inform all of the need. It is a good work commended by the elders who have overseen me and my family. Congregations interested and able to have a part in this work, no matter how small, or congregations looking for a sponsorship role should write to me in care of the Words of Truth. One of the preachers seeking backing for the preaching of the gospel in Kenya will be in contact with you. — 1501 6th Ave., Jasper, Al. 35501.

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