



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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This index for WORDS OF TRUTH for the year 1978 is printed in the hope that it will be helpful in locating articles on various subjects. It is arranged alphabetically according to the last names of the authors. Each author's articles are listed under his name in the order in which they were published. Following the title of each article, in parentheses, is the date of the issue in which the article appeared.

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Words Of Truth

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Pet Peeves

We all have pet peeves, those matters which are special sources of irritation encountered in the process of living. It may be a dog howling at night, a fingernail scratching the surface of a blackboard, or the hideous sounds of rock music; but some things grate on our nerves. There are also special sources of irritation in the church and those who preach perhaps take special note of them.



LEON COLE

There is the increasing tendency to make expedient ends within themselves. It appears that the thinking of many is that if an elaborate building is erected the great commission has been obeyed. These buildings, however, have often become "towers of Babel" monuments to an attitude of "we are rich, increased with goods and have need of nothing," and the prodigal continues to perish in the "far country." Preachers are then forced to become "professional cheerleaders" presenting special exhortations to "pay off the debt," instead of doing the work of an evangelist. There are times when it might be expedient for congregations to have special drives to pay off a huge debt; but isn't it strange that usually these drives must be made to build a "fellowship hall" or expand an already elaborate edifice rather than collecting funds to support a missionary or evangelize some part of the world.

Another special source of irritation is the increasing loss of individual responsibility among Christians. The individual is fast becoming a mere cog in the wheel to contribute money and keep the machinery going. A personal worker is hired to do his work for him in the field of personal evangelism. A youth worker is hired to work for him in this area. A few dollars are sent by the church to an orphan home and he thinks his duty in benevolence is done, and then a "professional visitor" is hired to do the visiting of the sick and shut-ins. And when the idea of the individual's having responsibility in these areas is mentioned, eye brows are lifted and one is made a suspect "anti." I am sure it is not the intention of

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Don't Throw Out The Baby With The Bath Water

There can be no doubting the fact that some of the controversy surrounding the authority of elders has arisen because elderships on occasion have misused and abused their authority. If an eldership uses its authority for the personal satisfaction of those who make up the eldership, instead of for the general welfare of the church, it is abusing its authority. Such is a clear violation of Peter's instruction to the effect that elders are not to be "lords over God's heritage" (I Peter 5:3). (This passage does not demand that an eldership consider the *wishes* of a congregation in making its decision; it does demand that an eldership consider the *welfare* of a congregation in making its decisions.)



BOBBY DUNCAN

But the fact that elders may have abused their authority is no justification for taking the position that an eldership actually has no scriptural authority for making decisions affecting the congregation. How could an eldership have the "rule over" the congregation (Hebrews 13:17), and not have any decision-making authority? And why would we be admonished to "obey them" (Hebrews 13:17) who have absolutely no authority to make decisions with respect to us?

Granted, often elderships do not have the proper concept of the scope of their authority. They sometimes feel that the congregation is to serve

them, instead of serving the Lord under the oversight. Decisions are made for their own personal convenience and satisfaction, instead of for the good of the congregation. This is an abuse of authority.

Sometimes one elder will obtain the mistaken idea that he, as an individual, has some authority to make decisions with reference to the congregation. One elder has no more authority than any one member of the congregation. Authority does not reside in an *elder* but in an *eldership*. (We know some reject the idea of an *eldership*; nevertheless, it is a concept that is altogether scriptural.) It is true that an eldership might authorize one elder to make certain decisions with reference to a congregation. But in such cases the elder has authority to make those decisions, not because he is an elder, but because he has been authorized by the eldership to make them. The same eldership could authorize one who is not an elder to do identically the same thing. It is inconsistent to insist that there must be a plurality of elders in a congregation in order to be scriptural, and then think that one elder has certain authority separate and apart from the eldership.

But the fact that some elderships have abused their authority, and that some individuals have mistakenly thought their being an elder gave them the right as an individual to rule over the congregation, should not lead any to conclude that an eldership has no scriptural authority. Abuses of every kind need to be avoided. But care must be taken on the part of all men to oppose that which is scriptural just because it may have been abused.

Let it be remembered: (1) that there is a proper and scriptural use of whatever is scriptural; (2) that that which is scriptural may be improperly and unscripturally employed, and (3) that there is no proper and scriptural way to employ that which is within itself, is unscriptural.

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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 does God not answer some prayers of his faithful children?"

But he does! He answers every prayer his faithful children pray. True, he does not always say, "Yes." Often times his answer is, "No." But, the "No," is as much an answer to the petition as the "Yes," and springs from the same motive. When a child, for example, because of its immaturity, makes a request of its parents which, for the child's welfare, they must refuse, their refusal to grant the specific request is

not a disregard of the child's petition; it is an answer to it, and an answer based on considerations for the child's own good. Our Lord promised, "Ask, and it shall be given you..." a promise, in principle, taught throughout the New Testament, but bestowed within the framework of our own best interests. When we make requests of God which would not be for our good; or, when we ask for a small blessing when he intends to give us a greater one, and thus withholds the specific request, this is by no means a disregard of the petition, but an answer grounded in our good. So

it is and so should we regard it, and be content with the divine wisdom evidenced in such cases.

We must always remember that God is the only proper judge of our needs, and to keep our requests, as far as we are able to do so, within the sphere of his will. John said, "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 5:14, 15).

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Baptism For Remission Of Sins

WALTER BUCHANAN

"Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized everyone 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)

Through the years there's been a great amount of discussion over the meaning of the word "for in Acts 2:38". Some cling to the idea that "for" means "because of" and that one is baptized because his sins have already been forgiven. Others hold the idea that "for" means "in order to" and that one is baptized — not because his sins have already been forgiven — but in order that they will be forgiven.

The best way to determine the meaning of "for" in Acts 2:38 is to study its usage in another place. The same word is used in Matthew 26:28. "For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." The same expression, "for remission of sins", is used in both verses, Matthew 26:28 and Acts 2:38. Whatever it means in one verse, it means in the other!

Is Jesus saying that He would shed His blood because sins are already forgiven? Indeed not! He would shed His blood in order that sins can be forgiven. If sins were already forgiven, why should Jesus die? From this we can see clearly the meaning of the expression "for the remission of sins" in Acts 2:38. We are not baptized because our sins are already forgiven but in order that they will be forgiven.—Highway 71 North Bentonville, Ark. 72712

Pet Peeves

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most brethren to leave this impression; but slowly and surely we are forgetting that each member of the body has a function to perform that no one else can do for him. To use an old cliche, "every tub must sit on its own bottom!! The Bible teaching is that "everyone of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).—127 North Prairie, Florence, Al. 35630



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12, 1979

NUMBER 2

The Gospel Paul Preached

(No. 1)

In Romans 2:16 the apostle Paul declared that: "...God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ." What did this illustrious preacher mean by the phrase "my gospel"? Obviously, he referred to the gospel which was committed to him, and hence, that which he proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile (Rom. 1:16). Paul's gospel was, of course, that same gospel that is elsewhere styled



WAYNE JACKSON

the gospel of God (I Pet. 4:17), the gospel of Christ (Mark 1:1), the gospel of the kingdom (Matt. 4:23), the gospel of grace (Acts 20:24), etc. Prior to Christ's death, that gospel was preached in preparation for the coming kingdom; after the Lord's resurrection, from Pentecost onward, it was proclaimed in fulfilled reality.

In Paul's day, as in our own time, there were those who taught spurious "gospels." In his letter to the Galatians the apostle expressed amazement that those brethren were so quickly removing themselves from the grace of Christ unto "another (*heteros* - of a different kind or quality) gospel" which was, in fact, a perverted gospel (Gal. 1:6-8). Because of their increasing fascination with a strange "gospel," Paul was fearful that his labor among them might be for naught (Gal. 4:11). It is that same gospel — Paul's gospel — and it alone, that is valid today; it is for that gospel that faithful teachers of the truth must contend.

A brief but very wonderful characterization of the gospel that Paul preached is found in the last letter that he wrote. It reads as follows:

"Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God; who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our own works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, where unto I was appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher" (II Timothy 1:8-11).

In the balance of this presentation (and in another article to follow) I would like to highlight several traits that identify Paul's gospel as sketched in the paragraph above.

A Gospel Of History. In his valuable book, *A Short Life Of Christ*, Everett Harrison has noted that: "Some religions, both ancient and modern, require no historical basis, for they depend upon ideas rather than events" (p. 11). Christianity is not one of these. It stands or falls on the basis of certain historical events. Such events are alluded to in Paul's charge that Timothy be not ashamed of "the testimony of our Lord." The expression "testimony of our Lord," grammatically speaking, could suggest two possibilities. It might denote the testimony which came from the Lord as a point of origin. Certainly Paul's gospel was divine, and not human, as to its origin (Cf. Gal. 1:11, 12). More likely though, "testimony of our Lord" denotes the testimony regarding the Lord. In other words, it referred to those facts concerning Christ that revealed him to be unique, culminating, of course, with the historical documentation of his death, burial and resurrection from the dead. These very facts are powerfully set forth by Paul as the very gospel which he preached (I


Cor. 15:1-4). Those, therefore, who have the sufficient intellectual interest to research the matter will find the available evidence to demonstrate that Christianity is no mere mystical, religious theory or speculative dream; rather it is grounded in the unassailable facts of verifiable history.

A Glorious Gospel. Paul's gospel was a glorious gospel. By that I mean it was a gospel in which one could take glorious pride; it was nothing to be ashamed of. The Lord foreknew the abuse that would be heaped upon his followers. He further had special insight into the weakness of human nature and the temptation of men to be intimidated and shamed when standing for what is right. Accordingly, he warned: "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed. . ." (Luke 9:26). Paul was not ashamed of the Lord nor his gospel (Rom. 1:16). Paul was not intimidated by the Jews, who were horrified by the doctrine of a crucified Messiah, or by the Greeks, who, in their pseudo-wisdom, disdained humble Christianity. And so, he urged Timothy not to be ashamed of "the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner."

Some, however, were apparently very much ashamed of both the gospel and Paul in those daring times. In emphasizing the great number of defectors, the apostle, by use of the synecdoche, wrote that "all that are in Asia turned away from me: of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes" (I Tim. 1:15). Demas forsook Paul for a love of the world (4:10), and numerous others weakened at the time of the apostle's "first defense" (4:16). Others, though, like Onesiphorus, were not ashamed of Paul and his gospel, but rather ministered faithfully in the cause (1:16-18).

In a day of much compromise on numerous issues, there is a great need for those who will unashamedly proclaim the whole truth. Young people are needed who will not be ashamed of the spiritual teaching they have received at the feet of godly parents. Saints are needed who will not be ashamed to declare the gospel

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Pressing On

JOHNNY RAMSEY

For the Christian there is no place for going backward. He has no reverse gear or retreat plans. The pull is always up and the cry is ever onward! His goal is to know fully the length and depth and breadth and height of the love of God (Ephesians 3:17-19). Each day brings new opportunity, challenge and urgency. Most of the time a Christian is "going on unto perfection" (Hebrews 6:1), launching out into the deep (Luke 5:4) while never looking back (Luke 9:62). With eyes firmly fixed upon Christ (Hebrews 12:2) such a one never deviates to the right or left (Joshua 1:7) as he holds a straight course in the Truth (II Timothy 2:15). This, naturally, calls for steadfastness and unwavering loyalty. It demands a price so high in the realm of consistency that few even try to pay it.

It is difficult to find members of the church that are constantly increasing in their love for God and in the full use and development of their talents to the glory and promulgation of Christianity. Too many of us are looking for a refreshing shade tree on Easy Street instead of a place of ardent responsibility in the Valley of Service! Preachers must challenge themselves to study harder as they determine to preach the whole counsel of God. Elders need always to be on the alert for personal progress as shepherds of the flock. Last, but not least, the flock needs to improve its "fellowship" as Christ, the chief Shepherd, inspires us to take up our cross and follow Him (Luke 9:23).

Very seriously, now, let us ask ourselves three pertinent questions: (1) Am I more spiritual now than ever before? (2) Am I living up to my full potential? (3) What sincere effort am I making to improve? Heaven hangs in the balance as we humbly ponder these issues. If we are not pressing on we are slipping back. Only Satan can smile over that conclusion.

Ernest Shurtleff has furnished us with these fitting words: "Lead on, O King Eternal, we follow, not with fears; For gladness breaks like morning wherever Thy face appears; Thy cross is lifted over us: we journey in its light; The crown awaits the conquest; lead on, O God of might!" Let us press on diligently to that beautiful home of the soul.—8900 Manchaca Rd., Austin, Tex. 78745.



Is It So Strange?



BOBBY DUNCAN

There are those who think it exceedingly strange that anyone could believe baptism to be a necessary command of the Lord. That an alien sinner must be baptized in order to be saved seems to be more than some are able to imagine. This is not because of a lack of scriptural support of the idea, for the Scriptures abound in statements showing clearly that baptism is one of the conditions upon which God will save (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Pet. 3:21). The idea that baptism is not necessary evidently arises from the failure to recognize this truth: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8, 9).

That man is unable to fathom the mind of God and understand the reason behind all his commands is demonstrated throughout the Bible. The taking of the city of Jericho by Joshua and the Israelites is a case in point. God instructed Joshua and the Israelites to go around the city once each day for six days. On the seventh day they were to go around the city seven times. The priests were to blow the trumpets of rams' horns, the people were to shout, and the walls were to

tumble down (Josh. 6). Now, wasn't that a strange way to capture a city? Yet it was God's way and the only way it could have been done. Is it so strange, in view of this, that God would require one to be baptized in order to be saved?

Naaman, the leper, is another example of God's dealing with man in a way that most of us would consider strange. The prophet of God instructed Naaman to wash in Jordan seven times in order to be healed of his leprosy (II Kings 5). Naaman, with a mind akin to some living today, felt that obedience to such a command was ridiculous. He overlooked, as do many, the fact that God's ways and thoughts are higher than man's. When he eventually washed in Jordan as God had said, he was healed. A strange treatment for leprosy, you say? Yes, but the only one that would work in the case of Naaman. Why should it seem so strange that God demands that one be baptized?

One other example is recorded in John 9. Here we read that Christ anointed the eyes of him who was blind and told him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (verse 7). The blind man obeyed, and received his sight. Do we not consider it strange that the Lord chose such a means of securing for the blind man his sight? Yet who believes the man would have received his sight had he refused to go and wash as the Lord commanded?

Since the Lord has through the years chosen ways to bless that seem strange to us, and since we all admit that in each case man had to submit to the strange command, is it really so strange that some of us believe it is absolutely necessary to submit to the command to be baptized in order to be saved?

Who Is A Pharisee?

HAROLD PEACOCK, JR.

Not infrequently when someone who is a faithful member of the body of Christ questions the actions of another, the accusation is made that anyone who would question the actions of another must be a "Pharisee!" I know of a young man (fourteen years old at the time) who in an attempt to defend the truth against the erroneous teaching of a Baptist preacher was called a "Pharisee." Now, the question is, is someone a Pharisee because he points out error in the life of another? Actually, it depends on the definition of who or what a Pharisee is.

The Pharisees were a sect of the Jews during the time Jesus lived upon the earth. Their name implied that they regarded themselves as special; they separated themselves from other men. It is a mistake to think that all Pharisees were bad, even though the name Pharisee, in general, carried a bad connotation. There were some good Pharisees who were not hypocritical.

The major portion of scripture which relates Jesus' encounters with this Jewish sect is Matthew chapters 21-23. Paul was later persecuted by this same group (Cf. Acts 23), and prior to his conversion had been a strict member of the sect. Especially in Matthew 23 do we find Jesus denouncing severely the actions of these men who "spoke from Moses' seat" but who practiced very little of what they preached! Jesus' informed his disciples that they should listen to what they taught that was the authoritative word of God

(then the law of Moses), but not to do according to their works because they "say and do not!" I have often wondered if Jesus was a "Pharisee" by the standard of some brethren's thinking! Concerning these people Jesus minced no words. *Please observe:* "Woe unto your scribes, Pharisees—HYPOCRITES!" "Ye fools and blind!" "Ye blind Pharisee!" "Ye blind guides!" Listen further. "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers!" (Can't you just see the "smile" on Jesus' face!) ". . . ye are like whitened sepulchres, which indeed APPEAR BEAUTIFUL OUTWARD, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (See Matthew 23:13-33).

In John 8:44 is recorded Jesus' most harsh indictment ever, perhaps: "Ye are of your father, the devil!" Also, "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God" (John 8:47). Jesus pointed out their sins. And what was their reply? Was this their reply? "Jesus you come across to us as a Pharisee!"? What they did say is recorded in John 8:48? "Say we not well that thou art a SAMARITAN, AND HAST A DEVIL?" When Jesus told them the truth about their lives, they attempted to stone him to death!

When Jesus came to this earth it was evident even from his youth that he was on a collision course with

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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"Please offer scriptural evidence that the work of THE LOCATED PREACHER IS SCRIPTURAL."

Paul preached for a church with elders for a period of three years (Acts 20:17-31).

1. The church in Ephesus had elders (Acts 20:17).
2. Paul taught publicly and from house to house: thus, combining, public preaching with personal ministration, such as is characteristic of thousands of loyal, faithful preachers among us today (Acts 20:20).
3. During this entire period the apostle was going about "preaching the kingdom" (verse 25).
4. Yet, during the entire period of his labors in Ephesus, he ceased not to admonish "every one night and day with tears" (verse 31).
5. This association of the apostle with the Ephesian church continued for a period of three years!

It follows, therefore, that if the preaching which Paul did, while in Ephesus, was not to the church, it was done at some other time besides night and day!

Further, if this apostolic incident supplies us with a precedent today, we are justified in an arrangement whereby a preacher is associated with a church, a church with elders, an association wherein he labors among the members night and day admonishing them, and preaching the kingdom of God—an association maintained for at least three years.

Timothy was left with a church with elders to preach and teach (I Tim. 1:3).

The passage reads: "As I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus, when I was going into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine."

1. There were elders in the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17).
2. Yet, Paul, an apostle, left Timothy in Ephesus to perform functions dealing with members of the church (I Tim. 1:3).
3. It will not be denied that, as opportunity offered, it was also his duty to "do the work of an evangelist" (II Tim. 4:5).

4. Here, then, is divine sanction for the work of a preacher which involves the edification of the saints, and the proclamation of the gospel to the lost.

We invite careful attention to the following facts: When Paul left Ephesus, to go into Macedonia, on the occasion recorded by Luke in Acts 20:1ff, Timothy was not in Ephesus, having already been sent, along with Erastus, to Macedonia (Acts 19:21, 22). When Paul reached Macedonia, on the occasion of the visit, designated in Acts 20:1ff, he wrote First Corinthians. In it, he mentions that he had sent Timothy to them; "For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy. . ." (I Cor. 4:17). From Corinth, Timothy returned to Macedonia, where he met Paul. This follows from the fact that Timothy is joined with the apostle in the salutation of Second Corinthians which Paul wrote from Macedonia.

It follows, therefore, that since Timothy was not in Ephesus, when Paul left there to go into Macedonia (Acts 20:1ff), Paul left Timothy in Ephesus, on a trip not mentioned in Acts! It is, hence, impossible to know how long Timothy remained in Ephesus when Paul left him there on the occasion designated in I Tim. 1:3.

Paul and Barnabas associated themselves with the church in Antioch, and taught "Much people" (Acts 11:26).

1. The work which Paul and Barnabas did, while associated with the church in Antioch, being teaching, was directed to the church.
 2. These men continued this work for a "whole year."
 3. To deny that this congregation had elders during this period is to contend that Paul failed to do for them what he always did for the churches with which he was associated. (Acts 14:23: "and when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, in whom they had believed.")
- Paul labored with the church in Corinth for a period of a year and six months, during which time he taught the word of God.*

1. To teach the word, is to labor with the church, so some contend.

2. Paul taught the word in Corinth for a year and six months.

3. Therefore, Paul labored with the church in Corinth for a period of a year and six months.

It is absurd to assume that this church was without elders, in view of Paul's well-known custom (Acts. 14:23).

To allege that this is an instance of a preacher taking the oversight of a congregation, in the absence of elders, is to contend for the pastor system with a vengeance!

Paul preached and taught in Rome for two years (Acts 28: 30, 31).

1. The apostle both preached and taught. This in the view of some, is to perform a ministry among both saints and sinners.

2. This type of work was continued for a period of two years.

3. During this interval, the apostle was supported by the contributions of the brethren, evidence of which is to be seen in the fact that he lived in his "own hired dwelling."

The fact that the apostle, during this period, was in the technical custody of the Roman government is not of significance; Paul would not have engaged in the work if such had been wrong.

Here, then, are five arguments drawn directly from the Scriptures in support of that for which we contend. The conclusions which follow are, to the reasonable and candid mind, demonstrative and conclusive. The premises on which they are founded are divinely sanctioned; the conclusions to which they lead must then be regarded as settled. The privilege of a preacher to preach and teach; to preach and teach in a community with elders, to preach and teach the church in such a community; and to maintain this activity for years, must be accepted. To reject this, is to repudiate the sanction of the word. For more than we w do not contend.

The Proper Emphasis On The Life Of Christ

Now that the Christmas season is over, it is good for us to make an objective investigation regarding such a subject. A person might hold an opinion as to which day Jesus was born and never be in conflict with the Holy Scriptures, that is, if he did not make such an opinion a matter of law or faith. Furthermore, there is nothing inherently wrong with observing national customs and traditions such as giving gifts and enjoying periods of family gatherings and other periods of fellowship, as long as no Biblical principle would be violated. Such festive occasions are most enjoyable. However, people do wonder why many Christians do not celebrate December 25 as being the actual birthday of Jesus Christ. Please consider the following.



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

the only writers who record the birth of Jesus and, though they relate where he was born (Bethlehem) during the reign of Caesar Augustus, God chose not to inform us as to the specific date of Jesus' birth.

Secondly, December 25 was set by uninspired men some years after the life of Christ. Liberius, Bishop of Rome, in 354 A.D. ordered that December 25 should be adopted as the date on which the birth of Christ should be celebrated. Mary E. Hazeltine in her book, *Anniversaries and Holidays*, page 178, suggests that "The selection of December 25 was largely due to the fact that it coincided with the greatest of the pagan festivals. Centuries have passed since the days of pagan festivals, but we still enjoy the strands of ancient customs that are woven into our present-day celebration." Other dates which have been set and observed in times past as Jesus' birthday are: January 6, March 25, March 28, April 19, April 20, May 20 and November 17.

Thirdly, it is generally agreed among the world of scholars that December 25 is a most unlikely date of the birth of Jesus. In Luke the second chapter, verse eight, we read: "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night." Albert Barnes, noted commentator says concerning the shepherd's keeping their flocks in the fields: "The climate was

mild, and to keep their flocks from wandering, they spent the night with them. It is also a fact that the Jews sent out their flocks into the mountainous and desert regions during the summer months, and took them up in the latter part of October or the first of November when the cold weather commenced. It is probable from this fact that our saviour was born before the 25 of December, or before what we call Christmas. At that time it is cold, and especially in the high mountainous regions about Bethlehem."

Fourthly, we should observe the fact that the latter part of our saviour's life, rather than his birth, was greatly emphasized by the four gospel writers. Of course, we do not intend to minimize his birth and his entrance as God into the human family but neither should we place over-emphasis where God has not done so. One third of the gospels and one seventh of the New Testament was written to emphasize the last week of Christ's life on earth and his death, burial and resurrection. The cross of Christ in the New Testament is supreme. More than 300 references are made to the cross of Christ. It was on the cross that the great sacrifice was made. Here the magnitude of God's love was shown. All New Testament doctrines center around the cross of Christ.

Fifthly, we can and should show forth the death.

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Who Is A Pharisee?

Continued from page 2

falsehood as it prevailed in the lives of men. Such was only inevitable! The greatest battle in the world is being waged between the forces of truth and the forces of error. But, truth shall prevail—at any cost! Those who belittle and “cast stones” at those who are engaged in the battle for truth—yes, even those who love the Lord and the souls of men enough to put into practice Galatians 6:1 and II Thessalonians 3:4-14—those who align themselves against the truth in such matters shall not prevail! Those (including brethren) who practice “in word if not in

deed” the name-calling tactic of “Pharisaism” need to re-evaluate (or evaluate for the first time perhaps) who a Pharisee is according to the New Testament. Or, at least, please try and get the name tag right: “Say we not well that thou art a SAMARITAN, AND HAST A DEVIL?”

Who is a Pharisee? I will submit the answer in the form of a question, my conclusion being drawn from all Scriptural evidence on the matter. One should draw only such conclusions as are warranted by the evidence. Here is the question: Is one a “Pharisee”

because he points out error, thereby attempting to help correct another, and out of concern for the one in error. . .OR. . . is one a Pharisee because he RESENTS being corrected?

Brethren who resent others who love men's souls enough to try to help them correct the sins and mistakes in their lives need themselves to be corrected!—P. O. Box 654, Aiken, South Carolina 29801.

The Proper Emphasis On The Life Of Christ

Continued from page 3

burial and resurrection of Jesus through obedience and our worship to God. When an individual obeys Jesus Christ, he does so in a likeness or form of the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord (See Romans 6:1-4, 17). Also, in observing the Lord's Supper upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7), we

do so in remembrance of Christ's body and blood, that is, of his death suffering (I Corinthians 11:23-30).

In conclusion, we should remember that the apostle Paul warned Christians about observing “special days” (Galatians 4:10, 11). Surely, if the Lord had

desired for us to honor the day of his birth in a special way, he would have included such information in his word, which is the authority in all that we do religiously (II Timothy 3:16, 17).—Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Alabama 36467.

“Love The Brotherhood”

(No. 1)

This marvelous expression occurs amidst a quartet of pithy, terse statements from the powerful pen of the inspired Cephas. The former fisherman, now an inspired apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote, “Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king” (I Pet. 2:17). Thus we have a quartet of obligations set forth for Christians. There is the obligation toward humanity, that is observed in the honor we are to accord them.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

There is the royal responsibility we owe toward the children of God; we are to love them. There is the dynamic duty we sustain to God as our Maker, our Preserver and Saviour; we are to fear, reverence and respect him. There is the obligation we owe human government; we are to honor and respect those in governmental authority. This latter point had been covered quite well by Peter in this very context (I Pet. 2:13-14). It is about the second of these expressions, these pithy imperatives, that I choose to pen a few articles for WORDS OF TRUTH over the next few weeks.

OBJECTS OF BOTH LOVE AND HATRED

It is exceedingly interesting and fundamentally profitable to go through the Bible and note the objects of both love and hatred. Some of these objects we are commanded to love; some of these objects we are warned lest we love them and lose our souls as a result. Toward certain objects the Godhead registers love; toward other objects the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit register hatred. Obviously, as his people, we should seek to love the objects God loves and hate the objects he hates. This is one of the ways we can prove that we belong to him and desire to please him. Let us now view this matter both negatively and

positively.

Solomon, the Wisest of the Ages, depicted six objects which God hates, yea seven things which constitute abominations in his divine sight. The Sage of Jerusalem wrote: “These six things doth the Lord hate: Yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren” (Prov. 6:16-19). In summary fashion we may say that God hates pride, falsehood, murder, evil thoughts, wicked imaginations, malicious mischief and sowers of discord among brethren. Conversely, he loves humility, truth, wholesome imaginations, doers of good and those who pursue peace. Through Isaiah God said, “Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them” (Isa. 1:14). Here is a case where apostate Judah engaged in hollow worship, being void of righteous lives to back up such. God hates such religious pretense. Twice in Revelation 2 Jesus declared his holy hatred for the deeds of the Nicolaitanes (Rev. 2:6, 15). Whatever the nature of their deeds was they constituted a stench in the nostrils of God's Son. Do we hate that which God hates or love that which he hates?

Positively, God loves the Son and has since before the foundation of the world (John 17:24). God loved the world (John 3:16). Jesus loved the church and

gave himself for it (Eph. 5:25). The ASV says he gave himself up for it. Jesus loved his own which were in the world and he loved them to the very end (John 13:1). Jesus loved his enemies enough to pray for them while on Calvary (Luke 23:34). Paul has two great chapters that deal almost exclusively with giving (II Cor. 8, 9). He affirmed in Second Corinthians 9:7, “. . .for God loveth a cheerful giver.” Do we really love that which God loves or hate that which he loves? It is not enough to love; we must know what to love and what not to love.—P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

The Gospel Paul Preached

Continued from page 3

message among their contemporaries. Gospel preachers who fearlessly hold forth the truth must be supported and encouraged. Elders who are set for the advancement and defense of the ancient faith must know of our appreciation.

With our eyes undimmed and our spiritual force unabated, let us take godly pride in the truth and those who speak it. (To be continued.) — 3906 East Main St., Stockton, Ca 95205.

Plant patience in the garden of your soul.
The roots are bitter but the fruits are sweet.

Maturity is the art of living in peace with that which we cannot change.

Maybe you can't take it with you but it is good to know there is one place you can go without it.

When there is no self crucifixion, there is no spiritual resurrection.

Christians should be “insulated” in the world but they must not be “isolated” from the world.

Those who have passed from this world die only when we, whom they loved, forget them.



Words Of Truth

the v.

(USPS 691-760)

— speak forth

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 15

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NUMBER 3

The Gospel Paul Preached

(No. 2)

In a previous article, it was observed that the gospel that Paul termed as his gospel, i.e., that which had been entrusted to him, was wonderfully outlined in II Timothy 1:8-11. Not only was that gospel a *historical* gospel, and a *glorious* gospel (see installment #1), but other traits characterized it as well.

A Gospel Worthy of Suffering. Paul admonished Timothy to "suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God." See also II Timothy 2:3; 4:5. There is suffering a plenty in the world as it is; why would one voluntarily assume additional discomforts? When the scene is properly analyzed, isn't it admittedly true that there just aren't too many things in this old world *worth* suffering for? In the ancient world suicide was a very popular way of dealing with suffering—and it is becoming increasingly so today! But that is not Christ's way. The gospel shows that human existence is more than the drudgery of daily living. The gospel tells of the Saviour who suffered to effect a redemptive plan; if such was the case with Christ, those who espouse his cause can expect no better (John 15:20). It is a gospel axiom that all who would "live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Tim. 3:12). But persecution comes in a variety of ways. To some it may simply mean dishonor in society's view (Acts 5:41). To others it may involve the loss of position or prestige (Phil. 3:8). It could even entail imprisonment, physical abuse or death (Acts 22:4). The point is this: because of who Christ is and what he did, and because of the divine validity of his system, the gospel is worth suffering hardships for. Through the power of truth, we can endure with patience. And let us always remember this: "...the sufferings of this



WAYNE JACKSON

present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward" (Rom. 8:18).

A Saving Gospel. The gospel which Paul proclaimed was the depository of God's saving power (Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 15:2). Unlike the anemic and frequently politic-oriented "social-gospels" of our day (which are mostly designed to placate human *wants*, rather than *needs*), the gospel of Christ is intended to confront man with his sinfulness (John 16:8), and to effect a reformation of the whole life through obedience to the God of heaven. Paul's gospel contained facts to be believed (I Cor. 15:1-4), commands to be obeyed (Heb. 5:8,9; Matt. 7:21; Acts 2:38), and promises to be received (Eph. 1:3). This gospel is absolutely the only hope for this earth!

The apostle, within our study context, affirms that his gospel is not one whereby a sinner is saved on the ground of his *own* works; rather, such salvation is according to God's purpose and grace. It should be carefully noted, however, that in denying that salvation is of our OWN works, Paul does not assert that it is without works of ANY sort. There are works of boastful man which are utterly disassociated from remission of sins (Eph. 2:8, 9; Tit. 3:5). And yet there are works of obedience that are divinely required as requisite for the reception of God's saving grace (Jas. 2:14; Rev. 2:5; John 6:29; Matt. 12:41; Jonah 3:10; Mark 16:16).


Moreover, Paul asserts that the salvation associated with his gospel was that which was "given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal." Here, the Biblical doctrine of "election" is alluded to. Before times eternal (i.e., before the beginning of time) the determination was made that salvation would be "in Christ" (cf. Eph. 1:4). This does not, of course, as with the erroneous Calvinistic concept of election, rob man of his freedom of choice. In the beginning God predestined a certain class of human beings to be saved—the "in Christ" class. The meaning is simply this: Jehovah determined to save those who would be responsive to his will. And those who obey his will are

said to be "in Christ" (Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:26, 27). Election is an "election of grace" (Rom. 11:5), and grace must be received by choice (II Cor. 6:1); hence, God's election is received by man's response!

A Consecrating Gospel. Paul's gospel contained a calling to holiness. The New Testament clearly teaches that we are "called to be saints" (I Cor. 1:2). We are to be living sacrifices, "holy, acceptable to God" in spiritual service. We dare not be conformed to the world any longer; rather, it is our duty to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:1, 2). All of the Christian's actions must be motivated by the desire to glorify God (I Cor. 10:31), hence, the kingdom must take first place in our lives (Matt. 6:33). It is one of the real tragedies of our age—perhaps of any age—that so many who profess to be Christians are indistinguishable from those of this world. A healthy dose of genuine repentance is sorely needed in the twentieth century church of God!

An Enlightening Gospel. As a consequence of Jesus' appearing (i.e., his entrance into the world as a man), he abolished death and, through the gospel, brought life and immortality to light. Since elsewhere Paul affirmed that death will be abolished at "the end," when Christ comes (I Cor. 15:23, 24), in what sense does he here claim that death has *already* been abolished? Well, in this sense: prior to the first advent of Jesus Christ, death cast a grim shadow over the entire earth (cf. Matt. 4:16). By his powerful and permanent resurrection, he has the keys to death and hades (Rev. 1:18), and through the light of his gospel, the sting of death has been removed. The child of God need not be in bondage to a slavish fear of death (Heb. 2:14). The gospel has shown that life (eternal communion with God) and immortality (incorruption) are obtainable through Christ. What a fresh breeze across a corrupted planet this news was!

The gospel Paul preached turned the ancient world upside down (Acts 17:6); and it can do it again. The task is in our hands!—3906 East Main Street, Stockton, CA 95205



Words Of Truth
(USPS 691-760)

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

Excuses

An excuse, in one sense of the word, is a false reason offered to hide the real reason for certain actions. For example one may stay home from church on Sunday morning and say it was because of a headache. But a headache equally severe on another day would not keep him from his job, from a hunting trip, or from a ball game. His excuse for missing church was that he had a headache. His real reason (perhaps unconsciously) was that he did not want to go to church as badly as he wanted to stay home.



BOBBY DUNCAN

There are many excuses which people give for their failure to attend church services, or for failure to do any thing they know they should do. Sometimes we are successful in "pulling the wool over our own eyes" to the extent that we hide from ourselves the real reason for our actions by giving some excuse that

would tend to justify us. We need to learn to distinguish for ourselves between our excuses and our reasons. Perhaps the following will be some help:

(1) On Sunday morning you wake up with a headache. Ask yourself, "Would I let this headache keep me from going to my job?" If your answer is "No," then it could hardly be a real reason for staying away from church, could it?

(2) On Wednesday night your child has a cold. Ask yourself, "Would this cold be enough to cause us to cancel our plans to visit friends or relatives if we had made such plans?"

(3) You are very tired, but it is time for Bible study. Ask yourself, "Would I be too tired to attend a ball game I wanted to see, or to go somewhere else I wanted to go?"

(4) It is time for church but the weather is terrible. Ask yourself, "Would this weather keep me from going to work, or on a hunting trip I had planned?"

(5) You know you should go to church, but your clothes are not as nice as some. Ask yourself, "Do my clothes keep me from going to the grocery store and other places in public?"

Your answers to these questions and similar questions that arise with various situations will help you know the difference between an excuse and a real reason.

What If I Had Never Been Born?

A few weeks ago I watched a television show starring Marlo Thomas. It was a new rendition of an old movie made long ago starring Jimmy Stewart. The plot has Marlo, around Christmas time, thinking of ending her life because things have taken a turn for the worse. An angel, trying to win her wings, appears and talks to Marlo, showing her how things would have been if she had not been born. Marlo does not like what



RAY HAWK

she sees. No matter how much trouble she was in, she wants to return to her life as it was rather than not be born. She found out that her life was worth living because she touched the lives of others much more than she thought.

At one point, Marlo is taken to the local cemetery where she finds her brother's grave. He had died in an accident when he was young. Marlo remembers the accident and argues with the angel that she saved her brother. The angel reminds her that she wasn't there to save him because she wasn't born. Because her brother was dead, he was not there during World War II to spot the U-Boat and give warning to turn the ship to avoid the torpedo that sunk it. As a result, several thousand men died on that troopship because Marlo was not born! My, what a difference one life can make.

Does the thought ever cross your mind that your influence doesn't count? Do you think that your absence will not matter? Have you ever thought that you really don't contribute much to making history? Take another look! Many people are watching you. Your life will either turn them to Jesus or away. You could be an Andrew who influences one person to obey Christ, and that person wins thousands to him. Without you, it would not have been possible. In this

Continued on page 4

"Love The Brotherhood"

(No. 2)

This magnificent trio of words adorn a terse and pithy passage that flowed from the potent pen of the colorful Cephas, an inspired apostle of Christ. Its three neighboring exhortations in I Peter 2:17 inculcate that we honor all men, that we fear God and that we honor the king.

It is imperative that love have an object upon whom to confer its ardency of affection. God loves. He loves his fellow members of the Godhead three. It would be interesting to have the Oneness people tell us whom the ONE PERSON in the Godhead, as per their theory, loved in eternity and before creation was begun. Has God always loved? If so, WHOM? He loves the world. He loves the church. He loves the good, the pure, the lovely and the wholesome. Christ loves the same objects. So does the Spirit of truth. Elders are commanded to be lovers of hospitality and of good men (Tit. 1:8). We are ever to speak forth truth in love (Eph. 4:15). This necessitates love for the truth and love for the souls to whom we communicate truth. Hence, we have the twin objects of the love depicted in Ephesians 4:15. Husbands are commanded to love their wives as they do their own bodies (Eph. 5:28). An even higher standard of love than this demands that they love their wives as Jesus loved the church (Eph. 5:25). Wives are to love their



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

husbands (Tit. 2:4). Parents are to love their children (Tit. 2:4-5; Eph. 6:4). Little children should especially be the precious objects of our love. A beautiful portrait of our lovely Lord is seen when interested and concerned parents brought their precious offspring to Jesus. He took them up in his arms and blessed them (Mark 10:13-16; Matt. 19:13-15). The songs, "Jesus Loves Me," and, "Jesus Loves The Little Children Of The World," express so eloquently how the Lord feels toward children.

Peter uses the word love a number of times in his first epistle. He refers to love or charity in each chapter. Uniformly he connects love with an object. In Chapter one he says, "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 Pet. 1:22). Brethren and one another form the objects of this love that Peter inculcated. This was not a pretended love, one of the hypocritical variety that so often exists in our world. It was a genuine love extended to and conferred upon brethren in the Lord. Of course in chapter two we have the expression we are examining in detail - "love the brotherhood" (I Pet. 2:17). In the third chapter we read, "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (I Pet. 3:10). Here life is the object of love. One will never learn the basis of real living unless he loves the life that a gracious God has given him and determines to make the most of the good days that are potentially his. In chapter four the colorful Cephas says, "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover a multitude of sins" (I Pet. 4:8).

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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).

"Is a stipulated wage for preachers scriptural?"

I. A gospel preacher is entitled to be supported as a matter of right, and not as an object of charity. This obligation results from a relationship which obtains between the teacher and the taught. "But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things" (Gal. 6:6).

1. The word "communicate" here, is from the Greek *koinoneo*, "to enter into fellowship, join one's self a sharer or partner" (Thayer).

2. It follows, therefore, that as those who support the word share in the reward which attends its proclamation, so those who preach it are to share, as a matter of right, in the things of a material nature which their brethren possess.

3. To urge that a preacher is to subsist on the freewill offerings of his brethren, makes the preacher a suppliant for charity, a beggar, an object of commiseration; whereas, Paul, in this passage, teaches that the support is to be his because he is a partner of those of his brethren who are engaged in secular pursuits. His right to support is an equitable one, not a charitable one!

II. The laborer is worthy of his hire. This maxim occurs a number of times in the New Testament; Jesus cited it in connection with the activities of the seventy (Luke 10:7); Paul, in reference to the support of elders who devote their full time to the work of teaching the word. It embodies a principle, applicable to preachers and elders alike, who spend their entire age, did engage to this extent, is clear from I Tim. 5:17.

1. Under consideration here is a laborer.

2. The laborer under consideration here, is one who spends his time teaching the word of God.

3. It is affirmed of this laborer that he is worthy.

4. That of which he is declared worthy is his hire!

The word "hire" in this passage is from the Greek word, *misthos*. Mr. Thayer defines this term as "Dues paid for work; wages, hire." Moulton and Milligan, in their monumental work in the Greek papyri, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, cite an instance of its use, "Where a slave is apprenticed to a shorthand writer to be taught shorthand 'at a salary agreed upon' of 120 silver drachmae..." The word occurs in the sentence, "Now to him that worketh is the reward (*misthos*) not reckoned of grace, but of debt" (Rom. 4:4).

It will be observed, therefore, that, whether preacher or elder, he who labors in the "word and doctrine" is entitled to his hire. This "hire" is dues paid for work; wages, a salary "agreed upon." It is a reward to which one is entitled for work done, in contrast with that which is bestowed through grace.

III. Paul took wages of churches. "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service" (II Cor. 11:8).

1. The word "wages" here is from the Greek *opsonion*.

2. The lexicographers define it as follows:

Thayer: "A soldier's pay, allowance, metaph. wages."

Liddell and Scott: "Provisions, esp. supplies and pay for an army."

Souter: "(Rations: then) soldier's pay, wages, salary, reward in general."

Abbott-Smith: "Provisions, provision-money, soldier's pay..." "Generally, wages, hire: II Cor.

11:8."

Robinson: "Hence, in the New Testament. . . a stipend, wages, rations, pr. of soldiers; trop. and gen wages, recompense, II Cor. 11:8."

Moulton and Milligan: (Note: The definitions of these authorities are especially significant. They are drawn from the papyri, documents reflecting the world of commerce, conversation and trade, of the day when the New Testament was being written. They thus define the word as *first century readers would have understood it*, and as we should, therefore, understand it today. The following is a complete transcription of their article taken directly from their text, except for the Greek authors, phrases, and sources mentioned.—GNW).

"This interesting word is said to have entered the Greek language with Menander, and it is frequently used by Polybius and other late writers. It is very common in the papyri and inscri., and its various uses may be illustrated as follows:... (1) For the meaning 'provisions' see. . . where, after various pieces of good advice, a father writes to his son. . . 'until however Anoubas arrives, you must pay for the provisions of yourself and your household out of your own money, until I send you some.' (2) The reference is particularly to a soldier's pay, ration-money, allowance (as in Luke 3:14, cf. I Cor. 9:7), in. . . where a certain Ptolemy petitions King Ptolemy Philometer that his brother may obtain a place in a company stationed at Memphis, and receive the usual allowance. Similarly, a soldier writes promising the repayment of a loan of 140 drachmae 'with my next pay, and in. . . provision is made for mercenary soldiers.' (3) From this the translation is easy to 'pay' 'wages' 'salary' in general. . . 'That I received double the allowance of provision-money. . . 'As soon as we receive wages I will send them to you' . . . the payment of 80 drachmae to a watchman, 'the salary of a sword-bearer,' 'she hath failed to supply my allowance for the last three months,' the complaint of a minor regarding his mother, 'wages for the cultivation of arable land!' 'allowance to crowned athletes,' 'that he may also give an artaba of barley on account of wages,' and for a wider sense where certain citizens are described as having rendered public services 'without' recompense. 'The question of the oracle, Shall I receive the present?' (4) The editors suggest that *opsonion* is perhaps 'interest'."

The lexicographers thus define that which Paul said he took from churches as wages, salary, pay, reward in general, a stipend. What do these words signify:

Salary: "The recompense or consideration paid, or stipulated to be paid, to a person at regular intervals for services. . . fixed compensation regularly paid, as by the year, quarter, month, or week. . ." (Webster's International Unabridged Dictionary).

Wages: "That which is pledged or paid for work or other services" (Webster).

Stipend: "Settled pay or compensation for services, whether paid daily, monthly or annually. . ." (Webster).

IV. I Cor. 9:1-18 teaches that the preacher is to be supported on the basis of service rendered, and not as an object of charity. This passage, too long to be copied into the book, should be read, and then the following characteristics noted:

1. Paul affirmed his right of support for the preaching of the gospel, and that of a family, if

such he had (I Cor. 9:1-5).

2. He was, in the nature of the case, privileged to forbear working, along with Barnabas, his fellow helper (Verses 3-5).

3. These principles he illustrated by a (a) welfare; (b) a vineyard; (c) a flock; (d) oxen threshing out grain. Said he, "What soldier ever serveth at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Do I speak those things after the manner of men? or saith not the law also the same? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. Is it for the oxen that God careth? or saith he is assuredly for our sake?" (I Cor. 9:7-9).

4. Having sown spiritual things, it was right that he should reap carnal things from the churches to whom he had preached (Verse 11).

5. It is a fundamental principle, recognized in the law and right in the nature of things that "they that minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar" (Verse 13).

6. "Even so," (*auto kai*) "in the manner spoken of; in the way described; in the way it was done; in the manner; thus, so. . ." (Thayer), "hath the Lord ordained (*dia-tasso*, to arrange, appoint, prescribe, *give order*) that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (Verse 14).

7. Notwithstanding his inherent right in these matters, Paul chose to forego them. "But," said he, "I have used none of these things: and I write not these things that it may be so done in my case. . . What then is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel without charge, so as not to use to the full my right in the gospel" (verses 15, 18).

8. For reasons which, to him, seemed good, Paul did not use his full "right" in the gospel at all times. This "right" was to receive support for his labors in the gospel. In foregoing this "right" and making the gospel without "charge," he made it clear that his case was an exceptional one. The word "charge," here, from the Greek *adapanos*, means, "without expense, requiring no outlay." Thayer, who thus defines it, supplies an additional explanatory clause, "That I may make Christian instruction gratuitous." "Gratuitous" is that which is given freely, "without recompense." Had Paul exercised his "right" he would have been entitled to "recompense." "Recompense" is "compensation; an equivalent or a return for something done, suffered, or given" (Webster).

Here, time and space suggest that, on this theme, we desist. We subscribe strongly to the view that those who are influenced by reason and revelation—the candid, the conscientious and the sincere—will neither need nor want additional evidence of the truth of the matters we have thus far affirmed. Individuals who will not consider candidly and accept wholeheartedly these conclusions are beyond the reach of logic, sound reasoning and the canons and criteria of thought processes.

We cannot close without reaffirming the fact that it is the basest slander to impute mercenary motives to those thousands of fine, faithful preachers who tirelessly labor in the cause of their master—many of them in distant places, in hard fields and under difficult circumstances. To

Some Are Left-Handed

It has been estimated that we have between ten and twenty million people in this country who are homosexuals. If these estimates are anywhere close to right, we have a gigantic problem on our hands. We do know that they have sufficient numerical strength to allow them to mount an impressive offense for their cause. The television medium has been most cooperative in assisting them to do so. It is



ARNOLD SEXTON

not uncommon to hear one extol their "lifestyle" as a utopia of the highest ambition. They are determined to whitewash this sin and make it acceptable. Regular programs, as well as talk shows, are replete with such efforts. They know how gullible and how little the average person thinks for himself. So, they proceed to tell the average person that he is narrow minded and unkind not to accept the sin of the homosexual. After all, some are left-handed; some are right-handed; some are black; some are white; some are short; some are tall, etc. The next punch-line is that the homosexual is just born that way. It's not his fault. He can't help it any more than a man can help being left-handed.

Isn't it amazing that when one wishes to justify or excuse his actions that he needs a scapegoat. If the homosexual can blame his sin upon the genetic process, he has a perfect scapegoat. If he is allowed this liberty, he can no more be blamed for being "gay" than one could be blamed for being short or tall. The truth is that genes do not determine behavior. God created man with the ability to make a choice. The fact that some homosexuals have ceased to be "gay" proves that it is behavior and can be controlled (I Corinthians 6:9-11). If it is genetic and a man is born a homosexual, God put within the man that which he condemns (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:27). Every man has the capacity and potential to commit any sin. Whether he sins or not depends upon his desire to control his behavior. The murderer, the thief, the alcoholic, etc., can just as rationally make the same claim as the homosexual. Are we ready to accept the life-style of the murderer as many are willing to do with the homosexual. Why is it that in these areas people realize that behavior is acquired? Yet, with the case of the homosexual, he claims to be born that way. The fact is he has a sin he doesn't want to give up. So he wants to make it acceptable. What better way is there than to claim he was born that way? It is true that a homosexual is born, but it is not true that he was born a homosexual. He had to learn how to be one.

It is not uncommon for some homosexuals to claim that they are God's children doing his will. They preach a doctrine of tolerance and love.

"Love The Brotherhood"

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The ASV has love here for charity. In the Greek text of this verse forms of *agape* are used just as in Peter's other allusions to love in this earnest epistle. Fellow Christians are the objects of this fervent charity or love. In chapter five Peter says, "Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity" (I Pet. 5:14). The ASV has a "kiss of love". This is again from the root word *agape*, the richest and deepest of all Greek words for love. Peter did not use a form of *eros*, a Greek word that would place lust in the kiss and give it sexual overtones. He meant the same by kiss of charity as

Since God loved all men, he loves the homosexual; and if the Christian isn't willing to accept it, it is a sign that he does not possess Christ's spirit. These people dump a "love" in the lap of God that he does not possess. God loves all men. However, he loves the sins of no man. He will not accept the man who will not repent (turn) from his sin. The homosexual who will repent will be forgiven. The one who will not, will not be forgiven. "God is no respecter of persons." He will not demand that other men give up their sins and let the homosexual in with his sin. He has to leave it behind like everyone else. The Bible clearly defines this practice as a sin. The Old Testament condemned it: "If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them" (Leviticus 20:13). Paul said that God gave up on some people mentioned in Romans one. Why did he give them up? Paul explains that it was because of false worship and immoral practices. What were the immoral practices? Notice Paul's description:

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves. . . For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for 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 lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet (Romans 1:24, 26, 27).

The above verses plainly show that God will not accept the homosexual without repentance. The Christian's attitude toward the homosexual should be the same as toward other sinners. He should be willing to teach and encourage him to give up his sin. And when he gives it up, he is as pure as any Christian (I Corinthians 6:9-11). Let's resolve to speak out against this abominable sin and stand ready to help and encourage one who is fighting the battle to overcome it.—1751 Damon Street, Birmingham, AL 35217.

Who Is Doing God's Will?

According to the words of Christ in Matthew 7:21, only those who do the will of God will enter the kingdom of heaven. Just who is doing God's will?

IS THE ATHEIST DOING GOD'S WILL? "But 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" (Hebrews 11:6).

IS THE AGNOSTIC DOING GOD'S WILL? Paul, in I Timothy 2:4, states that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31, 32).

IS THE UNBELIEVER DOING GOD'S

What If I Had Never Been Born?

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new year, remember, your presence does count in the assembly (Hebrews 10:25). Your contribution does mean something (I Corinthians 9:6, 7). Let us all remember, "Redeeming the time in 1979" by winning someone to Jesus Christ. You can, you know.—1461 East Chester Street, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.



DALTON KEY

WILL? "HE that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Listen to Christ: "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).

IS ONE OUTSIDE THE BODY OF CHRIST, THE CHURCH, DOING GOD'S WILL? Those who obey the gospel are added to the church (Acts 2:47), yet when Christ returns, vengeance will be taken on them "that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thessalonians 1:7, 8).

IS THE MODERNIST DOING GOD'S WILL? John spells the doom of the modernist when he writes, "Whosoever goeth onward, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God" (II John 9).

IS THE DENOMINATIONALIST DOING GOD'S WILL? Our Lord never built, founded, or planted one single denomination, yet he said, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13).

IS THE UNFAITHFUL CHRISTIAN DOING GOD'S WILL? "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (II Peter 2:20, 21).

ARE YOU DOING GOD'S WILL, MY FRIEND? Examine yourself in light of the Scriptures (II Cor. 13:5).—Box 126, Aurora, Missouri 65605.

Open Forum

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charge that these men merely labor for the loaves and fishes of local work is an impeachment of their honor, their integrity, their honesty. This defamatory libel is straight from the gutter. It was conceived in malice, born in falsehood and nurtured by Satan himself. We resent and repudiate it with all our being. Many gospel preachers, were they to expend equal energy in the business and commercial world, would fare far better financially; this, they forego, choosing to serve God humbly, unobtrusively wherever their lot is cast, seeking simply to advance, to the extent of their ability, the cause of Christ on earth. We salute them! *There is no finer, grander, greater body of men on earth.*



Words Of Truth

... it speak forth

— Acts 26:25

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Religious Titles

It has been the practice of the Lord's people to refrain from using the title "Reverend" in reference to gospel preachers. Our brethren are to be complimented for their desire to refrain from such unscriptural practices. However, other religious titles are as sinful as the one mentioned above. Care should be taken to avoid bestowing religious titles upon brethren which would violate the principle that our denominational friends have been violating. If one is not careful, he will condemn the very thing which he has been practicing (cf. Romans 2:3, 21, 22). At this point, it is in order to examine Bible principles in relationship to titles.

Jesus commands against titles of religious distinctions being received by his followers. Notice the following prohibitions commanded in Matthew 23:8-10: "...But be not yet called Rabbi... Call no man your father upon the earth... Neither be ye called masters..." The term "Rabbi" was a title given to eminent teachers of the law among the Jews. It signified "great," and it was a title of honor and dignity. The term "Father" is not used here in its normal relationship function. Jesus is not condemning one for addressing his earthly father with this term. He is condemning taking an earthly term, expanding its relationship, and making a religious title of it to claim superiority over others. When used as a title it would signify authority, eminence, superiority, etc. This is the use Jesus condemns. The last title condemned in context is "Master." The literal meaning for the word master is leader or guide. Jesus is not condemning leadership in the church, but he is condemning titles for that leadership. This will be amplified later.

In Matthew 19:16, 17, the Lord condemns titles again: "And behold, one came and said unto him,



ARNOLD SEXTON

Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, That is God...." This man was viewing Christ as a man, and he was bestowing a title upon him that belonged only to deity (any religious title robs God of honor). Jesus was not denying here that he possessed moral excellence. This would be out of harmony with the overall teaching of the Bible. It is even possible for others to have this quality. Barnabas did possess it, though he was not sinless, as was the Lord (Acts 11:24). The obvious lesson is that the Lord was condemning the use of this term as a religious title bestowed upon one this person regarded as a mere man.

One needs to keep in mind that any term bestowed upon man as a religious title is wrong. Also, terms which are scriptural may become unscriptural by the manner in which they are used. For example, the scriptural terms applied to the elders of the church may become titles. These terms refer to quality and work performed. In other words, they are descriptive terms which describe the function and work these men supply in the church. It would be no more acceptable to use the term "Elder" as a title than it is to use the term "Reverend"; not only that, but the

expressions minister, deacon, preacher, teacher, etc., are not title terms. They simply describe the work or function of these men in the church. Any of these words may become a title if improperly used. The term brother may even become a title. Sometimes it appears that this very thing is thoughtlessly done by some. When the preacher and a select few become brother this and that, and everyone else is Henry, Sue, and Joe, one is coming dangerously close to making a title of it.

It appears that in our efforts to impress the world we have men with credentials in the church that we have taken secular accomplishments and made religious titles of them. It is wonderful for a man to be an academic doctor, but it is also wonderful for a man to be a plumber, a mechanic, an electrician, etc. The Bible condemns making such distinctions in the church (James 2:1-10). But one argues that this is not a title; it is merely a description of his academic, educational standing. The argument itself shows that its motive is pride which is condemned by Christ in Matthew 23. No one in the church is introduced as plumber Joe. No one is introduced as mechanic Sam, etc. In the name of reason, Why is there a distinction made between them and Dr. Smart?—1751 Damon Street, Birmingham, Al. 35217.

My Little Boy

KENTYLER

A few days ago my little two year old boy did something that got my attention. I was putting a hub cap back on our car using the heel of my foot. Guess what he did! He backed up to the tire and began kicking the hub cap with the heel of his boot. Yes, just like his daddy. A few minutes after that as I went into the house I spat on the ground. A bad habit! Looking back over my shoulder, guess what my little boy was doing. Yes, you guessed it, he was spitting just like his daddy.

My little boy is following my steps. No doubt if I had

been smoking a cigarette he would have wanted one too. If I had been drinking a beer he would have wanted to do the same, OH, what an awesome responsibility to realize that my little boy is watching me and doing exactly what he sees me do.

Will I be careful how I walk and take that little heart and mold it in the way of the Lord? I pray with all of my heart that I will. What could be worse than to lead that little boy, whom I love so much, in the wrong way and

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Words Of Truth
 (USPS 691-760)
 I am not mad, most noble brethren, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness
 — Acts 26:25

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The Lordship Of Christ

Human history has been changed when an insignificant man or woman linked his life with the Lord of heaven and earth. Little people became great when they came under his Lordship. Paul wrote that God highly exalted Christ: that every knee should bow and that every tongue should confess Jesus to be Lord (Phil. 2:9-11).



JOHN WADDEY

Practical man asks what is so important about this? What is in it for me? For the individual it is a matter of salvation. "Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him for the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9). For the municipality: "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:16 KJV). For the nation: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Ps. 33:12 KJV). The wicked shall be turned into hell and all nations that forget God" (Ps. 9:17 KJV). In every facet of life recognition of Christ's reign is vital.

There are four classes of people with varying attitude toward the Lord Jesus:

- (1) Some neither call him Lord nor do according to his will.
- (2) Others call him Lord but do not obey his commandments.
- (3) A few do not own him as Lord, yet they live their daily lives by some of his precepts.
- (4) True Christians both honor him as Lord and are careful to do as he directs.

For those who do follow Jesus, his Lordship means that he has complete and absolute authority in every phase of their lives (Matt. 28:18). The very term "Lord" implies power and authority. It is hoped that every soul who reads these words will crown Jesus as the Lord of his life so that he in turn may crown him with life eternal (Matt. 10:32-33).

Jesus' Lordship is seen in his *preeminence*. Jesus is now seated at the right hand of God "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Problems With Personal Scruples

In the eighth chapter of I Corinthians the inspired apostle deals with the matter of personal scruples concerning the eating of meats. The fourteenth chapter of Romans deals with the same problem. Some in the early church believed one thing about the eating of meats, while other believed something different. Paul set forth principles which, if followed, would avoid any real problems over the matter of eating meats, and would enable brethren on both sides of the question to live together in perfect peace and fellowship.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Let it be emphasized and understood by all that the matters under consideration in the aforementioned chapters are matters of total indifference so far as one's spiritually is concerned. "But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse" (I Cor. 8:8). It is an abuse of these passages to try to make them teach that we should ignore doctrinal error of the type that keeps men from being pleasing to God. It is also an abuse of these chapters to try to make them teach that good works should be curtailed for no greater reason than that some have their feelings hurt because we are engaging in such good works. The matter of an individual's eating meats or not eating meats has not one thing to do with his being pleasing to God. Neither does it affect the growth or welfare of the church. It is a matter of indifference.

It is possible for one to allow a matter of indifference concerning which he has personal scruples to become a problem in the church. Personal opinions concerning matter of indifference are harmless, provided one does not consider all those who differ with his opinions as being dangerous, liberal, or fanatical.

An example of allowing personal scruples to become problem areas in the church is in connection with whether or not it is right for a chorus from one of our Christian colleges to present a program for others to hear and enjoy. We are not talking here about periods of worship; and it is not a question of substituting choruses, quartets, and solos for congregational singing in our worship. This we would oppose as being unscriptural. We are speaking rather of the long accepted practice of permitting a chorus to sing for an assembled audience in the meetinghouse or some other place such as on the campus of a college. This practice some are now opposing, and are writing articles condemning this practice in some brotherhood publications.

In order for those who oppose this practice to be consistent, they will have to take the position that it is wrong for a college chorus or anyone else to sing religious songs while someone else listens. This would mean that it would be unscriptural to have a singing at a funeral, unless it were congregational singing; and even then the family would also be required to sing. This would also mean that a congregation could not have a period of singing practice in which new songs are taught. We would like to know if those who take this position would take the position that quartet singing at a funeral is sinful!

In a recent article, one writer wrote concerning the matter: "Unfortunately, many will continue with these singing practices, regardless of what the Bible teaches. The same attitude kept the instrument in the worship and the missionary society in the budget, of the digressives from the restoration movement." He further wrote: "Brethren, if we are to be a people of the Book; if we are determined to speak where the Bible speaks and remains silent where the Bible is silent, we will have to come up with Book, Chapter and verse or put an end to this growing apostasy among us!"

These venomous statements demonstrate this matter of creating problems over private scruples. If a man has private scruples about listening to a chorus sing, no harm is done; but when he makes those private scruples matters of faith, and charges with apotasy all who do not abide by them, then harm is done.

If articles charging us with apostasy who do not agree with this man's private scruples are allowed to pass unanswered, some are going to get the idea that all of us who ever listen to a chorus sing have apostatized. Not only so, but some brethren will be afraid to allow the choruses to sing in their buildings, for fear they will be branded as apostates.

We do not believe the attitude which characterized brethren, N.B. Hardeman, H.A. Dixon, B.C. Goodpasture, Gus Nichols and other such giants of the faith is the attitude which "kept the instrument in the worship and the missionary society in the budget." Neither do we believe that the attitude that would permit a chorus to sing on Sunday night following the worship is the attitude that will lead the church into apostasy.

We cannot bring ourselves to close this discussion without expressing concern over the direction a publication is taking that allows repeated lengthy articles attacking college choruses to be published.

"Love The Brotherhood"

(NO. 3)

This eloquent and earnest trio of words adorns First Peter 2:17. These weighty words flowed from the pen of the inspired Peter. But of even greater weight is the question of where such an eloquent exhortation had its stately origin. These words cannot be divorced from the new commandment touching love that our lovely Lord gave shortly before his arrest and his cruel ordeal on the brutal brow of humiliating



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Calvary. Jesus told the eleven faithful apostles (Judas Iscariot, the traitor, had just made his exit), "A new

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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).

"As the result of your many years of preaching the gospel, what has been your aim as to method, and what advice would you offer to young preachers on this subject?"

I have long endeavored to achieve three things, as to method, in preaching the gospel: (1) Be simple; (2) be logical; (3) be original, as far as possible, in arrangement of material and in manner of presentation. If we are simple, we will be understood

if we are logical people can, and will, remember what we say; and if we are original, we will be appreciated! We must carefully distinguish between simplicity and mediocrity; the two are, indeed, as separate poles; to be simple, in presentation, one must, through intensive study, acquire a thorough understanding of the themes dealt with; anything short of this will be mediocre. Logic is, basically, a science of the operation of the mind; and, when our material is logically arranged, it is easily remembered by the

speaker, and readily understood by the hearers. And, if our arrangement, our illustrations, and our manner of presentation have some degree of originality, there will be a freshness of presentation which will attract and hold our listeners. Proper preaching of the gospel is hard work but the dividends which flow therefrom transcend all other earthly rewards, (Rom. 10:15b), and best of all, will populate heaven!

Abortion, Legalized Murder

It never fails to amaze me how far man has progressed in this age of technological and intellectual attainment. As far back as I can remember, the act of abortion was considered to be murder, and those who performed such acts were considered to be murderers. But in our day and age there has been a complete reversal in attitudes toward this ungodly act. Have we become so intellectual and advanced in our



JOHN G. SHAVER

attitudes and thinking that we may purposely set aside the most basic of all instincts, the preservation of life? Has the society in which we live become so advanced that the life of a human being means little or nothing? When will the death, carnage and ungodly acts of mankind finally incense the world to rebel? It is high time that we Christians came out of our shells of apathy and indifference to stand against this ungodly act of murder. People the world over are appalled, and rightly so, when any man, woman or child is murdered or maimed. But when one speaks out against the ungodly act of abortion someone is likely to say, "Well, maybe there was a reason for it." Can you imagine such a reversal of attitudes? A reason for murder? Murder is murder, and there is no way that we can justify the horrible sin of abortion.

I believe the Bible to be the infallible and inspired word of Almighty God (II Tim. 3:16), and must depend on it to be my guide and my stay in all things. The Bible relates incidents in the lives of many men and women, relating not only the good, but the bad. I have read in Holy Writ concerning murder, incest, adultery, drunkenness, lying, thievery and homosexuality to mention just a few. But there is one thing that I have never read of as being done by any of the people in the Bible, and that is the ungodly sin of abortion. Of all the evil sins committed by man in the Bible, there is not one instance mentioned in which he descended to the level of murdering an unborn child. The act of abortion is strikingly absent. Could it be that mankind has become so advanced and technological that something has been accomplished our day and time that no civilization has ever had recorded against them? Could it be that the so-called barbaric nations of ages past never condoned an act of barbarism that our civilized nation of today condones? May God help us.

According to all that I can find, the laws of a nation are designed to protect and guide the people of that nation. But this is not always the case of the nation in which we live. The laws of our nation are being changed and are becoming more and more Satan

oriented than God oriented. Any time the high court of the land hands down a decision to allow an unborn child to be murdered, it has acted in defiance of God. Is it any wonder that there is no respect for law and government in this day and time? One cannot put his trust in those who speak out of both sides of their mouths at the same time. It seems that the laws of our nation are being adapted to the good of the evil, rather than the good of the one who is righteous.

We could take a lesson from the animal kingdom, for the animals protect their unborn and their young better than the human does. It is a law and instinct of nature, and that law and instinct came from God. Man is supposed to be of higher intelligence and capability than any of the animal kingdom, but by his actions we are sometimes made to wonder.

I have heard and read almost all of the arguments of the pro-abortionists, and cannot find one shred of evidence to uphold their ungodly position. Abortion is murder, and murder is condemned by the God of heaven (Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 21:8). The pro-abortionists state that the unborn child is not living, and refer to this child as a "fetus." According to the Bible the unborn child is living and is not dead. If the unborn child were not living there would be no need for abortion would there? James, by inspiration states, "...the body without the spirit is dead..." (Jas. 2:27). This being true, then the converse is of necessity true: the body *with* the spirit is alive. Moses states, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood..." (Lev. 17:11). The ASV footnotes "life" to show that it means "soul" in the Hebrew. The blood of the mother, and eventually the blood of the baby is supplying the flesh. the unborn child. One of the

essentials of life is provided the baby by blood, and that is oxygen. Therefore, the baby has life and a soul *before* it is born.

It seems that man, in all of his unbounded wisdom has made a distinction between the unborn child and the born child by calling the unborn child a fetus. God has made no such distinction. Luke, by inspiration records "...the babe (*brephos*) leaped in my womb for joy" (Lk. 1:44). The reference was to the yet unborn John in his mother's womb. Later, in Lk. 2:12 it is stated, "...Ye shall find the babe (*brephos*) wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger." Jesus, the *already born baby* [*brephos*], and John, the *yet unborn baby* [*brephos*] are looked upon by God as *LIVING SOULS*. The Holy Spirit uses the exact same word in relating to the unborn child and the born child. If it is permissible to murder the unborn babe (*brephos*) in the womb, then why would it not be permissible to murder the baby (*brephos*) lying in his bed? To ask is to answer. It is wrong and sinful to murder the born child, and just as wrong and sinful to murder to unborn child.

Those who uphold and defend the ungodly act of abortion are sinning in the sight of God, and placing their souls in danger of hell fire. The righteous judge who legalizes such an act, the unfeeling father that approves of such an act, the unloving mother who permits such an act, and the unscrupulous doctor who performs such an act will stand before God condemned on Judgment Day. — Rt. 10, Box 186B, Jasper, AL 35501

Go To God In Prayer

GLENDATERRY

If I should feel lonely and down in deep despair, I pack all my worries up and go to God in prayer.

I tell him I am lonely, and lost and depressed too; That my head is confused and ask him what I should do.

I know he can settle the storm and calm the angry sea; And if I trust in him he will show the way to me.

And then I remain silent and pray to him for peace; And if I lean upon him my troubles and worries will cease. —403 Kendall Avenue, Adamsville, Al. 35005

Short Sermons

"Friends are like the warm blue sea, they splash laughter into your eyes."

Someone once said, "A stranger is a friend that I haven't met."

It isn't what you have in your pocket that makes you thankful, but what you have in your heart.

Faith will not always get for us what we want, but what God wants us to have.

Give a boy a fish and he will eat today, teach him to fish, and he will eat forever.

Did you ever notice that knockers are always outside the door?

Following the lines of least resistance makes men and rivers crooked.

Some minds are like concrete — thoroughly mixed and permanently set.

The Lordship Of Christ

Continued from page 2

every name that is named, not only in this world but in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church..." (Eph. 1:20-22). Christ precedes all others in priority, exceeds all others in superiority and succeeds all others in his finality. He is master of the mighty, captain of all conquerors and leader of all legislators. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. In Colossians, Paul pays homage to Christ. He is the image of the invisible God: The first born of all creation; the head of the church; the first born from the dead. In all things he has the preeminence (Col. 1:15-18). To the Romans, Paul declared Christ to be the Lord of both the dead and the living (14:7-9).

His Lordship is seen in his *ownership* of all things. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (Ps. 24:1). "All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made" (John 1:3). Not only were all things created through him but also *unto him* (Col. 1:16). Sinful men have always challenged his ownership. He did not put his signature on the sunset, yet it is his. He did not carve his initials on the mountainside, but he owns them. He took no patent on the flight of birds or copyright on their songs, but his they are. He did not put his brand on the cattle on a thousand hills, but they are no less his (Ps. 50:10). His is lord of all because he made all. Even every rebellious human being on this terrestrial ball is his. "He himself giveth life to all" and "in him we live, and move, and have our being..." (Acts 17:25, 28). In a special way, the Christian has been bought with a price (I Cor. 6:19-20). Christ is Lord!

His Lordship is seen in his *power*. He has all power (authority) in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). He has creative power (Col. 1:16). He has saving power (Matt. 11:28-29). He has power over death and the grave (John 10:17-18). He has power over his enemies (Rev. 19:11-18). He has power to destroy this material world (II Pet. 3:10-12). Men have been trying to wrest away his divine power for generations. Their names are gone and forgotten. Christ is yet the world's best known and best loved name. If man tries to destroy Christ with fire it will die at his feet and refuse to burn. If they try to destroy him with water he will walk on it (John 6:19). If they try to destroy him by destructive winds the tempest will lick his hand and lay down before him (Matt. 8:26). If one seek to condemn him by law he will find no fault in him (I Pet. 2:22). If an empire try to destroy him it will be broken in pieces. If one seek to destroy him by death he will break the bars and come forth from the grave (Matt. 16:18). If you reject him you will be haunted by his words, "Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man will open I will come in and sup with him" (Rev. 3:20). Jesus is Lord! His name stands synonymous for free-healing, friendly help and full-salvation. His name is like honey to the taste, harmony to the ear and health to the soul. It brings hope to the weary heart (Acts 4:11, 12). His birth is man's significance. His life is our example. His cross is our redemption. His resurrection is our hope. Christ is Lord.

Because Christ is Lord, *I shall not want*. David expressed the *provision* of the Lord for his people in his twenty-third Psalm, *I shall not want for rest*, since he makes me to lie down in green pastures. Nor shall I want for *refreshment*, since he leads me by still waters. *Forgiveness* is mine, because he restores my soul. He *guides* me in paths of righteousness. I will not want for *companionship*, for he is with me even when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. *Comfort* is never lacking, because his rod and staff comfort me. *Sustenance* is always available, because he prepares a table before me. Never will I want for joy, because he anoints my head with oil, and my cup runs over. I shall not want for anything in *this life*, for surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. Neither shall I want for anything in the life to come, for I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever (Ps. 23:1-6).

The Lordship of Christ demands a *coronation* in every human heart. My knee must bow, my tongue

must confess Christ as Lord (Phil. 2:9-11). My ego must be crucified, driven from the throne of my heart and Christ enshrined therein (Gal. 2:20). The apostle who wrote these lines proclaiming the lordship of Jesus walked all over the pagan world turning thousands of homes into chapels. Every street corner was to him a pulpit from which to proclaim Christ as Lord. He even succeeded in lighting the lamp of the Gospel in Caesar's household (Phil. 4:22). He permeated the Roman Empire with the Lord's Church and then, chained in Nero's dungeon, he conquered

Rome by writing letters. This insignificant Jew who was empowered by the Lord turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6). His message was "Christ is Lord of every soul must submit to his reign."

Every man is mastered by someone or something greater than himself. Christ alone deserves the place of majesty in our life (Matt. 22:37). We all need strength stronger than ourselves. We need a helper to overcome the strains and stresses of life. We need Christ as our Lord. Will you not bow your knee and confess his holy name this very hour?

"Love The Brotherhood"

Continued from page 2

commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34-35). Two days earlier, Tuesday of the final week, Jesus had given commandments Number One and Number Two as touching the supremacy and vast value of love. In response to an extended query the Lord declared, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:37-39). Here we have from the Lord his three great laws of love. (1) Love God supremely or paramourly. (2) Love neighbor as self. (3) Love your brethren in the Lord as I have loved you.

It is highly likely that Peter was an initial auditor to all three of these great laws of love. He is not specifically mentioned as hearing initially the first two but in all probability he did. They were delivered in Jerusalem during the last week and Peter was with the Lord in Jerusalem during that last week. In fact he was an eye witness of the stirring events of that final week. But we know for a certainty that Simon Peter was present and heard initially the new commandment as it fell from the gracious lips of the lovely Lord there in the Upper Room. Immediately subsequent to the giving of this new law on love Simon Peter raised a question for the Lord's reply (John 13:36-38). The giving of this new law on love must have made a lasting impression on Peter's keen mind. Decades later he would recall it by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and would express it in his own unique way. Be

it remembered that Jesus promised the apostles that the Spirit would enable them to remember all that the Lord had told them. The Bible says in John 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit (Spirit-ASV), whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things that I have said unto you." "Love the brotherhood" has its roots in the Upper Room discourse. It therefore is to be understood in light of John 13:34-35. Jesus commanded love: Peter commanded love. They both used the same form of that rich and deep comprehensive Greek word, *agape*, in their commands. Both of them set forth worthy objectives upon whom this love is to rest. Christ's inclusion of "one another" is the exact equivalent of Peter's employment of the term brotherhood. Peter did not give the standard or the measuring stick but the Lord did. Jesus said love each other as I have loved you. Would you therefore seek to ascertain how much you are to love the brotherhood? The answer lies in John 13:34-35. Love the brotherhood as I have loved you, Jesus' answer. This presents First Peter 2:17 in even a more delightful dimension, doesn't it?

In our next installment in this continuing series WORDS OF TRUTH I propose that we take a long and lingering look at how Peter practiced this precious precept within his own colorful life. This will pave the way for a rather thorough discussion of how we should be practicing this treasured truth in all of our brotherhood relationships.—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063

My Little Boy

Continued from page 1

have him spend eternity in hell?

Fathers, you may have a little boy just like mine. He is following your steps. Are your steps leading to the throne of God or in the other direction? With fear in your heart please accept your God given responsibility and make that little boy a man of God. The Apostle Paul said, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the

nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). May God give us the wisdom and strength to follow the instructions.

Yes, he is following my steps and I want those steps to lead to heaven. My little boy needs this more than anything else in the world; and yours do too.—P.O. Box 376, Arab, Al 35016

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VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1979

NUMBER 5

"Love The Brotherhood"

(No. 4)

This tremendous trio of words, "Love the brotherhood," is located in First Peter 2:17 and flowed from the prolific pen and mighty mind of Simon Peter. Quite literally in the Greek text the ardent admonition reads, "the brotherhood love." Rather intensely the apostle Peter counseled others to love the brotherhood. Did he practice such himself? Those who are familiar with the



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

eventful life of the colorful Cephas know that he did. In this current article for WORDS OF TRUTH we shall depict that loyal love of his in ardent action. Those who love the brotherhood will always desire to strengthen the faith of the brotherhood. Shortly before Christ trod the rocky road to the hill of the skull he said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:31-32). Before that night became history Peter had his mental baptism of suffering through which he passed and with much spiritual profit accruing from the same. When his faith was truly under fire and passed through its faltering phases and his hope was again established or begotten again by the resurrection of the Redeemer (I Peter 1:3), he spent the rest of his fruitful life in helping add people to the brotherhood and strengthening them after they were added. Love for the brotherhood is vitally connected with the feeding of their faith. In fact, both are connected intimately with love for Jesus. Those who fail to love Jesus care next to nothing about his great brotherhood of believers. Those who refuse to

love Christ and Christians could not care less about whether anybody has a particle of faith, let alone feeding their faith.

Relative to the foregoing thought please note the lovely link that Jesus makes between love for him and feeding the faith of his lambs and sheep. During one of forty days separating the resurrection from the ascension Jesus met with seven of his disciples by the side of the Galilean Sea. To Peter, in particular, the Lord said, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He said unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17). For about the next thirty to thirty-five years Peter spent his life in feeding the Lord's lambs or sheep, both these who were God's sheep already and those who were his potential sheep. There is no finer way to exhibit one's love for the brotherhood than in preaching the gospel to make brethren of alien sinners and to make stronger the faith of those already saved.

Peter showed his great love for the brotherhood that was about to be when he preached the gospel on Pentecost so powerfully (Acts 2). He exhibited the same love for those he desired to be his brethren in the Lord by the sermon he proclaimed on Solomon's porch in Acts 3. He does the same in Acts 4 and 5 both to his foes and the Lord's enemies. Peter showed his love for the brotherhood among Gentiles who stood upon the threshold of entering the church by preaching the good news of redemption of Christ at Caesarea to Cornelius and his household in Acts 10. Peter showed his love for the brother-

hood as he visited among the Judaeans in Acts 9 and performed the great miracles of healing Aeneas from his illness and raising Dorcas from the dead. He showed his love for the brotherhood when he stood like a stone wall, along with his apostolic colleagues and the godly elders, at the Jerusalem Conference in Acts 15 against the Judaizing teachers. Peter, Paul, James, John, Barnabas, Titus and others gave not so much as an inch of ground to the enemies of the cross (Gal. 2:4-5). Peter showed his love for the brethren by the writing of his two precious epistles. He exhibited love for his brethren when he told them how to react when faith is under fire. That is the gist of First Peter. He loved the brotherhood when he set before them the Christian graces in Second Peter 1, warned them of false teachers and false philosophies in Second Peter 2 and taught them about the Bible Doctrine of Final Things in Second Peter 3. This is how Peter practiced to perfection his own exhortation of "love the brotherhood."—P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tn. 38063.

Our Policy Concerning Announcing Meetings

We do not have any hard and fast rules concerning announcing meetings, lectureships, workshops, etc. As a general rule we announce lectureships and workshops of general interest to the brotherhood. Our announcements of these are usually brief, since we want to reserve as much of our space as possible for articles that teach or edify.

Gospel meetings and other activities of local interest only are not announced in WORDS OF TRUTH. Though the paper itself is owned by the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper,

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)
I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness — Acts 26:25

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Words Of Truth Lectureship

The First Annual WORDS OF TRUTH Lectureship will be conducted in Jasper, Alabama March 1-3. The program will begin on Thursday night, March 1 with a speech by Hudson Nichols, youngest son of the late beloved Gus Nichols, founder and editor of WORDS OF TRUTH from 1963 until his death in 1975. Speakers throughout the day on Friday and Saturday will include William Woodson speaking on "Fellowship," Johnny Ramsey speaking on "Back to the Bible," J. M. Powell speaking on "The Restoration Movement," and Hugo McCord speaking



BOBBY DUNCAN

on "The Worship of the Church." Each of these will speak both on Friday and Saturday.

The Friday night lecture will be on "The Church the Prophets Saw," by Tom Holland. The program will end on Saturday night with a lecture by V. E. Howard on a subject yet to be announced.

For some time there has been talk of beginning a WORDS OF TRUTH lectureship in Jasper. We are rejoicing that it is finally off the drawing board and on the calendar. We are excited also to have the outstanding list of speakers on this first program—not a man whose name is not known and respected by sound brethren throughout the brotherhood.

For those coming from a distance, there are several motels in Jasper. Also accommodations can likely be arranged in the homes of Christians in the area. If you desire that we arrange your accommodations you may write to us, or you may call us at (205) 384-6446 or 387-1670.

Mind Control

We have just witnessed the ultimate in "mind control" in the self destruction of the People's Temple cult in Guyana. Control was in the wrong hands as some nine hundred people allowed Jim Jones to do their thinking for them. As was true in this case, there are always those who will do our thinking for us if we are willing. This was pointed up recently when a former president of CBS News said that TV programming will mold the thinking of future generations. When you stop to think about that statement it is frightening, but true.



CURTIS DOWDY

The Bible has some information on the subject of mind control which we need to consider. "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Corinthians 10:5). The word here translated "captivity" is an interesting one. W.E. Vine, in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, defines the Greek term to mean, "either to lead away captive (Luke 21:24), or to subjugate, to bring under control (II Corinthians 10:5)." Thus, the Greek term would have been used in the following account:

The wild beast that was on the prowl terrorizing people and their animals has been captured, placed in a zoo, and is now providing entertainment for adults and children alike.

Now what made the difference? Obviously, the beast is under control, having been brought into captivity.

If I count correctly, the word "thought" appears in the text of the KJV of the Bible seventy eight times and in the vast majority the idea is that of control. This is vital to our spiritual welfare because we become what we think, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

The mind takes that which is fed into it through the senses, records it, and never forgets it. This storage is

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You Can Be An Apostle

The word apostle in the Greek New Testament literally means "one sent forth." Usually, when we think of apostles, the first thing that comes to our mind is the twelve apostles who were appointed personally by Jesus during his earthly ministry. The list of these original twelve can be found in Matthew chapter ten. Not included in this list are Matthias and Paul. Matthias and Paul were as much apostles as those listed in Matthew chapter ten. The selection of Matthias came after the betrayal of Judas Iscariot. In the latter part of Acts 1, we are told how Matthias was selected. He was personally selected by the Lord through the casting of lots. It was no accident that the lot fell on Matthias. It was done on purpose by the intervention of the Lord. Let us fully understand that fact, since a lack of understanding on this will cause us serious problems in other areas of biblical interpretation. What about the case of Paul? Paul was personally selected by our Lord as were all the apostles. His case is different in that his selection came after the ascension of Jesus. However, he met the qualifications of an apostle since he had seen the Lord as had the others. Among the facts affirmed by Paul in I Corinthians 15:8, Paul states that the Lord did appear to him. Read Acts chapter nine for additional study on this. There is absolutely no question in the minds of faithful believers that Paul was an apostle, and that much of his work was among the Gentiles.



MICHAEL D. STONE

Hebrews 3:1 declares Jesus the Christ to be an apostle. How could Jesus be classified as an apostle? Do you remember our Greek New Testament definition given at the beginning of this writing? In John 17, our Lord is praying to God. He declares in verse three that God sent him. Therefore, Jesus was

"one sent forth" by God. Jesus was an apostle. There are no apostles today like the twelve in Matthew ten, like Matthias and Paul or like our Lord. For one to claim to be an apostle in that sense and to that degree is to claim to have seen Jesus personally. No one living today has ever been so blessed, the claims of many "witnesses" to the contrary notwithstanding.

The term apostle can be properly applied to some living today. For example Acts 14:14 lists Barnabas with Paul as apostles. Barnabas was not an apostle in the sense and to the degree that Paul was; however, he was an apostle. He was "one sent forth." You and I should be apostles today. We should be a people that have been "sent forth" to spread the gospel to a lost world. What are the requirements for an apostle today? They are as follows: (1) Believe in Jesus as the Christ (Hebrews 11:6); (2) Repent of sins (Acts 3) Confess Jesus to be the Christ (Romans 10:9-10); (4) Be immersed in water for remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:4); (5) Be faithful to Christ every day and realize that we are "ones sent forth" to evangelize the world. Are you an apostle? You can be an apostle. — 4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101

Control Thyself!

KENT TYLER

Are you a quick-tempered individual? Are you one that flies off the handle?

How many friends have been lost, homes destroyed, and murders committed because someone lost his temper? We cannot fully comprehend the heartache and trouble that has been brought upon individuals because their mother or daddy, wife or husband, boss, or someone else could not control his temper. The quick-tempered bring misery to other people and sadly the individual who will not control himself will have to spend eternity in hell.

Consider the following passages that talk about being

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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).

"Do you feel that there is sufficient emphasis on the importance of preaching in the church today?"

No, not nearly enough.

The two most powerful influences in the world during the first century were the preacher and his message (I Cor. 1:18-21). The proclamation of the gospel in the early days of Christianity exerted a greater influence than the combined armies of mankind. The Imperial Roman Empire, invincible and unconquerable by force of arms, yielded to the armies of the Lord, and her impregnable legions fell one by one before the onslaughts of the soldiers of the cross. Bound by "the cords of the gospel" it "sought to destroy," that mighty empire lives in history as an example of the futility of resisting those who take their orders from the Lord.

It has ever been thus; and, when faithful and brave defenders of the faith bare their breasts to the fight and lift aloft the banner of the Lord in courageous array, victory is always theirs. Denominationalism, Liberalism, Pentecostalism and worldliness, though formidable in our day, present no more difficulties to overcome than the paganism characteristic of the apostolic age. Yet, when we compare the results which attended the labors of the first preachers, ours pale into insignificance. Why is this so? Human nature remains the same. The gospel is as powerful now as it was in the apostolic age. It is, and will ever remain "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). People are as much in need of salvation, and sin is as disastrous now as ever. What explains our failure? Can it be that we are not preaching the gospel with the earnestness and fervor characteristic of the preachers of the first century?

The thoughtful observer will draw this conclusion. Too many of us who claim to be preachers have "left the word of God," in order to "serve tables" (Acts 6:2), thus reversing the order of the apostles. In far, far too many instances today, the preacher's *study* has become an *office*, and the preacher has allowed himself to become an ecclesiastical bellboy and a clerical button pusher! If, on occasion, the preacher demurs, he is told that he was hired for this purpose and he must adjust or *else*. Often, the "or else" becomes the deciding factor, and another gospel preacher is added to an ever-increasing number of men who no longer have time to give "to the ministry of the word," and prayer.

The preacher's decision will eventually show itself in his waning power and persuasive abilities in the pulpit; but, what of it? He can please his worldly brethren with the fact that he made thirty-seven calls last week, and spoke on "Good Citizenship" at two civic clubs! With many in the church today, pulpit power is a cheap and comparatively worthless commodity, anyway. Some time ago, while in a meeting with a congregation in need of the services of a local preacher my assistance was asked in securing a man, and I was told by one of the elders that it did not particularly matter whether the preacher could preach well or not, "if he were a good mixer!" To what has the church come when many elders are more interested in a glorified chamber of commerce secretary for their preacher, than a man "mighty in word," in the pulpit? I presume that if these brethren stood in need of a doctor because illness had invaded their homes, they would not care whether he could practice medicine or not, just so he had attractive social graces! Or, if they needed the services of a law-

yer, they would not inquire into his ability as an attorney of the law, they would concern themselves solely with whether he possessed a pleasing personality and could entertain people in the courtroom!

This is not to minimize the importance of personal contacts in the Lord's work. It is the responsibility of all in the church to maintain such activity. Often, however, an over-emphasis here—the conviction that this is principally the preacher's work—is robbing the church of its most powerful influence, effective preaching. The preacher, painfully conscious of what is expected of him, must turn from the word of God and its careful and precise exposition to the multitude of small duties imposed upon him or, in the eyes of the brethren, fail in the performance of the duties for which he was "hired." If, in consequence, his sermons consist of mere platitudes and if he travels from Dan to Beersheba in the deliverance thereof, what does it matter? He played golf with some of the town's best known citizens, chaperoned two wiener roasts, and a rock festival during the week! Is it surprising that the burdened preacher, drained of physical, emotional and intellectual powers dips into brother _____'s minister's sermon manual, pours hurriedly over it for a few minutes during the week, so that on the Lord's day he can grind out, like a phonograph, mail-order sermons, showing little power and no trace of personality? Jeremiah was asked, "Is there any word from the Lord?" Congregations of people today often look into the preacher's face as he gets into the pulpit expectantly, hopefully, silently waiting for the answer to the same question. Were the preacher in many instances to re-

ply, he would have to say, "I do not know. I have not had time to find out."

"The number of men engaged as gospel preachers is larger than it has been in modern times. More preaching is being done today than at any time since the beginning of the Restoration Plea. Yet, there is a great dearth of Bible information among us. The familiarity with the Scriptures characteristic of our people in an earlier day is no longer true of us. Many factors contribute thereto; but, it is also very true that the shifting of emphasis is leaving the people with empty husks. In an earlier day, brethren "opened the Scriptures," and "expounded them." They had no time for (and would have spurned such if they had), the modern topical, textual preaching which consists solely in meaningless platitudes and silly inanities with which many audiences are lulled to sleep these days. An old Scotch preacher once told his audience in a day when it was fashionable for people to take a pinch of snuff during services that if they felt themselves getting drowsy during the sermon it would be in order for them to take a pinch of the powder while he preached. A thoughtful and discerning deacon replied that he thought the snuff ought to be put in *the preacher's sermon!* Pioneering preachers, in thundering tones, laid error bare and condemned sin in all of its phases. The result? Tens of thousands obeyed the gospel, and a mighty influx, comparable only to that of the apostolic age, were saved. The church today is sorely in need of great preaching. It can have it only when the preachers prepare themselves to deliver it. It is through this medium that the Lord's purpose is achieved in us who preach.

Why Preach The Gospel?

The question is often asked of gospel preachers, "Why do you preach the gospel?" More often than not the occasion of such a question is that of heartache and sorrow. The querist knows that the preacher has been taken to task by an unlearned church member because he presented the gospel message in fullness and truth. He may have gotten so close to some as to call a specific sin by name, or he may have used the word "denomination" in his lesson denouncing religious error. Whatever the reason, people just cannot understand why a man would continue to work in God's kingdom in the face of such difficulty. Many would quit their secular jobs if they were accosted in this way, but they think nothing of telling the preacher his preaching is just too strong. It is a shame, but some members of the church seem to think that the preacher is preaching "too hard" if he denounces specific sin, doctrinal error, or denominational error, to mention just a few. The remark is often made, "Preacher, you preach too hard. You're going to hurt someone's feelings." It seems to be the disposition of many today to let the sinner go to hell happy. Brethren, it is high time that we awaken out of lethargy, indifference, and apathy. It is high time we took a stand for Christ and quit "soft-soaping" the truth of God's word.

I am one of the first to say that we should not take



JOHN G. SHAVER

advantage in the pulpit. Never should we denounce error out of hatred or malice, nor should we purposely set out to hurt one's feelings just because he is in error. But neither should we "soft-soap" the truth just because it might hurt one's feelings. The Lord related, "Ye are the salt of the earth...Ye are the light of the world..." (Matt. 5:13-14). Salt is a preservative, but it burns in an open wound. Light illuminates darkness, and makes the pathway clear. The gospel preacher has the greatest and most rewarding charge on the face of the earth. The all important charge of preaching the gospel to a lost and dying world. He is the bearer of glad tidings (Rom. 10:15), and realizes that these glad tidings must be issued as God wants them issued. He realizes that he is to preach the word of God (II Tim. 4:1-2), and that some will treat his preaching as though it were nothing (II Tim. 4:3-4). The preacher of God's word knows that he must handle it carefully, for he could be condemned in its misuse (Gal. 1:6-9). He also realizes that he preaches to please the God of Heaven, and not the members of the church (Gal. 1:10). The next time you feel compelled to tell the preacher that he is preaching "too hard," try to remember just whom he is trying to please.

The problem is that many times the preacher is preaching to more than a few unconverted church members. They have no more regard for the truth and spiritual matters than does Satan. Preaching to these people is like preaching to a graveyard, the difference being that the physically dead can do no harm, but the spiritually dead can destroy the purity of the church. If the preacher preaches on specific sin in the congregation, even one or two of the elders may come telling him that he

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Our Policy Concerning Announcing Meetings

Continued from page 1

Alabama, none of our regular gospel meetings at Sixth Avenue have been announced in WORDS OF TRUTH Under the present editorship. The editor himself has preached in nearly thirty meetings in several states since becoming editor nearly three years ago, and not one of these meetings was announced in the paper. Since the paper is paid for by subscribers from across the nation, we feel an obligation to

avoid taking up a great deal of space advertising activities of local interest only.

No one can buy space to advertise in WORDS OF TRUTH. The paper is not a profit-making entity, and is not intended to be. The Sixth Avenue church receives no money to pay for the paper. Our publisher, The Northwest Alabamian, takes care of printing, mailing, collecting, billing, maintaining the mailing list, etc.

Each month the treasurer of the Sixth Avenue church pays for subscriptions of the members of the church, just as do the treasurers of all the other churches sending the paper to their members.

By maintaining this practice with reference to advertising, we believe we can present to our readers each week a maximum amount of very fine reading at a minimum cost.

Mind Control

Continued from page 2

referred to as the subconscious. The conscious mind is that part which relies on the input of the moment. Thus the whole mind, made up of the conscious and the subconscious, works on the principle of input to the conscious and output of the subconscious. This explains the so-called "brain washing" technique. Through repeated drills information is fed into the subconscious and is reinforced until, when confronted by a given situation, the desired action is automatic.

Little wonder that Inspiration urges, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). Delitzsch understood this verse to mean, "Above all things that have to be guarded, keep or guard thy heart." It is as if the "enemy" is out there ever probing, trying to get through the defenses to poison the source of life. The heart (mind) is that source, and if it can be contaminated then the whole of life will have been. Knowing this can be to our advantage.

Paul wrote, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Corinthians 2:11). If our subconscious is filled with the WORD OF GOD the temptation of life will be more easily overcome. The Psalmist wrote "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalms 119:11).

Suppose some temptation is fed into the conscious mind (Satan is trying to get an advantage). The choice we make will be determined not on just the input of the moment, but also on the output (not ignorant of his devices). The reasons we are not ignorant of Satan's devices is because we have learned from the Scriptures and stored the information. To see how it works turn and read of the temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4:1-10).

The input from without may happen so suddenly that there is no escaping the temptation. Imagine a man walking down the street suddenly seeing a woman approaching him dressed in such a way as to provoke lust (input to the conscious). What will he do? Hopefully he remembers that this is one of Satan's devices and his subconscious brings out the information needly namely, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and "...whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Exodus 20:14; Matthew 5:28). Upon all this he makes his choice. By bringing out of his subconscious other valuable things to think upon he has been enabled to overcome the temptation.

If, however, the output contributes to the temptation it almost assures that the temptation will bring forth lust and lust will conceive and bring forth sin and sin will bring forth death (James 1:15). If we have done as Paul directs, there is every reason to believe that a way of escape is not only available but will be taken: "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" (Philippians 4:8).

It is so vital to bring out thoughts into captivity (control), "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6).

God offers the wisdom (Proverbs 1:7, 22) by which our minds may be renewed (Romans 12:2). Nevertheless, we must keep before us the fact that God's written word is valuable to us individually only in so far as we allow it to guide and direct us. To read it casually now and then will be of little benefit in

bringing every thought into captivity. But through the study and application of that word along with prayer, worship, and service, we can, indeed, "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."—P.O. Box 456, Obion, Tennessee

Control Thyself!

Continued from page 2

quick-tempered:

"He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly..." (Pro. 14:17).

"He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding; but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly" (Pro. 14:29).

"A wrathful man stirreth up strife; but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife" (Pro. 15:18).

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Pro. 16:32).

The apostle Paul in giving the characteristics of love said that "Love...is not easily provoked..." (I Cor. 13:5).

If you are quick-tempered let me suggest one passage that will help you. James said, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (Jam. 1:19-20). If you will be swift to hear and then give great consideration to what you should say and do you can overcome being quick-tempered.

Remember, think before you act!—Box 376, Arab, AL. 35016

Why Preach The Gospel?

Continued from page 3

shouldn't be so hard on the congregation. The very men who should be concerned the most, seem to care the least. Men like this are no more than ungodly pretenders, and will have to answer to God for their indifference and lack of knowledge. It never fails to amaze me that the elders who hired the preacher because he had a reputation of being a sound man of the Book, are the very ones who tell him he is preaching too hard, and will have to leave if he continues to do so. Inconsistency seems to be their strong suit. (Now brethren, I am not saying that all elders are ungodly pretenders. I know of too many of these good men who are standing for the right. I know of more than a few occasions when elders have stepped into the pulpit after a sermon, and stated that they stood behind every word that the preacher said. May God bless such men, and give them many more years in His service.)

Some have said, "Why don't you preach like Jesus?" This question shows their lack of study and knowledge of God's word. Jesus denounced false teachers, murderers, liars, vain worshippers, and haters of God, just to mention a few (Mt. 15:8-9; Matt. 23). How many would have the gall to say, "Lord, you preach too hard"?

We have never needed sound gospel preaching more than we need it in our day. The world in which we live is full of violence, ungodliness and religious error. We are having the truth of God's word undermined by elders who will not stand for the truth, deacons who have no idea of what it means to serve, members who would rather live in the world than for Christ, and preachers who preach what these unlearned people want them to preach in order to keep their jobs. May God help us to come out of our apathy and indifference, and return to the whole counsel of God.

Brethren, I am not naive enough to think that all preachers are perfect, and that everyone else is imperfect. Such is not the case. We are in greater need of more and

more sound gospel preachers than ever before.

Why preach the gospel? Why subject your family and yourself to heartache, ridicule, sorrow and loss? Why take verbal and mental abuse? Why lay awake at night with tear-filled eyes worrying over situations to be dealt with when no one else seems to care? Because the faithful gospel preacher loves God, His word and the souls of mankind. He is a man who believes the facts and the promises of the gospel, and wants to share those things with a lost and dying world, so that they too may be saved. He will continue to preach the gospel of Christ regardless of the cost, and regardless of how many unconverted and unlearned church members say, "Preacher, you're preaching too hard."—Rt. 10, Box 186, Jasper, AL. 35501

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No TASK too exacting

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WINNING OF SOULS!**



Words Of Truth

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VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1979

NUMBER 6

Millennium Mania

(No. 1)

We are presently seeing an era of intense interest in future events. The other day I heard a young man say he was going to be a Futurologist. It cannot be denied, people want to know about tomorrow and there are plenty of opportunists around ready to take advantage of this curiosity. Neither can it be denied that many have gone overboard in outlining theories about what they believe God has in mind regarding the future of the earth. The most prevalent ideas are incorporated in the doctrine known as Pre-millennialism...the teaching that Christ at His Second Coming will usher in an additional thousand years in which there will be peace on earth. We are presently witnessing a kind of millennium mania where there is more confusion than understanding about God's plans for the future.



CHARLES COOK

Jesus said, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow..." (Matthew 6:34). There is a world of difference between worry and security. Real believers do not worry about the future, it will be taken care of in due time.

As we have already indicated, Eschatology (the study of the last things) has become the preoccupation of many religious groups and their leaders write and talk endlessly about it. And, we have noticed that their interest is always in the immediate future. They are like the Thessalonians of Paul's day who became caught up in a sort of extra fascination with the prospects of Jesus returning in their lifetime. Paul wrote to warn them not to "be troubled" and not to "be deceived," because it would not happen until after a "falling away" (II Thessalonians 2:2, 3). The "falling away" he referred to is a historical fact, but Paul's warning about not being troubled or deceived about the time of the Second Advent is excellent advice for us today.

The only healthy view of Eschatology is where one lives in preparation of meeting Christ according to God's timetable. This is done without speculation or sensationalism. Jesus said, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh" (Matthew 24:44).

Those today who are being so prolific in theorizing about Christ's Return not only place emphasis on His imminent return, but they also stress its earthly purpose. One gets the impression that their interest is more in the supposed Millennial Kingdom's power over the nations than in seeing Jesus face to face. They appear to duplicate the interest of the Jewish Nation when Jesus came the first time. The Jews had in mind a Messiah who would set up an earthly kingdom where they would rule over the earth. This attitude was even seen in his closest disciples. Judas wanted to handle the money, perhaps with the view of being appointed head over the earthly kingdom's treasury. James and John wanted positions on either side of the throne in an earthly kingdom. This idea was still in their minds, even at the Ascension Scene where the apostles asked, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6b).

The modern millennialists seem to be jockeying for

power and position in their single aspiration for an earthly kingdom. Hence, the weekly news is interpreted in light of its "eschatological significance." They say the European Common Market is shaping up to revive the old ancient Roman Empire, which as you know, is necessary for the fulfillment of Daniel 2. The Anti-Christ is alive somewhere in Europe getting ready to usurp power over all the earth. And, be sure to keep your eye on the Middle East situation. Soon after the Rapture, Russia will pounce on Israel and that will initiate Armageddon. So these theories continue to be elaborated and completely without Scriptural foundation. (More next week)—P.O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766

The Name Of Our Lord

No name deserves our reverent, respectful attention more than does the name of him in whom we enjoy "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places" (Eph. 1:3). Because our Father has given his beloved Son a "name which is above every name" we should ever strive to hold it high, to keep it from all degradation, and to protect and defend it with our very lives if need be (Phil. 2:9-11). Many good and true soldiers of the cross have been faithful unto death rather than recant their faith in the name of him who died that they might live (Rev.



DALTON KEY

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

I am not mad, most noble
 tus, but speak forth the Words of
 Truth and soberness

Acts 26:25

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We Recommend Bert Thompson

The Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper just concluded a three day seminar entitled Creation or Evolution, a Scientific Look. The seminar, conducted by Dr. Bert Thompson of Texas A & M University, was one of the most beneficial events we have ever attended. Dr. Thompson holds the Ph.D in microbiology. You can see that he is highly qualified to discuss the subject from a scientific point of view.

He has the unusual ability as a scientist to present the material in a clear and interesting manner. The greatest thing, however, is the fact that he is a dedicated Christian who does not compromise the Genesis account of creation on any point. One of the members here best described Bert by saying, "I'm glad that he is on our side."

It is our hope that elderships everywhere will see the need for such seminars and make them available to their members. Our faith in the Bible is being challenged from every side. For too long we have hidden in a corner and not spoken out for the truth. We have allowed our children to have their faith challenged without doing anything to help them build their faith in God and his word. Even those of us who are adults need to have our faith built up. A three day seminar with Dr. Thompson will go a long way in building the faith of all people, young and old.

This three day seminar covered such topics as The Alleged Proofs of Evolution, Theistic Evolution the Great Compromise, The Existence of God, The Inspiration of the Bible, and The Sovereignty of God. We highly recommend Bert Thompson.

The man who moved the mountain began by carrying away small stones.



RON HARPER

One of the greatest men ever to walk upon this earth, and the favorite Old Testament character of this writer, was Abraham. Though there are numerous reference to him in both Old and New Testaments, what we know about the events of his marvelous life is recorded in some twelve chapters of Genesis. Genesis 25 tells of the death of this magnanimous patriarch. Moses, writing some three centuries after the fact, recorded the death of Abraham in the following words: "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people" (Genesis 25:8).

These few words, chronicling the demise of the father of the faithful, are bursting with meaning; and they serve as vivid reminders of the attitude which should characterize all of God's people when they contemplate the coffin and the shroud.

This verse tells us that Abraham *gave us the ghost*. This is equal to saying that the spirit departed from the body. James tells us that death occurs when the spirit departs from the body. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26). Whenever the "silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:6, 7). Paul speaks of death as a "departure" (II Timothy 4:6), as going "to be with Christ" (Philippians 1:23), and as moving out of "this tabernacle" into "an house not made with hands" (II Corinthians 5:1). The inspired writers of the Old and New Testaments did not subscribe to the view that man is wholly mortal; rather they were in perfect agreement that God "formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zechariah 12:1).

We believe some significance may be attached to the fact that Moses says of Abraham that he *died* in a good old age. It seems there is often difficulty associated with saying very plainly that some certain one has died. We would prefer to say that he "passed away," or that he "expired," instead of saying plainly that he died. We would rather not think of death at all; and if we are forced to think of it, we would rather think of it in some other terms. The word death itself seems to strike fear into our souls and cause us to shrink away. But it is appointed unto all of us to die (Heb. 9:27), and regardless of what we may call it, death will come to us all as it did to Abraham. If we faithfully serve God, there will be no fear of death and no reluctance to call it just what it is.

Our text says that when Abraham died he was "an old man, and full of years." The phrase "full of years" is an interesting one. It means much more than that Abraham lived many years upon the earth. In fact, Abraham's one hundred seventy-five years, when compared to Methuselah's nine hundred sixty-nine, seems fairly short. But it is not said of Methuselah that he was "full of years." The phrase "full of years" translates the Hebrew word *sabea*, which means satiated, or satisfied. Used in this



BOBBY DUNCAN

Abraham's Funeral Sermon

FROM
 THE EDITOR

connection, it has to do, not so much with the length of one's life, but with its breadth, its height, and its depth. It more nearly describes the quality of one's life than the quantity. After all, when the body is lying cold in the grave, it matters but very little how long one lived upon this earth. But the kind of life one has lived makes all the difference in the world; and the kind of life one has lived is the only thing that does make any difference when the spirit has left the body.

It cannot be overlooked that Moses wrote concerning Abraham that, when he died, he "was gathered to his people." This cannot refer to the burial of Abraham's body; for Abraham's body was buried far from the old family cemetery in the land of Ur of the Chaldees. It was buried rather in the cave of Machpelah where he had buried his beloved Sarah nearly four decades previously. The reference then must be to the spirit of Abraham which took its flight to join his people who had preceded him in death.

But the text says that he was gathered to *his* people. Does this refer to his ancestors? If his ancestors were righteous people, then why did God require him to separate himself from them and enter into Canaan? The text does not say that he was gathered to his ancestors; it says that he was gathered to his people. *His* people were obviously those men and women of bygone days who had put their trust in God, believed his word, obeyed his commandments, and embraced his promises.

It is a certainty that when the time comes for us to die we will also be gathered to *our* people, i.e., our kind of people. If we are the kind of people who have given ourselves over to the gratification of the flesh, to ungodliness, and unrighteousness, then we will most assuredly be gathered into that place inhabited by this class of people. If, on the other hand, we have been a people who, like Abraham, "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10), then we will be gathered to that place inhabited by those of like precious faith.

The Influence Of The Home

The home is the oldest institution in the world, and is therefore, the very foundation of society and nations. It is not only the first institution to exist, but it also wields the first influence on the individual members of society and citizens of nations. The principles and ideals first instilled in the heart and mind of children in the home are usually the most lasting, and they are the strongest factors in determining their future life (Prov. 22:6).

"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). But individual citizens constitute nations; therefore no nation is any



W.C. QUILLEN

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).

"How may a preacher avoid sterility and stagnation in his preaching?"

By being a man of *the Book*, and a diligent student of *many books*. He who lives daily and intimately with the former, and dips frequently and intensively into the latter will never want for themes to preach, nor will his preaching be dry, unproductive and stale. On the contrary, he will eagerly seek the pulpit in order to share the gold nuggets he has mined, and his audience will find delight in the precious ore he has dredged up for it.

In no other work is there such a high moral obligation to be efficient and proficient. The well-being of those who listen is at stake both in this life and in the life to come; and, to fail to give the best one has to the effort amounts to criminal negligence. Most who fail, and are consequently fired, do so because they do not study. Elders will occasionally hire a preacher because he is reputed to be a "good personal worker," but in a few months they will *fire* him if he lacks pulpit power! Years ago, preachers were usually better educated and almost always better informed in the scriptures than other members of the church; but, this is far from being universally true these days; and a preacher will not last long in a congregaion who does not keep ahead of the membership in his spiritual development and study. Congregations ought to recognize the vital

necessity of such effort on the part of the preacher, and not only to permit it, but to encourage it. Any congregation, which places such demands on the preacher that he has little or no time for study, does not deserve an able preacher, and usually will not keep one long! I recently received the following question: "Don't you think that the preacher ought to be out visiting the members and going to the hospital to see the sick instead of studying four and five hours a day?" I find it difficult to be patient with such stupidity as is evidenced in this question! While it reflects a rather common attitude in the church today, it shows total ignorance of the responsibility of a gospel preacher, and assumes that he is hired by the congregation to do its work.

It is indeed the duty of one who preaches to visit the sick, not because he is a preacher, but because he is a Christian! It is equally the duty of every other member of the congregation so to do; and it is not possible for the preacher to do this for them. That such a question is raised these days indicates how completely we have been absorbed into the "Pastor system" of the denominational world. Do we suppose we can hire another to serve God for us?

Preachers must have time for reflection and study; and, in order to achieve their best efforts, they must study under circumstances where they are free of pressures and captious criticisms. And, they must have books to study. A preacher who does not love

good books is an anomaly; he will never realize his potential, who does not find satisfaction in his books and enjoy an intimate association with them. It is said that brother McGarvey, before leaving for his famed trip to the Holy Land went into his library and spent some time with his books as if communing with old friends. I can fully realize his feelings having often done the same. The collection of books ought to be a life-long pursuit of the active gospel preacher; no man ever attains to such a level of preparation that he has no further need to study. He who quits studying, quits growing mentally; and this leads to stagnation and sterility in preaching. There is of course much, much more to study than the mechanical reading of books or, for that matter, the lifting of thoughts and ideas from them. It is the use to which we are able to put the materials we discover which determines their value to us, and not for their mere accumulation. One may indeed have a vast array of facts at immediate recall; but, if they are not properly organized and classified, our "book-learning" will avail us little. It is said that Shakespeare had only ten thousand words in his vocabulary; a college graduate today has fifty thousand or more. Shakespeare knew how to use his! It is our duty as preachers, teachers, and workers for the Lord to strive to ever higher levels of accomplishment in His service, and we can do this only by ceaseless effort and unremitting toil.

The Year Of Increased Study

As I sit here in my office on this afternoon just a few hours before the beginning of 1979, my mind goes back some years ago to a statement the beloved Gus Nichols made: "the greatest threat to the church in this century is ignorance gone to seed among our brethren." When I first heard him make that statement, my mind could not fully comprehend how the greatest danger could come from within and not without the church. Yet, as time passes, I become more aware of what brother Nichols meant, because I now can see the reality of the church being torn asunder in some places by those who teach a different doctrine from that of the Bible, the doctrine brother Nichols preached for and fought for throughout his life. Some of the problems we face today are as follows:



MICHAEL D. STONE

(1) A failure to differentiate between opinion and doctrine. Some things are matters of personal judgment. Others are test of fellowship issues. Brother Nichols knew the difference.

(2) A failure of some preachers and elders to teach as strictly as the Bible teaches on matters of morality and dress. It is not uncommon today for some to contend that the wearing of shorts, mixed swimming, dancing, etc. are alright. Those leaders who refuse to teach on these things for fear of rocking the boat have by their silence sided with the devil. Brother Nichols knew that some "boats" need to be rocked for their own good.

(3) A failure to teach the Bible doctrine concerning

marriage, divorce and remarriage. Much of the teaching in our pulpits today on this subject is foreign to what brother Nichols taught. Are you aware of the difference? Increased study of this subject is needed in 1979. The false doctrine on this important subject is more serious and dangerous than most of us realize, thus allowing the church of today and tomorrow to be in serious trouble before God.

(4) A failure to understand that church attendance is not a substitute for godly living. Some are religious pretenders on Sunday and act like the heathen the rest of the time.

(5) A failure of elders publicly to state their support of the preacher as he preaches the truth. Elders can help their preacher if they would do this from time to time. Most elders are good men and want the truth taught, yet some are afraid to get involved because brother "money bags" may get mad and go somewhere else or quit giving. Many good preachers have had to move on elsewhere because the elders were inconsiderate in these matters. Elders, if you have a sound preacher, tell the church so from time to time. If your preacher is not sound, fire him.

(6) A failure of some elders and preachers to realize

the importance of good religious literature in every home. It should be understood by all of us that **NOTHING** can take the place of Bible study, however, a good religious paper in every home can compliment and even help encourage the study. Brother Nichols, in 1963, began *Words Of Truth*. He realized the importance of such papers. I remember so vividly the beloved late W.A. Bradfield at Freed-Hardeman College intercepting us as we left chapel services each day in order to give us some religious literature. He encouraged me in that regard and I have never failed personally to stand at the meetinghouse door after the services to hand out any good literature that I might have at that time.

Please study your Bible more in 1979. Will you subscribe and encourage others to subscribe to this great publication? For only \$4.16 per year, you can have *Words Of Truth* in your home every week. Make your check payable to Northwest Alabamian, Box 430, Haleyville, Alabama 35565 and request to be put on the *Words Of Truth* mailing list. Let us make 1979 the year of increased study.—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101

Subscribe
To The
Words of Truth

The Influence Of The Home

Continued from page 2

better than its citizens. And each citizen carries the influence of home life into all sections of the society in which he moves. Wherever he goes, whatever he does, he reflects the influence of life in his home.

Parents are responsible for making the home, and they are responsible for the kind of home they make. To them jointly God has given the tremendous power for bringing new life into the world. Just think! the awesome power of generating life!

Isn't it regrettable that men and women have abused this God-given power by engaging in illicit and adulterous sex relations out of wedlock, and have brought millions of unwanted children into this world,

who never have a wholesome home life, and are often bereft of adequate physical care, and moral and spiritual guidance? Do you suppose that these conditions have any thing to do with the rate of abortions in our land, when more babies are aborted than born? Is a society of fornicators and adulterers far removed from a society of homosexuals and lesbians? When marriage is ignored and home life abandoned, it is not possible to have a righteous nation.

Parents who bring children into the world are responsible for them. They should provide for them physically (I Tim. 5:8); and they must provide for

them morally and spiritually (Eph. 6:1-4). Little children do "not live by bread alone" any more than we do.

Parents owe their children more than house, bed, food and clothes. It takes more than a house to make a home. Yet to many people, home is no home.

One youth said, "Home is a place where you eat." A teenage girl said, "Home is where you can go between mid-night and daylight when everything else is closed." A mother said, "It is where you slave hardest and are appreciated less". A father said "It's where you fight your private battles." What is home to you?—P.O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tn. 38464

The Name Of Our Lord

Continued from page 1

2:10). Notice the importance and significance of our Savior's name:

(1) Salvation is obtainable only in his name. Peter said, "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).

(2) John gave this reason for penning his first epistle: "That ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John 5:13).

(3) "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Phil. 2:10).

(4) Penitent believers are baptized - immersed - "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19, ASV).

(5) Christ commissioned his apostles, "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached

in his name" (Luke 24:47).

(6) Remission of sins is obtained "through his name" (Acts 10:43).

(7) Eternal life springs from his name. John, by inspiration, wrote his account of the gospel, "That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

(8) The apostles "departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name" (Acts 5:41). His name was then, and is now, worthy of our suffering (Matt. 10:22; Acts 9:16).

(9) Our prayers must be offered to the Father in his name (John 13:13, 14; 14:15; 16:23; Col. 3:17).

(10) In New Testament times, miracles were performed in his name (Acts 3:6; 4:10).

(11) The heart-pricked Pentecostians were divinely

instructed, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

(12) All things done, both in word and in deed, must be performed in his name, or by his authority (Col. 3:17; Matt. 28:18; I Pet. 3:22).

From this brief cross-section of biblical references we are shown the superiority of our Savior's name to the name of any other. The name of Christ is backed by the God-given authority of Christ (Matt. 28:18). Because of this, it is not sufficient simply to ritualistically chant Jesus' name in hopes of receiving salvation or some sought after spiritual blessing; we must consistently and conscientiously obey him and do his will (Matt. 7:21; John 14:15; Heb. 5:9). Are you living up to the precious name of the sinless, spotless Son?—Box 126, Aurora, Missouri 65605

He Cannot Sin

Two verses in First John, chapter 3, demand our special attention. Verse 6: "whosoever abideth in him sinneth not..." Verse 9: "whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin because he is begotten of God."

These words are used by some Baptists in an effort to prove that once a man is saved, he can never be lost. They argue that since he cannot sin, how could he possibly be lost? Many Christians who fully understand that a saved person can become unfaithful and lose his salvation are stumped by these passages and do not know how to explain them.

The problem is one of translation. Both the King James and the American Standard translations leave the distinct impression that the Calvinist is correct in his "once saved always saved" doctrine. The Greek text, however, leaves no such impression. The problem lies in the translation of the Greek tenses.

Two modern translations make the true meaning of these texts abundantly clear. They are the *New Testament* by Charles Williams and the *Amplified Bible*. Charles B. Williams is a Baptist, former Dean of Southwestern Baptist Seminary and professor of Greek and Ethics at Union University. His translation is acclaimed to be one of the finest. Especially does he excel in his knowledge and translation of the Greek



JOHN WADDEY

tenses. Dr. J.R. Mantey, Greek scholar of Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Chicago writes, "Dr. Williams has succeeded in surpassing all other translators of the New Testament in bringing out the tense significance of the Greek verbs...also he has indicated the true sense of the Greek present tense wherever it is vital to clear understanding, e.g., I John 3:8, 9. ...we conclude that it is the best translation of the New Testament in the English language."

Billy Graham, the world's most prominent Baptist, endorses and highly recommends the *Amplified Bible*.

The renderings of these two translations make it abundantly clear that the verses under consideration in no way teach that it is impossible for a Christian to commit an act of sin.

Williams: "No one who continues to live in union with Him practices sin" (3:6).

Amplified: "No one who abides in Him - who lives and remains in communion with and in obedience to Him (deliberately and knowingly) habitually commits (practices) sin" (3:6).

Williams: "No one who is born of God makes a practice of sinning, because the God-given life principle continues to live in him, and so he cannot practice sinning, because he is born of God" (3:9).

Amplified: "No one born (begotten) of God (deliberately and knowingly) habitually practices sin, for God's nature abides in him - His principle of life, the divine sperm, remains permanently within him - and he cannot practice sinning because he is born (begotten) of God" (3:9).

Even without these modern translations we would know that the passages do not teach the impossibility of apostasy, by noting what John said in Chapters 1

and 2: "If we (Christians) say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1:10); and, "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man, sin, we have an Advocate with the Father..." (2:1).

The truth of the matter is that while the Christian can commit a sin, he cannot habitually continue to practice sin if he wants to remain faithful. If he keeps on walking in the heavenly light (I John 1:7), and the divine seed is abiding in him (I John 3:9), his faithfulness will always cause him quickly to realize his sin. His conscience will prompt him to repent of it and make appropriate confession (I John 1:9)—Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, Tn 37921

Attend Bible Study

And

Worship

Every Sunday!



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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VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1979

NUMBER 7

Love The Brotherhood

(No. 5)

This trio of words sparkles amidst some other terse sayings from Peter's pen as he neared the end of his colorful and eventful sojourn upon earth. They are all located in First Peter 2:17 and read, "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."

It is significant to note some things that Peter did not say in this earnest exhortation. He did not say to hate the brotherhood.

That would have gone against the Scriptural grain of John 13:34-35 and Hebrews 13:1. He did not say to wreck the brotherhood. That would have gone against the plain and positive teaching of Matthew 5:9, Romans 14:19 and Galatians 5:22-23. He did not say to slander the brotherhood. Such would have violated the tone and tenor of James 4:11. He did not say to love only the lovable of the brotherhood and to despise the unlovely. Such would make us totally unlike God and Christ and the precious portrait painted of their love and mercy in Romans 5:5ff. He did not say to ignore the brotherhood. He did not say to remain aloof the brotherhood and have nothing to do with the brotherhood of believers. Such would go against everything John said about Christian fellowship in his first epistle. He did not say to love just the home congregation and to care nothing at all for the brotherhood at large. Paul had all the care of the churches that tugged at the strings of his magnanimous heart (II Cor. 11:28). With Paul it was not an occasional care but a daily one.



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

Peter did not say to love only the ones we know in the brotherhood and to treat with contempt the unknown. He did not say to love the ones we consider to be the greatest in the brotherhood and look down our noses with intellectual snobbery upon those whom we deem to be the least in the kingdom of heaven. He did not say to love just the big, thriving and affluent congregations that can give \$500,000 or \$1,000,000 dollars on a given Sunday (much of which will be spent for their recreational pursuits) and to treat with contempt the small, struggling and relatively unknown congregations. The latter and not the former may well be the leaven that saves the church from going into apostasy in this perilous generation. Simon Peter's love for the brotherhood included ALL the brotherhood—not just a tiny portion of it. In this we must emulate him. In the remainder of this series for WORDS OF TRUTH I desire to write rather plainly and pointedly relative to this earnest exhortation both as to abuses of it and what the eloquent exhortation really demands of each of us.

Gospel preachers may fail to love the brotherhood. Elders may fail to love the brotherhood. Deacons may fail to love the brotherhood. Bible teachers may fail to love the brotherhood. The rank and file of members may fail to love the brotherhood. Peter knew all of this only too well and for that reason penned this persuasive trio of powerful words.

Does a gospel preacher really love the brotherhood at large when he lives only in his small world of his home congregation and is not in the least bit interested in the cause elsewhere? He does not take nor does he read any of the brotherhood publications. He never attends an area gospel meeting unless it is conducted by his home congregation or he is preaching in it. He never attends any kind of lectureship or workshop unless said lectureship or workshop is conducted by his home congregation. He never attends any type of

preachers' get-together where mutual matters of concern to all are discussed and where ideas for sermons and projects for greater usefulness are freely shared. As long as there is local peace where he lives and labors he is not bothered all that much with the liberalism, modernism, worldliness, denominationalism and other injurious isms that rise to assail and afflict the cause at large. As long as these errors and isms do not sift down to him and his local congregational world, he is happy, serene and not much concerned with the cause as a whole.

Does a gospel preacher really love the brotherhood if he is only interested in pushing and promoting what he and his home congregation have thought up, but toward the good works of others he could not care less? Does a gospel preacher really love the brotherhood when about all the growth he is interested in is building up the congregation where he labors at the expense of neighboring congregations? There are names for this practice. A mild designation for it is proselyting; a more severe designation is sheep-stealing! He is always belittling what others are doing and praising what they are doing where he preaches. Thus he is always seeking to pressure some one or an entire family to forsake the congregation where they have long lived and labored and come over and help build the biggest and best congregation in the city or county or perhaps the whole state. Such is not building the cause; it simply results in a SWELL of one place and a DECLINE at the place that is forsaken. The kingdom has not gained a new citizen; the church has not gained a new member of the body of Christ. But in the process brotherhood relations are strained by the resentment felt by the congregation that is forsaken toward the preacher and his group that have done the proselyting. This is NOT the way to serve the cause; it surely is not the way to love the brotherhood. — P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.



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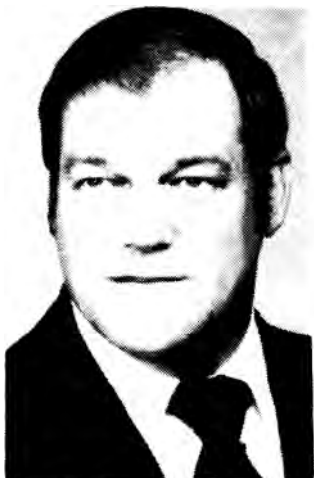
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Things Peculiar To The Apostles



BOBBY DUNCAN

The admonition given in II Timothy 2:15 rightly to divide the word of truth is one that cannot be over emphasized. A failure to heed this admonition accounts for much of the confusion in the denominational world; but it also accounts for much confusion in the Lord's church as well. This is especially true as it pertains to certain things said of the apostles of Christ. Knowledgeable brethren

have pointed out to their Pentecostal friends, and rightly so, that such passages as John 14:26 and John 16:13 are passages containing promises given to the apostles, and not to us who live today: "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"; and, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

While it is not difficult for most of our brethren to understand that the language of these verses does not have a general application to us today, there are other things said about the apostles that some today try erroneously to apply to themselves. For example, the latter part of Acts 1:8 says, "... and ye shall be witnesses unto me..." Jesus was here addressing his apostles. In order for one to be an apostle, he had to be a witness of the fact that Jesus had been raised from the dead. In selecting one to take the place of Judas the eleven apostles recognized the fact that the one selected would have to "be a witness... of his resurrection" (Acts 1:22). In order to qualify Saul to be an apostle it was necessary for the Lord to appear unto him. Jesus made it plain in Acts 26:16 that he appeared to Saul specifically that Saul might be a witness: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." Later Paul argued the authenticity of his apostleship partly upon the fact that he had seen Jesus Christ our Lord (I Corinthians 9:1). In every case in the New Testament where reference is made to some who were the witnesses of Christ it is always a reference to those who had personally seen the Lord; and no man could be an apostle who had not seen the Lord after he was risen from the dead.

Despite this clear teaching of the New Testament there are those in the church today who claim that they are witnesses for Christ. What they have in mind is the fact that they are telling others about the Christ, and they think they are "witnessing." But this is not the sense in which the word is used in the Bible; nor is it the sense in which it is used in denominational circles. If we are going to use scriptural words, we should use them in a scriptural sense.

Another reference to the apostles which is

often erroneously applied to Christians in general is found in II Corinthians 5:20: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." An ambassador is, "A diplomatic official of the highest rank appointed and accredited as representative in residence by one government to another" (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*). Look at that definition. The apostles fit that definition in every particular; but we do not. Though we are citizens of heaven (Phil. 3:20), and have our residence here upon the earth, still we are not ambassadors. We cannot speak in behalf of God on any matter; and we do not possess the credentials which the apostles possessed (II Corinthians 12:12). The Lord has not said to us, as he said to the apostles: "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" (Matthew 18:18). We neither perform miracles nor speak in behalf of God.

Furthermore we are no "diplomatic officials of the highest rank." The apostles were just exactly that. I Corinthians 12:28 says, "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers..." The word *first* in this passage denotes the matter of *rank*. The apostles of Christ are ambassadors because they are diplomatic officials "of the highest rank."

It is not difficult to understand how the Pope of Rome, denominational preachers who claim some direct leadings from God separate from his written word, or even denominational members who depend for the assurance of their salvation upon their subjective feelings or experiences, could think that they are *witnesses* and *ambassadors*. Those who follow the Bible should know better.

The Mormons claim to have living apostles who, according to them, are successors to the apostles of Christ. But the apostles of Christ have no successors; just as Christ himself has no successor. Christ did his work of making atonement for our sins upon the cross. It does not need to be done over and over again in every generation. The apostles did their work as the agents through whom the gospel of Jesus Christ was revealed and confirmed. That work does not need to be done over and over again in every generation. The Lord's church upon earth today can claim as its own the Christ and the apostles of the New Testament.

Faith In The Blood

JOHNNY RAMSEY

In Colossians 1:20, Paul tells us that Christ "made peace through the blood of the cross." Paul therefore, preached the gospel of peace (Romans 10:14) concerning the death, burial, and resurrection of the Prince of Peace (I Corin-

Continued on page 4

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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).

"Shall we know each other in heaven?"

This is a question of far more than merely curious interest to all thoughtful persons; and, to those who have dear ones already beyond the door of death, and who anticipate the time when they, too, must divest themselves of the robe of flesh and enter the realm of the dead. It is no wonder that hearts hunger for assurances thereon, and reason searches to supply them.

The unspeakable thrilling expectation of a glad reunion with loved ones on golden shores; the prospect of *seeing*, and *knowing* all of the illustrious characters of the ages and of sitting at the feet of Peter and Paul and the Lord; and, the glorious privilege of endless association with the dear departed dead in their immortal state, no longer weary and sad and worn and sick, but arrayed in that imperishable splendor which shall ever characterize the good, the pure and the blessed, excites the heart as no other matter does. Is this hope a vain one?

No! On this theme the Scriptures abound with evidence of the clearest and most convincing character. Limitations of space will allow consideration of but little of it, but enough for us to know that the doctrine of *Future Recognition* is eminently true and that on it we may rely.

(1) Job 19:25-27. Job positively affirmed that he (as Job) would see God; he would see God with his own eyes; he would see God in the flesh (following the changes which bodies will experience in the resurrection). Thus, the ancient patriarch, by inspiration, asserted the resurrection of the body, the preservation of the personality, and identity of the resurrected person.

(2) Revelation 6:9-10. These were, (a) personalities in the death state; (b) they had a consciousness of their surroundings; (c) they knew why they were there; (d) they had been murdered; (e) they were aware of the fact that their murderers had not yet been punished.

(3) II Samuel 12:23. David, stricken with grief, and with the body of his dead child yet

unburied, said, "Can I bring him back again? *I shall go to him*, but he will not return to me." This statement of the grieving monarch is significant only if when he should "go to" the child he would be conscious of being in *his* child's presence.

(4) Luke 16:19-31. The case of the Rich Man and Lazarus, whether a parable or not, lifts the curtain of the future and enables us, for the moment, to view the scenes of the yet-to-be. The characters were all conscious; all aware of their surroundings; all possessed of a memory of the world which they had but lately left. In the words of Abraham to the Rich man, "Son, *remember*," there is an inference for all for which we contend. Of course, the Scriptures teach we shall know each other in heaven! The doctrine of future recognition is grounded in hope, it is sustained by faith, and love longs for, and patiently waits, for its realization.

Millennium Mania

(No. 2)

Our point should not be misunderstood! (See previous article.) Eschatology is a legitimate course of study and would greatly profit every student of the Bible if conducted according to the rules. The rules simply demand Scriptural support. Over 300 times the New Testament alludes to the second coming of Christ and on 21 specific occasions Jesus made reference to his return. But instead of following honest rules and using Scriptural evidence to teach about last things, men have historically chosen to speculate outside the Scriptures. Even in the lifetime of the Apostle John one named Cerinthus claimed special insight and taught that the kingdom would come with the second coming of Christ and last for a thousand years on the earth. Polycarp quotes John as calling Cerinthus an "enemy of truth." When the first millennium of the Christian Age ended many theorized that the end was near. The Black Death of Europe was interpreted as a sure sign. But here we are nearing the end of the second millennium and the Lord still delays.



CHARLES COOK

The Nineteenth Century saw the rise of enthusiasts like William Miller who predicted Christ would return March 1, 1844. Many of his followers sold their farms and businesses and prepared to meet the Lord. But Jesus failed to show up on March 1. Miller announced that he had made a slight miscalculation and after adjusting his figures told his followers to expect Jesus on October 22, 1844. Again Miller was wrong and he died a broken man. However, the fever for date-setting continued and there followed a group headed by Charles Russell who came to be known as the Millennial Dawnists. The Millerites became the Seventh Day Adventists and the Millennial Dawnists later became the Jehovah Witnesses. It is sad to note that all

four of the major cults of today sprang from this era of speculation and sensationalism at the close of the Nineteenth Century — the Jehovah Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, Mormons and Christian Scientists. This era also produced the impetus for later movements such as that of Herbert W. Armstrong and others.

All of this has helped produce much of the confusion and curiosity, and the theories, which we find in the religious community today. In fact, it has produced a curious new religious sport among many of the main-line evangelistic groups, and it's really catching on! The idea of the game seems to be, "Who can top the latest popular predictive theory?" Consequently, you will find that clearly 50% of all religious literature being published today promotes some kind of millennial tenet. The religious publishing houses presently make millions of dollars because of these unhealthy interests in prophetic games.

The books referred to all give about the same outline for future events, each with its own special twist:

- (1) Jesus is coming *soon!*
- (2) He will rapture the living and dead saints out of this world for seven years.
- (3) With the church gone the Anti-Christ will rise to power through a ten-kingdom confederacy in Europe. (There are several disputes about the exact order of all this!)
- (4) The anti-Christ will then attack Israel but Jesus will return just in time to overthrow him in the Battle of Armageddon.
- (5) Satan will then be bound one thousand years and Christ will reign in Jerusalem.

Hal Lindsay is the author of one of the

hundreds of paperbacks in print telling how all of this is going to fit together. His "*Late Great Planet Earth*" has sold well over five million copies. Now it is considered a classic work among Premillennialists. Judging by the number of books he has sold, people evidently believe Lindsay knows something about God's plans for the future! He uses a forty-year formula. Why not? That's a good Bible number. He says within forty years of the time of the re-establishment of the modern Nation of Israel (1948) we will see all of these things come to pass. That means that the so-called "rapture" could occur as early as 1981 and the Battle of Armageddon by 1988. (See "*Late Great Planet Earth*", pp. 53, 54.)

It is amazing to realize that there are actually millions who truly believe that Lindsay and the other millennial teachers can divine the future so clearly. Some of these prophetic musings are getting ridiculous! One millennialist, playing up the theme that Christ was The Lamb in His First Advent and will not be The Conquering Lion until His Second Coming, went on tour in 1974 with a sermon entitled, "THE LION MAY ROAR IN '74." (Of course, Jesus became both Lamb and Lion in His First Advent!) Well, that sermon obviously did not "SURVIVE IN '75," but the millennialists were "UP TO THE SAME OLD TRICKS IN '76!" They were looking to be "RAPTURED TO HEAVEN IN '77" and in "'78 IT WAS GETTING LATE." So, here we are in "'79, AND IT'S MORE OF THE SAME OLD LINE!" (So much for the poetry, more next week.) — P. O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766.

Christians Stand Up

SAMUEL L. SOPER, JR.

In a world which is everything but what Christ and God desired, it is high time that Christians stand up and are counted as being for the Lord and against worldliness.

A very good example of why Christians need to be

counted on is seen in the recent speech of the President of the United States of America. Mr. Carter in his 1979 State of the Union speech delivered on

Continued on page 4

“You Needed Me”



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

The subject of this article is actually the title of a very popular song now being heard throughout our country via the airwaves. How refreshing it is to listen to a song that presents good morals in its lyrics. This is just the opposite of most of the music today which encourages illicit sex and sin in general. The thought, “You Needed Me” expresses a vital yearning within every person. We all want to be needed, and, we all need to be wanted.

Especially is this true with reference to the marital relationship. We have often heard, following the death of a marriage partner, how much the surviving one truly depended on him or her, as the case might be. How wonderful! God intended for the husband always to need his wife; likewise, the wife should always need her husband. This is true because each one fulfills a distinctive role in marriage.

One of the greatest problems facing our society today is the rapid increase in divorce. The “Bible Belt” of the deep South has not been excluded from this perplexing problem. In the January 12, 1979 edition of The Montgomery Advertiser, an article appeared with the caption, “Montgomery ranks high in divorces.” In fact, the article stated that “Alabama is among the leading states in the nation with number of divorces estimated at 6.8 per 1,000 people, compared with the national average of 5.0 per 1,000. In Montgomery County 8.9 divorces occur per 1,000 people, making it one of the top five divorce counties in the state.” The writer of the article quoted a marriage expert in listing five reasons that have contributed to the high divorce rates. Please observe the last one. “Fifth, a shift from an authoritarian to a more democratic culture with a crucial loss of critical inter-dependence such as the husband no longer being the sole supporter of the family.”

The Bible does not portray the husband as being the master and the wife the slave; but, Paul did teach that “the husband is the head of the wife” (Ephesians 5:22-24). In times past, the role of the bread winner belonged to the husbands. The wives were the workers at home” (Titus 2:5). Each one fulfilled much needed positions in the home life. They were not competitors but rather complimented one another. Today, things have changed drastically. Whether we like it or not, there are conflicts in the marriage relationship that are contributing to a great deal of unhappiness and even to divorce. Often, there is seemingly the necessity of the wife’s obtaining employment outside the home due to the escalated cost of living in our modern society. There are even cases wherein the wife brings home more money than the husband. This is certainly detrimental to the husband’s ego and his position as being the provider of the home. Such conditions, whether desired or not, can cause an attitude of independence and self-reliance. When a couple no longer feels the need of each other, separation is usually the ultimate end.

The Lord God meant for there to be an inter-dependence in the marriage relationship. There is the need of companionship. “And Jehovah God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him” (Genesis 2:18). There is also the sexual needs which have been designed to be fulfilled in marriage (I Corinthians 7:1-5). “Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4). Often in the everyday association of men and women on their jobs, there are temptations lurking in the shadows. In the daily fraternizing of the members of the opposite sex, such friendships can lead to flirtations and in

some cases, fornication will result. Usually, divorce is the consequence of such forbidden indulgences.

The mutual needs of the husband and wife are met in times of joy when expressions of happiness can be vented to each other. And, in moments of serious reflection and meditation, comfort can be received from each other when the trials and tribulations fill our lives. When the husband and wife are “joint-heirs of the grace of life,” strength can be found in one another to live acceptably to God and to rear children in “the chastening and admonition of the Lord” (I Peter 3:7; Ephesians 6:4).

The philosophy of “You Needed Me” is greatly needed in our families today. The beautiful passage in Ruth 1:16, 17 is certainly appropriate at this time. “And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest; I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: Jehovah do so to me and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.”

There is a beautiful Christian couple of our acquaintance who have lived together over a half of a

century. They have always felt the need of each other. In their home, hanging on a wall, is a poem that best exemplifies their attitude. We share it with you now.

TOGETHER STILL

*Let me hold your hand as we go downhill,
We've shared our strength and we share it still.
It hasn't been easy to make the climb,
But the way was eased by your hand in mine.
Like the lake, our life has had ripples, too-
Ill-health, and worries, and payments due,
With happy pauses along the way -
A graduation, a raise in pay.
At the foot of the slope we will stop and rest.
Look back if you wish; we've been truly blessed,
We've been spared the grief of being torn apart.
By death or divorce or a broken heart. The view
Ahead is one of the best, Just a little bit farther,
And then we can rest. We move more slowly,
But together still-Let me hold your hand as we
go downhill.....*

809 Perry Store Rd, Opp, Al. 36467

Faith In The Blood

Continued from page 2

thians 15; Isaiah 9:6). Faith comes by hearing the word of God; therefore we have faith in the blood of Christ to redeem us from iniquity (Romans 10:17; Ephesians 1:7). The New Testament beautifully informs us of this truth in Revelation 1:5:

“Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.”

In Hebrews 9:22 and 10:4 we learn that without the blood of Jesus there could be no remission of sins, because the blood of animal sacrifices could never take away sin!

Six centuries before Calvary a great prophet named Zechariah foretold a blessed event. He promised, by the power of God, “a fountain for cleansing and for sin” that would be opened outside Jerusalem. In John 19:34 we find the fulfillment of that prediction when Jesus Christ shed precious blood in His vicarious death. Our Savior said in Matthew 26:28, “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

Indeed, He is “the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). One of our most famous spiritual songs tells us that

there is power in the blood. How very true that is!

Not only is the shed blood of our Lord able to forgive the past sins of an individual who contacts that blood, by being buried with Christ in baptism (Colossians 2:12), but that efficacious flow continues to be a blessing for the faithful child of God (I John 1:7).

Perhaps Romans 5:8-11 most powerfully tells the story that causes us to have faith in Christ’s blood. That paragraph of Holy Scripture tells us that God loved us while we were yet in sin and sent His Son to suffer, bleed and die for us so that we might be reconciled or brought back to the Father by the death of Jesus. Through the benefits of the Cross (Galatians 2:21) we can walk through a wide-open gate to glory.

“Yes in the blood of Christ I see The gate that stands ajar for me.”

There is awesome power in the blood of the Lamb (I Pet. 1:18-19). Let us have the utmost faith in Heaven’s plan for our redemption. — 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Tx. 78745.

Christians Stand Up

Continued from page 3

Tuesday evening, January 23, 1979 to the Ninety-Sixth Congress, urged that both the Congress and the Senate get behind his efforts and push for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. It is sad indeed for the cause of Christ that the political leaders of this nation are pushing for the passage of such terrible legislation.

Isn’t it time that we took a stand on this? What can we do? The answer is we can sit down and write individual letters to the President telling him that we are not in favor of this awful legislation, and point out to him that it is not what God has said is His way. If we all will get involved, if we stand and are counted, maybe our leaders in Washington will see that this is not what we, the American public, want.

Those who are familiar with the situation know that the so-called Equal Rights Amendment has not one thing to guarantee equal rights that is not already a part of the laws governing our nation. It is instead a

piece of legislation the design of which is to destroy any recognition of God-given distinction between the sexes and become a cloak under which to shelter homosexuals.

It has been said, and rightly so, that Christianity is the greatest liberation movement ever known to mankind. Christianity liberates from sin and its power (John 8:32; Romans 6:23).

Brethren, equality is one thing; changing God’s order of things is another. Isn’t it time Christians stood up and were counted?—Crossroads Church of Christ, Jasper, Al. 35501.

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Words of Truth



Words Of Truth

... Festus; but speak forth

- Acts 26:25

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VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1979

NUMBER 8

Love The Brotherhood

(No. 6)

[Editor's note: All the articles in this series on "Love the Brotherhood" are very fine. We especially commend this particular installment to elderships.]

This courageous command is located in First Peter 2:17. It was penned by the colorful Cephas, an ardent apostle who served well his Saviour nearly forty eventful years. Peter wrote both as an apostle of Jesus Christ and as an elder in the church of our Lord.

Peter alludes to his being an apostle in First Peter 1:1 and to his being an elder in First Peter 5:1. As an apostle, Peter loved the brotherhood; as an elder in the Lord's church he loved the brotherhood.

In the previous article we depicted how that gospel preachers can fail to love the brotherhood at large by living only in the world of their local work. It seems appropriate now that we say something about elders and how they can fail to love the cause of Christ throughout the world. And it needs to be written with ascending emphasis that an eldership can greatly affect how the flock they oversee will react to the ardent admonition of "love the brotherhood." Elders can enhance that needful concept or they can hinder greatly its strict adherence by the congregation. Just as in the case of preachers, elders can get into the rut where they see nothing and value nothing but the local work they oversee. Thus a world vision for Christ and a desire to spread the gospel throughout the length and the breadth of the earth is lost due to the circumscribed bounds of limited local vision. It would be good for elderships throughout the brotherhood to feast regularly upon John 4:34-38 which says, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye. There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon you bestowed no labour; other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours." There is more than just the local field that is white unto harvest. Yet this is the only one that limited vision ever sees.

Far too many elderships frown on their local preacher's participation in a selected number of gospel meetings each year. This is not a new problem at all. Brother G.C. Brewer died twenty-three years ago. He desired in his active life to combine local work, gospel meeting work and a writing ministry. He made a number of moves because eldership where he labored frowned on his holding a few gospel meetings each year along with his local work. The congregations where he labored should have been happy for him to have done some meeting work along with his regular work locally. In happy contrast, brother Gus Nichols did local work for the Sixth Avenue congregation in Jasper, Alabama, for forty-three years before his death in 1975. Think of the great loss it would have been to the brotherhood at large if they had never allowed brother Nichols to be away for gospel meetings, lectures, special speeches to help settle church troubles and debates where he defended the truth. Sixth Avenue shared generously their preacher with the brotherhood. They are doing the same with their present preacher. In the summer of 1978 I preached in a gospel meeting in Walker County, Alabama, at Oakman. This is near Jasper. The Sixth Avenue congregation was well represented throughout the meeting. One night when several of their members were present and some of their elders were in attendance, I thanked publicly that great congregation for their unselfish willingness in sharing the illustrious Nichols with the brotherhood. But many elders do not possess such feelings. They insist, other than for a vacation and one or two meetings per year, the preacher be on the job locally the remaining days of the year. A gospel

preacher of my acquaintance who has always done an excellent local work and preached in several gospel meetings each year, once went to another state to preach in a meeting. While there for the meeting the elders told him, "We do not allow our preacher to be away for any meetings like this." His immediate response was, "If the elders where I do local work felt this way, I would not be here this week preaching in a meeting for you brethren." If every eldership felt as they did, there would be practically no gospel meetings conducted, for only a handful of our preachers do full time meeting work. Most meetings are held by those who combine local work with gospel meeting work or those who teach in our Christian schools and hold gospel meetings each year. . . Such restrictive elderships as the above one cannot see the brotherhood for the local situation that occupies all their attention.

At this point I would like to write a word of tribute to the eldership under which I am privileged to serve at Ripley, Tennessee. They love the work at home and want to see it grow. They also love the work elsewhere and want to see the whole brotherhood prosper. They have gone the second mile, yea, even the third, in allowing me to preach in scores of places and to spend a considerable portion of each day in writing. They remove many burdens that ordinarily fall upon a preacher's shoulders in local work in order that I might spend more time with the pen of religious journalism. As funds allow they help many places each year. One of our elders, Brother Fred Faulk, pioneered the way for the establishment of a black congregation in this city when the few black brethren said they would rather have their own congregation in the black community. They have a very nice and commodious meetinghouse, thanks largely to Brother Faulk's leadership. They provide good leadership for the church here and the love they have for the brotherhood at large is admirable. Their vision for Christ and Christianity reaches far beyond Ripley, Lauderdale County and West Tennessee. I rise up and call Fred Faulk and Everett Presson blessed in this very regard. I commend their example to other elderships. -- P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not made most noble for this but speak forth the Words of Truth and substance"

— Acts 26:25

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Some Observations On The NIV



BOBBY DUNCAN

One of the newest and most popular among the modern translations of the Bible is the *New International Version*, commonly designated by the initials N-I-V. We have not heard brethren generally defending the NIV; but we have heard a number of them use it in their preaching. We have also seen it quoted quite freely in a number of articles written by brethren.

At the risk of being called a fanatic, and of being accused of considering every preacher a liberal who quotes from any translation other than the King James Version, we want to make some observations concerning the New International Version. We certainly do not consider this as a review of the NIV, but merely a few observations concerning things that are quite noticeable.

In the first place, those who insist that the modern translations are so much superior to the old out-dated King James make a strong point about the matter of clarity. The King James is so hard to understand, they argue; and the modern versions are so much clearer. I suppose an example of this would be found in Genesis 13:1. The NIV says in terms so clear: "so Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had and Lot went with him." Isn't that clear? Of course, everyone knows exactly the meaning of *Negev*! What a great improvement over the antiquated King James Version, which says in language so obscure: "And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the *south*." We had always had a real struggle understanding the meaning of *south*; but now with the aid of the much clearer NIV it all comes to light. *South* means *Negev*, of course!

Another observation is that the translators of the NIV were strongly influenced by Calvinistic theology. Romans 5:14 in the King James Version properly says: "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." The NIV erroneously states: "Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come." The passage is talking about spiritual death which came upon all, "for that all have sinned" (verse 12). And verse fourteen does not teach as per the NIV that spiritual death reigned "even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam." It teaches rather that spiritual death reigned over those who did not sin "after the similitude of Adam's transgression." That is, the sin they committed (verse 12) was not like the sin of Adam. Adam's sin was in violating an arbitrary command of God. Others sinned by violating God's moral law. The passage does not say that death reigned over those who did not sin; it says rather that death reigned over those who did not sin by committing the same kind of violation Adam committed.

The influence of Calvinistic theology is further seen in the oft-repeated mistranslation of the Greek word *sarx* 'flesh.' This word occurs twelve times in the first thirteen verses of Romans 8. The King James Version faithfully translates "flesh" twelve times. The

context indicates the *flesh* is put in contrast with *spirit*; and the contrast is between the gospel, which is essentially spiritual, and the law of Moses, which was essentially fleshly. But seven times in these thirteen verses the NIV translates the Greek word *sarx* as "sinful nature." This is just exactly what the Calvinist would want this chapter to say. But the NIV translators knew better than they translated. They knew the word did not mean "sinful nature," because the same word is used in Romans 1:3, and there it refers to Christ. Did they attribute to Christ a "sinful nature"? Oh, no! To do so would be fatal to the Calvinistic position. And so what was "sinful nature" in Romans 8 and other passages, becomes "human nature" in Romans 1:3.

But the difficulties with this little Greek word *sarx* are not over yet for the translators of the NIV. It occurs again in Matthew 19:5, 6. The NIV translates verse 5 as follows: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." One what? That's right — one *flesh*. You see, it wouldn't make much sense to say that the two will become one *sinful nature*, or one *human nature*. And so in this passage, when it fit their purpose, they correctly and properly translated this little word that is so abused in other places.

Incidentally, this word occurs 151 times in the Greek New Testament. The King James Version translates it 'flesh' 147 of those times. Once it is translated "fleshly," twice "carnal," and one time it is joined with another word, and the two of them together are translated "carnally minded."

We will list one other brief observation. The NIV rendering of II Peter 3:10 indicates some Premillennial influence upon the translators. The latter part of that verse says, "...and the earth and everything in it will be *laid bare*." It is true that there is a variant reading in this text. Both the King James and the American Standard versions render "burned up." But a footnote in the ASV indicates that some manuscripts have "discovered" instead of "burned up." Reliable scholars are generally agreed that "burned up" is the correct rendering. The Premillennialists don't like this rendering, because it destroys their doctrine. But "discovered" is of very little help to them, since it hardly makes any sense. So the NIV translators decided to reject both renderings, and substitute one of their own making that would be acceptable to the Premillennialists.

We do not know who said it first, but it is worth repeating: Years ago the denominational people put the Bible into their creeds; but now they are writing their creeds into the Bible. And we will add: Our own brethren have adopted these creed-filled Bibles!

Subscribe To The Words of Truth

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 do the scriptures teach regarding recreation? How may I, as a Christian, determine what kind of recreation is proper and what is not?"

It can scarcely be seriously questioned that the people of our land have developed a mania for recreation. Millions of people in this country live largely for fleshly indulgence and their week-ends are spent on the lakes, in the mountains and at the seashore. Many of these are professing Christians who do not hesitate to forsake the assembly of the church to lie in the sun on public beaches, to fish in the lakes of the land, and to play golf on the fairways. Some of these seek to satisfy the conscience by a quick stop on the way to the beach for worship or by carrying the "emblems" of the supper with them. To all such the Lord's day has lost all real significance; it is a national holiday providing freedom from responsibility and affording opportunity for a lazy routine of fleshly pursuits.

All recreation is not to be condemned. The Scriptures teach that man is so constituted as to need rest and relaxation. God set apart and made holy the seventh day of the week, as a rest day; and the law of Moses made provision for many feast days on which the people of Israel were given opportunity for physical and social recreation. Christians, as well as Jews, also need release occasionally from the taxing responsibilities of life, and our civilization is vastly more complex than it was in the days of Moses. Ours is indeed a time of great stress and pressure, both mental and physical; and children of God need seasons of refreshing to renew and reinvigorate the physical man. God wants us to use our faculties to his glory and in the most useful manner possible, and this can be done only if our physical frame is kept in efficient order. All human beings need rest and recreation. Jesus practiced it (Mark 6:31, 32), the apostles taught it (I Tim. 4:8), and we must have it if we are to discharge fully our potential here.

We must, however, be careful that we keep our recreational activities under restraint, and maintain the proper perspective regarding them. Paul, the apostle, endorsed *some* recreation in the following statement to his associate and co-worker, Timothy: "For bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come" (I Tim. 4:8). There is profit in it. Exercise provides needed stimulus for unused and dormant muscles. By it the appetite is stimulated and encouraged. From it the mind derives diversion, and there is in it relaxation from the tension and pressure of everyday living. Bodily exercise provides zest for life and extends the span of it. It is profitable.

The profit to be thus derived is, however, "for a little," that is, for a limited time, and in a restricted and small area. Our earthly span is, at best, brief; and that which has to do with the fleshly part of man, extremely temporal. Moreover, the area of fleshly activity is small, affecting only the individual engaging therein. "Godliness" (piety, reverence), however, "is profitable for all things" (matters running out to every direction), and "having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come." Such involves, not only those about us, and the life we now live, but also that which is to come. It is, therefore, vastly more important to practice godliness; and bodily exercise, though useful, must never be permitted to interfere with the obligations which a life of godliness enjoins.

It is possible to engage in the wrong kind of recreation; or, as many do today, place too much emphasis on the right kind. Some prolong their rest until it is indolence. Mere idleness is not exercise. To engage in recreation is to re-create the mind and body with proper and pleasurable pursuits. Moreover, there are some "amusements" classified as

recreation which are really sinful and prohibited activities. Anything wrong must be avoided. Some acts are not in themselves sinful, but they lead to the neglect of proper duties and ought therefore to be avoided. Solomon said, "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich" (Prov. 21:17). When recreation is pursued until it has become one's chief interest in life it is sinful and subversive of the soul. Any activity, questionable in nature, ought to be shunned; and, all suspected amusements must be avoided. It is never safe to follow a course which has proven to be disastrous to others.

These questions we ought to ask regarding any proposed form of recreational activity: (1) Do the Scriptures condemn it? (2) Does it bear on its face the suspicion of evil? (3) Have others found participation therein to be harmful to their spiritual welfare? (4) Does it tend to break down the distinction between the church and the world? (5) Do good people generally approve it? (6) What effect will my participation therein have on others? (7) Will it lead on to the indulgence of bad habits in other areas? (8)

Will it cause me to be associated with people who are not good? (9) Will it take me into places of doubtful propriety? (10) Will my example influence others in a harmful fashion? (11) Can I afford the cost in time and money?

These questions properly answered will enable us to evaluate correctly any given type of pleasure or recreation. We must not allow the world to set up the standards of permissible recreational activity; God's word is the only proper criteria of what is right or wrong. The "retirements" which our Lord occasionally engaged in provide us with a pattern to follow. They were for (a) rest; (b) relaxation; (c) meditation. From his example, we will engage in recreational pursuits (1) only at the proper time (and never when such will interfere with our obligations to God and to our fellow men); (2) only for the proper purposes (and not for fleshly ease or indulgence); and (3) only in the right way (avoiding all sinful or questionable activity). *Bodily exercise is profitable only if it serves to equip us better for life's duties and responsibilities. When it interferes with such, it is sinful, and should be shunned.*

Millennium Mania

(No. 3)

This article and the one last week are not intended to be unkind, but one gets tired of the constant sensationalism and showmanship from those recognized as our nation's religious leaders. Billy Graham has joined these millennial forces within the last two decades in a stronger way. He dedicates at least one night of every "Billy Graham Crusade" to the millennial theme stressing the imminent return of Christ for an earthly purpose. Because of Graham and these others, millennium mania has infiltrated almost every religious group in so-called Christendom.



CHARLES COOK

The Dallas Theological Seminary is presently the "hot bed" for these earthly kingdom ideas. Hal Lindsay is a graduate of that institution, with honors! President John F. Walvoord concludes that in light of the present world situation, and its prevalent signs, the Millennial Kingdom "may be very near."

Have you noticed that no one discusses good old-fashioned Calvinism anymore? It isn't relevant anymore! But tell me, they say, "Are you a Pre-Trib, or a Post-Trib?" And, "How do you stand on the Rapture issue?" "Oh, I know, you're a Secret-Rapture, Pre-Tribulation, Pro-Jewish, Dispensational Pre-Millennialist!" Millennialism is getting to be like the ice cream business, it comes in about 31 different flavors! The whole doctrine is out of control and as the speculations get wilder people will hopefully see that it has no Scriptural foundation. One denominational leader who only dabbles in prophetic speculations wisely observed: "The danger in prophecy is that you think about it all the time and neglect everything important...it leads to spiritual snobbishness...catering to a strong desire to be on the inside" (Time Magazine, January 1973). The millennial advocates have formed a club, and if you do not subscribe to their theories, then you are to be

pitied for your lack of insight. Everyone wants to be "on the inside," so many have accepted the millennial doctrines without question. After all, some of our finest Bible scholars teach these doctrines.

The great disaster in all this is that these prophetic theories are inconsistent with the truth of God's Word. Criticism of them should not be misunderstood! Everything is prime for the second coming and this writer knows of nothing that would prevent Jesus from coming in this generation. Jesus Christ himself said, "I will come again" (John 14:3). The angels at His Ascension said, "He shall return" (Acts 1:11).

The Bible teaches that at Christ's return He will render up His kingdom, the church, to the Father and that will mark the end of time. "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death" (I Corinthians 15:24-26). Notice that "the end" is "when" he will deliver up the kingdom. That the kingdom is not still a future promise, but was established at Christ's first coming and is interchangeable with the word church is clearly seen in Matthew 16:13-19. Jesus said, "I will build my church" in verse 18, and speaking of the same institution in verse 19 called it "the kingdom." The kingdom was to "come with power" (Mark 9:1) and that occurred on the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection when the church was established (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 47).

Furthermore, the Bible teaches that Christ's return will mark the resurrection of *all* the dead. The millennial program calls for two resurrections, one for the dead saints and one a thousand years later for the rest of the dead. Jesus taught, "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in the which *all* that are in the tombs 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 judgment" (John 5:28, 29). And hear Paul declare before Felix "...there shall be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15). Jesus stated that all believers will be rewarded "in the last day." (John 6:40) and that those who reject His Word will

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likewise be judged at the same time, "in the last day" (John 12:48).

According to the Bible, Christ's return will mark the time of the judgment of mankind...not a thousand year extension. Jesus said, "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds" (Matthew 16:27). Again he said, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me

and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38).

It is easy to see that there are sharp differences between the Bible's schedule for the second coming and that on the millennialist's agenda. The Bible teaches:

(1) The Lord will come again.

- (2) The dead will be raised in that day.
 (3) All men will be judged in that day.
 (4) The righteous will go into eternal life.
 (5) The wicked will go into eternal punishment.
 We plead with religious people, and especially religious leaders, to be level-headed about the future. We plead with them to leave speculations out and to abide only by what the Scriptures teach us about end times. — P.O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766.

Some Causes Of Indifference

Is Christ still suffering today, even though some nineteen centuries have passed since his ascension to be glorified by the Father? Indeed he is, and he shall continue to suffer as long as God allows the world to continue. He yet suffers because of our unconcern and indifference toward him and his will.

We have been willing to give a little of our time and money but not ourselves. We are willing to give Christ a part in

our lives but not our lives. The Hebrew writer describes those who "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Hebrews 4:6), and those who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and have counted the blood of the covenant where with they were sanctified an unholy thing, and have done despite unto the Spirit of grace (10:29).

The lukewarm church members of Laodicea literally made Christ sick as he considered their lives (Revelation 3:16). It would thus be very advantageous for us to examine our treatment of the Savior of all mankind. Christ was not indifferent to our needs as he died on the cross for us. Are we so callous and unthankful that we are not willing to dedicate our lives to his service? In so many ways we have become indifferent to his commands. We have become indifferent and lackadaisical with reference to our appearance, our attendance, our worship and so many other areas of our Christian life. But why? Why have we become so indifferent to the needs of Christ, of those around us and of ourselves.

One reason we have become so indifferent is because of apathy. Apathy literally means "no passion" or "a lack of emotion." We have managed to take the true spirit out of religion. It is no longer the most important aspect of our life and is no longer that strong driving force that it once was. Many have developed a "So what?" attitude toward God's commands for righteous living. But Christ was a man of sterling character and compassion and we are to follow his example. There is no room for apathy among God's children for our Father is not an apathetic being.

Another reason for our present-day indifference is the age-old problem of selfishness. The one thing that is behind all sin which causes us to disregard the wishes of others and of God is selfishness. As Eve ate of the forbidden fruit she thought of its taste, its beauty, and how she would be enriched by eating of it, never thinking of its consequences upon herself and her husband. There is an everpresent desire in our world today to satisfy self at all cost. But we must have the attitude of the Good Samaritan. We must realize that Christianity is a religion of sharing (Acts 4:32-35).

A third cause of indifference is just plain laziness. God has always had a problem of laziness in his people and has always condemned it. He does so because the lazy person seldom accomplishes

anything worthwhile. Laziness can eat at our spiritual life like a cancer. The lazy man dreams up all sorts of difficulties and dangers to keep him from work (Proverbs 26:13). We must remember that Christianity is a religion of doing and abounding (I Corinthians 15:58).

Is Christ suffering because of your indifference? Are you indifferent because of apathy, selfishness or laziness? If so, then you must humble yourself in God's sight and ask for his forgiveness. Let us think positively and let us dedicate our lives to him. — P.O. Box 3, Joshua, Texas 76058



RONNIE LOWE

Have you ever thought why preachers of the church of Christ do not call themselves Reverend? We do not wear this title for a specific reason and this reason is Biblical.

Several months ago a man called me to ask about the term Reverend. I had never met this man but I appreciated his thinking enough of me to call and want some information about this religious matter. As we talked about the title Reverend I pointed out that this word only appears one time in the Bible and that in reference to the name of God. The passage is Psalms 111:9. Listen carefully what the verse says: "He (God) sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name." According to Young's Analytical Concordance the word reverend means "to be feared, revered."

Friends, I will assure you that my name is not holy and reverend, but God's is. And there is no preacher living upon the face of this earth whose name is holy and reverend. I challenge any preacher that wears the title Reverend to give me chapter and verse that authorizes him to do so. This passage says that God's name is holy and reverend, not that preachers are to wear the title Reverend. Keep in mind this is the only time the word is found in the Bible. Therefore, to wear the name Reverend is unscriptural and men that do ought to stop.

The person who proclaims the message of God is a preacher or evangelist. Listen carefully to Rom. 10:13-15: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Paul referred to himself as a preacher in I Tim. 2:7 and II Tim. 1:11. We are told in Act 21:8 that Philip was an evangelist. Listen carefully; "And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him." Philip was the one who took the gospel to the people of

The Title Reverend



KENT TYLER

Samaria and also the Ethiopian Eunuch recorded in Acts 8. Paul told Timothy in II Tim. 4:5 to "do the work of an evangelist."

Yes, the terms preacher and evangelist apply to me, but not Reverend. Friends, if your preacher wears the title Reverend, ask him to give you chapter and verse and when he cannot, ask him to quit wearing the title. Preacher and evangelist is scriptural. Reverend is not. This is why preachers of the church of Christ do not wear the title Reverend. — Box 376, Arab, Al. 35016.

Bible Study

The Bible is more readily available today than it has ever been. No legitimate bookstore is without a good stock of Bibles. All public libraries have God's word on their shelves. Most all families own at least one copy of the Bible. One can hardly grow up in this generation without knowing about and having access to the Bible. In light of all these facts, however, God's word is still not read and studied as it should be. The Bible may be on many millions of shelves, yet it is on only a few hearts.

The Christian should know more Bible and should know more about the Bible than anyone else. The Christian is called a disciple (Acts 11:26). The word disciple means "a learner." Therefore the child of God must be a learner. Christ invited men to come to him for rest by saying, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me" (Matthew 11:29). One has no business coming to Christ who is not willing to learn of Christ. Our Lord expects his disciples to continue in his word (John 8:31). Are you meeting up to the Lord's expectations in the realm of Bible knowledge?

Many good things in life can be, and often are, overdone. Bible study and Bible knowledge are not among these things. Won't you determine now to become a more devoted student of the sacred text? — Box 126, Aurora, Missouri 65605.



DALTON KEY



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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Love The Brotherhood

(No. 7)

The Christian has a fourfold obligation of love (1) He is to love God supremely (Matt. 22:36-38). (2) He is to love neighbor as he loves self (Matt. 22:39). (3) He is to love his brethren in the Lord or within the brotherhood (John 13:34-35; I Pet. 2:17; Heb. 13:1). (4) He is to love self (Matt. 22:39). Unless he loves self he will have but little or no desire to save self or soul from an eternal Gehenna. Unless he loves



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

self he will have no measuring stick to love his neighbor (Matt. 22:39). In this current series for WORDS OF TRUTH we are examining the love we are to have for the beautiful brotherhood of believers.

Attention has been focused on both preachers and elders and how they can love the brotherhood at large or be so completely wrapped up in the local situation that they could not care less about what transpires beyond their congregational boundaries. Deacons, Bible teachers and the rank and file of members can fall into these same injurious ruts. Some very realistic questions should help us in deciding whether we love the brotherhood as a whole or just the congregation where we have our membership.

What about the extent of our prayers? Do we pray for the brotherhood as a whole, or just for our own congregation? People can be selfish in prayer as well as in other realms. Perhaps you have heard of the family head who prayed, "Lord, bless me and my wife, our son John and his wife." That was the full extent of his prayerful petition, of his spiritual outreach in prayer. Do we pray just for our preacher, or for all sound preachers? Do we pray just for our membership, or for Christians everywhere? Do we rejoice only when we make congregational advancement, but feel a grain of envy when another congrega-

tion is successful in its planned work? Do we rejoice only when we have a baptism, but feel no corresponding joy at all upon learning of the baptism of one or many far removed from us? Do we feel sad only when we face a congregational tragedy, but feel no pain at all when a neighboring congregation faces an agonizing tragedy in its midst? Are we interested enough in the cause to take and read gospel publications which will inform us of what is going on as we seek to execute the Great Commission in our era? Do we rejoice when another from afar comes our way to share the good news of what is being done in his part of the world, or do we say, "Surely not another missionary report tonight?" Is this latter attitude the real way to show our Commission? Is this the proper way to "love the brotherhood?" Do you think this was the lukewarm attitude that greeted Paul and Barnabas at the end of the first missionary journey? Luke records, "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. And there they abode long time with the disciples" (Acts 14:27-28). Is this how Paul, Barnabas and Titus were received on their way to the Jerusalem Conference and when they arrived in the city of the four hills? The Bible says, "And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of all Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them" (Acts 15:3-4). When Peter finished his report to the Jerusalem saints relative to the reception of the Gentiles into God's church the Bible says in Acts 11:18, "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

Do we really love the brotherhood right around us when the best of gospel meetings and the finest of preaching in lectureships are held within a few miles

of our homes and yet we treat these gospel meetings or lectureships as though they were a contagious disease, and shun all connection with them? Some brethren are allergic to the gospel meetings conducted by their own congregation. I think I know whereof I write, for much of my life has been spent in this very type of work in half of the states of our great land. Others are allergic to all gospel meetings conducted outside their own home congregation. Is this the real way to love the brotherhood? Many preachers and elders are as guilty right here as any of the members are. Maybe that is where the members learned such, i.e., by watching their preachers and elders ignore all gospel meetings in their general area. There are places where I go and stay for a week, and less than 10 per cent of the preachers and elders of neighboring congregations will support such efforts if they have to drive halfway across town or a few miles into the country. Relative to some of these preachers I have aided them in getting the preaching positions they now hold, and that is how they say thanks!!! Maybe such preachers and elders are far busier than I, but if there is a meeting nearby my home and I have a free night, I go. This I have done for all the thirty years I have been preaching the gospel. I could not begin to count the gospel meetings I have later held having received the initial invitation to do so when I was visiting said meetings. This is not my reason for attending, but has been often an added blessing. I do not believe I can ignore such efforts and opportunities to worship God, study his word and fellowship Christians in other places and still love the brotherhood as Peter inculcates for me to do. For thirty years I have found such to produce additional opportunities to worship God, getting to meet new Christian friends or renew old acquaintances and obtaining additional insights into a passage of scripture or a topic of truth that received superb attention in the lesson of the evening. Many of my favorite sermons have come from outlines that I worked up from notes taken during a gospel meeting or a great lectureship.

"Love the brotherhood" means vastly more than

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Words Of Truth

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Acts 26:25

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First Annual Words Of Truth Lectureship

March 1-3
Jasper, Alabama
Thursday, March 1

7:00-7:25 p.m. Singing
7:30 p.m.

Truth and Freedom Hudson Nichols
Friday, March 2

9:00-9:50 a.m.
Back to the Bible Johnny Ramsey

10:00 - 10:50 a.m.
The Worship of the Church ... Hugo McCord

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Lunch Break

1:00 - 1:50 p.m.
The Restoration Movement .. Dabney Phillips

2:00 - 2:50 p.m.
Fellowship William Woodson

3:00 - 3:50 p.m.
Open Forum Bobby Duncan, Moderator

7:00 - 7:25 p.m.
Singing

7:30 p.m.
The Church the Prophets Saw .. Tom Holland
Saturday, March 3

9:00 - 9:50 a.m.
Back to the Bible Johnny Ramsey

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7:00 - 7:25 p.m.
Singing

7:30 p.m.
The Power of Faith V. E. Howard

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A Plea For Help



BOBBY DUNCAN

This plea for help is not the kind you may think. We are not asking for money. We are rather asking for help in completing our WORDS OF TRUTH files. Some time ago we announced on this page that we are trying to put together a complete set of every issue of this paper. When our set is complete, and as time permits, we will index the entire set. We have had requests for copies of articles written several years ago; and in

many cases it simply has not been possible to find the articles. Once our set is complete, and the index is written, it will be a rather simple matter, and relatively inexpensive, to locate and supply copies of articles that have appeared in the paper.

Very much of what our late beloved brother Gus Nichols wrote was printed in WORDS OF TRUTH, and nowhere else. We need your help in locating and helping us to obtain back issues. The response to the earlier announcement was good, and we now have much more than we had when we started. Several have been kind enough to bring or send old issues to us. Just this past week we were given a bundle of some of the very early issues.

Please look over the following information concerning our needs, and see if perhaps you might be able to help us. If you have a stack of WORDS OF TRUTH that you would be willing to give us, but do not want to take the time to check the dates, we would

be happy to receive the entire bundle. We especially need the following dates:

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1963: Dec. 27 | 1970: Mar. 27 |
| 1964: Jan. 31 | Mar. 20 |
| Mar. 20 | 1971: Feb. 12 |
| May 29 | Aug. 6, 13, and 20 |
| June 5 | Dec. 24 (?) |
| July 24 and 31 | 1972: Jan. 7 and 14 |
| Aug. 7 | May 12 (?) |
| Nov. 6 | July 28 |
| Dec. 25 (?) | Sept. 22 |
| 1965: We have less than half the issues for this year. | Dec. 28(?) |
| 1966: Jan. 21 | 1975: Mar. 21 |
| Mar. 18 and 25 | July 11 |
| Apr. 1, 15, and 29 | 1973: Mar. 2 and 16 |
| May 6 and 13 | Nov. 23 |
| June 24 | 1974: May 2 |
| July 1 and 8 | Aug. 30 |
| Dec. 23(?) | |
| 1969 Dec. 19 | |

You will note a question mark (?) beside some of the dates. This indicates that we are not sure that an issue was published on that date, though the date itself was a scheduled date for publication. If you have information that would settle this question, we would appreciate your sharing such information with us.

Zora M. Fike — Our Mother

[Editor's Note: The following was written by the children of the late brother and sister Avery Fike, and was read at the funeral of sister Fike. Brother Avery Fike, faithful gospel preacher in Alabama, and for many years an elder of the Sixth Avenue Church in Jasper, preceded his wife in death by about sixteen years. We feel the following brief tribute is worth sharing with our readers.]

This information was told by our father, Avery Fike, prior to his death about 16 years ago. To our knowledge this has never before been told publicly.

In the spring of 1921, mother and daddy moved to Jasper from a rural community called Liberty Hill in South Walker County.

Mother and daddy were faithful members of the church. There was not a church in Jasper at this time and they became depressed, and were considering moving back to the farm, or, requesting work in Cordova, where the late brother Gus Nichols preached.

Under these circumstances mother said, "Avery, surely we can find one or two Christians and worship here in Jasper. I don't want you to give up your job, or move back to the farm. We can have a true church here."

As a result of the remark made, one or two other Christians were found and they began to assemble each Lord's day. They did not move; nor did daddy quit his job. Neither did they transfer to a place where the church was already established. Instead, they met from house to house and worshipped regularly.

As a result of mother's suggestion, we think of her as a small pebble dropped into a pool. The pebble soon disappears from sight, but the waves caused by the dropping of this pebble continue to grow in size and magnitude until they are stopped only by the banks of eternity.

The pebble has disappeared, but the waves it created will continue until time shall be no more. We can see the wisdom of the almighty in withholding the rewards of the righteous 'til a final judgment can be made, when time has ceased and the waves of influence of the godly can only be stopped by eternity. We remember the waves of mother's faith and fidelity growing wider and wider as time goes on.

Love The Brotherhood

Continued from page 1

loving just the home congregation and its program of work and nothing outside the congregational boundaries. Those who restrict their total brand of Christianity to the local congregation and never show an interest outside the same are still novices to the great trio of words, "Love the brotherhood."—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063

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 words, sanctify, sanctification, holy, and holiness are all related, and derive from the same root. In Hebrew the word is *kadash*, in Greek, *hagiazō*. The basic meaning of these terms is to set apart, to make holy. This significance is to be clearly seen in our word *sacred*—something dedicated to holy purposes. While it is often assumed that the words sanctify, sanctification, holiness, and holy represents moral and spiritual qualities, such is not the primary and basic significance thereof; these qualities result from the manner of life which proceeds from such separation and dedication; and, when such is affirmed of them, it is only because the cause is put for the effect.

The root idea is simply and merely separation.

Sanctification is not to be mistaken for *justification*. Justification is the affirmation, on the part of God, of the right standing between a formerly alienated person and himself. It does not, of itself, indicate character or conduct. It simply suggests that the person justified is in an approved relationship with God. The word itself does not show whether such a person has always been innocent, or has been pardoned. It simply denotes the present relationship of the individual to the Father.

Sanctification is not *sinlessness*.

An induction of passages where it appears clearly indicates that such a concept cannot be claimed for it. It is affirmed that the Father sanctified the Son (John 10:36), and the Son sanctified himself (John 17:19). It is, of course, clear from this that the word does not mean to become sinless, since neither ever sinned. The meaning, consistent with the radical significance of the word, is that our Lord was set apart by the Father (and to which action he was also a party) for the work which it was designed for him to do. Moreover, Christians are sanctified by the word of truth, the gospel (John 17:17; I Pet. 1:22-25); and the church was sanctified by the washing of the water and the word (Eph. 5:26). By this it is meant that the church is composed of those who are set apart by the Lord through the agency of water and the word—an expression involving faith, repentance, confession, and baptism in water for the remission of sins. The church in Corinth was by Paul described as "sanctified" (I Cor. 1:2); yet, the disciples of that congregation were very far indeed from being in a sinless state.

The adjective *hagios*, from the same root as the word sanctification, and often translated *holy*, is used of God (I Pet. 1:16), the angels (Mark 8:38), the city of Jerusalem (Matt. 27:53), the Holy place (Matt. 24:15), the covenant with Abraham (Luke 1:72), the Scriptures (Rom. 1:2). It follows, therefore, that the basic meaning of the word is separation to holy purposes; dedication. It is a situation which Christians are to maintain for themselves: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you" (II Cor. 6:17).

Sanctification is not *some mysterious, inwrought condition accomplished through the independent agency of the Holy Spirit*. This, too, is clearly apparent from what is affirmed of sanctification in the Scriptures. Things, places, as well as persons, are said to have been holy, sanctified, and put in a special relationship to God. Among the *places* thus designated were the camp of Israel (Deut. 23:14), the hill of Zion (Psalm 2:6), the ground where God appeared to Moses (Ex. 3:5), the city of Jerusalem (Neh. 11:11), the tabernacle (Ex. 29:43), the temple (I Kings 9:3), the king's chapel (Amos 7:13) the altar (Ex. 29:36), gifts and offerings (Ex. 28:38; 29:27), a field dedicated to God (Lev. 27: 14, 16).

Such also was affirmed of *times*: the sabbath day (Gen. 2:3), a day set apart for a fast (Joel 1:14), the fiftieth year (Lev. 25:10).

Persons are said to have been made holy (sanctified): the firstborn of the family (Ex. 13:2), priests (Ex. 28:41), the people of Israel (Deut. 7:6), the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 1:5). Persons, places, times, and things were sanctified, set apart, and thus made holy by ceremonial cleansing (Judg. 17:3; II Sam. 8:11; II Kings 10:20; I Cor. 18:11).

It is important to remember that the various words used to indicate the state of sanctification mean that the place, thing, time or person thus sanctified, was set apart and put in a special relationship to God. The sabbath day was holy because God rested therein; the mountain of the Lord was holy because his house (the temple) was there; the vessels in which the priests offered incense were holy because they were used in the service of God (Num. 16:38).

Obviously, sinlessness is not a characteristic which may be affirmed of places, of days, and of things!

Holiness (sanctification) is a status which we may, indeed are commanded, to attain: "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Pet. 1:16). The verb is an ingressive aorist, the meaning being, "Enter into the state of holiness." As children of God, we are (1) chosen to be holy (II Thess. 2:13); (2) called to be holy (Rom. 1:7); (3) reconciled in one body to be holy (Col. 1:22). Holiness is thus associated with the divine calling. "As he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living" (I Pet. 1:15). Holiness is

attained through obedience to the truth, and continued faithfulness therein: "Sanctify them through thy truth: Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." What a marvelous affirmation! Observe that every word, but one, (against) is a monosyllable, and its significance is known to all. The Psalmist felt that the word was sufficient help in avoiding the allurements of Satan; the view that an independent ministry, apart from the word, by the Spirit is necessary, would have drawn no sympathy from him!

We sanctify ourselves (I Pet. 1:15), God is said to sanctify us (I Thess. 5:23), we are sanctified by the word (John 17:17), and by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:16), all of which means much the same. We do it by utilizing the word which God, through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit, gives us to acquire a life of separation from the world. We are taught, in the sacred writings, to yield our members to righteousness (right-doing), with a view to sanctification—that is, in order that sanctification may result. Christ is made unto us sanctification; he is the ground and occasion for it as he also is of justification (I Cor. 1:30). Sanctification is necessary in order to salvation: Follow after holiness (which is sanctification), "without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). A sanctified life is simply a dedicated life.

Preach The Word

In an article appearing in *Christianity Today* entitled "Preaching With Power and Purpose" by Lloyd Perry, some very accurate statements are made concerning ineffective preaching and reasons for it. Though *Christianity Today* is a denominational paper, many of the points made in the article are scriptural and show why the preaching done by some in the Lord's church today is ineffective. Mr. Perry stated,

"We have imported the idioms of the world into our music, programming, finances, fellowship, and preaching. We play down the great scriptural truths about man and his sins. We don't declare the dichotomy that exists between the kingdom of this world and the Kingdom of God.

"We must preach the mighty works of God, not the opinions or ideals. Preaching is a sacred trust. . . The goal is not to catch the spirit of the age, but to correct it with God's truth."

The idea set forth in the above quotations is that we have neglected the Word of God in our preaching. Notice the statement that "preaching is a sacred trust." The sacred charge is to "preach the Word" (II Tim. 4:2). The greatest need of the modern pulpit is expository preaching. Expository preaching is primarily concerned with the exposition of scripture. In his book *Sermon Design and Delivery* brother Tom Holland states that, "expository preaching develops a people who are 'rooted and grounded' in the Word of God." This kind of preaching is the best way to fulfill the charge God has given us.

The main point is, however, that we must preach the Word. The reason is very simple. The word of God is given by inspiration and thoroughly furnishes us



RON HARPER

unto all good works (II Tim. 3:16, 17). We are saved by obedient faith and that faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17). ". . . it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21).

We preachers must be careful what we preach. The charge is to preach the word. We have noticed a dangerous trend on the part of some who claim to be gospel preachers. We have gone to hear some of the "outstanding preachers" in recent years and heard stories and illustrations instead of the word of God. When the number of scriptures a well known "preacher" quotes can be counted on one hand with fingers left over, the charge has been abandoned. An occasional illustration to help bring out the meaning of a passage is in order but some have gone overboard with the matter and illustrate their stories with an occasional scripture.

There are many things wrong with our world. Preachers can best do their part to change the course of the world by going back to the Bible. There are many who are in the church that are starving to death spiritually. We have one of the most awesome responsibilities before us to feed them with the Bread of Life. This can never be done by sermons that consist of death-bed tales and emotional stories. God's word is the Bread of Life and it must be the center of our preaching. In this world of darkness we can help light the way by preaching the Bible. The members of the body of Christ will have greater spiritual depth when we begin to feed them with the Bread of Life. By preaching the word we can impress them with the need to study God's word and live according to its precepts. Then we will begin to see greater lasting results from our preaching. The church will grow and be made up of people who are committed to serving their God. Let us say as the apostle Paul, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (I Cor. 1:23).

Anyone can learn a few stories to tell that get

Continued on page 4

“What Mean Ye By This Service?”

“And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service” (Exodus 12:26)? Because of the hardness of the heart of Pharaoh, the children of Israel were still held captive in the land of Egypt. Now the Lord God was to bring yet one more plague upon the Egyptians, that was, the death of the firstborn of both man and beast. Moses and Israel were instructed as to the Passover and the details



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

of their duties in this, the beginning of a great annual feast which was to be observed throughout their

generations. God was to spare his children from the awful fate that awaited Egypt. Jehovah would also deliver his people from bondage. They were to observe and remember the night when death passed through the land and they were spared. In the new land which God would give to the Israelites, they were to teach their children the real meaning of the Passover when asked the question, “What mean ye by this service?” Later, when God gave the Law to Israel through his servant Moses, they were to learn his commandments and teach the same to their children. The parents were to be able to answer properly the question raised by their sons, “What meaneth the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you” (Deuteronomy 6:20)?

The duty of teaching children the ways of the Lord is the basic responsibility of the parents (Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Proverbs 20:6). The apostle Paul wrote: “And, ye fathers, provoke not your

children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). The church and the Christian schools can assist in this matter. And, the parents should utilize such organizations in the fulfilling of their responsibility. Fathers, mothers, are you able to answer intelligently and scripturally the questions raised by your sons and daughters which deal with subjects relating to the Lord’s Supper, baptism, instrumental music, acceptable worship and the Christian life? Are you as parents studying the Bible that you will be able to answer when those children ask, “What mean ye by this service?” Are you carrying those children to the Bible study periods on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening? Are your children in attendance for all the periods of worship? Do you encourage them to read the Bible, religious periodicals by our brethren, and good Bible-related books? If you cannot answer their questions today, don’t really expect them to be able to answer your grandchildren tomorrow.—809 Perry Store Rd., Opp, Al. 36467

Four Vital Lessons From Numbers

DALE C. FLOWERS

Paul wrote that the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ (Galatians 3:24). The book of Numbers has much to teach man if he is to be acceptable to God. The forty year history covered in Numbers carries the Israelites from Sinai to Moab. These tempestuous years are filled with examples of rebellion, murmuring, and unbelief. In them we find numerous object lessons for the saint today. Paul’s words, “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God” (Romans 11:22) are vividly illustrated by the record of the tragic rebellion, presumption and faithlessness of Israel.

Numbers teaches man that God means exactly what he says. “And Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord, when they offered strange fire before the Lord in the wilderness of Sinai” (Numbers 3:4). God has given specific instructions concerning worship. Nadab and Abihu substituted their ideas for God’s specific command. God’s anger at such presumptuousness is vividly demonstrated by the taking of their lives. This incident teaches the saint the tragic and eternal danger of replacing God’s specific commands with man’s desires and ideas.

Numbers 16 is God’s demonstration of the result of man’s rebellion against God’s appointed authorities. Korah and his cohorts were “famous in the congregation, men of renown (vs. 2). They charged Moses, God’s delegated authority, with taking too much upon himself and of making himself a prince over them (vs. 3, 14). They presumptuously violated God’s command that only the sons of Aaron offer before the Lord (vs. 30-40). This rebellion against God’s delegated authorities cost the lives of both them and their followers (vs. 30). Let all today who follow the rebellion against God’s delegated authorities (Apostles, husbands, government, elders) learn well the lesson of Korah.

Numbers 14 records one of the more famous incidents of unbelief. Here God has recorded the history of Israel’s refusal to enter the promised land. This sin of unbelief was demonstrated by Israel’s failure to trust in God’s power, promises and purpose. By listening to ten pessimists they demonstrated that they did not believe that God could

do what he said he would. For this cause God decreed that they spend the remainder of forty years in the wilderness—one year for each day the spies sent in the land (Numbers 14:26-39). God has offered man an eternal home in Heaven, physical blessings and spiritual blessings both now and eternally, in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). God has promised to “do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20). When saints fail to act upon God’s commands because they doubt success, they are guilty of the same sin committed by Israel at Kadesh. When man depends upon man’s strength, intelligence, plans and means, he falls short.

Numbers 21 records God’s reaction to the constant murmuring of Israel by the sending of fiery serpents to plague the people as they traveled by the Red Sea. Israel found murmuring in the face of difficulty much easier than courageous faith. Therefore God taught them that things could be worse. Israel lacked patience in time of trouble. They were being tested and came up wanting. Before we condemn too quickly let us examine ourselves. How do we react to problems and difficulty? God gave them a cure for the

snakebite, but he did not remove the snake. God has given us a cure for sin, but he has not removed the sin. Instead he requests that we humble ourselves, cast our cares upon him, because he cares for us (I Peter 5:6-7). In the face of problems the saint must remember he has God who cares. Israel forgot this, blamed God for their troubles and suffered as a result.

In these four object lessons the “schoolmaster” teaches man the eternal dangers of substitution for what God has specified; rebellion against God’s designated authority; failure to trust in God’s power and promises; and the consequences of murmuring. God will not tolerate such; and it is past time that saints learned this lesson! In each of the four warnings to those who would be faithful today. God, in Numbers, illustrates his goodness to the faithful and his severity to the faithless. God has made his offer and demonstrated the consequences. The choice is ours. Which do you choose?—Route 2, Box 307 X, Westmoreland, Tn. 37186.

Be Ye Honest

TONY LAWRENCE

Within the last few months, more than ever, I have heard reports of members of the church who are completely dishonest. I am not only referring to the man which sits on the back pew, but the man who stands in the pulpit and the men who oversee the work of the church. We pride ourselves in being simple New Testament Christians, “speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent where the Bible is silent,” and “following in the Old Paths.” We are making a mockery of the church and making ourselves hypocrites. As soon as the “Amen” is said to the closing prayer we rush to our cars and speed home breaking the law only to teach our children that honesty is not required in dealing with the government. We tell “little white lies” to keep from having to show extra income on our tax returns. But what about all of this? Numbers 32:23 states, “...your sins will find you out.” We laugh and say, “We sure pulled a good one over Uncle Sam this year.” And we think we have gotten away with it; but we haven’t. The very next day little Johnny brings home a note from school saying he was caught cheating on a spelling test. We wonder where we went wrong. How did we fail, and where did he learn such a thing? The children learn it from us! If you do not keep your word to it’s fullest, it is very unlikely your children will. If you cheat on your taxes, it is very likely that your child

will also learn to cheat. What a bad way for our sins to find us out this is!

There was a time when the members of the churches of Christ were highly respected, because when they said something it could be counted on. James 5:12 says, “let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay.” In other words, say what you mean and mean what you say.

If we knowingly misrepresent cars, horses, term papers, earnings, or anything in order to profit ourselves dishonestly we are doing nothing more than lying. When we say something, whether it is on paper or proceeds from the mouth, it ought to be the full truth. We as Christians have the duty and responsibility to see that we are honest in every area. Read Philippians 4:8, 9 and obey those things; because, if we do not, Revelation 21:8 already has our sentence on the day of judgment. That is, we will have our “part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.” Do not be surprised if you see some of the preachers, elders, deacons, and teachers there receiving their punishment. James 3:1 teaches that these will receive the greater punishment. There is a remedy that works to defeat dishonesty, at least in our own lives, and that is, read and study the Bible to know how to live; and most important, *live as Christ would live.*—Rt. 1 Box 110, Indian Mound, TN 37079

Preach The Word

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people all excited for a short period of time. It takes time to study to deliver Biblical sermons. Yet that is what we must have. May God help us to be preachers and not story-tellers. PREACH THE WORD.—1501 6th Ave., Jasper, Al. 35501



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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NUMBER 10

Seven Deadly Sins - Pride

Within the next few weeks I will be writing articles concerning envy, gluttony, impurity, anger, slothfulness and covetousness. In this article today, I will be discussing pride. These subjects are classified as deadly because of what they will do to a person's life and also to the church when there are members who are committing these sins. Sin will always pay off in the second death which is the eternal separation from God (Romans 6:23; James 1:15).



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

What are some reasons why people are proud? The first reason comes from one's social standing. Some people have a "tilted-chin" attitude and feel that they cannot be approached by the normal man. James speaks against being overly concerned with attaining a high social standing in chapter two; and in verse nine he says, "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors." The second reason why many suffer from pride is because of their intellectual attainments. Some people feel they are superior to the average man, and know too much to associate with the majority of people. Paul teaches against such thinking when he writes, "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness" (I Corinthians 3:18-19). There are others who are proud of their material wealth and disregard God. We must understand that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," and that God is a giver of all that we have (Psalms 24:1; I Corinthians 10:26; James 1:17).

Pride is an abomination to the Lord (Proverbs 16:5).

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18). Pride and ruin ride in the same saddle. Pride brings misery because no man with excess pride is completely happy. The person with excess pride lacks gratitude and contentment. Excess pride also prevents friendships. A person who is suffering from pride hates superiors, scorns inferiors and allows no equals. Pride creates strife. "Only by pride cometh contention..." (Proverbs 13:10). The ugly sin of pride closes the door to reconciliation, because the proud person will not forgive or ask for forgiveness. God opposes the proud. James writes, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6).

A great biblical example of pride is exhibited by the egotistical Pharisee in Luke chapter eighteen. The Pharisee felt that he was better than the publican; and he was telling God what he did, as though God did not already know. This is characteristic of man suffering

from the sin of pride—he makes himself out to be God and will resist the true teaching of God.

Paul has the answer for pride in Philippians 2:5-8: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Won't you, dear reader, repent of the ugly sin of pride so you can say as Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).—P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al 35580

Deceit of The Rankest Order

In an excellent editorial of this paper, the editor pointed out a number of gross doctrinal errors implanted in the NIV of the Bible. I wholeheartedly agree with each and every statement set forth in brother Duncan's editorial. I have had several discussions with some of my brethren concerning the "modern versions," and to my surprise, they do not seem very concerned about the subtle, but rank deceit contained in these volumes. Brother Duncan pointed out one gross doctrinal error I would like to deal with



JOHN G. SHAVER

in particular, and that is the insertion of "sinful nature" for "flesh" in Romans the eighth chapter. The Calvinistic theology of the NIV "text changers" jumps from the pages to entrap the unsuspecting reader. The doctrine of hereditary total depravity slithers as a slimy serpent to implant its deadly venom in the unprepared student.

This false doctrine of babies being born in sin has never been part of God's word, and it never will be regardless of how many "perversions" are printed. Many honest and sincere people, as brother Duncan pointed out, have been led to believe that since the fall of Adam every living soul is born with a corrupt nature: or in other words, every person on earth is born under condemnation of heaven. Regarding this damnable false theory, one denominational creed states that all persons are "born positively inclined to evil; and therefore are under just condemnation to

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Words Of Truth

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"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness"

— Acts 26:25

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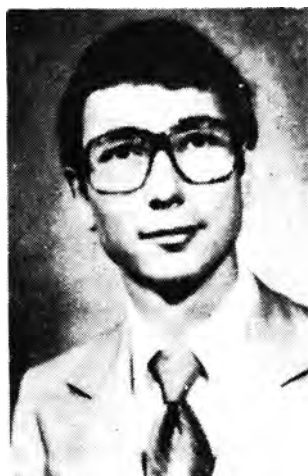
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Do You Know Who Paid Your Ransom?

The Christ said, "...whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:26-28). In the aforementioned verses, our Lord is contrasting the kingdoms of this world with his kingdom. Men in the kingdoms of the world rule over those who are under them. On the other



MICHAEL D. STONE

hand, those in the Lord's kingdom (the church) are to be servants. In the political kingdoms, the great are served by the masses. In the Lord's church, those who serve the masses are great. What a contrast!

Our Lord was a fine example of this great principle which so many in the church today seem to misunderstand. If anyone deserved to be served, our Lord did. He was worthy of the service of the masses. Yet, he took upon himself a term of humiliation—"the Son of Man." This shows that he was both human and divine. To understand the significance of this, we must understand a basic fact. Our Lord came to give, not to take. He gave so much for us. Those, today, who are always taking and being served are not like our Lord. He came to give his life a ransom for us all. At the time of our Lord, wealthy people would often buy a slave for the sole purpose of setting that slave free. The price thus paid was called the ransom price.

Most of the world are slaves to the master of sin. Our Lord has purchased us with the great price of his life. Therefore, the ransom price has been paid and there is no longer a need for us to be a servant of the master of sin. If you, my friend, are living in sin, you do not know him who paid your ransom.—4763 Skyline Drive, Ahsland, Ky. 41101

Moses E. Lard, one of the great preachers and writers during early restoration history, published for several years what was known simply as "Lard's Quarterly." In December of 1863 he wrote briefly of some of the struggles of his early childhood. His father, a poor man who owned no house nor any land upon which to build one, died, leaving a wife and six children. The mother of these poor children did her best to keep her family together, but times were hard. Lard wrote as follows:



BOBBY DUNCAN

"At length the painful fear was fully realized that as a family we could no longer be kept together. The day of separation at length came. To us all death would have been a relief. Thinly clad and poorly shod we stood round the humble hearth for the last time. Our mother's heart was breaking. As my brother and self stood beneath the little cabin eaves, just ready to take leave of the only objects on earth dear to us, and thus close the saddest scene of our lives, my mother said: 'my dear boys, I have nothing to give you but my blessing and these two little books.' Her soul was breaking and she could say no more. She then drew from her bosom two small testaments; and as her tears were streaming and lips quivering, she screamed as if it were her last, and that family was forever broken on earth. Yet, gentle reader, think us not poor as we turned from that mean abode. We bore with us a Christian mother's blessing and the precious words of Jesus. *We were wealthy boys.*"

Secular history records no more tender or touching scene than that described in the foregoing words. By ordinary standards it would seem ridiculous to conclude such a description by saying, "we were wealthy boys." But brother Lard did not measure wealth by ordinary standards; and neither was he using irony when he made the statement. He was dead serious and one hundred per cent correct in pronouncing wealthy those who have a Christian mother's blessing and the precious words of Jesus.

In this day when there is so much affluence, and in which wealth is measured in terms of material possessions, we would all do well to pause long enough to ponder the question, "What is true wealth?" Jesus had some things to say about "True riches"; and these he placed in contrast with what he referred to as "the unrighteous mammon" (Luke 16:11). Unfortunately there are many men and women who wear the name of Christ that are far more caught up in the spirit of this materialistic age in which we live than they ever will be in any effort to instill principles of truth and righteousness in the minds of their children. Nothing is too good for our children. We want for them the very finest food, clothing, medical care, education, etc. that it is possible for us to give them. This is not wrong. But the child whose parents provide all these and neglect the spiritual training of the child is a poor and pitiable child.

A Christian mother's blessing, and the precious words of Jesus—What an heritage! If Moses E. Lard had been the son of a financially well-to-do man and woman who were more interested in his physical and social welfare than anything else, the story of his life

"Wealthy Boys"

would no doubt, be recorded in words quite different. Perhaps there would have been no mention of hunger and pain, or sadness because of the dissolution of family. But perhaps he never would have preached the glorious gospel...never would have baptized his thousands...never would have written the rich gospel truth that came from his pen. Perhaps his name would have been found in the social register and would have been listed in Dunn and Bradstreet. But would it have been written in the Lamb's Book of Life?

A century (minus one year) has now passed since the body of Moses E. Lard was born back to St. Joseph, Missouri and deposited in Mother Earth. There is no way that the mother who gave him her blessing and a copy of the New Testament could possibly have known the impact the work of her son would have on the cause of the Lord. How thankful those of us who are still living a century after his death should be for the mother of this great man!

The mother of Moses E. Lard, a century and a half ago, tried and failed to keep her poor family together. But as we look back upon the sad dissolution of that family a hundred and fifty years later, who would call that poor mother a failure? A Christian mother's blessing, and the precious words of Jesus! These were, indeed, two wealthy boys.

ARE YOUR CHILDREN WEALTHY?

Some Lessons From Genesis

The book of Genesis begins where no other book begins. It begins with the beginning of all things on this earth. In the book of Genesis we have the true account of the creation. If we want to know the Who, How, Where and What, of the creation we do not need to go far in our research, because we have the Bible.

The book of Genesis lays the foundation for the rest of the Bible. The foundation of God's sending his Son is in the book of Genesis (Genesis 3:15; Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:8; Galatians 3:16; Galatians 4:21-31). Many of the things that follow Genesis could not be fully understood without this foundation book. Try to read the seventh chapter of Hebrews without the book of Genesis. The foundation of this chapter, which is about Melchisedec, is found in the book of Genesis. Turn to the fourth chapter of Galatians and try to understand fully what is being said and why, without the book of Genesis. We all can see that the foundation of God's plan is found at the beginning in the book of Genesis.

The book of Genesis has many valuable lessons we can learn and should learn. Let's study some lessons found in Genesis.

The first lesson is that the Bible is a book that deals with facts. From the very first verse of Genesis 1 the Bible deals with facts. The Bible does not assume



BOBBY WOOD

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).

"Who is Satan? Where did he come from?" What is to be his destiny?"

The name Satan means "an adversary," and, by implication, the enemy of God. He is also called the devil, which means *slanderer*, Apollyon which means *destroyer* and *deceiver*, which describes his purpose and work. He is also identified, in the scriptures, as the angel of the bottomless pit (Rev. 9:11), prince of the world (John 12:31), a liar, and a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44), and the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). He was an angel who, because he was puffed up with pride (I Tim. 3:6), was cast out of heaven (II Peter 2:4; Jude 6, Rev. 12:7-9), and became the leader of all fallen angels who were also in rebellion against God. Quaint old Alexander Cruden,

who though mentally depressed and under the heavy burden of mental illness much of his life nevertheless gave the world an invaluable tool of Bible study which has been a blessing to millions, penned the following excellent, and in my view, correct summary of biblical teaching regarding the evil one:

"By collecting the passages where Satan, or the devil is mentioned, it may be observed that he fell from Heaven with all his company; that God cast him down from thence for the punishment of his pride; that, by his envy, and malice, sin, death, and all other evils came into the world; that, by the permission of God, he exercises a sort of government in the world over his subordinates, over apostate angels like himself; that God makes use of him to prove good men, and chastise bad ones; that he is a lying spirit in

the mouth of false prophets, seducers, and heretics; that it is he, or some of his, that torment or possess men; that inspire them with evil designs, as he did David, when he suggested to him to number his people; to Judas, to betray his Lord and Master; and to Ananias and Sapphira, to conceal the price of their field. That he roves full of rage like a roaring lion, to tempt, to betray, to destroy, and to involve us in guilt and wickedness; that his power and malice are restrained within certain limits, and controlled by the will of God. In a word, that he is an enemy of God and man, and uses his utmost endeavors to rob God of his glory, and men of their souls."

His destiny is the "lake of fire" for ever and ever which he will share with all the wicked of the race, in torment, never ceasing (Matt. 25:41).

"Love The Brotherhood"

(No. 8)

"Love the brotherhood" is located in I Peter 2:17. It was inculcated by one who practiced what he preached. Peter preached love for brethren as we learn from I Peter 1:22 and 4:8. He practiced the same within his lovely life. This admonition is to be preached and practiced by twentieth century Christians just as it was by first century Christians.



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

Mention was made in a previous article how that some elders refuse to allow their local preacher to preach in more than one or two gospel meetings annually, unless he wished to do so during his vacation time. Since writing that I learned of a congregation who even frowns on their local preacher's attending area gospel meetings. They expect him to be on the job or at least on call day and night locally seven days a week and seven nights a week. Yet that same congregation wants the neighboring congregations to come in and greatly swell their crowds when they have a gospel meeting. If all congregations felt as they do, there would be no preachers free to do the preaching in such nor any from other congregations with a free night to attend. Such is an utter repudiation of Peter's ardent admonition that we "love the brotherhood."

The rank and file of members may suffer from spiritual myopia—a shortsighted condition where they see nothing and sense nothing but the local congregation at work. Nothing done by the brotherhood as a whole interests them; only what goes on at home stirs their interest and arouses their concern and with many there is but little stirring and arousing even in this restricted area of congregational concern.

Some years back and while working with another congregation a man once said in regard to my meeting and lectureship work, "You are gone too much." But gone where? Doing what? To fish and hunt far more hours each week than one puts into the Lord's work as this man did? To visit with relatives two or three days each week as some members do every week-end? To idle away twenty or thirty hours every week just drinking coffee and spending the time of the day with

every passer-by? There is a great big GO in the Great Commission of both Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15. One's going needs to be determined by what he does when he does go. It needs to be determined by the spiritual accomplishments of the trip. By preaching in some ten to twelve meetings per year and about that many lectureships, I double the number of sermons I would preach by being with the local congregation 52 Sundays per year. Also the Sundays I am gone gives the local congregation an opportunity to hear someone else that will have a different approach that might be peculiar to me. Such is true with all other preachers who combine meeting work with their local work. Any good that is done in these meetings and lectures is made possible by a splendid congregation that loves more than just the work at home. Few congregations are as generous along these lines as the one for which I preach in Ripley, Tennessee, and I rise up and call them blessed for being of such disposition. It is very, very seldom that any member there will say to me, "You are gone too much from the work here."

We can show our love for the brotherhood and lost souls by means of the religious pen. Most local sermons, unless broadcast or printed and sent out, benefit only a relatively few people each Sunday morning and night. But an article in one of our papers such as WORDS OF TRUTH, the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, THE SPIRITUAL SWORD, etc., may reach multiplied thousands. A tract may reach hundreds of thousands. A script for THE INTERNATIONAL GOSPEL HOUR may reach multiplied millions if it is chosen by Brother Howard to be used. I have had the privilege the last five years

in writing some 1,000 scripts for him or an average of some 200 per year. A book may benefit people long after the author has left earthly scenes. Today I have spent time in my study with books written by men long in their graves yet their works continue to do much in the way of current good. I have the privilege each week or writing the SENIOR QUARTERLY in the GOSPEL ADVOCATE series of lessons. This medium alone reaches some 20,000 to 25,000 high school and college age students each Lord's Day. Brother Noel Merideth writes the Adult Quarterly now. Brother Guy N. Woods wrote it for thirty years. This medium alone will reach way over 10,000 people each Lord's Day. Think of such an audience of readers or students each Lord's Day morning. If you are ever prone to say of religious penman, "He spends too much time in writing" or "Does your writing interfere with your church work?" why not go a couple of steps further by asking, "Writing what?" and "reaching whom?" I thank the God whose I am and whom I serve on a continuous basis for the good congregation at Ripley, Tennessee, that realizes something about the potential of the pen of religious journalism. It is a way that they and I can exhibit our love for the brotherhood and for the lost of this world. Such daily literary efforts are designed to reach souls both locally and in distant fields as well.

Let us resolve to "love the brotherhood" in attitude and action, in motive and mission, in language and life. Such is why Peter left this thrilling trio of words (three words also in the original Greek) within Holy Writ.—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063

Price Increase Announced

We regret to announce what all of us know is inevitable - an increase in subscription rates for WORDS OF TRUTH. This is the first increase in subscription rates in nearly three years (May 1, 1976). Since that time there have been three increases in postal rates, two increases in the legal minimum wage, and six increases in paper prices. During this time also the size of the paper has been slightly increased. We believe also that there is one area in which some noticeable improvements have been made. We refer to the fact that we now have the privilege of proof-reading the paper after the type has

been set. This enables us to eliminate most of the errors in typesetting.

We are confident that you, our readers, appreciate the paper and understand the necessity of this price increase. Beginning with the month of April the yearly subscription price will be \$5.20 for fifty-two issues. Churches which pay for subscriptions on a monthly basis will be billed at the rate of ten cents per copy. This is still less than the price of a postcard; and we feel it is one of the biggest bargains you will ever find.

Deceit of The Rankest Order

Continued from page 1

eternal ruin, without defense or excuse" (J.M. Pendleton, Art. 3, Church Manual Designed for Baptist Church). It is affirmed that those who sin, and there are none who do not sin, bear evidence that all men have a corrupt nature. According to this theory, if Adam had a corrupt nature he must have inherited it from his father. Now, since Adam was "a son of God," that would make God corrupt in nature. Can one imagine such a doctrine?

A question we must ask and answer is, "Can one inherit the sins of Adam?" Adam, the first man, sinned through temptation just like men sin today. He was tempted just as men are tempted today through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life (Gen. 3:1-6). Our Lord was tempted in like manner, but did not sin (Matt. 4:1-11). Adam and Eve, deceived and misled by Satan, disobeyed God and became the first sinners. The first man and woman, through their own choice and volition became the first sinners. Their sins were not inherited because one cannot inherit sin from God. Nor were they predestined or foreordained by an unchangeable decree of God that they should become sinners. For instance, if they were foreordained and unchangeably predestined by God to sin against God, then they were irresponsible, and God was responsible for their sin. According to this false theory, if they had not sinned, they would have changed the unchangeable decree of God; and since they did sin they did so without choice in the matter. Therefore, God is responsible for sin in the world. Ridiculous! This is a false premise resulting in false conclusions.

Adam was a creature of personal will and volition, and so is every human being on the face of this earth. Adam acquired his sins by choice and not by inheritance. Adam and Eve had a choice in the garden. Refuse to eat and obey, or eat and disobey. They chose the latter. It has already been shown that Adam could not inherit sin from his father, nor were his sins transmitted to his children. The doctrine of "sinful nature" asserts that every child born into this world, is totally depraved, wholly sinful by nature, having inherited the sins of his parents, and even the sins of Adam. The false theory assumes that Adam's nature was corrupted by sin, and all men inherit a corrupted and "Sinful nature" of Adam. We must understand that the law of procreation, the law of birth, is from God and for the perpetuity of the race. Could one in the wildest stretch of the imagination believe that God, through procreation, brings a baby into this world with a corrupted nature, which leads him to sin, without choice, and then punishes him for sinning, which he could not avoid? This erroneous theory, affirmed in many religious creeds, pronounces the infant at birth under "just condemnation" by reason of his inherited "sinful nature."

Another question must be asked and answered. "Are babies born of the Devil?" This is the conclusion one must accept if he believes in the "sinful" nature of man. Watch this quote: "That man is totally depraved is evident from his being a *child of the devil—fathered by the devil*, of the same moral nature, without salvation, destined to the same hell to which the devil is destined" (Dr. W.A. Jarrell, a Missionary Baptist, *Gospel In Water*, pp. 251-252). The same author states on page 260, "Inasmuch as children partake of the nature of their parents, and Satan is totally depraved, it is very certain that all infants and children are totally depraved, being born of their father, the Devil." It is difficult to believe how any father or mother could believe such trash. The advocates of the theory of "sinful nature" assert that all souls at birth are children of the devil, but God says "...all souls are mine..." (Ezek. 18:4).

A passage used as alleged proof is Psalm 51:5. There are two parts in David's statement. "In sin did my mother conceive me," speaking of the condition of the world in which he was conceived, not his. "I was brought forth in iniquity," he speaks of himself. David did not say that he was born with a corrupt, sinful nature. The Bible states that people were born

in a tongue (Acts 2:8). This does not mean that they were born speaking a certain language, but were born in a country where this language was spoken. David's statement that he was born "in iniquity" simply means that he was born into a world of iniquity; he was brought into a world in which sin prevailed. Question: If *every child* that is born into this world is a child of the devil, and he inherits the sins of his

parents, what sin does the child inherit if his parents are Christians? If a child can inherit sins from sinful parents, could he not just as well inherit righteousness from righteous parents? If not, why not? The answer simply is, that a child can neither inherit sin or righteousness from his parents.—Rt. 10, Box 186 B, Jasper, Al. 35501

Some Lessons From Genesis

Continued from page 2

anything. Books of men sometimes start with an assumption, but not so with the Bible.

Notice some of the facts the Bible deals with. The Bible does not go about proving the existence of God, but states the fact of God. Some say that the Bible assumes the existence of God. If a person wants to get to the real point, the Bible is stating the *fact* that God is (Genesis 1:1; Psalms 14:1; Psalms 19:1; Romans 1:20).

When we read Genesis we read the fact of who created the world and when God created the world. Genesis 1:26-27 and Genesis 2:7 teach us the fact that God created man and how He created man. (1) God made man in his likeness and image. (2) God created man from the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life... Modern science books begin with a theory of how man came into existence. Genesis deals with the fact of the fall of man, and the fact of the flood. There are a number of other facts, but these will give an idea what we are talking about when we say the Bible deals with facts.

The second lesson we learn from Genesis is that if one believes in the miracles of Genesis one then he must also believe in all the rest of the miracles in the Bible. Some will accept the miracles in Genesis one, yet, will not accept the universal flood found in Genesis 6-9. They will read Genesis one and believe every word, yet, when they get to Genesis six they start looking for excuses to belittle the flood. They believe it was a flood, but they say it was only a local flood.

A study of Genesis 6-9 will show that the flood was universal and not local. "And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven were covered" (Genesis 7:17-19). Notice the following quotations: "All the high hills. . ." "...under the whole heaven..." "were covered." The Bible says that all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. Furthermore, if it were a local flood, why build an ark? Would it not have been easier for them to go where there was no flood? Why put the animals in the ark if it were local? If the flood had been local, would it not have been easier to put the animals where the flood did not go instead of building the ark and putting every kind of animal in?

The local flood theory people have so many problems to answer that they cannot answer. It would be easier to accept the miracles of the universal flood than trying to explain it away and getting into an inconsistent position. The fact is, if a person can accept the creation in Genesis one, then he will have no problem accepting the rest of the miracles of the Bible.

The third lesson we can learn from Genesis is found in Genesis 6. God told Noah to build an ark of gopher wood. "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark; and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits,

and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof, with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it" (Genesis 6:14-16). When reading this passage, no one seems to have any trouble in understanding what it means and that God means what He said. We must also note that God did not say, "Thou shalt not use any other kind of wood." When God said gopher wood that excluded all other kinds of wood. Yet, some of the same people who have no trouble understanding this passage will have trouble when they get to Eph. 5:19: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." They say, "Well, God did not say thou shalt not have instrumental music." In Genesis 6:14 they did not have to have a "thou shalt not," yet, when they get to Ephesian 5:19 they want it. They understand in Genesis 6:14 that if Noah used any other kind of wood he would have been sinning, yet, when they get to Ephesians 5:19 they can't understand how doing anything but singing would be sinning. If one can understand Genesis 6 why can't he understand Ephesians 5:19? The God that gave the Old Testament is the same God that gave the New Testament (II Samuel 23:2; Exodus 4:10-12; Exodus 20:1; I Corinthians 2:9-13; Galatians 1:11-12; II Timothy 3:16-17). If we can read Genesis and understand it we can read the New Testament and understand it. The real problem is accepting what the Lord commands us in the New Testament.

Let us remember Paul's inspired statement in Romans 15:4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."—107 Hillside Drive, Abbeville, Alabama 36310

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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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NUMBER 11

Deceit Of The Rankest Order

(No. 2)

This article and the one last week are designed to show Christians that they should be careful, not only in what they hear, but also be careful in what they read and study. These articles point out the danger of word changes in "modern versions" of the Bible that are not merely word changes, but doctrinal error. It was pointed out in last week's article that the words "sinful nature" are really another attempt to palm off on unsuspecting people the unholy doctrine of hereditary total depravity, or that all are born in sin having inherited the sins of their parents, and the corrupted nature of Adam. It is false to conclude that one inherits sin from his parents, and therefore, born into the world as a depraved sinner. Of Jacob and Esau it is said, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth" (Rom. 9:11). This statement shows that they were not sinners before they were born. They became sinners after they were born, when they began to do evil. Their sins were not inherited, because before they were born, they were innocent, free from sin, having done no evil.



JOHN G. SHAVER

Some erroneously conclude, by misapplying Ephesians 2:1-3, that all people are born sinners and by nature are children of the devil. Observation shows however, that the inspired apostle declared that the people addressed had been "dead." Could it be possible that they had been born dead? Of course not. They were dead because of their trespasses and sins. They were dead because they had walked according to the ways of the world. They were dead because they

were directed by the spirit of disobedience. They were not born dead in sin, but they became dead in sin because of their disobedience to God. The people to whom Paul addressed these remarks were not depraved infants, but they were of such maturity that they chose to walk according to the way of this world. The way, or course of this world is described in Gal. 5:19-21. Could one imagine a child doing such things? Ridiculous. Those addressed as being dead in sin were separated from God by reason of their own choice. John explains what it means to walk according to the ways of this world (I Jno. 2:15-17).

"Sinful nature," or Hereditary Total Depravity is a false doctrine, because if one is totally depraved he cannot obey God. This false doctrine states that man is totally passive in regeneration. Dr. Ben M. Bogard, a Baptist minister, declared, "The depraved sinner cannot act except by enabling Grace of God through the Spirit" (*Total Depravity*, p. 13). Dr. W. A. Jarrell, a Baptist author, said, "The necessity of repentance and faith *after* regeneration is very obvious" (*Gospel In Water*, p. 509). The doctrine of the "sinful nature" of man puts man totally under the power of Satan, with no choice, nor ability to reject Satan and obey God. The sinner is so depraved that he cannot act except by the enabling grace of God through the Spirit, we are told. The necessary and false conclusion that we must accept is that man is incapable of repentance and faith until *after* regeneration. If this is true, then the Bible is false (Acts 2:40), the Lord was in error (Lk. 13:3), and the Holy Spirit misguided Peter (Acts 2:38). If a man were already regenerated, why tell him to repent and be baptized? How could he be regenerated without first believing in the Lord (Heb. 11:6)? Well pleasing without faith? Impossible! If this false theory were true, then man is regenerated, born again, saved from sins, without ever having faith, or repenting of his sins; for this false theory states that repentance and faith are of necessity *after* regeneration.

If this theory were true, then babies could not

be reconciled to God (II Cor. 5:18-20). The word "reconcile" implies a separation and a reunion. In other words, it means to bring back to harmony. Watch this very carefully. If a baby is born in sin, born of the devil, and ever departs from that state, which way would he go? To God. If he were "reconciled" to whom would he return? To Satan. As you well know, the reverse is true. We are born innocent, drift into sin and Satan, but are reconciled to God and righteousness.

If this vile theory is true, then little infants who die in infancy, being of a "sinful nature," are lost in torment. Surely, one can see the vile, untruthfulness of such a doctrine. The advocates of this false theory try to avoid their dilemma by asserting that "elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who worketh with and where, and how he pleaseth" (Presbyterian Confession of Faith, Chapter 10, Sec. 3). What happens to the non-elect infant who dies? Do only elect infants die? The direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the infant who dies, saving him from hell, leaves the infant who does not die, a totally depraved creature with a "sinful nature." Truthfully, do you think that Christ would remove the "sinful nature" of a dying infant, and not remove that same "sinful nature" from a living infant (Lk. 18:15-16)?

The false doctrine of the "sinful nature" of man denies that the gospel is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16-17; Rom. 10:14-17; I Cor. 1:21; Mk. 16:15-16; II Thess. 1:7-9). The false doctrine of the "sinful nature" of man also denies purification (I Pet. 1:22-23; Acts 3:19; II Cor. 5:10). I hope dear friend, that you can see the dangers of changing words in the text of God's word. The translators of the "modern versions" know beyond a shadow of a doubt what they are doing. Be careful dear friend, in what you use, and how you use it. One more thought in closing: If man is born with a "sinful nature," and is totally depraved, how could he "wax worse and worse" (II Tim. 3:15). To ask is to answer.—Rt. 10, Box 186-B, Jasper, Al. 35501.



Words Of Truth

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I am not mad, most noble King,
I do but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness.

— Acts 26:25

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Your Last Day On Earth

Ronald Coleman

"What would you do if you had only one day to live?"

In west Germany Gunther Klempnauer, who teaches religion, took a survey of 625 young Germans. He asked the above question and about 500 students answered in essay form.

Seriously, how would YOU answer the question? What would you do?

The results of the survey were distressing — but perhaps to be expected from people in the world.

*28 young people said they would not wait for death to come but would take their own lives.

*A 16 year old boy said: "I would blow myself up with a hand grenade in public protest against the middle class and the government bureaucracy.

*20% of the young men would spend their last day on earth drinking, taking drugs and committing fornication. A typical response from an 18 year old boy: "I would get drunk and steal a car. Then I would take all my money out of the bank and drive to Hamburg. I'd go to the redlight district, pick out the best looking girls and..."

*The picture wasn't all black. An 18 year old girl wrote: "I would like to spend my last evening in Church, alone with God, and to thank Him for my full and happy life."

It would be interesting to know how our young people *in the church* would answer. And what about YOU? Most likely you won't have any advance notice of your last day. Any day *could* be the one. We all know what the Bible says about the uncertainty of life. "Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is no abiding" (I Chron. 29:15). Death suddenly, unexpectedly overtakes thousands each day! What sort of guarantee do you have that it can't happen to you?

"What would you do if you had 24 hours to live?" An interesting question. A more important one is: "How are you living *now*—day by day—while having no idea when it will all be over?" We need to plan, work, and strive as if we had many years left to serve Jesus. But at the same time live each day in view of the fact that it *could* be the last.—Arab, Al. 35016.



FROM

THE EDITOR

"A Soul Saving Church"

Several times within recent months we have heard reference made to what some called "a soul saving church." More often than not the reference is used by one who is trying to justify his efforts at establishing a new congregation in an area where congregations are already plentiful. "But," he says, "we need one soul saving church in this area."

We have absolutely no quarrel with the idea that churches should be soul saving churches. Saving souls is the mission of the church. A congregation which exists for any purpose other than that souls might be saved has no right to exist. It is a sad fact that some churches have lost sight of their mission, and spend far more time in recreational pursuits than they spend in preaching the gospel. It is sad also that many individuals who have become members of the church feel no compassion for lost souls and no obligation to try to lead them to the Lord.

But to set about to establish a congregation in an area where another congregation is not needed, and to seek to justify it by saying that we need "one soul saving church" in the area is but to demonstrate an egotistical and pharisaical disposition. Not only so, but it also constitutes an indictment of every congregation and every preacher in the area. It says there is not one of the already existing congregations which is carrying out the great commission—that not one of the preachers in the area is preaching the gospel.

When one talks about needing "one soul saving church" in an area where there are a large number of congregations, he usually means that the churches in the area have demonstrated their unwillingness to allow the church to become subsidiary to and controlled by the bus program. Mind you, now, it is not enough for a church to have a bus program to be considered a "soul saving church." Unless the bus program is the center of attraction and everything else is made secondary to it, a church is simply not a "soul saving church." It may have a daily radio program, a television program, two or three full time gospel preachers, a dozen or so full time missionaries, an effective personal work program, offer Bible correspondence courses, have two or three meetings a year, and even have a bus program; but unless it has a bus program around which everything else is centered, it simply does not qualify as a "soul saving church." And any in the congregation who do not, for whatever reasons, participate in the bus work are considered simply as not being interested in saving souls.

Also when one talks about "one soul saving church" in an area where there are many churches of Christ, he is usually inadvertently telling those who hear him that he has been in the middle—maybe has even been the cause—of a church fuss. Being familiar with the Bible teaching concerning peace, peacemakers, unity, sowing discord among brethren, etc. (Romans

14:19; Matthew 5:9; Psalm 133:1; Proverbs 6:19), one would naturally feel compelled to rationalize in connection with his own part in a church fuss. If the entire problem can be blamed on the alleged indifference toward lost souls of other people involved in the fuss, one certainly feels more comfortable with his having been involved. If a group has pulled out to start a new congregation in an area where many other congregations already exist, there needs to be some justification for so doing. The most simple justification for such is to indict every existing congregation of not being interested in saving souls. It is much easier to do this than it is to accept one's share of the blame for a problem, repent of it, confess it, and work with the brethren for a solution.

Please do not interpret the things said in this article to mean that we are opposed to bus programs. At Sixth Avenue we have three bus routes, and some of the finest workers to be found. The program is productive of some good. Like this paper, our radio program, our missionaries, our lectureships, our protracted meetings, etc., our bus program is a tool of the church to reach the lost with the gospel. This writer personally does not have the time to work the bus routes. Editing this paper, writing an article each week, preaching every day on the radio, teaching three classes per week, preaching twice on Sunday, attending two personal work meetings per week, doing personal work, counseling, etc., does not leave much time for working bus routes. We do not believe this fact would justify the conclusion that we are not interested in saving souls.

Brethren, let us not forget that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Whatever tool may be legitimately used to reach the lost with the gospel should be used to the greatest advantage possible. But we should never allow the glorious gospel to be upstaged by any man, any program, any gimmick, or any tool.

Price Increase Announced

We regret to announce what all of us know is inevitable - an increase in subscription rates for *WORDS OF TRUTH*. This is the first increase in subscription rates in nearly three years (May 1, 1976). Since that time there have been three increases in postal rates, two increases in the legal minimum wage, and six increases in paper prices. During this time also the size of the paper has been slightly increased. We believe also that there is one area in which some noticeable improvements have been made. We refer to the fact that we now have the privilege of proof-reading the paper after the type has been set. This enables us to eliminate most of the errors in typesetting.

We are confident that you, our readers, appreciate the paper and understand the necessity of this price increase. Beginning with the month of April the yearly subscription price will be \$5.20 for fifty-two issues. Churches which pay for subscriptions on a monthly basis will be billed at the rate of ten cents per copy. This is still less than the price of a postcard; and we feel it is one of the biggest bargains you will ever find.



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).

"Is it inappropriate to sing while partaking of the Lord's Supper?"

Yes.

It is not only inappropriate, it is wrong! Observance of the Lord's Supper, and singing are two separate and distinct acts of worship, involving very different, physical, mental and spiritual participation. There are four things we must do in order properly to partake of the Supper. We are to look (1) inward; (2) outward; (3) backward and (4) forward in its observance. (1) We are to "examine" ourselves (I

Cor. 11:28), in the act of observance; (2) we "proclaim" (ASV) "the Lord's death," by our participation (I Cor. 11:26), (3) we remember the events of Calvary (I Cor. 11:25), and (4) we keep alive, in our hearts, and before others, his eventual return (I Cor. 11:26).

We who sing "with the spirit and with the understanding," as all must do in order to praise God acceptably, must (1) give attention to the lyrics as much so as if we were actually composing them at the moment in praise to God; and (2) we must follow the music to which the lyrics are set in order properly to

sing in unison with with others. Neither act-singing, or partaking of the Lord's Supper—can be properly engaged in while attempting the other. Only those who partake mechanically and ritualistically of the Supper would want to attempt singing in connection with it, and then only to create some emotional situation which escapes them in the proper observance of the Supper. The practice is without apostolic precedent and wholly unacceptable to those who are content with the New Testament order.

"Is The Proof Text Dead?"

DAN WINKLER

Many have been the assaults against the authority of God's word. One of recent origin has been mothered by the pseudo-intellectual circles of modernism and is voiced in the assertion, "The proof text is dead (of no account, worthless)." Of course, any sermon characterized by biblical support would be termed frivolous and any preacher insisting on this means of evidence would be viewed foolish by the proponents of this said contention.

Is the proof text dead? Is it proper to use the Bible as evidence of a point's validity? Does such make for sound reasoning? In answer, the following is affectionately submitted:

(1) The many New Testament appeals to the Old Testament give evidence of the proof text's value. Many times the Old Testament was referred to, in

authoring the New Testament by inspiration, as evidence for a specific though (cf. 1 Pet. 1:15, 16; Lev. 11:44). Thus the Holy Spirit affirms, "The proof text is alive, valid, and valuable."

(2) Jesus, living under the old law, made use of it in a proof text fashion (Matt. 19:3-6; Gen. 1:27; 5:2; 2:24). Christ affirms, "The proof text is alive, valid, and valuable."

(3) Apollos, living in the Chrisitan dispensation, "powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ" (Acts 18:28). Philip, a contemporary of Apollos, converted the eunuch of Ethiopia by preaching unto him Jesus and doing so from the scriptures (Acts 8:30-35). These gospel preachers of the first century affirm, "The proof text is alive, valid, and valuable."

(4) The all-sufficient nature of God's word also points to the proof text's worth. It is the all-sufficient standard by which man is "furnished completely unto every good work" (II Tim. 3:16). If the proof text is dead, and some other authoritative means of support must be offered, to that extent the word of God is not all-sufficient. The Bible's purpose and nature implicitly affirm, "The proof text is alive, valid, and valuable."

The proof text is not dead. To say otherwise is to strike at the rudiments of scripture and thus at the very heart of Christianity. May the commitment, convictions, conduct, and contentions of every Chrisitan rest solely upon scriptural proof texts, yea, biblical authority.—P.O. Box 196, Greenville, Texas 75401

Seven Deadly Sin-Envy

Envy is the topic of discussion in this the second in a series of articles concerning the seven deadly sins. The definition of envy is: "pain felt at sight of happiness of another person joined with a desire to possess same advantage." Socrates said, "Envy is the daughter of pride, author of murder and revenge."

A person who is suffering from the sin of envy admits three facts: (1) an inferior feeling, (2) living in selfish isolation, and (3) utter absence of love. Envy is also rendered as *jealousy* in many scriptures. We understand that when jealousy creeps in, love creeps out. Readers, do not underestimate the seriousness of envy; because it is not a surface disease, but one that is deep rooted. "A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones" (Proverbs 14:30).

Let us now consider some scriptures that show the curse of envy. The sin of envy led King Saul to try to take David's life by throwing a javelin at David (I Samuel 18:6-12). The elder brother in Luke chapter



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

fifteen was envious of his father's killing a fatted calf for his brother's coming home. Envy brought Jesus, the Son of God, to Pilate. "For he knew that for envy they had delivered him" (Matthew 27:18). Many times we become broken hearted when churches are torn by strife and confusion. Many times this is caused by envy of the people involved. Let us consider what James says: "But if ye have bitter *envying* and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where *envying* and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work" (James 3:14-16). The sin of envy is so bad that those who practice such "will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gallatians 5:21).

How can we prevent the ugly sin of envy? One must forget self and have a genuine interest in others. Instead of feeling sorry for self, think positively and count your many blessings. Work and follow Jesus. "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). Fill your heart with love or charity. Paul says "...charity envieth not..." (I Corinthians 13:4).

Many times a person will try to keep up with his neighbor and will envy the prosperity of those who are not living a godly life. "For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked" (Psalms 73:3). The trouble with the one who envies another is a lack of trust in the Lord. When we put our trust in the Lord instead of ourselves, the sin of envy

can be cured. "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. We must trust in the Lord and commit our ways to God, and in so doing we can overcome the sin of envy. "Commit they way unto the Lord; trust, also in him: and he shall bring it to pass. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him..." (Psalms 37:5, 7)—P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580.

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Christ Never Promised You A Disneyland

For many, Christianity has become a matter of convenience rather than THE way of life. Youth groups have become activity-centered instead of Christ-centered. This past summer an area denominational group sponsored a trip for their young people to Disneyland. There is nothing wrong with going to Disneyland, but when it becomes the focal point of the year's calendar, and



RONNIE LOWE

one of the most important and effective means of reaching area youth, we have lost sight of what the mission of the church really is. The church is not in the entertainment business. It is not a country club, social club, nor retirement club. These things have their place in our lives, but they are not what constitutes Christianity.

What then is the mission of the church? It is to seek the salvation of souls. To accomplish

this end, we preach the gospel, assist the needy, and edify the saints. The church should be a haven in a world filled with sin; but we must never lose sight of its eternal purpose. It is not to draw people through entertainment programs, but through the proclamation of the truth.

God never promised us a Disneyland, nor did he promise us that our life would be a bed of roses. He has, however, promised us a life of difficulty and dedicated service. Jesus did not recruit followers by telling them only of the advantages. Jesus stated: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Paul writes, "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12).

It is comforting, however, that Jesus did not ask us to do more than he himself has done. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich (II Corinthians 8:9). Things worthwhile rarely come easily. The more we work to obtain something, the more it will be

appreciated when it is obtained. Christ never promised an easy life for his followers, but he does promise that the benefits will far outweigh the sacrifices.

One way we as parents and teachers get out children to do what is right is by promising them a reward. Likewise, one of the ways Christ has of getting us to do what is right is by promising us a reward. He has reserved for us "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away" (I Peter 1:4). Christ promises us many benefits as a result of our suffering for him (II Corinthians 4:17). Also, he promises that all things will work for our good (Psalms 34:19; Romans 8:28).

We do not always keep our promises, but we can rest assured that God will keep his. He never promised life would be a Disneyland, nor did he purpose that the church would be a social club or entertainment center. But he did promise a great reward for those who enter into the service and endure to the end (Revelation 2:10). Let us always remember that his promises are conditional upon our manner of life.—P. O. Box 3, Joshua, Texas 76058.

"Our Humility"

DALTON KEY

Humility seems to be a scarce virtue today, but pride and egotism are nothing new. As Solomon said, "There is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

Nebuchadnezzar, King of ancient Babylon, because of his pride, was "driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen. . . till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like bird's claws" (Daniel 4:33). After God had restored him to his former position, the king admitted, "Those that walk in pride he is able to abase"

(Daniel 4:37).

Notice the haughty, arrogant prayer of the Pharisee in Luke's eighteenth chapter. He prayed, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are" (Luke 18:11). In terms of humility, he was more like most men than he realized. I once heard of a man who prayed, "Lord, I thank thee that I am not like that puffed up Pharisee!". He had missed the point entirely. Christ concludes, "Everyone that exalteth himself shall be abas-

ed" (Luke 18:14).

Our Lord has given us a perfect example of humility. In coming down from heaven to save mankind, he "humbled himself" (Phillippians 2:5-10). He taught, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3, 4).

Let us ever follow Jesus' footprints of humility! — Box 126, Aurora, Missouri 65605.

Sin-Be Careful

It is a shame that more people prefer to live in sin rather than to live for God. The effects of sin can be seen in our society, in many homes and, at times, even in the Lord's church. To deny the fact of sin and its impact upon our lives is not to face reality. It seems to this writer that there are at least two basic ways Satan convinces many people that living in sin is the better way of life.



MICHAEL D. STONE

First of all, Satan plants a doubt in our mind about the word of God. He wants us to have no faith in that word. This tactic is not new, for it was used on the first woman. In Genesis 3:1, the record states, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?" Notice again the statement, "hath God said." Here, Satan planted a seed of doubt concerning the word of God in the mind of Eve. My

friends, if Satan wants to destroy you, perhaps this will be the avenue of his first attempt. Be careful!

The next thing the devil may do is to contradict God's word. It is unlikely that he would employ this tactic first, as it might receive some resistance. However, if he can successfully plant a doubt about God's word in your mind, then he is in a more favorable position to contradict his word. This, he also did on mother Eve. In Genesis 3:4, we notice Satan saying, "...Ye shall not surely die." God told the

woman that she would die if she ate from the forbidden tree. Satan then told her that she would not die. If that is not a one hundred percent contradiction, then, I just don't know what a contradiction is. The devil, even today, uses this method. One example will be cited here. I Peter 3:21 tells us that baptism saves. One does not have to look very far to find many that do not believe that baptism is required in the scheme of redemption. Be careful!—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Ky. 41101

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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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Ernest Angley: Impostor

(No. 1)

Ernest Angley, founder of Grace Cathedral in Akron, Ohio, was in Birmingham, Alabama, January 28, for one of his "healing (?) crusades." Dan Jenkins, Doug Williams and wife, Mike Barrett and wife, and James Pilgrim attended the crusade to put Mr. Angley to the test, that is, give him an opportunity to do what he claims he can do. Brother Barrett has polio and must use crutches. He was taken to be "healed." Mr. Angley failed us. Mike left on his crutches. This brief three part series will compare Ernest Angley's work with the examples of miracles in the New Testament.



JAMES PILGRIM

Both Mr. Angley and one of his singers said Mr. Angley preached a series of sermons on "Untying God's Hands" under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Mr. Angley said he was then led by the Spirit to put the sermons into print, and that the book would go forth throughout the world. Who is the author of the book? Hear Ernest Angley's own words on the matter: "The Holy Spirit, author of the book." Beloved, this teaches present day revelation. It also makes his book as authoritative as your Bible, with the message equally as binding. Are you ready to glue his book to the back of your Bible? Read Gal. 1:6-9; Jude 3; II Tim. 3:16, 17.

Even in the days of the apostles there were "false apostles" (II Cor. 11:13; Rev. 2:3), "false teachers" (II Pet. 2:1), "false prophets" (II Pet. 2:1; Matt. 24:11), and such like who seduced (led astray) Christians (I John 2:26). A comparison of Mr. Angley's words and actions to the New Testament quickly and unquestionably reveals him to be a false teacher. This will become increasingly evident. The Bible warns us to beware of such persons (Matt.

7:15-20). Matthew was also inspired (II Pet. 1:20, 21) to tell us how we may know such persons; that is, the fruit test. Mr. Angley's fruit reveals him to be a wolf in sheep's clothing.

While on a recent trip to the Holy lands (supposedly the latter part of 1978-JP), Mr. Angley said the Holy Spirit told him, "The generation that will see the coming of the Lord is now on the earth." Beloved, even the Lord Jesus Christ does not have such knowledge, neither the angels, but God alone—Excuse me! God AND ERNEST ANGLELY. And we now know it. Surely Christ must know the time since Mr. Angley has made it public. Ernest Angley now has the time period. It will be interesting to see if he now joins the Armstrongs (Herbert W. and Garner Ted), the Witnesses, and others in setting a date. Of course, they failed.


One of Mr. Angley's opening statements was, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). This verse was used to deceive the audience into believing that miracles were intended to continue in our day. Our Pentecostal friends rank among the top as perverters of this verse. But what proves too much proves nothing! How did Adam and Eve come to be? (Gen. 1:26, 27; 2:7, 21, 22). Do we still have 12 apostles upon the earth? (Matt. 10:1-8). We could go on and on, but the point should be clear. No knowledgeable Bible student doubts that Jesus is the same. Neither does such a person believe He does everything the same way always. The Jews had the law of Moses (Deut. 5:1-5). We have the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2). God is the same, but the law under which the Jews lived and the law under which we live are not the same. Further studies will show that the *same* Jesus no more works through miracles today than does He create people as He did Adam and Eve.

When people were called on to contribute to the work Mr. Angley is doing, he told them *not* to look into their pocketbooks and bank books before they decided what to give. Beloved, that contradicts what a genuinely inspired man (Paul) told the church of God at Corinth (I Cor. 16:1, 2). The Corinthians were told

to give generously (Lk. 6:38; II Cor. 8 and 9, esp. 9:6, 7). However, Biblical instruction demands a look at what one makes before he decides what he can give. Mr. Angley's appeal for money, and his means of collecting it, is quite different from New Testament teaching. As for me and my house, we will follow the New Testament record.

Mr. Angley told his captive audience to wait on the Holy Spirit to tell him whom He wanted to come to be healed. He said, "Some people won't wait on the Holy Spirit." He then selected people to come. Any who tried to get in the healing line without being called were *turned back* by the ushers. Can you picture (or read) the apostles doing this? Brother Barrett, the polio victim on crutches, was told that he could not go on stage because it would be dangerous going up the steps. He was sent to an invalid section where he would be prayed for later. One wonders why Mr. Angley did not take him by the right hand and lift him up as Peter did the lame man of Acts 3:1-11, 16; 4:1-22. Do we really wonder? Do we not know why? Research time! Read the New Testament through to see if you can find an example of our Lord or His apostles selecting people for healing like Mr. Angley did. Or were not all healed who were sick? (Acts 5:16; Matt. 4:23, 24; 8:16; 12:15).

Mike Barrett and all others went away as cripple as they were before they went to Boutwell Auditorium. One person on a stretcher, one on a cot, many in wheelchairs, on walkers and crutches left infirmed. One boy with a leg shorter than the other was told that he was healed, and that his short leg would in time grow to be as long as the other one. Friend, read Acts 3:11, 16; 4:1-22; and Matt. 8 and 9. Question: Did our Lord or his apostles fail to heal these persons? Do you know of anyone who came to Jesus or the apostles to be healed who went away unhealed? Why do so many leave Ernest Angley's crusades as they came?? There must be an explanation. He is not of God, and he does not possess any miraculous gift of the Spirit. (More next week)—P.O. Box 3022, Hueytown, AL 35020



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Truth and soberness

Acts 26:25

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Alexander Campbell And The Versions

We do not want to fiddle on the same string too long, but we are going to make a few brief comments concerning an argument sometimes used in support of the idea that we should not be critical of the modern versions of the Bible.

Men such as Alexander Campbell are quoted as favoring new translations, and it is implied that to favor the new versions of our day simply puts one in the class with such men as Campbell. Brethren

McGarvey and Hardeman are also quoted in similar fashion. If these men favor the new translations, then why should we oppose them?

It should be kept clearly before us that these men lived and died before the multiplicity of modern translations came on the scene and began to be used by the masses of the people. When these men talked about the usefulness of modern translations they did not have in mind productions such as Today's English Version, The Living Bible, The New International Version, etc. These have come on the scene in more recent years and represent a new breed of translations—a breed which sets forth what the translator wishes it to say rather than what the inspired writers of the Bible actually said.

It is in order to quote the aforementioned men to show that they did not oppose new translations of the Bible. But it is not in order to quote them on this subject to try to prove that they would not, if living today, oppose such version as have been mentioned above.

In connection with the version issue, as with other issues, there are extreme positions in both directions. To illustrate this point we share with you a letter we received from one of our subscribers about a year ago. The letter is reproduced here in its entirety without any change in spelling or punctuation.

The words of truth--

This is to tell you to take my name from your mailing list because I have noticed in different writing's of the editors of lesson's that they use other translations and I firmly believe its wrong I do not believe in changing the word's in our Bible If the apastel which were in spired could not write our Bible as we need it, then no mere worm of the dust need not try and I know they is people who do not know nothing but our King James and they may go to the worship services of the church and a teacher or preacher get up quoting other translations—what do you think it's going to do to them when they are there to hear the Bible taught Oh they's lots but this is enough (signed)

Honestly, that is the letter reproduced exactly as we received it. If there are any doubters, we have the original hand written letter in our files. Interestingly enough, the writers for *Words of Truth* use only the King James or American Standard Version in writing their articles. I assume from this that it must be the American Standard Version to which this reader objected so strongly. He obviously considers the King James Version as not being a translation at all. To him, the King James Version was written by the



BOBBY DUNCAN

apostles themselves. This is an extreme case.

But getting back to the matter of quoting some of the pioneer preachers with reference to the versions, the following illustrates our point: Many years ago we heard brother Gus Nichols say more than once that a man could learn the plan of salvation and how successfully to live the Christian life from any one of the many translations then in existence. In later years, however, we herd brother Nichols say that he could no longer make this statement. He was talking about the fact that some of the versions of more recent vintage contained so much error as to cause one who followed them to be in danger of being lost.

Some Things To Think About

JOHNNY RAMSEY

We are living in hard times spiritually due to extreme liberalism, nauseating compromise and the inordinate desire for "a better public image." So many members of the church are ignorant of the Bible and are surrounded by a generation far more interested in social welfare than the pure gospel. Salvation from sin is taking a back seat to fellowship halls and mission depots. Not very many people, even in the church, have a deep, spiritual view of things holy and divine. When we ought to be seriously studying these grave trends we, like Israel of old, rise up to play. When plain truth ought to thrill our souls we are crying in the language of Isaiah 30: "Speak to us smooth things." While men claiming to be gospel preachers speak with forked tongues too many brethren love to have it so! All across this land we see rumblings of abject modernism from within the walls of Zion. One editor whitewashes a Hollywood celebrity who sings at Las Vegas in the gambling dens and bars of the Mafia and the cesspools of nudity. Some teachers in "our schools" speak unsteady words concerning inspiration of the Bible, music in worship and the Christian's participation in dancing and drinking. While the souls of men are dying a Tennessee church provides ladies with a class to learn how to make hats and a Coke machine in the hall in case their strenuous study overwhelms their esophagus! In far too many pulpits the listeners are treated to a series of quotes from Barth, Tillich, Lewis, Fosdick, Trueblood and Bonhoeffer while Christ and Paul and Peter go begging. What men say about the Bible overshadows what the Bible has to say about men!

It is much later than we think when we become enamored with the panoply of worldly attainments and begin to compare God's true way with Satan's schemes for the secular and profane. We need a double dose of Galatians 1:10 and James 4:4. Truly, we cease being a servant of Christ when we are so busily engaged in receiving the applause of men. The world never has and never will welcome ardent followers of God.— 8900 Manchaca Rd., Austin, Tx. 78745.

Worship God

Man is so constituted that he will worship something. He is by nature a creature of worship. Wherever men are found in every country and clime, they have their objects of worship. Every rational person finds himself looking to, and reaching out for something beyond himself in times of trouble and distress, or when he feels relief from emotional crises.

But this does not mean that men worship the right object, or in the right manner. Men have been known to worship the sun, moon, and stars, and every creature in the earth. They have worshiped images of man and beasts. In Isaiah 44:9-20, the Lord chides the absurd practice of men in making images of gold, silver and brass with their own hands, and then falling before them in worship. Or the action of cutting down a tree, and with a part of it, he warms his body, with another part he cooks his food, and then with another part he makes an image, according to the beauty and figure of a man; he calls it a god and falls before it, prays to it, saying, "Deliver me; for thou art my God."

Such ignorance and deception is to be pitied. But it is enough to show that acceptable worship to God depends upon God's revelation. Men today cannot acceptably worship God apart from the expressed will of God found in his last will and Testament which he has made and revealed through Jesus Christ.

People familiar with the object and manner of worship as revealed in the New Testament find the behavior of multitudes today just as absurd as the actions of men described by Isaiah. through the news media, we have seen on one side of the world two popes elected by men to represent God, and watched millions pay him homage. In South America, the pope was hailed

Continued on page 3



W. C. QUILLEN

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 meant by the statement, 'God came from Teman, and the Holy one from mount Paran'?"

This quotation appears in a poetic statement in Habbakkuk (Hab. 3:3), in which the prophet describes a vision of Jehovah which he experienced in which he saw God coming in power and great glory from the direction he had come when he led his people out from the cruel bondage of Egypt (Deut. 32:2). Teman was a country just south of Judah; and often referred to in the scriptures as Idumaea. Paran was a desert region situated between Judah and mount

Sinai. The prophet, by his poetic and metaphorical allusion to this area and its historic significance to the people, doubtless wished to convey the notion that there would be a similar intervention of God in behalf of this people who were then beset by an ungodly world, and oppressed by cruel enemies, and an equal ultimate triumph for them. The reference is primarily to the deliverance of Jews from the bondage they were then suffering, and it would be as signal and successful as had been his similar actions in their behalf when he brought them forth from Egypt. Obviously, the prophet's statement is not to be

interpreted literally; the coming of God is figuratively described and vividly portrayed to evidence his power and intervention in behalf of his suffering and oppressed peoples. However, in such references, we are not to overlook the pervasive purpose of God in the long reach of events and we ought to see in these remarkable affirmations our own eventual triumph. It was this which prompted the Spirit through Paul to write, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

Innocent Blood

Time and again God's word speaks of innocent blood. Each time it refers to the violent destruction of innocent human lives. There is divine principle in this matter that is plainly applicable to us today. The day you read this article four thousand innocent unborn human babies will be killed by abortionist doctors in America. Before the year ends



JOHN WADDEY

and one half million babies will so perish. Since January 22, 1973 over seven million have been destroyed. In America it is no crime to kill the babe, so long as he resides in the mother's womb. Dr. Bernard Nathanson quit the business after aborting 60,000 victims (Good Housekeeping, March 1976). Virtually every city in America has one or more abortion clinics whose single purpose is death for profit. All branches of the federal government have given their approval to this blood-letting.

The law of God on shedding human blood is first stated in Genesis 9:6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." Because man was made by God in his image and likeness, a wall of protection was erected about him. The manslayer was not to be tolerated. The Penalty for homicide was death! God ordained capital punishment.

God's attitude toward the violent is reflected in Proverbs 6:16-17: "There are six things which Jehovah hateth: yea, seven which are an abomination unto him: [among them are] . . . hands that shed innocent blood." To be godly we must love the things he loves and hate the things he hates.

"You shall not pollute the land where in ye are: for blood, it polluteth the land. . ." (Num. 35:33). To the king of Judah in Jeremiah's day God said, "This saith Jehovah: execute ye justice and righteousness. . . neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing [protect the innocent] then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting on the throne of David [the dynasty would be preserved] . . . But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith Jehovah, that this house shall become a desolation" (Jer. 22:3-5). The

purpose of civil government is to protect the innocent, the weak and helpless from the violent aggressors. Failing to meet this basic obligation, a government forfeits its right to continue on God's earth! The Lord had earlier warned the Hebrews to make provision "that innocent blood be not shed in the midst of (their) land . . . and so blood be upon them" (Deut. 19:10).

Israel ignored God and shed innocent blood without shame or justice. King "Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another. . . doing that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah" (II Kings 21:16). The masses " . . . sacrificed their sons and daughters unto demons and shed innocent blood. . . and the land was polluted with blood" (Psalms 106:37-38).

God was not mocked, they reaped what they had sown (Gal. 6:7). Ezekiel announced their judgment in three terse decrees. ". . . righteous men. . . shall judge them with the judgment of adulteresses and blood is in their hands. For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I will bring up a company against them, and will give them to be tossed to and fro. . ." (Ezek. 23:45-47). "I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee" (Ezek. 35:6).

"Wherefore I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood which they had poured out upon the land" (Ezek. 36:18). Like heathen Egypt and Edom, Israel became a desolate wilderness "be-

cause they shed innocent blood in their land (Joel 3:19). God raised up the powerful juggernaut of Babylon who cruelly conquered and deported the whole nation for 70 years of slavery. Justice had to be satisfied. Like Abel's, the blood of their innocents cried out from the earth for vengeance (Gen. 4:10).

At her worst Israel never came close to shedding the vast volume of innocent blood that now flows freely in our nation. They sacrificed their infants to the idol gods of Canaan. Our women sacrifice theirs to gods of lust, pleasure and convenience. Then pagan priests burnt their victims; today white frocked doctors do the ghoulish service. The results are the same: 7 million innocents have died. How long will God's patience withhold the judgment due? Every person who has stained his hands with the blood of these babes will one day cry out with apostate Judas. . . "I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood" (Matt. 27:4).

May God's people awake from their lethargy and rise up to put a stop to this fiendish practice. Bad laws can be changed if the people care enough to do so! And may this ancient prayer be on our lips and in our hearts:

"Forgive, O Jehovah, thy people. . . and suffer not innocent blood to remain in the midst of thy people. . . and the blood shall be forgiven them" (Deut. 21:8).—Route 22, Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, Tn. 37921.

Worship God

Continued from Page 2

as vicar of Christ by the multitudes, who fell before him.

On the other side of the world, we watched other millions receive Ayatollah Khomeini with divine honors. Sun M. Moon is accepted by thousands of people as divine. Jim Jones laid claim to similar honors. Just last week one came to my office and boldly announced himself as Jesus Christ. False prophets and cults are countless.

The apostle John, filled with awe by the scenes shown him and the things he heard, "fell down to worship" the angel that showed him these things. But the angel said, "See thou do it not . . . worship God" (Rev. 19:10; 22:9).

Whom or what do you worship? — P. O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tn. 38464.

Price Increase Postponed

The subscription price increase announced in two previous issues has been delayed one month.

Subscription rates increase \$1.12 per year beginning First of May instead of First of April.

Churches will be billed at the rate of 10¢ per copy.

This is the first increase in subscription rates in three years (May 1, 1976). Since that time there have been three increases in postal rates, two increases in the legal minimum wage, and six increases in paper prices.

Seven Deadly Sins - Gluttony

(No. 3)

Today's article is our third in a series on seven deadly sins, and we will be discussing gluttony in this article. The definition of a glutton is: "one who eats voraciously, or to excess." The Hebrew word for gluttony means a squanderer or prodigal. The broad Bible meaning of the word gluttony is: "over emphasis in any of the physical appetites, such as food, sex, fortune or status."



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Corinthians 15:19, 22).

The sin of gluttony places emphasis on the material instead of the spiritual. We should be reminded of the lesson that Jesus taught on the Mount when he said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal: For where your treasure is there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:19-21). We will never look to the spiritual side of life until we repent of the sin of gluttony.

Gluttony is a terrible sin because it will defile our bodies. We must always keep in mind that we should keep our bodies fit for the Lord. If we fail to do so the sin of gluttony will shorten our life span, and therefore we will not be as useful in the kingdom as we should. "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God, in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (I

Corinthians 6:19-20).

If people who are guilty of gluttony will not repent and come back to God, this deadly sin will bring ruin to their lives. "For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty...." (Proverbs 23:21). This sin will make one think only of himself and thus cause him to forget God. "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord" (Obadiah 1:4).

We can see how ugly this sin is, because gluttony will make a person selfish. A person can become so selfish with his material possessions that he will not share with those who are in need. John says, "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, know 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" (I John 3:17-18).

Gluttony was one sin that caused the city of Rome to fall, and it will help to bring America down. When a church is filled with members guilty of this deadly sin, you have a group of people who are interested in themselves. Brethren, may we all repent and be interested in living a life for God and leading people out of sin into the Kingdom of God. —P.O. Box 118, Parrish, AL 35580.

With Eternal Glory

"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (II Timothy 2:10).

This passage points out that Paul had salvation in Christ Jesus. This salvation had eternal glory. "The salvation...with eternal glory." The expression "with" is from the Greek word *sun* meaning "union, with, together, possession, of eternal glory." What is eternal glory?



RAY HAWK

the twelve tribes of Israel." We know Jesus is in his kingdom now for Titus 3:5 speaks of the "washing of regeneration" which Acts 22:16 points out is baptism. Also, in Luke 22:29, 30, the apostles would sit and eat at the Lord's table when they sat upon the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. To eat and drink at the Lord's table is to partake of the Lord's supper. I Cor. 10:14-21. The Lord's table is in the church for that is who was at the table in the Corinthian letter (I Cor. 1:2; 11:18-34). To be in the church is to be in the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1:13).

The words "eternal glory" show that when one has salvation in Jesus Christ, he is a companion with Christ in eternal glory. That eternal glory is the eternal kingdom. Keep in mind that the word "eternal" is used in several ways. We are in the Messianic kingdom. We are in the kingdom that has no end. We are in the kingdom that originated with God rather than man. The word "eternal" may also show its origin as contrasted with that which originates from man.

Some religious people quote John 3:16 to prove the word "everlasting" life means a life you cannot lose. Keep in mind that the word "everlasting" is the same word found in II Timothy 2:10. To be in the eternal glory with Jesus is to be in the eternal kingdom. To be in the eternal kingdom means to have salvation. That salvation is called everlasting life. But, may one lose it? I John 3:15 states, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." Here, a brother in Christ hates another brother in Christ. To be in Christ is to have eternal life. That is, the life that originates from God to save man. But, I John 3:15 shows that if a brother hates a brother, he is a murderer. If he is a murderer, eternal life cannot abide in him. Therefore, the scriptures teach that one may lose eternal life.

I am sure someone is going to ask the question, "If we may lose eternal life here, what about in heaven?" Please keep in mind *how* the Holy Spirit is using the expression "eternal." It

may be used as a contrast. It may be used to show the Messianic age or kingdom. What *kind* of life do we have IN Christ Jesus? Is it mortal life or eternal life? If it is not eternal, what kind is it? I John 5:11 says, "And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Where is eternal life? IN his Son! Are you IN his Son? If so, what do you have? Also, read I John 5:13, 20. Is the language past, present, or future tense? Present tense, isn't it? Keep in mind that I John 3:15 points out that one must live right to keep that life abiding in him.

Since the word "glory" is used interchangeably by the Holy Spirit with "kingdom" in Mark 10:37 and Matt. 20:21, we may see how the word glory is used in II Tim. 2:10; Matt. 19:28; Luke 24:26; Heb. 2:10; I Pet. 1:11. It also appears that the apostles and prophets were looking for a coming "glory." "The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" (I Pet. 5:1). See also I Pet. 5:4, 10; Col. 3:4; and Rom. 8:18.

It seems, to this writer, that the word "glory" is used to show Jesus would enter his glory after his suffering or death. Then we see it is used to indicate the end of the miraculous period and the coming in of the perfect man (Eph. 4:13; I Cor. 13:8-10; Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21-27, 28). Last, it is used to indicate final judgment of all mankind and the salvation of the faithful (Matt. 25:31-33).—1461 East Chester, Jackson, Tn. 38301.

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Words Of

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"I am not mad,
the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:20

(USPS 691-760)

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Watch Out For The Devil!

JOHNNY RAMSEY

A chameleon is a lizard with a greatly developed power of changing the color of the skin to match its environment and thus hide its presence and purpose. Thus, in our vocabulary a chameleon represents "an inconstant person." The Devil is able to camouflage his diabolical schemes with smokescreens of deceit and craftiness as he wars against our souls. The word for Satan in Greek is our word *adversary* and that depicts his emphasis exactly. As Jesus astutely pronounced in Luke 22:31, so it is even today: "Satan desires to have you."

It takes monumental courage and determined loyalty in these overtly wicked days for children of God to withstand the old Serpent (Revelation 12:9). His subtle devices pose constant threats to our salvation (II Corinthians 2:11 and 11:3). In order successfully to overcome Satan's wiles we must truly have on the whole armor of God as the panoply of righteousness! Yes, the Devil is shrewd, changeable and awesome in his onslaught against Truth. Incessantly he roams the earth with his satanic forces of evil to corrupt, beguile and overwhelm the lost. Satan operates forcefully in the open immorality of the world. He is just as persuasive in mock Christianity — denominationalism. And, able to change his spots to match the surroundings, he also enjoys success too often within the church by causing members to defect, surrender and break the Lord's heart. The great enemy of the soul restlessly presses on in day to day combat with the devotees of Christ. It is a rugged battle that will only end when the Lord, upon returning, slays all iniquity with the spirit of his mouth (II Thessalonians 2:8). In the interim, however, the Devil is busily engaged in undermining the influence of the Lord. The chameleon, of whom we speak, can even take a good thing and turn it sour. For instance, in Genesis 13 we read of the magnanimous spirit of Abraham in allowing Lot to take first choice of land for crops and herds. Satan used this occasion, however, to cause Lot to "pitch his tent toward Sodom." This resulted in the total spiritual decline of Lot and his family. The devil used Judas Iscariot's one weakness, love of money, to push Jesus into the hands of evil, envious men who drove the Savior to the cross. Satan used the immodesty of Bathsheba and poor timing by David (II Samuel 11:1)

to introduce a chain of events that tore Israel to shreds. The crafty chameleon even caused Moses to fall short of the promised land and later filled the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira with a deadly lie and an avaricious spirit that produced the first recorded sin in the New Testament church. Yes, whether it be a compromising Aaron at the foot of Sinai, or a greedy Balaam in the wilderness, or a defiant Jehoiakim before a winter fireplace, you can be assured the evil that ensues can be related to the Evil One "who walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (II Peter 5:8). We could consume several more pages referring to Satan's past accomplishments, but to be most profitable we need to make applications to his devious work today. In our own lives we need to realize that love of money, lack of Bible study, uncontrolled speech (gossip or profanity) or a failure

to speak up for Christ can all be traced to the cunning work of the Devil. He knows our weaknesses and can be expected to exploit them to our own condemnation. May we grow in faith and love and dedication to such an extent that the crafty chameleon will look else where to sell his wares. For, "he that is in us is greater than he that is in the world." We can gain the victory over Satan—but only if we persevere.

"Though the Tempter in efforts bold, or in Subtlety as of old, should essay to allure my Soul, I'll never forsake my Lord."

For those who overcome the constant confrontation with the Devil there awaits the loving arms of the One who boldly and victoriously sent Satan on his way. Let us overcome that we may come over to live with Christ. —8900 Manchaca Rd. Austin, TX 78745

A Few Guidelines For Making Proper Decisions

We are constantly faced with the task of making decisions, the outcome of which may affect our quality of life here, and determine our eternal destiny "over there." Decisions which have to do with right and wrong are of paramount importance.

We cannot rid ourselves of the responsibility of decision making, for, as someone has said, "Not to decide is to decide." The following are a few guidelines which may be of help to you in your decision making.



DALTON KEY

DOES THE BIBLE SPECIFICALLY MENTION THIS? IF SO, IS IT CONDEMNED OR CONDONED? Two examples of sins specifically forbidden would be (1) sexual relations outside marriage (Hebrews 13:4), and (2) lying (Colossians 3:9; Revelations 21:8).

DOES THIS FIT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE BIBLE'S PERFECT PRINCIPLES? For instance, one of the more basic principles of the Bible teaches that man is to work for what he has (Genesis 3:19; II Thessalonians 3:10). One who expects to live off the wealth of others, or receive "something for nothing," would be in violation of this principle.

DOES THIS HARM MY BODY? According to inspiration, we are not our own; we are the Lord's (I Corinthians 6:19,20; Romans 14:7, 8).

WILL THIS HELP (OR HURT) MY CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE? In all that we do and say, we must be "an example of the believers" (I Timothy 4:12; cf.

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble brethren, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness"

— Acts 26:25

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Seven Deadly Sins — Impurity

(No. 4)

We will be discussing impurity in this the fourth article in a series on seven deadly sins. The definition of impurity is: "The quality or state of being impure." What Isaiah said in the long ago can be said today; for we are living in an age of confused values. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil: that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter" (Isaiah 5:20).

Leviticus 15:31 says:

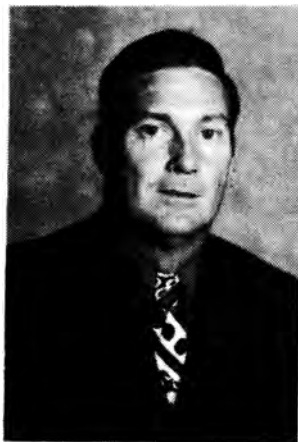
"Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them" (Leviticus 15:31). People who practice impurity in the church also defile the church. This is a very deadly sin, and we must do all we can to get people to repent of this terrible sin.

What are some of the breeders of impurity? We shall attempt to discuss some of the leading causes below. The first breeder for discussion will be pornographic literature. The meaning of pornography is: "depiction of erotic behavior (as in pictures or writing) intended to cause sexual excitement" (Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, p. 661). As parents we must teach our children the danger of such literature and supply them with the Bible and good religious books.

The second breeder of impurity is obscene motion pictures. Parents, don't be fooled about what is being shown in your own living room on television. We must be sure that our children are not being brain washed with filthy motion pictures. We must have the courage to say "no" to our children if they want to view such pictures.

The third breeder of impurity is the sin involved with the dance. What is wrong with a couple's dancing together? Dancing falls under the sin of lasciviousness, and this is a sin of the flesh (Galatians

Continued on page 4



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

There seems to be a great deal of concern on the part of many about the image of the church. This is as it should be. Every child of God should be concerned about what others think of the church of Christ. Our effectiveness in persuading men to believe and obey the gospel is dependent in large measure upon what others see in us. Jesus knew this; and so he prayed for the unity of his followers, "that the

world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:21). He taught also that we are the light of the world and the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13-16).

Often, however, those who have the most to say about the image of the church are those whose primary concern seems to be that the church be considered a respectable denomination, very little different, if any, from other denominations. The truth is that this is the very image the church already has in too many places; and it is the very image we need to be trying to change. As long as this is the image the world sees we can never be successful in leading people from darkness to light.

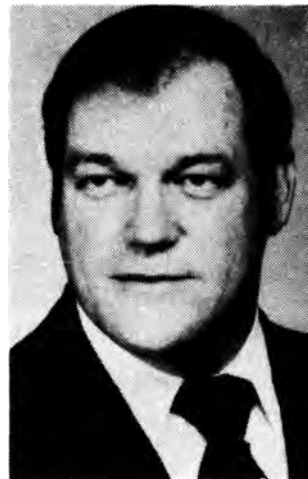
What kind of image should the church of Christ project in order to make the proper impression upon the world?

We should be known as a people whose primary concern for life is to please God. This was the goal of the apostles of Christ. Paul said, "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10). He further said in I Thessalonians 2:4: "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God which trieth our hearts." Read also Matthew 6:33.

We should be known as a people who know the word of God. A knowledge of the word of God is one of the safeguards against sin. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11). A lack of knowledge brought destruction to God's people in Old Testament times (Hosea 4:6), and it will bring destruction to his people today. There was a time when we were known as a people who could give chapter and verse for the things we taught, but we no longer enjoy that reputation. While we stand now where we stood then—on scriptural ground—most members of the church know about as little about the Bible as their denominational friends. To make bad matters worse, many of our preachers read or quote very little of the Bible in their preaching. When we were known as a people who knew the Bible we were experiencing the most rapid growth of any religious group in the United States. Our deceleration in growth seems to be directly proportionate to our decrease in Bible knowledge.

We should be known as a people who live in harmony with the word of God. The inhabitants of Jerusalem could see the influence of Jesus upon the lives of the early saints (Acts 4:13). Our reputation should be such that no one would be surprised to find not one of our number is among those who drink, curse, steal, refuse to pay their debts, lie, divorce, commit adultery, dance, dress immodestly, bear tales, stir up strife, etc. On the other hand, our lives should be such that our neighbors look upon us as a people who, like our Lord did, are going about doing good (Acts 10:38).

We should be known as a people who respect the



BOBBY DUNCAN

FROM THE EDITOR

Our Image

authority of the word of God. What we do in religion must be authorized by the word of God (Matthew 15:8, 9; John 4:24; II John 9; Revelation 22:18, 19). We should go to great lengths to impress our religious neighbors with the fact that the differences between us and them are not differences of interpretation, as they have been led to believe; they are rather differences of attitude toward the authority of the Bible. Controversial subjects such as the subject, action and design of baptism, instrumental music in worship, the frequency of the Lord's supper, etc. would be largely agreed upon by all those who have the proper attitude toward the authority of the Bible. Our preaching should ring with admonitions to our auditors to accept the authority of the Bible; and they should be impressed with the fact that for us, a "thus saith the Lord" is the end of all controversy.

We should be known as a people who stand firmly opposed to all those who disregard the word of God, either in life or in doctrine. Those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine of Christ are to be marked and avoided (Romans 16:17). Those who walk disorderly (literally, *quit the ranks*) are to be withdrawn from (II Thessalonians 3:6). Those who practice immorality are to be delivered to Satan (I

Corinthians 5:1-5). Some seem to be putting forth an effort either to hide or minimize the importance of the fact that there is a difference between the Lord's church and the denominations. We refer to the fact that some preach the truth, but avoid preaching in such a way as to distinguish the church of Christ from other churches. If they condemn religious error at all they do so in language carefully calculated to avoid letting those in error know their error has been condemned. Neither Christ nor his apostles ever stooped to such a practice. They always made it crystal clear where they stood with reference to truth and error; and we should do likewise. Those who know us should come to expect this of us.

May our Lord help us individually and collectively to project to the world the very image he would have us project.

Impostor

(No. 2)

Last week we began a series of three articles on Ernest Angley. This article continues to contrast Mr. Angley's claims and actions with the New Testament.

The miracles of the New Testament were immediate (Matt. 8:3, 13; 9:22). There is not a single miracle that took two weeks, or as Mr. Angley put it, "in time." He told a young boy whose legs were different lengths that he had healed him, and that his short leg would grow to be as long as the other one. It did not then, and it will not. Beloved, if Ernest Angley



JAMES PILGRIM

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).

"Please comment regarding the trend today to use the common forms of pronouns in addressing God such as 'you,' and 'yours' rather than the solemn 'thee,' 'thou,' and 'thine'."

I regret it, and can only answer that I regard the trend as further evidence of the fact that there is a determined effort to move away from the principles and practices formerly characteristic of all of us.

I am quite aware of the "arguments" which are offered in support of the practice to which you refer (1) "No such distinction exists in the Greek Testament." (2) "These forms are archaic, and their use is not good English." (3) "Those who use them feel as much reverence and respect for God as do those who prefer and use the older forms." To which I reply, (1) we do not pray in Greek today, but in English. Moreover, it is not a question of adherence to a specific divine standard, but rather a question of response on the part of those participating. Brother L.R. Wilson effectively dealt with this aspect of the matter, when he wrote, "Whether it makes a difference to God or not as to how we address him, I am not able to say. But it does make a difference to me, and I think there are a great many who feel as I do about it. We appear to be pulling God down to the same low plane of man, and addressing him in the language of the street, when we say 'you,' and 'your'." Further, when one is called on to "lead" the prayer, it is the responsibility of the one so doing to express scriptural and *appropriate* language which all present may properly adopt and sanction with an "amen" at the conclusion. Most older people today prefer the older forms. Ought this not to be taken into consideration by all who lead? Suppose, for example, a highly learned brother meets with saints in some congregation whose members have little or no education, whatsoever; and whose members have vocabularies that are vastly smaller than is that of the educated brother. Would he insist on using words beyond their apprehension in preaching and prayer? Granted that, in such a case, God would understand him, would not simple Christian courtesy suggest consideration for the feelings and reaction of others involved?

(2) The older forms of pronouns, when used in addressing Deity, are neither archaic nor incorrect English. The Revised Standard Version and the New English Bible whose translators were extremely liberal use the solemn pronouns in prayers addressed to God in the scriptures. The fact that these productions which have gained such wide acceptance among the more liberally minded use the old forms shows that the argument that these terms are outmoded is without merit. Those who insist on using common pronouns in the address to God are guilty of glaring inconsistency in rejecting the solemn forms in prayer and then moments later lustily using them again and again in song. There is something ludicrous in a brother solemnly asserting that he rejects the pronouns, "thee," and "thou," in prayer to God, and then immediately "makes the rafters ring" as he sings, "How Great Thou Art!" However, "Consistency is a hobgoblin of little minds," we are told!

(3) I do not question the sincerity of those who address God as "you," nor do I ask them to use the sacred forms in prayers not involving me or others. But, when they are called upon to lead *public prayer* they ought to regard the feelings of those for whom they are vocalizing sentiment to God, and not use words and phrases which have a shocking effect on a large segment of the audience. I have never heard anyone contend that it is difficult to worship acceptably when all use the solemn pronouns in prayer; I am acquainted with vast numbers of people who find the ordinary ones objectionable. Ought there to be any difficulty in determining the proper course in such cases? (I Cor. 8:13). In his usual incisive fashion brother B. C. Goodpasture, the distinguished editor of the Gospel Advocate, once

wrote: "We have heard brethren address God as 'you,' but we have seldom, if ever felt that the lives of the speakers were as intimate with God as their words would indicate. In the use of such language, it is difficult to see the humility, reverence, and modesty that are characteristics of all acceptable prayer" (Gospel Advocate, December 18, 1946, p 1188).

Multitudes of faithful Christians today feel that there is something incongruous in addressing God as we would our fellow men. Granted that this is an attitude which has developed over a long period of time, and that it is grounded in aesthetics rather than apostolic example, *is there anything wrong with it?* And, when and where do we stop? Instances are becoming more and more frequent in which shocking statements are made in prayer. One character, in a southwestern town some months ago lifted his eyes heavenward and said, "Hi, Dad!" Are we ready for this? Really, what argument can our brethren who

reject the older forms make against such?

Not all people who address God as they would any human being reject the older translations, *but all who repudiate those translations and are urging acceptance of so-called modern speech versions* use common pronouns in addressing Deity, and the design is obvious. We are prepared to affirm that not one "modern speech" version which has attained to any publicity in our day is in harmony with the Greek New Testament; and that if these documents continue to gain acceptance in the churches of Christ the Cause, as we know it, cannot continue. These changes are but the prelude to more sweeping ones soon to engulf us. The Versions which our fathers and mothers knew and loved, believed and obeyed, will enable all who so do to go to heaven. Such is not true of many of the so-called "Bibles" which people are now becoming increasingly enamored with. Too late many of them will discover they have taken a serpent into their bosoms!

Ethics

Ethics is the science of right and wrong in human relationships. Since God made man a social being, it is to be expected that he would provide him with a code to govern his conduct toward his fellow man. Six of the ten commandments were ethical in nature (see Deut. 5:16-21). A vast portion of the books of Exodus-Deuteronomy are devoted to this theme. The Proverbs deal almost exclusively with man's social relations. For example, "A false balance is an abomination to Jehovah; but a just weight is his delight" (Prov. 11:1). The Prophets had as one of their major tasks, reminding the Hebrews of the social duties. Micah wrote: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to *do justly*, and to *love kindness*, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (6:8).

He notes that without this proper ethical conduct, all of their religious efforts, no matter how noble, were in vain (6:6-8).

The greatest ethical teacher of all was Jesus, the Son of God. Never has a greater, more noble rule of conduct been set forth than his golden rule. "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them" (Matt. 6:12). Again, he taught us to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:39). In vain have men sought a more equitable code. Society is poorer because so few will practice this standard.

Recently while visiting my physician I spied the following message displayed upon his wall. It was obviously written in the old days before the advent of the professional abortion doctors and that new breed of practitioners whose god is mammon and whose code is self. While we do not endorse every line and conclusion, on the whole it is a beautiful, wholesome statement of honor for a physician or any other citizens of planet Earth.

"Near two thousand years ago a famous Teacher and Great Physician formulated this code of ethics: 'Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' Centuries later another great teacher...expressed the same thought in these words: 'This, above all, to thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.'

"Ethics is duty! Ethics is moral conduct! Ethics is



JOHN WADDEY

the force which smooths the rough places of life; it is the oil of gladness; the perfume of social intercourse. Ethics is harmony. By ethics is the universe upheld and suns and stars guided in their course. Ethics is power and honor, justice, goodness and truth. Ethics is the mailed hand that rights every wrong, that brings order out of disorder, that conquers chaos. Ethics is the voice of the Lord God Omnipotent calling the wayward sons and daughters of earth back to the Father's house. Ethics, properly applied, is Paradise regained. Ethics is peace, good-will to men. Ethics is God incarnate, saying to the waves of trouble and sorrow that threaten to engulf helpless humanity, "Peace be still!" Without ethics life would be a burden, and the question, "Is life worth living?" would indeed be pertinent.

"Therefore, O ye sons of Hippocrates, would you be ethical, be good, be pure, be kind and gentle, be honest and fearless? And it must follow as the day the night; as surely as right is better than wrong; as surely as strength is better than weakness; as surely as health is better than sickness; as surely as joy is better than sorrow; so surely will you be successful and happy...." *J.M. Kennedy, M.D.*

Let every child of the king learn the ethical code of Jesus and honor it in every relationship of life. Then will we be "blameless and harmless...in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom [we] are seen as lights in the world..." (Phil. 2:15). —Route 22, Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, Tn. 37921

He Only Told

One Side

MICHAEL D. STONE

"Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw

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Ernest Angley: Impostor

Continued from page 2

possessed miraculous powers the leg would have been restored *right then*. His claims are a striking contrast to the inspired accounts. Why will people allow this impostor to deceive them? (cf. Matt. 24:4, 24; Eph. 4:14; 2 Tim. 3:13).

A lady with a walking stick went *limping* off. The lame man of Acts 3 went *leaping*. There is a great difference between *limping* and *leaping*. Mike Barrett is still limping. The boy above is still a cripple. A man with a leg problem hurt his leg in demonstrating his "healing," and almost fell. His pain was evident, and he slowed down his show. Those in wheelchairs, on crutches or walkers, on cots, and stretchers all went away the *same* way. Read your Bible from beginning to end to see if you can find a partial miracle wrought by heavenly powers. You will not. Read 1 Kings 13:1-6, especially verses 4 and 6. Did the hand begin to grow or heal, or was it completely healed *then* and *there*? Compare also Matt. 8:3, "cleansed," and 9:22, "whole." A deaf mute *muttered* at Mr. Angley's service. Incidentally, she was muttering before she went up on stage. The dumb *spoke* in Matt. 9:32, 33. (Cf. Acts 3:7-11, 16; 4:9, 10).

Question after question was raised in our minds about the things done on the Boutwell Auditorium stage. No honest person doubted that Mr. Angley had failed time after time. But look at the reaction to the New Testament miracles. The Sanhedrin Court met to consider the miracle of Acts 3. Read Acts 4:1-22, and note: "They could say nothing against it" (v. 14); "That indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it" (v. 16); "All men glorified God for that which was done" (v. 21); and "this miracle of healing was shewed" (v. 22). "All the people saw...they knew...were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him" (3:9-11). Ernest Angley's critics do not go away without questions. But neither do they go away without answers. His fruit labels him (Deut. 18:22).

Mr. Angley said, "An angel goes before me." He claims the angel protects him. In some telecasts he has claimed to see angels coming down all around the auditorium, and he says he is the only one who can see them. He is certainly honored more than all others, including all of his fellow preachers.

But some of them claim to be able to see angels. Do you suppose one or more of them fibbed? There were angels in the Old and New Testaments who appeared to people (Gen. 19; Matt. 1). However, the burden of proof of angels appearing to people today, especially lining walls of auditoriums, is upon Mr. Angley. Let him produce book, chapter, and verse to back his assertions. Can or will he? No! It would seem that Mr. Angley likes to be held in esteem.

Pictures of the battle of Armageddon, painted at the Holy Spirit's direction (?) were sold for \$10.00 each. The picture when hung on a wall is supposed to save one's family and thousands more. Dan Jenkins, other Christians, and the writer were not touched by it. Mr. Angley has a good money-making scheme going. One wonders why all present did not purchase a picture since the Holy Spirit was the painter. Mr. Angley plays upon the symbolic language of Rev. 16:16, where the forces of good are pictured as overcoming the forces of evil, a simple message to the saints assuring them of final victory. Incidentally, that is the message of the book of Revelation. Our warfare is *not* physical confrontation, but spiritual.

Emphasis was also placed on the rapture. Mr. Angley, a premillennialist, believes the saved will soon be raptured, a seven (?) year tribulation will come, and the saved will then accompany Christ back to earth to reign with him. What he fails to realize is that Christ will not again set foot on earth (1 Thess. 4:17). Too, no man of the seed of Coniah (Jechonias) will reign in Judah sitting on David's throne and prospering (Jer. 22:24-30). But Jesus is of the seed of Coniah (Matt. 1:11). Would not our Lord prosper if he reigned? Again, the rapture doctrine would necessitate Jesus descending and ascending 3 times. But the Bible speaks of only two (Cf. Matt. 1 and Heb. 9:26-28; Acts I and I Thess. 4:16, 17;. Cf. also. Rev. 1:7; II Pet. 3:10-12; John 5:28, 29).

The people who came looking for a miracle, or

whatever, were told it was their fault if they did not get it. Mr. Angley said, "Don't blame me." Thus he relieved himself of all responsibility for failures. I don't remember Jesus or His apostles saying anything like that. I guess Lazarus would have been at fault had he not been raised (John 11). James 5:15 puts the burden on the one praying. Certainly this was the case in John 11. How much faith did Lazarus have? Or Dorcas? (Acts 9:36-43). Faith was required at times (Matt. 9:22), but not in every case. Why is not Mr. Angley honest enough to inform his audiences of

this? Why does he not accept responsibility for his failures? Do not the ill folk who attend his crusades come in faith, expecting a miracle? Why else would one on a stretcher come? Would they give their money in unbelief of his work? Why, one of his ushers was even cripple, one overweight, and such like. He had not even cured them. Mr. Angley reminds me of the exorcist Jews of Acts 19:13-16: "But who are ye," Mr. Angley? (More Next week)—P.O. Box 3022 Hueytown, AL 35020

Seven Deadly Sins — Impurity

Continued from Page 2

5:19). Another meaning for lasciviousness is "wantonness." Some people refer to dancing as a respectable sin, but there is no sin that is respectable, because sin is "all unrighteousness" (1 John 5:17). Paul instructs us to "Walk honestly as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying" (Romans 13:13).

How may we guard ourselves and avoid impurity? We can guard our hearts (Matthew 15:18-20). We can avoid evil companions (1 Corinthians 15:33). We should not be "unequally yoked with unbelievers,"

and we must come out of sin and be separate from all impurity (1 Corinthians 6:14-18).

We as parents, preachers, elders and all members of the Lord's church must cry out against impurity that the church will be clean and pure. I pray that we will never become like the people in the day of Jeremiah. "Were they ashamed when they had committed abominations? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush..." (Jeremiah 6:15). Let us all be ashamed of the ugly sin of impurity and turn to the Lord.—P.O. Box 118, Parrish, AL 35580

A Few Guidelines for Making Proper Decisions

Continued from page 1

Philippians 2:15; Matthew 5:15).

WILL THIS STRENGTHEN (OR WEAKEN) MY FELLOW CHRISTIANS? "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Romans 14:19).

WILL THIS BE INJURIOUS TO ANYONE'S HEALTH OR REPUTATION? Paul tells us that "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor" (Romans 13:10).

ARE MY MOTIVES PURE? In Christianity, not only are actions important, but the motives behind the actions are important as well (1 Corinthians 13:1-3; Galatians 5:26; Matthew 6:1-18)

WILL THIS MAKE ME A STRONGER CHRISTIAN? Anything which would deter from spiritual growth should at all costs be avoided.

TEN YEARS FROM NOW WILL I LOOK BACK ON HAVING DONE THIS WITH REMORSE OR WITH REJOICING? "The memory of the just is blessed" (Proverbs 10:7).

WOULD CHRIST DO THIS? This provides the acid test. The mind of Christ is to be our mind (Philippians 2:5); he is to be our example in all things (1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Peter 2:21). — Box 126, Aurora, Missouri 65605

He Only Told One Side

Continued from page 3

that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat" (Genesis 3:1-6).

In the above text are several interesting lessons of which each of us should be aware. One of the most obvious lessons is the method in which Satan works. If we could be more aware of the subtle methods used by him, then we would, perhaps, be on guard more against these methods.

First, Satan got Eve to doubt the word of God. Notice his statement, "hath God said." If he could just get her to question, in her own mind, the word of God, then he would be in a favorable position for the next step. There are millions right now who are doubting the Lord's word. Some, even in the church, have lost their faith in the word of the Lord. Evidence of this is seen in our pessimistic attitudes toward growth and in our attitude of indifference to the lost around us. God surely is not pleased with us when we question the integrity of his precious word.

Then, the devil contradicted the Lord's word. He told the woman, "Ye shall not surely die." My

friends, if that is not a one hundred percent contradiction, then I just don't know what a contradiction is. God said they would die if they ate from the forbidden tree, and then Satan said they would not die. The word of God is being contradicted today on many fronts. For example, 1 Peter 3:21 affirms that baptism saves us. Yet, how many do you know who teach and believe that baptism has nothing or little to do with one's salvation? "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

As one writer expressed it, "It should be noticed that Satan presented only one side of the picture. It is true that the fruit was good, that it was pretty, and that it would bring a knowledge of some things of which she did not then know. But he did not present the ugly side of the picture, that it would bring about her destruction, that it would bring sorrow and suffering upon her and her posterity forever. Satan never presents that side of the picture. He always presents the beautiful side and leaves the ugly side covered from our view."—4763 Skyline Drive Ashland, Ky. 41101



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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Bible Miracles

Every knowledgeable Bible Student will profess faith in miracles. The inspired word (II Tim. 3:16, 17) records some of the miracles performed by Jesus and his people. A few recorded miracles in John are turning water into wine (2:1-11), healing the nobleman's son (4:46-54), the impotent man made whole (5:1-9), feeding of the 5000 (6:1-14), walking on the sea (6:15-21), restoration of sight (9:1-7), and restoration of life (11:1-46). Matthew, Mark, Luke and Acts record many other miracles. I believe every one of them because "God, that cannot lie" (Tit. 1:2) said they happened.



JAMES PILGRIM

Perhaps we should pause just here to define miracles, especially since we hear almost everything called a miracle. In light of what happened in Bible miracles, we believe the following definition is accurate: A Miracle (Acts 4:16) is an immediate (Matt. 8:3), extraordinary manifestation of Divine power (Eg. Ex. 14:21, 22), that works above natural law (Eg. Matt. 8:23-27). Natural law may see a person recovering from an illness over a period of weeks, while the supernatural will recover that person immediately. Natural law may let winds cease slowly as the cloud passes, while the supernatural will calm wind at once. Perhaps much confusion over miracles could be solved if people knew what was involved in miracles.

Why were miracles performed? Miracles were used to reveal God's truth to us. The miraculous tongues (languages) with which the apostles spoke on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 6) enabled them to reveal the truth to the crowd assembled. I Cor. 12:1-11 lends credence to this. The recorded truth did not come through a natural learning process. Paul said the Spirit gave him the things he taught (I Cor. 2:12-16; Comp. II Pet. 1:20, 21). One should also note in this

connection that the speaker or writer did not always understand what he revealed to his hearers or readers. The apostles taught about the kingdom, but look at their question in Acts 1:6.

Mark 16:20 and Heb. 2:1-4 give us further understanding as to the purpose of miracles. They were performed to confirm the word, that is, establish it as the inspired, inerrant, plenary, verbal word of God. But one may ask why such was necessary. We must remember that the law of Moses had existed for some 2500 years. It was God's law for His people even during the earthly ministry of Jesus. God had planned for the first covenant to cease when Jesus came (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13; Gal. 3:1-29; Col. 2:14-16; II Cor. 3). Thus the truth of the second covenant would need some verification. How else would the Jewish nation know that they were to turn from the law to grace and truth? (John 1:17). How else would they know to be obedient to the faith? (Acts 6:7). Miracles were performed to prove that the word spoken was truth from heaven. The speaker was approved in the same manner (Acts 2:22; John 3:2; 5:36; Acts 3 and 4).

While miracles were of temporary benefit to the sick and/or dead (We say temporary because they would all die sooner or later.), the real purpose went beyond this. Miracles were performed and recorded to produce faith in Jesus Christ (John 20:30, 31). The miracles did exactly that. Even the apostle Didymus would not believe that Jesus had been raised until he saw the proofs (John 20:24-29). You and I are in the group mentioned in verse 29, that is, we have not seen, and yet we believe because of the evidence

presented (Cf. vv. 30, 31). Countless numbers have been drawn to faith as a result of the inspired record, even many who have never obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine delivered. What about you?

The apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:2, 4, 5; 2:1-4). In Acts 8:14-21, 19:1-11, and Rom. 1:11 we learn that the apostles were the only ones empowered to impart spiritual gifts, and that this was done through the laying on of the apostles' hands. Beloved, those who received the powers were unable to impart powers. Such is clear evidence of the fact that we do not have miracles today, else we have some very old apostles alive somewhere. But inspired and historical evidence says they are all dead. One, therefore, cannot have miraculous power today because of the way they were received.

The Bible clearly teaches that miracles were to cease. Note: (1) The gifts of the spirit were given in part (I Cor. 12:1-11); (2) When the perfect came the part would be done away (I Cor. 13:8-10); (3) The perfect has come (Jas. 1:25); (4) We, therefore, conclude that the part has been done away. But notice what was in part: *Miraculous* wisdom, knowledge, and faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, and interpretations of tongues (I Cor. 12:8-10). In light of the statement of fact preceding these gifts, one must conclude that the gifts have ceased (Eph. 4:8-16). But one question remains: Do you believe God who teaches the cessation of miracles, or Mr. Angley and other uninspired men like him? I believe God. — P.O. Box 3022, Hueytown, Al. 35020

Turn Around And Say, "I Love You!"

W. N. Jackson

"...their works they do for to be seen of men..." [Matt. 23:5]

In the emotionalism sweeping through the church in the last several years, surely one of the most

ridiculous activities is the having of all in the audience to turn around and tell the person behind them, "I love you!" Those behind all this get some kind of delight in manipulating people, and they feel that the

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**Words Of
Truth**
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Fretus, but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness"* — Acts 26:25

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A Faith Building Program

NOVIE C. PERRY

I was privileged to hear brother Dan Jenkins at the Fairview Church this month as he discussed a vital need in the church. The need for instilling the word of God in the hearts of those who attend Bible classes. The need for imparting and retaining the word of God in the hearts of learners is basic to the very existence of Christianity, and brethren at Shades Mountain are doing something to fill this need. They have organized a simple method of applying and retaining hundreds of scriptures on a quarterly basis in their Bible program, and I am convinced that it is worth telling about to every church.

The use of flash cards, repetition, and application of various Bible games and visual aids constitute the mechanics of what the Shade Mountain church uses in its curriculum. The real challenge is, and always will be, the teacher's tying the chain of scriptures together as the class travels through the book of Acts, life of Christ, etc. As the students memorize the scriptures they also learn the context, or background of the passages and learn the application.

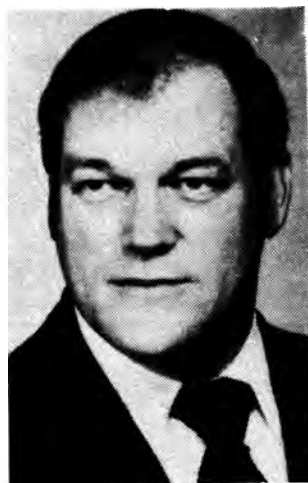
Dan estimates that the teachers cover about seven to ten passages of scripture per week, which includes application of the Bible message wherein those passages are found. The teachers review what they have covered every class period and teach the same material Sunday that they do Wednesday, using the same teacher. The teachers may switch quarterly or keep on teaching as long as they like, and many do not want to take a break!

What are some things that make the Shades Mountain program so successful? Some observations I made from Dan's presentation in Mobile were the following: (1) The program teaches two to five times as much Bible to the student than past programs; (2) The program promotes creativity among the teachers; (3) The program offers a great solution for absent teachers in a small church when the whole church is studying and using the same materials; (4) The program motivates young people's interest greatly, through the use of games that give friendly competition and make Bible study a delight; (5) The program encourages weak members and non-Christian parents at home, who have children, to more interest in attending and studying; (6) Above all, the program obtains the desired result, for which the Bible school exists in the first place: it builds soul-saving and life-changing faith in the hearts of all involved. — Rt. 2, Box 340, Grand Bay, Al. 36541



Buying Property And Not Getting The Deed

A few days ago we were in conversation with a preacher who is approaching retirement age, and who has spent all his preaching life working with some small congregation which was unable to pay a liveable salary. Recently the congregation which was supporting him in a mission area had discontinued its support, and he was seeking other work. One statement he made sticks in our



BOBBY DUNCAN

mind. It was not the first time we had ever heard the statement; but this time we feel it should be repeated and some observations should be made.

The statement is this: "We have bought and paid for too much real estate for which we never received a deed." This refers to the fact that congregations for which he worked had told him time and again that they knew they were not paying him enough, but were doing the best they could, since they were having to make payments on their building. In other words, the preacher's pay was cut in order to enable the church to pay for its building.

No doubt, many preachers have paid for property of one kind or another which they never

really owned. A congregation needs some additional classrooms. The preacher sees the need, and urges the brethren to build them. They do so; and then when the time comes that the preacher should have received a raise in pay, they fail to raise him, and use the added expense of the new classrooms as excuse. The meeting-house needs redecorating. A decision is made to redecorate. Then when time comes for the preacher to receive his raise, the brethren cannot afford to raise his pay, because of the large redecorating expense.

Many a good dedicated gospel preacher has urged his brethren to launch out into some needed work—such as a mission work, a radio program, a television program, a building program, etc.—knowing all of the time that he and his family would pay more of the bill in the long run than any other member of the congregation; and this would be by virtue of the fact that the expense of the new work would keep him from being paid what he should be paid, and would be paid if it were not for such work.

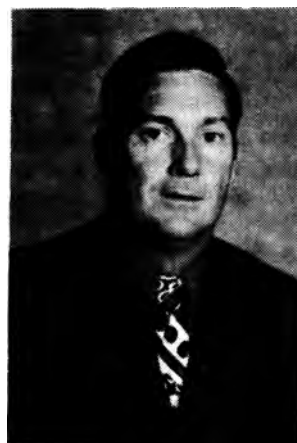
Such a practice is thoughtless and certainly out of harmony with the will of God and with good business judgment. Every congregation wants its preacher to be a promoter of everything that is good. They want him to make things happen; and then when things happen, they sometimes require him to foot the bill.

We wonder, indeed, how much property preachers have bought and paid for, and for which they have never received a deed. Perhaps the judgment will reveal this also.

Seven Deadly Sins — Anger

Anger is the topic of discussion of this the fifth in a series of articles concerning seven deadly sins. Many people will live a good life for years, have a good influence and character, and then lose their temper and fly off the handle and say things they should not say, thus losing their influence in just a matter of moments. Once a person loses control of his temper before someone, it is difficult to get this person to accept him as he once did. Just one person can become angry and sin and bring shame and reproach upon a good church. Unfortunately some preachers have become angry in the pulpit, and as a result the congregation has lost its respect for the preacher.

Jesus said in the sermon on the mount, "But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement" (Matthew 5:22). The apostle Paul in writing to the



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

Colossians said, "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth" (Colossians 3:8).

The sin of anger is an infectious spiritual disease. Solomon writes, "Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul" (Proverbs 22:24-25). Many parents through their anger have led their children to behave like them, losing their temper and saying things they should not say.

Many times a person has a problem with the sin of anger because he talks first and thinks second. We should think first and then most times we would not say the things we do when we become angry. Listen to James when he says, "Wherefore my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (James 1:19-20). The word *wrath* means "violent anger or rage" (Webster's 7th New Collegiate Dictionary, p. 1032).

Many times a child of God who is living an obedient life will have enemies who will say or do things that they should not. Consequently the child of God will retaliate by saying and doing things that are not becoming to a Christian. We must never in our

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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 was Paul's thorn in the flesh?"

"And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted over much. Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my power is made perfect in weakness" (II Cor. 12:7-9). It should be noted that Paul had "visions" (plural), likewise in number; he tells us but little of just one of these experiences here, in spite of their "exceeding greatness," and nothing of the others.

Paul, despite his nobility of character and his fidelity to the Lord, was but a man, and therefore susceptible of being "exalted over much" by his unique experiences. To prevent this, he was given "a thorn in the flesh," a "messenger of Satan to buffet" him, in order that he might not succumb to the temptation to exalt himself improperly. The thorn was a *skolops* from *skalopizoo*, to impale, to crucify; and, it was thrust into his flesh by an agent of Satan to "buffet" (torment) him. So great was the agony which he suffered from this painful disorder that three times he implored the Lord to deliver him from it. But, because a greater blessing would be Paul's with the thorn, than without it, the Lord did not comply with the request, and did for Paul what was infinitely better: he empowered the apostle with strength enabling him to cope successfully not only with this problem but with any comparable one. Further, this demonstrated the fact that the cause of Christ does not depend, for its success, on the strength of any man, including the great apostle, but is actually advanced when there is complete awareness of weakness, since this emphasizes total dependence on God. Paul perceived this, in the incident, and readily acquiesced in it: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong" (II Cor. 12:9, 10). Convinced that the will of God was being done in him, Paul gladly bore the burden of pain, of weakness, of trial, of persecution, and of want, because he unhesitatingly made his personal interests subservient to the Cause of the Lord. His consciousness of weakness served only to provide occasion for the strength of the Lord to be exercised in him, and thus his real strength was made possible because of his own inherent weakness.

The imaginative ingenuity of Bible expositors is in nothing else better demonstrated than in their efforts to identify Paul's painful stake—the *thorn in the flesh*. Merely to list the wild guesses they indulge in is an exercise in futility. Among their foolish conjectures are uncontrollable temper, fleshly desires, epilepsy, sharpness of tongue, profound mental depression! Men capable of attributing to the greatest of all the apostles these things do neither their heads nor hearts any credit.

While it is not possible to *know* the exact nature of the affliction which Paul described as a thorn in the flesh, a careful induction of numerous separate and unrelated passages point to the conclusion that it was some form of *ophthalmia*—an affliction of the eyes—which may have resulted from the blinding flash of

light which fell directly into his eyes, blinding him, on the road to Damascus, thus leaving in his flesh this painful reminder of the murderous mission which he had begun on that fateful day (Acts 9:1-9). (1) He had serious and acute physical infirmity (Gal. 4:13; II Cor. 10:10; 11:23; 12:10). (2) The Galatians did not find his physical infirmities objectionable, implying that some did (Gal. 4:14). (3) The Galatians would have "plucked out" their own eyes and given them to Paul, a circumstance difficult to understand if his eyes were as good as the eyes of the Galatians! (4) He wrote with large "letters," (Greek, *characters*), a well-known characteristic of those who see poorly (Gal. 6:11). (5) He exhibited inability, on occasion, to recognize people, thus

evidencing poor vision (Acts 23:1-5). (6) When sight was restored to him, there fell from his eyes "as it were scales," indicative of inflammation (Acts 9:18).

Does not a simple induction of these bits of descriptive detail reasonably suggest some sort of eye affliction; and, is it not also within the realm of reason to conclude that the reason the Lord did not miraculously remove this painful, disfiguring disorder in response to Paul's plea was to keep evermore in the mind of the apostle the humbling realization that he had been called to his high and honored privilege, as an apostle of the Lord, while seeking to destroy the Cause to which he was now giving his life?

Make No League With The Inhabitants Of This Land

For many years the churches of Christ have waged and won battles against almost insurmountable situations. Faithful gospel preachers have stood on the forensic platform and presented the truth of God's infallible word against atheist, modernist and liberal elements alike, and have emerged victorious. One would think with all of the battles that have been fought, that one might be able to relax and take it



John G. Shaver

easy for awhile, but such is not the case. Every time that one foe falls it seems that two more take his place. This wouldn't be so bad, but it seems more and more that our own brethren are the ones who are drifting further and further from the truth of God's word.

Amos, in the long ago stated, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed" (Amos 3:3)? This question must be answered, and answered with all finality. Can one walk with those who trample it asunder, as if it means nothing at all? Of course not! This would mean that we cannot walk with those of the denominational world who hold false doctrines, and we cannot walk with those of our own number who hold false views (II Cor. 6:14-15). If not, why not? We have a heinous monster growing by leaps and bounds in our midst, and that monster is liberalism. Just a few examples of this injurious sin: "We can fellowship anybody regardless of his belief or practice," or, "Book, chapter and verse preaching is old fashioned, and cannot get the job done anymore," or, "The world is changing and we have to change in order to survive," or, "The end justifies the means," or, "Any version of the Bible can be used; they all teach the truth." May God help us! The above statements were not made by denominationalists, but by those who profess to be our brethren! The above statements have been made by elders, preachers and members of the body of Christ.

Brethren, we, like the nation of Israel, are making

league with the inhabitants of the land. Israel fell because she rejected God and his instructions. Will this be our lot? Will we fall because we were too cowardly to stand against the liberals? I sincerely hope not. This situation will not just go away. If anything, it will get worse, unless we stand and fight!

How do we fight this ungodly element? Elders of the body of Christ will have to stand up and be counted in giving the bum's rush to the liberal minded preachers among us; and if they don't have the backbone to do it, get out and let someone serve who has! The members of the church have to stand against ungodly pretenders. Preacher's will have to stand for the truth of God's word, rather than preach a wishy-washy, spineless, watered down version of the gospel just to keep their jobs. We have too many pulpit fillers and not enough preachers, and I fear that this is probably the major source of our problem.

Many among us are saying, "Oh, just leave them alone; we don't have that trouble here. And besides, we don't want to hurt anyone's feelings." I can guarantee you of one thing dear friend, you leave false doctrine alone, fail to refute it, and you will have it! The general idea today is to let the alien sinner and the erring child of God go to hell happy. Don't dare prick their hearts with the gospel, or point out a specific sin, for it might hurt their feelings. I wonder what Paul or Stephen would have said of that spineless thought? I, for one, do not, and will not accept such a philosophy!

Many among us are following after the denominations like a puppy follows after its mother. They are not bound by the scriptures, and come up with one gimmick after another trying to entice people into their midst. But guess what? Just a little while later, here come some of the so-called churches of Christ clamoring for more and more of their gimmicks, so we can be like the nations round about. Brethren, when are we going to grow up and get the point? When will we get back to the idea of "I will do only what God has authorized, on more, and no less." Jeremiah stated, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). Where do we go from here? On what do we stand? The Book, dear friend, *THE BOOK!*—Rt. 10, Box 186 B, Jasper, Al 35501

Turn Around And Say, "I Love You!"

Continued from page 1

benefit in love is the SAYING of it rather than the DEMONSTRATING of it. One would have expected this kind of thing in a holiness assembly, but now it is a growing thing among the saints of God.

One man, in a recent publication, became quite upset when someone dared question the usefulness of the practice. His point was: "If God commands us to love, what is the harm in a congregation expressing that love?" Here again, he is confusing the SAYING of it with the DOING of it! If I were a visitor in an assembly, and perfect strangers turned and said, "I love you!", I'd wonder just what peculiar twist of mind had them. As a stranger, I could sense their goodwill by the way they greeted me, made me feel at

home, directed me to the proper place for study and worship and expressed an interest in my being there and in wanting me to visit again. All of that a stranger needs, wants, should expect, and all of it he would understand.

The best one could do, in loving an absolute stranger, is to value his soul and appreciate his worth in the kingdom or his potential worth in the kingdom if he is not a Christian. All of that would be a little hard to express to a person, and here again, the saying of it might well run him off and have you branded as a real look!

Rather than causing the church to be more spiritual, the sensational, emotional gimmickry of the

last several years has caused us to be less spiritual! It has done nothing but make a mockery of real Biblical teaching. It has substituted an outward expression—so many words—for the actual DOING OF THE DEED (James 1:25).

I can, by a Christian attitude and life, show to my brethren and to all men, my love. I can, by proper spirit and hospitality, show a visitor to our services all he will need to see Christ in me. My love will be that which he can see and know, and I'll never have to form the words; that's good, for in most cases he wouldn't believe it anyway if an absolute stranger turned and said, "I love you!" —Fulton, Ms. 38843

Seven Deadly Sins — Anger

Continued from Page 2

retaliation transgress the law of God. Paul had the answer on what our attitude should be in the book of Romans when he said, "Dearly beloved avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, vengeance is mine: I will repay saith the

Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:19-21).

May we all do as Paul instructed: "Be ye angry and sin not...." (Ephesians 4:26). We must always strive to be in control of ourselves.—P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580

Religious Confusion

Just suppose that you receive an invitation to attend a series of religious meetings which is to be conducted by this writer. The meeting is to be for five nights, beginning on a Monday and concluding the following Friday. On the first night, an exhortation is given relative to salvation from sins. Emphasis is given to the teaching that everyone will be saved eternally, thus, the doctrine of UNIVERSALISM. Tuesday night, at the



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

conclusion of a Bible-centered lesson, stress is given to the point that there isn't anything that one can do regarding salvation; that is, some are chosen to eternal life while others are chosen to eternal damnation. The teaching of Calvin, that is, the doctrine of PREDESTINATION is preached by this writer. Again, on Wednesday night you return and hear this scribe instruct people in the way of redemption by teaching sinners that the only way to be saved is to believe. This could be classified as being the doctrine of FAITH ONLY. Somewhat confused, you are still determined to learn more of the Bible so you come to the meeting on Thursday night. As the lesson is being concluded, sinners are urged to come down to the 'mourner's bench' and PRAY THROUGH. By this time, you must have some doubt as to the stability of the speaker since you have heard him teaching differently the past four nights relative to salvation from sins. Yet, in spite of this confusion, you decide to return for the final session of the meeting. The concluding service is an emotional one with much pleading with the sinners to obey Christ. This time, however, you hear this writer instructing the lost to BELIEVE in Christ, REPENT of their sins, CONFESS their faith in Christ and to be IMMERSSED into Christ of the remission of their sins. At this, you leave the building confused and angry. You wanted to know how to be saved but your confidence in the speaker has been completely destroyed. You determine never to enter a church

building again. A hypothetical case, you say? Yes. But, let's approach this matter with a few variations.

Just suppose that five different religious organizations in one locale decide to have a series of meetings during the same five day period, and, you have received invitations from each group. Because of your personal acquaintances in each group you decide to attend one night of each meeting. On Monday night, group number one teaches that all men will be saved regardless of their morality. Group number two on Tuesday night emphasizes that some are predestined to heaven and others are predestined to hell. On Wednesday night, group number three preaches that one is saved by faith only; while group number four stresses that all sinners present on Thursday night should come down to the mourner's bench and pray through. Friday night, you hear the preacher of group number five teach sinners to believe in Christ, turn from their sins and upon a confession of their faith, to be baptized in order to be saved. A hypothetical case? No, for such situations

and circumstances occur practically every Sunday.

Can each group be correct and scriptural in its different teaching? If so, could not this writer be as equally scriptural in teaching similarly? If not, why not? Could not this scribe be just as sincere in believing the different teachings as the five different groups in believing their respective doctrines? Is the Holy Spirit guiding men in believing and teaching contrary doctrines? If this be the case, is God the author of the religious confusion that exists today? Is it more acceptable for a plurality of men to teach different doctrines than it is for one man to teach different doctrines? If so, why? Could you accept the thought that Peter, Paul, and other inspired men taught contradictory ways of salvation in their day? Can we not see that the reason why so many people are confused in religion today, and, that many even become skeptical in the existence of God and the Bible. These questions are raised to motivate you to think and read the Bible.

Short Sermons

EVERY MAN MUST LIVE WITH THE MAN HE MAKES OF HIMSELF, AND THE BETTER JOB HE DOES IN MOULDING HIS CHARACTER AND IMPROVING HIS MIND, THE BETTER COMPANY HE WILL HAVE.

* * * * *

ANOTHER THING MAN CAN DO THAT THE LOWER ANIMALS CAN'T IS STAND UPRIGHT IN FRONT OF A CROWD AND PUT BOTH FEET IN HIS MOUTH.

* * * * *

DOING AN INJURY PUTS YOU BELOW YOUR ENEMY; REVENGING ONE MAKES

YOU BUT EVEN WITH HIM; FORGIVING HIM SETS YOU ABOVE HIM.

* * * * *

A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE HONEST AS THE DAY IS LONG: BUT WHEN IT GETS DARK — LOOK OUT!

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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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VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 1979

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Bible To Be Condensed

(No. 1)

[Editor's note: This lengthy article is to be run in two installments. We recommend a careful reading by all because of the nature of the subject matter].

Imagine, if you can, that you have never seen or heard of the Bible. Now, suddenly, someone places a copy in your hands. You examine it carefully. As you thumb through its pages, you feel its leather binding and take note of its careful printing. You also ponder the huge size of the book. You are impressed by the size and make-up of the Bible which set it apart as a most unusual book.



RALPH WALLIN, JR.

What is your attitude about the Bible? Attitude is something which causes us to act either in the right way or the wrong way toward people and things. Many have been led to think they need a math book, science book, English book, but not the Book of books. The inspired Luke said, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few" (Acts 17:11-12).

Our greatest needs are not to be better educated, not to be richer, not to be better looking, not to have better automobiles, and not to have bigger and better houses. Our greatest need is for a better attitude toward the Bible. We should have a ready mind to search the scriptures and see if that which is taught religiously

is true.

Luke states that many of the people of Berea believed, even of the Greeks, men and women. They had a good attitude toward the truth. Our attitude should be right toward all truth regardless of what it is or what we find it to be.

Do you study your Bible? What does the Bible mean to you? The beginning of real Bible study comes from a deep appreciation of it. A person's soul and his Bible are his two greatest possessions. The only light for the soul is the Bible. As the Psalmist said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). When a person's faith in the Bible, is destroyed he is left as a wanderer in the darkness without a light to guide him.

The Bible is our only hope of finding our way through the world and finally out of the world. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). The prophet of God recognized the need for divine guidance. Jeremiah knew that man, if he is guided in the right direction, needs to follow the Bible.

There is a deliberate and planned attack on the Bible. The Bible is being attacked from many sides. We must meet these attacks head-on and stop them. This can be done only when we are aroused to clean the dust off our Bibles and get them down to study as never before. We need a better attitude toward the Bible.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple" (Psalm 19:7). The Bible is perfect and cannot be improved upon. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21).

One of the latest attacks upon the Bible is the one being made by the *Reader's Digest* editors. Their mistake is in thinking that the Bible can be compared to the contemporary works of men. The Bible cannot be successfully compared to any book or any sets of books. The Bible is a

library; yet it is only one book. It has sixty-six books, but it is one book. Though there are sixty-six books there is a unity that runs through all these books that makes them one. The black line of man's sin and the scarlet thread of redemption is never lost sight of in a single book of the Bible. Whatever is said in any book is always related to these two great subjects. The Bible is unique. It will always be unique because it originated with God (II Peter 1:21).

According to the Savannah Morning News, Saturday, January 6, 1979, page 2a, "The Digest editors are putting their pencils to the Bible. Starting with the 800,000-word Revised Standard Version, they plan to cut the Old Testament in half and trim about one fourth of the New Testament, a job they said may take up to five years."

Isn't it interesting that it took about forty different men a period of almost sixteen-hundred years to give us the Bible, and now the *Reader's Digest* editors are going to take away half of the Old Testament and trim about one fourth of the New Testament in five years? This certainly proves one thing. It doesn't take as long to destroy as it does to make or build. I am sure Mr. Herbert Lieberman, executive editor of condensed book projects, thinks he is doing people a service. There are a number of Bible passages which must be considered at all times.

First, which words and verses of the Bible are not important? Jesus said, in Matthew 4:4, "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The Apostle Paul wrote, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given

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Words Of Truth

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"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness"

— Acts 26:25

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Be A Prude!

In our free and liberated society, many are ashamed of being pure, decent and chaste. Why should anyone be ashamed of doing that which is right both for now and for eternity?

Do you find yourself defensive if called a prude? Actually, this term is derived from the french word, "prude-femme," denoting a lady of modesty and taste. This sounds a lot like the woman of I Timothy 2:9 doesn't it? "In like



DALTON KEY

manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

What we need today are more prudes, more men and women of modesty and good taste. Our Lord has said, "Blessed are the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8). The apostle Paul stated, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thessalonians 5:22). Again, Paul instructed young Timothy, "Keep thyself pure" (I Timothy 5:22). Yes, the Bible exhorts, "Be a prude!"

You don't find prudes on skid-row. You don't find prudes in the penitentiary. You don't find prudes being assaulted because of their scanty attire. You don't find prudes slumped over in a filthy, stenchful back alley begging for another "fix." No, you don't find prudes in the sewer of this world's sinful society. Yes, common sense urges, "Be a prude!" — Box 126, Aurora, Missouri 65605.

Subscribe To The Words of Truth

Do You Know Who The Enemy Is?

Sometime within the past year or two—we don't remember when—we wrote an article for this column entitled, "Do You Know Who Your Friends Are?" As we recall, the thrust of that article was to emphasize the fact that those who point out to us our shortcomings may be our best friends, while those who do nothing but compliment us may be our enemies.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Though the title of this article may remind you of the other article, the purpose of this article is different. In this we want to plead with brethren to exercise caution in handling differences within the body of Christ. We realize this plea will automatically be interpreted by some as suggesting that brethren not oppose liberal trends within the church, or that such opposition should be mild. Those who know us know better. We firmly believe that those who are trying to restructure the church, and make it into nothing more than a denomination among denominations need to be exposed, and their error needs to be refuted. This paper always has been and will continue to be used for that purpose as well as for the promulgation of the truth in other areas.

What we are talking about is the tendency on the part of some to consider all who differ with them as having no respect for the word of God, as not caring about Bible authority, as having no love for the truth, as being indifferent toward right and wrong, as not being honest in their views, etc. And we are talking about differences either in judgment or in areas wherein great and good men have differed down through the years. In some cases we are talking about vicious at-

tacks made against some who are among the greatest friends the truth has ever had.

We recall reading an article which was written by a young preacher some time before the death of our late beloved brother Gus Nichols. The young man was taking issue with brother Nichols with reference to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and from some of the things said in the article, one might have gotten the impression that brother Nichols was a great enemy to the truth and should be shunned on every hand. Other men, and more mature than this young man, have differed with reference to this very matter without attacking each other or leaving the impression that they considered each other as being unsound and unfit for service in God's kingdom.

Is a brother who loves, preaches, and defends fundamental Bible truth an enemy to me or the church simply because he differs with me on this matter? Is he an enemy to the church because he believes the Bible allows the guilty party in a divorce action to remarry under certain circumstances? Does his willingness to extend fellowship to those who use the Revised Standard Version make him useless in the kingdom, without any further consideration? Should he be branded as digressive because he sees no sin involved in the matter of a Christian college chorus' presenting a program of spiritual songs in the presence of an audience? Are these the battle lines? Are these the issues that separate the true from the false? Is this the territory for which the faithful must fight and win in order that the kingdom of Christ might maintain its identity in this wicked world?

We have never said, nor do we now say, that one should not teach the truth about these and other matters. What we do say is, that with the powers of denominationalism, pentecostalism, liberalism, Catholicism, Calvinism, Premillennialism, Materialism, worldliness, anti-ism, etc. threatening our very existence, care must be taken that we not destroy our allies in this great fight, while we allow the real enemy to go unnoticed and unchecked. *Know who the enemy is!*

Kindness and Forgiveness

"Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32).

In our relations with each other two things are enjoined: (1) Be kind to each other; (2) Forgive each other, with tenderheartedness coming in between. If we exercised more kindness toward each other, we would have fewer occasions demanding forgiveness.

Christianity, when lived as Christ prescribes, destroys "all bitterness and wrath and anger, clamor, and evil speaking, with



W.C. QUILLEN

malice" from the heart (Eph. 4:31). There is no Christianity in sour rude, rough, unkind, uncouth, uncharitable, impolite, evil disposition. The Spirit of Christ is incompatible with a fussy fault-finder, a chronic critic, a constant complainer, a mouthy murmurer, and the heart of a heretic (Tit. 3:10). Because of such the home is frequently robbed of its happiness, the church of its peace and unity, and the guilty, unless there is repentance and forgiveness, of his soul.

"Be ye kind one to another." Kindness costs you nothing, except perhaps a little pride and a bit of stubbornness, neither of which you should have anyway. Yet it rewards you so greatly, and in so many ways! In being kind, you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. So let us be kind, courteous, considerate, and polite.

Such behavior, growing out of a true and tender heart, accomplishes at least four things: (1) It keeps

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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).

"Are there instances of the use of 'Roman' time, as well as 'Jewish' time in the New Testament? How does this matter relate to the proper understanding of Acts 20:7-11?"

The sacred writers apparently used both Jewish and Roman methods of calculating time. Mark, for example, declares that the crucifixion occurred at the third hour (Mark 15:25), John, at the sixth hour (John 19:14). According to Jewish count, Mark put it at 9 a.m.; John at 12 noon. On the assumption that John followed the Roman method (which we use in this country today), the hour was 6 a.m.—six hours following the beginning of the day the previous midnight. Under this hypothesis, John designated the hour when the events began, Mark when the crucifixion was actually consummated. We prefer this explanation (advanced and defended by Westcott in an elaborate note at the end of his comments on John 19, and also held by Wieseler, Moulton, McClellan, B. W. Johnson, Tholuck, Wordsworth, and many others) to the view that there is a copyists' mistake in the text (Alford, Clarke) or that the difficulty is insoluble (Meyer). It is interesting to observe that there is a disposition by commentators who reject the view that John followed the Roman method to assert utterly without justification (see Westcott's article alluded to above), that other allusions to time by John cannot be regarded as Roman. We believe these confirm the view rather than controvert it. Johnson's judicious note amply justifies, in our opinion, John's use of Roman time: "John wrote many years later, after Jerusalem had fallen, among people who began to count at midnight, as did all the Roman world, and he therefore used their language and called six o'clock the sixth hour, as we do, rather than the first hour as the Hebrews did" (People's New Testament with Notes, page 402). It seems most reasonable that he should so do. Had it been the Lord's will that the Jewish reckoning was to obtain in the church today he would have so indicated it; in the absence of such intimation, it was proper for John, who wrote toward the end of the first century, and for a vastly wider audience than Matthew, Mark and Luke, to use the method of computing time best known to his readers.

But, what of the Troas meeting?

En route to Jerusalem Paul stopped in Troas where he spent a week with the saints and, on the "first day of the week" assembled with them "to break bread." The meeting was at night (Acts 20:7-12). It is a matter of no little interest when this meeting was convened; whether immediately following the onset of the Lord's day, if determined by Jewish reckoning (which would have started at sunset on what we call Saturday), or on the following night—Sunday evening, by Roman determination. The solution is not an easy one and we can answer only as the matter appears to us. I believe that the meeting occurred according to Jewish reckoning and the church assembled soon after sunset on what we would now call Saturday evening, but the early part of Sunday—the first day of the week—to them.

(1) There is no indication at this time (John wrote the Gospel many years later) that the Roman method of computing time had come into use. The early church, under the influence of Jewish teachers, long adhered to Jewish customs and practices and yielded them only under great pressure. For many years following the establishment of the church, numerous Christian Jews observed the Sabbath and the first day of the week. Their penchant for observance of special days required the attention of Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (chapter 14).

(2) Paul arrived in Troas in the early part of the week, and tarried there seven days, evidently waiting for the Lord's day so that he might worship on that special day with the disciples. On the assumption that

the meeting occurred on Sunday night, we must accept the conclusion that Paul allowed to pass the whole of the daylight portion of the Lord's day and waited until the shadows of the evening had fallen before convening the meeting to worship God and memorialize the Lord's death. This appears so inconsistent with what we know of the apostle that we unhesitatingly reject the view that he would be thus indifferent to obligations he deemed so vitally important. The objection that the saints in Troas were slaves and thus not permitted by their masters to meet in the daytime seems inconclusive; (a) there is no indication that they were slaves; (b) if so, this would provide additional grounds why the church was assembled in the evening, following the onset of the Lord's day, rather than on the morrow. That it is affirmed, by the historian, they departed "on the morrow," does not necessarily support the view that the method of determining the day was Roman; the word "day" is used here, as often elsewhere, to indicate the light portion of the twenty-four hours' period, designated in John 11:9, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?"

(3) The assumption that the Roman method of reckoning prevailed creates grave difficulty regarding when the supper was eaten. They came together "to break bread." Paul, however, continued his speech past midnight, and in the early morning hours "The bread" (Acts 20:11, ASV) was broken. If the meeting convened on Sunday evening, the breaking of this bread occurred, according to Roman count, on Monday morning. Some seek to obviate this difficulty by alleging that this refers to a common meal, and that the Lord's supper was observed before the midnight hour. This is, of course, purely an assumption, and without support in the text. The fact

that the article appears before the word "bread" in verse 11, indicates that the inspired writer intended the reader to identify this bread with that earlier mentioned in the text (verse 7). Moreover, in verse 11, we are informed that "when he (Paul)...had broken the bread and eaten," he continued talking with the saints until daybreak—understandable if he were officiating at the Lord's table, and broke the bread (ate it) before passing it to the others to break (eat), but unaccountable if it were a meal and he alone ate, inasmuch as the others had been there as long as he. We believe that the breaking of the bread in verse 11 refers to the Lord's supper; and that the mention of the word eaten suggests a common meal.

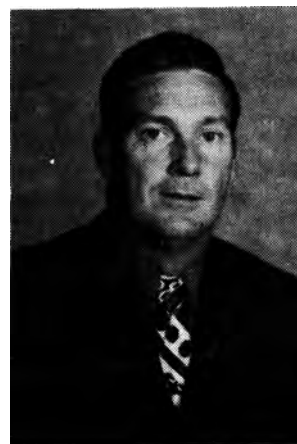
These matters are interesting and important from an exegetical standpoint, but are no more significant in establishing a pattern for us today than the fact that the meeting was conducted in a third-story building, the sermon preceded the supper, and a common meal followed its observance. Of significance is the fact that here is apostolic precedent for the observance of the Lord's supper on the first day of the week, a day, the limits of which, we can determine, only by compliance with the customs which among us prevail. Today, the first day of the week is that twenty-four period between midnight Saturday and midnight Sunday. The New Testament does not designate an hour or other measurement of time within this interval. It follows, therefore, that sincere saints of God may assemble at anytime therein with the assurance that their worship is acceptable to God. Those who postpone their worship until the evening because they prefer to engage in matters of worldly concern, make religion a matter of convenience and are in conflict with other principles of truth with which we have not herein dealt.

Seven Deadly Sins — Slothfulness

Slothfulness is the theme of discussion in this the sixth in a series of articles concerning seven deadly sins. The meaning of the word slothfulness is: to be sluggish. We are now living in a time where we see the sin of slothfulness on every hand. People today are putting off today's tasks until tomorrow. Many in the church today are putting off what they know to do now until a later time, and some try to shift their own responsibility to someone else. We must never forget that Christianity is on an individual basis, and we must stand in judgment to give an account of our individual living. "For we shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ. For it is written, as I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:10-12).

When a person is guilty of slothfulness he is lazy and indolent. "A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again" (Proverbs 19:24). Think about how great the church would be and all the many good works that could be accomplished if there were not those who were lazy and indifferent.

One of the chief causes of slothfulness is procrastination. Today we say, "tomorrow I will do



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

this or that," and when tomorrow gets here it is today, and we are still looking to the future. Solomon said, "Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Proverbs 27:1). "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14).

The curse of slothfulness paves the way for further temptations. The second curse it makes for discontentment and complaint (Matthew 25:24-26). The third curse is it begets beggars. This sin depicts the society of America today, not wanting to do any work and living off others. Paul said, "that if any would not work, neither should he eat" (II Thessalonians 3:10). It is time now that we wake up and redeem the time (Ephesians 5:14-16).

God in all ages has called men to help his cause, and these men were those who were busy doing something. Think of Moses, Gideon, Amos, Peter, Matthew and Paul. God doesn't call lazy people to do the work that needs to be done. Today in the Christian age, God calls through the gospel (II Thessalonians 2:14). In obeying the gospel there is something that we must do. Peter said "...save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40).

There are many things that should inspire and motivate every child of God to be busy every day that we live, such as: (1) God's blessings and goodness, (2) the desire to be like our Lord (3) realization that we are to give account of our stewardship of time, talents, etc., and (4) when we look out we can see so much that needs to be done. Let us repent of the sin of slothfulness and begin now to be on fire for our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.—P.O. Box 188, Parrish, AL 35580

Bible To Be Condensed

Continued from page 1

by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:14-17).

Which words of the Old and New Testament are not needed? Which scripture of the Old and New Testaments is not inspired? Jesus did not say that we would live by a few words or some of the words of God. Jesus said, "by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Jesus Christ, as God's Son, knew what we needed to have life here on earth and to prepare for the life to come. When God gave us the Bible, he gave us everything we need to guide us.

In the second place, John tells us, "and there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen" (John 21:35). "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31). God knew what to give us and what not to include. He did the trimming before any of the writers from Moses to Jude wrote a single word.

God gave us only what we need—nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else. And we need all of it today. As the scripture has said, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (II Peter 1:3).

The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans said, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). Here Paul tells us all the things which had been written by other writers of the Bible were written for our benefit. Which words or scriptures can man "trim" from the Bible without causing damage to the scriptures? God gives us the complete answer in the Bible!

Near the beginning of the Bible we read, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2). Toward the middle of the Bible we read, "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Proverbs 30:6). And near the close of the Bible we read, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man

shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18-19). Like a golden thread this principle runs throughout the Bible. The editors of *Reader's Digest* are in error and certainly in conflict with all of the scriptures in this article. In their attempt to "trim" the Bible, they are violating God's commands.

Why do people seek to change God's word? What is the motive of those who tamper with God's book? I firmly believe they do not have the right attitude toward the Bible. Sometimes the motive for doing a thing is money. The motive might be for recognition among his associates or co-workers. A person's motive might be to accept it as a challenge of something never before undertaken. The motive might come from a feeling of doing a good service. Whatever the reason, it is wrong! Every departure from God's word was denounced by Christ while on earth. His attitude has not changed. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). (More next week.) —P. O. Box 703, Claxton, Ga. 30417.

Kindness and Forgiveness

Continued from Page 2

down hostilities; (2) It promotes peace and good will; (3) It tends to bring those who sin against us to repentance; (4) It makes it easier for us to forgive them when they repent.

The need for forgiveness is universal. It is not optional, but imperative. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wages of sin is death." But God

forgives the penitent believer who obeys him. He then imposes on the forgiven the duty and obligation to forgive when sinned against. We must forgive those who sin against us "even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us." And unless we do so, we can not be forgiven (Matt. 6:14-15).

"Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and

beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye; and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness" (Col. 2:12-14). —P.O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

Suffering Children

If the information we receive from social agencies is anything like correct, the children of America are suffering more abuse from their parents than at any time in the history of this nation. What a sad commentary on a way of life that brings parents to bruise, batter, burn and in other ways brutalize the fragile bodies of babies and youth.

I read recently of two children who were found chained inside a room filthy with their own excretion. I heard a report from a social worker of a baby whose alcoholic mother allowed her baby to remain in the same diaper until it had to be soaked loose, as the material had become matted to the raw flesh of the child.

When we read or hear reports of the above it just plain makes us made to think of such cruelty. However, have we really stopped to think about the treatment our own children and/or grandchildren receive at our hands? You see, we can be guilty of abusing our children spiritually.

Children suffer the consequences of unfaithful parents! — This is attested to by the Israelites who, because of their unbelief, refused to accept God's gift of Canaan, turned back at Kadesh to wander in the



CURTIS R. DOWDY

wilderness forty years. It is at this point we hear the Lord say, "And *your children shall* wander in the wilderness forty years, and *bear your whoredoms . . .*" (KJV). Looking at another version, it reads, "And *your children shall* be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and *shall suffer for your faithlessness. . .*" (RSV). The NIV gives it, ". . . *shall suffer for your unfaithfulness.*"

As it was true then it is so now; parents who have turned back from following the Lord are guilty of abusing their children, spiritually. Children suffer the consequences of unfaithful parents. They will be robbed of those golden moments that are so soon

gone forever, opportunities to learn the art and joy of true whole-hearted worship. They will miss the life changing experiences which can come only to a family that prays, sings, studies, gives, observes and serves together.

Oh, no! You would never chain a child nor neglect his wet diaper, but what about the spirit of that child? Every unfaithful parent ought to repent, pray for forgiveness and then lead the children in spiritual development.

Are your children suffering because of your spiritual whoredoms?—Obion, Tennessee.

Gus Nichol's Preachers Workshop

The Gus Nichols Preachers Workshop which was begun several years ago will be held this year at Indian Creek Youth Camp near Parrish, Al. The date of the workshop will be October 1 thru 5. The facilities of the camp will be furnished free of charge to those who wish to come. Meals will be served in the Camp Cafeteria at the cost of \$2 per meal.

Indian Creek Youth Camp is located in a beautiful secluded spot 17 miles from Jasper, Al. There are accommodations for approximately 100 campers with hot and cold water in bath houses. There is also limited space for those who

wish to bring their own campers though there are no water or sewer hook-ups for campers.

In previous years the workshop has been held in various places and the charge of \$50.00 was made to those in attendance. This workshop is being sponsored by Sixth Avenue Church of Christ with other churches cooperating.

Preachers wishing to reserve one of the 100 spaces should write the church at 1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Al. 35501 or call (205) 384-6446.

Speakers participating in the workshop will be announced soon.



Words Of Truth

Speak forth

Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, APRIL 20, 1979

NUMBER 16

Bible To Be Condensed

(No. 2)

(Editor's note: This is the second part of this article concerning plans announced by READER'S DIGEST to produce the Bible in condensed form as they have done other books. For the first part of this article see last week's WORDS OF TRUTH).



RALPH WALLIN, JR.

On Tuesday, January 9, 1979, I called Mr. Herbert Lieberman and asked the purpose of their "putting their pencils to the Bible." He said, "Our purpose is to get more people to read the Bible. We will leave all sixty-six books intact. The structure will remain unchanged and the language will be very close to the Revised Standard Version. At most, the most minimal kind of transitional word might be used." In turn he asked me, "Would you rather see a Bible collecting dust or people reading a condensed form of the Bible?" He further said, "We are not changing the Bible. We are only removing the repetition and shortening the genealogies of the Bible". I then asked Mr. Lieberman how he would treat Genesis chapters one and two. He replied, "We haven't gone that far yet, but I suppose we will leave them very much the same." I then asked how he would treat the genealogies of Matthew one and Luke three. He

said, "I suppose we will leave them much as they are now."

At this point I would like to examine and comment about our conversation. First, it is better to have a Bible collecting dust than give a condensed form of the Bible to a man and tell him he has the word of God. If the *Reader's Digest* Condensed Bible has less than the Bible, it contains too little. If it contains more than the Bible, it contains too much. If it contains the same thing as the Bible, why have it?

The *Reader's Digest* editors have no right to tamper with the word of God. God's word is the final authority for everything that we do. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28:18). Paul wrote, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17). God did not give Mr. Lieberman or anyone else the authority to change the Bible. A condensed Bible is a perverted Bible. The market is now flooded with perverted Bibles in many of the so-called translations. Mr. Lieberman and the *Reader's Digest* crew want to add to this perverted group of translations by giving us a perverted condensed Bible which is not at all the Bible; and it is a mockery to call it a Bible.

Perversion means an improper mixture. In Jeremiah 23:36 Jeremiah accused the false prophets in Israel of perverting the words of God: "For ye have perverted the words of the living God." God said that he would punish that man and his house. When we stand in the presence of the word of God, we stand in awe. To alter the word of God in any manner is to pervert it. Men such as Mr. Lieberman, who change it, fall under the condemnation of the passages we have given.

Men such as the editors for *Reader's Digest* condensed books and others have exercised the liberty to put into their own words what they believe to be the meaning of words and phrases and sentences in the Bible. "At most, the most

minimal kind of transitional word might be used." This statement alone is enough to cause A God fearing, Bible believing person to know that their motive is to attack the Bible as the word of God.

Mr. Lieberman said, "We have talked with a number of religious leaders across the land and they are thrilled with our idea." Yes, I can understand why these religious leaders would be thrilled. They are the liberal religious theologians of the day. Why should they not be happy? These liberal religious theological leaders have a large company like *Reader's Digest* helping them in their attack against the Bible.

It is no little wonder that Mr. Lieberman and his crew would decide to tamper with the Bible at a time when people already have a shaken faith and broken confidence in the inspiration of the Bible and the deity of Jesus Christ. With bold and brazen audacity, these editors with the encouragement of these liberal theologians want to give us a condensed Bible to implement the theological views of ultra-modern schools of religious thought. The Bible as we have had it and known it was produced in an age of faith in its integrity and inspiration. This condensed Bible is produced in an age of doubt and of corrupt religious thought.

Mr. Lieberman said, "We want more people to read the Bible." If this is his real reason, then he should spend the time and money to encourage people to read the Bibles he says are in their homes collecting dust, instead of giving people a condensed Bible. People who want to read the Bible have always read it and will continue to do so.

By the removal of one half of the Old Testament and one fourth of the New Testament, there will be the disappearance of words from the text through and through, page after page, verse by verse, deletion after deletion.

When any man tampers with the Bible he is guilty of trifling with eternal things. In the

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

I am not read most noble fees
 but speak forth the Words of
 Truth and soberness

— Acts 26:25

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Calling On The Name Of The Lord

"And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name" [Acts 9:14]. These words were spoken by the disciple Ananias to God in reference to Saul, the former persecutor of the church of Jesus Christ. Saul had authority to cast into prison "all that call on thy name," that is, the name of God. But, what was it and what is it to "call on thy name"?

We can believe with confidence that it is not a

mere repeating of the name of the Lord. On one occasion, Jesus states: "Not everyone 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" (Matt. 7:21). In Luke 6:46 we read, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" One can readily see that whatever calling on the name of the Lord is, such is more than saying his precious name. These two passages greatly emphasize the need of obedience to the commands of the Lord.

The first instance wherein we find an inspired man's using the prophecy from Joel 2:32 was Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:21). That prophecy was: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Peter continued preaching to his audience that Christ had died and had been resurrected by the power of the Father (Acts 2:23, 24, 32). Those Jews who believed Peter's preaching concerning the sonship of Christ inquired of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They were instructed to "Repent, and be baptized...for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:36-38). Some three thousands souls "gladly received his word" and "were baptized" (Acts 2:41). Thus, the people on Pentecost understood clearly that calling on the name of the Lord was not merely an utterance but rather it was actions motivated by faith.

In Romans 10:13, we find the expression used

Continued on page 3



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

Clearly set forth in the Bible is the fact that there is such a thing as worshiping God in a way which is unacceptable. Matthew 15:9 speaks of some whose worship is vain. A fact just as clearly set forth in the Bible is that there is such a thing as acceptable worship. When the tempter sought to entice our Lord to fall down and worship him, our Lord replied: "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord

thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:10). In order for us to please God in our worship it is imperative that we know the difference between worship which is acceptable and that which is not.

What is the standard by which we determine whether or not worship is acceptable? Do we measure the acceptability of worship by its pomp or grandeur? Do we measure it by its power to excite or please the worshiper? Do we determine its acceptability by polling the populace to see what the majority believe about it? Is the sincerity of the worshiper the criterion by which we measure the acceptability of worship? The answer to all these questions, even the last one, is the same. While one of the requirements for acceptable worship is that the worshiper be sincere, the sincerity of the worshiper is not the standard by which worship is measured to determine if it is acceptable. Then what is?

The word of God is now and always has been the standard of acceptable worship. From the early morning of time down to the present God has accepted the worship of those who worshiped according to his instructions; and he has rejected the worship of those who deviated from those instructions. Not to be overlooked is the fact that there has never been a time in the history of man's existence when man was allowed to choose the way he would worship God. God has always given instructions concerning how man should worship.

In the fourth chapter of Genesis, the Bible tells of the worship of Cain and Abel, sons of Adam and Eve. Both Cain and Abel worshiped the one true and living God. Both brought sacrifices; and both were obviously sincere. God accepted the worship of one, but rejected the worship of the other. Why? Because one worshiped as God instructed, and the other did not. Two passages in the New Testament make this point crystal clear: Hebrews 11:4 and Romans 10:17. The first of these tells us that it was "by faith" that Abel offered a sacrifice acceptable to God; the second tells us that faith comes by hearing the word of God. Abel worshiped according to the word of God, and God was pleased.

Another incident which illustrates the absolute necessity of allowing the word of God to govern our worship is recorded in Leviticus 10:1,2: "And Nadab and Abihu. . . offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." So far as the record is concerned these sons of Aaron deviated from God's instructions concerning worship in only one point, and that a minor one, as most would view it. But using fire which the Lord had not authorized instead of the fire which



BOBBY DUNCAN

Acceptable Worship

the Lord had authorized cost them their lives.

These old Testament incidents were recorded "for our learning" (Rom. 15:4) and serve as "our examples" (I Corinthians 10:6). Jesus makes it clear that we who live in the gospel age must also measure our worship by the word of God. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). To worship "in spirit" is to worship sincerely and from the heart. To worship "in truth" is to worship according to the instruction given in the word of God; for God's "word is truth" (John 17:17).

Worshiping God acceptably in this gospel age involves: (1) singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16); (2) praying (I Thessalonians 5:17; Acts 12:5); (3) preaching or studying the word of God (Acts 20:7; 2:42); (4) eating the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7); and (5) giving as we have been prospered (I Cor. 16:2). Acts 20:7 and I Corinthians 16:2 show clearly that the day upon which all these acts of worship are to be engaged in is "the first of the week." We infer from many passages in the New Testament that singing, praying, preaching, or even the giving of one's means for the work of the Lord may be properly done on other days of the week also—not instead of, but in addition to the first day of the week. The only day of the week, however, upon which we may properly observe the Lord's supper is the first day of the week. There is no authority for its observance upon any other day. But in order for our worship upon the first day of every week to be acceptable, we must observe the Lord's supper. It should be emphasized that those who play instruments, burn incense, light candles, count beads, etc. in their worship are doing so without divine authority.

John 9:31 says, "Now we know that God hearteth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." This remarkable passage shows clearly that our meeting with God's approval depends upon two things: (1) worshiping God acceptably, and (2) being obedient to his will.

Follow The Leader

EARLENE ROSE

Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6).

Little feet are swift to follow
 Footsteps made by adults' feet.
 What is heard by ears so tiny,
 Little lips oft times repeat.

Anxious minds are soon developed,
 And will learn what adults teach.
 Eager hands desire to fondle
 Things for which the adults reach.

Then, if children go asunder,
 Sorrowed adults bow and pray;
 Never guessing pathways trodden
 Have been paved by them each day.

1608 24th St.
 Northport, Al. 35476

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 the use of titles, in religious circles, in harmony with the teaching of the New Testament?"

Their use, and non-use, in some instances, borders on the ludicrous in some of our services these days. For example, in a college auditorium some time ago, it was announced that *Doctor* Blank would deliver the address, *Brother* Blank would lead the prayer, and Bill Jones would direct the singing—three distinct levels!

The public press recently brought to light the shameful fact that five denominational preachers admitted in testimony before the Federal Trade Commission that they paid a Washington "university," fifty dollars each, for "degrees," ranging all the way up to Doctor of Philosophy. Evidence was produced to show that the "university" existed, for the most part, only on paper, yet had branches in most Southern cities. The inglorious publicity focused on these men for buying "degrees," for fifty dollars each, though in the denominational sphere, affords an occasion to direct attention to a definite trend in the church today. It serves to bring to light the temptations some preachers feel to attract to themselves attention, and the condition which prevails in the church which suggest such to them. It is pathetic that a man would so greatly desire to be called "Doctor," he would actually stoop to buy such a title, and it is tragic that circumstances obtain which make him want (and perhaps feel the need of) such an empty title of honor.

Titles of honor, whether earned or unearned, whether real or "honorary," are utterly foreign to the spirit and genius of Christianity; and their use unquestionably falls under the ban of the Lord. In his scathing denunciation of the Pharisees he said: "They...love...greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren" (Matt. 23:5-8). It should be observed that the title "Rabbi" was not an empty honorary one, but the token of long years of sustained and persistent study. It was, as Albert Barnes points out, "A title given to eminent teachers of the law among the Jews; a title of honor and dignity, denoting among the Jews; a title of honor and dignity, denoting their authority and ability to teach. They were gratified with such titles, and wished it given to themselves as denoting superiority. Every time it was given to them it implied their superiority to the persons who used it; and they were fond, therefore, of often hearing it applied to them. There were three titles in use among the Jews—Rab, Rabbi, and Rabban—denoting different degrees of learning and ability, as literary degrees do among us." Jesus did not forbid the use of these titles on the ground that they were empty and unearned; they were real and bona-fide tokens of achievement and learning; they were condemned on the ground that they served to set up distinctions where there should be none—distinctions among those who have a common Master and Lord, and are, therefore, of a common heritage.

The command here, to continue with Barnes, "is an express command to his disciples not to receive such a title of distinction. They were not to covet it; they were not to seek it; they were not to do anything that implied a wish or willingness that it should be appended to their names. Everything which would tend to make a distinction among them, or destroy their parity; everything which would lead the world to suppose that there were ranks and grades among them as ministers, they were to avoid." To conclude with Barnes: "This title (Rabbi) corresponds with the title 'Doctor of Divinity,' as applied to ministers of the gospel; and, so far as I can see, the spirit of the Savior's command is violated by the reception of such

a title, as it would have been by their being called 'Rabbi.' It is a literary distinction. It does not appropriately pertain to office. It makes a distinction among ministers. It tends to engender pride, and a sense of inferiority among those who do not; and the whole spirit and tendency of it is contrary to the 'simplicity that is in Christ'."

The logic of the foregoing quotation is irresistible; and Mr. Barnes' words apply with equal force to titles of any nature among Christians, whatever their significance may be. The desire for an education is a laudable one, and a willingness to make sacrifices to that end is commendable. But we cannot avoid a feeling of fear for the consequences to follow the present-day obsession of many among us to spend years of precious time and effort in delving deeply into matters which at the best cannot contribute to the work of preaching the gospel, and which may, and sometimes do, shake their faith in it.

To qualify for the apostolic encomiums, one needs only to enroll in the University of Sustained Service. He may be sure that any degrees thus obtained will

not be empty, meaningless appellations. *Paul* described *Tychicus* as "the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-servant of the Lord" (Col. 4:7). *Epaphras* was "a servant of Christ Jesus" (Col. 4:12). *Epaphroditus* was his "brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier, and your messenger and minister" (Phil. 2:25). *Apollos* is described as "The brother" (I Cor. 16:12). The list might be indefinitely lengthened: *Phoebe*, a servant of the church; *Priscilla* and *Aquila*, fellow workers in Christ; *Epaenetus*, the beloved; *Andronicus* and *Junias*, fellow prisoners; *Apelles*, approved in Christ; *Rufus*, chosen in the Lord.

The road to true greatness is in service to others. Jesus taught that the way up is *first down*; "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matt. 23:11, 12). It is significant that these words of our Lord were uttered in connection with his denunciation of the Pharisees for their love of distinctive titles.

Shall We Sell Our Baptistry?

TED BROOKS

Recently I heard of an elder who stood before the congregation and said, in effect, "If we're not going to be serious about soul-winning, brethren, we might as well sell our baptistry!" Of course, this good brother was not advocating such a drastic move—he simply sought to awaken his brethren from their sleepy, apathetic attitude toward the lost souls of their community. But then, according to some of my brethren, he might have made sense!

Some of my brethren believe that if the bus ministry has been abused, the solution is to sell the bus. They believe that if some congregations have experience abuses of evangelistic fervor through "soul talks" (a modern-day title for the old "cottage meeting"), then the idea of conducting "soul talks" ought to be pushed aside. Others have ceased having old-time revivals, or have regulated the old 2 and 3 week meeting to a 3-day lectureship to the church about its problems. Why? Because more preaching can be done? Because more souls can be saved? No, but because, we are embarrassed and disappointed in the majority of the "believers" who refuse to work for and support such a *time-consuming effort*. And then we will refer to such a 3-day hearing on "*What's Wrong With The Church*" as a "Gospel Meeting", as if non-Christians should be invited. That is as assinine as to suggest that we sell the baptistry!

Why do we react so negatively? Why can we not see in the negative wrong the potential for positive improvement, and then make those improvements? Why must we appear to be in the abolishing business—abolishing bus ministries, soul talks and revivals?

I have heard elders tell members to stop conducting home Bible studies, because they had run out of Bible class space and felt they could not afford to build on just yet. Worst of all, the members obeyed their elders in this, and today, several years later, they still have not added on classrooms, because they do not need to!

Are we not guilty of excusing our destruction of evangelistic efforts on every hand because our microscopic faith could not find solutions to problems that arise from these efforts?

Let us learn to love little children, and not turn

them away by abolishing bus ministries! Let us grow past prejudices of race and social status. May we learn to discipline and love them into worship with the general assembly, rather than teach them the false conception of a church divided by age.

My brethren, let us continue to have cottage meetings, soul talks, home Bible studies, or whatever the title to a work patterned after the practice of the early disciples going to and meeting in households, evangelizing the lost with the simple gospel. And may we learn that evangelism includes all that encompass living the Christian life, such as spending time as a Christian parent with one's child, and as a Christian husband or wife with one's spouse.

Moreover, brethren, let us revive the old-time revival! Let us get back into the old-fashioned habit of knowing our neighbors, visiting them occasionally, inviting them to be our special guests at an upcoming evangelistic meeting (which could be Sunday morning or night services!), and to share a meal with us afterwards. May we be motivated to ask preachers to come who will preach the pure and simple gospel of Christ, and tell Christians and non-Christians alike *What's Right About The Church of Christ*. Quoting my good preaching brother and friend, S. G. Gray (with whom this may not be original but is, nonetheless, worth quoting), "The Lord's church at its worst is far better than human denominationalism at its best."

We must not sell the baptistry—we must work diligently to keep it in use—for "the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4).—503 Hughes Ave. Attalla, Al. 35954.

Calling On The Name Of The Lord

Continued from page 2

again with reference to calling on the name of the Lord. But, one needs to read the context in verses 13-15 to understand what is meant by this term. If we begin with verse 15 and revert back to verse 13, we understand all that is involved in such a promise.

Continued on page 4

Bible To Be Condensed

Continued from page 1

Savannah Morning News we read, "At most, the most minimal kind of transitional word might be used." This statement within itself is an admission of tampering with the word of God. When you change the ingredients, you have changed the product.

Let us, who believe the Bible came from God, stand firm on God's word and fight for what we know is right. This is an attack on our faith and

the faith of our children. I trust that you will write to Mr. Lieberman in charge of the *Reader's Digest*, Pleasantville, New York, and ask him not to continue this project. *Reader's Digest* has given us many good articles and excellent condensed books. However, they have now stepped out of their field. Let us let them know that we will "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3) And that this contending include a stand

against those who would change the Bible. Let us always have the right attitude about the Bible and the right attitude toward those who would do us harm by changing God's word. However, let us mark them as they should be marked.—312 South River Street, Claxton, Georgia 30417.

Gus Nichols Preachers Workshop

The *Gus Nichols Preachers Workshop* which was begun several years ago, and discontinued last year, will be held this year at Indian Creek Youth Camp near Parrish, Alabama. The date of the workshop will be October 1-5. Facilities of the camp will be furnished free of charge to those wishing to come. Meals will be served in the camp cafeteria at a cost of \$2.00 per meal.

Indian Creek Youth Camp is located in a beautiful secluded spot seventeen miles from Jasper, Alabama. There are accommodations for

approximately one hundred campers, with hot and cold water in the bath houses. There is also limited space for those wishing to bring in their own campers, though there are no water or sewer hook-ups for these campers.

In prior years the workshop has been held in various places, and a charge of fifty dollars was made to those in attendance. This year the workshop is being sponsored by the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, with other churches cooperating. Indian Creek Youth Camp is making its facilities available

free of any charge other than actual expenses incurred. Preachers are invited to attend, paying only for meals. (Incidentally, the camp cooks are excellent cooks, and do not allow anyone to go away hungry.)

Preachers wishing to reserve one of these one hundred spaces should write Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501, or call (205) 384-6446 or 387-1670.

Speakers participating in the workshop will be announced soon.

What Will Your Answer Be?

No fact is taught with greater positiveness and clearness in the Bible than the fact that we must all answer to God for our actions in the judgment at the last great day (II Cor. 5:10; Romans 14:12). But judging by the way many of us live and act, it is apparent that many of us do not expect to have to answer for our deeds and neglect. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: **BUT KNOW THOU, THAT FOR ALL THESE THINGS GOD WILL BRING THEE INTO JUDGMENT**" [Ecl. 11:9].



W.D. HARRIS

What will your answer be before God in judgment if you have failed to learn the saving truth of God's word? The Bible is God's revelation to man, which reveals the divine plan of salvation (Eph. 3:1-3). You cannot die in ignorance of God's truth and be saved eternally (John 8:32). And God's word will be the standard of judgment on that last great day (John 12:48). With Bibles as plentiful as they are in our day, there is no excuse for anyone's dying in ignorance of God's saving truth. We must study to show ourselves approved unto God (II Tim. 2:15).

What will you answer in the judgment if you have been deceived and misled by false prophets and teachers? Jesus warned against being deceived by false teachers (Matt. 7:15-20). He also warned that if the blind follow the blind they will both fall into the ditch (Matt. 15:14). John, the apostle, admonished his readers not to believe every spirit (teacher), but to try the spirits whether they be of God (I John 4:1). This is done by measuring what they teach by the truth revealed in the Bible. "To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).

What will your answer be if you meet God in judgment out of Christ and as one who spurned

opportunity after opportunity to obey the truth? (Romans 2:8, 9; Heb. 2:1-3). How to get into Christ is made crystal clear in the New Testament (Romans 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:26, 27). There is no other way revealed in the New Testament to get into Christ and there is no salvation out of Christ (Eph. 1:3; II Tim. 2:10; II Cor. 5:17). Will you be speechless before the judge at the last great day because you went to meet the bridegroom (Christ) without a wedding garment? (Matt. 22:14).

What will you answer in judgment if you have failed to love your brethren? Jesus said this would be evidence to the world that we are his disciples (John 13:34, 35). It is also evidence that we have passed out of death (spiritual death) into life (I John 3:14). No other duty is enjoined more frequently in the New Testament than this one. If the Lord could love us with all our faults, surely we ought to be able to overlook one another's faults as Christians and love one another. We cannot claim to love God and not love our brethren (I John 4:20, 21).

What will your answer be if you have put your hands to the plow and then looked back? (Luke 9:26). What will your answer be for having crucified the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame? (Heb. 6:4-6). What could an apostate answer, who had better never been born! (Matt. 26:24; II Pet. 2:20-22).

What will your answer be for all the flimsy excuses you have made for absenting yourself from the Bible classes and worship services of the church? (Heb. 10:25; Luke 14:15-35). When you are asked for a reason and you only have an excuse, what will your answer be? If you have failed to mold your life sufficiently into the likeness of Christ's life by failing to assemble enough for worship, how will you answer him?

What will your answer be if you have failed to seek first the kingdom of God? (Matt. 6:33). When the Lord inquires about your missing services to entertain company, or to go anywhere else you wanted to go, but you could not get to services, what will your answer be? (Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26; Col. 3:1).

What a sad day it will be if we meet the Judge of the universe unprepared! Speechless! Condemned! Lost! For eternity!

Some day you'll stand at the bar on high,
Some day your record you'll see;

Some day you'll answer the question of life,
What will your answer be?

Sadly you'll stand, if you're unprepared,
Trembling, you'll fall on your knees;
Facing the sentence of life or of death,
What will your answer be?

Now is the time to prepare, my friend,
Make your soul spotless and free;
Washed in the blood of the Crucified One,
He your answer will be.

What will it be? What will it be?
Where will you spend eternity?
What will it be, O what will it be?
What will your answer be?

-Tillit S. Teddlie

1613 9th Ave., S.W., Decatur, Al 35601

Calling On The Name Of The Lord

Continued from page 3

There is, first of all, the preaching of the word, the hearing of that message, and then, the believing of that gospel. The calling is subsequent to these foregoing steps and embodies the same.

The Biblical example that really clarifies this matter is found in the conversion of Saul. Ananias is sent by the Lord to give further instructions to Saul the sinner concerning what to do to complete his obedience. In Acts 22:16, we read what is said to the penitent believer: "And, now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

We must come to the inevitable conclusion that cannot be denied that "calling on the name of the Lord" in order to be saved involves God's scheme of redemption for the alien sinner; namely, faith in Christ, repentance of sins and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. Have you called on the name of the Lord?—809 Perry Store Rd., Opp, Al. 36467



Words Of Truth

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the Words o...

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NUMBER 17

Absurdities Surrounding The Abortion Issue

Human life begins at conception. So teaches the Bible, and there was a time in recent history when medical science agreed. Quoting from the September, 1970 issue of the California Medical Association's journal, "...human life begins with conception and is continuous whether intra or extra-uterine, until death." At this present date, however, after almost a decade of scientific advance, the medical field cannot (or will not) define either when life begins or ends. There are now great controversies raging over the technical points of exactly when a fetus is considered a human and exactly when a human is considered lifeless.



CHARLES COOK

Jesus was referred to as an entity in Mary's womb at the point of His conception by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20, 21). How grim to think of the condition of the world today had Jesus been aborted. How unthinkable! And yet, on the very day you read this as many as 5,000 babies will be killed by abortion. Each year an estimated 1.8 million lives are ended in this monstrous way. For certain not one of them would have been the Savior of the world; that roll was for Jesus alone. But perhaps some of them would have had a saving influence on the world. Undeniably, they all had a right to live. The Bible provides for the safety of the unborn (Exodus 21:22-25). Dignity and respect for human life is taught throughout God's Word. Murder is defined as the selfish, premeditated taking of a life, and abortion fits that description. The Bible teaches, "Thou shalt do no murder" (Exodus 20:13). (Compare Genesis 9:6; I John 3:15.)

At the moment of conception a new being ex-

ists, totally different from the body of either the mother or the father. This being is human with his own set of chromosomes. He is alive and capable of replacing his own dying cells. All he needs is food, care and time to mature... and his God-given right to live! At 18 days there is an independent heartbeat. In six weeks movement begins and his human brain activities can be picked up on an electroencephalogram. Isaiah said, "(God) made thee and formed thee from the womb" (Isaiah 44:2).

Because abortion raises the issue of human rights, the rights of the unborn versus the rights and liberties of women, the government has had to intervene. This accounts for most of the ludicrous situations and absurd arguments which have come to surround the subject. Add to that the fact that it is one of the most sensitive moral issues of all times, and it becomes clear as to why so much confusion and nonsense pervade the matter.

Due to pressures from humanists, liberal religionists, lobbying forces and a general atmosphere of amorality in the nation, in 1973 the U. S. Supreme Court declared that states cannot prohibit voluntary abortions during the first three months of pregnancy. The choice of whether to abort or bring the child to a full term delivery is to be settled by the mother and her physician. It is generally believed that state laws protect the unborn in spite of the Supreme Court's decision — but this is clearly untrue. Most state restrictions provide protection only for the mother's health. In Colorado an abortion can be performed as late as two days before full term. The irony of the situation is seen in the fact that one year following this decision from our nation's capital, statistics revealed that there were more abortions than births in—you guessed it—Washington, D. C.

The High Court's decision to let abortion be decided between the woman and her physician has its roots, not in Biblical principle, but in the humanistic approach to life. This philosophy

states that man is nothing more than flesh and blood, he has no spiritual quality. He is nothing more than an animal. Lawmakers and judges are no longer concerned with the Biblical teaching that God is the giver of life and that man has no authority to terminate it (Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Psalm 127:3). The sixth commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder" (Exodus 20:13), is forgotten.

And, from that same decision other absurdities have arisen. Now that men have assumed the authority to terminate life at its beginning, it necessarily follows that some feel it is time to make laws related to terminating life at its ending. Legal abortion opened a Pandora's box, so next perhaps will come legal euthanasia, then no doubt other atrocities. The general attitude toward abortion, euthanasia and related subjects in the pro-abortion camp is so preposterous at this juncture they are no longer discussed as moral issues at all. It didn't take them very long to decide the morality of these things anyhow. They used, of course, the Situation Ethics formula, "It suits us... so let's do it."

The absurdities continue to abound from various other directions too. Our elected officials in Washington are in a quandary as to what to do about government funding of abortions on demand because they are not sure how Catholics and down-home fundamentalists feel about it. They suspect there is still a moral conscience in the country and they can't afford to offend it. It appears obvious that only a few of our national leaders themselves are making their decisions about abortion from a moral standpoint. In Washington it's politics as usual! One legislator displayed a trace of concern when he told a reporter, "We have introduced legislation that will insure that fetuses will be terminated in *THE MOST HUMANE WAY*" (Emphasis mine, CC).

The government machine itself seems to be mostly concerned with the financial aspects of

Continued on page 4

Harding Graduate School



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble King,
but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness"

- Acts 26:25

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Examples Of Youth

Youth is a wonderful thing, and especially wonderful when the young people of today devote themselves to God and his way. It is of utmost importance that our young people know what God's word has to say, and adapt their lives to coincide with that word. Paul recognized this fact, and related it to Timothy, his son in the gospel (II Tim. 3:15). We must teach our young people to trust in God's



JOHN SHAVER

word, for it furnishes us all that we need (II Pet. 1:3). We must, not only by our words, but by our deeds, teach our youth the importance of adhering to those things which are written (II Tim. 2:15; Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11; II Tim. 3:16-17), for without them, we are lost!

I can think of no better place to find examples of youth, than God's infallible word. The account of four Hebrew youths, probably in their teens, taken into Babylonian captivity, about the year 606 B.C. is found in Daniel 1:1-3:30. Jerusalem had been overcome (Dan. 1:1-2), and the four Hebrew youths had been taken captive. They were Daniel (*God is My Judge*), Hananiah (*God Is Gracious*), Misheal (*Who Is What God Is*), and Azariah (*God Has Helped*). One can readily understand why the Babylonian captors would change such meaningful names. So they changed the names to Belteshazzar (*Bel's Prince*), Shadrach (*Commandment of Aku*), Meshach (*Who is like Aku*), and Abed-Nego (*Servant of Nego*). Is it not sad that the Heathen Babylonians thought that by changing a name they could change the heart? Not so in the case of the four young men we are discussing. They were to go through a period of purification in order that they might serve Nebuchadnezzar. This purification period was to cover a period of three years. They were to have the best the Babylonians could offer, but they refused (Dan. 1:8). In refusing the ways of the heathen, they had upheld the way of God, and he made them ten times wiser than the Babylonian astrologers and magicians.

Continued on page 4

An Open Letter To The Governor

The Honorable Forest James
Governor of Alabama
Montgomery, Alaba-
ma 36104

Dear Governor James:

The purpose of this letter is to register my personal disappointment because of actions taken by your office that will result in large increases in gasoline tax. I have heard estimates of from four and one-half cents per gallon all the way to

seven cents per gallon as the amount of additional tax we will be paying at the gasoline pumps.

Please understand that I do not mind paying my fair share of taxes. I do feel, however, that to require me to pay such large amounts of gasoline tax is unfair. The proposed increase could cost me as much as \$122.50 the first year. And since ninety percent of the miles I drive are directly connected with my work of preaching the gospel, there is little chance of my cutting down on the number of miles I drive. I am sure the majority of those who would be penalized with this additional tax are also hard working respectable people. It seems to me that we are already paying high enough taxes on gasoline, which is no longer a luxury, as it once was to some. It is now a necessity to most.

I realize that additional tax money is needed for the efficient operation of Alabama's business. But it seems to me that the extra tax money could and should come from another source. I respectfully suggest that the following be given serious consideration: (1) Impose an additional tax upon every package of cigarettes, instead of upon every gallon of gasoline. Not only would this bring in a large amount of revenue, but it would be an imposition of taxes on a commodity that one could do without if he felt he could not afford the additional tax. This is not true concerning those of us who must have gasoline to carry on our work. The extra advantage of this would be that some might even be encouraged to quit smoking, in which case Alabama's air would be less polluted. And certainly those who have money to burn could have no legitimate complaint about additional taxes.

(2) Impose an additional tax upon every can of beer, every bottle of wine, and every drink of whiskey, vodka, etc. One who has enough money to spend on things that are productive of no good at all, and of as much evil as these things, should be willing to pay extra taxes. That way at least part of what he spends could conceivably be used to help pay the extra burden placed on the taxpayer by him and others like him who drink. Statistics show that the present tax imposed on alcoholic beverages does not nearly pay for the extra cost of police protection, maintaining jails, keeping up welfare payments, treatment of alcoholics at state expense, highway accidents, etc., incurred because of them. If there should be those who decided to quit drink-



BOBBY DUNCAN

ing because of the additional tax, think what this would mean to our great state.

(3) Impose an additional tax on every pornographic film and magazine. Those who pay to see these pornographic movies or who buy the magazines portraying nudity and sex would never complain; they would be too embarrassed to do so. Besides, if they can throw their money away on such filthy trash, they evidently are affluent enough never to feel any extra burden because of a large tax on these items. It just might be that some would even be encouraged by the additional tax to quit spending their money on such things; and it just might be that some of those peddling this sort of thing would decide to quit it. Think what this could mean to promote purity in the lives of the children in Alabama.

(4) Impose an additional heavy tax on those who go to the dog races, and upon the wagering that takes place there. After all, those who worked so hard to legalize dog racing in Alabama made such a strong point about how much the tax money would mean to the state. They could not afford to complain about being required to pay additional taxes. Besides, this is also an area where higher taxes might conceivably deter some from spending their money foolishly. Some child that would otherwise go hungry might have food to eat, if his father decided to bring home the paycheck instead of taking it to the dog track.

By the way, I wonder how many church bus programs that bring children to Bible study and worship would be burdened by an additional gasoline tax. How many charitable organizations, taking food to the needy and elderly would be burdened? How many elderly people, and those on fixed income would be burdened?

Governor James, I sincerely believe that a man of your business ability and position of respect over the state should give serious consideration to these matters. I hope to hear soon that you have changed your mind with reference to legislation that would result in higher gasoline taxes. If extremely heavy taxes should be imposed on these other things mentioned, I am confident that the grassroots people of Alabama would consider themselves extremely fortunate that you are the governor of this great state.

Respectfully yours,
Bobby Duncan

Subscribe To The Words of Truth

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 discuss I Cor. 16:1, 2; and explain how this passage may properly be cited as a pattern for a church treasury from which funds may be taken for many purposes when it was originally intended to provide for the needs of poor saints only."

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 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." (I Cor. 16:1,2). Earlier, perhaps in a previous letter the apostle had written to the church in Corinth (5:9) or, what is more likely, on the occasion of his last visit with them, he had revealed his plans to provide for the poor saints in Jerusalem in a great contribution he proposed to raise from Gentile congregations in Macedonia, Achaia, Greece and Asia Minor, and the Corinthians had given immediate assurances of their willingness to assist. The time had now come for their promise to be translated into performance; and, it was his design in the instructions given in I Cor. 16:1, 2, to indicate the *manner* in which their obligation was to be performed.

(1) The *time* when the contribution was to be gathered was "upon the first day of the week." The Greek phrase is *kata mian sabbatou*, literally, "upon one of the sabbath," Hebrew idiom for the first day of the week. The word *sabbaton* was by them used to designate the week (cf. Luke 18:12); hence, day one of the week is the *first* day thereof. We thus learn that the church was accustomed to meet on the first day of the week (see also Acts 20:7), and it was, therefore, appropriate that the obligation being enjoined by the apostle should be performed on that day.

(2) The duty embraced "everyone" capable of giving of his means. It was not limited to the rich or to those possessed of abundance; the poor were to participate to the extent of their ability. In a later exhortation, this aspect of the matter was repeated: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9, 7).

(3) The amount each was to give was to be determined in harmony with the prosperity he enjoyed. The word God, though not in the Greek text, is implied, inasmuch as he is the source of every blessing. Each would give *as he was able*, thus distributing the obligation in such fashion as not to be unduly burdensome to any, (II Cor. 8:13).

(4) The *design* of this arrangement was to avoid the necessity of contacting each disciple for his contribution when the apostle arrived. With their gifts pooled into a common treasury, the contribution would be ready on short notice, thus freeing Paul and his associates from the arduous and often unpleasant task of raising the money directly by personal appeals. This is sufficient refutation of the conjecture of some commentators, and all Sabbatarians, that the disciples were merely asked to place in a treasury *at home* their gifts, in which case the "gathering" which Paul desired to avoid would yet be required to be made. *Each* disciple was to give; each disciple was to give as he had been *prospered*; each disciple was to give upon the *first day* of the week, into a common treasury of the church.

(5) The *purpose* of this contribution was to relieve want and destitution among the poor saints in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26; I Cor. 16:3). It is worthy of note that *only here* is a Lord's day contribution enjoined; and the only *specific* purpose for it was to relieve the poor in the Jerusalem congregation. There is here *no* definite and detailed *pattern* of using the Lord's day contribution to "pay" the preacher, purchase Bibles, song books, literature and communion supplies, or to erect auditoriums in which to meet for worship. There is, indeed, no apostolic

example of using the money thus raised for the poor saints of the congregation raising the money—only the poor of another congregation! It is therefore absurd to insist, as do some extremists today, that *general* authority (as, for example, the command to "visit" the fatherless and the Widows, in James 1:27) is not sufficient; and to demand a *detailed* description of every duty from the Scriptures, while they hesitate not to cite I Cor. 16:1,2, to justify the use of the money for all the purposes indicated above, and many others besides, excepting, of course, a *home* for the *homeless*' sometimes styled orphanages!

But, do not all of us cite I Cor. 16:1,2, as the proper way in which to meet all the financial needs of the church in its work and worship today? Indeed so; but, not on the ground that it provides a specific and detailed pattern of such, because it *does not*. We have, in this passage, a demonstration of the way in which apostolic congregations, under the direction of an apostle, *met a legitimate* need. The need, in that instance, was to relieve the poor which then, abounded in the congregation in Jerusalem. That

great church had impoverished itself in large measure, in providing for the great host of disciples who were in the city on the day of Pentecost, and for sometime thereafter; and subsequent persecution from unbelieving Jews had added to their burdens. In addition to the sense of obligation Paul felt toward all the poor (Gal. 2:9), he taught that it was an act of Christian brotherhood designed to promote greater fellowship between Jewish and Gentile Christians for the Gentile churches to come to the aid of the Jewish church in the city where the church was established. (Rom. 15:25-27.)

The churches thus *met a need* by means of a Lord's day contribution. We reason, therefore, that in any instance, *when a need has been established*, it may be met in the same way. Support for the preacher, literature, songbooks, Bibles, and the communion supplies, church buildings, and other matters in the same category, are proper and legitimate needs of the church. They may, therefore, be provided for from the treasury of the church supplied from the Lord's day contributions.

Thomas B. Warren To Tennessee Bible College

BY MALCOM HILL

Tennessee Bible College is very happy to announce that Thomas B. Warren of Memphis, Tennessee will be moving to Cookeville, Tennessee in August of this year of become Executive Vice President, Dean of the Graduate School of the college, and Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Christian Apologetics.

Brother Warren comes with the highest credentials in every way. He is a very humble godly man, having reared three wonderful Christian children. He has a deep understanding of the Word of God and an even deeper respect for it's authority. To brother Warren the Bible is *THE BOOK*.

Thomas B. Warren attended Abilene Christian university where he received the B.S. degree (in Bible, education and mathematics). He holds two M.A. degrees: one from the university of Houston (in religion and another from Vanderbilt University (in philosophy). He received the Ph.D. degree from Vanderbilt University in philosophy. Brother Warren has done additional graduate study at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Texas Christian University, and Harding Graduate School.

Brother Warren has been a faithful gospel preacher since 1945, having served churches in Texas and Tennessee. He has worked with the Brownsville Road congregation in Memphis since 1973. He is the regular speaker for "Five Gospel Minutes," a daily radio broadcast heard on many stations throughout the United States. He is a giant in the defense of the faith. He has very capably defended the truth both within and without the church in public and private debate.

Brother Warren is considered by many to be the leading defender of the existence of God with atheists and agnostics. He has of late debated two of the world's outstanding atheists. His first debate was in Denton, Texas with Dr. Antony G.N. Flew of England from the University of Reading in England. This discussion was conducted September 20-23, 1976 in the Coliseum on the campus of North Texas State University. His Debate with Dr. Wallace I. Matson on

the existence of God was conducted in Tampa, Florida September 11-14, 1978 in the Curtis Hixson Convention Hall. Dr. Matson is Professor of Philosophy at the University of California at Berkeley. both of these debates have been published in book form and are available on cassette tapes.

Brother Warren is a prolific writer. He edited *THE SPIRITUAL SWORD* in 1958. *THE SPIRITUAL SWORD* ceased publication until 1969. When it resumed publication, brother Warren was again selected to serve as editor. *The Spiritual Sword* is now known as one of the best publications in our brotherhood. It is published under the oversight of the Getwell elders in Memphis. Brother Warren served as staff writer for the *Gospel Advocate* from 1958 until 1977, at which time all staff writers were discontinued. He has written and/or edited over forty books, tracts, film strips, etc. He has just become editor of a new monthly journal, *Golden Gems*, designed to reach non-Christians with the gospel.

Thomas B. Warren is no stranger to the field of higher education. He taught mathematics at Abilene Christian University (1946-47). He helped start Ft. Worth Christian College in 1958. He taught there (1958-64) and served as President 1959-61). He moved to Freed-Hardeman College in 1964 to become Chairman of the Department of Bible where he served until 1971. In 1970 he taught at Harding Graduate School as visiting professor of Christian Doctrine. Then, in 1971 he joined the faculty of Harding Graduate School As Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Christian Apologetics. He has served in that capacity since 1971.

Brother Warren is married to the former Faye Brauer. She has been his faithful and loyal companion for many years. They have three children, all faithful Christians: two lovely daughters, Mrs. J.M. (Karen) Waters, Mrs. John R. (Jan) Coleman, one son, Lindsey, who is an outstanding educator and preacher himself. They have four grandsons. — P.O. Box 532, Cookeville, TN. 38501

Absurdities Surrounding The Abortion Issue

Continued from page 1

the issue. What will abortion do to the economy? One civil servant of the HEW department stated that "an abortion is quite a savings" when compared to the price the government has to pay for a full term pregnancy of a mother eligible for Medicaid. The average government expense for an abortion under Medicaid is \$180, whereas maternity, pediatric care and public assistance for a full term pregnancy on the average costs \$2,200. As of 1975 federal and state funds of \$50 million was paid out for abortions under Medicaid. An estimated 220,000 abortions were performed through this system. It is horrendous to think that our elected representatives are sitting on Capitol Hill discussing abortion as an economic problem rather than a

moral issue.

The March, 1976 edition of *McCalls Magazine* reported that abortions are currently the second most performed surgery in the country. One-fourth of these have been paid for at government's (our) expense. Studies in Boston showed a pattern of repeaters with about ten percent of the women at certain clinics receiving second and third abortions at government expense. The article said, "For some abortion seems to be replacing the pill and other forms of contraception." Recently, on NBC News, Senator Edward Brook (now an ex-senator) reported that the U. S. Department of Defense paid in one given year for more abortions through defense funding than did HEW through the Welfare System.

The absurdities are becoming more and more compounded as this kind of facts comes to light!

Senator James Buckley pointed out a glaring hypocrisy in the pro-abortion camp when he told a reporter, "The proponents of permissive abortion make rape and hardship cases the major focal point... thereby diverting attention from wholesale killing which is the ultimate consequence of reforms they seek." Pro-abortionists are so extremely active in civil rights movements — they want women, gays and minorities to have all "their rights." Abortion is anything but concern for human rights, it is murder! (More next week) — P. O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766.

Seven Deadly Sins — Covetousness

This is the last in a series of articles concerning the seven deadly sins. The meaning of covetousness is an "inordinate desire for wealth." Another meaning is: "too eager to get to own something, especially something belonging to another person." Jesus said, "...take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).



JERRY T. BRAMLETT
Many people today consider this sin to be a respectable sin; but dear reader, there is not a respectable sin. All sin is a transgression of God's law (I John 3:4).

The harm of covetousness is that we will never be satisfied with what we have, but we will always be wanting more and will envy those who have more than we do. This sin is opposite of the teaching of Paul in I Timothy 6:6-8. This sin has caused millions of people to miss some of life's finer treasures. Covetousness in reality is vanity. "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase; this is also vanity" (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

The sin of covetousness is the root of many other sins. This sin will lead one to a departure from the faith (I Timothy 6:10). This sin caused Gehazi to lie (II Kings 5:20-27). Covetousness causes domestic trouble (Proverbs 15:27). Covetousness has caused bloodshed (Ezekiel 33:31; Psalms 10:3). A person who commits the sin of covetousness has his affections on the earth and not above (Colossians 3:1-2).

How terrible is the sin of covetousness? This sin is so bad that we cannot inherit the kingdom of God if we covet (I Corinthians 6:9). If we cannot inherit the kingdom of God then we are lost. Yes, reader, please do not underestimate this sin. The rich young ruler was covetous to the extent he turned away from Jesus because he was unwilling to remove this idol from his heart (Matthew 19:16-22). Jesus gives us a parable about a man who was interested in trying to gain as much as he could so he could "eat, drink and be merry," but he died and Jesus said God called him a fool (Luke 12:16-20).

Let us look at some characteristics of the man who is covetous. He thinks of himself and not

God. "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21). A covetous man serves the god of mammon instead of the God of heaven. "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" (Matthew 6:24). The one who is committing the sin of covetousness has the word of God choked and is unfruitful. "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth

the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Matthew 13:22).

My purpose for writing on this subject is that some will repent and have the attitude that Paul had when he wrote to Timothy: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (I Timothy 6:6-8). — P. O. Box 118, Parrish, AL 35580.

Examples Of Youth

Continued from page 2

made them ten times wiser than the Babylonian astrologers and magicians.

Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, but couldn't remember what it was. He demanded that his wise men interpret the dream, or else they would die. As all men who live by falsehood and deceit, they needed to be told the dream before they could give an adequate answer. God gave Daniel the interpretation of the dream; and after interpreting it for the king, he and the other three youths were given places of honor among the Babylonians. But as do many earthly monarchs, Nebuchadnezzar had put his trust in something besides God. An image of 90 feet by 9 feet was constructed, and instructions given for everyone to fall down and worship that image when the signal was given. Any who refused would be cast into a fiery furnace. The Hebrew youths refused to bow to the evil image and the wicked king was wrath. A second chance was given, but still the courageous young men refused to bow (Dan. 3:16-18). The furnace was heated seven times greater than usual, and the youths were bound to be cast into the fire. Those who carried them to the furnace entrance were consumed. The wicked king saw four images walking about in the furnace, but only three young men had been cast in! Wonder of wonders! When the young men emerged from the furnace their clothes were not singed or burned, their hair was not singed, neither was there any smell of smoke about them (Dan. 3:28-30)! But how could this be? How could this come to pass? God had been on their side, and his power is great.

These young men recognized the authority of God, and by their lives they caused a wicked king to recognize that authority. God came first in their lives as he should in ours (Ex. 20:3; Mt. 22:21; Acts 4:19-20). By standing for God, they glorified him, and this took great courage. It would have been easy for them to have said, "Everybody else is doing it." Many of our young people seem to think that this

makes something right, but it does not! Would God have condoned idolatry by these young men on the excuse, "Everybody else is doing it?" Of course not! Those who bear the precious name of Christ should have the courage to stand for the right, and against the wrong, regardless of what those in the world say (I Jno. 2:15-17).

Many say, "If it doesn't violate my conscience it must be all right." If the conscience is properly educated it is a reliable guideline, but many consciences are not educated in God's way, but the way of the world. If one's conscience is educated in God's way it should not be violated in any way (I Tim. 1:19). These young men refused to compromise in any way-refused to do that which they knew to be wrong. Our Christian young people need the same type of conviction today, but many see no wrong in modern dance, smoking, drinking, drugs and such like. Why? Because we as parents and teachers have failed to teach and train them in God's infallible word! These young men knew that life itself was unimportant. Even if they died they would trust God, for they believed that he would deliver them (Dan. 3:16-18). They stood for what they knew was right, and what they were sure of (Dan. 2:28).

Young friend, be assured if you stand for God you will be rewarded. There may be some who will taunt, mock and deride, but you trust in God, stand, and be confident (II Tim. 1:12). As God's kingdom received praise and honor from a wicked king as a result of these four young men, so also will God receive praise, glory and honor because of the stand you take. The evils of the world are alluring, but they are soul damning! The pleasures, privileges and blessings of a Christian life far outweigh anything the world can offer. Think on those things Paul describes in Philippians 4:4-8, and adapt your life to God's word and way, and you will never go wrong. — Rt. 10, Box 186 B, Jasper, AL 35501



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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Capital Punishment And God's Word

ALTON HAYES

John Louis Evans III has not only been in the news in the state of Alabama, but nationwide. Evans is the man who in 1977 willingly gunned down a Mobile pawn shop owner while his two young daughters watched. This murderer now states that he would prefer the electric chair rather than life in prison. As he says, this is his "freedom from a living hell." While Evans has given up his fight for life many in our nation have had prayer vigils and other demonstrations to show their disapproval. These opponents of capital punishment have even quoted from inspiration to prove(?) their point: "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13). However, there are others that state capital punishment must be executed upon Evans and all others who commit those crimes worthy of death.

Look closely at the statements made in the news relative to this serious subject..

1. Evans states that capital punishment is his only chance for freedom.
2. Those against capital punishment state that it accomplishes nothing, but takes another person's life.
3. The advocates of capital punishment state that it serves as a deterrent to crime and must be practiced.

We ask now as did the Apostle Paul, "What saith the scripture?" (Gal. 4:30).

As one begins with the very first book of Holy Writ he finds many things concerning the subject of capital punishment. When God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that his every imagination was evil, he decided that man would be punished by the flood. After the flood God instructed Noah in certain things. One of the commandments of God is found in Genesis 9:6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." God simply stated that a man should not shed another man's blood. The punishment of this act is, "by man shall his blood be shed" — capital punishment. Why this high regard for human life? Answer: "for in the image of God made he man."

Looking again at inspiration we examine certain

things contained in the law of Moses. Those against capital punishment state that they have the argument won at this point. Many of them simply quote, "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13); but does this verse really deny capital punishment? Was killing of all kinds forbidden under the law of Moses? If one will examine this verse closely he will see that perhaps a better translation would be, "Do no murder." To state that this verse forbids all killing and therefore capital punishment is to overlook other plain scriptures. If one was guilty of murder under the law of Moses he was put to death: "He that smiteth a man so that he die, shall surely be put to death" (Exodus 21:12). For the acts of adultery (Lev. 20:10ff.); incest (Lev. 20:11-14); sodomy (Lev. 20:13); rape of a betrothed virgin (Deut. 22:23-27); and idolatry (Ex. 22-20) one was to be put to death.

The New Testament also teaches that capital punishment is proper and right. As the apostle Paul was before Festus he stated, "For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing *worthy of death*, I refuse not to die..." (Acts 25:11, emphasis mine). One can clearly see that Paul acknowledged capital punishment, and had he been guilty of a crime punishable by capital punishment he was willing to submit. Perhaps one of the most potent passages in favor of capital punishment is found in the book of Romans. The writer, by inspiration, states: "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" (Romans 13:1-4). Notice these facts: (1) The civil government is of God (verse 1). (2) If anyone resists the power of the government he resists the ordinance of God (verse 2.) (3) To those who would live in a proper manner the civil government is not a terror (verse 3). (4) The ruler is the minister of God (verse 4). (5) If one does evil he should fear the ruler for he has the God-given right to punish — bear the sword (verse 4). (6) Capital punishment will cause fear to the evil doer (verse 4).

Other passages could be studied for a more in-depth study of the subject; however to those desiring the truth on capital punishment these verses should suffice. Capital punishment must be brought upon those who would commit crimes against society by the ruler — the minister of God. (Note: A very excellent discussion of this subject can be found in *The Living Message of the Books of The Old Testament*, "The Living Messages of Exodus," pages 40-44. This article on Exodus is written by James Meadows.) — P.O. Box 128, Munford, Al. 36268.


Try A Little Kindness!

JOHN W. ROBERTSON

The means we have used to convert the lost have been effective. We have had great results in studies with the lost over the years because of determination, consideration and love. But could it be we would have better and lasting results if we would apply the act of kindness — *genuine loving kindness*? We are living

in a world filled with anxieties, fear, woe, sorrow and tension! We are truly living in a fast moving age, perhaps too fast to stop and show a little kindness. How many problems could be solved in the world if this principle of loving kindness were applied? In our

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I am not made, most noble Jesus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness. — Acts 26:25

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Truth, Tradition, and Tragedy

In Matthew 15:3-6 Jesus gave a scathing rebuke to the religionists of his day because they "made the commandment of God of none effect" by their tradition. We err if we conclude from this that tradition is equal to tragedy and the very opposite of truth. Tradition, within itself, is neither right nor wrong. The thing condemned in the aforementioned text is a tradition which makes the commandment of God of none effect—not tradition in general. In fact, II Thessalonians 3:6 clearly enjoins that we withdraw from "every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received" from the inspired writers. Here the word *tradition* is put for the gospel of our Lord, the truth which makes men free (John 8:32).



BOBBY DUNCAN

There can be no doubt that some hold as gospel truth that which is nothing more than tradition. Needless to say, a failure to distinguish between gospel truth and tradition is tragic, especially if the tradition hinders one's obedience to the truth.

Gospel truth never changes; but as times change traditions may also change. But there is no virtue in changing traditions unless those traditions need changing. We heard of a preacher who reportedly agreed to move to work with a certain congregation provided he be allowed to change some of their

traditions. We did not then, nor do we now, know of any terribly bad traditions held by that congregation as a whole. Since the preacher's moving there, several things have changed, but at last report nothing had been improved by the changes.

Some insist on changing the order of worship. We are not opposed to such a change; but will changing it make it any better? If not, why so much criticism of those who have left it the way it is for these many years? We have preached in meetings in which the order of worship was different every night. One night we would have three songs and a prayer before the sermon; the next it might be three prayers and a song. Every night was different. We find no fault with such a practice, but have wondered if such variety really made any contribution to the effectiveness of the worship. In fact, we feel somewhat that the worshipers might actually have been distracted from their worship as they tried to guess what was going to happen next.

We tend to be suspicious of those who spend a great deal of time criticizing what they call our traditions. If it is a tradition which makes the commandment of God of none effect, we should criticize it; and we should point out, as did the Lord, wherein the commandment of God is made of none effect by the tradition. If, on the other hand, the tradition is not out of harmony with the revelation of God, and does not hinder our service to him, why be critical of it, and why try to change it? Did it ever occur to these critics that a certain practice may have become traditional because it is expedient? And could it be that the non-traditional practice they are trying to substitute for it never became traditional because it is not as expedient?

Errors Of Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism is of comparatively recent origin. According to their own records, it does not date back further than 1866. (Minutes of the 42nd General Assembly of the Church of God held at Birmingham, Ala., Aug. 28-31, 1948). The Pentecostal Church, Inc. traces its origin back to 1899. (*Religious bodies, Statistics, History and doctrines*, Vol. II, pp. 1334-5). Both of these dates are far too late to be the church you read about in the New Testament.



W. D. HARRIS

There has been a revival of Pentecostalism in the past quarter century which may be called "neo-Pentecostalism" (new Pentecostalism). All of it is completely new compared to the religion that dates back to the first century, and is revealed in the New Testament. There is a variety of groups calling themselves "charismatics," which is rooted in a misinterpretation and misapplication of the New Testament. One of the chief promoters of this movement has been the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International. It has been endorsed and advocated by business executives, movie stars, TV personalities, and college professors. Is this movement of divine origin? Is it endorsed by the Scriptures? We shall examine some of its claims in what follows.

Holy Spirit baptism was promised to the apostles only (Acts 1:8). This was fulfilled on the Pentecost of Acts 2 (Acts 2:1-4). Holy Spirit baptism that was promised only to the apostles made them infallible in their teaching and preaching, guided them into all the truth, and brought to their remembrance all that Christ had said to them (John 14:26; 16:13). There are

Continued on page 3

Absurdities Surrounding The Abortion Issue

(No. 2)

In our previous article we were discussing absurdities involved in the federal government's role with reference to current abortion practices. In this article we move on to other absurd practices pertaining to the abortion issue.

It is obvious that in America the practice of abortion is epidemic and can only lead to further complications and absurdities. For example, in Virginia a court ruled that a woman could have an abortion without the consent and despite the objections of her husband. In New Jersey a man was charged with murder for shooting a pregnant woman which caused the death of her unborn twins. She was seven months pregnant and the man should have been so charged. But in the state of Colorado she could have demanded an abortion, even in her seventh month of pregnancy, and obtained it. But she nor her doctor would be charged with murder. To really see how acceptable abortion is, consider the caption which appeared under a photo in a newspaper



CHARLES COOK

in Sacramento, California: "The controversial Dr. Alfred Kennan has performed 10,000 abortions in two years *without the loss of a single life*" (Emphasis mine, CC).

In a day when capital punishment is challenged as barbaric, and to take up arms to defend one's nation is certainly not vogue, it seems ridiculous that so many people proudly claim to be pro-abortionists. One doctor wrote, "Some of the same people who are urging the abolition of capital punishment are taking the lead in advocating abortion on demand. Has the willful murderer more rights than the unwanted child?"

One abortion proponent argued, probably to the embarrassment of most in his ranks, that abortion is no more serious than removing tonsils. . . a mere surgical procedure. I think he "cut his own throat" with that one! Another objected to the publishing of grotesque pictures of the aborted fetus as "distasteful," but he approved of the act itself. This would be like Hitler's being squeamish about seeing pictures of Auehewitz where the Nazis murdered thousands of Jews.

Many ecology buffs bravely promote the conservation of nature, the elements and all forms of life. They are worried about endangered species. Abortion is not consistent with what they say they stand for because there is no form of life more

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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).

"Can the Virgin Birth be clearly established in the scriptures? What may be said of the view that the words translated 'virgin' in the Old and the New Testaments might properly be rendered 'young woman' as some of the modern speech translations render them?"

Hundreds of years before the remarkable event occurred, prophecy had established the supernatural and miraculous manner of the Saviour's birth. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). The unique manner of his entrance into the world should not afford occasion for surprise; indeed, it should be expected to be exceptional in view of the fact that no other on earth, or in heaven, ever has been, or ever shall be, like him. Being deity, he is related to the Father; having a human mother, he has close kinship with mankind. Like the Father, he inhabits eternity; like man, he experienced the trials, and bore the burdens of a human being, on earth. He alone has been privileged to know, through personal experience, the highest joys of heaven, and the bitterest sorrows of earth. Because he is exceptional, his birth had to be exceptional; it is not surprising that he should come into the world by being born of a virgin.

Ahaz, king of Judah, faced with imminent attack by Pekah, king of Israel, and Rezin, king of Syria, was counselled by Isaiah, the prophet, to rely for aid on the Lord. He was instructed to ask for a "sign," which the Lord would provide in token of the truth of the promise. Ahaz spurned the divine aid offered, and turned to the king of Assyria for help, in consequence of which he earned the severe denunciation of the prophet. The inspired man informed him that God would supply a "sign" anyway! (1) A virgin would conceive; (2) a son would be born; (3) his name would be Immanuel (God with us).

It is beyond belief that men who entertain real respect for the Scriptures, and who regard them as inerrant and reliable could see in this prophecy anything other than clear reference to the birth of Christ detailed by the Holy Spirit, through Matthew and Luke, hundreds of years later. But, there are those who thus do; their long draughts from the wells of denominational theology have bemuddled their minds and beclouded their vision to the point that this prediction of the prophet is by them believed to have only local and limited application, and to have been fulfilled in that day! How is this conclusion reached? (1) By denying that the "sign" was one of supernatural significance. (2) By alleging that the Hebrew word *Almah* may properly be translated "young woman," as well as "virgin."

They are wrong, grossly and dangerously wrong, on both counts. The "sign" was to be given by Jehovah. In the nature of the case it had to be something other than a token or action resulting from the ordinary operations of nature. Rain, falling out of a thunderstorm on a summer day, is no mark of immediate and exceptional divine intrusion; snow, falling from a cloudless sky in the summertime would be! Only an event far removed from the usual course would suffice for "sign" from God. Anything less than a miracle would have been discounted by Ahaz and all others. Moreover, that the Hebrew word *almah* signifies only an unmarried woman, and a true virgin, is clear from an induction of its entire biblical usage. Psalm 68:15 (*damsels*); Exodus 2:8 (*maid*); Proverbs 30:19 (*maid*); Genesis 24:43 (*virgin*); Song of Solomon 1:3 (*virgins*); 6:8 (*virgins*); Isaiah 7:14 (*virgin*). A careful analysis of these passages—all of the instances in which the word *almah* (translated *virgin* in Isaiah 7:14) appears—reveals that the term is never applied to a married woman, never designates a non-virgin, never alludes to an impure woman.

Isaiah's affirmation is clear and decisive. The "sign" given was that a virgin would conceive; of this conception a son would be born; his name would be Immanuel. Thus, conception and birth of a son, by a virgin, establishes clearly the miraculous nature of the event; and the name Immanuel, meaning "God with us," points to his deity and settles the matter. Convincing though these considerations are, we are not dependent on inductive reasoning alone for the proper interpretation of this vitally important passage. The Holy Spirit, evidently anticipating the liberal pretensions of modern "scholarship," supplied us with an infallible interpretation of Isaiah 7:14.

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:18-23).

It will be observed, from the foregoing description of the birth of Jesus that Matthew, one of his inspired biographers, quotes the prophecy of Isaiah, regarding the birth of a son by a virgin, and applies it to Mary, mother of Jesus. Further, he asserts that *this fulfilled* the prophecy of Isaiah regarding the virgin birth. Hence, Matthew's testimony proves that the word *almah*, used by Isaiah, designated a virgin—one never having known man—not simply a young woman of marriageable age. The American Standard rendering in Matthew's statement is, "Behold the virgin shall be with child. . .", *the virgin*, the specific virgin of the prophecy, and not some other! Last, but

not least, though Isaiah revealed the message to Ahaz, from Matthew we learn that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet. . . Not only was the birth unique and supernatural, the one thus born was likewise the only one of its kind. He was the called *Emmanuel*, which being translated is *God with us*. This, of course, alludes to the coming down of deity into human form. The Word "was made flesh and dwelt" (literally, *pitched his tent*) "among men" (John 1:14). Of no other, save our Lord himself, can such be affirmed. Matthew's unequivocal assertion that the birth of Jesus to Mary, "the virgin," fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah, (a) establishes the Messianic character of Isaiah 7:14; (b) identifies the virgin of the passage with the virgin Mary; and (c) proves that any translation of Isaiah 7:14, which renders the Hebrew word *almah*, by words indicating anything less than virginal character (as do most of the so-called Modern Speech Translations), is wrong, and propagates grievous and dangerous error. It is highly disturbing, and the situation ought to occasion the most serious thought and action on the part of all who love the truth, and there are those among us, in ever increasing numbers, who are being influenced by liberal and modernistic theologians to deny the Messianic character of Isaiah 7:14. Is our great and ever expanding brotherhood, long committed to the defense of the truth of the Scriptures, prepared to accept anything less than heart-felt dedication thereto? Our Christian schools were established to be, and have long been, bastions of truth, set for the defense of the gospel. They must, at all costs, remain so; or apostasy will be the bitter and inevitable consequence. Men have no right to teach error who are employed to teach the truth. Those who yearn for forbidden paths often prate of academic *freedom*; all such need to remember that there is such a thing as academic *honesty*, and if they cannot conscientiously teach that which they accepted employment to teach, they ought to quit—not corrupt unsuspecting children of Christian parents, who do not learn until too late that their offspring have been offered up on the altars of liberalism and permissiveness.

Errors Of Pentecostalism

Continued from page 2

only two cases of Holy Spirit baptism in the divine record: (1) The apostles received it on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), (2) The house of Cornelius received it, as an exception to the rule that it was received by the apostles only (Acts 10:44-48; 11:15-17). Note: This exception was made to convince the Jewish Christians that the Gentiles were accepted into the church (Acts 11:17, 18). If one had the baptism of the Holy Spirit today, he wouldn't need the New Testament to preach. The apostles preached without a written New Testament. If one had the baptism of the Holy Spirit today, he should remember all that Christ said without having to read it in the New Testament. It is inconsistent to claim Holy Spirit baptism and then have to read from the New Testament what Jesus said. If one had the baptism of the Holy Spirit today, he could not make a mistake in his teaching and preaching (John 14:26; 16:13). (I have personally heard them preach while claiming to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and then cite a wrong reference in the Scriptures or misquote a passage.) How could they do this, if they are baptized in the Holy Spirit? This is unmistakable evidence that they have not been baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Pentecostals claim to be able to perform mir-

acles of healing today through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit. The baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to perform *all manner* of miracles. On the day of Pentecost Jews from fifteen or sixteen different nations heard the apostles speak in their own tongues (languages) (Acts 2:4-12). The apostles healed the sick (Acts 5:12-16). The apostles could raise the dead (Acts 9:36-42; 20:8-10). These were the signs (credentials) of an apostle (II Cor. 12:12).

Those who claim to work miracles today cannot do *all* the apostles could do. The truth is that they cannot perform any of the signs that the apostles could. The same men that Jesus empowered to heal the sick could also drink deadly poison, take up serpents (and not be harmed by it), and raise the dead, etc. (Mark 16:17-20). Since those who claim to work miracles today cannot do all these signs, that is undeniable evidence that their claims are false.

To claim to work miracles today is rooted in a misconception of the purpose of miracles. Miracles were never performed in the first century by the apostles, and those on whom they laid

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Try A Little Kindness!

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relationships with each other now different life would be if we would: "consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" (Hebrews 10:24). I love the words of Eph. 4:32: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Kindness, a marvelous quality! "Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart" (Prov. 31-3). Kindness constitutes mildness of temper, calmness of spirit, and sweetness of disposition! The Bible says in Titus 2:10: "Adorn the doctrine." I don't know of any better way to "Adorn the Gospel" than to make the beauty of the loving gospel shine through the act of kindness.

WHAT IS KINDNESS? You go to the dictionary and ask, "What is Kindness?" Then you read: "Kindness is the quality of benevolence well bestowed toward another; an act of good will." The synonyms listed are *compassion* and *gentleness*. You seek out the poet and say, "Sir, please can you tell me, what is kindness?" The poet answers: "Kindness is the master key to the lock on every barred heart! Kindness is the most precious jewel from the mine of heaven! Kindness is the chief foreman in the shop of good works! Kindness is a firm handshake from a friend!" You go to the word of the Lord and say, "Father, please, what is kindness?" Then the Lord in His own fine, brief and beautiful way says: "Love suffereth long and is kind, seeking not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, beareth all things, believeth all things hopeth all things, endureth all things," (I Cor. 13:4-7).

Jesus said in John 13:34: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another..." Lord, tell me, what is so new about this commandment? Every principle of love for one another is found throughout the pages of the Old Testament. What is so new about this love? The Lord used a word of love (*agape*) that he had never used in this sense before. This love that Jesus commanded here in John 13 was this: "I am going to love you whether you love me or not." "I am going to love you whether you want my love or not." "I am going to love you because you need my love." One of the Lord's chief qualities is kindness, therefore, we can never be like the Lord until we can be kind or kinder!! "Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger—and of great kindness" (Neh. 9:17). "That in ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace. In His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ" (Eph. 2:2 Emphasis mine).

The act of kindness will win when everything else fails. There is a story about a little twelve year old lad who was playing with a 22 rifle and accidentally shot himself. At the time, his father couldn't be found. He was finally found in a beer joint having a few beers. Several people rebuked him and spoke sharply to him. Somehow word got to the little boy in the hospital about the things they were saying to his dad. When the father sobered up and walked into the hospital to see his son, the little lad said: "Daddy, I don't care what they say about you, I just love you." That is what broke that man from drinking. It has always been this way: loving kindness gets results! The Bible states in Psa. 17:7, "Show thy marvelous

loving-kindness..." Nothing in the world can give us a warm glow inside like an act of kindness performed toward somebody else without any desire of getting anything in return, with no strings attached.

The president of Kiwanis International tells this little story about himself: One cold winter evening, as he left his office, started his car and was warming it up, he noticed a 9 or 10 year old boy standing in front of a store crying. He thought to himself, "Should I get involved?" He did. He got out of his car and walked over and asked the boy: "What is the matter son?" The boy answered, "Not anything." "Now, said the man, "something is wrong, now what's the matter?" The boy began crying openly and said, "My daddy sent me to the store with a dollar to buy some things, and I have lost the dollar! My daddy" he continued, "is home, drinking, and I can't go back home until my daddy goes to sleep." The man said "I had to do something! So I gave the boy a dollar so he could buy the things his daddy, sent him after, and I also gave him some to spend on himself." The man said, "I had turned to leave, when the little fellow ran and embraced me around the waist, looked up into my eyes, and said, "Mister, I sure do wish you were my daddy!" The man telling the story said, "You know what I did then? I drove around 30 or 40 blocks to see if I could find another little boy who had lost a dollar. Giving away just does something to you inside!"

Brethren, I exhort you: Love the brethren, Love the lost, Love God and Keep His commandments. *Give Kindness! Share Kindness! Try a little kindness!*—Sage Avenue Church of Christ, 57 North Sage Ave. Mobile, Alabama 36607

Absurdities Surrounding The Abortion Issue

Continued from page 2

endangered right now than unborn babies. Anyone who advocates the right of life for all cannot with another breath advocate abortion and be anything but a hypocrite. Hal Watkins wrote, "We have societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals and for the protection of endangered species of birds and animals, but we are tossing babies into sewers and garbage cans" (*The Counselor*, No. 19).

But, it is argued, "abortion is a private matter and should not be controlled by laws or regulated by social mores." Whose privacy and rights are they defending? Surely not the unborn! Too much is said in favor of the rights of the adults over the defenseless unborn. How far shall we carry this matter of rights? Shall we digress to the standards of the ancients? In distant times if a father did not like the looks of a child, or if it was deformed, or maybe a girl, he would smash it on the rocks and throw it to the wild beasts. A more humane method of disposal was simply to abandon the baby on a roadside, if no one adopted the baby it just slowly died.

Abortion reverts us to the same brutality, except it murders the child before instead of after its birth. Have you ever seen a picture of a fetus aborted by the "Vacuum Method?" The baby is literally "sucked out" piece by piece. There are various "Surgical Methods" where the baby is either killed while still in the womb or brought out and killed or allowed slowly to die. An aborted baby which is over thirteen weeks old will struggle for life two or three hours before giving up. The "Saline Method" involves injecting a salt solution into the womb and the fetus is both burned and poisoned to death. The ancients sacrificed their children to their stone gods, and modern man sacrifices his children to his gods of permissiveness and sin. To me the ancients appear more justified, they stood in darkness, ignorance and fear. Enlightened, modern man ought to know better!

One group further argues that abortion ought to be legalized "because people are going to practice it anyhow." This argument has been propounded by those wanting to legalize marijuana and other drugs. The fallacy in such reasoning is obvious. We could argue a case for legalized rape, or anything, on this

basis.

One of the all-time atrocities has always been the story of how Herod killed the infants of Bethlehem in an attempt to destroy Jesus. Another is the story of Pharaoh's killing infants to destroy the Israelites. A certain anti-abortion publication commented, "These historical incidents when compared to present abortion statistics pale into insignificance" (*Family Renewal News*, Box 73, Clovis, Ca. 93612). In Bethlehem probably no more than ten to fifty children were killed seeing it was but a small village. Undoubtedly, a larger number of children were killed in the Pharaoh incident. In America we are killing almost two million infants a year and that rivals the conduct of Hitler more than it does that of Herod and

Pharaoh.

This article would be incomplete without mentioning this absurdity: teenage girls can go to abortion clinics in some states without their parents' knowledge or consent, but these same children cannot have their ears pierced in a department store without written permission from a parent (The Printed Preacher, November, 1977).

The greatest absurdity of all that could be included is this: men believe that they can act contrary to the nature of God, compound their sins, never repent, and get away with it. The stark reality of Romans 14:12 will come to all one day: "So then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God." — P. O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766.

Errors Of Pentecostalism

Continued from page 3

hands and imparted the gifts, except for the purpose of confirming the word. The New Testament had not been written to use as confirmation, so early Christians were empowered with miraculous signs to confirm that they were messengers of God and that their message was divine (Heb. 2:3, 4; John 20:30, 31). Even the apostles did not perform miracles when it did not serve this purpose. Paul did not heal Epaphroditus when he was sick "nigh unto death" (Philippians 2:25-27). He left Trophimus sick at Miletus (I Tim. 5:23). The apostles performed miracles only when it confirmed their message. God's revelation is now full and complete (Jude 3; II Peter 1:3; II Timothy 3:16, 17). It carries its own confirmation and needs no further confirmation (Galatians 1:6-12). These confirmatory signs were for the purpose of producing faith. Faith now comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). The first four books of the New Testament were written specifically for the purpose of producing faith in Christ as the Son of God (John 20:30, 31). Miraculous signs are no longer needed for this purpose. If you are sick and need a doctor, call the doctor. Jesus

advised the sick to call a doctor Matthew 9:12). Paul advised Timothy to take medicine for his sickness (I Tim. 5:23). So if you are seriously sick, see a doctor and pray for natural healing. God still heals, but through natural law (not contrary to, or apart from natural law).

One of the most common claims of Pentecostals today is to speak in tongues. But Paul said tongues were to cease when revelation was completed (I Corinthians 13:8-10). Among the three representative supernatural gifts mentioned by Paul here is *tongues*. That which was perfect which was to come was perfect (complete) revelation. *IT HAS COME* (Jude 3; II Peter 1:3, II Timothy 3:16, 17). When John laid down the pen of inspiration, revelation was finished. Miraculous gifts might be compared to the scaffolding used to build a house. As long as the house is under construction the scaffolding is needed, but when completed the scaffolding is removed. Miraculous gifts have been removed because they are no longer needed. God's word has been revealed and confirmed.—1613 19th Ave. S.W., Decatur, Al 35601



Words Of

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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A Review Of The Teaching Of John Clayton

(No. 1)

It has been some twenty years since I first read G.C. Brewer's famous "Lecture on Evolution," which was initially given in Fort Worth, Texas in the fall of 1927. That powerful lesson so stirred my heart that I resolved to become a serious student of Christian evidences so that, God being my Helper, I might be equipped to defend honorably the integrity of the sacred Scriptures. After two decades,



WAYNE JACKSON

during which I have literally spent hundreds of hours in study and hundreds of dollars in books in pursuit of knowledge in the field of apologetics, I can say with absolute confidence that the Bible is a totally reliable source of information upon all matters with which it deals. It is the verbally inspired Word of God!

Having such a keen interest in Christian evidences, I feel a special closeness for those who also labor in confronting an unbelieving world with the evidence for God's existence, the divine origin of man, etc. I truly appreciate brethren who develop their talents in this area. Correspondingly, I find few things as utterly repulsive as those attempts which are sometimes made to make the Bible narrative conform to the infidelic theories of current scientism. And that brings me to the purpose of this series of articles.

One of the more widely traveled and increasingly popular teachers in the church today is brother John Clayton of South Bend, Indiana. Brother Clayton is generally busy several week-ends of each month throughout the year with his "Does God Exist?"

program, which operates under the oversight of the Donmoyer Church of Christ in South Bend. In addition to his public lectures, John edits a monthly paper, also entitled "Does God Exist?" with a circulation of some 14,000 readers. The popularity of his program is evidenced by the fact that in 1978 he averaged some \$2,800 each month in contributions received - not counting August during which gifts were over \$12,000 for a special project he was promoting. I mention this growing popularity for the following reason. While all of this would truly be wonderful if brother Clayton were faithfully teaching the truth pertaining to Christian evidences, the sad fact is, John propagates a whole host of errors that are so foreign to the plain teaching of the Bible, and so damaging to the faith of our young people, that it has become imperative that a thorough exposure of his doctrine be made.

For some time my good friend Bert Thompson and I have talked of the need to present to our brotherhood a survey of John Clayton's teaching. Bert is an instructor in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A & M University; he holds the Ph.D. degree in food microbiology, and he has engaged in extensive correspondence with John Clayton. Accordingly, we approached brother Bobby Duncan, editor of *Words of Truth*, and asked his permission to submit such a series. He agreed. First off, I will do a series reviewing some of the material that brother Clayton has written, with a careful refutation from the Bible. Following that, brother Thompson will present several articles calling attention to the false teaching in the "Does God Exist?" tape recorded lecture series.


Bert and I are certainly aware of the fact (as is brother Duncan) that we will be accused of persecuting John Clayton. In fact we already have been as a result of articles previously published in *Words of Truth* and other journals. However, God being our Witness, we have absolutely no desire to

hurt John personally. There are many things about him that we admire. Our heart's desire is that he may come to a deeper faith in the Bible, renounce the error he advocates, and join hands with all those who respect the authority of the Word of God. We will pray to this end. But in the meanwhile, we cannot stand silently by as he continues to sow the seeds of evolutionary compromise throughout our great brotherhood. Aside from this anticipated criticism, we have been encouraged by a great number of widely known and highly respected brethren to pursue this endeavor. Our files are filled with letters from across the country written by sincere brethren who are deeply grieved and greatly concerned about the teaching that is popularly being called "Claytonism." And so, we believe the time has come for us to speak out. We only ask that you carefully consider the documented evidence that we introduce: compare brother Clayton's teaching with the plain, uncomplicated statements of Scripture, then tell us whether we are wrong or not. (To be continued.)—3906 East Main Street, Stockton, CA 95205

The Foundation Of Obedience

MICHAEL D. STONE

"Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth



Words Of Truth

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this but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness
Acts 26:25

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Errors Of Pentecostalism

(No. 2)

In our previous article we discussed two basic errors of Pentecostalism. First, we answered their claim to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Secondly, we examined under the searchlight of God's word their claim to work miracles. In this installment, we shall examine four more errors fundamental to their claims.

CLAIM FEELINGS AS AUTHORITY

Pentecostals also advocate religion as a "romantic" encounter—that "the heart of man has reasons which his mind knows not of"—in making decisions in religious matters. To them truth is altogether subjective and that what one thinks as a result of his feelings becomes truth. With them revealed truth is not objective and does not necessarily reveal the mind of God, but feelings are the highest authority. As a result, they have regular testimonial services, in which they describe their feelings.

What saith the Scriptures? According to the New Testament, the Bible is truth (John 17:17). This truth is not subjective, that is, it does not originate in the minds of men, but from the mind of God. The Bible must be studied and obeyed, regardless of what our feelings dictate (II Tim. 2:15; John 8:32). It is the inspired, absolute, authoritative Word of God (II Tim. 3:16, 17; II Pet. 1:20, 21; I Cor. 2:9-13). Feelings are deceptive. Jacob mourned many years feeling that Joseph was dead, while Joseph was alive in Egypt the whole time. Jacob relied on false evidence and as a result his feelings were misguided (Gen. 37). Solomon said, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12). The same wise man said, "He that trusteth in his

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W. D. HARRIS

There is a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding about the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. This is true not only in the denominational world, but also in the church. No doubt most of the problems we experience in matters of this kind grow out of the fact that we have failed to teach the truth as emphatically, as clearly, and as often as we should. And we are convinced that our failure to teach as we should concerning the subject of the Holy Spirit stems largely from our own failure to have a clear understanding of the Bible teaching on the subject. We need to have clear answers to such questions as: Why were early Christians endowed with miraculous powers? How were these powers imparted? How long were they to last? How does the Holy Spirit influence people today? This article deals with the first of these questions, i.e., why were early Christians endowed with miraculous power? Subsequent articles will deal with the others.

In dealing with this question, two words need to be kept before us: *revelation* and *confirmation*. Every miracle performed by Christ and his disciples was in connection with the revelation and confirmation of the will of God. A failure to understand this fact has led thousands and thousands of people to go searching for miracles where there are none.

Consider first the matter of revelation. Did it ever occur to you, dear reader, that the apostles and others who preached the gospel in the first century had to do so without the benefit of a written New Testament? They did not own a copy of the New Testament, nor had they ever seen a copy of it; for not a line of it had been written for the first few years of the church's existence. Yet they accurately and effectively preached the gospel. Neither this writer nor any other living today could preach the gospel accurately if he did not have access to the written word. There is no man living today who preaches one single, solitary truth about the gospel that he did not learn, either directly or indirectly, from the written revelation. But the apostles and others of the first century preached accurately the gospel of Christ before a line of the New Testament had been written. They were able to do so because they were miraculously endowed; and they were miraculously endowed to enable them to do so. Jesus had promised the apostles before his ascension that the Holy Spirit would be given to them, and that he would (1) teach them all things, (2) bring to their remembrance all things that he had said to them, (3) guide them into all truth, and (4) show them things to come (John 14:26; 16:13). This is the reason they were able to preach without a copy of the New Testament. What would a man need with a written copy of the New Testament if the Holy Spirit were directly guiding him into all truth, teaching him all things, bringing to his remembrance everything that Jesus said, and showing him things to come? One who possessed the Holy Spirit in this manner could write the New Testament, which is exactly what these miraculously endowed men of the first century did.

We now have God's completely perfected revelation (II Timothy 3:16, 17; Jude 3). Nothing is to be added to it (Revelation 22:18, 19). It already



BOBBY DUNCAN

contains all things that pertain to life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). The apostles could not have preached the gospel without miraculous endowments. But miraculous endowments today would not enable us to preach one single gospel fact, command, or promise which we cannot already preach. The apostles simply did not have what we have (the perfected revelation), and we do not have what the apostles had (miraculous endowments). They were miraculously endowed so that they might receive God's revelation and give it to the world. No additional revelation is to be given; therefore, no present day miraculous endowments are needed.

Consider now the matter of confirmation. The gospel not only needed to be revealed; it also needed to be confirmed by miracles. The apostles and other preachers in the church's infancy, though inspired, could not prove their preaching by citing chapter and verse in the New Testament. In order to establish the authenticity of that which they preached, these early gospel preachers performed miracles. In Mark 16:17-20 we are told that the miracles performed by the apostles were signs by which the gospel was confirmed. In other words, those who heard the preaching done by the apostles did not have to guess whether or not it was true. They saw the miracles performed and knew the preaching was true. Hebrews 2:3 says that the gospel "was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." The very next verse makes it clear that this confirmation was "with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost."

Please keep in mind the fact that this miraculous confirmation of the truth preached took place during an age when no preacher and no audience had ever seen a copy of the New Testament. Today those who preach may prove the truthfulness of that which they preach by directing attention to the New Testament; and those who wish to examine the truthfulness of a thing preached may likewise open their New Testaments and investigate. Those who preached the gospel in the first century could prove its truthfulness by performing miracles; those who preach the gospel today may prove its truthfulness by citing proof from the New Testament. Those who heard the gospel preached in the first century could ascertain its authenticity by observing the miracles performed; those who hear the gospel preached today may ascertain its authenticity by investigating their New Testaments.

Miraculous endowments were given in the first century in connection with the *revelation* and *confirmation* of God's word. Now God's word has been completely revealed and thoroughly confirmed. The Bible stands today as God's perfectly completed and thoroughly confirmed revelation. It admits of no possible additional revelation. To claim miraculous powers today is tantamount to affirming that the Bible is not complete (needs further revelation), or that the truthfulness of the Bible is questionable (needs further confirmation). Neither of these is true. God's will needs no further revelation; and it needs no further confirmation.

to persuade some to believe the Bible. But John 20:30, 31 affirms that the miracles written in the New Testament are sufficient to produce saving faith. Faith is produced by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17), not by seeing a miracle. It is sometimes argued that there are some who will not believe the Biblical record of miracles, but would be convinced by seeing miracles performed. Our Lord's reply to such an argument is: "If they hear not [the inspired writers], neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

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 should be used on the Lord's Table, wine or unfermented grape juice?"

Our Lord, in the institution of the Supper in an upper room in Jerusalem on the fateful evening before his death, said with reference to the "cup," "Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come" (Luke 22:17, 18). Thus, this element of the Lord's Supper was described by him as "the fruit of the vine." *Wine* (fermented juice of the grape with alcoholic content), is "the fruit of the vine." *Grape juice* (unfermented) is "the fruit of the vine." Either, therefore,

may be used.

To urge the use of one, to the exclusion of the other, on alleged scriptural grounds, is to make a law where God made none. It is grave sin so to do (I Tim. 4:3).

Reasons of expediency, however, may dictate that of several *right* ways to perform divine requirements, one is *preferable* to others. I personally prefer the unfermented juice of the grape myself, for a number of reasons. (1) It is vastly more pleasing to the taste, to me, than the alcoholic variety. (2) It may be obtained usually where groceries are sold, not requiring one to go into areas where hard liquor is dispensed. Christians have no business being seen at a counter

where whiskey and other intoxicating beverages are sold. (3) In rare instances, people once alcoholics, have found the taste of wine so irresistible that, after imbibing it at the Lord's table, they have returned to their former habit. These and similar considerations have prompted our brethren, for the most part, to use unfermented grape juice. In full time meeting work, I am associated with at least fifty congregations each year, in one capacity or another. So far as I can recall, I have not observed *one* instance of the use of wine on the Lord's table in ten years, or more.

Errors Of Pentecostalism

Continued from page 2

own heart is a fool" (Prov. 28:26). When objective truth, the word of God, instructs us what to do, and our spirits (minds) confirm that we have done what God's word says, how can we have stronger confirmation than that? (See Rom. 8:16, 17). The Holy Spirit bears his witness through the written word and the word only.

As to testimonies, the examples of conversion in the book of Acts are inspired testimonies. The Holy Spirit placed his stamp of approval on them twice — the preacher in each case was guided directly by the Holy Spirit, and Luke, who recorded them, was guided directly by the Holy Spirit. If my conversion in its essentials coincides with those examples, what greater assurance do I need that I am saved or have the approval of God in my Christian life? Good feelings are the result of knowing that one has followed divine and inspired testimony (Acts 8:39; 16:34).

USE MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC

Pentecostals, along with most all denominations, use mechanical instruments of music in their worship. There is no authority in the New Testament for such. True, the New Testament does not say not to have them, but this is no authority for their use. We must be silent where the Scriptures are silent (I Pet. 4:11). Are we at liberty to include anything in our worship that is not forbidden? If so, where did the Lord forbid the use of cake and ice-cream in the observance of the Lord's Supper?

True worship must be according to "spirit and truth" (John 4:24). This truth is God's word (John 17:17). If there is no authority in God's word for what we do in worship, there is no divine authority for it. Christ's words (not Moses, not our own feelings, emotions, or preferences) will be our standard of judgment in the last day (John 12:48). Vocal music is specified repeatedly in the New Testament as the kind of music authorized by God in Christians' worship (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19). Christians abide in the teaching of Christ (II John 9-11). Christians follow the God-given pattern (Heb. 8:5 without adding, subtracting, or altering that pattern to suit their own desires and opinions. God's pattern for the church in the New Testament does not permit the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship.

WOMEN PREACHERS

Pentecostals, as do many denominations, al-

low their women to lead public prayers and to participate in public teaching and preaching. We would not deny any woman the right to participate to the fullest in her God-given role in the work and worship of the church, but has God given her authority to do these things in public assemblies? The Holy Spirit, through Paul, contrasts the duties of men and women in public prayer and teaching in I Tim. 2:8-15. "Men" are authorized to pray everywhere (V. 8), but women are to remain silent when public prayer and teaching are involved (Vs. 11, 12; I Cor. 14:34, 35). The word "teach" in I Tim. 2:12 is from the Greek word "didasko," and Thayer says it means "to deliver didactic discourses." Thus, women are forbidden to teach over men and "to usurp authority" over man in teaching and praying. "The men only and no women whatever are to do the praying in public worship of the congregation" (Lenski). Any woman that respects the divine order of subjection will acquiesce without resentment, recognizing the divine reasons for it (I Tim. 2:13, 14). "In its attitude toward women... [the New Testament] impresses upon woman her duty of being under obedience and withholds from her the office of Word proclamation in the assemblies of the congregation" (Fritz Zerbst, *The Office Of Woman in the Church*, p. 62).

HEALING IN THE ATONEMENT

Finally, Pentecostals teach that physical healing is included in Christ's atonement for man. Christ redeemed us "from the curse of the law," and sickness is the curse of the law, destroyed by Christ, is their claim (Oral Roberts, *If You Need Healing—Do These Things*, pp. 25, 26). "Is Divine Healing in the Atonement? We believe it is... Through the Fall we lost everything. Jesus recovered all through His atonement... we are redeemed from the entire curse, body, soul and spirit" (F. F. Bosworth, *Christ The Healer*, pp. 25, 38).

Does this harmonize with the Scriptures? Christians are not promised freedom and release from sickness, but grace (strength) to endure them. Paul prayed three times for his thorn in the flesh to be removed, but God said, "My grace is sufficient for thee" (II Cor. 12:9). Paul gladly gloried in his infirmities (*astheneia*) (II Cor. 12:10). This is the most common Greek word for sickness used in the New Testament. Many afflictions were endured by Paul for the sake of Christ (II Cor. 11:23-27).

If physical healing is a part of the atonement,

why did Paul leave Trophimus sick at Miletus (II Tim. 4:20)? And why did he not heal Epaphroditus when he was sick "nigh unto death" in Rome (Phil. 2:27)? All physical sickness is a part of the process of dying, which has come as a consequence of Adam's sin which was not changed by Christ's death on the cross. To claim that physical healing is included in Christ's atonement is to misunderstand the nature and the purpose of his atonement. Atonement in the Old Testament was always contemplated in an offering for sin, and so was the death of Christ—an offering for sin (Rom. 5:9-11). "Did our Lord Jesus Christ by His death on the cross atone for bodily sickness and disease? No! Never!... The doctrine that our Lord Jesus Christ, when He died on the cross, made an atonement for the sickness and disease of the body is a False Doctrine, a doctrine that cannot be found from one end of the Holy Scriptures to the other" (T.J. McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and The Atonement*, pp. 16, 17).

CONCLUSION

We have examined six of the basic doctrines of Pentecostalism and have found them to be error in the light of God's word. Error of any stripe will not save. Only the truth of God's word saves (John 8:32). We appeal to you, dear reader, if you are in error, throw off its shackles and return to the pristine light of God's word and God's Word only.—1613 19th Ave., S. W., Decatur, Al. 35601.

Welcome To Our New Readers

With this issue we welcome a number of new readers—over three hundred elders and preachers who took us up on our offer to give them a thirteen weeks trial subscription. We hope you will read each issue carefully, and that you will enjoy doing so.

We greatly value comments and criticism from our readers—especially from elders and preachers. We sincerely invite your suggestions and criticisms.

Words of Truth is published every week in the year. It is owned by the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper, Alabama, and is overseen by the elders of that great church. Subscriptions to the paper are sold by the publisher, *The Northwest Alabamian*, in Haleyville, Alabama. There is no selling of advertising space in *Words of Truth*.

The Foundation Of Obedience

Continued from page 1

these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof" (Matthew 7:24-27).

The above quotation is from the words of Jesus as he brought his great sermon on the mount to a close. He compares his hearers to the two kinds of builders.

Both builders represent those who have a knowledge of the Lord's will. The wise man is the man who, after learning about Jesus, does the commands of the Lord. He is likened unto a man who builds his house on a rock. The rock foundation is the foundation of obedience. For one to build his life upon any other foundation is most foolish. Jesus teaches that those who go through life living in disobedience to him are like the man who builds a house on the sand. Most

everyone would contend that only a fool would build an expensive house on a sand pile; and yet, most of these same people are building a life (something more precious because the soul is involved) upon a sandy foundation of disobedience to the Lord's way for their lives. My friend, what about your foundation?—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101.

Winkler To Direct Preacher School

EDDIE WHITTEN

On January 28, brother Roy Deaver announced his resignation as the Director of the Brown Trail Preacher Training School, Bedford, Texas, effective at the end of the school year this August. Brother Deaver was the motivating force in the founding of the Brown Trail School and has served as its only director since its beginning in September, 1965. During that time the school has trained over 100 men for service in the church throughout the land. The Brown Trail elders reluctantly accepted brother Deaver's resignation, and expressed to him their prayers in his behalf in his new work with the Tennessee Bible College in Cookeville, Tennessee.



WENDELL WINKLER

throughout the land. He has been associated with the Brown Trail School of Preaching from its inception; thus he knows the value of the school and how it works. He has a wonderful family relationship, and two of his sons, Dan and Mike are preachers of the gospel; and his third son, Tim attends Oklahoma Christian College.

Winkler began preaching in and around Port Arthur, Texas, in 1944. He attended the Montgomery Bible College (now Alabama Christian College) and Lamar College of Technology, Beaumont, Texas. While in school, he served the Oak Grove congregation, Quinton, Alabama. He has served congregations in Texas, Louisiana, and Missouri. He worked with the Glen Gardens congregation in Fort Worth, Texas, for 13 years. He has held meetings in fifteen states and has appeared on a number of our college lecture programs. He debated A.L.

McKinney on "The Inspiration of the Bible." He has contributed numerous articles to brotherhood publications. He has authored ten books and has others in preparation. He was a member of the board of trustees of Fort Worth Christian Academy and Fort Worth Christian College. He was a staff writer for the Gospel Advocate under the late B.C. Goodpasture. He has held a number of city-wide meetings.

In discussing the future of the school with the elders, brother Winkler has outlined many goals both immediate and long-range.

In summation, the Brown Trail elders issued this statement: "By working together with a positive attitude and with the proper perspective of reaching our fellowman with the precious gospel of Christ, there is no question but that success will crown our efforts in the Lord. We welcome brother Winkler to this great work."

Youth And The Frailty Of Life

Recently, in a nearby city, a lad of sixteen years was walking on the sidewalk when he approached a parked truck containing natural gas. For some unknown cause, the truck exploded and burned the youth over 98 percent of his body. Several days later, he lost the battle for his life and succumbed to the grim reaper, death. The thought that this was his last stroll through his neighborhood perhaps never entered his mind. Most young folks do not take death very seriously. Oh, it isn't that they do not ponder the fact but rather they consider death as being more in line for the old people. They would consider death as something that happens to other folk, not to themselves. Life is so beautiful when one is young and full of zeal and vitality. And, youth is a wonderful time of life. One's heart has not been filled so much with all the unpleasant experiences that come into the lives of older people. Very few teenagers have not had a direct connection with death invades the ranks of youth, the bad memories and experience seem to last only for a relatively short period of time. The fact that death might occur to one who is so young just doesn't seem reasonable. It seems that the "silver cord is loosed, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern" only after a long life (Ecclesiastes 12:6).



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

that we are only a heartbeat away from death. The young university athlete who was preparing himself for an important track meet never suspected that he would die before he even got off the practice field; but he did. Then life was over and eternity has begun.

The Holy Scriptures exhort: "Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Proverbs 27:1). "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:13, 14). "Remember how short my time is: Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" (Psalms 89:47, 48). May all of our young people see the great need, therefore, in heeding the words of the Preacher when he said: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth..." (Ecclesiastes 12:1).—809 Perry Store Rd Opp, Al. 36467

It was stated at the time of brother Deaver's announcement of his resignation that careful attention would be given to secure the right man to insure the continuation of the high standard of excellence for which the Brown Trail Preacher Training School is known. Much time and careful and prayerful consideration have been involved in the selection of the one man the elders feel can do the best job of fulfilling the requirements of this standard.

After many hours of prayer and discussion, the elders are pleased to announce that brother Wendell Winkler has agreed to accept the responsibilities of Director of the school.

Brother Winkler, the pulpit minister at Brown Trail, fills every requirement which the elders feel to be of utmost necessity in the work as director of the preacher school. He is widely known and highly respected throughout the brotherhood. His direction of the Ft. Worth Lectures, held at Brown Trail the third week in January each year, has been masterful, aptly depicting the position of the Brown Trail church as being the type of church that will stand fast in the face of any force that would attack the authority and inspiration of the Holy scriptures. His books are used extensively throughout the church and convey a strong conservative stance regarding Christian principles. His motivational abilities are recognized by all who know him, and this facet of his talents has resulted in many benefits to the congregations which he has served in the past, and now at Brown Trail. His editorship of the Waymarks (the Brown Trail bulletin) has received many plaudits from far places, and his articles are reprinted widely in other bulletins

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- But, life is such a fragile thing. Someone has said



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"I am not
the Words

— Acts 26:25

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VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 1979

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A Review Of The Teaching Of John Clayton

(No. 2)

As this series of articles regarding the teaching of brother John N. Clayton is developed, it is important that some introductory matters be presented. First of all, my knowledge of brother Clayton's ideas in the realm of Christian evidences is primarily gleaned from the following sources authored by this brother: *Does God Exist? Correspondence Course* (10 Lessons); *Does God Exist?* (a monthly bulletin published over a span of five years); *The Source* (a 182 page book, published in 1976); and, *Personal Correspondence* between myself, several other brethren, and brother Clayton, over the past four years or so. Secondly, in order to understand the reasons behind some of John's attitudes toward the Bible, it is imperative that a brief word be noted concerning his background.



WAYNE JACKSON

there was no God." Eventually, he reached a state of deep depression. He writes: "I have sat on the edge of my bed with a 22 caliber rifle between my legs, trying to have enough guts to pull the trigger." However, through the influence of a young Christian girl (whom he later married) John renounced his atheism and during his junior year at Indiana University he was baptized in Bloomington, Indiana. Later John moved to South Bend and identified with the Donmoyer congregation, where brother James Boyd was the local preacher. Brother Boyd recalls that in the late 1950's he was approached by John Clayton with a request for baptism. John felt that he had not properly understood the gospel at the time of his first "baptism," hence, it was invalid; and so, he desired to be re-baptized, which brother Boyd did. Now here is the puzzling thing about all of this. When John wrote the booklet, "Why I Left Atheism," about a decade after his *second* baptism, he dates his conversion from the *first* baptism. Here is that testimony:

"I came forward, understanding that I now believed totally and completely in God. I recognized that I needed to start a new life, and be willing to tell people that I accepted the existence of God and believed that Jesus is his Son. I also realized that I was totally and completely lost in my sins, and that I needed to be baptized to have forgiveness as the Bible commanded" (CC, 10, pp. 13, 14).

I mentioned the foregoing for this reason. In my judgment it is somewhat less than honorable to tour the country lecturing dramatically on a conversion from atheism to Christianity while in college, yet all the while concealing the fact that even he, John Clayton, had repudiated the authenticity of that initial "conversion." I know the first story has a more sensational ring, but is this an honest approach?

John's educational background is of considerable interest in this inquiry. He received a B.S. and M.S. degree from Indiana University and then earned another M.S. degree from Notre Dame. His major

area of study was in earth sciences—a field almost totally dominated by evolutionary thinking! During the early years of his Christian life, John was still receiving his education from those who were either outright unbelievers, or else from those who advocated theistic evolution and hence rejected a literal approach to the Genesis account of creation. So far as I am able to determine (and I would be happy to correct this if I am mistaken), our brother has never formally taken any Bible courses from conservative Bible scholars who advocate a literal view of the entire creation in six days as taught in Genesis. Now I say this, not to suggest that one must be formally educated to have a correct concept of creation, but rather simply to give you an idea of John's training in light of his claim to being a specialist in Bible-science matters. As brother James Boyd, who worked several years with John, sadly notes: "John was and is long on science but short on Bible" (*Personal Letter*, 2/26/79).

In February of 1969 brother Clayton started the lecture circuit with his presentations on the existence of God (*Does God Exist?*, 7/77, p. 8). His popularity grew and he soon began to distribute printed matter and tapes reflecting his ideas. Within the first five years of the program, John had presented over 3,000 lectures in more than 200 congregations (*Personal Letter*, 8/1/75). I am confident that many sincere brethren were attempting to encourage this former atheist. But a tragic thing happened. In his immaturity, our brother allowed his new-found popularity to *crystallize* his teachings—a number of which are in plain opposition to the Bible doctrine of creation! Some brethren undoubtedly did not know enough themselves to detect this brother's errors (and still don't).

Perhaps others, not wishing to offend him, remained silent. But what a great injustice to John this was. As Professor William D. Matthew once said: "Many a false theory get crystallized by time and

According to brother Clayton's booklet, "Why I Left Atheism" (*Correspondence Course*, 10), from the earliest days of his remembrance he was taught "that there is no such thing as God—that anybody that believed in God was silly and superstitious and ignorant and had simply not looked at the evidence." His mother would ask him, "Do you really believe there's an old man, floating around the sky, blasting things into existence here upon the earth?" As a consequence John became a confirmed atheist. He studied the Bible, says he, "for the explicit purpose of finding scientific contradictions in it." He argued with religionists frequently and attempted (with some success to "break" their "faith." He confesses that he conditioned himself to lie and steal, for "after all,



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— Acts 26:25

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Burdens

NICK HAMILTON

The Spanish have a proverb: "No home is there anywhere that does not have sooner or later its hush." Every person has his problems. No one escapes. Some burdens are seen rather easily, but some are not. Maybe we should all be more tolerant toward others, not knowing the inner burdens which they may be feeling. As in all matters, the Bible speaks on the subject of "burdens." Here is what it says.

"EVERY MAN SHALL BEAR HIS OWN BURDEN" (Gal. 6:5). Much of our lives are lived in isolation. We are born alone. We die alone. And we live most of our life alone. No one can be born for you, nor can anyone die for you. And no one, absolutely no one, can answer for you. You cannot find yourself lost in a crowd on judgment day. Whether others do right or not, you must! In Jonathan Edwards' diary were discovered these words: "Resolved, first that every man should do right, whatever it costs. Resolved, second, whether any other man does right or not, I will, so help me God."

"BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS" (Gal. 6:2). These statements are not contradictory, as they might appear. It is just that some burdens are social, common, affecting many souls. Note the setting of this statement. When a brother fails, that makes it a matter of mutual concern. Some burdens need to be carried with other—grief, poverty, heartache. Some church burdens must be shared mutually. John Chrysatom said, "it is better for the sun to quit shining than for John Chrysatom to quit preaching."

"CAST THY BURDEN ON THE LORD" (Ps. 55:22). We cannot flee from burdens. They must be met and conquered. God helps by sustaining us. How? He can remove the burden. Or, he might choose to allow a greater blessing be ours. Or, he might help us to overcome it. Whatever the case, we need his help.

Burdens can break us down, or they can make us better people: it all depends on us.—1901 Jennifer, Little Rock, Ark. 72203

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FROM

THE EDITOR

Miraculous Gifts — How?

This is a continuation of a discussion which we began last week on the subject of miraculous gifts. The article last week dealt with the matter of why miraculous gifts were given. It was shown that they were given solely to effect the revelation and the confirmation of God's will. It was further shown that, since the revelation and confirmation of God's will is now complete, there is no further need for miraculous gifts.



BOBBY DUNCAN

In this part of discussion we will deal with the matter of how the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were imparted to those who received them. It will be observed that, with the exception of the apostles and the household of Cornelius, miraculous gifts were imparted only through the agency of the apostles of Christ. This fact is significant in that it makes it impossible for those living today to perform miracles, since none living today could possibly have come into direct contact with any of the apostles of Christ.

Acts 8:14-18 is a demonstration of the fact that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost were given only through the agency of the apostles. Read the entire chapter. Philip (not the apostle by that name) had preached the gospel to the people in the city of Samaria. He had confirmed the word he preached by performing miracles. The people had been receptive to the truth and had been baptized. "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost" (verses 14 and 15). Please observe that Philip, though himself miraculously endowed, did not impart miraculous gifts to those whom he had baptized. He was not an apostle, and had not the power to do so. The apostles at Jerusalem sent two of their own number, Peter and John, to do what Philip could not do, since he was not an apostle. Until the apostles arrived on the scene, the Holy Spirit "was fallen upon none of them" (verse 16). But when the apostles arrived in Samaria, they (the apostles) laid "their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (verse 17). It was not through the laying on of Philip's hands the Holy Ghost was given; it was through the laying on of the hands of the apostles. "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost" (verses 18 and 19). It is obvious from this statement that Simon saw that the apostles had power that Philip did not have, i.e., to lay hands on others and impart the Holy Ghost to them.

The very fact that Peter and John came to Samaria under these circumstances shows that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit could not be

imparted except through the agency of the apostles.

Paul alluded to the fact that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit could be given only through the agency of the apostles when he stated that his desire to go to Rome stemmed partly from his desire to impart some spiritual gift unto the Roman Christians (Romans 1:11). If these gifts were imparted independently of the apostles, why would his presence at Rome have anything to do with their receiving any such gifts? Either he or some other apostle had to be present at Rome before the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit could be given, just as it was necessary for apostles to be present at Samaria before these gifts could be given.

In II Corinthians 12:12 Paul refers to "the signs of an apostle." His own apostleship had been challenged by false teachers at Corinth, and he was defending its genuineness. His argument in its defense was the fact that he had performed the signs of an apostle, i.e., had done things only an apostle could do. In the very next verse he says, "For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches. . ." What would their being equal to any other church in the brotherhood have to do with proving Paul's apostleship? The thing wherein they were not inferior to other churches was in the matter of spiritual gifts. Paul said as much in I Corinthians 1:7: "So that ye come behind in no gift. . ." The fact that they had spiritual gifts proved the apostleship of the one through whom these gifts were given. But how could such be so, unless it were also true that spiritual gifts could be bestowed only through the agency of the apostles. If we should arrange Paul's argument syllogistically, it would look like this:

Major Premise: Miraculous powers can be given only through apostles.

Minor Premise: You (church at Corinth) received miraculous powers through me (Paul).

Conclusion: Therefore, I (Paul) am an apostle.

If, as many today claim, miraculous gifts can be received in some other way than through the agency of an apostle, then Paul's argument is without any validity. The fact that spiritual gifts were imparted only through the laying on of the apostles' hands proves there are none who perform miracles today.

We have stated that the household of Cornelius was an exception to the rule that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were given through the hands of the apostles. A thorough discussion of this fact is impractical at this point, but a careful reading of the tenth and eleventh chapters of Acts will make it clear that the purpose of the falling of the Holy Ghost upon the household of Cornelius was that the equality of Jews and Gentiles might be established. This was God's way of showing the prejudicial Jews that there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles. But this case is an exception to the rule, and all other who received miraculous powers of the Spirit did so through the laying on of the apostles' hands.

An article to follow will deal with some passages which deal directly with the duration of miraculous gifts.

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).

"May a woman pray in a public assembly?"

Not only *may* she so do, she *must*, if she worships God acceptably, inasmuch as prayer is one of the essential items of worship when Christians assemble (Acts 2:42; 12:12; 20:36). What the querist means, of course, is: "May a woman lead prayer in a public assembly?" Whether a woman may *pray* in a public assembly and whether a woman may *lead a prayer* in public assemblies are two vastly different matters, and they ought to be kept entirely separate in our thinking and study. Often, this distinction is ignored, and the feeling is that if a woman cannot lead a prayer in public she cannot pray in public.

Actually, it is of little importance who "leads" the prayer if it is audible and scriptural

since the purpose of such leading is to express clear and understandable sentiments which the congregation may follow and adopt as their own. The view, that there is some blessing available to those who lead prayers not given to others results from a mistaken notion of what prayer in public really involves. What difference does it make who actually gives utterance to the petitions delivered, since every disciple joins in and makes the address to God his own? To insist on being given the opportunity to lead prayers, whether by men or women, is foreign to the spirit of Christianity, and opposed to that disposition where each is to count "the other better than himself" (Phil. 2:3). Those who "In honor preferring one another," would never strive over such things (Rom. 12:10).

Is it *scriptural* for a woman to lead in public

prayer? I do not believe that it is. It is not possible for a woman to qualify as an elder (I Tim. 3:1-6), as a deacon (I Tim. 3:12), as an evangelist (Titus 2:15; I Tim. 2:11, 12), which creates a strong presumption that it was not God's intention that women should be involved in the oversight of the church, nor actively engage in its public ministrations; there is no hint of such activity by women in the records of the early church; and, those instances involving public always specifically indicate that men, not women, participated (I Tim. 2:8; Acts 20:7-12). These considerations would not, of course, apply to family and private devotions; but, *Christian women will shrink from any public activity which would subject them to the displeasure of their Lord!*

God's Manual For Marriage

Sandwiched between the books of Ecclesiastes and Isaiah is the book Song of Solomon. It contains eight chapters, one hundred seventeen verses, and two thousand six hundred sixty-six words. According to one commentator, the Jews thought the book symbolized the love of Jehovah for Israel and his dealings with his people throughout their history. To the Christian the book expressed the love of Christ for his church, or the mystical union between the individual soul and its Lord. (G. Henton Davies, Alan Richardson, and Charles L. Wallis, editors, *The Twentieth Century Bible Commentary*, Donald Southard, "The Song of Solomon" New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1932, 1955, pp. 262-263). Another writer stated that the book told about Solomon trying to win a maiden away from her shepherd lover or husband.



RAY HAWK

It is this writer's conviction that the Song of Solomon is God's manual for sex in marriage. We know from Genesis 1:22 that God provided sex as a means to propagate the human race. I Corinthians 7:1, 2 tells us each man should have a wife and each woman a husband to keep themselves from fornication. But, what does God allow the husband and wife to do in their relationship with one another? Genesis 26:8, 9 shows Isaac and Rebekah were "sporting" so that Abimelech understood that they were husband and wife. But, what is "sporting"? The same word is found in Genesis 39:14, 17, when Potiphar's wife accused Joseph of "mocking" her.

Often two people marry and then one or both have guilt feelings about their desires for one another's body. God stated, "Marriage is honorable in all, and *the bed undefiled*" (Hebrews 13:4). One should also read I Corinthians 7:1-5 in several different translations. The Song of Solomon shows that intimate contact between husband and wife is not wrong. It points out

that husband and wife should desire the other's body. The book describes the kiss, 1:2, 8:1; neck, 1:10; 4:4, 9; 7:4; cheeks, 1:10; 5:13; her breasts, 1:13; 4:5; 7:3, 7, 8; 8:1, 10; eyes, 1:15; 4:1; 5:12; 6:5; 7:4; hugs or embraces, 2:6; 8:3; lovely face, 2:14; 5:15; bed, 1:16; 3:1; hair, 4:1; 5:11; 6:5; 7:5; teeth, 4:2; 6:5; lips, 4:3, 11; temples, 4:3; 6:7; tongue, 4:11; belly, 5:14; 7:2 (here it may also mean womb, *Gesenius Hebrew And Chaldee Lexicon*, Grand Rapids; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964 7th p.113); legs, 5:15; mouth, 5:16; 7:9 (literally, both of Solomon and his bride talk about the taste of the other's mouth); feet, 7:1; thighs, 7:1; navel, 7:2; and nose, 7:4.

If two young people who are thinking of marriage would sit down and read this book, it might help to rid them of erroneous ideas which will hinder their marriage and cause unhappiness later. If Jim Jones' followers had read the book and understood it, he could not have used their rightful desires for one another against them as he did. When a man lusts after a woman who is not his wife, it is an act of sin (Matthew 5:28). It is not wrong for him to desire his wife or she him! Remember, God said that the bed is undefiled (Hebrews 13:4.)

One writer spoke of Solomon as a "dirty old man." That is not so! Solomon wrote the book by inspiration. God wanted it in the canon of scriptures called the Old Testament. It is there for a purpose. If it embarrasses or upsets people to read it, that is their problem. They are the ones with the sinful hangups, not Solomon. God made sex for two people married to one another. He meant for us to enjoy one another's physical presence. All of this is seen in Song of Solomon.

In the book we see not only Solomon's desires for his bride, but her's for him (5:10-16; 7:10-8:3; her desires for him; 4:12-14; 7:1-9: his desire for her). If one takes each of the words found in these passages and looks them up in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, he will discover some interesting root meanings. For instance, in 7:4 when Solomon says to his bride, "Thy neck is as a tower of ivory" he means he wants to lay siege to the back of her neck. When she says, "There will I give thee my loves" she is saying I will give you my boiling love or

passion (7:12.)

One of the problems in reading Song of Solomon in the King James, American Standard, Revised Standard, or several other English translations is the failure of one to understand several people are speaking at different times. Although I never recommend the New English Bible or The Living Bible (Paraphrase), these two do point out when the groom, bride, or the bride's companions are speaking. One needs to know this to keep up with the dialogue.

The Song of Solomon is seldom read by most members of the church. One reason is because few read the Old Testament. Another reason is because few understand it to be a love drama between husband and wife. I hope married couples and those planning to marry will read it and recognize that God made sex for two people married to one another. He meant for us to enjoy one another (Genesis 26:8).—1461 East Chester, Jackson, Tn. 38301.

Sharing

*The road seemed so long, and the load that I carried
Made my shoulder ache with pain,
And my footsteps grew slower, as my body grew weary,
And my shoulder sagged with strain.*

*When by my side, I felt the warm touch
Of a shoulder pressed closely to mine,
Bridging the way for the load to be shared,
And my load seemed to welcome the sign;*

*For it shifted some weight to the one by my side,
And together we traveled that road,
And I learned that the touch from someone who cares
Can lighten the heaviest load.*

Earlene Rose
1608 24 St.

Northport, Al. 35476

Bear Ye One Another's Burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

(Galatians 6:2)

We Must Be Like The Mongrel

After Israel became divided, Israel, the northern kingdom composed of the ten tribes, lasted for approximately two-hundred years. In 721 B.C. the Assyrians took captive these ten tribes. The southern kingdom, Judah, lasted for approximately three-hundred years after the division before it was taken captive by Babylon in 600 B.C. When Israel fell to Assyria, the Jews were carried into captivity and the Assyrians sent some of their people over into Israel to take care of the land so that it would not go to waste. And so it happened that the



MICHAEL D. STONE

few Jews who were allowed to remain in Israel intermarried with some of these Assyrians. This resulted in a mongrel race which came to be known as the Samaritans. As a result of this mixture, the Samaritans came to be despised and hated by the Jews.

It is interesting to note that Jesus used a despised Samaritan to teach a great lesson concerning our responsibility to help any who may be in need of our help. "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance a certain priest was going down that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion, and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn,

and took care of him. And on the morrow he took out two shillings, and gave them to the host, and said, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee. Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him that fell among the robbers?" (Luke 10:30-36).

The Samaritan did what the religious leaders would not do. The priest and Levite were prejudiced. The mongrel was not. The priest and Levite did not engage in the practical aspects of Christianity. The Samaritan did when he offered personal service. Can it be that many of us are so involved in the mechanics of religion that we have no time for the practical part of Christianity? This particular Samaritan was despised by so many and yet was loved and appreciated by the One who knows the hearts of men. Whether we are a success or not in this life and whether we have a hope of an eternal life with God will depend to a great extent on whether we were like or not like this mongrel.—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101

Repentance

ARNOLD SEXTON

Gospel repentance is the only kind that will save.

An example of repentance without sin is found in Genesis 6:6. It reads: "And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." God's repentance was not produced by any act of sinfulness on his part, but it was a result of man's sinfulness. The righteousness of God demanded punishment of man's sin. The grief God had in his heart was because punishment was essential. God's repentance was no reflection upon his character; it was a reflection upon the character of man. The definition of the word "repented" (*Nacham*) used in Genesis 6 is "to pity, console or (reflex) rue; or (unfavorable) to avenge (oneself)—comfort self, ease (one's self), repent." From this definition one can see this repentance is connected with the righteous vengeance of God. God repented (was sorry) that he had to move against man (cf. Romans 12:19).

Repentance without a change of life is illustrated by the case of Judas. His repentance was emotional and produced an emotional reaction. Emotional repentance is not directed by stability of life. This is seen in the lives of many who come down to the front during the invitation and lose their direction shortly thereafter. Emotions must be controlled by the gospel. The repentance of Judas was also one of defeatism instead of a repentance of victory. It placed him in such an emotional state that he plunged deeper in sin. Such is usually the case where only emotional repentance is involved. Repentance that is not controlled and directed by the gospel will not save.

Another type of repentance that will not save is that which is done for reasons other than one's love for God. One may quit doing many sinful things such as drinking (alcoholic beverages), swearing, fornication, etc., without ever obeying the gospel. It is commendable that one would repent from these things; yet, it will not purify him before God unless he does it in view of the gospel. Repentance is connected to Christ's blood the same as every other responsibility of Christianity (Acts 2:38; Hebrews 9:22).

The only kind of repentance that will save is gospel repentance. This simply means it is the kind directed by God. Paul said, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation...the sorrow of the world worketh death" (II Corinthians 7:10). Notice the contrast between "godly sorrow" and "the sorrow of the world." How may one know what "godly sorrow" is? Of course, it is only by revelation. Therefore, sorrow which grows out of subjectivism cannot produce repentance. Saving repentance must be God directed.

It is appropriate to look at an example of how

God-programmed repentance works. Acts 2 is a classic case. After Peter had convinced many of the pentecostians of their sinful condition, he said to them: "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). A casual reading of this context will show one that repentance caused them to: (1) gladly receive the word (verse 41); (2) be baptized (verse 41); (3) continue in the study and practice of Christianity (verse 42); (4) perform sacrificial, benevolent acts (verse 45); (5) practice unity (verse 46); (6) give the praise to God (verse 47); (7) demonstrate love for those outside of Christ (verse 48). This is quite a contrast to the repentance of Judas. This repentance resulted in changed lives. The repentance of Judas worked to his destruction.

A different word is used to describe the repentance of Judas and gospel repentance. The word "metamelomai" is used to describe the repentance of Judas, while the word "metanoeo" is used to describe gospel repentance. Thayer distinguishes between the two as follows:

SYN, metamelomai, metanoeo: The distinctions so often laid down between these words, to the effect that the former expresses a merely emotional change the latter a change of choice, the former has reference to particulars the latter to the entire life, the former signifies nothing but regret even though amounting to remorse, the latter that reversal of moral purpose known as repentance—seem hardly to be sustained by usage, but that "metanoeo" is the fuller and nobler term, expressive of moral action and issues, is indicated not only by its derivation, but by the greater frequency of its use, by the fact that it is often employed in the impv... (page 405).

The distinction that he sets forth is that "moral actions and issues" are fundamentals of the gospel. One who is not willing to allow his life to be shaped by the gospel is not a fit subject for gospel repentance. The repentance set forth in Acts 2 should be practiced. All forms of repentance "so-called" should be rejected.—1751 Damon Street, Birmingham, Alabama 35217

Teaching Of John Clayton

Continued from page 1

absorbed into the body of scientific doctrine through lack of adequate criticism when it is formulated" (*Climate and Evolution*, 2nd edition, p. 159). The same can be said of religious theories as well.

John has now gone so far, and taught his theories so vigorously, that it would require a monumental act of courage and humility for him to change. Yet, this is what we would sincerely hope for, and to this end will we continue to pray. (To be continued.)—3906 East Main Street, Stockton, CA 95295

Repentance is a very important part of God's redemptive plan for man. However, because of the various ways this word has been used, it has caused some people to fail to understand its real position relative to the gospel. The Bible speaks of more than one type of repentance. One may repent of something that is not sinful. Conversely, one may sin and repent (not gospel repentance) but never change his life.

Dying In Despair

Robert Ingersoll, a well-known infidel, was aggressive in his fight against God and the Bible. In 1899, while dying, he exclaimed, "Oh God, if there be a God; save my soul, if I have a soul; from Hell, if there be a Hell!" This man had no hope; he had no source of comfort as he faced the reality of death.

Thomas Paine was known throughout the country for his public denunciations of God.

His book, *The Age of Reason*, was an outright attack upon Christianity and its basis. In death, however, there was quite a difference in Paine. His last words were "Oh Lord, help me. Oh God, stay with me, for I cannot bear to be left alone. Lord, what will become of me hereafter?" Though a respected patriot and statesman, he left this life without assurance.

Another noted infidel, Hobbes, died in 1679. As his last breath was leaving him he said, "I say again, I would, if the world were mine, give it all for the right to live just one more day. I am about to take a leap in the dark and I am so afraid."

Friend, you may not be an infidel; but are you prepared to walk the "valley of the shadow"? The Scriptures teach that death is an appointment we all must keep (Hebrews 9:27). Life is uncertain, death is sure, and eternity is endless (James 4:13, 14). Are you ready?

May we ever be able to say with Paul, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain...I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (Philippians 1:21; II Timothy 4:6). —Box 125, Aurora, Mo. 65605



DALTON KEY



Words Of Truth

but speak forth

— Acts 26:25

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A Review Of The Teaching Of John Clayton

(No. 3)

Brother John Clayton's writings contain some good material on the existence of God, but the overall force of such is greatly weakened by a sort of "theistic agnosticism" which pervades the whole. It is an attitude which suggests that though we confidently believe that God is, the concept cannot be absolutely proven, hence, cannot with certainty be known. In discussing God's existence John writes:



WAYNE JACKSON

"The most basic problem in the philosophical context is the point that there is really no such thing as absolute truth or proof from a purely logical standpoint. Since definitions of what is meant by reality and assumptions of what physical reality really is can always be challenged, the absence of absolute proof can be defended. You cannot prove to me that you exist, for I can deny the use of sight by pointing out that sight can be confused by optical illusions or various other problems in interpretation" (*The Source*, p. 15).

I would respectfully suggest any brother, who feels that his *own* existence is an unprovable proposition, really doesn't need to be touring the country lecturing on the existence of God.

Along the same line, brother Clayton says that many people today are "demanding absolute proof in an area where absolute proof is no more accessible than it is in any aspect of our lives. You cannot absolutely prove to me that you exist. ...There is a

leap of faith in nearly everything we do, and there are some questions relative to God, His origin [God has no origin, WJ], His plan, and His methods that cannot be totally comprehended by any of us" (*The Source*, p. 182). John's reasoning is strikingly similar to the philosophy of Danish author Soren Kierkegaard, the forerunner of existentialism, who asserted that proofs for God's existence are not conclusive; it is only when we let go of them and take the leap of faith that God exists!

None of us, of course, believes that he has absolute knowledge of all Jehovah's purposes and methods. But that is a long way from asserting that we cannot prove, and hence know, that He exists. The Scriptures demand that we "prove all things" (I Thes. 5:21); would not that include the existence of God? Can one *know* that God exists? "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psa. 46:10; Cf. II Tim. 1:12).

Brother Clayton has a similarly inaccurate view of Bible inspiration. He says:

"I do not contend that it can be conclusively proven to 20th Century Americans that the Bible is inspired, because the Bible writings have been written over a period of 4,000 years, in at least three languages and several cultures. This variability of background leads to cultural and linguistic difficulties that allow differences of opinion to creep in. There are countless examples of such difficulties" (*The Source*, p. 89).

First, the Bible was written over a period of some 1,600 years, not 4,000. Secondly, John's charge that linguistic and cultural changes have negated the Bible's claim that it is the inspired word of God (II Tim. 3:16, 17), is atrocious, and it is easily refuted. The Old Testament was mostly written in Hebrew (a fractional portion is in Aramaic). However, approximately two and a half centuries before Christ the OT was translated into Greek. Now observe this fact: Christ frequently quoted from this Greek

version, the Septuagint (cf. Matt. 4:10, 15:8, 9); he called it "scripture" (John 19:36), and elsewhere he declared that "the scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). The point is—faithful translation does not destroy inspiration!

Thirdly, while cultural transitions may make the interpretation of some passages rather difficult, such problems certainly do not militate against the infallible proofs that the Bible is the verbally inspired word of God! If one cannot prove that the Biblical documents are inspired, how could he possibly establish that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?

Though John alleges that he believes in the "plenary" inspiration of the Scriptures, his definition of plenary could stand some amplification. It is rather apparent to me that he does not endorse the idea of "verbal inspiration." He writes: "It seems to the writer that the concept of inspiration is, that God saw to it that His *ideas* were conveyed by the writers, but their own style and *expression techniques* was allowed" (*Does God Exist?* 9/79, p. 8 emp. WJ). While it is true that stylistic peculiarities are evident within the divine writings, it is not true that God merely gave the writers "His ideas" and thus left the *expression* of those ideas to their own techniques. That is a denial of *verbal* inspiration. David said, "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was upon my tongue" (II Sam. 23:2). And Paul affirmed that the message he proclaimed came "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth" (I Cor. 2:13).

Brother Clayton's disdain for the authority of the Scriptures is also seen in other ways. Recently he said of a book he was reviewing: "Regurgitation of the usual chain of Biblical reference is not the style of this book" (*Does God Exist?*, 10/77, p. 13). Since when is a book to be praised merely because it does not regurgitate (vomit up) a chain of Bible verses? Somehow I have labored under the impression that quoting God's book was honorable! (To be continued.)—3906 East Main Street, Stockton, Ca. 95205



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

I am not mad, most noble
 men, but speak forth the Words of
 Truth and soberness.

— Acts 26:25

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The Neglected Commandment

Can the church of today be the church of the New Testament and not practice that which the church of the New Testament practiced? The answer to this question must be a resounding, "No!" I have been a member of the Lord's church for some twenty seven years, and have heard preachers of the gospel denounce the denominations for not following the pattern set forth in the New Testament, and they were right in doing



JOHN SHAVER

so. But are our garments clean and spotless? Are we following the pattern of New Testament Christianity explicitly? I fear, dear brethren, that in some cases we are not! One of the most deadly sins mentioned in the Bible is the sin of neglect. To neglect any one of God's commandments is to place one's soul in jeopardy. There is a commandment in God's word that has been shamefully and purposely neglected by many congregations of God's people. That commandment is just as much a commandment as is baptism, and that commandment is: "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly..." (II Thess. 3:6).

The young church at Thessalonica had come to a point of having to make a decision. Paul had expressed confidence in their rendering obedience to God's will (II Thess. 3:4), and then put them to the test, commanding that they withdraw from their disorderly brethren (II Thess. 3:6). Some have stated that there were idlers in Thessalonica laboring under a misconception of the Lord's imminent return (I Thess. 4:13-18; I Thess. 5:1-8; II Thess 2:1-12). Regardless of their motives, these brethren were in error, and would need to be disciplined for their own good, and for the good of the church.

God is a God of discipline, and expects his people to be pure and obedient. Discipline in the church is never pleasant, but it must be practiced to keep the

Continued on page 4



Miraculous Gifts – How Long?

In two previous articles on the subject of miraculous gifts we have shown (1) that miraculous gifts were given to effect the revelation and confirmation of the will of God, and (2) that miraculous gifts were imparted only through the agency of the apostles. Since the will of God has been completely revealed and thoroughly confirmed, and since there are no apostles living today through whom miraculous gifts can be imparted, it necessarily follows that people today do not possess miraculous powers. In this article we will deal with some passages which tell how long the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were to endure.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Perhaps the lengthiest and most thorough discussion of miraculous gifts contained in the Bible begins in I Corinthians 12 and continues through chapter 14. Chapter 13, the *Love* chapter, is actually a contrast between the permanent nature of love and the temporary nature of spiritual gifts. Please observe verse 8: "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." Now the question is, when shall miraculous prophecies, miraculous tongues, and miraculous knowledge cease and vanish away? The answer is in the next two verses: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." Here supernatural knowledge

and prophecy are mentioned as illustrative of all miraculous gifts. It is clearly stated that this knowledge and prophecy were "in part," referring to the fact that the great body of divine truth was not at that time completed or perfected. Part of God's divine revelation had been given, but part of it yet remained to be given. Until the revelation was completed or perfected, supernatural gifts were necessary. But "when that which is perfect" came, then these miraculous gifts would be done away. "That which is perfect" most assuredly refers to the perfect and complete New Testament of Jesus Christ.

Some, in an effort to escape the conclusion that supernatural gifts were to be done away with the completion of the New Testament, have tried to make "that which is perfect" refer to Christ. This would mean that miraculous gifts would continue until Jesus comes back again. Such an interpretation neither fits the context, nor can it be made to do so. It is obvious that the apostle is drawing a contrast between certain things that were temporary and certain things which would be permanent—things that would be done away, and things that would remain. The things that would be done away were miraculous gifts; and these would be done away "when that which is perfect" was come. The things that would remain were faith, hope, and charity (love); and they would abide after "that which is perfect" was come. But how could faith and hope abide after "that which is perfect" was come, if "that which is perfect" refers to Christ? When Jesus comes again, our faith will become sight, and our hope will become a reality.

Paul was writing of a time when faith, hope and charity would remain, but when miraculous gifts would be done away. It would be "when that which is perfect" was come. When the New Testament was completed or perfected, miraculous gifts were done away, but faith, hope and charity (love) continue to abide with us.

I Saw The Wicked Buried

It is not uncommon to see men buried, for death is appointed to all men by the Almighty Himself. Quite frequently we visit funeral homes and find two, or three, maybe four or five corpses on the same day. Moreover, death often does its works suddenly and swiftly, and without respect of persons, age, rank, or even of character. For the righteous die as well as the wicked; saints as well as sinners.

But some people seemingly never see the wicked buried. They may have been noticeably wicked in life, never having obeyed the gospel of Christ, God's power to save. But, to many people, death seems to change sinners into saints. In conducting funeral services, some preachers encourage this view. I have known a few preachers of whom it was said, "He has never lost a case."



W. C. QUILLEN

A widow sat with her children on the front pew listening to the preacher eulogize her deceased husband. The more he said the greater her amazement and the less she cried. Finally she whispered to her oldest child: "Son, go up there and see if that's your daddy."

Whether or not this actually happened (it was told to me), it does demonstrate a point.

A little girl, walking through the cemetery with her mother, asked, "Where are all the bad people buried?" Have you ever wondered? (Matt. 7:13-14).

It is proper to pay honor to whom honor is due, and to say in eulogy that which is true and can be justly said. It is better to tell the family and friends what the Lord says about salvation and the hereafter, and hope they can make application to their departed loved one. After all, he is both Savior and judge. However, it is sad to see such men buried as the wise man saw:

"And I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy" (Ecc. 8:10).

The church of Christ is today the Lord's holy place (Heb. 9:10). There are many people who never attend its worship services. But there are many who do, and some with a degree 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).

"How may I more effectively rely upon the promise of God, and eliminate worry and care from my life?"

To "overcome the world" is, in the final analysis, to live the Christian life in spite of an unfriendly environment. "This is the victory that overcometh the world" (I John 5:4). We are all continually faced with the temptation of blaming our failures of whatever type on our environment. "If circumstances were only different," we are disposed to say, "we would be different." Thus, instead of pointing the accusing finger at ourselves, we do that which is much easier and far less painful—we place on our surroundings the responsibility for our failures.

There is, of course, an element of truth in this. An unfriendly and evil environment does make for difficulty in living the Christian life. "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (I Cor. 15:33). We are inclined to take on the color of our surroundings.

But while an unfriendly environment does create difficulties, it is nevertheless true that thousands among us today are attaining to high standards of character in spite of opposing circumstances. *It is fundamentally true that the secret of a good life does not lie necessarily in circumstances that are friendly but in internal resources of character which enable us to triumph over all difficulties.*

These resources of character constitute the real difference in people. Identical circumstances produce people both good and bad. All of us are acquainted with people who have deteriorated when living in the midst of an environment conducive to growth and development in Christian character.

Some, mistaking the truth, are ever on the search for an ideal situation. This is a vain and futile quest. (1) There are no ideal situations. (2) If there were, it is not likely that we would recognize them. (3) Were we to stumble upon one, so soon as we began to participate therein it would cease to be ideal. Becky Sharp, a character in one of Thackeray's stories, thought that she could be a good woman if she had an income of five thousand pounds a year. But one of her type could not be good in any circumstances without a radical transformation of character.

This is a truth of wide application. A lesson all of us need to learn is that contentment rests not on outward circumstances, but upon the inner resources of strength in a man's soul. Paul learned contentment through the master of outward circumstances. Happiness does not depend on what a man *has*, but upon what he *is*. Happiness is a by-product of character.

It is not in titles, nor in rank;
It is not in wealth like London Bank,
To purchase peace and rest;
If happiness have not her seat
And center in the breast,
We may wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest."

Circumstances do not *make* a man; they do reveal *what kind* of a man he is! There is a legend of an Oriental king who was very unhappy. He summoned a philosopher of his realm and inquired of him how he might be happy. The philosopher told him to seek out the most contented man in his kingdom and to wear his shirt for a while. When, after exhaustive investigation, they located the man, they discovered *he had no shirt!* The miserable, the wretched, the unhappy need, to use a phrase of Paul's: "to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16).

No man fails until he is himself a failure. The younger son, in the parable of Luke 15, was a prodigal at heart long before the decision was reached to claim his inheritance. Deterioration of character always precedes corruption of life. It is significant that our Lord never excused anyone because of an untoward

environment. The sweep of sacred history makes clear the fact that when a man or woman fails it is due not to outward circumstances, but to inner defeat. Jesus expected his disciples to triumph in spite of obstacles. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world (i.e., change their environment) but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:15). He did not admonish them to do the best that they could considering their surroundings. They had available to them reserves of power which would enable them, if used, to face any situation and triumph over it.

It is not suggested that such is easy. There are battles to be fought, desperate conflicts to be waged, requiring the most valiant efforts. Stevenson, in a fine passage in his "Lay Morals," says: "Where did you

hear that it is easy to be honest? Do you find that in the Bible? Easy? It is easy to be an ass and follow the multitude like a blind, besotted bull in a stampede: and that, I am well aware, is what you and Mrs. Grundy mean by being honest. *But it will not bear the stress of time nor the scrutiny of conscience.*"

No, it is not easy, but it is possible. Let us, then, be done with excusing ourselves for our failures, and being sorry for ourselves in our difficulties. It is not inevitable that we should fall before our adversaries. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4).

"Though raging storms around me beat,
And seas tempestuous roll;
Whate'er betides me, I shall not fear,
Thy strength will keep me whole."

"Give Attendance To...Exhortation"

The apostle Paul in his first epistle to Timothy, told him to give attendance (or devotion) to three things: reading, exhortation and doctrine (or teaching) (I Tim. 4:13). We today could take the same advice from the apostle Paul. There has been much written on the subject of daily Bible reading and the doctrine that we are to contend for, but we fail many times to give the proper amount of "attendance" to exhortation.



TONY LAWRENCE

Exhortation is something that if practiced will cause not only ourselves to become stronger but also those around us. The word "exhortation" traces its etymology to the Latin word *exhortari*: *ex* - completely plus *hortari*, to encourage. Therefore, the word exhortation as we use it and as it is used in the Bible is "to encourage completely." Some think that because Timothy was an evangelist that it is the duty of only ministers and maybe elders to exhort or encourage. The Bible teaches that we all have this responsibility, and we shall see who the Bible commands to be exhorters and what methods they should use.

We as preachers and teachers have the responsibility to motivate the congregation or class to work and be faithful. This effort can be accomplished very effectively by the means of exhortation. Paul, in Romans 12:1, besought those Christians to present their bodies as living sacrifices. This is our purpose to day, that is, to get people to surrender their lives to God. We can reap amazing results by "beseeching" people rather than always condemning them. In many instances where "beseech" is found, an inspiring sermon follows (cf. Acts 26:3-ff; Rom. 12:1-ff; and II Cor. 10:1-ff). A second method is through the use of the words, "let us". In I John 4:7 we read: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God: and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." J. Gresham Machen, in his book, *New Testament Greek for Beginners*, states on page 131: "The first person plural of the subjunctive is used in exhortations." This is known as the "Hortatory Subjunctive" and is translated in our English Bibles as "let us." So we have John exhorting us to "love one another" through this means. Many would rather hear a sermon or lesson that included the preacher or teacher in the lesson by saying, "let us" rather than, "you should." If would seem that if we would use

this positive mode employed by the early Christian teachers that we would gain outstanding results as they did. An example of one of the early Christians can be found in Joseph who came to be called Barnabas because of his exhortation. His name meant "son of exhortation," just as Simon was given the name Peter which meant "rock." Our duty as preachers and teachers can be summed up in the words of Albert Barnes: "One who presents the warnings and promises of God to excite men to discharge their duty" (*Barnes Notes on Romans*, Page 278).

We have said previously that some have felt that exhortation was for ministers or at least the leaders only. We shall now strive to show that exhortation is for all Christians. The Book of Hebrews was written to encourage the Hebrew Christians not to leave the faith. He commanded them not to "forsake the assembly" and as a means of remaining faithful to "exhort one another" (Heb. 10:25). When we sing we "admonish one another" (Col. 3:16). Paul stated that the Romans were able to "admonish one another" (Rom. 15:14). We can see easily that exhortation in all of its forms (exhort, "let us" admonish, beseech, etc.) is a basic part of every Christian life. Therefore, we as Christians may not all be able to preach, teach or fill a capacity as a leader; but we all have the ability to encourage our brethren, and in so doing we will reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7). When we reap what we sow then we all are built up and encouraged in the faith that will save us! — Rt. 1 Box 110, Indian Mound, TN 37079

As Usual

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained..."

— Psalms 8:3

The sun arose this morning
In its usual array
To lighten all the eastern sky
And start a usual day.

The world will make its orbits
Along its usual course,
And gravity will hold it up
By its own usual force.

And so it goes; the usual things
That people take for granted
Are functioning the way they should;
That's how the Master planned it.

— Earlene Rose

The Neglected Commandment

Continued from page 2

church of our Lord pure. The apostles of Christ had every right to require discipline because they had the authority to do so (I Cor. 14:37). This is further attested to by the phrase, "In the name (by the authority) of our Lord" (II Thess. 3:6). It is the same statement used by Paul to the Corinthian church (I Cor. 1:10). The command to withdraw (*stello*) means to "remove one's self, withdraw one's self, to depart, to abstain from familiar intercourse with one" (Vine). The same word is translated "avoiding" in I Corinthians 8:20. The commandment to withdraw from the disorderly is the most neglected commandment in the church today, and the neglect of that commandment is sin! It is never easy to withdraw from the disorderly, erring member of the church. Serious problems may arise, both among those who are to be disciplined, and in the congregation in general. But do we seek to please men or God? What problem cannot be overcome using God's infallible word as the solution? None!

But why should problems arise in that area of discipline? In his booklet *The Forgotten Commandment*, Ed Smithson lists five reasons why discipline is difficult and seldom practiced in this day and time. Few people have ever seen it practiced, too much sin in the church, we are too weak, we are afraid of what the membership will or will not do, and we just don't want to get involved. Brethren, do you

honestly think that God is well pleased with our indifference toward one of his commands?

Some might ask, "Why should we discipline the disorderly: haven't they already withdrawn themselves from us?" The Bible says to "withdraw yourselves," not "they have withdrawn themselves." This kind of reasoning is pure cowardice! We must discipline the disorderly because God commands it in order to save the soul of the person disciplined (I Cor. 5:5), to save the church (I Cor. 5:6-7), and to save the world (Acts 5:11). The word "disorderly" (*ataktos*) is a meaningful word. It carries a military connotation relating to a failure to keep in rank, insubordinate. One might ask, "Well, who are the disorderly?" Those who are negligent (Heb. 10:25-29), busybodies (II Thess. 3:11-15), causers of division (Rom. 16:17), immoral (I Cor. 5:1-13; Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 21:8), and the worldly (I Jno. 3:4; I Jno. 5:16-17).

Those who sin are to be rebuked (I Tim. 5:20), sharply if need be (Tit. 1:13). But brethren, we must never forget the all important reason for discipline. The LOVE of the soul of the one to be disciplined. If withdrawal must be done, it must be done in the proper spirit. It must be done out of loving hearts, and not with the heart of hatred or envy. The procedure used must be initiated in such a manner as to win, and not to repel. If the one to be disciplined responds to

the exhortations of love, then a soul has been saved. If he rejects the advances of love, then the result is his own doing, and the church has been made pure. The whole object of discipline is to bring the sinful member to repentance; and this will fail if the other members neglect their duty. It is right that we should all admonish, warn, and plead with our fallen brother, and if he repents, forgive him. But never, never condone his sin; and this is what we are doing if we fail to discipline. If not, why not?

Are we the church of the New Testament? Do we follow the pattern of New Testament Christianity explicitly? If we fail to discipline the disorderly we cannot answer in the affirmative. Does the congregation where you worship practice discipline as the Bible directs? If so, you are experiencing love, enthusiasm, zeal, work, growth and great potential. If not, may God help you: for you are not following the pattern of the New Testament Church. Brethren, God disciplined evildoers as individuals, and even as nations. He has taught by example, and now demands discipline in the church of our Lord. It is necessary that we obey God in *all things*. "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17).—Rt. 10, Box 186-B, Jasper, Al. 35501.

What If I Am Lost?

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

One evening while hunting, I became temporarily lost. During those few minutes, there was a frantic feeling in my heart. Surely those people who become lost for days experience a terrible ordeal. But, the sense in which the term "lost" is used here is in the spiritual sense. When Jesus came to the earth "to seek and to save that which was lost," the world stood condemned in sin (Luke 19:10; John 3:17). Apart from Christ, man is lost in his sins (Ephesians 2:11, 12; I John 5:19). He is lost now and will continue to be separate from God in eternity unless he obeys the gospel (Mark 16:15, 16). Whose fault will it be if one is lost eternally?

First of all, it will not be the fault of Jehovah God. This is evident since God gave his son to die for the sins of the world (John 3:16; II Peter 3:9). This was the great sacrifice made possible by the grace of the heavenly Father (Hebrews 2:9).

One cannot blame Christ for being lost. Jesus suffered the pain and agony of the cross in order to redeem fallen man through the shedding of his precious blood (Ephesians 1:7). "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). God gave his son, and the son gave his life that man could be saved and not be lost.

The Holy Spirit cannot really be the object of blame for man's being lost. This third person in the Godhead was sent by the Father for the express purpose of guiding inspired men in revealing the complete word of God (John 14:26; 16:12; I Corinthians 2:13, 14).

Of course, the Bible is not to be considered as the reason why man is lost. The truth does not condemn in this sense but rather can set man free from sin (John 8:31, 32). Man is lost, not because of the word, but because of his sins. The gospel "is the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16). All need to study its contents and follow its precepts.

The angels are not to be blamed for man's being lost. These creatures of God do not reveal the way of salvation unto man; but, they do rejoice whenever a sinner comes to the Father for forgiveness. This indicates their happiness rather than sorrow when one is saved from sins (Luke 15:7, 10).

The church of the Lord is not guilty of man's being lost. The "called out" of God constitutes those who are saved (Acts 2:38, 47). The church is not the saviour but it is that which is saved (Ephesians 5:23). The church is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15). It may be that members fail in their obligation to preach Christ and him crucified; however, the body (church) of Christ cannot be accused of being the fault of man's lost condition.

When it comes down to placing the blame for man's being lost, it must be confessed that man himself is the guilty party. It was man who disobeyed God, thus, bringing a separation between himself and the Father (Isaiah 59:1, 2). Man is a creature of choice. He can decide either to reject Christ and salvation, or obey the Lord and be saved (Matthew 7:13, 14; 11:28-30).

Sometimes, a person, in making a defense for his unsaved condition, will state that he will not be the only one lost in eternity. And that is the sad fact of the matter. Jesus taught in Matthew 7:13, 16 that "many" would enter the "broad" way "that leadeth to destruction." There is no pleasure in this knowledge. What joy could one have in finding a wife, a husband, a child or one's parents in the place of torment?

The Bible relates the terribleness of being lost eternally. In Luke 16, we have the account of the rich man and Lazarus. Both men died and found their situations had drastically changed from this life. Lazarus, because of his trust in God, was carried by angels to "Abraham's bosom," depicting a place of paradise and peace. In contrast, the rich man, who had left God out of his life, "lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Other passages referring to the final abiding place of the wicked mention the "hell of fire" (Greek: Gehenna of fire) (Matthew 5:22). This place of punishment is also described as being where there is "outer darkness" and "the weeping and the gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 25:30). In Revelation 21:8 we have this terrible description of hell: "But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."

The punishment for the wicked will be eternal. In Matthew 25:41, Jesus said to those sinners on the left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." The King James Version renders the word here in this verse as being "everlasting." Both these words come from the same Greek word and mean the same. In verse 46 of this chapter, we read: "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life." The point is, just as long as the righteous shall enjoy the bliss of heaven, the wicked will have to endure the horrors of hell. Jesus described hell as being a place of "the unquenchable fire" (Mark 9:44, 49). Perhaps the passage that denotes the eternal nature best is found in Revelation 14:11: "and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever (unto ages of ages); and they have no rest day and night. . ."

While God is merciful and the God of love, he is also a God of justice. Every sin not requited by the blood of Jesus Christ must be punished, else God will cease being just. Remember that hell was prepared for the devil and his angels, not man (Matthew 25:41). Man will be lost eternally because of his own choosing, and in spite of all that God has done to save the human family.—Route 1, Box 13, Opp, Al. 36467.

I Saw The Wicked Buried

Continued from page 2

regularity. And then they leave as they come. They hear the gospel of God's love, offering mercy and forgiveness, and are urged to embrace it to their salvation, but they would not. They came to the place of privilege, prayer, praise, and peace eternal, yet went away empty, except their sins. How sad!—P. O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tn. 38464.



Words Of Truth

able Festus: but speak forth

Acts 26:25

(USPS 6)

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Preachers and Moral Crisis

In the last half of the 8th Century B. C. Israel was in a moral crisis. God described her with searing words: "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that deal corruptly! They have forsaken Jehovah, they have despised the Holy One of Israel. . . the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no sound-



JOHN WADDEY

ness in it. . ." (Is. 1:4-6). A modern news columnist recently painted his concept of modern America: "The America of the 1970's is in a class by itself. Never before has so large a share of the population indulged in an orgy of self pampering, overdosing, loafing, sponging, splurging, cheating, shoplifting, looting, philandering, even murdering. That's what the statistics show" (Jack Anderson, "What Is Happening to the American Dream?" *Parade*, March 19, 1978). One need not be a seer to conclude that we too are enmeshed in a moral crisis.

What is even more disturbing about this situation is the tolerant acceptance of it by the masses of the people. Signs of moral decadence are everywhere, but the average American cannot see them. Society seems unable to deal with crime or to control the criminal element; it appears rather as a helpless victim. In our indulgent society the will to believe, to resist, to contend, to fight is gone. In place of this is the desire to conform, to drift, to follow, to yield, to surrender.

Is it not strange that a civilization that has produced the best airplanes, cars and computers has also produced the worst types of people in

abundance?

It is common for the blame for such a social crisis to be passed on to politicians, educators, the media or some other public group. The question rises to this writer if a part of the blame may not lie upon the preachers of America. It is tragic that not only have most pulpits been muted on the moral challenges, but many have actually capitulated to Satan's side in the conflict. Thus we see such paradoxes as preachers calling for "gay rights" and opposing restrictions on pornography. Of course, these are a minority. But it cannot be denied that the majority are failing to provide strong moral leadership in the public teaching of Christian ethics and in leading the battle against these vices.

Sadly many of my fellow preachers in the Lord's church are in this category. It is my personal experience that our people are looking for strong moral leadership in the pulpit. They will generally warmly encourage and help a man who launches out in a responsible way. Even the denominational world will follow our leadership in this area. All across the land there is a restless feeling of responsibility in the hearts of religious people. They know something needs to be done, they feel that they and the church leaders should do it, but the leadership is just not there. They will gladly fall in behind us when we lead out. (If today they follow our moral leadership, tomorrow they may well follow our spiritual leadership.)

Consider these words from Dr. Karl Menninger: "We know that the principle leadership in the morality realm should be the clergy's, but they seem to minimize this great traditional and historical opportunity to preach, to prophesy, to speak out. . . Some clergymen prefer pastoral counseling of individuals to the pulpit function. But the latter is a greater opportunity to both heal and prevent. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, indeed, and there is much prevention to be done for large numbers of people who hunger and thirst after direction to-

ward righteousness. Clergymen have a golden opportunity to prevent some of the accumulated misapprehensions, guilt, aggressive action, and other roots of later mental suffering and mental disease.

"How? Preach! Tell it like it is. Say it from the pulpit. Cry it from the housetops.

"What shall we cry?

"Cry comfort, cry repentance, cry hope. Because recognition of our part in the world transgression is the only remaining hope." (*Whatever Became of Sin?* New York, Hawthorne Books, Inc., 1974).

Remember brethren, this is no preacher or elder, it is a world famous psychiatrist. Surely if he sees the need for strong fearless moral leadership in the pulpit, we can.

For our pulpit models we need to study the ancient Hebrew prophets of Jehovah. Preaching like theirs would revolutionize our diseased society and the church. God is still looking for men who will "stand in the gap" of the broken besieged walls of Zion and build up those damaged moral and spiritual walls (Ezek. 22:30). They were scarce in Ezekiel's day as in ours. We, however, can be the volunteers who stand up bravely and volunteer, Lord "Here am I; send me" (Is. 6:8). Whether we win or lose in this great moral battle for the hearts and minds of men, at least they will know "that there hath been a prophet among them" (Ezek. 2:5). Always remember God's charge to Ezekiel: "Thou son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words. . . nor be dismayed at their looks, though they are a rebellious house. And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. . ." (Ezek. 2:6-7).—Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921.

(Editor's note: We hope our readers understand that neither we nor brother Waddey endorse the idea of a clergy, as expressed in the quotation from Dr. Karl Menninger.)



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How The Holy Spirit Wields An Influence Today

In three earlier articles we have established (1) that miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were given to effect the revelation and confirmation of the will of God, (2) that these supernatural powers were imparted only through the laying on of the apostles' hands, and (3) that supernatural powers would and did cease when "that which is perfect" (i.e., the completed New Testament) came. It is our purpose in this article to show that the influence of the Holy Spirit upon people today is that, and only that, which he wields directly or indirectly through the written word.



BOBBY DUNCAN

It should be remembered that the Holy Spirit has always wielded his influence upon the masses of the people by speaking to them. This was true during the early morning of time when Noah preached to the people concerning the flood. Peter tells us that it was by the Holy Spirit that this preaching was done during the time while the ark was in preparation (I Peter 3:18-20). This was also true during the time of the Mosaic law. Nehemiah 9:30 is illustrative of the way God spoke to and influenced those living under the law: "Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets...." Please observe that this verse says (1) that God testified, (2) that he did so by his Spirit, and (3) that the Spirit was in the prophets. The point is this: God's message has always been given through certain men selected of God and miraculously endowed by the Holy Spirit to communicate that message infallibly to the masses. The Holy Spirit never has guided anyone by feelings and urges. He has always guided by speaking and communicating his message in words.

David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue" (II Samuel 23:2). How did the Spirit of the Lord communicate his message? By speaking. How did he speak? He used the tongue of David. Notice another passage, this one from the New Testament: "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus" (Acts 1:16). Peter here attributes the authorship of that which is recorded in scripture to the Holy Ghost. It was spoken by the mouth of David and written by the pen of David, but its author was the Holy Ghost. Peter affirms this very thing concerning all the Old Testament writings. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:20, 21). The statement that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation means that the writers of scripture were not writing their private and personal views concerning the matters whereof they wrote; they were instead writing the word of God which was revealed to them by the Holy Ghost. It follows, then, that when we read the Old Testament we are reading

the message given by the Holy Ghost to those who lived under the Old Testament.

The same can be said concerning the New Testament. I Corinthians 2:9 is a verse often read at funerals and misapplied to Heaven. The verse does not refer to Heaven, as the context will show. It refers rather to the gospel of Christ, which had been hidden in past ages, but had now been revealed. The very next verse states: "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. . ." Now skip to verse thirteen: "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth...." Paul here clearly affirms (1) that the truth was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, and (2) that the Holy Spirit gave him the words to use in the proclamation of that truth.

In another remarkable passage dealing with this matter, Paul states: "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 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) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:2-5). Here is the matter of revelation and inspiration clearly set forth. The Spirit revealed the gospel to certain men, who in turn were inspired to write what had been revealed to them—"not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." When we read the New Testament we are reading that which was produced by revelation and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. To the extent we are influenced by the written word, we are influenced by the Holy Spirit; to the extent we fail to follow the teaching of the written word, we are failing to follow the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit speaks to us through the written word. I Timothy 4:1 says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly...." Do you want to know what the Spirit says? Then read the New Testament. Seven times in chapters two and three of Revelation we find this statement: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." If you want to know what the Spirit says to the churches, read what is written in those chapters. When we read the New Testament we are reading the message of the Holy Spirit to those of us who live under the New Testament.

From time to time we hear certain religious people speaking of feeling "moved" to do certain things; or some speak of doing "what the Lord lays on" their hearts. This is all traceable to the mistaken idea that the Holy Spirit communicates his message to man by causing man to have certain feelings and urges. In no age of the world has the Holy Spirit influenced man in any such ambiguous way. He has always communicated his message by speaking words; and the words the Holy Spirit speaks to you today are the words recorded in your New Testament.

If our doing the will of God depended upon the accurate interpretation of our urges and our hunches and our feelings, we could never be absolutely sure whether or not we are doing the will of God. Our only assurance would be our own subjective reasoning. As it is, we have the will of God (the Holy Spirit's message for us) clearly recorded on the pages of the Bible. When we read the Bible, we can say with absolute certainty, "This is the message of the Holy Spirit to me."

Was Jesus Really Tempted?

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Matt. 4:1). This verse affirms that Jesus the Christ was tempted. Yet, there are those who offer objections concerning the validity of Matthew 4:1-11 as regards the circumstances of our Lord's temptation. "And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness" (Mark 1:12.) The temptation came immediately following



MICHAEL D. STONE

our Lord's baptism. Let the reader understand that Jesus did not court temptation. He did not on purpose put himself in a situation where he might be tempted to sin. It was God's will that he be tempted, therefore, he was willing to contend with Satan on that basis. Let us not on purpose get into tempting situations. Temptation may begin as soon as one declares his allegiance to God. Is it not the giving in to temptation that causes many to fall away shortly after their baptism? Perhaps the church could make a stronger effort to protect these precious new Christians from the temptations of Satan, thereby saving many that might otherwise be lost. Let us notice some objections to the temptations of the Christ.

Unbelievers say a man cannot go for forty days without food and live. Yet, the Bible affirms that Jesus did. If there is any doubt in your mind, read Luke 4:2. The Bible states that Jesus, "did eat nothing." If nothing doesn't mean nothing, what does it mean? Furthermore, others in the Bible went forty days without food and lived. Concerning Moses the Bible says, "And he was there with Jehovah forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water..." (Exodus 34:28). Elijah also went that length of time without food and drink as recorded in I

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 does worship consist?"

"Instrumental music is never in worship. Worship is in the heart. A mechanical instrument can never be put in the spiritual heart, even though one is put in the place of assembly. The inner man worships. The outer man seeks to give expression to what is within."

The foregoing statement occurs in a tract recently fallen into our hands, the design of which is to justify the use of mechanical instruments of worship in praise to God. It is significant in that it is an effort at avoidance; an attempt to evade the difficulties which plagued earlier proponents of such practice who vainly sought to justify its use in worship. Boswell, in his debate with Brother Hardeman, and Stark in the discussion with Joe S. Warlick, argued that instruments of music are divinely authorized, being sanctioned in Eph. 5:19, and thus may be regarded as proper as singing itself.

So futile was the effort that it has since been abandoned. It is now contended, as above, that the instrument is not in the worship, because worship is simply and solely a matter of the heart; and that singing, the Lord's supper, prayer, etc., are not acts of worship, but merely the expression of the worship which is in the heart.

Such a view reveals a gross misapprehension of what worship is. The word most commonly used to indicate this act in the New Testament is *proskuneo*, the basic meaning of which is to *kiss the hand toward*, an act in oriental countries signifying obeisance. In the New Testament it denotes homage, reverence, awe, etc.; and it includes such acts as may be utilized in expressing or exhibiting these emotions and attitudes.

In the American Standard Version of the New Testament at Matt. 2:8, there is reference to a footnote (and often thereafter where the word worship occurs a reference to this footnote) which reads: "*The Greek word denotes an act of reverence whether paid to a creature (see ch. 4:9; 18:26), or to the Creator (see ch. 4:10).*"

(1) The Greek word denotes an act. It will be seen, therefore, that our author under review is in error in declaring that worship is solely a matter of the heart. It is not true that only the inner man worships. Inasmuch as worship consists of acts, it follows that such acts are as much involved in worship, and are as essential to it, as the attitude which prompts them. The view that worship is simply and solely an attitude—to be distinguished from, and dissociated with acts—is not in harmony with the facts in the case.

(2) The Greek word denotes an act. . . *paid*. This emphasizes and enhances the force of our suggestions above. Worship is an attitude; but it is more, it is an attitude which expresses itself in an act—an act paid to another. *To worship then, one must engage in acts.*

The effort to dissociate acts from attitude in worship was born of the desire to escape the opprobrium of adding to the worship of God. It is recognized, by those who use the instrument, that there is no authority for such practices in the New Testament. Thus, to escape the guilt of such, it is now alleged that worship does not consist of acts, but merely involves attitudes; and that these attitudes may express themselves in acts by the outward man in the fashion he chooses.

The effort is a failure for at least two reasons: (1) It is based on an erroneous concept of what worship is; (2) it does not elude, but merely post-

pones the fatal dilemma. For, this worship which is alleged to be merely and solely a matter of the heart and which expresses itself in harmony with the wishes of the "outward man," is either restrained or unrestrained. If unrestrained, then the will of the worshiper becomes the sole standard by which to determine the suitability of an act. The pompous worshiper behind stained glass windows, the Salvation Army lass with her tambourine, and the snake-handler may all properly claim justification for their choices of expression. We may disregard Acts 2:42, if such an argument is valid, and henceforth be governed by our own desires in what is suitable worship to God!

If, however, (as is the case), no such worship is acceptable, but is restrained, we inquire, What is the restraining influence? We are thus brought back to the place where we should have begun in any matter involving our duty to God: What does the New Testament authorize us to

do in worship to him? The early church continued in the apostles' teaching (which included singing, Eph. 5:19), the Lord's supper, the contribution and prayer. Less than these we cannot offer acceptably to him; more than this is an unwarranted and officious intermeddling with the will of God himself. Under this ban, mechanical instruments of music, in worship to God, and all other similarly unauthorized additions and innovations must inevitably fall.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the last question and answer in the book which we have reprinted almost in its entirety. We are grateful to brother Guy N. Woods and to Freed-Hardeman College for granting permission for this material to be printed in WORDS OF TRUTH. We feel that its appearance on these pages has added measurably to the value of this publication. Brother Woods now serves as Associate Editor of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, and answers questions in nearly every issue of that fine publication.)

Review of the Teaching of John Clayton

(No. 4)

In this article the writer will begin to review the attitude of brother John Clayton toward the theory of evolution. The following quotations, from his own pen, are highly revealing.

"The most basic problem in the picture, is the feeling of many believers and nonbelievers alike, that evolution is alien to the Bible and belief in God. Historically, this has been true of the dark age religionists, but it was never true of the Bible and should not be characteristic of the Church today" (*Does God Exist?*, 8/75, p. 2).

Again our brother writes:

"If we look carefully at the issues about which we are talking, however, we can find that evolution and the Bible show amazing agreement on almost all issues and that one is not mutually exclusive of the other" (*The Source*, p. 130; emp. WJ).

And then this:

"To say that evolution has all the answers from inanimate matter to man is to violate the evidence and to take an extreme position. To suggest that evolution is false, devious, and opposed to the Bible is equally extreme" (*The Source*, p. 130).

Now I want to make the following points very clear. John is constantly complaining that his critics, when reviewing his teaching, either misquote, partially quote, or quote him out of context. I mention this for the following reason. When our brother is firmly confronted with such radical quotations as those given above, he



WAYNE JACKSON

vacillates sharply claiming that all he means by such statements is that organisms can undergo change, such as, for example, the development of dogs and wolves from a common ancestor. Well, no true creationist denies that there has been variation within the basic kinds created by God as per the book of Genesis. I intend to show, though, that his writings, accumulatively considered, reveal that he means far more than variation by his use of the term "evolution." In fact, John clearly teaches a modified form of *theistic evolution*.

In his book, *The Source*, brother Clayton introduces what he calls his "forrest of evolution interpretation" of all living things. He avows that this is "a model that does work." This theory is the idea "that life may have started in a number of different places upon the Earth." While the atheist would say that it all happened accidentally, John says the creationist could claim "that God started life in different places suited to fit the environment of that place. Life then, would evolve differently in each of those different environments, no matter what form life had when it started." He continues:

"The amazing thing about this newest concept of evolution, which does a much better job of fitting the fossil evidence and conforms nicely to all the other evidence used to support organic evolution, is that it agrees beautifully with the description given in the Bible. The only place in the Bible where the word kind is given anything approaching a definition is I Corinthians 15:39 when the writer identifies four kinds of flesh. He enumerates these as the flesh of fishes, birds, beasts (mammals) and men. A comparison of this description to Genesis 1 shows exactly the same terminology" (*The Source*, pp. 152, 153).

Two points need to be made here. First, brother Clayton believes that such creatures as bacteria, worms, insects, reptiles, amphibians, etc.,

Continued on page 4

Was Jesus Really Tempted?

Continued from page 2

Kings 19.

Another question that is asked is, was Jesus tempted the entire forty days or only during part of the forty days? Luke 4:2 implies the temptation lasted for the entire forty days. We have no valid reason to believe otherwise.

Regarding Satan's offering to give Jesus the kingdoms of the world, some have said that Satan had

nothing to give because God owns all things. Let us look at that statement for a moment. If that statement is true, then Jesus was not really tempted. If Satan had nothing to give and if Jesus knew that, then, my friend, where was the temptation? Satan did indeed have the world to give to the extent that he controlled it. He was willing to trade his hold upon the world for the allegiance of Jesus.

Yes, Jesus was really tempted. His temptation serves as an example to us in overcoming our temptations. For he was tempted with the lust of the flesh, the pride of life and the lust of the eyes as we are today.—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101

Review of the Teaching of John Clayton

Continued from page 3

came into existence in some remote period prior to the creation week of Genesis 1, possibly in a "gap period" between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2; or else, "they may have evolved from basic forms that God created." Secondly, he contends that other life forms evolved from the four basic kinds mentioned above, which he classifies as *phyla* (*Correspondence Course*, 5). (Incidentally, John's use of terminology is rather unorthodox and frequently unstable. For instance, he classifies fish, birds, and mammals as different *phyla*, whereas the standard biological system puts them all in the *Phylum Chordata*.) In connection with his four-kinds theory, our brother says: "This model would say," for example, "...that the mammals have come about from one source..." He then adds: "We do not wish to have you accept this because *we have said it is true*. Obviously it could effectively be charged that *our position* is biased and prejudiced" (CC,

10; emp. WJ). This would imply that everything from rats to apes evolved from a common ancestor! This is consistent with John's claim elsewhere as he suggested that the "ape family" possibly evolved from "some primitive rodent" (*The Source*, p. 170). This is a form of theistic evolution, pure and simple! Numerous other statements by brother Clayton reveal his evolutionary bias. He says that "the tree shrew, his ancestors and relatives" are "known to be the *first sure mammals* on this planet" (*Does God Exist?*, 7/76, p. 3; emp. WJ).

Frankly, John's view of early man is not the most complimentary that I have ever read. He suggests that early man likely had more body hair than we. "Body hair certainly is not necessary to keep us warm, but we can imagine that our ancestors in glacial climates probably profited from body hair as a protection against many elements in the environment in which they

lived" (*The Source*, p. 138). Of Adam he recently said: "This writer sees no need to view Adam as a highly advanced and sophisticated individual. God had to make the first clothes man wore so he wasn't very advanced" (*Does God Exist?*, 4/78, p. 2).

Finally, this little gem from the pen of our popular brother: "Even if you did evolve from totally non-living inanimate matter, the question of God's existence would not be affected in the slightest" (*The Source*, p. 132). Can you believe that?! If we evolved from inanimate matter, the Bible is absolutely false. It could not be proved then that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The record of the Lord's testimony concerning creation (cf. Matt. 19:4, etc.) would be a lie, and nothing of Jehovah's character would be known! Will brother Clayton's defenders stand with him here? (To be continued.)—3906 East Main Street, Stockton, Ca. 95205.

Preventive Heartaches

W. W. HAYES

Years ago there was a cigarette commercial on the radio that stated, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Though this jingle was used to promote a nasty, costly habit, it has the ring of eternal truth. Many large corporations have a preventive maintenance program for their equipment. General repairs are made each year to locate potential trouble spots before they can cause extensive damage and a costly shut-down during the peak periods of business activity. We are all familiar with preventive medicine in the form of immunization shots which stamp out communicable diseases such as typhoid, polio, etc.

This same concept is taught in the Bible in a spiritual sense. The wise man has told us, "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Proverbs 30:15).

"Correct thy son, and he will give thee rest; yea he shall give delight unto thy soul" (Proverbs 30:17). Paul admonishes us in Ephesians 6:4: "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Too often we fail to heed these principles and as a result we wonder why our children depart from the faith, bringing us the tragedy of heartache. Here are a few suggestions to follow to help prevent this heartache:

Bring, do not send, your children to all activities of the church (Hebrews 10:25). Impress upon them the importance of church attendance for study, fellowship and worship. Be on time. The functions of the church are much more important than those of a secular nature, and we are on time for jobs, schools, doctor appointments, etc.

Have your children associate with the right friends. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" (II Corinthians 6:14). If they are constantly together with those who are not New Testament Christians, it will not be very long before they become indoctrinated with denominational ideas.

Teach them the importance of reverence in the assemblies. No small child should be allowed to go to the rest room or water fountain alone during the assemblies. Take them during the intermissions and impress upon them (with a switch if necessary) that they cannot go during classes or worship.

Thoroughly teach them God's Word. "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). Note that we are to study to be approved of God, not men. Know the scriptures yourself. Teach them to your children at home; check

your children's Bible class lessons and determine if they have them properly prepared. Cooperate with the Bible class teachers; ask them if your child participates in class or if he misbehaves, daydreams and plays. Do not become angry at the teachers if they give you a bad report. Correct your children and teach them to have proper respect for the teachers and other church leaders. Have your children in classes of their learning level.

These are just a few suggestions, which are Bible supported, to help prevent heartache. There is a bumper tag which says, "If your child has gotten off on the wrong track, maybe he needs switching!" Will you do your part?—1037 Linthicum Street, Tarrant, Alabama, 35217

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Words Of Truth

"I am not ashamed to speak forth
the Words of Truth"

Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, JUNE 8, 1979

NUMBER 23

Testimonies Witnessing Sharing

Before me is a religious journal published by a conservative Protestant group. The paper is strongly Calvinistic in doctrine but does contain some materials worthy of consideration. An article in the current issue contains some thoughts we would do well to consider. Excerpts from the article follow: "Soon after my conversion... I found... a small evangelical... group. They placed enormous stress on having a testimony for Christ... The testimony was always expected to be what the Lord had done or was doing in my life. ... Some older members had assumed the responsibility of asking such questions as 'What is the Lord now doing in your life?' ... This mentality was not confined to my particular group. It is widespread. ... Giving a testimony to what the Lord has done ... is virtually a sacred element in evangelical piety. ..."



R.W. GRAY

In a further discussion of this practice the writer observed, "In the Bible, testimony is to the historical; in evangelical piety it is usually existential and experiential. In the Bible it is out-side-of-me realities; in evangelical piety it is predominantly the inside-of-me phenomena. In the Bible, testimony is to Christ clothed in the gospel; in evangelical testimony it is Christ clothed in evangelical humanity. ... The Biblical spotlight is on historical verities and not on experiential ambiguities" (Verdict, Mar., 1979).

The foregoing has a familiar ring for a number of reasons: (1) This writer recalls the highly emotional "testimony meetings" of a former religious connection. (2) The subjectivism so often projected by denominationalists. (3) The introduction of "witnessing" among us by campus evangelism a few years ago. (4) The current emphasis upon similar things, especially in personal work and youth groups in some of our churches.

Some of the wildest and most fanciful ideas ever

advanced by the subjective thinking of untaught minds flowed from the testimonial meetings in which this writer once engaged. The more impressive the testimony the closer to the Lord one was presumed to be.

Our Pentecostal neighbors excelled in the art of "testifying" which frequently led to an "outpouring" (?) that resulted in "tongue speaking" (?) and the like. They came to think of themselves as the truly spiritual group. A large segment of the religious world gravitated toward this movement, and hence, the rise of the Charismatic Movement.

Lack of biblical knowledge, as well as a failure to accept the Bible as a complete and objective standard in religious life, was at the root of such meetings. The same may be said of our brethren when they adopt a similar practice.

The fact that an idea originated in a questionable setting is no basis in and of itself to reject it outright. But is it good reason to examine it carefully before adopting a semblance of it in the Lord's work.

An ecumenical spirit generally pervades the Protestant testimonial meetings. The idea is left that "doctrine is of little consequence." The real issue is "what the Lord had done for me," and not what the Bible says.

It is obvious that some among us are borrowing from the sects the practice of testifying. It is some times disguised as a "sharing" session. And we certainly realize that there is a time and place wherein we may share our confidence in the Lord with others

or with one another. But we must avoid allowing a would be "sharing" to become nothing less than a "subjective testimony."

No doubt some have borrowed the "testimony" concept with little or no background knowledge as to its true origin or to the abuses to which it so readily lends itself. We should avoid a format that allows or encourages "testimonies, witnessing, or sharing" on the part of any who may be in attendance in our meetings or teaching sessions. This opens the door for the input of error and the confusion of minds. And we may well avoid the language of the sectarian world that suggests we are involved with their questionable practices. Their shibboleths are not essential to our teaching methods. We may express ourselves clearly, and in terms of the scriptures, as easily as we may borrow the language of Ashdod from our neighbors.

When the Spirit described a private situation in which one was taught He said, "He ... began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35). In another case He said, "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord and to all that were in his house" (Acts 16:32). Paul and Silas testified, witnessed and shared, but the Holy Spirit did not use the language in describing their teaching session with a heathen jailor, nor is such language essential to our understanding of the situation. May we return to the concept of "calling Bible things by Bible names, and doing Bible things in Bible ways." —P.O. Box 90236, East Point, Ga. 30344

Situation Ethics In the Church

RON HARPER

One of the most damnable doctrines to come forth from the fires of Hell is Situation Ethics. One of the leading proponents of that doctrine is Joseph Fletcher, who wrote the book entitled *Situation Ethics The New Morality*. The leading idea set forth in this doctrine and the book is that there is only one thing that is always right: love.

The following quotations will show beyond a doubt what this doctrine is all about. "Good and evil are extrinsic to the thing of action. It all depends on the

situation" (*Situation Ethics*, p 59). "There is only one thing that is always good and right, intrinsically good regardless of the context and that one thing is love" (p 60). The basic thrust of this doctrine is that something may on one occasion be a sin and at another time be right. "And therefore what is sometimes good may at other times be evil, and what is sometimes wrong may sometimes be right when it

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

I am not mad, most noble brethren: but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness.

— Acts 26:25

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What Wilt Thou Have Me Do?

ALVIET. LOWERY

The question asked in the title of this article is one of the most important questions man ever asked. It also carries with it complete surrender to the will of Christ. We remember it as being asked of Saul of Tarsus while on Damascus Road (Acts 9:6). It was asked of perhaps the most religious man of the first century. Thus it behooves us, regardless of our religious teaching and persuasion, to contemplate the seriousness and the import of this very vital question: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

The one to whom Saul directed his question had taught in an earlier day, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done ALL those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10). WHAT IS OUR DUTY? Jesus answers, when you have done ALL those things COMMANDED OF YOU. Solomon would say it was to "Fear God and keep His commandments. . ." (Eccl. 12:13). If we are only unprofitable servants when we have done all things commanded of us, what are we when we have not done all? Or if we have done those things which the Lord has not commanded?

As we survey the pages of God's Holy Word, we are impressed that there are three "KEYS" that would have (and did) unlocked the store-house of God's treasures unto those who utilized them. These are: The Authority of God, man's action and his attitude toward God's authority.

What we call "Heaven's Hall of Fame" as listed in Heb. 11 begins with Abel, not Adam nor Eve. WHY? The offering of Abel was accepted of God, while that of his brother was rejected. WHY? Cain's offering lacked that necessary ingredient to make it acceptable: Faith, that comes from hearing God's authority. Cain's actions were not right because his attitude was wrong.

Abraham worshiped his God when he offered his son in sacrifice to God. Since Genesis 22:5 is the first usage of the word "worship" we note that all Abraham did on that occasion was WHAT God said, the WAY God said it, and BECAUSE God said it. This sets the pattern for the rest of the Bible teaching concerning acceptable worship. Without the authority of God to Abraham, what he was about to do would have been no different from the worship of the

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FROM
THE EDITOR

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

In four previous articles we have established four important facts with reference to the Holy Spirit: (1) that the supernatural gifts of the Spirit were for the purpose of revealing and confirming the gospel, (2) that they were imparted only through the hands of the apostles, (3) that they lasted only until such time as the New Testament was completed, and (4) that the only influence wielded by the Holy Spirit today is the



BOBBY DUNCAN

influence wielded through the written word. Some who are in complete agreement with these four propositions believe, nevertheless, that the Holy Spirit personally dwells in the Christian. This personal indwelling is said to be, not through the word of God, but in conjunction with the word. We believe this idea is erroneous, but the error involved is of little consequence, so long as one understands that the Holy Spirit influences the Christian only through the written word.

Unfortunately there are those who are in complete agreement with the first three proposition listed above, but who do not agree with the fourth. They believe in a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit does something for the Christian as he dwells in him. One evangelist of note said: "I do not believe...the Holy Spirit operates only through the word of God in the life of a Christian....If He does nothing as the indwelling Spirit, there is no advantage to having Him in us." Because there are those who believe the Holy Spirit operates in some way other than through the word, and because this belief is based upon the idea that the Holy Spirit personally dwells in the Christian, we will deal with that idea in this article.

In order to understand properly the Bible verses that deal with the Holy Spirit it is necessary that the reader keep in mind the fact the New Testament was written largely to churches and individuals who possessed supernatural gifts of the Spirit. When a letter written to a church or an individual possessing supernatural gifts referred to that church or individual's possessing the Holy Spirit, such reference would most naturally be understood to refer to those supernatural gifts. Suppose you had lived in the first century and had received the miraculous endowments of the Spirit through the laying on of the apostles' hands; and suppose an apostle wrote you a letter referring to the fact that you had received the Holy Spirit; what would you think he was referring to? Rather than thinking he was referring to a non-miraculous, personal indwelling of the Spirit, you would most naturally understand his reference to that which you had received through the laying on of the apostles' hands. It is a mistake for us to read the New Testament as if it were written to people who already had a New Testament instead of people who, for the most part, possessed or were familiar with miraculous endowments.

Take for example First Corinthians. Paul reminded the Corinthians in the very outset that they were behind none in the possession of Spiritual gifts (1:7). In chapters twelve to fourteen he discusses the proper use of those gifts of the Holy Spirit. When he makes reference in 3:16 to the fact that the Spirit of God

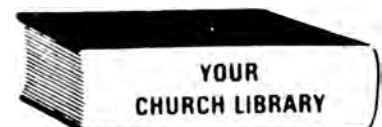
dwelt in them, would they understand him to be referring to a non-miraculous, personal indwelling? It will help us tremendously in our understanding of the passages dealing with the Holy Spirit if we will remember that the entire New Testament was written during the miraculous age.

A second thing one must keep in mind in studying passages that deal with the Holy Spirit is the fact that, in connection with the scheme of redemption, the work of the Holy Spirit has to do with the matter of revelation and confirmation of God's will. The fact that a man had the Spirit, which enabled him to perform miracles, proved that the preaching he did was true. In other words one's having the Spirit proved he had the word of God. Today those who argue that the Spirit personally indwells the Christian argue in reverse; they use the word of God in an effort to prove they have the Spirit. Passages that deal with the Holy Spirit need to be understood in the light of what we know was the Spirit's work in connection with the scheme of redemption. Does a non-miraculous personal indwelling have anything to do with the matter of revelation and confirmation?

A third thing which one must remember in the study of this subject is the fact that the Bible should be allowed to be its own interpreter. Several places in the New Testament refer to the fact that some received or were given the Holy Spirit. In most cases it is quite obvious from the immediate context that the reference is to the reception of miraculous powers. For example, when we are told in Acts 8:14-18 about the apostles' coming from Jerusalem to Samaria and imparting the Holy Ghost to the Samaritans, we read such expressions as, "that they might receive the Holy Ghost," "they received the Holy Ghost," "the Holy Ghost was given," and "he may receive the Holy Ghost." We have no difficulty in understanding that it is the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost that is under consideration. The context shows such to be the case here, as in many other passages. (Other passages the reader may want to examine in this respect are Acts 10:44-47 and 19:1-5).

There are some passages, however, which refer to some's having received the Holy Spirit without specifying in the immediate context that it is a reference to supernatural gifts. Instead of allowing the Bible to be its own interpreter, some have concluded that these passages refer to a non-miraculous, personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in every Christian. In order to reach such a conclusion, one must overlook the fact that the New Testament was written largely to those who possessed supernatural gifts, and he must overlook those passages which tell us in plain language what it means to receive the Holy Spirit. A statement to the effect that some would or did receive the Holy Ghost is no proof of a non-miraculous, personal indwelling of the Holy Ghost. This should be especially apparent when we consider that the people to whom such statements were made had knowledge of the Holy Spirit only in connection with the matter of revelation and confirmation of God's word.

In our next article we will discuss some of the passages we believe to be misunderstood in connection with this matter.



CHECK US OUT.
YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID!

Blacker Than Hell and Worse Than Satan

DAN WINKLER

Sin, like a malignancy, is progressive in nature. One might start walking in the counsel of the wicked, only to find himself elbow to elbow with rebellious scoffers (Ps. 1:1). It is even possible for one to drift (Heb. 2:1) so far, that he "cannot cease from sin" (II Pet. 2:14).

One of the many tragedies in this fact is that as sin progresses in one's life, that one's relationship with God disgreets. Such is true because God deplores iniquity (Ps. 5:5). Israel, during the reign of Jeroboam II, exemplifies the progression of sin and the separation it will cause between God and man.

Note the names Hosea was instructed to give the children of Gomer. They were names which symbolized Israel's declining relationship with God: (1) Jezreel (meaning "God will scatter"); (2) Lo-Ruhamah (a term denoting a withdrawal of mercy); and (3) Lo-Ammi (meaning "not my people" or "no kin of mine"). Sin progressively engulfed the nation, resulting in God's warning and ultimately turning from them. God turned his back on them because they, through sin, turned their backs on him.

Yes, sin will separate man 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" (Isa. 59:1, 2). Yet, many (tragically enough, even in the brotherhood) have striven to belittle sin. Just listen to the change of terminology that has transpired. The immorality of drunkenness is being disguised as "alcoholism." Adultery and fornication is whitewashed into "having an affair." Homosexuality now boldly and disgustingly marches

Evil Can Be Overcome

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing the Lord's church in our time is the constant battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. This battle is not peculiar to this generation, however, this generation seems to be having more difficulty in winning the war than many in past generations had. The church is no longer the fastest growing religious group in America as it once was. Many in the church are



MICHAEL D. STONE

not as holy and dedicated to the Lord's work as those of past generations were. These are symptoms of a disease many have which is caused by a failure to look upon the evil about us for what it really is.

The proper attitude must first of all be manifested by each of us as regards evil. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (I John 2:15-17). It is easy to do the things one loves to do and hard to do the things one hates. The problem we face is to learn to love that which is good and to hate that which is evil. If that should take place, then, our problem of right living would be solved. All of the appeals in the world which draw men away from God will pass away. These things should not be desired by any. Yet, there is that which will abide forever. That which is of the greater

(Continued on page 4)

value under the "gay" banner. How repulsive!

Some backyard, self-made theologians and spurious philosophers even contend that sin is a sickness. Nonsense! Sin is sickening but not a sickness. Sin will cause sickness but it is not a sickness itself. The omniscient Almighty defines sin: "Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness" (I John 3:4). Sin is a transgression of God's law. Why call it anything else?

Sin is blacker than hell and worse than Satan. It will deceive (Heb. 3:13), defile (Jer. 2:22), deaden the heart (Heb. 3:13; II Pet. 2:14), and damn the soul (Rom. 3:23; cf Eph. 2:1-5; James 1:15). Thus to whitewash its true identity and nature is to alter divine instruction and laugh in the face of spiritual

death.

So, "abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:10). "Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth), proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord; and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them" (Eph. 5:8-11). "Abstain from every form of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15). "Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God" (James 4:4).—P.O. Box 196, Greenville, Texas, 75401.

A Review of the Teaching of John Clayton

(No. 5)

As much as we dislike having to say it, brother John Clayton's teaching regarding the creation is almost totally dominated by the concepts of evolutionary geology. Concerning matters of origins, brother Clayton's approach frequently appears to be: *first*, what do the scientists claim? — *then*, how shall we harmonize the Bible with these claims? This method really suggests that one cannot accept the clear statements of Scripture when such are disputed by the theories of the "scientists." Attention will now be directed to John's attitude towards the Genesis record of origins.



WAYNE JACKSON

Most people are probably at least vaguely aware of Eric Von Daniken's heretical views that man originally came to earth as an astronaut, via some sort of space ship, from a distant galaxy. In his book *The Source*, brother Clayton refers to Von Daniken's theories (and similar ones) and then amazingly says this: ". . . whether the ideas suggested by these individuals are true or false, the whole subject is of no consequence to our problem" (p. 33; emp. WJ). If Von Daniken's view is true, the Bible is false! That may be of no consequence to brother Clayton's problem, but such a notion is considerably consequential to this writer!

Please read carefully the following statement from John Newpher, a liberal theologian of the Lutheran church who denies that the Genesis account of origins is literally true: ". . . we should never have to feel that we must defend Genesis 1 and 2 on scientific grounds. The basic theme of these articles is not the how and the what of creation, but the who and why" (*Minneapolis Star*, 3/16/63). Now listen to brother Clayton. He says that Genesis "was designed to tell all men that God created all things. Not when, or how, or where, or why, but simply that God did it" (*Does God Exist?*, 8/78, p. 11). John would not go as far as this modernist, but his approach is basically the same.

Genesis 1 affirms that the earth and its creatures were created in a span of six literal days. This is confirmed by Exodus 20:11: ". . . in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them

is. . ." But brother Clayton just does not believe that inspired statement. He observes that the belief "that the entire creation took place within six days" is "a very shallow conclusion" and "inconsistent with the Genesis record as well as other parts of the Bible" (*Does God Exist?*, 10/76, p. 5; emp. WJ). This is the man who is lecturing to our young people all over the nation!

Since brother Clayton believes that the earth is approximately 4.5 billion years old (*The Source*, p. 124) — the standard evolutionary estimate — he must, in some fashion, accommodate Genesis 1 to this concept. Accordingly, he advocates a modified form of the so-called *Gap Theory* and also the *Day-Age Theory*. John declares: Genesis 1:1 is an undated verse. No time element is given and no details of what the Earth looked like are included." He then says: "I suggest that all geological phenomena except the creation of warm-blooded life were accomplished during this time" (*The Source*, pp. 147, 148). Such a view flatly contradicts Exodus 20:11 and Genesis 1. For example, John would have the creation of fish (a cold-blooded creature) in Genesis 1:1, whereas according to Moses, they were created the 5th day (Gen. 1:20-23)! Actually, John believes the "days" of creation were not literal days until the fourth day. Note the following.

"The first indication of regularity in time and the first establishment of chronometers for man is recorded in Genesis 1:14. 'God said, . . . and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.' God established the two lights for man's measurement of the changing times around him. Prior to that time, there were no such regularities if we take the passage literally. The fossil record supports this point of view with numerous indications that our chronometers are relatively recent in their function and that some period of time may have taken place prior to their establishment" (*Does God Exist?*, 9/78, p. 6).

May we raise two incisive questions: First, if the first three days of creation are not literal days, what does "evening" and "morning" (Gen. 1:5, 8, 13) symbolize? Secondly, if Moses uses "days" in Genesis 1 to denote eons of time, what would "years" (Gen. 1:14) denote?! Also, is the expression "six days" in Exodus 20:11 to be understood in terms of

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Situation Ethics In the Church

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serves a good enough end—depending on the situation” (p 123). In other words, it may be good for a person to commit adultery if the motive is love and the end to be served is good. “A young unmarried couple might decide, if they make their decisions Christianly, to have intercourse (e.g. by getting pregnant to force a selfish parent to relent his overbearing resistance to their marriage). But as Christians they would never merely say, ‘It’s all right if we like each other!’ Loving concern can make it all right, but mere liking cannot” (p. 104). Indeed, “Love could justify anything” (p 126).

It is quite clear that the author’s problem is his misconception concerning Biblical love. “But for the situationist what makes the lie right is its loving purpose; he is not hypnotized by some abstract law, ‘thou shalt not lie’ ” (p. 65). It is clear that he does not understand that true love cannot be separated from obedience to the commands of God. “If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments” (John 14:15 A.S.V.). John plainly stated “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (I John 5:3). Mr. Fletcher talks at great length about what the loving thing is but fails to realize that “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments” (I John 5:2). True love in the Biblical sense cannot be separated from obedience to the commands of God.

We doubt that scripture would have much effect on Mr. Fletcher; however, notice his attitude toward the Bible. “In all humility and in spite of any hesitations based on false piety and Biblicism, Christian Ethics is under grave obligation to do some tinkering with scripture” (p 91). It is quite clear that he doesn’t consider the Bible as the infallible word of God. In fact Mr. Fletcher is not even sure that there is a God. “God’s existence and belief that Christ is God in man cannot be proved, any more than a Marxist can prove that history is headed for Communism and that labor is the sole source of commodity value” (p 47).

The Bible is infallible because it is the word of God (II Tim. 3:16, 17). Right and wrong are to be determined by the Bible and if we truly love God and each other we will to the best of our ability keep the commandments of God.

One more example will show that this doctrine is totally false: “We could make a formal but false apostasy under persecution for the sake of dependants or the life of an illegal underground church” (p 72). This statement is in direct conflict with that of Jesus in Matthew 10:37. “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.” Situation Ethics is plainly a false doctrine that makes man a god and encourages sin.

Today we see a modified form of this doctrine in the Lord’s church. The Bible is very plain in teaching that women are to dress modestly in the presence of men (I Tim. 2:9). There are some who say that the need for women to dress modestly could vary with the situation. For example, in some parts of the country some are saying that since it is common for women in our area to go to the beach in bathing suits we do not see any problem in our women (members of the church) going to the beach (where men are present) in bathing suits. In other words, the situation of living in a part of the country where it is the common practice to wear immodest clothing makes it alright for the child of God to do so on certain occasions. What is this other than situation ethics? Others say that it would be alright for a woman to dress immodestly (in the presence of men) as long as it is on the tennis court, basketball court, or as a cheer-leader. In other words, the situation of playing tennis, basketball, or being a cheer-leader makes it alright for a woman to dress immodestly. Others are saying that it would be alright to attend dances since they are school activities and many of their friends will be there. In other words, the situation of being a school activity and having friends there makes it alright to attend a dance.

From this it should be obvious that situation ethics

has crept into the church. Regardless of the situation, right is still right and wrong is still wrong. The Bible is still the standard of ethics. Not the situation one finds himself in or what the crowd does. We would do well to remember the words of Isaiah: “Woe unto them

that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter” (Isaiah 5:20).—1501 6th Ave., Jasper, Al. 35501.

What Wilt Thou Have Me Do?

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heathen nations in which Abram was reared.

But what about man’s ACTIONS? or to say the same thing, the response of man to God’s authority? Paul would state it: “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus...” (Col. 3:17). Man has only two avenues open to him: to OBEY the voice of God, or to REJECT it. We have seen how we obey (Luke 17:10) by doing ALL God has commanded us to do. Man may reject or disobey the voice of God by doing something similar to what God has said, such as Naaman in II Kings 5 or by delaying a decision, as Felix in Act 24. Or he can, as many did in Acts, outrightly reject God’s way. Noah was a preacher of righteousness who did what God said, in the way God said it and simply because God said it. “Thus did Noah according to ALL God commanded him” (Gen. 6:22) Why did Noah use gopher wood in building the ark? Was it the most accessible kind of wood? Was it the best kind for the building of arks? Nothing can be accomplished by speculation. Since the ark would be a type of the church, the gopher wood symbolized the only kind of material of which the church would be built, that is the saved (Acts 2:47). Man has no more authority to add to the church

than Noah had to add to the kind of wood in the ark.

Finally, what should be man’s attitude toward God’s authority? Paul summarized it beautifully in I Corinthians 13:1-3 when he taught that it is love that motivates our speaking, our thoughts and our benevolent deeds. Love for man was the motivating force that moved God to send his only begotten Son to die for lost man (Jn. 3:16). It was Christ’s love that prompted him to pay the redemption price for the church (Eph 5:25). Our love for Him will cause us to act upon the commands of God in the way he commands and because he commands.

Beloved sinner friends, since Jesus has said you and I will be judged by the words he has spoken (John 12:48), and that we will be judged by the things written in the books (Rev. 20:12), you should search diligently what the Lord would have YOU do. Do not question what the Lord had the thief on the cross do. When Jesus told Peter to follow Him, remember that Peter’s reply was, “What of this man?” referring to John. Jesus’ answer to him would apply to you today: “If I will...WHAT IS THAT TO THEE? Follow thou me” (John 21:22).—Post Office Box 84, Chato, Alabama 36518

Review of the Teaching of John Clayton

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“three epochs and three days?” Brother Clayton simply does obeisance to the evolutionary time-scale and that’s all there is to it!

Since John subscribes to evolutionary chronology, rather than to Biblical chronology, he alleges that while the evidence indicates that the earth is approximately 4.5 billion years old, man, by way of contrast, has only been around for roughly 1/450,000th of the history of the earth, and hence, “is a very recent new comer to this planet” (*Correspondence Course*, 8). But Christ did not endorse such a notion for he affirmed that man and woman had existed “from the beginning of the

creation” (Mark 10:6). Similarly, Paul argued that man’s knowledge of God was “since the creation of the world” (Rom. 1:20). How can such plain statements of Scripture be ignored? Brother Clayton has been pressed to explain these passages in the light of his views, but so far as I know, he has never even attempted to respond to them. (Note: I have written an article entitled, “Compromising the Creation Account,” which represents a thorough study of this final point. Those who desire a copy may receive one by simply writing me and requesting such.)—3906 East Main Street, Stockton, Ca. 95205.

Evil Can Be Overcome

Continued from page 3

should be desired, and that is not the things of this world.

Furthermore, we must maintain the proper relationship toward evil. “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” (II Cor. 6:17-18).

Finally, we must manifest the proper action with reference to evil. “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11). Paul affirms that there is to be no fellowship by us with that which is evil. We are to live a holy life before God and our fellowmen. This is the first step of action toward evil, and there are many who go this far; however, our job is only half

completed until we put into action the other command of Paul to “reprove them.” Sometimes, we are afraid to reprove and rebuke those who are living in sin. It is easy for a preacher to reprove the church about sins which they are not engaged in, because that is the popular thing to do; but, can God be pleased with such a preacher? Evil can be overcome!—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101.

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus,
the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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Lydia And Her Open Heart

A most interesting study is found in the sixteenth chapter of Acts beginning with a vision which appeared to Paul by night. In the vision there was a man of Macedonia pleading, "Come over into Macedonia and help us."

Now Macedonia was on the continent of Europe and there was need that the "Good-news" spread to the lost there. In fact, the man said "Come. . ."

Those who are in sin need help, and the gospel is the only thing powerful enough to help.

For this study we will pass over the trip, come directly to Philippi, and to a river side on the sabbath where women have come together for prayer. Here we pick up Acts 16:14: "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."

Some have asserted that Lydia's heart was opened by a direct intervention either by the Lord or the Holy Spirit. There can be no doubt that her heart was opened nor that it was opened by the Lord, so says the text. However the question is, was there a direct intervention separate and apart from the speaking done by Paul? (16:13). We can be certain what Paul was speaking! Verse fourteen says she gave heed to that spoken by Paul, and verse fifteen says she was baptized. So it was the gospel that Paul was speaking, and the gospel is the power (Romans 1:16) and the means (Ephesians 6:14-17) unto salvation. By giving heed to the gospel, Lydia's heart was opened by the Lord THROUGH his word spoken by Paul.

Upon obedience to the gospel command to be



CURTIS R. DOWDY

baptized, Lydia said, "If you have judged ME to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us" (Acts 16:15). Evidently Paul judged HER faithful as he and his company used Lydia's house as a mission point in Europe.

With this background I raise the question, if the Lord intervened directly to open Lydia's heart how could Paul judge HER to be faithful? In short, it would have been the faithfulness of the Lord, not Lydia, about which Paul would have judged. Too, if the Lord had acted directly to open Lydia's heart why the vision with the man pleading for Paul to come over and "help us"?

Had the Lord intervened directly to open Lydia's heart would he not be committed to intervene directly to open everyone's heart? In view of the fact that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34), I think we can so agree. Since God is no respecter of persons; since we read of others who heard the gospel but did not obey it, we can know that God did not intervene to act directly upon Lydia's heart. This point is proved by something that took place in Corinth and Rome.

Paul departed from Athens, came to Corinth "reasoning" and "persuading." He testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ and the result is recorded: "And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles" (Acts 18:6).

Please mark where Paul placed the responsibility for the rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. Look at the words "they opposed themselves" and "your blood be upon your own heads." Had the Lord been in the business of intervening directly to open hearts, as some allege, Paul would have reasoned that the Lord opposed them and their blood be upon HIS head. But no! Paul was aware of the fact that each individual is responsible before God for how he will respond to the gospel.

If the above is not sufficient, please consider

Acts chapter twenty eight. Paul was in Rome in his own hired house, receiving the leading Jews and "persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets" (verse 23). This resulted in some's believing and some's not believing (verse 24). It was at this point that Paul quoted Isaiah, "Saying, go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive" (verse 26). We raise a question here. Why did they hear but not understand, see but not perceive? Could it have been that God refused to intervene, separate and apart from the word spoken by Paul, to open their hearts? Oh no! Verse twenty seven places the responsibility squarely upon the unbelievers: "For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Please pay close attention to "heart," "ears," and "eyes." God did not act directly to close their heart, ears, or eyes, but Paul said, "THEY" did. *They* could have been converted; *They* could have been healed; God was ready. However, since God had not directly closed their heart, ears, or eyes, it was not his responsibility directly to open them (God is consistent with the free will of man).

Lydia heard the gospel, gave heed to the truth taught, and the Lord opened her heart. The Jews at Corinth and some at Rome heard the gospel, rejected the truth taught and the Lord closed theirs. In neither case was the Lord intervening directly, but through the preaching of his word.

If our heart is opened or closed to the truth, it will be because of a faith response, or the lack of it, on our part to God's Holy Will. (At this point read Romans chapter ten.)—P. O. Box 456, Obion, Tn. 38240.



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Acts 26:25

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Believing A Lie

Many people in this day and time are being led astray in the world of religion, by deceitful teachers and their false doctrines. Jesus warned those of his day concerning the doctrines and commandments of men (Mt. 15:3-9). Paul realized that some would believe a lie, and in believing that lie would reject the truth and be damned (II Thess. 2:11-12). Many of those who are being led astray know the truth, but for



JOHN SHAVER

some reason or other would rather remain in their error than obey the truth of God's word. I'm sure that you have heard someone say, "We're all trying to get to the same place, just taking different ways." I wonder if those who use this reasoning would apply the same reasoning while planning a vacation trip? Would one plan a trip to Florida using a map of Vermont? Of course not! Then how in the name of common sense could one hope to reach heaven without using God's road map, the Bible? Jesus stated that the way to heaven was a way many would not tread (Mt. 7:13-14). I have heard some say, "I'll doom my parents to hell if I obey the gospel." I don't suppose that they have ever read God's facts concerning salvation, and how that judgment is an individual matter (Mt. 16:27; Rom. 2:6; I Cor. 3:8; II Cor. 5:10; I Pet. 1:17; Rev. 22:12). What I do has nothing to do with the eternal destiny of my parents and neither can they do anything to alter my salvation. Others have said, "There are hypocrites in the church." Yes, I'm afraid that there are a few, but wouldn't you rather put up with a few hypocrites on this side of eternity, than to spend an eternity in hell with all of them? Some have said, "I'm not good enough to be a Christian?" True, but who is? One does not become good to be a Christian, but becomes a Christian to be good. I have heard some say, "I've plenty of time to obey the gospel." Have you? I suspect that you haven't spent much time in the study of God's word in reference to the brevity of life (Jas. 4:13-14).

It is said, but it boils down to "believe a lie and be damned." Why? Because those who use such

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FROM

THE EDITOR

The Gift Of The Holy Ghost In Acts 2:38

We say again that, if all who believed in the non-miraculous personal indwelling were in agreement that the only influence wielded by the Spirit upon the Christian is that wielded through the Bible, we would consider this error of little consequence, and likely would not deal with it in this series of articles. Unfortunately such is not the case, for there are some who reason that if the Holy Spirit personally dwells in the Christian he must do something for the Christian by dwelling in him. Else there would be no need for a personal indwelling.



BOBBY DUNCAN

It would be good if the reader would review our last article carefully before reading this one. In this article we will discuss Acts 2:38, a passage most frequently used to prove a non-miraculous, personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. "Then Peter said unto them, 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."

It is argued that those who repented and were baptized were promised the gift of the Holy Ghost. But please observe that this verse does not define "the gift of the Holy Ghost". It merely promises "the gift of the Holy Ghost" to those who would obey the gospel. For a definition we will have to go to one of the several passages which speak of the gift of the Holy Ghost in a context where it is clearly defined. We would suggest Acts 8:14-18. Here we read of some who obeyed the gospel and who "received the Holy Ghost" (verse 17). To them it was "through laying on of the Apostles' hands" that "the Holy Ghost was given" (verse 18). It is clear from the context that the gift of the Holy Ghost—at least in Acts 8—is the supernatural power of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 10:45 is another passage which helps define the gift of the Holy Ghost. It says that "the gift of the Holy Ghost" was poured out on the household of Cornelius, resulting in their speaking in tongues and magnifying God—obviously referring to the miraculous.

Another passage which shows what the inspired men had in mind when they referred to someone's receiving the Holy Ghost is Acts 19:1-6. Paul asked, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (verse 2). The context will show that he had in mind the supernatural power of the Holy Ghost, which he later imparted by laying his hands on them (verse 6).

This definition will fit Acts 2:38. The people to whom Peter was speaking had witnessed a miraculous manifestation of the Holy Spirit, and had asked the meaning of it. Peter had answered them by quoting Joel's prophecy of a miraculous outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon "all flesh." In verse 33 Peter had attributed that which the people saw and heard to the fact that Jesus had "received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost." When he said to them, "repent and be baptized. . . and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," what would they be ex-

pecting? A non-miraculous, personal indwelling of the Spirit? If so, where had they learned about anyone's receiving the Spirit personally and yet non-miraculously?

We admit there are some difficulties with the position that the gift of the Holy Ghost in Acts 2:38 is the supernatural power imparted through the laying on of the apostles' hands. But we believe there is an acceptable and credible answer to every argument which can be advanced against this position. One difficulty seen by some is the fact that this position requires that one contend the first part of the verse applies today, while the latter part was limited to the miraculous age. This difficulty disappears when one sets forth an explanation of Mark 16:16, 17. Verse 16 applies today, but verse 17 was limited to the miraculous age. And, after all, was not Peter in Acts 2 laboring under the Great Commission of Mark 16? The Great Commission of Mark 16 (1) stated conditions of pardon, (2) offered salvation, and (3) promised miraculous powers. Peter, laboring under that commission, (1) stated conditions of pardon, (2) offered salvation, and (3) promised miraculous powers. Why should we expect anything less?

Another difficulty which some see lies in the fact that the language of verse 39 seems to promise the gift of the Holy Ghost to every person in every age who would repent and be baptized. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This language is intended to embrace Jew and Gentile alike. "Unto you, and to your children" refers to Jews. "All that are afar off" refers to Gentiles (cf. Ephesians 2:13). But the "as many as the Lord our God shall call" is the part that gives difficulty. Some feel that it just must be made to include more than Christians of the Miraculous age. But must it, when it is explaining a prophecy concerning the Spirit's being poured out upon "all flesh"? If one can squeeze "as many as the Lord our God shall call" into the framework of a prophecy that talks about "all flesh," "your sons and your daughters," "your young men. . . and your old men," and "my servants. . . and my handmaidens," then the difficulty will disappear.

One other thing worthy of note before we leave this passage is Luke's references to the promise. The book of Luke closes with an account of Christ's ascension. Before he ascended, he said, "And, behold, I send the promise of my father upon you. . ." (Lk. 24:49). This is an obvious reference to the supernatural outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As Luke takes up the narrative in Acts 1, he refers to the Lord's admonition to "wait for the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4)—another reference to supernatural power. After the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in Acts 2, Peter explained that what they had seen and heard was connected with "the promise of the Holy Ghost" (2:33). Then verse 39 says, "For the promise is unto you. . ." Would Theophilus, to whom Luke and Acts were written, get the impression that the people in Acts 2 were promised a non-miraculous, personal indwelling of the Holy Ghost? Did Peter switch promises, between verse 33 and verse 39? The promise in Luke 24:49 is miraculous. The promise in Acts 1:4 is miraculous. The promise in Acts 2:33 is miraculous. How could one conclude that the promise of Acts 2:39 is not miraculous?

A Review Of The Teaching of John Clayton

(No. 6)

In this series of articles reviewing the teaching of brother John Clayton and his "Does God Exist?" lecture and literature program, I have had to be very selective in the inclusion of material since brother Bert Thompson (whose articles will follow) and I do not wish to extend this series beyond that which is absolutely necessary. We sincerely believe, however, that our efforts will have conclusively shown that the error taught by this brother is considerable, and that accordingly, his sphere of influence ought to be circumscribed until such a time as he ceases to propagate his false doctrine. This final installment of mine will deal with some miscellaneous matters.



WAYNE JACKSON

The Bible clearly teaches that the flood of Noah's day "prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high mountains that were under the whole heaven were covered" (Gen. 7:19). In the NT Peter confirms that the ancient world "overflowed with water" (II Pet. 3:6); he even uses the flood as a type of the coming judgment of the world (Cf. Matt. 24:38, 39). But brother Clayton is not sure at all that it happened this way (he must wait to see whether "science" can prove it!); he writes:

"Was there a flood, or is the Biblical account a myth? Was the flood global or local? When did the flood take place, if it did occur? Was the flood caused by a natural event such as the collapse of a canopy-covering the Earth once had, or perhaps a magnetic reversal, or was the flood a miracle of God not explainable in scientific terms. I must in all honesty confess that I do not have answers to these questions which can be dogmatically made and defended" (*Does God Exist?*, 11/75, p. 2; emp. WJ).

He goes on to say that he is inclined to believe that the flood was global but that one of his problems has been "the total lack of evidence for such an event" (p. 3) What about the Biblical evidence? Does it count for nothing? It is one thing for a Biblically unlearned and immature person to have honest doubts—we will pray for him and teach him. But it is an entirely different matter to turn such loose to sow their doubts through the brotherhood!

Several months back in *Words of Truth*, I reviewed brother Clayton's article on the great ages of the pre-flood patriarchs. John contended that since science cannot prove that the patriarchs lived to such great ages as recorded in Genesis, it is probable that Methuselah's age, for instance, after he begat his first son, should be divided by twelve; hence, he did not actually live to be 969 years of age (*Does God Exist?*, 6/78, p. 11ff). Since "science" cannot prove that a virgin birth has ever happened, should the Biblical record of Jesus' virgin birth be dismissed too?!

Recently John wrote an article on religious unity. In that piece he raised a question regarding the use of mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship. Although he advised against the use of the instrument on the grounds of unity, he added: "The New Testament passages which deal with the question of music all refer to singing (See Eph. 5:19; Col.

3:16) although some passages might be able to be done with an instrument, especially if the instrument supplements singing instead of replacing it" (*Does God Exist?*, 12/78, p. 8). Which NT passages allow supplementation of singing with instruments of music? I don't want to sound overly harsh, but I must say this—when a man this doctrinally loose can be as popular as John Clayton is, it does not speak well for the current condition of the church in America!

To say that John does not take to criticism well is to make somewhat of an understatement. When one southern preacher wrote John questioning some of his views, he was told:

"In the Bible belt, I have found that nearly half of the preachers are trained in many of our preacher training schools that do not encourage what I understand the whole New Testament Church to be about. Preachers are given 'canned' answers to specific points of view quoted from other preachers, or authorities in the field. . . I seriously question whether the Church as the Lord intended it even exists in many communities in that part of the country, because of the fact that people are following blind tradition, instead of their own investigation and study" (*Letter*, 9/75).

In a more recent outburst against those who

have attempted to teach him the way of the Lord more correctly, brother Clayton said:

"In recent months I have come to a point in my life where I have to question my association with the 'Church of Christ' as it exists in the United States" (*Does God Exist?*, 7/77, p. 6ff).

He then complained that he is "frustrated and disillusioned" and wonders if he should "withdraw into a house church" or perhaps go "into a group that may not be doctrinally 100% correct" but which is closer to NT Christianity in spirit. He alleged that "all the wonder that led me to the Church" has been "shattered." When John published his booklet, *Why I Left Atheism* (1968) he said: "I guess in a real sense you could say I'm still looking. I'm still trying to find that true church" (p. 10). Apparently now, more than a decade later, he still has not found it; the question may really be, does he know what he is looking for? This is truly sad.

Finally, this word — John Clayton claims that he can count on one hand all of those within our brotherhood who are critical of his program. Either John has a woefully deformed hand, or he doesn't know our brotherhood!—3906 East Main, Stockton, Ca. 95205.

A Difficult Command To Obey

DEMAR ELAM

One of the truly difficult commands of God to obey is to be found in Matthew 5:44, which says: "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good unto them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Living in harmony with our fellow man is not difficult when our fellow man is amiable and friendly toward us. But, when our fellow man is unfriendly, hateful and spiteful toward us, we must put forth extra effort to achieve a peaceful co-existence.

How are we to treat an enemy? Jesus says to love him! What about those who hate us? "Do good to them", says our Lord. And what about those who despitefully use and persecute us? Pray for them! These teachings go against man's sinful nature. It is most natural to strike back at those who lash out at us. It is quite unnatural to man to do good to someone who hates him. But these *are* the teachings of Jesus, and being his followers, we must try to the best of our ability to obey them. And the surprising thing is that when we put into practice these lofty principles, many of our enemies disappear! At least, they change toward us. They become friends. It's not always the case but it does often happen.

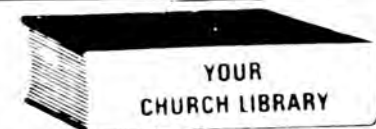
Jesus went on to say, "For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even publicans so? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?" (Matt. 5:46-47). Christianity does not call for "just average" behavior. It rather calls for living on a higher plane. We could describe it as "mountain top living." When we obey Jesus' teachings we obtain a level of spiritual attainment far above average. We become Christ-like and enlarge our Christian character.

What would keep us from putting into practice Christ's teachings in Matt 5? I think, more than anything else, pride. The teaching in Matt. 5:44 demands humility. For example, when a dispute arises between two people and one of them behaves unseemly, unfairly or rudely toward the other, the wronged person will be hurt. For one thing, his pride is hurt. But, if the wronged person is a Christian he cannot allow his hurt pride to stand in the way of his obeying Matt. 5:44. He must have enough humility to

rise above his hurt pride and lead out in seeking a reconciliation. Jesus commands love for enemies, and love is action! If we become lifted up with pride we place ourselves in jeopardy of falling into the condemnation of the devil (I Tim. 3:6). The Christian must actively seek a way to resolve his differences with one who has wronged him. He must seek to bring about good feeling between him and his enemy. This is hard but necessary.

A Christian who refuses to be forgiving in nature blackens his heart as the years go by. He soon finds that his heart is so hard and black that he cannot feel loving toward others or toward God. He becomes anxious and fretful and wonders whatever happened to the peace that Christians are supposed to have. So, if we refuse to follow Christ's teaching we do *not* become more and more Christlike as the years go by. Instead we become more and more like the prince of this world, the devil! Jesus has shown us many, many ways that we can become more and more like Him. Matt. 5:44 is one of the ways! "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).—P.O. Box 412, Hamilton, New Zealand

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Believing A Lie

Continued from page 2

weak excuses receive not the love of the truth, and have a working of error imposed upon them. By this, they received a strong delusion, not the truth. One will never be disposed to accept the truth until he loves it. If he is not interested in the truth, he will not likely search for it as did the Bereans (Acts 17:11). Jesus commanded that the truth be taught, heard and obeyed (Mt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16). This truth would sanctify and set one free (Jno. 8:32; Jno. 17:17). The truth is made known, as Jesus commanded, by the gospel's being taught or preached, but one must study for himself to be sure that he received the *whole truth* (Acts 17:11; II Tim. 2:15).

What choice do we have? Truth or error. One cannot hold to both, for this is not God's way (Mt. 12:30). Failure to embrace the truth of God's word will lead one to embrace the false doctrine of man. Any man who does this will fall prey to error, lies and deceit. The result— "believe a lie and be damned!"

One might ask, "What is truth?" Truth is a body of correlated facts. As we study God's word we find the answer to this all important question (Jno. 8:32; Jno. 17:17). Apart from God's word we grope aimlessly in the darkness and error of man's inept wisdom. The

dependence on the doctrines of men brings eternal ruin, leading one into the darkness of the world. But dependence on God's word will make one free, and keep him free, as long as he abides in that word.

One of the main problems in the religious world, and in the church is the lack of respect for God's word, and the authority of that word. It is a known fact that the ways and wisdom of man do not always coincide with the ways of God (Prov. 14:12). Note some of the examples of man's wisdom in contradiction with the word of God. "One church is as good as another," or "One does not have to be in the church to be saved," or "I was saved on my sick-bed," or "I put my hand on the radio as a point of contact," or "I prayed through for my salvation." To believe such expressions is "to believe a lie and be damned!" Brethren, false doctrine is like a mirage to a weary traveler. It is an optical illusion, or should I say delusion? He thinks it is just what he needs, but finds out that it is useless and meaningless.

I'm sure that you have heard the statement, "One name is as good as another." Let me examine that statement with a few questions. Do you sign your best friends name to your checks? Did you affix your best

friend's name to your car title, or deed to your property? Did you name your daughter "Jezebel?" Did you name your son "Judas?" No? Why not? If there is nothing in a name it would make no difference. But you see, dear friend, many practice in religion that which they would deem foolish otherwise. Names are words with an agreed meaning, and having come to an agreement on the meaning of a word or name, one must be *exact* in his usage of that word or name. The name of Christ is to be exalted over all others (Phil. 2:9-11). The name "Christian" denotes a servant of Christ, and is divine in origin (Isa. 62:2; Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; I Pet. 4:16). Can this be said of any other religious name or organization? It can readily be seen that the man-made doctrines of the religious world plainly contradict God's word. Anything more than God's word is too much, and anything less is too little (II Jno. 9-11). When will we get back to God's word as our only guide in matters religious? The Sacred Writ does not lie, for it is from God. Either believe God's word, or "believe a lie and be damned." The choice is yours, dear friend. Look well to your choice! — Rt. 10, Box 186B, Jasper, Ala. 35501

The Things That Belong To God

DONALD E. DAVIS

Drafting Christian women too? Recently we have been hearing a lot about the reinstatement of the draft with the very real possibility that it will include some form of draft for women too. This is but another clear warning to the church that we need to do some sound biblical teaching on this matter. Many brethren are particularly concerned about the drafting of women, or even their registration. Rightfully so, but, their indignation falls short. It should include the drafting or volunteering of Christian men for combat.

This is an issue that many brethren have studiously avoided for years. They have evaded or ignored the force of New Testament teaching with various webbs of logic. They cannot honestly answer the overwhelming preponderance of evidence in the New Testament precluding Christians in combat; they have just said something different. Such "reasonings" do not make it a matter of opinion. The question is simply, *is there clear biblical authority for a Christian to kill for his government?*

There is no more authority in the New Testament for the drafting of our Christian men (at least for combat duty) than there is for drafting Christian women. God made a change at the cross from a national Israel, to the universal spiritual Israel, the church (Galatians 3:26-29, I Peter 2:5-10). This forever changed the role and realm for service of His people: (1) "...learn war no more..." (Isaiah 2:3-4); (2) "the battle bow is broken" (Zechariah 9:9-10); (3) therefore, "...we do not war according to the flesh..." (II Corinthians 10:3); (4) "our citizenship is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20); and (5) "...go preach the gospel..." (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16, II Corinthians 10:1-9, Ephesians 6:10-18). This is the only warfare in the New Testament authorized by King Jesus for Christians.

For Christians to accept combative service in Caesar's military is to go beyond what is written (I Corinthians 4:6). This is rendering him a service God has not authorized him to require (Acts 5:29). Jesus taught there are things that belong only to God because of his authorization (Matthew 22:21).

Paul clearly distinguishes the separate roles of civil government and that of the Christian (Romans 13:1-7). Note the pronouns: "he/it" (civil government), and "you/ye" (Christians). He is not teaching a Christian may serve in a combative role, rather he is simply pointing out that a Christian should "give place unto the wrath of God," AND ALLOW THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT opportunity to work out God's

vengeance (Romans 12:17-21). God in the New Testament has given the state, *not the church, the sword*. The two are to be distinct in their roles; nowhere is the Christian exhorted to join the civil government, but without doubt many scriptures preclude a position of violence.

Jesus commanded Christians to flee a cruel and aggressive Roman army that would, without doubt, destroy their businesses, homes, and possibly their families (Luke 21:20-22). This must have sounded as hard then as it does today. Far too many brethren today will not walk with Jesus on this simple teaching (John 6:66-68). To some it is treason. At best, we can conclude that if Jesus wanted His people to war, we cannot find authority for it in the scriptures (John 18:36). To say otherwise is to reason from the silence of the scripture, and renders all of our arguments against instrumental music unsound.

Let it be clearly understood, that a Christian's ultimate love is not to his enemy, not to his family, not to his own life, not the brethren, and certainly not to his country; but, to Jesus (John 14:15). We cannot be faithful to him and reason that the end justifies the means (cf. I Samuel 13:8-12, 15:22). If so, then, why did not Jesus, his apostles, and the early church arm themselves to protect their loved ones from cruel Roman and Jewish oppression? To be faithful to Jesus may well cost a Christian all of these things (John 16:2; Revelation 2:10). A stable society may not serve God's will, nor is one promised (John 14:27).

Many difficult hypothetical questions and situations may be offered by those seeking to justify themselves (Luke 10:29). However, if consistently pursued, the simple teaching of Jesus will remain untarnished. *Apparent* logic may seem very persuasive. But Christians must walk "by faith" that Jesus meant what He said and will provide the best for his own (II Corinthians 5:7, Philippians 4:19, Romans 8:28). God does not always command the logical from the human point of view (Abraham offering Isaac).

It is interesting to observe a parallel between the "lawyer" and some educated brethren today who would reason from a series of questions rather than from scripture in context (Luke 10:29; I Corinthians 2:1-5; Acts 17:2-3). It is "situation ethics." Their questions usually solicit conclusions based on emotions. These catch the innocent, the unsuspecting, the unlearned, and the unskilled off guard; not knowing how to answer or what the

scriptures teach, they are overwhelmed. Such maneuvers served only to obscure and evade the real question: *is there clear New Testament authority for the Christian to kill for his government?*

Brethren, it's about time we wake up, and resolve never again to give our Christian fathers and sons as straw for Caesar's furnaces of violence. Nationalism is not a work of the church. We *cannot continue* to give to Caesar what belongs to God. God did not give Caesar the authority to draft Christians to kill in his armies. Neither may Christians take such authority upon themselves and volunteer for such license. Will we so teach them?

Brethren, the bottom line is this: *have we degenerated into a quasi-Christian organization that rails against organs, but condones bombing and slaughter* (Matthew 23:23-24(?—Drawer A, South Berre, Vermont 05670).

The Gifts of God

Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift. —II Corinthians 9:15.

The God who clothes the fields
And sees the sparrows fall
Is the God who hears our prayers
And answers when we call.

The God who gives the sunshine
And refreshing rain
Is the God who heals our hurts
And takes away our pain.

The God who breathed the life
Into a form of clay
Is the God who makes our lives
A joy to live each day.

Earlene Rose

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"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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VOLUME 15

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NUMBER 25

A Review Of The Teachings Of John Clayton

(No. 7)

(Editor's Note: We do not make a practice of saying a great deal in this paper about the academic attainments of our writers. Any effort to honor one man above another by referring to him as "Doctor So-And-So" is out of harmony with the teaching of our Lord in Matthew 23. Furthermore, one may be eminently qualified to write or speak on Biblical matters without holding a Ph. D.; and the fact that one holds a Ph.D. does not necessarily qualify him to write or speak on matters of a spiritual nature.

This series of articles has to do largely with matters of science as they relate to the Bible. It should, therefore, be pointed out that brother Bert Thompson, who is taking up where brother Wayne Jackson left off, holds the B. S. degree in biology from Abilene Christian College, and the M. S. and Ph.D. degrees in food microbiology from Texas A & M University where he is now an instructor in the College of Veterinary Medicine. We mention this, not to honor him above others, but to let the reader know that he is suited academically to this subject. We are indebted to him and brother Wayne Jackson for this much needed series of articles).

As I begin my articles reviewing the teachings of brother John Clayton, and draw this series prepared by Wayne Jackson and myself to a close over the next few weeks, I feel a few introductory comments are in order. Brother Jackson has already given our reasons for writing these articles, and has so aptly pointed out for all concerned that we have absolutely no desire to hurt brother Clayton. Our only goal is to see Truth taught and the Bible as the authoritative word of God revered. It is our



BERT THOMPSON

hope that brother Clayton will see some of the egregious errors he is espousing, and will come to a clear knowledge of the Truth so that much good may be done and the cause of Christ may be uplifted in the eyes of all.

But may I also make the following comments. First, in all possible fairness to John Clayton, I must say that much of his material is very good and quite sound. I have always said that, and will continue to say it. Secondly, I do not impugn the motives of brother Clayton. It is apparent to me that he has a real love for lost souls, and wishes to be instrumental in bringing people to Christ. Never would I impugn a man's motives. Thirdly, one thing is for certain: brother Clayton no man can accuse of "being in it for the money" because he clearly is not. He gives away or lends out more material than most people sell. I admire and respect him for his attitude in this regard. Let it be made crystal clear at the very outset: neither brother Jackson nor I have any personal vendetta, no "axe to grind" against brother Clayton. We consider him our brother in Christ, and wish him well in all that he does that is in accord with the teachings of the Bible.

However it is becoming more and more apparent, not only to us, but to others in the brotherhood as well, that many of the teachings of John Clayton are unsound, and contradict or compromise plain Bible teachings in several areas. Those of us who oppose the errors of brother Clayton do so both privately and publicly because we know that it only takes a little strichnine in a meal to kill one!! What good is capable of being done will most assuredly be heavily outweighed by the terrible errors being propagated and espoused. We will have accomplished little if we have "converted" the atheist/agnostic and yet at the same time filled the church of our Lord with theistic evolutionists, progressive creationists, and the like. The fruit of such will be bitter indeed. If nothing else, history has shown that to be true, and we would be the wiser for having learned from past

mistakes.

As I pen these words, I cannot help but be reminded of the tremendous lesson brother Goebel Music presented at the third annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship at the Getwell church of Christ in October, 1978, entitled simply "We Must Be Willing To Be Hated By The World and the Brethren." The spirit of that lesson comes to mind as brother Jackson and I set about this most unpleasant task of pointing out the errors in teaching of one so popular as John Clayton. Would that this series of articles were not necessary!! But, I concur wholeheartedly with brother Jackson in stating that "we cannot simply stand by silently as brother Clayton continues to sow the seeds of evolutionary compromise throughout our great brotherhood." And so, though the criticism will assuredly come—and though it will be fierce and heavy—we can do no other. Our love for the uncompromised word of God will let us do no other. And while we make no claims to have "all knowledge" or to set ourselves up as some sort of "infallible judges," we do know that Truth can be obtained (John 8:32) and that God expects us to defend it fervently (Jude 3; Philippians 1:16)—even if we must oppose publicly the false teacher in so doing (Gal. 2:4-5; II Tim. 4:1-3; II Peter 2:1ff).

Let it be *strongly* stated at the outset of my part of this series of articles that neither brother Jackson nor I will be guilty of depending upon "second-hand" or "hearsay" information for those things that we write. The careful reader will quickly notice that each statement is documented, so that all who will can "double-check" our statements. Each statement will be referenced fully and completely. As I pen my articles, I am taking brother Clayton's teachings from several sources: (1) Audio cassette tapes produced under the title of *Does God Exist* and authored by brother Clayton himself; (2) brother Clayton's monthly bulletin, *Does God Exist*; (3) *The Source* (a 182-page book, published in 1976):

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— Acts 26:25

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Do My Prophets No Harm

Through David, Jehovah said, "Touch not my anointed ones, and do my prophets no harm" (I Chron. 16:22). A perennial problem from the earliest of times has been that God's prophets are subjected to all kinds of abuse and persecution by the wicked. But not only do the wicked of the world hate and attack God's spokesmen, but the worldly element in his Kingdom have joined hands with Satan in this effort to destroy them.



JOHN WADDEY

That ancient principle of warning is applicable today, for faithful gospel preachers stand in a role similar to that of the prophets of old. Predicting the future was but a small part of the prophet's work; he was a preacher of righteousness. He spoke words of edification, exhortation and consolation (I Cor. 14:3). So do preachers today. The ancient prophet was inspired to teach, we must study the written revelation to know God's will. Today God still says, "Do my prophets no harm."

When you hurt God's teachers you hurt God's cause. It was God's good pleasure, through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe (I Cor. 1:21). When a preacher is attacked and driven out of his work, the Lord's cause suffers. When you "ruin" a preacher you not only hurt him and his family, but you rob hundreds, even thousands of lost souls of their chance for salvation. There are not enough preachers to tell all the world of Jesus, as it is. When a good man is brought down, there will be no one to take his place. Multitudes will languish in hell because of the damage done.

Gospel preachers fill an important and vital role in God's kingdom. Faithful, capable preachers make strong growing churches. Look around at congregation without the services of a good preacher. The value of a preacher's work is evident. Is this what we want?

When you reject the instruction and correction of a

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FROM

THE EDITOR

The Gift Of The Holy Ghost In Acts 5:32



BOBBY DUNCAN

"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). This verse states the fact of God's having given the Holy Ghost to "them that obey him." Like Acts 2:38, this verse does not define the gift of the Holy Ghost. In an earlier article (June 8, 1979) we discussed some principles which should be allowed to govern our study of passages dealing with the Holy Spirit. We strongly urge that that article be read, along with the one on Acts 2:38 (June 15, 1979), before this one is read.

Does Acts 5:32 teach that the Holy Spirit personally dwells in Christians in a non-miraculous way? We do not believe it does; and we shall set forth reasons why in this article.

In the first place, the statement is made in a context in which miraculous powers of the Spirit are discussed. Verses 12-16 of this same chapter state: "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people... Inasmuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." It was this very fact that caused the high priest and those with him to be filled with indignation (verse 17), and to put the apostles in prison. That very night, by means of a miracle, the prison doors were opened and the apostles were sent to preach in the temple. Against this background, when Peter referred to "the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him," those to whom he was speaking, as well as Theophilus to whom the book of Acts was written, would naturally understand him to be referring to the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit so evident in this chapter.

A second thing that leads us to reject the idea that this passage is speaking of a non-miraculous, personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the fact that Peter's statement is designed to argue that the apostles were obedient to God. These were the religious leaders to whom Peter was speaking. Theoretically, the only thing Peter would need to do to obtain their approval of the actions of the apostles would be to show that their actions were in obedience to God. His argument, arranged syllogistically, is as follows: Major Premise: God gives the Holy Ghost only to those who obey him. Minor Premise: God has given the Holy Ghost to us, as is evidenced by the miracles performed by us. Logical Conclusion: Therefore, we are obedient to God. This argument of Peter would have no strength at all separate and apart from the miracles performed by those to whom the Holy Ghost was given. Hence, what is under consideration in Acts 5:32 is the fact that supernatural powers of the Spirit were possessed by the apostles to prove that they were not liars and disobedient, as they had been charged.

A third thing that causes us to believe that the gift of the Holy Ghost in Acts 5:32 is the supernatural

power of the Holy Ghost is the use of the word "witnesses." How could a non-miraculous, personal indwelling of the Spirit possibly be a witness? Let us examine two other passages where reference is made to the Spirit's being a witness. The first is John 15:26, 27: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." We know of none who would say the testimony of the Spirit in this passage refers to something accomplished through a non-miraculous, personal indwelling. But look at the similarity between this passage and Acts 5:32. This passage says, "... he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness." Acts 5:32 says, "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost. . . ." Is not Acts 5:32 a fulfillment of the promise of John 15:26, 27?

The second passage we mention in this connection is Hebrews 2:3, 4: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" Here is a clear reference to the testimony given by the apostles of Christ coupled with the supernatural workings of the Holy Ghost. And it is said in this passage that God bore "witness." Are not the events of Acts 5 described in this language of Hebrews 2:3, 4? If not, what is lacking in Acts 5? What else would we have to find in that chapter to be able to say Acts 5 is an example of what Hebrews 2:3, 4 is talking about?

Some who believe Acts 2:38 and 5:32 are talking about an ordinary, non-miraculous personal indwelling of the Spirit will even concede that those who originally heard these two statements made by Peter probably did, at the time, think he was referring to the supernatural manifestations of the Spirit, but later learned he was speaking of the ordinary, non-miraculous, personal indwelling. Such a thought not only seems far-fetched, but also raises another difficult question; i.e., where did these later learn they were mistaken in their understanding of these statements?

Before closing this article we will make some brief observations concerning Ephesians 1:13, 14, which states: "... ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance. . . ." These verses have been used by some to sustain the idea of an ordinary, non-miraculous, personal indwelling of the Spirit. But it should not take a great deal of reflection to conclude that the words "sealed" and "earnest" could not refer to an ordinary, non-miraculous, personal indwelling. The very nature of a seal and of earnest demands they both be something visible and tangible. It is easy to understand how the supernatural powers of the Spirit could be referred to as a "seal," for such constituted God's "seal" of approval of those who were preaching the truth. It is easy to understand how supernatural gifts could serve as the "earnest" or guarantee of the Christian's inheritance, for the supernatural gifts actually confirmed, or guaranteed the authenticity of the gospel being preached. How could a non-miraculous indwelling do such?

There are numerous other passages which make reference to the fact of some's receiving the Holy Spirit; and in some cases the immediate context does

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Preach The Word

I believe the admonition Paul gave Timothy to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" to be as binding on the gospel preacher as Mark 16:16 is binding to the alien sinner. The reason for my believing such is: "All scripture is given by inspiration to God..." (II Timothy 3:16). We are living in a time when modernists, liberals, and even some who claim to be gospel preachers, have gotten so hung up on the Holy Spirit issue that it is taught that the Holy Spirit works separate and apart from and independent of the word of God. Therefore many, many preachers have gotten away from preaching the word of God, and there is a strong tendency to disregard the Bible today.



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

In this article I am affirming that we can be saved by the word of God, and that it is sufficient for us in the 20th Century to know and to obey and be children of God. If my child should go to school from September through May and have a perfect attendance record, how could he do any better in attending? If he should have perfect attendance, he could not improve in that area. The Psalmist says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul..." (Psalms 19:7). If the law is perfect, and the Psalmist acknowledges that it is, how then can the law be improved? The law will also convert the soul, and a person must be converted in order to have his sins blotted out (Acts 3:19). Therefore, if a person is converted, how can he be any better off than having his sins blotted out?

Jesus taught in John 3:3, 5 that a person must be born again. I have never heard a person disagree with Jesus by claiming that one could be saved without being born again. So the question is not: "should we be born again?" but the question is: "how is one born again?" The answer is found in I Peter 1:23: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." If we are born again as Jesus stated for us to be, and this birth is by the word of God as recorded by Peter, then we can conclude that the word of God is sufficient for us to be saved. What more could a person want than to be born again and be saved?

Jesus taught his apostles that, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). Jesus also said, "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). What is there that the Spirit can do for us that the word of God cannot do, in that the apostles were led by the Spirit, and we have in the word of God what the apostles taught? We can know this truth and be free of sin, and this truth is the word of God which we have in the Bible. To deny the word of God today, one would deny that the Spirit led the apostles into all the truth, that we can be free of sin, and that God's word is truth. We must accept the truth to be saved, and the word of God is truth.

The Apostle Peter says, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth..." (I Peter 1:22). What is truth? "... thy word is truth" (John 17:17). In obeying the truth one's soul is purified which means he is pure or clean. If your soul is pure or clean from sin through obedience to the truth, then there is no contamination in your soul. It is not possible for your soul to become more pure than when it obeys the truth, the word of God.

James writes, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). Why would anyone,

especially preachers, get away from the word of God when it will save one's soul? Through the inspired writing of James, we can learn the importance of hearing, believing, and obeying the word of God because it will save a person's soul. Yes, the word is sufficient for us to obey, live by and then go home to live with God. If the word of God will save, and James indicates it will, the inevitable conclusion is that we will be lost without the word of God.

Jesus warns that, "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. Can you feature man's being judged by Jesus Christ with an imperfect standard? That is the conclusion one must draw if we are to be judged by the words of Christ and if the Bible is not sufficient to save one's soul.

Because I do not believe that the Holy Spirit works separate and apart from and independent of the word of God does not mean I do not believe in the Holy Spirit. I certainly believe that the Holy Spirit guided

the writers of the Bible to write what God wanted man to know and we have today in the word of God all that we need to go from this life to a life with God beyond the grave. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Cor. 2:12-13). Inasmuch as the writers of the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit and they wrote what the Holy Spirit wanted us to know, there would not be any reason why the Holy Spirit should work separate and apart from the word of God.

As I let my pen rest from this article, let me exhort, plead and encourage every preacher to preach the word of God with all the boldness that you have. Why? "Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:14). — P.O. Box 118, Parrish, AL 35580

Dr. Bert Thompson To Join Faculty At Tennessee Bible College

Readers of WORDS OF TRUTH will be interested to learn of a recent announcement concerning Dr. Bert Thompson, one of our staff writers. Some of our readers are already familiar with the work of Tennessee Bible College in Cookeville, Tennessee. Tennessee Bible College, a work under the eldership of the Northwest church of Christ in Cookeville, will begin its first full-time year of operation this coming



DR. BERT THOMPSON

September as the brotherhood's newest preacher/teacher training school. Dr. Malcolm Hill will serve as the College's president, Dr. Thomas B. Warren will serve as the executive vice-president and dean of the graduate school, Dr. Roy Deaver will serve as vice-president, and Lindsey Warren will serve as dean of the undergraduate school. The College will be offering the B.A. degree initially, and eventually the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Christian Apologetics.

Dr. Thompson, who holds the earned Ph.D. degree in food microbiology, has been employed for the past 4½ years as a professor in the Department of Veterinary Public Health, College of Veterinary Medicine, Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. In addition, he has taught Christian Apologetics and Christian Evidences in the School of World Evangelism operated by the A&M Church of Christ in College Station. He has also been actively engaged in presenting seminars entitled SCIENCE AND NATURE: TWO VOTES FOR GOD (dealing with the creation/evolution controversy) as a part of the Institute for the Advancement of Christian Theism (a work of the Brownsville Road Church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee, with Dr. Thomas B. Warren serving as Director of the Institute).

Effective August 17, 1979 Dr. Thompson has resigned his professorship at Texas A & M University and he and his family will be moving to Cookeville, Tennessee to join the faculty at Tennessee Bible College. Dr. Thompson, who will be the only faculty member with graduate level training in the sciences, will be teaching in the areas of science and the

Scripture as well as the philosophy of science. It is felt that his expertise in these areas will successfully complement the expertise of the Bible faculty, and will allow the College to better train preachers and teachers to meet current atheistic, evolutionary thought.

Dr. Thompson, who will serve on both the graduate and undergraduate faculties, will also serve as Associate Director of the Institute for the Advancement of Christian Theism, under Dr. Warren. The work of the Institute will be under the auspices of Tennessee Bible College effective September 1, 1979.

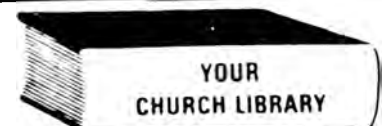
Tennessee Bible College wishes to announce with pleasure the association of Dr. Thompson with its faculty, and wishes to announce to friends of the Thompson family and the brotherhood the forthcoming move of the Thompsons to Cookeville. The Thompsons may be reached until August 17 at: 1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840. After August 17 they may be reached at the College address: Box 532, Cookeville, Tennessee 38501.

The Gift Of The Holy Ghost In Acts 5:32

Continued from page 2

not make clear what it means to receive the Holy Spirit. It seems to this writer that these references to receiving the Holy Spirit simply must be understood in the light of what we know from other passages it meant to receive the Holy Spirit during the time the New Testament was being written.

Our final article in this series on the Holy Spirit will be on the intercession of the Spirit mentioned in Romans 8:26.



CHECK US OUT.
YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID!

A Review Of The Teaching of John Clayton

(No. 7)

Continued from page 1

and (4) personal correspondence between myself, other brethren, and brother Clayton over the past few years. Since brother Jackson has already examined most of the written materials, my part in this series of articles will deal mainly with the audio cassettes; written materials will be used to show contradictions and compromises between what is written and oftentimes what is said. I strongly urge those who are interested in this matter, before you stand up to defend or oppose brother Clayton and his works or teachings, to listen to his audio cassette tapes, read his book, *The Source*, and examine his monthly bulletin. A man's written or spoken lessons, as

always, will tell the ultimate story of his beliefs and leanings—and this is certainly the case with brother Clayton. After all is said and done, the entire case will stand or fall based upon the documentation presented in these articles.

One last thing needs to be mentioned as this first article is brought to a close. Brother Clayton has often remarked that his critics have no ground to stand on, since not one of them has ever attended one of his seminars. He seems to feel that unless a man has attended one of the *Does God Exist?* seminars, there is no ground for objective criticism. To that I would make the following observations: (1) *I have* attended

one of brother Clayton's seminars, (I heard brother Clayton in October, 1977 at the Water-view church of Christ in Richardson, Texas), and; (2) It matters comparatively little whether or not the seminars have ever been attended, since so many writings, cassettes, video tapes, etc., are currently available which were written/produced by John Clayton. Brother Clayton's works are readily available for a careful perusal by any interested party, and the works speak for themselves, independent of the seminars. With these things noted, we now begin the task before us. (To be continued)—1004 Hereford, College Station, Tx. 77840.

Do My Prophets No Harm

Continued from page 2

teacher who is correctly telling you God's will and then try to "run him off," you are in reality rejecting God and fighting against Him. To reject the sayings of Christ is to reject Christ (John 12:48). To receive Christ's messenger is to receive the Son and Father. Similarly, to reject those same messengers is to reject Christ and His Father (John 13:20). The very truth you rejected will judge you in the last day.

God will punish a people that persecute his prophets. Our Lord said, "Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell? Therefore behold I send unto you prophets...and some of them shall ye kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous..." (Matt. 23:33-35.) When you attack or in any way hurt God's faithful prophets...his preachers...you join the ranks of the unholy throng that began with murderous Cain. Your punishment will be the same as theirs. How shall you escape the judgment of hell?

Why do church members hate and despise the preacher that they have employed to teach them God's word? This is one of the strangest and most paradoxical situations; people wanting a preacher, then turning on him as an enemy.

Some dislike a preacher because he preached against their sins. Rather than repent, pride leads them to get rid of the meddling preacher. Perhaps the preacher perceived their hidden evil motives or ambitions and they seek to remove him before they are exposed. The preacher may have dislodged them from an unlawful seat of power in the church. Or maybe he refused to back their pet plan or personal desires. It could have been that he would not be a part of their clique, choosing rather to serve and cooperate with all the brethren. All of these reasons are commonly seen when carnal brethren turn on a faithful minister.

Oddly enough, some people seem to hate and despise God's evangelists. Perhaps that same childish spirit that makes some school children hate and despise their teachers who are trying to do them good, motivates some carnal minded members of the church to have these hostile feelings toward preachers. With such a carnal mind, such brethren can never be acceptable to God (Rom. 8:6-8).

A preacher is no more effective than his reputation in the community. A man's reputation is a fragile thing, easily marred and broken. Satan, understanding this, looks for willing helpers to discredit and destroy God's men. It seems he has little trouble finding ready volunteers even inside the Lord's camp.

No wonder so few young men are willing to devote their lives to full-time work for God. They have seen the abuse that faithful servants of God have suffered from evil brethren and they do not want to subject themselves and their families to it. So also many good

men have given up their work for God because of such undeserved abuse. Put yourself in their shoes. Can you blame them?

How can we help in this matter? (1) "Know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and esteem them exceedingly highly in love for their work's sake" (I Thess. 5:12-13). Love and respect God's teachers who serve faithfully. (2) Teach your children love and respect for ministers of the gospel. (3) Never discuss the faults and failures of preaching brethren before your youngsters, or before sinners in the world. (4) Open your home to God's servants, get to know them personally, let them help you and yours by their knowledge and godly lives. (5) Do not allow yourself to fall into the habit of criticizing every sermon and every move preachers and their families make...especially in front of your children. (6) Be a friend and supporter of good preachers when other disparage or attack them. Preachers need a friend too. Remember the golden rule (Matt. 7:12). (7)

Remember that a preacher who is not run out can be starved out. He may be unable to meet his financial responsibilities and this will make him vulnerable to his enemies. See that your preacher is well-supported financially. (8) When a sermon cuts and burns you, do not strike out at the preacher. "Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves" (II Cor. 13:5). Be like those on Pentecost, ask what you need to do to be right with God. (9) Sure, some preachers go bad, deceive and take advantage of brethren. But do not let that occasional rascal poison you against all preachers.

I do not argue for "ministerial immunity" for preachers. I do plead for fairness and equity, for consideration and kindness; that we treat preachers as we want to be treated (Matt. 7:12). Is this too much? Let us love the brotherhood, including God's peacher servants, and may we never do them harm.—Rt. 22, Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, Tn 37921

Be Ye Doers Of The Word!

"But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22).

The doer is the person who accomplishes things. We need thinkers, planners and designers, for without such we would be in confusion, turmoil, disarray and get nothing done. But just thinking about something doesn't get the task done. And the best of plans are ineffective until put into use.

It is easier to hear a sermon than to preach it; and it is easier to preach a sermon than to practice it. Because this is true, there are far more sermons preached and heard than practiced. It is possible for people to attend worship services regularly and listen attentively to the lesson delivered, drinking in every word spoken, and yet be profited none; because they don't become doers of the word.

They may approve what is preached, commend the lesson heartily, and thrill at the thought of how wonderful it would be if that sermon were put into practice, and the good things taught were done. In the course of the lesson

many may think, "That's right: I could do that and I should do that, and I intend to do it." But they do not do it: they go away and soon forget it. Such action is called procrastination, or putting it off. With the good intention of doing better later, many of us never do so well as we should.

It may be that we apply the lesson to others, and think, "Well, they are not doing anything about it either. They are members of the church, too, and they heard what I heard." So we attempt to excuse ourselves for not doing what we know we should because of the inactivity of others. And these "others" may be thinking the same way about us. Thus we tend to stand in each other's light, and to hold each other back. Where such conditions exist, we have a situation of people "measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, and are not wise" (II Cor. 10:12). Together they may hurt and hinder the very cause which they claim to love most.

One is to be commended for his interest in hearing and studying the Word of God, else he could never know it (II Tim. 2:15), nor believe it (Rom. 10:17). If he is not a doer of the word, he deceives himself.

"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25). —P. O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tn. 38464.



W. C. QUILLEN



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble king, but I speak forth
the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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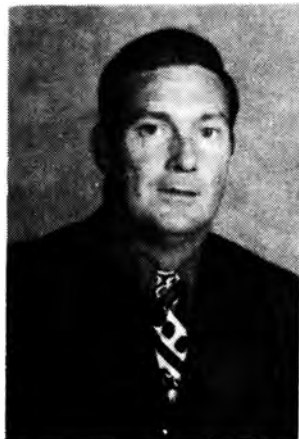
NUMBER 26

Preach The Word

(No. 2)

When I was a child growing up in the forties and fifties I always heard biblical preaching each Lord's day, and when there was a gospel meeting we would always hear book, chapter and verse preaching. There was never any doubt as to what the preacher believed concerning the word of God; for the Bible was always proclaimed. But today my heart is saddened because I have heard what was supposed to be gospel preaching that which could be spoken in any civic club in town with very little scripture used at all. In many pulpits today theologians are being quoted more often than Peter and Paul. We are becoming like the people of old when it was said of them. "That we also may be like all the nations. . ." (I Samuel 8:20). We are becoming like the religionists of today without any real true biblical preaching. The people mentioned earlier in I Samuel did not reject Samuel, they rejected God, and so are we when we cease preaching the word of God.

We have become like our religious neighbors to the extent that the statement is made that we believe in "churchianity" instead of Christianity. What this means is don't preach the church. It is impossible to preach Christ fully without preaching the church; because the church is the body of Christ, and Christ is head of the church (I Corinthians 12:12-14; Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:16, 5:22-25; Colossians 1:18). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, loved the church enough that he gave himself for it, and he shed his precious blood that the church could be purchased (Ephesians 5:25; Acts 20:28). Readers, we don't need less preaching on the subject of the church, but



Jerry T. Bramlett

we need much, much more concerning the church that we may know beyond any shadow of a doubt that we are in the one body that Christ will save (Ephesians 5:23).

There are some preachers today who ridicule and mock other preachers for preaching the plan of salvation. We have some who do not believe that we should preach the plan of salvation of faith, repentance, confession, and baptism, but just leave the plan alone and preach the man. It is impossible to preach the man, Jesus Christ, without preaching the plan; because Jesus himself taught faith (John 8:24), repentance (Luke 13:3, 5), confession (Matthew 10:32-33), and baptism (Mark 16:16). Philip preached Jesus to the eunuch and he must have preached baptism since "the eunuch said, see here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36). How could the eunuch know he should be baptized if Philip had not preached baptism when he preached Jesus? In the conversion of the eunuch, we see his faith when he confessed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and was baptized. Yet preachers reject this plan and won't preach it. Preacher brethren, if this preaching Jesus was good enough for Philip to preach the plan, how can we refuse to do it?


It is now believed by some that the Lord's church is not *walking* fully after the New Testament. I now quote from a brother-hood paper: "I am convinced that we are walking *closer* to the New Testament pattern than anyone else." The writer uses the term "closer," and my friends, if that is true, we are not fully walking in the truth but only closer to the New Testament. This quote would deny the prophecy of Daniel when he said, ". . .but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:44). If we are only closer, then the kingdom has not been set up or we are not going by the seed which is "The word of God" (Luke 8:11). I maintain that the kingdom has been set up, that we are going by the seed, the word of God, and those who obey and live by the gospel can be saved. Closeness may count in horseshoes, but not in religion. In Mark

12:34, there was a scribe who was near the kingdom, but being near did not make him in the kingdom. Therefore, he was lost, being on the outside. The Lord's church has been built, and one can become a member of it by believing, repenting, confessing and being baptized. One can worship according to the divine pattern by having teaching from God's Word, by partaking of the Lord's Supper, by giving as prospered, by praying and by singing without the accompaniment of an instrument of music. One can be "faithful unto death," and the Lord will "give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). This is not near it, but is it.

People today are saying, "I wish you would preach like Jesus." This statement is intended to mean preach a positive gospel and never preach about the negative. In many places the members are being soothed and satisfied as they never hear subjects such as giving, attendance, adultery, sin or immodesty. In Matthew chapter twenty-three Jesus used the following statement seven times: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." If people want preachers to preach like Jesus, they can expect strong rebuke. The illustration above shows that Jesus did preach to the needs of the people and not only did he preach things of a positive nature but also things of a negative nature. "Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. See I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms to *root out*, and to *pull down*, and to *destroy*, and to *throw down*, to build and plant" (Jeremiah 1:9-10). The instruction here is much more negative than positive. It is time NOW to preach what God wants rather than man. "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Timothy 4:2).

Many preachers today are advocating that elders do not have any authority. This is one form of liberalism; to break down in the Lord's church any form of restraint or discipline. If we

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FROM
THE EDITOR

The Intercession Of The Spirit

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Romans 8:26, 27).



BOBBY DUNCAN

This passage is urged in support of a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and is interpreted to mean that the unutterable desires or groanings of the Christian are by the Holy Spirit received and translated into language the Father can understand, and then presented to him. While we freely confess that this is a difficult passage, we do not believe the foregoing to be an accurate exposition. The reasons are as follows: (1) This exposition is inconsistent with what we know of the work of the Holy Spirit in connection with the scheme of redemption, i.e., revealing the mind of God to man. Instead of the Spirit's revealing the mind of God to man, this interpretation of the passage has the Spirit revealing the mind of man to God. (2) It suggests an inability or weakness on the part of the Father to understand our prayers without the Holy Spirit's translating them. How can this be reconciled with such statements as the one recorded in Matthew 6:8? "Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." (3) It is most assuredly inconsistent with the view that this is a work accomplished by the personal indwelling of the Spirit, and that such is a special benefit peculiar to Christianity and not enjoyed by the faithful in previous dispensations. If this is accomplished through the personal indwelling of the Spirit, and if the personal indwelling of the Spirit is a blessing peculiar to the Christian age, then how could Abraham, or Elijah, or any of the Old Testament characters pray, with no Holy Spirit to intercede for them? We believe these three things are enough to cause serious doubt about the view that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers, translates them into acceptable language, and then presents them to the Father.

Then what is the meaning of the passage? It is the conviction of this writer that the passage refers to the fact that during the miraculous age Christians were inspired in their praying, particularly those who led the prayers in the public assemblies. Before this idea is rejected outright, please give consideration to the following facts: In the first place, we know that there was such a thing during the miraculous age as inspired praying. In I Corinthians 14:14 Paul spoke of praying in an unknown tongue. But the only way one could pray in an unknown tongue would be to pray by inspiration. If one prayed by inspiration in an unknown tongue, one might also pray by inspiration in such a way as to be understood. This is precisely what is meant by the very next statement in the chapter: "What is it

then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." "With the spirit" in this passage means by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The next verse will bear out this fact. "Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" This is another clear reference to praying in an unknown tongue, and it is referred to as blessing "with the spirit." The preceding verse makes it plain that it is not enough to pray by inspiration ("with the spirit"), but the public prayers must also be uttered in a language that can be apprehended by those in the assembly ("with the understanding"). Ephesians 6:18 mentions praying "in the Spirit," and Jude 20 refers to "praying in the Holy Ghost." Incidentally, Thayer says to be *en pneumati* 'in the Spirit' means "to be in the power of, be actuated by, inspired by, the Holy Spirit." He then cites Romans 8:9 as an example of this usage (*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Page 211). Could it just be that the prince of lexicographers is correct in his observations on this verse? This is in the same chapter with the passage we are discussing in this article.

In the second place, such an understanding of this passage would be in harmony with what we know about the work of the Holy Spirit in connection with the scheme of redemption. It is a matter that has to do with confirmation and revelation of the will of God. Have we not often labored the point that miraculous endowments of the Holy Spirit did for Christians during that age what the written word of God does for us today? How could a man lead a public prayer who had never seen a copy of the New Testament? Would you call on a man to lead prayer in a public assembly who had never seen a copy of the New Testament? But during the first century there were inspired men, whereas today we have an inspired book, the Bible, to enable us to know how to pray. Those people in the early days of Christianity literally did not know how to pray, for it had not been recorded in a book for them to learn. Inspiration directed their praying just as it directed their preaching.

It may be objected that the verses under consideration simply do not say that. The truth is, whatever the verses say, they do not say it simply; the language is somewhat obscure, and even the translators of the King James Version were not absolutely sure about the translation, as is evidenced by the marginal note in verse 27. And after all, do you really believe the Holy Spirit speaks to the Father "with groanings which cannot be uttered"? You see, it is not a simple passage.

Please read the following paraphrase of Romans 8:26, 27: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities—the weakness of having longings which we know not how to express to God in prayer. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us. And the Holy Spirit who searches the hearts knows what the longings of the spirit of man are, so that he is able to give us the words whereby to express these longings in a manner pleasing to God." Please be assured that we are not trying to prove a

Continued on page 3

The Restoration Concept Is Valid

In the April, 1979 issue of *Integrity*, pages 157-158, brother C.W. Zenor had an article on "The Restoration Concept." He listed eight reasons why the Restoration Concept is invalid among churches of Christ.

First, he says, "No New Testament passage makes future generations responsible for going back to the New Testament or the Bible by way of some restoration movement. There is no scriptural authorization for the true church to be restored by some kind of sacred blueprint." Brother Zenor apparently is looking for a specific statement for authorization. He leaves the impression that since the Bible does not say "restore the New Testament church," or "The scriptures are our blueprint for restoration," our pleas is invalid. Does the New Testament make future generations responsible for going back to the New Testament to teach Jesus Christ? Is it not a blueprint for our correct knowledge of the Savior and how he saves us? If religious people are teaching something contrary to what the Bible teaches about Jesus, would it need correcting or should we add the error to the Bible? Could we teach Jesus was a homosexual? Could we teach he worshiped Satan? If we taught these errors, would someone be wrong in trying to restore the original concept of Jesus as found in the New Testament?

Second, our brother states, "It ignores the fact that since its inception, the church has never ceased to exist." True, it never has ceased to exist in the scriptures and perhaps historically. However, if men no longer teach what God says men must do and how to become children of God, you do not have a valid Christian nor the church of Christ.

Third, he claims the Restoration Concept is "invalid because even if full restoration could be accomplished, it would not be desirable. It would be undesirable because it would produce an

Continued on page 4



RAY HAWK

A Review Of The Teachings Of John Clayton

(No. 8)

As we continue this review of the teachings of John Clayton, I think it important that the reader understand how this inquiry came about. Early in 1977 I became acquainted with the teachings of brother John Clayton. As my knowledge of his program and teachings grew, I became considerably distressed at what I saw being taught. On July 16, 1977 I penned a letter to the elders of the Dommoyer Avenue



BERT THOMPSON

Church of Christ in South, Bend, Indiana, who sponsor the "Does God Exist" program. My 4-page, single-spaced letter to them asked them to respond to teachings of brother Clayton which were in opposition to biblical teachings, and which are being mailed out under the church letterhead. Their response to me was dated August 3, 1977, and stated simply (in two very short paragraphs, one being only one sentence long) that I would have to contact brother Clayton if I had any questions regarding this matter. I penned another letter to the elders, stating that I felt it incomprehensible that elders could not speak for what was being taught under their oversight, but I would, nevertheless, write brother Clayton. On August 5, 1977 I wrote brother Clayton a one-page, single-spaced letter. Appended to that letter were two pages of 39 questions which I asked brother Clayton to answer, so that we could straighten out what his elders termed "misunderstandings." I felt that if there were truly some misunderstandings, certainly by his answering my questions we could straighten out the matter in the easiest and quickest possible manner. Listed below are the 39 questions I asked brother Clayton to answer.

1. Is the Bible inspired (verbal, plenary inspiration) by God?
2. Are the first eleven chapters of Genesis historical (i.e.: not "allegorical" or "mythical")?
3. Is the flood discussed in Genesis 6, 7, & 8 global (universal)?
4. Is Exodus 20:11 true and literal?
5. Do atheistic (organic) evolution and the Bible contradict each other?
6. Is theistic evolution acceptable in your opinion?
7. Was there a creation of life forms prior to the week of creation discussed in Genesis 1:2ff?
8. Are the days mentioned in Genesis 1 literal, 24-hour days?
9. Is the geological timetable true?
10. Did you make the following statement on page 131 of your book, THE SOURCE: "These people (theistic evolutionists—BT) do have one very excellent point, and that is that this whole subject is totally irrelevant to the question of the existence of God."?
11. Do you believe the statement in question 10 above to be true?
12. Did you make the following statement on page 130 of your book, THE SOURCE: "To suggest that evolution is false, devious, and opposed to the Bible is equally extreme."?
13. Do you believe the statement in question 12 above to be true?
14. Does the word "evolution" in statement 12 above mean the General Theory of Evolution?
15. Are you a theistic evolutionist?
16. Are you a progressive creationist?
17. Did you make the following statement on page 131-132 of your book THE SOURCE: "Even if you did evolve from totally non-living inanimate matter, the question of God's existence would not be affected in the slightest."?
18. Do you believe the statement in question 17

above to be true?

19. Did you make the following statement on page 130 of your book, THE SOURCE: "If we look carefully at the issues about which we are talking, however, we can find that evolution and the Bible show amazing agreement on almost all issues, and that one is not mutually exclusive of the other."?

20. Do you believe the statement in question 19 above to be true?

21. Does the word "evolution" in the statement in question 19 above refer to the General Theory of Evolution?

22. Does the word "evolution" in the statement in question 19 above refer to the Special Theory of Evolution?

23. Do you believe the earth is relatively young (i.e.: less than 10,000 years old)?

24. Do you believe the earth to be quite old (i.e.: millions or billion of years old) (NOTE: This question does not have reference to the "age-appearance" concept. It is asking a question about the literal age of the earth)?

25. Did you make the following statement in your "Does God Exist?" series teacher's manual: "If dinosaurs existed 200 million years before Adam and Eve it does not present any problem to a literal understanding of the Genesis account."?

26. Do you believe the statement in question 25 above to be true?

27. Is the geological timetable based on "circular reasoning"?

28. Are dating methods (i.e. Carbon-14, potassium-argon, etc.) based on assumptions?

29. Were the footprints of the man (which were found in the same Cretaceous stratum not far from the dinosaur footprints in the Paluxy River bed near Glen Rose, Texas) authentic?

30. Were the dinosaur footprints (mentioned in question 29 above) authentic?

31. Mr. William J. Meister, Sr., on June 1, 1968, at Antelope Springs, Utah, discovered a trilobite fossil imbedded in the sandalprint fossil of a man. Is the sandalprint of the man authentic?

32. Is the trilobite fossil (mentioned in question 31 above) authentic?

34. Do you feel that those of us in the brotherhood who are questioning your teachings are "persecuting you"?

35. Are you disillusioned with the church of Christ today?

36. Is the church of Christ the one true church that Christ established and purchased with His blood?

37. Do you feel that some of us in the brotherhood have, for some reason, a personal vendetta against

you?

38. If you knew (or felt) that I was teaching false doctrine, would you make some effort to see to it that I was better taught the truth and that my error was corrected?

39. Will you extend fellowship to people from denominations?

On August 12, 1977 I received a letter from brother Clayton, in response to my letter of August 6. The letter read, in part:

"I am sure that a man of your intelligence and training recognizes that it is impossible to give a YES or NO answer to all question. I could challenge you to answer YES or NO to the following questions:

- (1) Have you quit raping little girls?
- (2) Have you stopped beating your wife?
- (3) Etc.?

I am sure you realize that if you answer either way, you condemn yourself on questions such as these. Many of these questions that you asked in your 40-question quiz were of the same nature."

The reader can judge for himself if the questions listed above are of the nature that brother Clayton accuses them of being. Is asking the question "Is the Bible inspired (verbal, plenary inspiration) by God" analogous to asking "Have you quit raping little girls"? Is asking the question "Is Exodus 20:11 true and literal?" analogous to asking "Have you stopped beating your wife"? **YOU BE THE JUDGE!!** But let this be said in all fairness to this listing of questions which was sent to brother Clayton. Upon forming this list of questions, I presented the list of questions to be eight elders of the A&M church of Christ in College Station, Texas where I worship and work. None of those men found any of the questions to be of the nature brother Clayton accused them of being. I further shared the list with three more Christian gentlemen: Dr. Russell Artist of Nashville, Tennessee, Jon Gary Williams of Lavergne, Tennessee, and Wayne Jackson of Stockton, California. None of those men found the questions to be nebulous or indefinite. It appears that brother Clayton would not (or could not) answer the questions for fear of what the answers — written down on paper for all to see—would be!! Else why were no responses to these straightforward questions forthcoming? Surely anyone who deals with Christian Evidences as much as brother Clayton does could answer such questions. The question is: Why didn't he????

In our next installment, we shall examine possible answers to this question, and brother Clayton's stance on these and other issues.—1004 Hereford College Station, Texas 77840

The Intercession Of The Spirit

Continued from page 2

position by a paraphrase we have made ourselves. But look at these verses as they are quoted from the King James Version in the beginning of this article, and see how we arrived at this paraphrase. Let the phrase "with groanings which cannot be uttered" describe "our infirmities." That makes more sense than having the Holy Spirit "groaning." In verse 27 let "he that searcheth the hearts" refer to the Holy Spirit, and let "Spirit" refer to the spirit of man. Then substitute the marginal reading, "that" for "because," and the above paraphrase becomes at least possible.

We say again that our own paraphrase certainly does not prove the validity of our argument. It really does nothing more than present our view of what the passage is saying. It has the advantage, however, of being in perfect harmony with what we believe the Bible teaches throughout.

This is the last in our series of articles on the Holy Spirit. We do not anticipate anything close to one hundred per cent agreement of brethren with all the things we have said in the articles. Perhaps we have stimulated some thinking that will result in further study on the part of some. If so, we have accomplished that much good.

Please note this closing statement: The things we have discussed in the last four articles in this series are things that are profitable and should be of interest to Christians. All who are sincere desire fuller and deeper understandings in these areas, as well as in all areas of revealed truth. But we may disagree over these matters, and still work together in peace and harmony; our view of these matters does not affect our obedience to God, so long as we are committed to the proposition that the written word is God's one and only means of speaking to us.

Preach The Word

can get the doctrine over that elders have no authority, then we can do what we want to do when we want to do it and preach any and everything that we want to preach. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made your overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof..." (I Peter

5:2). Elders have authority to feed, which means that the congregation that they are over is their responsibility, to see that they are fed according to God's divine truth. One qualification of an elder is: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9). Elders are to feed, exhort, convince, and take the oversight thereof. members have an obligation to the elders "to

know them, esteem them, honour and obey the elders" (I Thessalonians 5:12-13; I Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:17).

I end this article by giving you my attitude in writing and in preaching. "Through thy precepts I get understanding: Therefore, I hate every false way. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way" (Psalms 119:104, 128).— P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580.

The Restoration Concept Is Valid

anachronism—a first-century church in a twentieth-century world." To this charge I might ask, "Is Christ an anachronism—a first-century Savior in a twentieth-century world"? Our brother, in actuality, is saying the message of God for the first-century has no validity for us today. This is not true.

Fourth, brother Zenor claims the Restoration Concept is "invalid because no two of the twenty-five different groups in the Church of Christ in the American Restoration Movement have agreed upon what should be restored.... Surely no one wants to restore any specific one of these defective religious bodies in toto." The Restoration Concept is not to restore errors made by first-century saints or churches, but to restore righteousness, mercy, and faith.

Fifth, our brother says the concept is "invalid because it places an inordinate emphasis upon external elements of the ancient church." He suggests "internal marks more accurately identify the church which manifests the authentic spirit of Christ...." The Bible places an emphasis on doctrine and keeping oneself (I Tim. 4:16). We must glorify God in the name Christian, but we must live like saints (I Pet. 4:16; Rom. 12:1, 2). Actually, we do not emphasize the external to the exclusion of the internal. But, if we did, it would not negate the importance of obedience in these matters. Could I call Jesus by the name Satan and continue to worship through him correctly inwardly, if externals are not important? Have you ever heard the denominational jargon, "There's nothing in a name"? This is brother Zenor's bottom line.

Sixth, brother Zenor comments that the concept is "invalid because it enslaves its adherents." Yes, it enslaves us, not to "a paralyzing legalism" or "a legal handbook" but to Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:16-18.) Is the New Testament a law in any form? If not, why must I believe? Why repent? Why is it wrong to commit fornication? Why is it sinful for a man to have twenty wives at the same time? Why is it wrong to sleep with a different woman each night? Why is it wrong to have sex with an animal? What tells me I can't do these things?

Seventh, our brother states the concept "is invalid because it enshrines arbitrarily selected scriptural elements as absolute essentials." If this negates the Restoration Concept, it would also invalidate the Lord's word and church. Brother Zenor seems to say that everyone has a right to do his own thing and is only invalidated when he says one *must* do something. I Corinthians shows that the church was involved in wrong action and doctrine and Paul told them *how* to correct it. If we had the same problems, wouldn't the same solutions apply? If not, why not? When Judaizing Christians began teaching circumcision was essential to salvation (Acts 15:1), did that make what was essential wrong too? Was the church Paul was a member of invalid?

Eighth, our brother says the concept is "invalid because there is not generally acceptable way in which biblical information can be applied to present day situations." I deny that the Restoration Movement is "the most divided religious movement in the history of Christianity." I would like to know what the twenty-five divisions are. The Corinthian church of God was in the process of dividing into four

groups. Would our brothers say all four would be correct? One? Did this proposed division invalidate Paul's call for unity (I Cor. 1:10-13)? Our brother seems to think the division would be "biblical information" that could "be applied to present day situation," but the plea for unity on Paul's part was not. By what standard does brother Zenor say the Restoration Concept is invalid and his article is valid? He is saying that no one among us knows the "generally accepted way in which biblical

information can be applied to present day situations" except him! If he doesn't have it, how does he know that one of us doesn't?

Every reason raised by brother Zenor against the Restoration Concept would also invalidate the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" found in the New Testament (Eph. 4:3). Frankly, I'll stick with the Bible.—1461 East Chester Street, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

Be Thankful



DALTON KEY

Matthew Henry, the well-know Bible commentator, was a busy, cheerful man. Once, when he discovered someone had stolen his purse, he turned to his diary and entered this unique observation: "Let me be thankful first, because he never robbed me before: second, because although he took my purse he did not take my life: third, because although he took all I possessed, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed." How many of us would have been as thankful in such a situation?

A radiant heart of thanksgiving is a blessing both to the one reflecting it and to those touched by it.

Conversely, nothing is more repugnant to many than a selfish spirit of ingratitude. No one likes a grouch, not even the grouch himself.

Cicero, the renowned orator of ancient Rome, said, "A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all other virtues." Listen to the inspired apostle Paul: "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (I Thessalonians 5:18). Again, he admonishes, "In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6).

What a pity to see only the dark side of sorrows and suffering. As Milton, in substance, said, "Every cloud has a silver lining." We should not, we must not waste our precious time moping over our troubles; we must rise up and rejoice because of our abundant blessings!

Let us "praise the bridge that carried us over." Let us be ever thankful to God, especially, for the good things he has done and continues to do in our behalf.—Box 126, Aurora, Mo. 65605

What Price Apathy?

DAVID M. ERFMAN

In our world today, many exhibit the attitude of "let someone else do it." Their thinking is that "everything will work out for the best," but will it? It's true that God's word says that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord (Rom. 8:28), but do we love the Lord truly if we exhibit that terrible trait of apathy.

Webster defines apathy as: "without emotion, lack of interest, listless condition, and indifference." This definition fits some of our congregations and individual Christians just as it was applied to the church of Christ as Laodicea which made God sick to his stomach. We must not, however, confuse the use of various promotional gimmicks now being advocated in some places with anti-apathy. Many, not all, are almost worse than apathy.

When Christians refuse to recognize and preach

against such things as social drinking, when they sit through services in a bored state, sometimes sleeping, and when they refuse to attend all of the services of the church, they are apathetic!

What can we do about apathy? The admonition to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season" (II Tim. 4:2) would go a long way to combat apathy. The admonition to "Study to shew thyself approved" (II Tim 2:15) would go a long way toward combating apathy. The command to "withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly" (II Thes. 3:6) would go a long way to combat apathy.

Let us not be deceived; it won't all work out unless we work at it. Let us put on the whole armor of God and fight with all our might the terrible enemy of APATHY.—130 Lina Dr., Prattville, Ala. 36067



Words of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26

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God Wants You To Hear His Gospel!

Because of sin — his own sin (Isa. 59:2), — man is lost!!! "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (I Jn. 5:19). Without the gospel, man remains lost, for the gospel is the "power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). Therefore, Paul wrote: "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost" (II Cor. 4:3). To man this may appear foolish; but "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21). The Holy Spirit says man is saved "by"—not "without"—the gospel (I Cor. 15:1-2). The morally upright Cornelius was directed to send for a preacher (the apostle Peter) "who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Act 11:13-14).



Flavil H. Nichols,
Associate Editor

The "gospel of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). The "gospel" is not a "dead letter," as some teach; rather, "the word of God is living and active..." (Heb. 4:12, ASV).

It is God's purpose and plan for "every creature" in "all the world" to hear preached the gospel of Christ. Jesus said, "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" (Mk. 16:15-16). "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; 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. Amen" (Matt. 28:18-20).

The "gospel" which BEGAN to be preached in Jerusalem (Acts 2), is for all men, for Jesus said this gospel "Should be preached in his name among all

nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Lk. 24:46-47).

"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). Therefore "faith" is absolutely essential to becoming a Christian; and "faith" is also essential to living the Christian life. However, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). One "hears" this gospel, either by READING the word of God, or by HEARING one who has studied it as he faithfully preaches this "gospel." This is how "faith" is produced in the human heart (Jn. 17:20-21; 20:30-31). Also, this is how "faith" in the human heart "grows." Paul wrote some: "Your faith growth exceedingly" (II Thess. 1:3).

The only way Christians now, as in the first century, can "continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42) is for them to *know* what the apostles taught! For this reason every Christian should be vitally interested in hearing every gospel sermon possible. This is why I urge each member to hear the radio broadcasts in his area. New converts can grow spiritually mature much more rapidly with the aid of gospel broadcasts, Bible classes, religious journals, etc., than they can without these aids. It

almost sounds like conceited bigotry for one to say he does not need Bible school, *Words of Truth*, or the radio sermons—especially when one is known to be a "babe" in Christ, or a weak, immature, stumbling Christian.

Perhaps a word of caution is in order however: Be sure the lesson you study is not a perversion of the "gospel" as it is set forth in the written word of God! (Gal. 1:6-9). Just as no food at all is better than eating poison, so no journal at all is better than one which serves spiritual "poison." And the more artfully the false doctrine is disguised as the truth, the more dangerous, it may be, and the more enticing it may appear. Read and heed II Jn. 9-11: "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: 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."

Attend the church of Christ where you can hear the gospel of Christ in its ancient simplicity, purity, and power.—1000 St. John Rd., Route 9, Elizabethtown, Ky 42701

The Old And New Law

ROGER E. DICKSON


The Bible contains 66 books, 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. The Bible contains two systems of written laws which God has given his people through history. The first written law, the Old Testament, was given to the Jews. The law is called the "law of Moses" (Neh. 8:1), the "law of God" (Neh. 8:18), the "law of the Lord" (Lk. 2:22-24), or simply "the law" (Rom. 3:9-19; 7:7 Jn. 1:17; 3:9-19). The second law, the New Testament of Christ, was brought into force when Christ died on the cross (Heb. 9:16, 17; Col. 2:14). God's people today are under this law which is referred to as the "law of the Spirit of life" (Rom. 8:2), the "new covenant" (Jer. 31:31; Lk. 22:20; I Cor. 11:25; II Cor. 3:6; Heb.

8:8; 9:15), the "perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25), the "law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2; I Cor. 9:2), or the gospel (Mk. 16:15; Rom. 1:16; 6:17).

The Old Testament law was given on Mt. Sinai (Neh. 9:13; Ex. 19:11, 18-20; Deut. 33:2). It was given through angels (Heb. 2:2; Acts 7:38, 53; Gal. 3:19). It was given by angels through Moses (Neh. 8:14; 9:14; Jn. 1:17; 7:19). The Old Testament law was given only to the Jews, the children of Israel (Deut. 4:1, 13; 5:1-3; Ex. 19:4-6; Neh. 8:1; Rom. 3:1, 2).

Harding Graduate School

Continued on page 4



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— Acts 26:25

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Nobody Thinks Anything About It Here

Recently a preacher from Sunny Florida was asked if church members in that area tend to have less conviction about modest apparel than in other sections of the country. His reply was: "In this area shorts and swimsuits are such common attire that nobody thinks anything about it."



BOBBY DUNCAN

Recently a lady from a northern state was visiting in Alabama and bemoaned the fact that Christians in Alabama frown upon mixed swimming. "In the north nobody thinks anything about it," she said.

Please let it be understood that this writer is not naive enough to think that all or nearly all people in Florida and in the northern states feel as these two examples. Nor is he naive enough to think people in Alabama are more concerned with modesty than those in other places. We appreciate our brethren in Florida and other states who stand firmly on the word of the Lord; and we realize there are still a number of preachers who are not ashamed or afraid to preach against immodest apparel. We realize further that some of the people in Alabama also seek to justify their own wearing of immodest apparel by saying, "Nobody thinks anything about it any more."

But when someone tries to justify the wearing of immodest apparel by saying that nobody thinks anything about it any more, we cannot help feeling highly insulted. In fact, we believe such a remark is intended as an insult. The implication of such a remark is this: "Most people are enlightened enough and little enough concerned with lewdness that they are not so much aware of exposed human bodies. And you wouldn't be either if you would get you mind out of the gutter and quit being so old fashioned." We believe this is exactly the kind of insult that is intended when someone says, "Nobody thinks anything about it."

While we feel stung by this kind of insult, this is not the most stinging insult involved in such a statement. The most stinging insult in such a statement is the insult to our intelligence. You see, it is an insult to the intelligence of a grown man to tell him that nobody thinks anything about immodesty if immodesty is widely practiced. If this were true, then the sensible thing would be for all of us to go completely naked all the time. This would clean up the thinking of the most vile, and would do away with lust and adultery completely. If that doesn't make sense, why doesn't it?

A lustful look on the part of David resulted in adultery and murder (II Samuel 11). Jesus recognized the danger of a lustful look (Matthew 5:28). Why do some try to pretend that no such thing exists today?

There are two things that contribute to widespread immodesty on the part of women and girls who are members of the church and who would not knowingly do anything that is wrong: (1) Women do not generally have the same awareness of the exposed bodies of men as men do the exposed bodies of women. The danger of a woman's lusting as the result

of seeing a man in shorts or swimsuit is usually not very great. For this reason it is difficult for them to understand the danger of men's lusting because of their being scantily clad. (2) Men often have not the courage to be honest with their wives and daughters about this matter. A wife will read this article or hear some preacher preach about immodesty and lust. She will ask her husband if the things said are true; and in many cases he will not have the courage to tell her that the preacher has told the truth.

We realize that every mention of this matter will cause some to accuse us of being overly conscious of the opposite sex. But we will not be intimidated by such accusations. We do not believe Paul was overly conscious of the opposite sex when he commanded women to adorn themselves in modest apparel (I Timothy 2:9).

Note To Trial Subscribers

A few weeks ago some three hundred plus of our present readers began receiving *WORDS OF TRUTH* on a free trial offer extended by the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper, Alabama. We hope these, as well as all others who read this weekly periodical, enjoy and profit by so doing.

In about one more month the free trial subscriptions will expire. We hope you like the paper so much that you will want to continue receiving it, and that you will renew your subscription right away. By acting at once, you will not miss a single issue. The price for one year's subscription is \$5.20.

Please include a note with your check stating that it is a renewal subscription.

We would like to think also that some of the preachers and elders who have been receiving the paper on a weekly basis will want to see it to that every family in the congregation receives it. If so, send us a mailing list, and tell us where to send the bill each month. We believe the paper will be worth far more to the church than the ten cents per family it will cost the church.

ATTEND
BIBLE STUDY
AND
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EVERY SUNDAY!

We Must Have Bible Authority

There has never been a time in our nation's history when respect for authority was more needed than it is today. Without respect for authority there is anarchy. Authority is basic to every activity of life. There must be a standard of authority to settle any disputed matter. For example, a man does not have the



RAY DUTTON

right to determine for himself how many pennies make a dollar or how many ounces make a pound. We must all accept the same standard or the result would only be confusion. The same thing is true in athletic contests. Football is played by a set of rules, and these rules constitute the standard of authority by which every play is judged. If both sides do not agree on the rules there is no way that an orderly game could be played.

In the same way, if men are ever going to unite in their religious beliefs and put a stop to the religious anarchy and confusion caused by a world divided into more than 300 so-called "Christian" denominations, there must be a common standard of authority accepted by all.

An acceptable standard of authority will never be found in such things as feelings, conscience, visions, formal creeds, or traditions. The prophet Jeremiah said that the "way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). Solomon pointed out how dangerous it is for a man to use his own judgment as his only guide for "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12). Rather, it is God who has ultimate authority over our lives. Solomon made this abundantly clear when he said, "fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13).

This authority has been given unto Christ. Je-

Continued on page 4

A Review Of The Teachings Of John Clayton

(No. 9)

Because brother Clayton could not, or would not, answer any questions (see the previous article), I set about trying to locate the answers in his writings, audio-tutorial tapes, workbooks, etc. In addition, in October, 1977 I travelled from College Station, Texas (my home) to Richardson, Texas (a suburb of Dallas) to hear brother Clayton's seminar on "Does God Exist?" This was approximately a 4-hour trip, one-way, but was the closest seminar which brother Clayton would be holding in our area.



BERT THOMPSON

Because I had to be back in College Station to teach my class on Christian Evidences at the A&M church of Christ on Sunday morning, I was unable to stay for brother Clayton's Sunday lectures on "Why I Left Atheism" and "God, Man & Caveman." I did, however, secure tapes of the 2 lectures, and a booklet brother Clayton has authored entitled "Why I Left Atheism" which is a script form of the sermon. Upon arriving at the seminar, I made myself known to brother Clayton. We spoke briefly and cordially, and I listened to his presentations.

Upon returning home, I received a short note from brother Clayton, thanking me for my attendance at the seminar. I responded with a note back to him on October 26, 1977 (his note to me was dated October 24). This began what was to be a lengthy series of correspondence between brother Clayton and me. During that correspondence, we tried to straighten out our differences, one-by-one. However, on May 17, 1978 brother Clayton penned his last letter to me, stating that until such time as I was ready to come with the "attitude of learning and sharing" he saw little use in our correspondence continuing. Since that time, though each has been aware of the ongoing work of the other, we have not corresponded regarding the issues.

There are a good number of Christians among us who would like to know just exactly what John Clayton does teach! Let me provide the following examples:

(1) In the March, 1979 issue of *Rocky Mountain Christian* (page 3) brother Clayton stated: "We are accused of not believing the flood is global. This is in fact a deliberate falsehood. We have stated repeatedly that it is our opinion, based upon Biblical and scientific evidence, that the flood was global....the statement that we do not believe in a global flood is simply not true." Yet in brother Clayton's audio-tutorial tape entitled, *Questions and Answers*, Number 1, he blatantly makes the following statements: "...There is no way geologically of supporting the idea that there was a world-wide flood....On the North American continent, for example, there is no place, no real conclusive evidence that there has ever been a flood over this continent....You cannot go to geology and find evidence to support the idea of a world-wide flood....The Bible does not maintain positively that this was a world-wide flood....It seems to me plausible that possibly the flood story was confined to the known earth at that time." Now let you, the reader, decide: Does John Clayton believe in a global, universal flood, or not? Your guess is as good as mine!

(2) Also in the March, 1979 issue of *Rocky Mountain Christian* (page 3) brother Clayton wrote: "I have been accused of believing that the Earth is 6 billion years old. What I have pointed out is that the Bible does not give the age of the Earth. I have taken the world view that espouses a nonworld time reference...." In a letter to Dr. Basil Overton, distinguished Editor of *The World Evangelist* (dated, September 18, 1978), brother Clayton stated

verbatim: "As a matter of fact, I have never maintained that the Earth is of great antiquity." Now let us hear from brother Clayton as he speaks on his audio-tutorial tape, *Questions and Answer*, Number 1: "It is my personal conviction that probably the earth is very, very old—much, much older than the 6, or 7, or 8, or 10,000 years that some people would like to attribute to it." Hear brother Clayton once again in his book, *THE SOURCE*, as he discusses astronomic dating procedures: "Thus it is possible to calculate how long the Sun has been involved in its present kind of thermonuclear reaction to arrive at the amount of fuel it now has left. This figure turns out to be just over 4.5 billion years—another indication of the age of our system" (page 124). Again, writing in his book, *THE SOURCE* brother Clayton comments: "This is the main method (stromatalite growth patterns—BT) used in establishing the idea that life began on the Earth some 1.3 billion years ago....Probably the most convincing argument for dating methods is that they do work" (pp 125-6). Now perhaps you, the reader, can decide. Which statement are we to believe? Does John Clayton advocate an ancient earth or doesn't he? It appears that even he doesn't know for sure!

(3) What does brother Clayton believe concerning the Bible's inspiration? In his book, *THE SOURCE*, he goes to great lengths (using the fields of medicine, oceanography, astronomy, etc.) to prove the Bible's inspiration. One of his cassette tapes is even entitled *Evidences of the Bible's Inspiration*. In *The Source*, he states: "If I could prove conclusively to you that the Bible is inspired by a knowledge or a power vastly superior to man, you would have to admit that some force or being did the inspiring....We can see clear evidence that the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts from which our Bible has come were

inspired" (p. 89). In a personal letter to me, dated November 23, 1977, brother Clayton remarked: "I also agree that in a general sense our present-day Bibles are close enough to the original that we don't have any worry about it..." (p. 2). I had just written (on November 17, 1977) to brother Clayton an exhaustive treatment on verbal, plenary inspiration. He remarked in his November 23 letter regarding that: "Your discussion of the inspiration of the Bible also leaves very little in it that I disagree with" (p. 2). So it would appear brother Clayton ought to believe the Bible is inspired. Yet he makes this statement on p. 89 of his book, *THE SOURCE*: "I do not contend that it can be conclusively proven to 20th Century Americans that the Bible is inspired, because the Bible writings have been written over a period of 4,000 years, in at least three languages and several cultures. This variability of background leads to cultural and linguistic difficulties that allow differences of opinion to creep in. There are countless examples of such difficulties." Now which shall we believe? Is the Bible inspired, or isn't it? It appears brother Clayton wishes to move "to and fro" on this fundamental issue. His grasp of the importance of verbal, plenary inspiration seems very, very weak, as can be seen by his statement in the March, 1979 issue of *Rocky Mountain Christian* (p. 3): "Evolution does not answer the primary evidences for God's existence and if evolution were true it would reduce the Bible to being nonliteral, but it would not reflect upon the Word of God." Brethren, any teacher among us who proposes that reducing the Bible to being nonliteral would not "reflect on the Word of God" can hardly understand how important inspiration is! You decide: does John Clayton believe in verbal, plenary inspiration?—Continued—1004 Hereford College Station, Texas 77840

Is There Anything In A Name?

JERRY A. JOHNSON

There are those who say, "There is nothing in a name." If this were true, God would never have given and changed names. He named the first man Adam (Gen. 5:1, 2). God didn't arbitrarily select this name. The name Adam means "man," and refers to the highest order of God's creation. It also served as the first family name. God also named Ishmael (Gen. 16:11), Isaac (Gen. 17:19), and others.

Why did God change names if there is nothing in a name? Abram was changed to Abraham (Gen. 17:5), Sarai to Sarah (Gen. 17:15) and Jacob to Israel (Gen. 32:28). God gave names to fit the character and purpose of the individual. When one's character and purpose changed, he changed his name.

In the secular realm, all of us recognize the difference in names. For instance, parents do not name their children Ahab or Jezebel, because of the wicked characters who wore those names. Neither do parents name their children Fido or Rover, because these are dogs' names.

Also, in the realm of religion, there are differences in names. One name is not as good as another. A name given by God is better than one given by man. Isaiah prophesied as follows: "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name" (Isa. 62:1, 2). "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting

name, that shall not be cut off" (Isa. 56:5). In these two passages we learn that God purposed to call his people, who were in his house and within his walls, which is the church (I Tim. 3:14, 15), no longer by the old name Israel, but by a new name which he would give after the Gentiles were privileged to obey the gospel. The new name would be given when God's scheme of redemption had been introduced to the Gentile world. This came some ten or more years after the gospel was preached to the Jews on Pentecost. Cornelius and his family became the first Gentiles to obey the gospel without having to submit to circumcision. When the gospel had been preached to a considerable number of Gentiles (Acts 11:20, 21), the new name Christian was given. "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). This was not a nickname, nor was it a name spoken in derision. It was a name given by God (*chrematizo*) from heaven.

The converts on Pentecost were called believers and disciples, but they were not called Christians. The converts among the Samaritans were also called believers and disciples, but not Christians.

As God is in the old name Israel, Christ is in the new name Christian; and salvation is in the name of Christ (Lk. 24:46, 47; Acts 2:38; 4:12).

The apostle Paul tried to persuade Agrippa to become a Christian (Acts 26:28). James says "Christian" is a worthy name (Jas. 2:7). In I Peter 4:14-16 we read these words: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye: for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon

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The Old And New Law

Continued from page 1

The Old Testament law was only a temporary law to prepare man for a greater law to come. It was given with purpose, but God did not mean it to be a complete and unending law. The Old Law was a shadow, an indication of the better law to come (Heb 10:1; Col 2:16, 17). The Old Law was a tutor, an aid to bring man to Christ (Gal. 3:24, 25). The Old Law was given to expose sin (Rom. 3:20; 7:7), for where there is no law there is no knowledge of sin (Rom. 4:15). The Old Law preserved God's promise to Abraham (Gen.

12:1-3) until that promise could be fulfilled in Christ (Gal. 3:8, 16, 18, 19).

The sacrifices of the Old Law could not take away sins (Heb. 10:4; 9:15). No man could be justified by the Old Law (Acts 13:39; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:1-4; Rom. 3:20, 28). True righteousness could not be achieved under the Old Law of Moses (Gal. 2:21). The Old Law could not give life (Gal. 3:21, 22). The Old Law was weak in that God never meant it to make man perfect before him (Heb. 7:18, 19). It was only the shadow (Heb. 10:1) of the New Covenant which is promised would come (Jer. 31:31-34).

Jesus came to fulfill the Old Law (Matt. 5:17, 18). He gave his law in fulfillment of the old Jewish law (Matt. 5:21, 27, 33, 38, 43). When Christ died on the

cross, the old first law of commandments was taken away (Heb. 10:9, 10), abolished (Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:14-16), that Christ's New Testament might be brought into force (Heb. 9:16, 17).

Christians were made dead to the ten commandment law by the death of Christ (Rom. 7:1-6). There was a change of priesthood when Jesus came. He became our high priest (Heb. 8:1; 9:11; 2:17); therefore, such a change necessitated a change from the Old Law to the New Law (Heb. 7:11-14), for under the Old Law, only those of the tribe of Levi could be priests. Jesus was of the tribe of Judah. The Old Law has been cast out and Christians are free from its bondage (Gal. 4:21-5:1). There is no justification today through the Old Law and any who would try to live under it are cut off from Christ (Gal. 5:1-6).

God speaks to us today through His Son (Heb. 1:1, 2). Grace and truth were given through Jesus (Jn. 1:17). Jesus is the way, truth, and life (Jn. 14:6). Christians will be judged by the words of Jesus (Jn. 12:48) which are spirit and life (Jn. 6:63). In relation to the Old Law, the New Law of Christ offers a better covenant (Heb. 7:19) which has a better hope (Heb. 7:19), better promises (Heb. 8:6), better sacrifices (Heb. 9:23), a better possession (Heb. 10:34), a better resurrection (Heb. 11:35) and a better blood of

sprinkling (Heb. 12:24). The superiority of the law of Christ (the New Testament) over the Old Law (the Old Testament) is shown in the fact that the law of Christ was given to all nations (Mk. 16:15), was dedicated by the sacrificial blood of Christ (I Cor. 5:7; Heb. 10:10, 19, 20; I Pet. 1; 19), has Christ as an eternal offering (Heb. 9:28) and high priest (Heb. 8:1; 9:11), saves to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25), has complete remission of sins (Heb. 10:17), has justification (I Cor. 6:11), is written on our hearts (Heb. 8:10), is able to give an eternal inheritance (Acts 20:32), contains spiritual ordinances (Jn. 6:63; 4:24, 24; Rom. 12:1, 2), and has been ordained by Jesus the Son of God (Heb. 2:1-4).

We have the Old Testament today as an inspired record for our learning and admonition (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11). But it is no longer binding upon mankind. All this side of the cross of Christ must submit to the law of Christ (Rom. 6:17; Heb. 5:9; II Thess. 1:7-9). Any who would try to be justified today by keeping the Old Law given to the Jews are severed from Christ, they are fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4). Christians today are justified by faith in Christ (Rom. 3:28; 5:1). They are not under condemnation because they have been baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3, 4; 8:1; Gal. 3:27, 28).—3201 N. 7th Street, West Monroe, La. 71291

Is There Anything In A Name?

Continued from page 3

you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. 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. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" ("in this name," A.S.V.).

Human religious names are wrong and sinful. The Corinthian church was characterized by this sort of division. "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and

I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul" (I Cor. 1:12, 13)? Thus, why does one today wear the name of Luther, or Calvin, or Wesley or John the baptist, etc.? A saved person is to wear the name of the one to whom he is spiritually married, for there is a marriage relationship between Christ and his church (Isa. 62:5; Rom. 7:4; Rev. 21:9). What a privilege to be married to Christ by obeying his gospel, and to wear his name forever (Isa. 66:22;

Eph. 3:14, 15)! One can by simply believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Jn. 8:24, 21; Acts 16:30, 31; Heb. 11:6), repenting of his sins (Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 3:19; 17:30), confessing his faith before men (Matt. 10:32, 33; Rom. 10:9, 10), being baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16) and faithfully living the Christian life until death (Rev. 2:10). "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2b).—P. O. Box 425, Double Springs, Alabama 35553.

We Must Have Bible Authority

Continued from page 2

Jesus who said, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18, ASV). Jesus warned some in his day that "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 words of Christ will be the standard by which we all will be judged. However, the words of Christ are not just those written in red letters in your Bibles, but Jesus gave his words to his apostles who were given the authority to bind and loose (Matt. 18:18). The apostles were inspired by the Holy Spirit so they could remember all Jesus had commanded them to teach (John 14:26) This is the reason the apostle Paul said that what he wrote was the "word of God" and "the commandment of the Lord" (I Thess. 2:13; I Cor. 14:37).

All of this means that the very authority of God is found in the words of the Bible. The Bible is thus the only true authority in matters of religion. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16, 17).

God demands that we have divine authority for everything we do in religion. He requires that "whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to

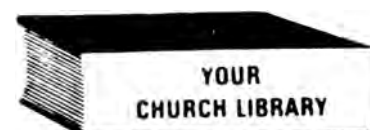
God and the Father by him" (Col. 3:17). To do a thing "in the name of Jesus" is to do it by his authority. Thus God requires that whatever men do—whether in terms of their beliefs and teachings ("in word") or their practice ("in deed")—be done by Christ's authority. If what a man practices or teaches is not authorized by Christ in His Word, then such practices or teachings are unscriptural and are condemned by God. The apostle John put it this way: "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 John 9).

Because many people do not understand the necessity of Bible authority for everything they practice in religion, they often conclude that it doesn't matter what a person believes or does in religion just as long as he is honest and sincere. Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1, 2) may have been honest and sincere in their worship, but when they chose to offer strange fire before the Lord (for which they had not divine authority) he destroyed them. The same is true regarding the life of the apostle Paul. Though he was honest and sincere (Acts 23:1) as he persecuted Christians, he was counted by God as "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious" (I Tim. 1:13). Sincerity in his Jewish beliefs was not enough to save Paul. He had to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and be obedient to his will,

or he would have died in his sins (John 8:24; Acts 22:16). Honesty and sincerity are not enough. We must do the will of God.

When you consider what you believe and what you practice in your religion, can you truthfully say that everything is based on the authority of Christ? Can you give book, chapter, and verse for every doctrine your church teaches? Can you find scriptural authority for your practices in worship, your church's organization, and for your religious practices? To be right we must have Bible authority; we must be scriptural.

A man is not seriously trying to please God if he has very little regard for the Bible authority. In every aspect of our spiritual lives God expects us to "walk by faith" (II Cor. 5:7). But one can walk by faith only when he has Bible authority for everything he believes, teaches, and practices (Rom. 10:17). Are you willing to examine your religion to see whether it is based on the authority of God's Word? For your soul's sake I hope you will.—713 Maryethel Dr., Montgomery, Al. 36109.



CHECK US OUT.
YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID!



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"but speak forth

Acts 26:25

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, JULY 13, 1979

NUMBER 28

Forty Of The Longest Years

"Then the children of Judah drew nigh unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that Jehovah spake unto Moses the man of God concerning me and concerning thee in Kadesh-barnea. Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of Jehovah sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land; and I



MICHAEL D. STONE

brought him word again as it was in my heart. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed Jehovah my God. And Moses swore on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy foot hath trodden shall be an inheritance to thee and to thy children forever, because thou hast wholly followed Jehovah my God. And now, behold, Jehovah hath kept me alive, as he spake, these forty and five years, from the time that Jehovah spake this word unto Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, and to go out and to come in. Now therefore give me this hill-county, whereof Jehovah spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakim were there, and cities great and fortified: it may be that Jehovah will be with me, and I shall drive them out, as Jehovah spake. And Joshua blessed him; and he gave Hebron unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance" (Joshua 14:6-13).

About two years after God's people had left Egypt, they came to the southern tip of Canaan to a place called Kadesh-barnea. It was from this point that Moses sent twelve spies to spy out the land in preparation for God's people's entering the land which had been promised to them since the days of

Abraham. After the return of the spies, only two of them gave an encouraging report to Moses and the people. God was ready for his people to enter and to take possession of the land but the people were not ready. Joshua and Caleb alone of the spies had the faith and determination necessary to enter; the rest did not. Because of this lack of faith, God decreed thirty-eight more years of wandering in the wilderness. The thirty-eight plus the two already spent made a total of forty years of wandering. Those with no faith were not to enter the promised land, therefore, the wandering years were mostly for the purpose of giving that generation time to die. It was their children that finally did enter some thirty-eight years later from the time of Kadesh-barnea.

Caleb was about 38 years old when he left Egypt with God's people. He was 40 when Moses sent him as one of the spies (he represented the tribe of Judah) from Kadesh-barnea. He was with the people during the 40 years of wandering. He was with Moses and the people conquered the eastern half of Canaan. After Moses died, Joshua led the people across the Jordan and the western half of Canaan was conquered. Caleb was there during all of these events.

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:13, 14).

Paul reminds the Ephesian saints of

At the time of the text above, Caleb is 85 years old. Yet he remembers a promise that Moses made to him some 45 years ago regarding an inheritance which Caleb would have when they finally entered the land.

Caleb now goes to Joshua and reminds him of the promise as Joshua begins to divide the western half of Canaan among the tribes. Joshua was pleased to keep the promise and to give Caleb that which he deserved.

Here is a man who many years ago decided to stand for the right when most everybody else was standing for the wrong. His decision to stand alone if need be in order to please God was not done in vain. God will always reward the faith even though that reward may be postponed by circumstances beyond our control. It's easy to stand with the majority and very few people have the courage of Caleb to stand in minority.

I am thankful for men in the church like Caleb. Men and women will stand for the right at all cost. If you are a Caleb and it seems that the worldly majority have the upper hand, then you may be in forty of the longest years of your life, but know for a fact that God will not forget.—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101

Purchased Possession



RAY HAWK

their beginning. In Acts 19:1-7, Paul preached to them, they believed it, and were baptized. After they were baptized, Paul "laid his hands upon them" and they received the Holy Spirit (verse 6). Notice the parallels, not only between Acts 19:4-6 and Ephesians 1:13, 14 and Ephesians between Ephesians 1:13, 14 and Ephesians 4:8-13!

Acts 19:4-6	Ephes. 1:13-14	4:8-13
1. Believed on him	1. Believed	
2. Baptized	2. Trusted	
3. Laid hands	3. Sealed with	3. Gave gifts

Harding Graduate School



Words Of Truth

USPS 691 760

I am not mad, must noble men
but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness

Acts 26:25

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Substitutes Of Brass

In II Chronicles 12 we find a very interesting account of a man who forsook the Lord. This man was a king of Israel, a man who by all means should have known better. He forsook God and His law, and therefore, the Lord said "...Ye have forsaken me, therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak" (II Chr. 12:5). Shishak was king of Egypt and was to take from the temple the golden shields which Solomon had made (II Chr. 12:9). Remember, however, that while God protected the temple, Shishak nor any other man could have defiled the temple, or taken its treasure. After taking these golden shields Shishak probably thought that in defeating Israel he had defeated the God of Israel, but this was not the case. The three hundred shields of gold were quite a conquest for this wicked ruler. All of the shame and looting came as a direct result of Rehoboam's failure to follow the law of God (II Chr. 12:5). When he returned to the ransacked temple the sight must have haunted and appalled him. There was now an empty wall where once had been the golden shields placed by his father. The absence of these golden shields exposed his failure. So Rehoboam made copies of the golden shields, but in doing so he used brass, not gold. Needless to say, brass does not have the same value as does gold. Rehoboam made a cheap imitation of the real thing.

Rehoboam's failure should shout a warning over the ages. Substitutions are often just cheap imitations, and one must be careful not to substitute a cheap imitation of brass for the gold of God. The modernist tries to substitute a brass imitation of partial, or thought inspiration for the golden shield of verbal inspiration. He tries to substitute humanistic inspiration such as a Riley, Milton or Shakespeare might possess, for Bible inspiration. There is a vast difference as Peter, by inspiration, states (II Pet.

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JOHN SHAVER

This title may at first cause some to believe that we do not have the proper respect for the Bible—to say that some things in the Bible are not necessarily so. But you may be sure we believe the Bible record to be true and accurate in every detail. But there are some things said in the Bible that are not necessarily so—that is they do not have to be that way. For example, Jesus told the Jews of His day, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40). It was true that the Jews would not come to Christ that they might have life, but it did not have to be that way. They could have come if they had so desired. There are a number of statements made in the Bible that are so, but not necessarily. Notice:

The Bible says, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8). This statement means simply that men act more wisely in reference to material matters than the children of God act in reference to spiritual matters. This may be seen in the difference between



BOBBY DUNCAN

our efforts to influence people to act and the efforts put forth by those of the world. Those of the world spend billions of dollars in advertising their products or services. They engage many hand-shaking, letter-writing, speech-making individuals to promote their particular enterprise. As a rule about all we children of God do to promote the cause of the Lord is to have services at the regular time on Sunday. Or as the children of this world are spending billions to train teachers, build and equip classrooms, and furnish supplies to educate their children, we in the church are content to crowd children into a small room, put with them a teacher with little or no training, and think it is money wasted to buy the supplies really needed to teach these children. The Lord's statement is true, but not necessarily so.

Another thing taught by the Bible is true, but not necessarily so. That is that some of the Hebrew Christians habitually absented themselves from the assembly of the saints (Heb. 10:25). It didn't have to be this way. Neither does it have to be so today. There are some in practically every congregation whose manner it is to be absent from certain services. It does not have to be so, and the Lord is not pleased with it; but it continues to be so.

It is so, but not necessarily, that relatively few will be saved (Matt. 7:13, 14). Jesus has died for all (Heb. 2:9). He invites all to come (Matt. 11:28). All can come (Rev. 22:17). But most will not be saved, for they will not come to the Lord.

Square Dancing



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

Sometime ago a question was submitted to this writer to be answered in regard to the advisability of Christians who participate in square dancing. In answer the writer raised some sixteen questions to serve as guidelines. Here they are:

1. In what type of environment does square dancing place the participant?
2. Is this environment conducive to one's Christianity, or does it dull one's spiritual sensitivity?
3. If there were a strict segregation of the sexes at the square dance—strictly males with males in one place, and females with females in a separate place—would there be the same drawing power, the same motivation to participate?
4. As a man, does participation in the square dance prompt impure thoughts toward the women who are involved?
5. As a woman, does participation in the square dance prompt impure thoughts toward the men who are involved?
6. Would it be considered out of place or inappropriate by the participants to begin the square dancing session with a prayer, and close with a benediction? Would anyone think it odd or unusual to

request the Lord's blessings to abide such a popular amusement?

7. As a woman participant, do any of the actions called for demand indecent bodily movements, or do the whirling actions reveal large portions of the legs?

8. If the regular square dancing session happened to fall upon a night when there was a church service such as Mid-Week Bible Study, a gospel meeting, or a visitation meeting, which would claim priority?

9. Does the square dancing participant spend as much time trying to convert the lost as in square dancing? As much time in Bible Study and in prayer as in square dancing?

10. Would anyone consider it out of place at a square dance to ask every participant to attend a coming gospel meeting or the next regularly scheduled service of the local church of Christ?

11. Does square dancing lead the participant to desire to engage in modern dancing? Does it break down the barrier toward a more dangerous type of dancing?

12. Will participation in square dancing make it easier, or harder, to teach one's child against the evils of the modern dance?

13. Will participation in square dancing make it harder for *other Christian parents* to teach *their* children against the evils of modern dancing?

14. Would respect for the elders and their wives, the preacher and his wife, the deacons and their wives, the song director and his wife, and the Bible teachers and their wives (or husbands), be enhanced or diminished if they all participated regularly and

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A Review Of The Teachings Of John Clayton

(No. 10)

In our last article we pointed out several contradictions in what brother Clayton says at one point in time that he believes, and what he says at a later point in time that he believes. We continue in this vein as we ask the important question, "What does John Clayton believe?"

(4) In the March, 1979 issue of the *Rocky Mountain Christian*, brother Clayton wrote: "I have been accused of not believing Exodus 20:11

....I certainly believe Exodus 20:11, but I believe the references must be looked at accurately and not as some others have tended to do" (p. 3). After I had written to brother Clayton regarding my belief in and acceptance of the six-day (literal 24-hour day) creation expressed in Exodus 20:11, he penned these words to me in a personal letter: "I know, for example, that our understandings of Exodus 20:11 probably are very much the same and yet my view of that obviously is somewhat different than yours as far as what it encompasses" (personal letter, November 9, 1977, p. 3). I had made it known quite clearly to brother Clayton that I believed Exodus 20:11 to be literal, historical, factual, and true, and he agreed that "our understandings of Exodus 20:11 probably are very much the same." Furthermore, in his taped lesson entitled *Questions and Answers, #1* brother Clayton asserts, "I don't see any necessity of denying that the day of Genesis 1 were 24-hour days..." And so it would appear, since brother Clayton says "I certainly believe Exodus 20:11" and "I don't see any necessity of denying that the days of Genesis 1 were 24-hour days," that brother Clayton meant what he said. Yet the reader is asked to consider these statements: (a) "I believe it is totally inconsequential as to whether or not the days of Genesis were literal 24-hour days or not. It isn't until the fourth day until the sun and moon were established as chronometers. There were no days, seasons, etc.—at least as we know them—before the fourth day" (Tape, *Questions and Answers, #1*): (b) "In the next several verses (following Genesis 1:11—BT), we see the Sun, Moon, and Stars made useful for the measurement of time. Notice that God says that the days, years, etc., as we know them were established at this point. It is obvious that prior to this time, sunrise, sunset, and the normal phases of the moon were not visible from the Earth, if indeed they existed at all" (THE SOURCE, p 116); (c) Concerning the literal 24-hour days of Exodus 20:11, Clayton states: "...I personally could not get up on my soap box and maintain this because I am not a Hebrew scholar and I'm not qualified in this. My suggestion is to you that also it would be unwise for you to get up and maintain a position on this since the Bible does not seem to make a point of this issue," (Tape, *Questions and Answers, #1*) (Emphasis added, BT).

Comments on these statements will be made in a later article, but we must simply hasten to add at this point that for a man who says, "I certainly believe in Exodus 20:11" to state the "the Bible does not seem to make a point of this issue" seems quite incongruous! God defined his terms (Genesis 1:5 where he defined "day" as "an evening and a morning"), yet brother Clayton says "there were no days...before the fourth day." Exodus 20:11, Exodus 31:17, and Genesis 1 disagree with brother Clayton. What does brother Clayton believe?

(5) In his tape, *Questions and Answers, #1*, brother Clayton comes on very strongly when he remarks, "I think that the important thing that we need to recognize here is that when we get up and we add to God's word, and we force the Bible to say something we believe to be true, we make a mistake....Let's not



BERT THOMPSON

add to God's word by making it say something it doesn't say." In his latest book, *EVIDENCES OF GOD*, brother Clayton remarks, "If Genesis can be relegated to an allegorical account relevant to ignorant men, 3000 years ago but not today,, cannot this same logic be used elsewhere? If various passages which state factually an act of God...don't (sic) really mean what they say, how can we apply ANY Biblical teaching to man? All one has to say is 'well, that was fine for the day in which it was written, but it doesn't apply to man today,' and they have absolved themselves of any responsibility for their actions" (pp. 120-121) (Emphasis in the text). Now the reader is urged to listen to the following statements made by brother Clayton in the *Rocky Mountain Christian* (March 1979, p 3): "I have been accused of not believing in Exodus 20:11. What I have pointed out is that Exodus 20:11 is a quote of Genesis 2, and *Genesis 2 is not a historical account*. Genesis 2 is for the purpose of showing the relationship of man and woman as is clearly stated in verse 24 and since Exodus 20:11 does not refer to Genesis 1, but to Genesis 2, *it is not speaking historically....*" (Emphasis added) If Genesis 2 is *not* historical, then what are we to consider it? It is then allegorical, mythical, poetical, liturgical, etc.? But brother Clayton previously stated that "if Genesis can be relegated to an allegorical account...cannot this same logic be used elsewhere?" **AH, TRULY, THE LEGS OF THE LAME ARE NOT EQUAL!!!** Brother Clayton *demands* (!!) that we not "get up and add to God's

word and force the Bible to say something we believe to be true" and then he tries to use some exegetical hocus-pocus to make Exodus 20:11 a quote from Genesis 2, which it clearly is not. And what about Exodus 31:17? Brethren, what *does* brother Clayton believe? Are we to accept Genesis' creation account as historical or aren't we? It seems brother Clayton can't seem to make up his mind on the matter. Hopefully the read will not have as much trouble. In brother Clayton's tape, *Evolution's Proof of God*, he makes this unusual statement: "We need not compromise the literacy (sic; he is referring to literalness) of the Genesis record." Yet he then process to tell us that Genesis 2 is not literal (historical). What *shall* we believe? He closes his tape, *Evolution's Proof of God*, with a statement toward the end as follows: "The point is that that sequence given in Genesis is totally accurate." If it is accurate, then why is Exodus 20:11 not accurate? In his tape, *Does God Exist?* brother Clayton states toward the end of the tape, "The Bible doesn't make a single error in any of its discussions". If that is true, then why isn't Exodus 20:11 true and correct? If Exodus 20:11 states that God created the earth, the sea, the heavens and all that in them is in six days, then why isn't that correct? Brother Clayton shares at least one feature in common with the theistic evolutionists: he must relegate at least part of the first 11 chapters of Genesis to myth, alegory, etc. in order to make *his doctrine* fit!!!!—1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840

Lessons From Sodom

All of the events of the Bible contain many great lessons for our learning. The events of Genesis 13 through 19 concerning Lot and Sodom are no exception.

A strife arose between the herdmen of Lot and Abraham because the land around Bethel was not sufficient for both of their herds. The only solution was for them to go their separate ways. Being head of the family, and oldest Abraham was entitled to m first

choice of the land to take. Abraham showed a great spirit in yielding this privilege to his nephew Lot (Genesis 13:9). Abraham displayed a wonderful attitude when he said, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren" (Gen. 13:8). Abraham was older, he was head of the family and by all rights he could have demanded first choice. Instead, he said we are brethren; there shouldn't be strife between us: therefore I yield to you. Many have been the churches that have split because hard heads have refused to yield on matters of opinion. It is never right to compromise truth. God expects us to stand on his word and contend for he faith (Jude 3). At the same time, it is never right to cause division in the church over an opinion. It is tragic for brethren to fight over such matters as what color the carpet should be, what time we should assemble for Sunday morning, etc. while the work of converting the lost is left undone. We must realize that we are brethren and be big enough to yield our opinion rather than cause trouble in the church. "We be brethren."

In contrast to the wisdom of Abraham, we see the foolishness of Lot. Lot surveyed the well watered plain of the Jordan and chose to make it his home.



RON HARPER

Genesis 13:12, 13 tells us that Lot "pitched his tent toward Sodom" and that "the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Lot made a tragic mistake in making his home in such a wicked place. We realize that all sin (Rom. 3:23), and that there are wicked men in any city. At the same time we see that the men of Sodom were "Sinners before the Lord exceedingly." The entire city was corrupt. There can be no doubt that the ungodly influence of Sodom took its toll on Lot. In Genesis 19 God sent two angels to Sodom to warn Lot of the coming doom. When the wicked men of Sodom desired to have homosexual relations with the angels Lot tried to make an ungodly compromise. He would have allowed the men to take his two virgin daughters instead of the angels (v8). Who can doubt that if Lot had never lived in Sodom he would not have considered such a compromise? Many people learn too late that "evil companionships corrupt good morals" (1 Cor. 15:33 ASV). We must be careful to choose the right kind of associates. Never underestimate the power of an ungodly influence. Parents have the duty of knowing and controlling who their children associate with. If we spend most of our time with evil people it is unlikely that we will remain godly. One cannot play on the coal pile without getting dirty.

Then we see that choosing the well watered plain of the Jordan did not turn out to be a very good move for Lot. Many times in life we choose that which looks best or seems to be most convenient. When making our choices in life we need to consider the end of the matter. The Jordan plain looked good to Lot, yet he was influenced by the men of the city; he lost his wife, and finally had to see his own illegitimate grandchildren which he begat. No doubt that if Lot had the choice to make again he would never choose the well watered Jordan plain. We should, in our decisions, try to see the end of the matter. It is said of Abraham that, "by faith he so journeyed in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which

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Substitutes Of Brass

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1:20-21).

Many try to substitute a brass imitation for the golden shield of the deity of Christ. They relate that he was just a good man, and in doing so, exalt his humanity and deny his deity. If what they say is true, then Jesus was the biggest fraud that ever walked on this earth. But he was who and what he claimed to be, the Son of God (Jn. 8:24; Jno. 20:30-31). The world cannot bury Jesus; the earth is not deep enough to be his tomb, for he was declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4).

Others try to substitute a brass imitation for the golden shield of the Virgin Birth. That which once was widely accepted is now doubted by skeptics and intellectuals(?). Now Jesus is called a biological miracle. Some have even gone so far as to say he was an illegitimate child. Some have even changed the words of the Bible to prove their point (RSV - Isa.

7:14).

Some do not like the idea of a religion involving blood, so they say that Jesus just died as a perfect example for our death, or as a martyr for some cause. But the Bible gives us the true picture of why he died (Eph. 1:7; Rom. 5:8-9; Rev. 1:5).

Other try to substitute an imitation of brass for the golden shield of the resurrection. They say that Jesus was drugged, and therefore didn't suffer. They say that his body was stolen by his disciples. How do they explain the fact that none of the disciples even knew of his resurrection until the women visited the tomb (Lk. 24)?

Isn't it sad that people have no more love for God and his way than to substitute the brass of man for the gold of God? It is even a greater tragedy to find that some who profess to be his children are guilty of this sin. Some have tried to substitute preaching for study. Rather than study God's word to become more

proficient and knowledgeable, they let the preacher do their studying for them (II Pet. 1:3; II Tim. 2:15; II Tim. 3:16-17; Rom. 15:4). In doing this they rob God, the church and themselves. Many substitute gossip and talebearing for prayer, and in doing so, condemn themselves (Jas. 3:1-12; I Thess. 5:17; Jn. 17:1-23). Others try to substitute worldliness for Christian living, and are traveling the pathway of destruction (Jas. 4:5; I Jno. 2:15-17; Rom. 12:1-2; Tit. 2:11-12). Some have even tried to substitute the brass of false doctrine for the gold of God's truth (I Tim. 4:1-4; II Tim. 4:1-4; I Tim. 4:16).

Brethren, the world makes many substitutes, and many of them are in direct conflict with the way of God. Let it be known that no man is at liberty to substitute the brass of man, for the gold of God. — Rt. 10, Box 186 B, Jasper, Ala. 35501

Square Dancing

Continued from page 2

enthusiastically in the square dance?

15. In your judgment would Jesus Peter, James, John, John the Baptist, Timothy, Stephen, Philip, Luke, Barnabas, Mary (the Lord's mother), Mary Magdalene, Mary and Martha of Bethany, Lois, Eunice and Susanna have square danced in their day, had such been a common social practice? Have you ever thought of Jesus as a dancing Lord?

16. How well is the Christian representing the family of God when he participates in square dancing?

For these reasons this writer and his family do not participate in this type of activity. There are too many more worthy activities over which no question mark rests for me and mine to resort to this one for a recreational or entertaining activity. If a better case can be presented for the square dance than this, will anyone try to justify a more dangerous type of dancing the such as modern dance with the close embrace or the wild, suggestive bodily movements of

the participants? If so, on what basis? This writer has yet to meet the person whose spirituality has been deepened and made more fervent by a persistent participation within the usual environment of dancing, whether "Square," or of a more demanding dimension of fleshly indulgence.

We close with some appropriate Scriptures that set forth some needed principles in regard to all recreational or entertaining activities. Jesus said in Matthew 5:8, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Luke said in regard to Timothy, "Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium" (Acts 16:2). Paul wrote the Corinthians, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (I Cor. 6:19-20). Paul wrote to the Philippians, "Only let your conversation (manner of life) be as it becometh the

gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel..." (Phil. 1:27). Paul wrote Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (I Tim. 4:12). Paul said in I Timothy 5:22, "...keep thyself pure." Peter talked about our Lord when he said, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps..." (I Pet. 2:21). John said it this way: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I Jn. 3:31). Last, we note the closing beatitude of the Bible: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and many enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14). — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063

Purchased Possession

Continued from page 1

and Holy Ghost came on them	that holy Spirit of promise	unto men
	4. Until	4. Till
	5. The redemption of the purchased possession	5. We all come in the unity of the faith... unto a perfect man...

The Ephesians had received the Holy Ghost through the laying on of Paul's hands (Acts 19:6). This was the gifts spoken of in Ephesians 4:8. This reception of the holy Spirit of promise (Acts 2:16-18; 38, 39) was to continue until (till) the perfect (teleios, I Corinthians 13:8-10) or complete came. This took place in the first century when gifts ceased and the church stood complete.

But, what is the "purchased possession" which is to be "redeemed" when the gifts come to an end? In Luke 21:28, Jesus is speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem (this event transpired in A.D. 70) and says, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." This is the same Greek word found in Ephesians 1:14. The purchased possession would be redeemed when the perfect or complete came. This same word, "redemption," is found in Ephesians 4:30: "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." The word seal (ed), found in Ephe-

sian 1:13 and 4:30 is also found in I Corinthians 9:2 and has a miraculous connotation. The Corinthian saints had Paul's hands laid upon them just as the Ephesian church did. This is how both churches could perform miraculous deeds.

The purchased possession and the language in Matthew 24:31 and Romans 13:11 are inter-related. Jesus, speaking of events that will take place just before the destruction of Jerusalem, said, "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Cf. Mark 13:27; Luke 21:28). In Romans 13:11, 12 Paul said, "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand..." If we will see Ephesians 1:13, 14 in context with 4:8-13, we can see what the purchased possession is which they looked forward to.

EPHESIANS 1:14

EPHESIANS 4:13

The Unity Of The Faith
The Knowledge Of The
Son Of God Unto A

The Purchased Possession — A Perfect Man
(The Church, Eph. 5:23, 27) The Measure Of
The Stature Of The Fulness Of Christ

First century saints were sealed with the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the

apostles' hands as a down payment (earnest) of their inheritance which came when gifts ended. The purchased possession is that which is described in Ephesians 4:13, a possession which we now enjoy in the church of our Lord!—1461 East Chester Street, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

Lessons From Sodom

Continued from page 3

hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:9, 10). Our main concern in life should be getting to heaven. We should make every choice with that end in mind. God should be included in every decision we make. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).—1501 6th Ave. Jasper, Al 35501

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The More You Love, The Less You Are Loved

GLENN A. POSEY

Paul said, "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved" (II Corinthians 12:15). How strange, and yet how true! Perhaps it is because we get our standard of "loving" turned upside down.

Too often our loving others produces enemies instead of friends. "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16). When truth and error are involved, a friend will always hold truth as the standard of conduct. And yet one often makes ardent enemies by telling people the truth. The more you love, the less you are loved.

Men of God, those more interested in God's cause than their own, certainly are hard to find. God said, "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it" (Jeremiah 5:1). This type of man is sought for still—a friend, and yet in so many instances his "loving" by preaching the truth produces enemies, those who love him less.

The gospel preacher or teacher loves the brethren, and demonstrates that love by preaching the truth (II Timothy 4:1-3). The preacher who doesn't tell the infidel that there is a God, doesn't love him. If he tells him there is a God, the infidel may become his enemy. The preacher who doesn't tell the unfaithful church member he must repent, doesn't love him. If he does tell him, he is likely to become his enemy.

The truth is the only message that will set one free (John 8:32). We show our love for others by telling them the truth revealed in the New Testament. The drunkard or social drinker may not appreciate the truth; the immodest dresser will not appreciate the truth. And they will love one less for telling them the truth. In fact, those preachers who are loved most by some are the ones who just let sinners alone. Surely we are in a time when some, "having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own

lusts" (II Timothy 4:3, ASV).

Do you love a preacher that will tell you social drinking is a sin, immodest apparel is a sin, unfaithful attendance is a sin, mixed swimming, dancing, lying, cheating, etc. are sins? Would you like for all

preachers just to shut up about these things and let you alone? We know some of you love us less for telling the truth about these things, and few are just brave enough to tell us so. — P.O. Box 716, Haleyville, AL 35565

Pressing On!

JOHNNY RAMSEY

At least 100 verses from the eight writers of the New Testament center around the theme of departing from sound doctrine. In Paul's admonitions to Timothy and Titus alone, it is safe to say one-third of the context deals with what the church must do to be saved! Is the Devil causing our spiritual apathy with the old idea: "You are all eternally secure; God will take care of you. Don't be concerned about doctrinal error, innovations in worship, men's devices in church government and liberalism in morals. After all, Christ did purchase the church with His blood; therefore it can never fail": Are you listening to Satan?

Satan always enjoys that kind of preaching because it keeps sinners lost by thinking they are saved! Actually, one verse all by itself, I John 2:4 defeats the doctrine of grace alone—faith alone: "He that saith, I know him and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him." Even when denominational preachers speak to their members, they follow the same pattern of Nicolaitan heresy. They affirm: "After one become a Christian, he cannot fall from grace; he is eternally secure." There is only one way that such a position could possibly be true — men would have to lose the power of choice upon becoming Christians! For as long as we can choose, we may decide to do wrong.

It is true that the divine part of the church shall never fail, and the message of truth that sustains the church is impregnable (II Timothy 3:15; I Peter 1:25; Daniel 2:44). However, from the human standpoint, only eternal vigilance and unfaltering loyalty can prevent a major departure from truth! A step away from Christ is a step into darkness (John 8:12). Walking with Him, in love and integrity, sheds constant light upon the pathway of life (Colossians 1:10). When the church is centered upon the Lord, there is no room for "preacheritis" or indifference or worldliness. When Christ is the point of focus, we will proclaim his message, follow His example and obey his commandments. Nothing short of that can save the church.

The commodity we have to offer the world is the pure message of the Lord. Nearly any actor in Hollywood can jerk more tears than we can, and most lawyers are sharper in swaying audiences. But the one precious ingredient that we have by God's trust in us, is the gospel of his grace (Acts. 20:24). When we resort to playing on people's emotions and becoming "response crazy," we walk the ancient road to insincerity and sectarianism.

Friend of mine, I appeal to you to search the New Testament, reading all of you can find therein concerning the bride of Christ, the church, and then

Continued on page 4

A Review Of The Teachings Of John Clayton

(No. 11)

In our last two articles we pointed out several contradictions in what brother Clayton claims to believe from time to time. It appears that at one point in time he believes and advocates one thing, while later he believes and advocates another. We continue in this vein as we ask, "What *does* brother Clayton believe?"



BERT THOMPSON

(6) In his book, *THE SOURCE*, brother Clayton asserts: "If we look carefully at the issues about which we are talking, however, we can find that evolution and the Bible show amazing agreement on almost all issues and that one is not mutually exclusive of the other....To suggest that evolution is false, devious, and opposed to the Bible is equally extreme" (p. 130). In his tape, *Evolution's Proof of God*, Clayton states: "As a matter of fact, when we get into the subject of evolution, the subject is really irrelevant to the existence of God. There really is no relationship between the two subjects (God's existence and evolution)." (SPECIAL NOTE TO THE READER: To those who would like to see clearly how fallacious this second statement is, may I refer you to *THE WARREN-FLEW DEBATE*, and *THE WARREN-MATSON DEBATE*, both published by National Christian Press, Box 1001, Jonesboro, Arkansas. In those two great books Dr. Thomas B. Warren soundly defeated the atheists' arguments regarding evolution and used the defeat of evolution to prove God's existence—plain and pungent evidence that evolution IS HARDLY IRRELEVANT to God's existence.)

Now I am keenly aware that brother Clayton will rush to defend these two statements (or at the very least, the first one) by stating that he is speaking of "variation" (what he refers to as "factual evolution"—see *Rocky Mountain Christian*, March, 1979, p. 3). He will try to defend his position by stating that he means only limited change within kinds, that is to say, variation (which none among us doubts anyway!). But what do the facts of the case say? Let you, the reader, examine the evidence and decide. When brother Clayton asserts that "evolution and the Bible show amazing agreement on almost all issues" is he speaking of organic evolution or not? Hear from his own tapes and writings the following evidences:

(a) "At one time in your life you had a tail. At one time in your life you had what essentially were gill slits" (EVOLUTION'S PROOF OF GOD, Tape). (COMMENT: The human embryo *never* has gill slits!)

(b) "Back in the days when man was cracking bones to get his food out of the bone marrow actually of animals he used those back teeth to break bones" (EVOLUTION'S PROOF OF GOD, Tape).

(c) "The appendix, although we might get some argument here because of its good blood supply, is viewed by most people to be a vestigial organ. Our appendix doesn't serve any immediate useful function that we can tell....Hair in our country, for the most part, is purely decorative....Hair is essentially vestigial" (EVOLUTION'S PROOF OF GOD, Tape). (COMMENT: Neither the appendix nor the human hair are vestigial. These statements are totally incorrect, and can be proven incorrect. I have in my possession a letter from George Mixter, M.D., Assistant Director, Health Education, American Medical Association, dated March 10, 1978. In response to a letter I sent to A.M.A., requesting a list of the current official vestigial organs, Dr. Mixter wrote: "So far as I am aware, the A.M.A. does not have any 'official list' of vestigial structures. Nor am I aware of any current literature on the subject." The

A.M.A. says there are *no vestigial organs* currently!!!).

(d) "In science we find some evidence that one-celled animals were created in the primitive seas very, very early" (EVOLUTION'S PROOF OF GOD, Tape).

(e) "Algae and lichens were the first things to be in existence" (EVOLUTION'S PROOF OF GOD, Tape).

(f) "As we look at the fossil record we find that the very first living animal was a complex little fellow called a trilobite" (EVOLUTION'S opteryx—a bird," (EVOLUTION'S PROOF OF GOD, Tape).

(h) "Birds, mammals, and man are mentioned; and all of these are recent additions to the Earth geologically" (EVIDENCES OF GOD, book, p. 151).

(i) "At an early stage in the earth's history, marsupial mammals were apparently the dominant form of life. *Placental mammals, like us, are relative newcomers to the earth* compared to the marsupials (DESIGN'S PROOF OF GOD, Tape: emphasis added).

(j) "If dinosaurs existed 200 million years before Adam and Eve it does not present any problem to a literal understanding of the Genesis record" (Teacher's Manual, *Does God Exist?* series, p. 16).

(k) Speaking of his "modified gap theory," Clayton suggests: "I suggest that all geological phenomena except the creation of warm-blooded life were accomplished during this time....Changes took place in the Earth (but no gap destruction) until God began the formation of man's world with birds, whales, cattle, and man in the literal day of Genesis..." (THE SOURCE, p. 148).

(l) "I have no way of telling where man's beginning should be on the chart. *Clearly man has become the dominant form of life on the Earth only in modern time, but where Adam and Eve fitted into this picture is unclear*" (Teacher's Manual, *Does God Exist?* series, p. 35).

(m) "...links do exist between fish and other forms" (THE SOURCE, p. 153).

(n) "The concept of creation of basic forms by a supreme being, and evolution occurring in these groups not only explains the evidence of evolution, but also helps us better understand many Biblical accounts" (THE SOURCE, p. 154).

(o) "I suggest that like all life, the ape family has evolved in its own tree. Whether this evolution began with pliopithecus, a lemur, or some primitive rodent, I cannot say, because the evidence is inadequate. This evolution culminated in the modern ape. These apes have had many species, some of which exist today" (THE SOURCE, p. 170).

(p) "The tree shrew, his ancestors and relatives" are "known to be the first sure mammals on this planet" (*Does God Exist* month bulletin, 7/76, p. 3).

(q) "This writer sees no need to view Adam as a highly advanced and sophisticated individual. God had to make the first clothes man wore so he wasn't very advanced" (*Does God Exist* monthly bulletin, 4/78, p. 2).

(r) "Even if you did evolve from totally non-living inanimate matter, the question of God's existence would not be affected in the slightest" (THE SOURCE, p. 132).

(s) Man "is a very recent new-comer to this planet" (*Does God Exist* correspondence course, 8).

Each of these quotations is fully documented. None are taken out of context. It seems quite apparent that brother Clayton has gone farther with his "evolution" than many people realize. It is quite obvious that it is not just "variation." Rather, it is much more than that. How much more? You be the judge. If there are "links between the fish and other forms" and if man is "a very recent new-comer to this planet" then *what kind of evolution do you think he is advocating????* Oh, yes, it is well-disguised and the evidences are subtly presented. In his tape, *EVOLUTION'S PROOF OF GOD*, brother Clayton even likens God's law systems (Patriarchal, Mosaical, Christian) to a type of evolutionary creation, stating that God started out with simple plan for man's law, graduated to a little more complex, and finally reached the perfect pinnacle in the Christian system. Clayton then draws an analogy from this to God's creation, stating that the simplest things were on the earth first, and then a graded system occurred whereby the most complex (and finally man) arose. If ever there were a "red herring" thrown into a discussion, this has got to be the most perfect example I've ever seen. What *does* brother Clayton believe?—1004 Hereford, College Station, TX 77840

I Can't Go To Shell For Answers

As I looked through my July 9, 1979, issue of *U.S. News & World Report*, I noticed a little booklet entitled "Shell Answer Series #19." Perhaps, most of you have seen these booklets from time to time which are put out by the Shell Oil Company. I enjoy reading them and have appreciated the many helpful hints for better driving. However, there is one problem whose answer cannot be found in the "Shell Answer Series." This problem regards preachers. We shall deal with this problem and the solution in this writing.

It is important first to determine who is a preacher. Many in our brotherhood do not know "the other side" of who is the preacher. Most of us think of the preacher as one who preaches, knows the Bible and lives by the Bible. All of these are correct. But, let me tell you "the other side" of the preacher. You must know this if you are to put what I am about to say in the



MICHAEL D. STONE

right perspective.

First of all, a preacher has basically the same problems of life that you have. His family has bills to pay just like your family does. He wants his children to attend college just as you want yours to do.

Secondly, your preacher is grateful to the brethren who support him. Churches are supporting their preachers better now than they have ever done in the past. Many churches now pay a preacher's health and life insurance and Social Security as industry does for its employees. These are great steps forward. Usually a church will furnish the preacher a house with utilities paid in addition to a weekly cash support. Preachers appreciate these advances by the brethren; however, there is more to tell.

Third, a preacher is a man who DOES pay Income Tax and Social Security just like you do. I have been amazed at some brethren thinking that preachers do not pay such. If the church pays their half of the Social Security Tax, then the church is doing what industry does; however, if the church is not paying their share of this tax, then the preacher is in financial trouble as you would be in the same situation.

Fourth, he is a man who DOES pay Social Security taxes on the rental value of the house which the church furnishes him. There is no income tax paid on this house but he MUST PAY Social Security taxes on

Continued on page 4

I Can't Go To Shell For Answers

Continued from page 3

the rental value of the house. So, brethren, the house is not free. The house in which I live would rent for about \$250.00 per month, therefore, I am paying Social Security taxes on an additional \$3,000 per year income (this is in addition to my other Social Security taxes) on a house which I do not even own. It would be better if churches gave preachers a sufficient housing allowance and let them buy their own houses. This would be better for the preacher and the church.

Fifth, most preachers give over ten percent of their income back to the church. He is expected to wear nice clothes and drive a fairly presentable automobile. In Ashland, Kentucky, (national

headquarters for Ashland Oil Company) where I live, unleaded gas is now selling around \$.90 per gallon. These higher gas prices affect ALL the church, but preachers even more. Many members drive their auto to the plant and it sits there until time to go home. The preacher MUST use his auto frequently in his work each day going to the hospital, doing other visitation, etc. If your preacher does not have a gas allowance, he is probably in serious financial trouble. Does not most industry provide a mileage expense for its workers? Should the church be as appreciative toward their preacher?

My suggestions for the above problems are found

No Place To Hide

Isaiah describes a man trying but unable to hide himself from the Assyrian invaders in Israel. The bed was too short and the cover was too narrow for him to hide himself upon (Is. 28:20). I see a similar scene in America today among many Christians.

The church is like a small band of pilgrims in a hostile wilderness with swarms of enemy armies pressing the attack on every side (Rev. 20:8-9). The problem is, the average Christian, preacher and elder is trying desperately to convince himself that no serious problem exists.

Some have quit subscribing to papers and magazines and sold their televisions to avoid the unpleasant news of current events. Others have carefully built a shield around their lives to screen out all evil and the very mention of such. Families keep moving further into the countryside away from the wicked city to escape pressures of moral corruption.

But out where the real world and 99% of the people live, evil men are waxing worse and worse (II Tim. 3:13). Those who hold the false philosophies of humanism, evolution and hedonism and other similar views are boldly and militantly attacking Christianity and its value system from every side.

Most public schools have been captured by these hellish forces. Higher education is generally brazen in its anti-Christian program of attack.

The TV and movie industry is almost wholly controlled and used by these evil attitudes. The news media prints glowing reports of their conquests and shames and ridicules those who dare oppose them.

Most of the mainline Protestant churches have been successfully infiltrated and captured with hardly a struggle. The few remaining ones are under open siege. Denominational preachers and theologians such as Joseph Fletcher are among the chief spokesmen for skepticism, immorality and every ungodly moral evil.

Our children are being seduced and corrupted by these heathen forces before our very eyes. Our churches are feeling the same pressures in their own memberships. Our moral and spiritual standards are being eroded as pressures mount to conform to modern society.

Brethren, one can only hide from a belligerent so long; one can run from the bully just so far. Sooner or later there comes the time when there is no place to run or hide. Inevitably we will be forced to stop, turn and do battle. The question is should we wait until every outpost has fallen and the final fortress is surrounded and under attack? Or, should we now, while we yet have a little strength and influence in our society, unsheath the sword and make our stand for God, Christianity, marriage, the family, and



JOHN WADDEY

morality?

The question in many minds seems to be, it is right for Christians to do something other than go to worship, be morally good and to evangelize? The scriptures authorize us to fight against sin and ungodliness and to defend the cause of God against the devil and his angels. (1) We are to fight the good fight of faith (I Tim. 6:12). (2) Our weapons are spiritual, not carnal, we fight against every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God (II Cor. 10:3-5). (3) We are commanded to stand and fight against the world rulers of this darkness with the weapons and armor of the Lord (Eph. 6:10-17). (4) We are to reprove the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11). Our fight must be more than a wringing of the hands and bemoaning what the world is coming to. It must be more than an occasional sermon on such issues. An emotional outburst in the church bulletin or a brotherhood journal will not suffice. We must put our words into action. Sermons without follow-up, positive action are just like faith without works—lifeless, dead, useless.

The "ain't it awful" society never accomplished anything! (That is, those good people who shake their head, wring their hands, and say, "ain't it awful," and then go home and sit down to watch TV). We must do more than just pray. Two small boys played around and were late getting started to school. Having a stern teacher, one suggested that they should stop and pray. The other countered, "Let us pray as we run". Prayers are answered as God aids and rewards our human efforts for his holy name.

Brethren, What Must We Do? Perhaps your heart is pricked and you want to join the battle to save our children, homes, church, and nation. If so: (1) Inform yourself. Blind zeal is seldom productive and often destructive (Rom. 10:3). (2) Join hands with others who have launched a Christian counterattack. Right to life groups are functioning across the land in every state. They fight abortion and euthanasia (the selective medical killing of the weak and unwanted). Citizens for Decency groups are found in many cities. They seek to rid communities of pornography, shut shops and filthy movies. Stop ERA groups such as Women Who Want to be Women, Eagle Forum, and others who are actively opposing the proposed Equal Rights Amendment and the women's liberation movement are working effectively.

Nearly every community is plagued with the common evils of liquor, beer, gambling, and prostitution. These must be driven out. Our public schools have largely been lost but there is still hope in some areas. You must get involved to have a positive influence. P.T.A.'s must feel our influence. Christians need to be active, participating members of these and similar groups.

We need elders who will recognize the need and bring in qualified Christian leaders to educate and inform their congregations in these areas. We need preachers and elders to stand up publicly and lead the members into affirmative action.

We need the boldness to go to City Council and make our demands known. We must get over the shrinking timidity so common among us in these

in the example of the church where I preach toward my family. We are furnished a house with all utilities paid. The church pays all of our health and life insurance. They put money every month into my IRA Retirement Account. We are given a sufficient weekly cash support. In addition to all of that, I am given \$50 per week (not per month) for an auto expense. Beloved, your preacher can't find the answers to these problems in the "Shell Answer Man." The answers are found in you, the leadership of the church.—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101

areas. We must go to the press and visual media and ask to be heard. We need to be strong, determined and stubborn in our resistance to the damning social and moral evils.

We must be willing to run the risk of being ridiculed, misrepresented and even slandered and attacked by the opposition who cherish their evil privileges and desperately wish to preserve them. This definitely is not the route of comfortable discipleship.

We must be intelligent and Biblical in our opposition. The ignorant rantings of the backwoods preacher gains nothing but derision. Leaders, however, will listen when we speak calmly, rationally and factually. Truth is still the best weapon in our arsenal (John 8:32).

We must be willing to invest our funds in this fight. Only when we are willing to spend and be spent will we win the battle in our arena (I Cor. 12:15). Our founding fathers declared their willingness to risk their lives, liberty and fortunes when they declared our independence from Great Britain. Nothing less could have brought about the victory. It is extremely costly to wage a successful war against entrenched evil.

We need strong backing from fellow Christians for those who are out front in the thick of the battle. Many preachers are hesitant to step out in such fights for fear of losing the support of their congregations and ultimately their jobs. This ought not so to be.

We must not only be against things bad, but we must be for things wholesome and good. It is never healthy to be always "against" something.

We will have to be willing to work with other groups in our community in addition to churches of Christ. Alone we do not have enough numbers or clout to make our voice heard. Without compromising in doctrinal or spiritual matters we can cooperate with civic groups, patriotic groups, as well as religious groups who share our concern for basic public morality.

Can we really complain how bad the world has become if we have never lifted a hand to drive the devil out? May we who have volunteered for Messiah's army now step forward with eager hearts to volunteer ourselves to be the front line assault troops to take the battle into Satan's domain and drive his alien armies forever out of our land.—Rt. 22, Beaver Ridge, Rd., Knoxville, TN 37921

Pressing On!

Continued from page 1

begin immediately to search for a group of people who have restored the worship, the life and the teaching of the blood-bought church of Jesus Christ. Determine that you will become a member of that body by believing in Christ as the Son of God, turning from sin in your life, and, after confessing the sweet name of your Lord, be immersed in water for the remission of sins. The Lord will then add you to his church, and you will be able to assist his cause as you go through life, ever looking forward to the beautiful home of the soul. Let us ever press on!—8900 Manchaca Rd, Austin, Texas 39345



Words Of Truth

"I am the

voice that speaks forth

Isaiah 61:1-3
Matthew 23:23-25
Matthew 26:25

(USPS 691-76)

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FRIDAY, JULY 27, 1979

NUMBER 30

May I Not Wash In Them?

These words are found in II Kings 5:12. They were spoken by Naaman, a Syrian leper. He had been told by Elisha to go wash seven times in the Jordan. His counter proposal was that he wash in the rivers of Damascus. He even asked if they were not better than all the waters of Israel. He now wants to know, in spite of the prophet's instructions, whether he might wash in them and be clean. It seems to me that this reveals an attitude and sets forth some needed lessons.



WINFRED CLARK

He Claims A Promise Where None Is Offered. Notice, he wants to know if he might not wash in them (the rivers of Damascus) and be clean. Surely, he could wash in those rivers all he wanted to. I don't know of anybody that would stop him. But to hope to be clean by so doing is expecting something that had not been promised. In fact, I don't know of many preachers that would tell you he would have been cleansed in those waters. They would say, "The promise is tied to washing in the Jordan." Surely, they would be right for they would be saying what the prophet said.

In view of that, what of the promise of salvation in connection with baptism (Mark 16:15-16)? Jesus plainly said that he that believeth and is baptized would be saved. Would one hope to claim the same promise and ignore baptism? No, not anymore than Naaman could hope to claim cleansing and ignore the Jordan. Yet, people claim salvation by faith only, by praying through, or at some other point other than where Jesus placed it in Mark 16:15-16. Do you really think men can hope to obtain such while ignoring the word of the Lord? Surely not. The promise is tied to

the command.

A Matter Of Faith Is Made A Matter Of Opinion. Faith comes of hearing God's Word (Romans 10:17). The prophet, Elisha, spoke God's word. Naaman knew and understood what Elisha had said. It was not a matter of misunderstanding. In fact, both he and his servants understood what was said. They all knew he was to wash seven times in the Jordan. Yet, he would inject his own human opinion into the matter and make what Elisha said only a matter of opinion. If he could make Abana and Parpar, Rivers of Damascus, equal to or better than the Jordan, he makes the whole thing a matter of opinion. For the introduction of these rivers was surely only a matter of opinion. On the other hand, the washing in Jordan was a matter of faith.

But all the Naamans are not dead. We still have some modern ones. If you think not, bring up the Bible teaching concerning the church. Talk about the "one body" (Eph. 4:4). When you do this you will hear people begin to bring in the rivers of Damascus, as it were. They will talk about good folks in all churches, or the church of ones choice. The choice

then becomes a matter of a opinion. This is said in spite of Ephesians 4:4 and other such passages that show there is but one church. Some will even talk of the "pitfalls of distinctiveness".

Such Sets Aside A Plain Command. When Naaman made this statement, he is in reality, asking whether or not what the prophet had said could be set aside for what he thought. He would wash, it is true, but where does he want to wash? If he could ignore the *where* why couldn't he ignore the *what*? If he could substitute the place why not the washing? The Jordan was as much a part of the command as the washing. Likewise, take a look at baptism. Baptism is in water (John 3:5; Acts 8:36-39). But baptism requires a burial (Rom. 6:2-5; Col. 2:12). Now, would you substitute the element? No, surely not. Would you substitute the method? Many do, and call sprinkling baptism. This reveals an attitude like Naaman. Such would set aside plain commands or examples.

May we ever guard our hearts to see that our attitude toward God's word is what it should be.—P.O. Box 1025, Athens, AL 35611

Good As His Word

Earlene Rose

Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

—Proverbs 27:1

*He never opposed the work to be done.
As he saw a great need, he was the one
To say that this work would surely do good,
And he would help gladly—whenever he could.*

*He never condemned those who brought things to
Mind
that needed his help, and when he could find
The time he would willingly help any way,*

But he was so sorry that he could not today.

*Today was so filled, but tomorrow he would
Do all the good works that he knew he should,
But of these good works, no one has yet heard.
His word was "tomorrow;" he was good as
his word.*

—1608 24 Street, Northport, AL 35476



Words Of Truth

... am not man, most men, ...
... but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness.

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Cowards

Among the multitudes populating hell will be **COWARDS** (Rev. 21:8).

Every person in every age has to struggle with the temptation to run, to hide from the challenges of life. To escape these difficult decisions many purposely close their eyes and turn away, lest they be forced to act. The world desperately looks for men who are "strong and very courageous" to lead the way (Josh. 1:7).



JOHN WADDEY

The call for courage comes in many areas of life. It may be courage to stand up to the bully and defend one's rights. It may be the ability to make right decisions in the face of great pressures to choose the opposite, or to compromise, or to make no decision at all. For some it is the ability to resist temptation and the pressure of peers to engage in forbidden or questionable activities. Then there is the father who needs courage to guide his adolescent children in the right paths by saying no when all the others are doing the doubtful deed. In the church, courage is needed by elders and preachers who must deal with factious brethren and false teachers. There is a special need for moral courage among God's people to stand up and fight against the great evils of our day. God is still searching for men to "stand in the gap" and build upon the walls of morality (Ezek. 22:30).

We live in a generation when sin runs rampant in the streets. The face of every large American city is covered with ugly sores. There are the massage parlors (houses of prostitution), adult bookstores (porno shops) and X-rated movies (flesh flicks), nude bars and gay hangouts (sodomy shops). Every faithful Christian is against such vices as these. Nearly every preacher has spoken out against them. Really, it takes no special courage for God's men to decry these evils to God's people. The test is, will we take our message and protest out of our haven of rest into the enemy's den? Nothing less than this will win the battle.

While most can muster up enough courage to resist the sleazy sinners named above, there is another vice

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FROM

THE EDITOR

A Question About Pants Suits

Frequently our mail brings some question from a reader about some Bible subject. Most of the time we answer these questions in individual letters. Needless to say, this requires a great deal of time, and often the inquirer must wait several days for a reply. Occasionally we receive a question which we feel merits an answer on the pages of **WORDS OF TRUTH**. Such is the nature of the one which is the subject of this article.

A reader in a city far

removed from Jasper, Alabama wants to know about the propriety of women's pants suits. Are they proper at all? Should they be worn to worship? Are they men's clothing?

In the first place, trousers are not necessarily and essentially men's garments; and men's garments are not necessarily and essentially trousers. For example, the kilt, which is actually a knee-length, pleated skirt, is a garment worn by men in the Scottish Highlands. In Bible times there is no indication that the common dress of men included trousers. As a matter of fact, the indication is that the common dress of men did not include trousers. Exodus 28:42 commands that the priests were to wear "linen breeches to cover their nakedness" when they were serving at the altar or ministering in the tabernacle. The fact these "linen breeches" are mentioned only in connection with the priestly garments, and that for the purpose of covering their nakedness while they were performing their priestly duties, would indicate that trousers were not the common garment of men in Bible times.

In view of these facts, it is a misuse of the scripture to find a verse which prohibits women's wearing men's garments, and then to try to prove from that verse that it is sinful for a woman to wear long pants.



BOB DUNCAN

By what verse in the Bible is one able to show that long pants belong essentially to men?

Incidentally, the passage in Deuteronomy 22:5 is a prohibition of women's dressing so as to look like men, or men's dressing so as to look like women. God has always intended for men to look like men and women like women. Whatever kind of dress one might wear which would tend to conceal the identity of his sex would have violated the law of Moses, and is a violation of the New Testament (Cf. I Corinthians 11). Women's pants suits do not tend to do so, although some garments, and especially hair styles, being worn by both men and women, do tend to do so. It is the conviction of this writer that the short hair on women and long hair on men present a much greater problem in this respect than do the women's pants suits.

In the second place, what about wearing them to worship? We are dealing here with a matter of judgment and taste. As a matter of personal judgment this writer believes it would be better for women not to wear pants suits to worship. The worship of the Almighty is not a casual matter; and we should not dress casually to engage therein. Besides this, there are many women who cannot appear neat and tidy except in a nicely fitted dress. Certainly these should not wear a pants suit to worship.

In congregations where the eldership has requested that women not wear pants suits to worship the matter should be forever settled. Every faithful Christian woman is a woman who wants to cooperate with the overseers of the congregation. At Sixth Avenue in Jasper, Alabama where we preach, the elders requested that pants suits not be worn to worship. They have as much right to request this as they have to request that all those taking a leading part in the worship wear coats and ties.

One closing thought: The wearing of pants suits, even to worship, is more decent and modest, and much preferred by this writer, than the wearing of the mini-skirts so popular just a short time ago. Now watch this: The next major problem we will have with women's dress in worship is going to be the dress that is long enough, but split up the side so as to expose in a provocative way the thigh of the wearer.

The Wisdom Of Men

JOHNNY RAMSEY

In I Corinthians 2:1-5 the great apostle Paul solidly stated the firm foundation upon which he stood. He made it crystal clear that the preaching of the Cross would cause men to place their faith in the power of God instead of the nebulous wisdom of men. Today we continually need this exact emphasis. High sounding theological arguments or towering monuments of sophistry will not save the sin-burdened souls of mankind. Plain, thrilling, uncontaminated Truth is the basic ingredient missing in so many lives and so many sermons. America and the world stand on the very threshold of damnation and utter ruin because of the glaring lack of dynamic, straightforward, uncompromising Bible preaching. Elbert Hubbard was very perceptive when he stated: "Theology is an attempt to explain a subject by men who do not understand it. The intent is not to tell the truth but to satisfy the questioner." If you have ever listened to a man who knows a lot of homiletics,

philosophy and textual criticism but very little about the Bible you can well appreciate the foregoing statement. Far too many preachers today are studying what men say about the Bible rather than what the good Book says about men!

In James, chapter 3, we read the vivid contrast between man's wisdom and God's wisdom. There is a chasm vast and wide and the wisdom of the world shuns the power of the gospel because it is just not sophisticated enough for the arrogant leaders of society. However, the very message they reject will rise up to haunt them in Judgment (John 12:48; Romans 2:16). We ought always to remember the brilliant statement of Solomon: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." When any man, who claims to be a gospel preacher, refuses to proclaim the simple message of Christianity he chooses a

Continued on page 4

A Review Of The Teachings Of John Clayton

(No. 12)

In 1971 Dr. Thomas B. Warren, then Chairman of the Department of the Bible at Freed-Hardeston College in Henderson, Tennessee, authored a small but powerful book entitled *A Time For Sound Doctrine In A Day of Liberalism*. Within the 63 pages of that small book, Dr. Warren made an urgent plea for brethren to awake to the dangers of Biblical compromises in whatever form they might raise their ugly heads.



BERT THOMPSON

Dr. Warren states emphatically: "We must stand up and be counted in the matter of the fact that truth must be defended.... We must defend the truth and we must defend it at the very point at which it is being attacked!.... We must have objective and universal truth.... We must recognize the importance of doctrine!" (pp 45, 46, 47, 48; emphasis in the original text).

I could hardly agree more with Dr. Warren! As I pen this and the succeeding closing articles of this series, I am made keenly aware that in regard to the teachings of John Clayton it is — now, more than ever — "a time for sound doctrine in a day of liberalism!" Those of us who have studied, in depth, the teachings of John Clayton know assuredly that he is espousing an "evolutionary-creationism" — a subtle form of the perverted theistic evolution which believers of the Biblical account of creation oppose so much. Though he adamantly denies teaching theistic evolution, "a rose by any other name is still a rose" (to coin an old adage). His modified gap theory (see pp. 147-148 of his book, *THE SOURCE*) makes it abundantly clear that such verses as Genesis 1:1-31, Exodus 20:11, Exodus 31:17, Matthew 19:4, Mark 10:6, and others are to be dispensed with and the "thus saith the Lord" replaced with a "thus saith John Clayton." Some among us, who are more influenced with persuasive speaking abilities and advanced degrees than we are by "proof-text" Bible teaching, are quick to remark, "Well, brother Clayton has two M.S. degrees and is a scientist. He is intelligent and certainly must know that of which he speaks so eloquently."

Intimidation is the name of the game. In philosophical circles, it is termed "prestige jargon." If a person can use fancy words, extended phrases, and sweeping generalizations to sway an audience, he can manipulate the audience and so intimidate them to the point that they are forced to remark, "Well, he 'sounds' right, so he must be right." This "prestige jargon" fallacy is a favorite tool of evolutionary scientists of our day and time. It is easy to "win" an audience by speaking in flowing terms of "the biogenetic law of embryonic recapitulation," or "Mendelian hereditary characteristics of an uncontrolled diverse population in the ecological niche." But we so often fail to recognize that Charlie Brown was correct when he once shouted to Lucy (in the "Peanuts" comic strip of such renown): "You're not right; you just sound right!"

There is no doubt that brother Clayton holds two M.S. degrees, is a converted atheist, has a masterful command of the English language, and can sway an audience through his powerful charisma. But these are not the important points in this discussion. The important point is this: Which shall we accept — a "thus saith the Lord" or a "thus saith John Clayton"? There are simply too many instances (as our previous articles have shown) where John Clayton's "thus saith" doesn't agree with the Lord's "thus saith." We are forced to make a choice

between the two. What shall we do? What shall we do?

Brother Clayton says the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, were not created in 6 literal 24-hour days (*THE SOURCE*, pp. 147-148). Exodus 20:11 and Exodus 31:17 state just the opposite. Brother Clayton states: "In Genesis 1:2 I'm told by the Hebrew scholars the most accurate reading is that the earth 'became without form and void' and some have suggested that maybe a tremendous number of years passed between the first part of Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2" (*Evolution's Proof of God*, Tape). Yet there is not to be found on the market today any standard, reliable translation of the Bible which places "became" in Genesis 1:2. Now whom are we to believe — John Clayton with his assertion that "became" belongs in Genesis 1:2 (thereby leaving the way open completely for this "modified gap theory") or the hundreds of renowned Hebraists who have faithfully translated the multiplicity of standard translations without the word "became" in Genesis 1:2? Whom are we to believe? Clayton states adamantly that man "is a very recent new-comer to this planet" (*Does God Exist*, correspondence course, 8). Yet Jesus himself stated that "But from the beginning of the creation, Male and female made he them" (Mark 10:6). Whom are we to believe? Jesus or John Clayton? Of one thing we may be sure — both cannot be right. We must make a choice. It is truly "a time for sound doctrine in a day of liberalism!"

I respectfully submit to the readers of *WORDS OF TRUTH*, and to all who may come in contact with this series of articles, that brother Clayton's stand on "evolutionary-creationism" differs from out-and-out

theistic evolution *only in degree, not kind!* And I do not make this statement lightly. I have conferred with the co-author of this series, brother Wayne Jackson, before placing the above statement here for all to read, and he concurs wholeheartedly. The evidence is simply too abundant, and too clear, and too weighty, for us to state otherwise. We stand firm that the "evolutionary-creationism" of brother Clayton is in direct contradiction to plain and simple Bible teaching regarding the important Biblical doctrine of creation. As Dr. Warren stated (see quote at first of article): "We must recognize the importance of doctrine!" Truly, brethren, we must! Let us be about our task, though at times it is unpleasant and distasteful to us. The Bible states very plainly that the "Days" of Genesis 1, beginning with day one, were composed of "an evening and a morning". Based on that truth, the Bible gives us important ages of the great patriarchs (Methuselah, 969 years; Lamech, 777 years; Peleg, 239 years; Noah, 930 years; etc). Yet brother Clayton steps in with a "thus saith John Clayton" to negate completely these plain Bible statements and render them completely absurd and useless with his "Doctrine" (based on evolutionary assumptions) that these ages could not possibly be correct, and are in need of serious adjustment (see *Does God Exist* monthly bulletin, June 1978; also see *Words of Truth*, August 18, 1978 for an excellent refutation of this unsound doctrine in an article by brother Jackson entitled "Methuselah's Age"). Whom shall we believe? Do we allow ourselves to be intimidated by impressive "facts and figures" and persuasive speech, or do we accept a "thus saith the Lord"? Brethren, what will we do? What will we do? — 1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840

Hell Is No Fable

It is my intention to bring to your attention the reality of hell, the eternal abode of the wicked. Jeremiah of old asked the question, "What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?" (Jer. 13:21). When the warnings are realized and the wrath inflicted, what will you say then? Hell is not a very pleasing subject to think about, and many shut it out of their minds. Jesus asked of the scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Mt. 23:33). The argument given by many is, "God is too good to let anyone go to hell." We must never forget the goodness of God, but let us never overlook the severity of God (Lev. 10:1-2)? How would Uzzah feel about the severity of God (II Sam. 6:3-8)? Our nature should be to serve his goodness, but many will refuse (Mt. 7:13-14). But thanks be to God that you and I can insure our eternal destiny by obedience to his will (Heb. 11:6; Lk. 13:3; Mt. 10:32; Mk. 16:16; Rev. 2:10). On the other hand, one can insure his eternal destiny in hell by disobedience to God (II Thess. 1:7-9).

I personally feel that many people really do not believe that there is a place called hell. All men can think of in this life is the fun they are having. Very seldom do they realize that this so-called fun is rushing them head-long into hell, the place they don't think about. Two separate religious surveys were



JOHN SHAVER

taken asking religious (?) teachers if they believed there was a place called hell. In the first survey, forty eight percent did not believe in hell; in the second survey, seventy-two percent did not believe there is a hell. I am afraid that this idea is even prevalent in the church of our Lord. Could one imagine the change of attitude in the church today if all of the members actually believed in a place called hell? There would be an outbreak of evangelism such as the world has never seen. There would be no delinquent members, no slack attendance, and no worldly members. Elders, deacons, preachers, teachers, personal workers would be unstoppable in their assigned responsibilities. But such is not the case because many members of the church do not see the reality of hell. Many have a false idea of Satan, and this causes us to view him as silly or foolish, and this is just what he wants. To view Satan as a foolish character, running around in a red suit, with a long tail and horns is dangerous. He is anything but foolish. He is deadly! Many jokes are told about hell on the job, radio and television. It is hard to think that something is dangerous and deadly while we are joking about it. Hell is no joking matter!

God intends for man to learn about hell, for it is mentioned over and over in his word. The rich man learned his lesson too late (Lk. 16:19-31). If we don't learn this lesson of hell now, we'll surely learn it later. Hell is not a place where one will go for just a short time. Hell is eternal! Some say that eternity is time; not so, for time can be measured. Let us learn some lessons from the account in Luke 16. The rich man found that death is final and there is no second chance (Heb. 9:27). He learned of an eternal guilty conscience, for he could remember his life on earth, his brother's lost condition, and the word of God which he denied (Lk. 16:25-31). He learned that God

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The Wisdom Of Men

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course that will condemn him and his audience. When anyone sells his mind to Satan for use in teaching error or veiling Truth he becomes a mental prostitute. There can be no crime more serious. We may live in a highly educated, secularized and mobilized age but it still takes plain vanilla Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38 and Galatians 3:27 to save a soul. While the souls of men

are dying in sin for want of gospel preaching let us not be found at the shrine of theology drooling over vague and conflicting dogmas that may sound ever so brilliant. The tremendous vocabulary of a university professor may be the source of pride for some people but it has seldom been the cause of conversion for anyone.

I have actually listened to some men on Lectureship programs who speak in such high-sounding terms that one would think it was an unknown tongue. Such orators would probably name their stray dog *Phydeaux* (that's French for *Fido*, don't you see?). —8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78745.

Cowards

Continued from page 2

that often finds a comfortable place in our communities with virtually no opposition. I speak of abortion clinics. An abortion clinic is a chamber where evil doctors kill innocent unborn human babies for hire. Of course, the mothers conspire with their physicians. God has always hated hands that shed innocent blood (Prov. 6:16-17). This year 1 1/2 million babies will die in these death houses. You wonder why don't people do something about this? The answer is lack of awareness. We all can spot the enemy if he is obviously evil, but the abortionist doctor looks like any other healer of men. Abortion nurses resemble angels of mercy. Women who have aborted their babes look like all other typical ladies. The public mind still clings to the old image of the physician who graduated under the sacred Oath of Hippocrates, swearing "never to help a woman procure an abortion." We must realize, however, that we live in a new day as far as the medical profession is concerned. A new ethic is evolving. A few years ago the editor of *The California Journal of Medicine* made this observation:

"The reverence of each and every human

life has been a keystone of western medicine, and is the ethic which has caused physicians to try to preserve, protect, repair, prolong, and enhance every human life. . . Since the old ethic has not yet been fully displaced, it has been necessary to separate the idea of abortion from the idea of killing which continues to be socially abhorrent. . . it is suggested that this schizophrenic sort of subterfuge is necessary because, while a new ethic is being accepted, the old one has not yet been rejected."

Certainly not all physicians are willing to kill for money, but some are and their number is growing daily. Tragically I am too often learning of "Christian" doctors whose hands are stained with the innocent blood of the unborn (Gen. 4:10-11). Although the white frocked killers in the medical clinics do not outwardly look the same as the drug pusher, porno peddler or street pimp, they are no less evil. Their sins must be condemned.

A few years ago one might have pled ignorance in reference to this monstrous evil. Every week the news

deals with the fact of it. Scores of books and pamphlets have attacked it. Qualified men are speaking extensively to the issue. If you have shunned your responsibility in this matter, read Prov. 24:11-12 and tremble.

Have we the courage to "cry aloud and spare not" to remind God's people of this evil (Is. 58:1)? More than this, have we the courage to move out of our "SANCTUARIES" (birds have sanctuaries) into the field of conflict and do battle with the baby killers? Can you stand on the sidelines and watch while the innocents perish? Can we close our eyes and walk away? Have you ever wondered why God styles his word the Sword of the Spirit? (Eph. 6:17).

"There are two kinds of injustice; the first is found in those who do an injury, the second is those who fail to protect another from injury when they can" (Cicero).

"The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who in a period of moral crisis, maintain their neutrality" (Dante).

Hell Is No Fable

Continued from page 3

meant what he said, and this is one of the most difficult tasks of preachers today—convincing people of the sincerity of God. He learned that hell is no fable or joke. He learned that it is a reality (Mt. 25:41), a place of outer darkness (Mt. 25:30), and eternal separation from God (II Thess. 1:7-9).

If you are among the great majority, who by their own volition inherit hell for their eternal abode, and

are indifferent and careless about their souls salvation, may you see just who will be there with you. The majority (Mt. 7:13-14), the talent wasters (Mt. 25:14-30), the forsakers of the assembly (Heb. 10:25-29), all of the ungodly (Rev. 21:8; Gal. 5:19-21), all of the erring children of God (Mt. 13:41-42), and all those who know not God (II Thess. 1:7-9). The rich man learned his lesson too late. Why don't you take advantage of the knowledge you have gained and

start living for God rather than Satan? If the rich man could cry out to you, what would his message be? "Believe that there is a place called hell, and strive not to enter therein, for hell is no fable!" The warning of Amos rings out over the eons of time: "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12). Are you ready to meet God?—Rt. 10, Box 186 B, Jasper, AL 35501

Is The Preacher The Pastor Of The Church?

Pastors are spoken of in Eph. 4:11. The Greek word for pastor is "Poimen." The meaning is "a shepherd." All of us know that a shepherd tends to the flock.

Is the preacher the individual designated by God to take care of the flock? The Bible answers with an emphatic *no*. In Acts 20:17-18 Paul, who was at Miletus, sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus and they came unto him. I want to draw your attention to verse 28 of this chapter as he spoke to these elders. Listen carefully:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you



KEN TYLER

overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." This passage plainly teaches that elders are to feed and take care of the flock. If the word pastor means "a shepherd" and these elders were told to take heed to the flock and feed it, we must conclude that an elder is a pastor. Keep in mind that these men were to take care of the flock in Ephesus. Of course, the flock and church are the same.

Peter further proves this point. He told elders to "feed the flock of God which is among you" (I Pet. 5:2). Remember, the word pastor means a shepherd. All of us know that shepherds tend the flock. Peter told these elders to "feed the flock of God which is among you." Therefore, we must conclude that elders and pastors are the same.

The qualifications men must meet in order to be able to serve as pastors are set forth in I Tim. 3, Tit. 1, and I Pet. 5. There are individuals going around today wearing the name pastor who are not even married, much less have believing children, which are two of the qualifications that must be met for a man to serve

as a pastor. We have three men who serve as the elders of the church in Arab. They, not the preachers are the pastors of the church. This is what the Bible teaches.

A preacher can serve as a pastor only if he meets the qualifications for pastors and has been appointed as one of the pastors. I Peter 5:1 tells us that Peter was an elder. Listen to him: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder." Yes, a preacher can be a pastor, but he must meet certain qualifications and be appointed by the local church.

The idea that the preacher rules the church is wrong. According to the Bible the elders are the overseers of the flock. I believe you can see this is what the New Testament teaches. Acts 14:23 instructs us that each congregation is to have elders to take care of the flock. Does the church you are a member of have elders, or is the preacher called the pastor? My friends, may we follow the New Testament pattern? Examine the church you are a member of and ask, "where are the elders?" If we want to go to heaven we must follow God's pattern.

No, the preacher is not the pastor of the church.



Words Of Tr.

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak in
the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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NUMBER 31

Does God Answer Prayers Today?

Does God answer prayers today when the Christian petitions heaven? One may either reply with one of two extremes or with the truth. The charismatic person believes every prayer is answered with a "no" from God or a miracle. Some believe God replies with a "no" or if what you asked comes to pass, it was a coincidence. If God answers our prayers today, how does he do so?



RAY HAWK

our prayers today, how

I believe we need to recognize a few Biblical principles before we may understand how God answers our prayers. Notice that we are under natural law today. Natural law is not supernatural law. When a child is born, it is not a miracle under supernatural law, but is under natural law. Jesus pointed out to Nicodemus: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (John 3:6). Birth was not viewed by the Son of God as miraculous.

A tree grows in a natural way. You have a seed, a sower, and a field (Luke 8:5-8). Wine is made by grapes which ferment into wine. It is a natural process. To provide food, we must plant and harvest (Ephesians 4:28). To gain knowledge, we must study (II Timothy 2:15). When someone gets well from a sickness, it is divine healing, but not miraculous divine healing (I Timothy 5:23). All of this is performed by following natural law.

In the Bible we notice supernatural law superceding natural law when God so directs. Adam was created (Genesis 2:7), not born naturally. Jehovah created trees in the beginning (Genesis 1:11), but not now. Jesus changed water to wine (John 2:9), but that was not natural, but rather supernatural. Israel ate manna (Deuteronomy

8:3), but we must work for our bread. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:21), but today we must study to know God's will. Lame men were healed miraculously and immediately (Acts 3:6, 7), but today they must settle for hospitals, medicine, and time to heal.

A good example of divine healing is Timothy. He lived in the age of miracles but was healed in a non-miraculous way! Paul instructed him to "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities (I Timothy 5:23). Trophimus "have I left at Miletum sick," said Paul (II Timothy 4:20), indicating that no miracle was being performed, and that Trophimus had to get well just like you and I. His healing was divine healing, but not miraculous divine healing! Another example of this KIND of healing is found in the example of Epaphroditus. Paul told the Philippians, "He had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him" (Philippians 2:26, 27). How did God have mercy on him? God healed him. Miraculously? There is no indication that it was. How was he healed? Divine healing through medicine, doctors, hospitals, and convalescence. Their natural means of healing may not have been as modern nor as technical as our's, but it was sufficient to bring about his healing. Was prayer used in his behalf? Paul said, "Pray without ceasing" (I Thessalonians 5:17), so he and others would have prayed for Epaphroditus.


Examples of miraculous divine healing show that it is different from divine healing in that it involves supernatural powers that cause immediate healing without medicine, operations, doctors, or convalescence. The lame man is a good example of miraculous divine healing (Acts 3:6-8; 4:16). He had been lame since birth. He had to be carried wherever he went. He was healed immediately. He walked and leaped as if he had always done so. The miracle could not be denied, even by the enemies of Christ. Dorcas is another example (Acts 9:36-42). She

had died. Peter raised her from the dead. To speak of some event or healing as miraculous today is to misuse the word and not as defined by God in the New Testament!

In Philippians 2:27 we have found that God had mercy on Epaphroditus by healing him. Here was God's providence (care) working during the miraculous era. God's providence does not need the miraculous to work. In the book of Esther we see God's providence to deliver his people from Haman. Mordecai told Esther, "For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14). God delivered Israel through Esther. Yet, the book does not mention the name of God anywhere! God's providence without miracles.

We need to understand that even during the miraculous period, God answered prayers by providence with a "No," a "Yes," or a "Wait awhile." In the miraculous period, people got sick (II Timothy 4:20). Prayer was offered for them (I Thessalonians 5:17). Some got well (Philippians 2:25-30). Some died (Acts 12:2). Prayer offered by God's people for James was answered through God's providence as "No." Did James want to live? Did he himself pray for deliverance? Did he look forward to the sword? Perhaps because James was killed with the sword and Peter was next on the list, is the reason the church was skeptical of Rhoda's announcement that Peter had been delivered and was standing outside the door. Peter's deliverance, in this case was miraculous, but since James was not delivered, they may have felt that it was not God's will to deliver Peter. Remember, even in the day of miracles, James the brother of our Lord still said, "For that ye ought to say. If the Lord will, we

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691 760)

I am not mad most noble Pre-
tense, but speak forth the Words of
Truth and substance — Acts 26:25

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The Lord's Day

In the Bible the seventh day of the week is distinguished from all other days in that it was given a name, the sabbath day. The first day of the week is also distinguished from all other days in that it was given a name, the Lord's day. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10.). Reasons which the Bible gives for this distinction, including the purposes for observing each of those respective days and the utility of each day, represent and demonstrate the differences between the Old and the New Testaments, between the law of Moses and the gospel of Christ.



W.C. QUILLEN

The first day of the week was not made sacred by legal enactment, as was the sabbath day. Nor do we observe it by compulsion or force on penalty of death, as the Israelites were required to keep the sabbath. If this were true, it would be out of harmony and incompatible with the religion of Christ and everything connected with it.

It would be no more appropriate to coerce one to assemble on the Lord's day on penalty of physical punishment, then to coerce him to partake of the Lord's Supper, sing praise to God, give of his money into the Lord's treasure, or pray to God in the name of Christ, on penalty of physical punishment.

Under the old covenant, people were required to be circumcised, keep the sabbath, pay their tithes, give of their first fruit on pain of physical punishment. In Christ, we are free from the bondage of the law, and all service that we render to God in Christ must be willingly, fully, cheerfully, and freely rendered, if we are acceptable to him.

In keeping with this principle of freedom in Christ, the Lord's day is to be observed by Christians in worship, praise and thanksgiving, rendered voluntarily from hearts of redeemed souls, as free children of God, and not as slaves under compulsion.

We need to get away from that fearful, slavish

Continued on page 4



Is It A Sin Not To Marry?

A preacher is reported to have preached that no normal and healthy adult can be a faithful Christian without getting married. We have no way of knowing what point the preacher was trying to make, or even if the person who told us this properly understood what was said. But we have been asked to deal with the question of whether or not it is a sin for one not to marry.



BOB DUNCAN

There can be no questioning the fact that marriage is an institution of God, and that it was designed for humanity's happiness and well-being, as well as for the procreation of the human race. Even while Adam was still in the Garden of Eden, God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone..." (Genesis 2:18).

Marriage provides the opportunity for love and companionship sorely needed by most, if not all, human beings. Marriage provides the only legitimate means for the gratification of our God-given sexual appetites. Marriage provides the opportunity of being a part of someone with whom we share our heartaches and happiness, our joys and sorrows, our victories and defeats. Marriage provides the only ideal situation for bringing children into the world and helping them to grow and develop into the kind of men and women God wants them to be. Everything said or done to demean marriage is an impeachment of the wisdom and goodness of the Almighty. Those who try to enjoy the good things of marriage while circumventing marriage itself are destined to experience bitter disappointment in this life and eternal punishment in that to come.

But all of this does not prove that one cannot live faithfully the Christian life without getting married. The apostle Paul was not married (I Corinthians 7:7), though he made it plain that he had a right to be had he so chosen (9:5). He also told certain ones that it would be better for them to remain unmarried provided they could do so without burning in the lust of the flesh. But he hastened to add that those who could not do so should marry (7:8,9). Verse 11 of this chapter gives the wife who has departed from her husband a choice of either (1) remaining unmarried or (2) being reconciled to her husband.

While the things said in this chapter certainly point up the pitfalls of going through life without a marriage partner, they do make it abundantly plain that it is possible for one to live in harmony with the will of God and not be married. Were such not the case, then it would be utterly impossible for some to go to heaven. Or to say the least, some would be faced with trying to go to heaven while married to one who is not fit to be married and who is doing everything in his power to keep his spouse from serving the Lord.

In I Timothy 4:1 Paul wrote of some who

would depart from the faith and would give heed to "doctrines of devils." In connection with this he said these who would depart from the faith would forbid marriage. To make a religious ordinance forbidding marriage is to depart from the faith and to follow doctrines of devils. Why? Because marriage is mandatory? No, but because marriage is optional. It would be just as much a departure from the faith and a doctrine of devils to make marriage mandatory as it would be to forbid it. Why? Because marriage is sinful? No, but because marriage is optional. We have no right either to forbid or make mandatory that which God has left optional.

If it be argued that no normal human being can live faithfully the Christian life out of wedlock because it is impossible to control the desire of the flesh, we would call attention to the fact that this is an indictment against every healthy teen-ager, every healthy married person whose spouse has become invalid, every healthy widow and widower, and every healthy and normal person in the world who is not married. We doubt that any gospel preacher is really ready to make such an indictment.

Servant Or Not?

KENT TYLER

Listen to the beginning remarks of Jude's Epistle. "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." In this article I want us to turn our attention to the phrase "the servant of Jesus Christ." Examine your life and see if you are really a servant of the Lord.

"The word 'servant' is translated from a word (doulos) which literally signifies a slave (cf. the margin of the ASV), though with this difference: doulos designates one who gladly surrenders his will to another, a disposition not always characteristic of literal slaves, but eminently true of all who resign their wills to that of the Lord. The service is absolute and unrestrained, but willing and rendered from motives of love, and gratitude and joy. The word appears in the introductions to the Epistles of Romans, Philippians, Titus, James and II Peter" (Guy N. Woods, Commentary on Peter, John and Jude, P. 382).

As you can see the statement "the servant of Jesus Christ" is one that means Christ is my master and what he wants I will seek after, because I love him and appreciate what he has done for me. After understanding the meaning of the word "servant" can you truthfully say that you are the servant of Jesus Christ? Does your life center around what Christ wants? Are you striving with all of your might to please Christ? John said, "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). Many claim to be servants of Christ, but their lives show they are not telling the truth.

Jude was the servant of Jesus Christ. May all of us be servants of Christ, realizing if we are not we cannot dwell with him in heaven. — Box 376, Arab, Al. 35016

A Review Of The Teachings Of John Clayton

(No. 13)

“Thus Saith The Lord” Or Thus Saith John Clayton?”

It is the firm conviction of this writer that the entire issue which we are currently discussing — John Clayton's teachings versus those of the Bible—can best be summed up thusly: *Which shall we accept? —that which the inspired word of God says, or that which John Clayton wishes the inspired word of God said????* Brethren, this is a most serious problem, and one which shall not be dispensed with easily. What shall we do?



BERT THOMPSON

Brother Clayton flagrantly attacks the Biblical genealogies in his seminar series (I have heard him personally, in October of 1977 in Richardson, Texas) and in his taped lecture series (cf: *Evolution's Proof of God*, Tape), as being worthless for giving even estimates of the age of the earth. Brother Clayton states that the genealogies have huge gaps in them which completely invalidate them. Clayton states, "Any attempt to ascribe a specific or even a general age to either man or the Earth from a Biblical standpoint is a grievous error" (*Does God Exist*, correspondence course, Lesson 4, p. 3). Certainly most among us would agree that the genealogies cannot be used, as would agree that the genealogies cannot be used, as would agree that the genealogies cannot be used, as did Bishop Ussher and Chancellor Lightfoot, to date *exactly* when the creation of the earth or Adam occurred. However, to attack, as does brother Clayton, the genealogies and try to "stuff" 4.5 billion years of time into them for the sake of evolutionary geology is to go too far! There is no conceivable way to "cram" 4.5 billion years into the genealogies of Ezra, Luke, I chronicles, etc. and have them retain any relevance at all. The interested reader is referred to two articles which deal convincingly with this entire argument. The first is "Biblical Genealogies and Human History" in the Christian Courier, 3906 E. Main St., Stockton, CA 95205. The second is "The Antiquity of Human History" in *Words of Truth*, April 14, 1979. Both articles are from the pungent, scholarly pen of Wayne Jackson, and show the complete and utter absurdity of trying to "squeeze" 4.5 billion years into the existing genealogies. As brother Jackson states, should Clayton's system of mis-using the genealogies be correct, "it would further appear that the 'genealogies' ought henceforth to be called 'gap-e-ologies'" ("The Antiquity of Human History, *Words of Truth*, April 14, 1979). As brother Jackson concludes in the above-mentioned article, "Too, since this seems to be the era of a multiplicity of Bible versions, perhaps someone could come out with a rubberized version of the Scriptures which would contain sufficient elasticity to allow further 'scientific' discoveries. Seriously, God's people need to learn that it is the epitome of folly to be seduced by the silly assertions of infidel pseudo-scholars. The Bible is factual in its clear statements and its implied deductions, regarding the history of man. Let us trust it and study it thoroughly" (*Ibid*). What are we to believe, brethren? Do we prostitute the Biblical genealogies (and a host of other Bible statements) to modern science, so that evolutionary geology can be accommodated? Which shall it be—a "thus saith the Lord" or a "thus saith John Clayton?" Of one thing we can be sure: both cannot be correct. What shall we

believe?

The evolutionary-creationism of brother Clayton has gone too long, and too far, unchecked. Brother Clayton has aligned himself with those who, like him, suggest compromise (slight to total, as the case may be) of the Biblical doctrine of special, fiat creation at the hand of an Almighty God who did what Genesis 1 says He did. His close association with and recommendation of men such as Dan Wonderly, Donald England, and others tell more of the story than most of us realize at first glance. Brother Clayton's espousal of and acceptance of such problematic doctrines as the geological timetable, the "non-world view" of Genesis 1, evolutionary dating methods, etc., need to be fully exposed for what they really are — attempts to "baptize" evolution in some of its varied forms so that in its main tenets it is made palatable and acceptable to unknowing Christians. The fruits of this "Baptism" are bitter indeed, and I have tried to expose them, one-by-one, in my book, *THEISTIC EVOLUTION* (Lambert Book House 1977 Box 4007, Shreveport, LA 711104). I have examined these various doctrines at length, and have attempted to show the reader not only their immediate shortcomings but their bitter fruits as well. It is high time someone among us stood up to be counted for Special Creation at the hand of an almighty omniscient God who did what Genesis 1 (and other passages) state so plainly that He did!

Many of brother Clayton's statements in his books, monthly bulletins, and tapes are simply not true. Here are several examples: (1) "At one time in your life you had what essentially were gill slits" (*Evolution's Proof of God*, Tape). This is a totally untrue statement, and smacks of embryonic recapitulation, which it is intended to support. But a recent (1974) biology text will tell you plainly: "Actually, these 'gills' are alternating ridges and furrows on the right and left side of the neck. They never develop into gills. They remain covered by a thin membrane and never have a respiratory

function" (*BIOLOGY: A SEARCH FOR ORDER IN COMPLEXITY*, Zondervan, p. 434; emphasis in original text). The human embryo never has gill slits. Brother Clayton needs to correct or update his information if he intends to continue lecturing in this area. (2) "Our appendix doesn't serve any immediate useful function that we can tell....The appendix...is viewed by most people to be a vestigial organ" (*Evolution's Proof of God*, Tape). This is totally false. Dr. Robert G. Taylor, specialist in internal medicine, has reminded us: "The function of the thymus and the human appendix are beginning to be understood in the 1960's...the tonsils and the appendix help to prevent disease germs from entering the system" (CF: *After Its Kind*, Bryon Nelson, Baker Book House, pp 196-197). Today it is difficult indeed to convince a pediatrician to perform an appendectomy on a young child, because although we do not understand all we need to about the appendix, we do know it plays a vital role in our body defense system, especially in the young. To say that it is vestigial is simply incorrect. (3) "Algae and lichens were the first things to be in existence" brother Clayton states in his tape, *Evolution's Proof of God*. Yet hear Dr. R.G.E. Murray, one of the world's greatest living microbiologists, and a contributor to the "microbiologists' Bible", *Bergey's Manual of Determinative Microbiology* (1974, p. 7, "A Place For Bacteria In The Living World"): "The fossil record, although indicative of microbial life long ages before recognizable forms of life appeared, is not able to tell us anything of the order of appearance and thus contribute to phylogeny." Yet brother Clayton, who is supposed to be a creationist (by his claims) even goes farther than the evolutionist to say that "algae and lichens were the first things to be in existence," even though the evidence will not (cannot!) support such a claim. The statement by brother Clayton has no support in the Bible or in science. It is simply an erroneous assertion.—1004 Hereford College Station, Texas 77840

Who Gave Us The Bible?

JOHNNY RAMSEY

When one considers the very basic question, *Who Gave Us The Bible?*, it is quite evident that the position we occupy as Christians is the only logical stance in the religious realm. We ardently affirm that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21). Some tell us that the Bible contains only the words of brilliant men. But good, brilliant minds do not lie and the writers of Holy Scripture said over 250 times: "Thus Saith The Lord." In other words, the 8 penmen of the New Testament gladly told the world: *This is the word of God and not the fables of men* (read I Corinthians 2:13 and I Thessalonians 2:13). Over 30 Old Testament penmen acknowledged divine inspiration (See Jeremiah 1:9; Amos 1:1 and II Timothy 3:16,17). "All Scripture Is Given By Inspiration Of God." The supernatural qualities of the Bible bespeak such a source!

Brilliant, evil men would be smart enough not to give us a book that condemns them to eternal ruin. Therefore, such an hypothesis as to the origin of the Bible crumbles into absurdity. Satan would not give the world a book that disrobes himself as the perpetrator of all evil and shame. The only sensible answer as to the origin of the contents of the Bible must be the position faithful children of God have always espoused — God revealed its message and inspired the men who wrote the sacred contents of the Book of Books! Jesus told the apostles in Matthew

10:19 they would know how and what to speak. Guided into all truth (John 16:13) by the Holy Spirit the apostles spoke as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4 and John 14:26). We now have that divine revelation fully confirmed (Mark 16:20 Hebrews 2:4) in our Bibles. God is the divine Architect and not men!

It makes sense to affirm that the God who made us gave us a revelation of Himself that can be understood. Surely it makes no sense at all when the libertine in religion speaks of the love of God and then denies that our loving Creator could or would give us a message capable of being understood! If God made us and loves us He can and does reveal His will in language we can gladly receive, comprehend and obey. In John 8:31-32 we clinch this point: "If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." Since Jesus later tells us (John 17:17) that God's word is truth we can forever be assured that His word is something *we can know and understand and obey* (read Ephesians 5:17; Acts 2:41; Corinthians 1:13). It makes no sense at all to speak of a loving Father who confuses His creation. Sometimes the brilliance of the skeptic is highly suspect! Such critics often write books *they expect us to understand* in which they tell us we cannot understand the Bible. Such strange logic!—8900 Mauchaca Rd., Austin, Texas 78745

Does God Answer Prayers Today?

Continued from page 1

shall live, and do this, or that" (James 4:15). God was no less interested in James, the brother of John, than he was in Peter. If God could say "No" to his deliverance from death in the age of miracles when men could be delivered by angels (Acts 12:7), why should we be surprised if he should say "No" to our prayers

today? Just because we are faithful servants of God does not guarantee that we will not get sick. Epaphroditus did. Just because we are God's children doesn't mean we can't have some reoccurring ailment; Timothy did (I Timothy 5:23).

God in his providence (care) can deliver with-

out using miracles. He did in Esther's day, and he may in ours. But, let us not think that troubles cannot come our way, or even sadness. It did in the day of miracles and it can today. Let us remember to pray, "If the Lord will."—1461 East Chester Street, Jackson, TN 38301

The Lord's Day

Continued from page 2

spirit which is always murmuring and complaining, and asking, "Do I have to do this? Or must I do that?" when it comes to doing anything the Lord says do. Rather we should, in love for the Lord and gratitude for all of his goodness to us, ask, "What will thou have me to do, Lord? What more can I do?" The acceptableness of any service reluctantly rendered is

surely questionable. "If there first be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (II Cor. 8:12).

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Cor 3:12). Freedom to serve the Lord according to the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which makes us free from the law of sin and death" (Rom.

8:1-3)

Sacredness is attached to the first day of the week because of the great events which occurred on that day, and the teaching and example of the inspired Apostles and of early Christians in their observance of it. APOSTLES CALLED IT "THE LORD'S DAY."—P.O. Box 212 Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

Your Loved Ones In Heaven

(No. 1)

As a Christian there are many reasons why I want to go to heaven in yonder's world. As a Christian there are many reasons also why you want to go to heaven when earthly scenes are concluded. I want to go to heaven because it will be a place of rest. Jesus promised rest to those who come to him (Matt. 11:28-30). Rest is employed twice in that potent passage of preciousness. Its first mention may be the rest we receive by having our sins remitted. The second reference may well refer to heavenly rest. This thought suggested itself to the inimitable H. Leo Boles in the writing of his G.A. Commentary on Matthew more than forty years ago. Paul promised rest to the troubled saints of Thessalonica. He said in judgment that God will render tribulation to the troublers; he will recompense rest to the ones who are persecuted (II Thess. 1:6-9). Rest remains for God's people in the precious and weighty affirmation of Hebrews 4:9. The prophet of Patmos, the apostle John, affirmed in Revelation 14:13 that a royal rest awaits those who die in the Lord.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

I want to go to heaven because it is designated as a better country in Hebrews 11:16. *Better* is the key tone of Hebrews. It is used some twelve or thirteen times or an average of about once per chapter. It is applied to Christ, to his being our mediator, to his covenant of Christianity, to the promises of the gospel and to the final inheritance for the souls of all the redeemed or the righteous (Heb. 8:6; 11:16).

I want to go to heaven because it is the land of the *NOMORES*. There will be no more seas of separation or seas of turbulence (Rev. 22:1). There will be no more tears or sorrows: there will be no more pain or death (Rev. 21:4). There will be no further need of the

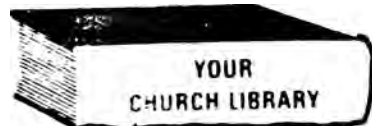
sun or of the moon (Rev. 21:23). There will be no need of a temple (Rev. 21:22). There will be no more defilement, no more abomination and no more lying (Rev. 21:27; 22:15). There will be no more night (Rev. 21:25). There will be no more curse (Rev. 22:3). There will be no more devil to tempt and no more beast and false prophet to deceive (Rev. 20:10; 19:20). There will be no more unrighteous people with their constant contaminations (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 21:27; 22:15).

I want to go to heaven because it is a new place. The aged apostle on Patmos so affirmed in the opening verses of Revelation 21. I desire that fairer and better clime because it will be a holy city, the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2). This makes it most unlike any city on earth which is usually filled with vice and overflowing with depravity and corruption. I want to go to heaven because of its radiant and striking beauty. It will be like a bride prepared for her husband (Rev. 21:2). I want to go to heaven because of the delightful descriptions which are given it in Revelation, chapters 21 and 22. Some of those delightful depictions in these two concluding chapters of Holy Writ are: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God, And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither shall there be anymore pain: for the former things are passed away.... And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall

glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life... And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare

twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it: and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever... 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. 21:1-4, 22-27; 22:1-5, 14).

The major reason why I want to go to heaven is due to the fine fellowship that will be enjoyed there. We can be with the Father (Rev. 7:15ff; 21:3). We can be with the Son of God (I Thess. 4:17; John 17:24). We can be with the Spirit of truth (Rev. 1:4). We can be with the faithful and worthy ones from Patriarchal times, from the Mosaic Dispensation and from the Christian Age. We will get to be with all our loved ones who have died in the faith. It is about this latter point that I want to write in some detail in this extended series for this great and worthy weekly, WORDS OF TRUTH. Much grief is asswaged in the silent city of the dead as we deposit a loved one into the cold and uninviting embrace of Mother Earth if we can really bury that person in the warmth of Christian hope. The cemetery is not a final good-bye to Christians. It is simply a temporary farewell until the day of eternity dawns for the Christian who has passed on and the one who survives for yet a little longer. This series will pursue some thoughts that many people are currently ignoring relative to the home of the soul, its inhabitants and our anticipated association and lovely link with them in a never ending eternity.—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063



CHECK US OUT.
YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID!



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak
the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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Your Loved Ones In Heaven

(No. 2)

Anticipation of being reunited with our Christian loved ones in heaven is one of the sweetest reflections of what heaven will be like. It is eminently right and Scriptural to desire such and to prepare for the same. David expressed such a desire when he said at the death of his infant son, "But now he is dead, wherefore shall I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (II Sam. 12:23). Incidentally, did not David anticipate a future recognition of his son? The statement is robbed of all intelligent meaning on any premise other than the actuality of future recognition of our loved ones in the heavenly hereafter.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The Thessalonians were greatly upset because they thought their loved ones who had fallen asleep in Jesus would be deprived at the second coming. This formed the basic background of Paul's great discourse in the closing six verses of First Thessalonians 4. The Bible says at this point, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede-ASV) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, and 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. 4:13-18). The precious concept of being with the Lord and their loved ones permeates this whole precious passage of Sacred Scripture.

There is a kindred principle set forth in the deaths of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Of each of these Hebrew founding fathers it is affirmed that at death he was gathered unto his people. The Bible says of them respectively, "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people... And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him... And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people" (Gen. 25:8; 35:29; 49:33). I long have believed these to be Biblical references to the gathering of their immortal spirits to the place where the spirits of their righteous ancestors had gone. This realm is styled Sheol in the Old Testament and Hades in the New Testament. Those together in Abraham's bosom will be together later in that eternal home of the soul.

Many years ago Brother Tillit S. Teddie wrote a

great Christian song entitled, "Heaven Holds All to Me." The second stanza says, "Out on the hill of that wonderful country, Happy, contented and free, Loved ones are waiting and watching my coming."

In marked contrast to the foregoing sentiments consider the attitude of the doomed, miserable and tormented souls in Hadean punishment at this very moment. If the doomed Dives (a Latin name for riches is representative of all that pathetic population, then we know that they do not desire for their family and loved ones to come there. The tormented son of Luke 16 says to Father Abraham, "I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:27-31). This man did not desire his family to do as he had done. He did not want them to be lost subsequent to death. How vastly different would he have felt about a reunion with his family if he had been where Lazarus was and anticipated rich the coming of his brethren at death into the realm of Abraham's beautiful bosom.


Catholic Problems

JOHNNY RAMSEY

Another embarrassing incident which any Catholic, conversant with his own history, is well aware of is "the Babylonian Captivity of the Roman Catholic church." From the years 1309 to 1377 (nearly 70 years, the same length of the Babylonian Captivity of the Jews in Old Testament days), the Pope did not live

in Rome. He lived in Avignon, France, and thus the Pope was in captivity outside of his own homeland, away from the Vatican. Following this Babylonian Captivity, came the great schism from 1378 to 1418 in which there was not one Pope nor two nor three-but

— Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

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I am not mad, must noble feat,
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Truth and soberness — Acts 26:25

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How Times Do Change

During the Johnson administration, in the 1960s, one of the President's aides was found guilty of homosexual action. He was promptly fired and left office in disgrace. The Congress and courts of the United States, along with the public in general, seemed shocked at such shameful behavior in high circles of government.



W.C. QUILLEN

Last year the Congress with administrative approval and judicial sanction, voted five million dollars of taxpayer's money to support the national women's conference in Houston, Texas. The money was used in selecting delegates in local communities, and to pay transportation and motel expenses for the delegates in Houston. Both in local meetings and in the Houston conference, liberal proponents of ERA ran rough shod over all opposition.

With the co-operation of the news media, the conference claimed, and tried to make it appear, that they were speaking for a majority of American women. Yet, just across town, some ten thousand women, who had paid their own expenses, were assembled in opposition to the conference and in protest to its proposals.

Over opposition among its own delegates, the dominant element in the conference, with a cut and dried program, passed twenty-five of its twenty-six proposals as a 'national plan of action' for women. One proposal endorsed and adopted in this plan of action is: "Sexual preference—eliminate discrimination against homosexuals."

It is hard to believe that most of the highest officials in our government, along with their wives, endorse such a plan of action for American women, or men either, and that they would support an amendment to

Continued on page 4



A Significant Admission About The NIV

One of the criticisms we have made of the New International Version is the fact that the translators were obviously influenced by Calvinistic theology. The rendering of the Greek word *sarx* 'flesh' as "sinful nature" over and over again in Romans 8 is an example of this. (See our editorial of February 23, 1979). Also the rendering of Psalm 51:5 in the NIV is clearly a false statement and teaches that children are sinful from conception. "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." This is Calvinism, pure and simple. Calvinism, mind you, is not taught in the word of God; but it is taught in the New International Version.



BOB DUNCAN

In an excellent article written by John G. Shaver ("Deceit of the Rankest Order") and published in *Words of Truth* in two parts (March 9 and March 16), reference is made to the "unholy doctrine of hereditary total depravity" and the fact that it is taught in the NIV. In response to the article and to other things we had said about the New International Version, the editor of a liberal magazine had some things to say that are rather interesting and should cause faithful brethren who have been defending the NIV to have some second thoughts. In trying to justify the rendering of the Greek *sarx* as "sinful nature" this particular

editor had the following to say:

The real "rub" in the above NIV rendering is that it threatens the Church of Christ doctrine that all mankind are born into the world free of the Adamic nature, a doctrine expounded by Pelagius in the 5th century and declared "heretical" by the Council of Carthage in A.D. 418. This doctrine later developed into Armenianism and is now embraced by the Church of Christ; and it is still just as heretical as ever.

The significance of this quotation in connection with our discussion of the New International Version is great. The author of the quotation is not in agreement with what he calls "the Church of Christ doctrine that all mankind are born into the world free of the Adamic nature." But the "Adamic nature" is not the point of disagreement; the "Adamic sin" is. The question is not whether or not all inherit the fleshly nature of Adam; it is rather whether or not all inherit the guilt of Adam's sin. It is this latter doctrine—that all inherit the guilt of Adam's sin that is taught in the NIV, and that is believed by the editor of this liberal magazine. He recognizes that the doctrine of inherited sin is taught in the NIV, and he believes that doctrine. He further says that the NIV threatens the doctrine that all are born free of the Adamic sin. *In this he recognizes what many of our more conservative brethren fail to recognize or refuse to admit*, i.e., that the New International Version teaches Calvinism.

In other words, the position of the editor of this liberal magazine is that one who objects to the teaching of Calvinism would naturally object to the New International Version. This is one of the few things upon which we are in complete accord.

The Resurrection Of The Body

Of all the mysteries that challenge us there is none greater than that of the resurrection of the body at the last day. Yet, it should be no more mysterious than the crowning act of creation when God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul (Gen. 2:7). As death is appointed unto all so is the resurrection of our bodies. There have been exceptions to death, namely Enoch and Elijah, and in the future death as we know it will not be the experience of those living when the Lord returns (I Cor. 15:50ff). Martha, the sister of Lazarus, knew of this great event, for she said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection of the last day" (Jn. 11:24). How did



VIRGIL BRADFORD

she know this? We shall see. And if any is sceptical let him consider well Paul's question to Agrippa:—"Why is it judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the dead" (Ac 26:8)?

In spite of all the mysteries of the resurrection the fact of it is set forth in unmistakable language. "All that are in the tombs shall hear his voice and come forth" (Jn. 5:28f). "Waiting for our adoption—the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23). "And God hath both raised the Lord, and will raise up us by his power" (I Cor. 6:14). In this last reference the apostle is making an argument for the sanctity of the body. It is not made for fornication but for the Lord. It is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. It will be raised up. Therefore, keep it holy. (Read First Corinthians 6:12-20).

A number of outstanding cases are now pointed out. In the time of Elisha the Shunammite child was brought from the dead (II Kgs. 4:8ff). Jairus' daughter was raised up by Jesus (Mk. 5:35ff). Christ called Lazarus from the tomb (Jn. 11). Bodies of saints came out of their

Continued on page 4

A Review Of The Teachings Of John Clayton

(No. 14)

In our last article, we were examining some of the statements of brother Clayton which are simply incorrect. We continue this examination in this, our final and concluding article dealing with the teachings of John Clayton. (4) "The very first mammal that we know anything about was the *Archaeopteryx*, a bird" (*Evolution's Proof of God*, Tape). This statement is totally incorrect on more than one count. First, birds are not mammals. Any standard



BERT THOMPSON

biology textbook will substantiate this (cf: *Life: An Introduction to Biology*, by Simpson, Pittendrigh, & Tiffany, 1965, pp 796ff). Secondly, birds much older than *Archaeopteryx* have been recently discovered in the fossil record. *Science-News* (Vol. 112, Sept. 24, 1977, p 198) announced the discovery in the fossil of the remains of an undoubted true bird some "60 million years older" (by the evolutionary timetable) than *Archaeopteryx*. Thus, *Archaeopteryx* (which was thought by many to be a transitional form between reptiles and birds) was destroyed as a "missing link" and the presence of birds pushed even farther back than once was thought by evolutionist. Brother Clayton's statement is entirely incorrect on two counts. (5) Clayton has stated, "links do exist between fish and other forms" (*The Source*, p 153). This is certainly news to both creationists and evolutionists. The ardent French evolutionist, LeComte duNouy, stated 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" (pp 72-73; emphasis added). Dr. Austin H. Clark of the United States National Museum made the following statement, which is still true today: "...Indeed, so broad are the gaps between these various types of lower animals that they cannot 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" (*Science*, March 8, 1929). One is made to wonder what "links" there are between the fish and other forms. The evolutionists would certainly be happy to know of such existing forms! (6) Brother Clayton states, "The tree shres, his ancestors and relatives, are known to be the first sure mammals on this planet" (*Does God Exist*, a monthly bulletin, 7/76, p 3). Yet brother Clayton told us that "The very first mammal that we know anything about was the *Archaeopteryx*—a bird" (*Evolution's Proof of God*, Tape). I wonder which of these two statements we are to accept? How can both be true?

(7) Brother Clayton has stated "this writer sees no need to view Adam as a highly advanced and sophisticated individual. God had to make the first clothes man wore so he wasn't very advanced" (*Does God Exist*, monthly bulletin, 4/78, p 2). I cannot help but wonder how, if Adam was so "dense" and "limited in his faculties", that he was able to name each and every creature of the earth as God brought them to him for that express purpose (Genesis

2:19-20). If you were presented with such a task, could you have done it? It appears from a simple reading of the Text that Adam had enough "sophistication" and was "highly advanced" enough to be able to perform that enormous task of naming the heavenly and earthly creatures. Once again we are presented with the problem of whether to accept "thus saith the Lord" or "thus saith John Clayton." What shall we believe?

SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS

This series of articles by brother Jackson and myself has had as its goal to help bretheren see what is actually being taught by oral and written means, by brother John Clayton. We repeat our sentiment that we harbor no ill-will toward brother Clayton. Some have accused us of trying to "destroy the work of John Clayton." Nothing could be further from the truth of the matter. We do not want to destroy it. Rather, we would hope to offer some constructive criticism which will cause brother Clayton to re-evaluate his views and teach the truth on matters in which he is currently in error.

The Bible clearly teaches that there are some things that are not to be compromised. Yet many in the church today are screaming and yelling, "Compromise, Compromise!". If their words do not say it, their actions do. The ranks of the church are being breached because brethren "compromise." False teachers have "crept in unaware" (Jude 4), "bringing in their damnable heresies" (II Peter 2:1), but in *too many* instances these same false teachers are being openly invited to come in and bring thier false doctrine with them—and bretheren welcome them with open arms. The false teacher and his

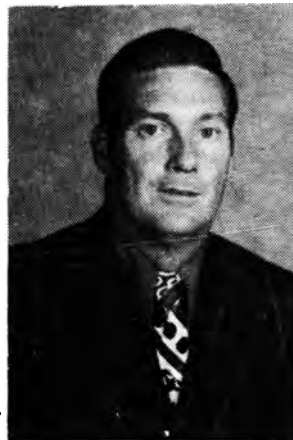
herises are welcomed because others possess the spirit of compromise. HE COULD BRING THEM IN AMONG FAITHFUL BRETHEREN IN NO OTHER WAY!

Perhaps this spirit of compromise is a symptom of a much larger disease. The unfaithful, the adulterers, the disorderly, and others of almost any sin imaginable have been fellowshipped in the church in many places (though not all) for a long time. An increasingly large number of churches, it seems, do not know (or at least do not follow) the N.T. teaching concerning discipline. Others seemingly care little what the N.T. teaches in this regard. And on the skirts of this laxity, the false teacher has made his appearance among us!

Bretheren, THERE IS NO COMPROMISE ANY MORE DESPICABLE OR DANGEROUS THAN THAT OF THEISTIC EVOLUTION ("EVOLUTIONARY-CREATIONISM"). Christians, who have so little faith in what *God has said*, and so much faith in what *man has speculated*, have capitulated and have accepted "evolutionary-creationism" almost in its entirety, thinking themselves the better for it. God forbid! The fruits will be more bitter than any among us ever thought possible. We will rear up a generation of young people who do not know the beautiful Bible doctrine of *ex nihilo*, fiat creation at the hand of God. And we will find that once the first chapter of the Bible has been compromised, there is nothing standing in the way of compromising every other chapter! There are some among us who will not compromise. We stand firm that "God said what he meant, and meant what he said! From that we shall not waiver. Genesis 1 and Exodus 20:11 stand, without contradiction as God's final word on creation.—1004 Hereford, College Station, TX 77840

Jackson — Bayer Debate

July 30 through August 2 W.N. Jackson, Evangelist of the Fulton Church of Christ, and R.E. Bayer of the United Pentecostal Church, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida were engaged in a public discussion at Fulton, Mississippi. On Friday night, August 3, the audience had the opportunity to ask the two speakers questions and the evening was spent in a questions and answers type discussion.



Jerry T. Bramlett

On Monday evening Mr. Bayer affirmed: "The Scriptures teach that all believers have the promise of receiving Holy Spirit baptism as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles." Bro. Jackson denied this proposition. Mr. Bayer made an argument that all preachers are called in a special way, but Bro. Jackson responded by saying preachers are called like all other children of God, and that is through the gospel (II Thessalonians 2:14). Mr. Bayer attempted to make the claim that all preachers are inspired, but Bro. Jackson showed some inconsistencies between preachers today and the Apostles of

the first century. Bro. Jackson also pointed out that we do not need inspired men because today we have God's inspired word.

On Tuesday evening the proposition was: "The Scriptures teach that the promise of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, is not for all believers today." Bro. Jackson used I Corinthians 12:4, 8 and 10 to show that all believers in the first century did not speak in tongues. At this point the United Pentecostal church manual, page 22 was shown to Mr. Bayer, and we quote: "The basic and fundamental doctrine of this organization shall be the Bible standard of full salvation, which is repentance, baptism in water by immersion in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the initial sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance." This quote was on a chart used by Bro. Jackson to show that Mr. Bayer was jailed by his human creed, there is no escape, and that Mr. Bayer could not explain away the contradiction. Bro. Jackson used another chart of the United Pentecostal church manual, page 12 as follows: "In the days....The early Quakers, Wesley, Whitefield and Irving, *The Gifts and Manifestations of the Apostolic Church* were much in evidence..." Mr. Bayer was then asked. "Did the Holy Spirit lead

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Catholic Problems

Continued from page 1

four at one time. Four at one time! Which one was infallible? Which one was the voice of the living Church? Which one of the four was the Vicar of Christ upon earth? These are problems they must resolve. This is embarrassing history for those who pay allegiance to the Vatican.

These people believe that the Pope is infallible only when he speaks *ex cathedra*, from the papal throne,

when he speaks on matters of faith and morals. Most people do not know that it was not until July 18th, 1870, that the Roman Catholic Church pronounced officially this doctrine of infallibility. It had been discussed for some time: there had been those in the 13th century who affirmed that the Pope was infallible. However, most Romanists in that era agreed with William Occam who violently and logically opposed such a theory. But just about a hundred years ago, 764 bishops came to Rome to vote

on this issue of papal infallibility. Of this number 231 voted against it, 533 voted for it. In fact, 229 of them fled Rome, lest they have to place an official "No" upon the ballot. And so, only 533 out of 764 bishops voted. On July 18th, 1870, 533 admittedly fallible men voted infallibility upon another man. That is an impossibility in itself. How can fallible human beings vote on the infallibility of someone else? It just cannot be done. The very inception of this decree is absurd in the absolute. —Arlington, Texas

The Resurrection Of The Body

Continued from page 2

graves after the resurrection of Christ (Mt. 27:51f). Dorcas was raised up in Joppa in the presence of Peter and other saints (Ac. 9:36ff). Eutychus, who fell from a third story loft, was brought back to life by the Lord at the hands of Paul (Ac. 20:7ff). But all of these who were raised up died again, only the Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead to die no more — "death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9). "Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore" (Rev. 1:17ff).

The resurrection of Jesus guarantees his second coming and the day of judgment (Ac 17:30f). But of necessity the resurrection of the body precedes these things. The Scriptures teach that all the dead, the righteous and the unrighteous, shall be raised "in the last day." Concerning the faithful Jesus says, "I will raise him up in the last day" (Jn. 6:44f). The unrighteous, the wicked, shall also be raised in the last day (Jn. 5:28f; Ac. 24:15). The Judgment Day shall also be on the last great day (Jn. 12:48; Rev. 11:15ff). Since the righteous are raised the last day and the unrighteous are judged on the last day, it is clear to all that the coming of Christ, the resurrection and the Judgment

are all the SAME DAY. Hence, no thousand year reign of Christ between the resurrection of the lost and the saved. The "last trump" shall awaken all the dead bodies of all who have "fallen asleep."

We would all like to know just what the resurrected body will be like. Not one word has been revealed to enlighten us on this matter except that which is negative—we do not, and cannot, know what the body will be like until that day arrives. Please notice that almost everything written by Paul is from the Christians' point of view. We can be sure that the body of the resurrection involves a transformation of the physical to the spiritual. It may help to think of the present body being the "seed" of that which is to be. (Read First Corinthians 15:35ff). The amazing fact is that the bodies of those in Christ will be like his glorious body (I Jn. 3:1ff). Those living at the presence of Jesus will be conformed to the body of his glory (Phil. 3:20f). And with that we must content ourselves until he comes.

The coming of the Lord and the resurrection seem to be instantaneous. He will come "as a thief" comes, that is unexpectedly (I Thes. 5:1f). However, there is some order in the resurrection

of the dead and the change that takes place in those who are alive. "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 that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thes. 4:16f). So the order is this: the righteous dead are raised FIRST: the righteous living are changed AFTER the dead are raised. Here again we must not read into this situation a thousand years of Christ's reign on earth. The fact abundantly taught is that Christ is reigning now over every created thing and will do so until he comes, at which time he will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (I Cor. 15:24ff).

The Lord Jesus Christ has brought to light the answer to Job's age-old question, If a man die shall he live again? The answer is, YES, all who die shall arise, some to everlasting life and some to everlasting damnation (Cf. Dan. 12:1-3; Jn. 5:28f; Ac. 24:15). Then when he comes an eternal separation shall take place, or eternal rewards. The choice is our's to make.—Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064

How Times Do Change

Continued from page 2

the Constitution of the U.S., such as ERA wants.

How Times have changed!

Methods employed by proponents of ERA to get their way are often unfair, unethical, if not unlawful. They have pressured the Federal Government to cut off funds to states that refuse to ratify their

amendment. They insist that different organizations and political parties refuse to hold meetings and conventions in cities and states which do not endorse their cause. This borders on blackmail. They want to deny states, which had been duped into voting for the amendment, the right to rescind their vote upon

seeing their past error.

They camouflage the ugliness of the obvious results of some of their proposals, and do all they can to shut-up all opposition.—P.O. Box 212 Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

Jackson—Bayer Debate

Continued from page 3

Wesley to Methodist sprinkling?

In Mr. Bayer's last negative speech for the evening he knew he could not debate Bro. Jackson, consequently he resorted to preaching their doctrine and the people of the Pentecostal church stomped their feet, shouted, clapped their hands and became very disorderly.

I did not attend the Wednesday evening discussion, but on Thursday night the proposition that was discussed was the following: "The Scriptures teach that water baptism was administered by the Apostles in the New Testament church to the penitent believer, only in the name of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Book

of Acts, and is not scriptural if administered using the words, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

Bro. Jackson pressed and pressed Mr. Bayer to give him an example where a formula of words was spoken in the actual act of baptism. Mr. Bayer could not produce such an example. Night after night Bro. Jackson read from the United Pentecostal Church Manual pointing out the inconsistencies between the manual and God's Word. On this particular evening Mr. Bayer gave Bro. Jackson his manuals because Bro. Jackson proved to the audience that the United Pentecostal Church is a creedbound organization. Mr. Bayer did everything in his

power to get his supporters to put on a demonstration, but it was obvious that he had lost the debate, he was out of soap and even his people did not get excited and come to his rescue.

The Bible truth was presented throughout this debate, and Bro. Jackson did an outstanding job night after night. I would definitely recommend W.N. Jackson of Fulton, Mississippi for future debates because he is a very diligent student of God's Word and can present the truth in a very powerful way and retain his composure while doing so.—P.O. Box 118, Parrish, AL 35580



Words Of Truth

...not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth
of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

(USPS)

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Rat Poison

DONALD E. DAVIS

Recently, I contacted an area preacher concerning the featured speaker of a men's retreat he was coordinating. The speaker was to be a brother whose teaching and book on marriage, divorce and remarriage is erroneous according to scripture. The brother in question was reputed to be an eloquent speaker and very knowledgeable.

The preacher, whose eldership is responsible for bringing this false teacher to the area, assured me that "he would not speak on marriage, divorce and remarriage...and that he was coming." He was to speak on "how to lead people to Christ," as if this could solve the problem.

It is not enough that a man whose teachings are plainly erroneous on one doctrine, says the "right thing" most of the time. Much, in fact, most of what a false teacher says may be true — Billy Graham is a good example. However, *rat poison* is usually at least 98% good grain; it is the 2% poison that kills every time. His accuracy in an isolated engagement is one thing, but what he may say in private conversations, or an examination of the overall slant of his teaching is quite another matter.

The real danger of such a false teacher's being afforded a public opportunity to speak is that it gives him credibility and responsibility before innocent and often immature brethren who may be overwhelmed and deceived. Such is allowing brethren to sip deadly poison (cf. Titus 1:10-11).

The most tragic thing is that elderships and preachers allow this to happen and be put on the spot, rather than put the speaker on the spot as should rightfully be the case. To insist that the truth be taught unflinchingly in love is not legalism (Ephesians 4:11-16). It is acting from love. The struggle for sound doctrine is often very painful, but is a labor of love for truth and people; a failure here is Satan's delight. Some "issues" are for sound doctrine (I Timothy

6:3-4).

Within our brotherhood, whatever has happened to the love (agape) to "test the spirits" (I John 4:1-6)? Have we drifted so far from the truth that we apply this exclusively to "radical denominational teachers," and this seldom uniformly? God never intended that love, or a current brotherhood facsimile of it (more like an *esprit de corps*) cover or ignore even one false teacher or his teaching for one minute (Galatians 2:4-15). In fact, mature love demands that they be identified and exposed by name, at least to those who have the need to know (cf. Acts 20:28-32, I Timothy 1:18-20, II Timothy 4:14-15).

We do not love the brethren if we allow them to sip the deadly poison of false doctrine. Our first love must be to the truth and sound doctrine (John 8:31-32). A form of it cannot save. Jesus prayed only for unity upon truth, and not for a union palatable to most (John 17:17-21, cf. II Timothy 4:1-5).

One hears the phrase, "we be brethren" used a lot today (Genesis 13:8). No doubt much division has been unnecessary. Without question, a great challenge before the church will always be learning to live together as brethren. However, there are brethren we cannot fellowship as faithful brethren and still be faithful to God (cf. I Corinthians 5, I Timothy 1:18-20, II Timothy 4:14-15, I John 2:18-19, 4:1-6, Revelation 2:12-29). Neither their actions or disposition can be tolerated. Unless we expose them, then we are approving their false teaching.

We cannot show love and allow one intentionally to spread spiritual death, however subtle. Truth has no middle ground, it cannot be known by compromise or fabricating doctrine we can "live with." It ought to be evident, that the simplicity of the truth does not always appeal to the intellectual pride of some brethren

(II Corinthians 11:3, cf. I Corinthians 2:1-5).

Let us consider some lessons of principle found both in the Old and New Testaments (Romans 15:4, cf. Joshua 24:31, Judges 2:10):

1. God's people have never remained faithful to him for very long.
2. Many of God's people have always been unwilling to accept the simple authority of his written word for very long.
3. Many of God's people have always been unwilling faithfully to proclaim his message, or allow it to be faithfully proclaimed for very long.
4. Many of God's prophets (preachers today) have always been willing to say about what the people want to hear, or that is to the advantage of their security.
5. Many of God's people have always done just about what they wanted to.
6. We can only be deceived, by thinking that the church today is an exception. All warning in the New Testament is for an eternal vigilance (cf. II Peter 1:5-11).

Brethren, the time is far past, when we ought to start applying these principles to the churches of Christ and not merely the denominations. If we do not we will be a denomination.

The New Testament "thoroughly furnishes" the church to discern false brethren and their doctrine (II Timothy 3:16-17). Are we no longer able or willing to do this? Love or "a grace oriented church" cannot excuse errors not being identified, exposed and biblically dealt with. God's people are to be distinct because of their unalterable loyalty to the simplicity of his word (Titus 2:11-14), serving God his way only (Romans 10:1-3).—Drawer A, South Barre, Vermont 05670.



Words Of Truth

(U.S.P.S. 691-760)

I am not mad, most noble
Kings, but speak forth the Words of
Truth and substance.

— Acts 26:25

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The Great Inheritance

The idea of an inheritance is as old as the human race. God chose this familiar concept to describe the saints' spiritual reward. The child of God has "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled... that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven..." (I Pet. 1:4). Nothing in earth's realm can compare in importance and value with our inheritance. We should want to know all that we can of this blessing.



JOHN WADDEY

Paul prayed that the Ephesian brethren would know "the riches of the glory of (their) inheritance..." (1:18). Thus it is glorious. Nothing is comparable with our home with God (Rev. 21:1-22:5). According to Peter our inheritance is "undefiled" (I Pet. 1:4). It is "Incorruptible" for God will preserve and protect his children and their home. It will not fade away because it is the everlasting reward of the eternal God. It will not grow old with age nor crumble with the sands of time like earthly homes. It is "reserved in heaven for you" and the honor and integrity of Jesus guarantees that certainty of this marvelous inheritance (John 14:2). In Hebrews 9:15 the writer speaks of the "eternal inheritance." Thus it is age lasting and unending in nature.

Among the many blessings of our inheritance is salvation. Paul wrote that Christians shall "inherit salvation" (Heb. 1:15). While our salvation is certainly a present experience, there is a dimension of salvation to be enjoyed only in heaven. Now we have forgiveness of our sins, then we will be freed from sin's temptation. Now we have to live in a sin cursed world, then will be total righteousness. The Galatians were told that Christ "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world" (1:4).

To inherit heaven means to be part of the eternal

Continued on page 4



The Shortest Sermon In The World

It is amazing how one's loyalty to a certain position can enable him to look right at, and yet never see things that would tend to prove that position false. Such is the case with the author of a book, *The People Who Couldn't be Stopped* (Ethel Barrett, Regal Books Division, G/L Publications, Glendale, Calif.). The book claims to be "a story of your church, and how it began, and how it grew, until it covered the earth." What the author actually does it relate some of the incidents recorded in the Books of Acts, not as they are therein recorded, but as the author obviously wishes they had been recorded.

The words which form the title of this article are quoted from the account given in this book of the conversion of the Philippian jailor. After the question asked by the jailor, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?", the Bible records the following: And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house" (Acts 16:31-34).

Now notice the incident as related by this particular author: After the question, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?", this author narrates as follows: "Paul and Silas preached him the shortest sermon in the world, but it came right to the point. 'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, and your entire household,' they said.

"The jailor's decision was as quick as the sermon had been short. He believed. At once.

"And in an instant everything had changed!

"He hustled them outside, where they 'told him and all his household the Good News from the Lord.' Then he washed the cuts on their backs. And then he took them into his own home and fed them" (Emphasis HER'S).

Now, do you see anything wrong with this account? One thing is quite obvious, and that is, that the jailor's baptism is clearly left out. It is just as clearly included in the account by the inspired historian. Why did this modern day writer so clearly omit it? We think we know the answer, and it is simply that the author was more interested in conveying her own prejudicial views concerning baptism than she was relating the facts as they actually occurred. Some in the denominational world do not like to mention that the jailor was baptized, and that his baptism occurred the "same hour of the night."

But this article has to do with what this particular author calls "the shortest sermon in the world." She thinks that Paul's command to the jailor to believe on the Lord Jesus was the



BOB DUNCAN

sermon. She also thinks that the jailor, upon hearing this one command "believed. At once." Nothing could be further from the truth.

The command to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," was not a sermon; it was merely an introduction to the sermon. The very next statement is, "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." Here was the sermon; and it was not until the word of the Lord was spoken unto him that he believed. The Lord was spoken unto him that he believed.

One cannot believe until he hears the word of God. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Since faith is based upon the word of God, the word of God must be preached before one can believe. The jailor could not believe until the world of the Lord had been spoken unto him.

It seems quite obvious that the word "believe" is used in Acts 16:31 to embrace total obedience to Christ, and not merely a mental acknowledgment of the facts concerning the identity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, it was after the jailor had repented and was baptized that it is said, "And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

It is not strange that some will ignore and even deny the obvious in an effort to maintain their prejudices? But this disposition is not new. Jesus found it characteristic of some in his day, and said: "In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, by hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matthew 13:14, 15).

Baptism — What Jesus Taught

"And he said unto them, Go ye into the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16: 15-16).

In the text above, we find the marching orders for the apostles and their associates to carry the gospel of Jesus into all the world. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). Jesus stated that before Jerusalem was destroyed the



MICHAEL D. STONE

Continued on page 4

Your Loved Ones In Heaven

(No. 3)

If you are a Christian and have Christian loved ones who have vacated earthly scenes, then one of the sweetest anticipations you no doubt possess currently is getting to see those loved ones in the heavenly hereafter. Such is a precious sentiment to my soul. But much of the preciousness of this sentiment rests squarely upon whether we will know our loved ones in heaven or not.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Will we recognize our loved ones in heaven? Does the Bible teach future recognition? By way of response some have said no. They cannot visualize spiritual beings there as recognizing people with whom they were acquainted on earth. Why do some object to future recognition? Some have voiced the objection that future recognition would hamper heavenly happiness. Here is how they come to such a conclusion. "If I get to heaven and fail to find my parents there, my marital mate there, my brother or sister there, my children there or my grandchildren there, then I would be miserable indeed throughout eternity because they have been denied heaven and have been deprived of eternal felicity." This is lame logic indeed! May I suggest a counter argument? Suppose future recognition in the home of the soul is really impossible. Then you will not know whether a single one of your loved ones made it to heaven or not! Therefore you will be miserable throughout all eternity being unsure whether all of them were there or not! To decide that one will be miserable there because a loved one is absent is faulty logic on the following weighty grounds. (1) These same people have found a measure of happiness here on earth—a vale of tears and heartaches—and yet had loved ones on their way to hell. (2) This reflects on God's promise which tells us of undiminished happiness and undimmed joy in that lovely land across which the shadows will never be cast. (3) This reflects on the fact that everyone in heaven will recognize that only the obedient should be there and that those who obey not the gospel and have lived rebellious and immoral lives deserved the eternal hell to which they have been consigned and to which they really sent themselves by their own infamous brand of flagrant disobedience. Paul teaches just who will go to hell in these words of moving gravity. He writes, "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;..." (II Thess. 1:8-9). To the Romans he wrote, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). No one, ABSOLUTELY NO ONE, will be in hell who does not deserve to be banished there. (4) On earth we have not counted our loved ones as saved people in the church unless they have obeyed the gospel of God's Son. In heaven we will recognize that heaven could only be heaven and home for those who made the proper preparation to go there. (5) Does the objector think that he loves his loved ones more deeply than God, than does Christ, than does the Spirit of Truth? Will the Godhead be miserable throughout eternity because hell is filled with Satan, his angels and all who preferred service to him rather than service to the God of the universe? This rhetorical question needs an answer. The answer is a built-in one. (6) If we are really concerned about our loved ones who are now lost and thus not headed

for heaven, why don't we do more to live Christ before them and to teach them the way of salvation? There are people who right now are concerned, they say, about loved ones in the heavenly hereafter who apparently are totally unconcerned about loved ones on earth who are totally irreligious in nature and ungodly in daily deportment. Such is inconsistency gone to seed and then some!

Will we know our loved ones in heaven? A clear induction of all passages that touch this answers with a resounding affirmative. Several of these passages will be noted in our next article for Words of Truth. But for now we raise a question. How do we recognize people here on earth? Quite frequently in gospel meetings or lectureship work in various parts of the

country I will meet someone whom I have not seen for years. Yet on occasion I may walk up to that person and call him or her by name or he might do the same to me. You can do the same toward your acquaintances of years gone by and they with you. How? By two simple devices—identity and memory. The person has identity—a name, a certain facial expression, the type of body build, the color of hair, the smile, etc. We have memory that recalls with an amazing computer-like accuracy the name and other recognizable features. Will we have both in heaven? Most assuredly! We will have an identity; we will possess memory. Future recognition is well taught Bible doctrine as we shall prove in subsequent studies in this series.—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063

Decisions, Directions And Destinies

"Enter ye in the narrow gate" (Matthew 7:13). Man is a creature of choice. God made him that way. Even in Eden, Adam had the power to choose between obedience and disobedience. The very fact that God had placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden infers that man possessed the power to make moral decisions. God's foreknowledge



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

does not preclude the free moral agency of man. If it did, man would be no more than a mere robot. Neither would he be responsible for his actions, good or bad.

In the context of Matthew 7:13, 14, the Lord admonishes and encourages all to "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it." The mere fact that Jesus presented two choices strengthens the premise that men possess the power to make decisions in regard to spiritual matters. If not, why urge men to enter in by the narrow gate.

The decision made determines the direction one will travel in this life; and, the direction one travels will eventually determine one's eternal destiny. There are two masters, the Saviour and Satan; two gates, one narrow and one wide; two ways, one straitened, the other broad; and two destinies, one is eternal life and the other is eternal destruction. One's eternal destiny actually depends upon the decision made in this life.

The grace of God does not nullify man's responsibility in this matter. An indecision is making a choice not to follow Christ. Jesus said: "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathered not with me scattereth" (Matthew 12:30). There is no neutral ground where an accountable person might linger, free of responsibility in decision making. If it could be heard, the voice of Felix crying from the grave, would shout that one should make that positive decision now before it is eternally too

late. Almost is not enough either. One may know the truth, understanding the facts to be believed and the commands to be obeyed; and yet if obedience to the gospel is not completed, salvation will not be enjoyed. King Agrippa bears mute evidence, lo these many years, of the awful fate of the procrastinator.

One of the saddest statements ever uttered by the Saviour was, "Many are they that enter in thereby" in referring to the broad way that leads to everlasting destruction. The percentage has not changed with the passing of the centuries. How sad that the majority of people choose to live separate and apart from God in this life and be lost in eternity.

My friend, choose now the narrow gate and the straitened way that leads upward to life everlasting. It is not easy, but difficult in that the way is demanding. One must give the very best. Wherein we fail, God's grace is extended. This is the way of Christ, the cross and the church. The burdens are made easier to bear because of the Lord's help. The abundant life can be enjoyed now, and in the world to come eternal life. Your decision will either bring you doom and despair, or blessings and heavenly bliss. Choose the narrow gate while God's mercy lingers.—809 Old Perry Store Rd Opp, Al 36467

He Cared

EARLENE ROSE

BY THIS SHALL ALL MEN KNOW THAT YE ARE MY DISCIPLES, IF YE HAVE LOVE ONE FOR ANOTHER.—John 13:35

My Soul was sad and weary;
My grief was hard to bear;
I searched the world for solace,
But found no comfort there.

When gently on my shoulder
I felt a loving hand,
And I knew the friend who touched me
Had a heart to understand.

For he had known such sorrow;
His touch had said he cared;
Then he softly said "I love you,"
And I knew my load was shared.

When a friend is heavy hearted
With a trial to go through,
And you cannot find the words to speak,
Simply "I love you" will do.

1608 24 Street Northport, AL 35476

The Great Inheritance

Continued from page 2

kingdom (Jas. 2:5). The redeemed will reign with God in the eternal realms (Rev. 2:26-27). To inherit the kingdom suggests that we will be there *with the king* of the kingdom, i.e., the Lord Jesus (I Tim. 6:15). There we will receive all the promises made by God to the faithful. Paul urges us to be diligent that through faith and patience we may inherit the promises (Heb. 6:11). We are heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Tit. 3:7). The ever present enemy of all men's joy and happiness is death (Heb. 2:15). In heaven death will be no more (Rev. 21:4). There will be life abundant (John 10:10) in a land where we will never grow old. In Rev. 21:1-7, John sketches a bold and beautiful picture of the saints' inheritance. Most beautiful of all is the fact that the tabernacle of God is with men, i.e., the redeemed children of God will live in the Father's house.

They may be poor as to the world, but they are "rich in faith" (Jas. 2:5). They have "Turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto

God that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance..." (Acts 26:18). Having been baptized (immersed) into Christ, they are heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3:28-29). Being God's children by faith, they are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:16-17). All of the heirs have been "sanctified," that is, set apart to God's service (Acts 20:32). Because they look forward to their inheritance, they are willing to suffer with Christ so that they may be glorified with him" (Rom. 8:17). By following Jesus their Lord and imitating his holy example, they have learned patience as they wait to receive the promised inheritance (Heb. 6:12).

Where there is an inheritance there must be at least two parties to it. There is the one who has the wealth and possessions to be bestowed and, of course, the person who will receive these blessings by the fact of kinship or gracious bestowal. In the earthly realm an inheritance suggests a death of the original possessor of the riches. Here the analogy breaks down. For it is

we who die, not God. He is the living, eternal God (Heb. 10:31). We are mortal men that are appointed to die (Heb. 9:27). Even so the Creator and possessor of the universe and all that is therein wills to give his dying children the riches of heaven. In order that the gift be not in vain, he has promised to raise them from the dead and give them an eternal life with him in glory (I Thess. 4:13-18). So we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17). Race or nationality is no longer a factor, for Jews and "Gentiles are fellow-heirs, fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (Eph. 3:6).

Dear reader, you too can be a heir of God's eternal riches if you are willing to become his obedient child through faith and baptism into Christ (Gal. 3:26-28).

(The author is indebted to David Fernyhough for the idea of this lesson.)—Route 22, Beaver Ridge Rd. Knoxville, TN 37921

Baptism - What Jesus Taught

Continued from page 2

gospel would be preached throughout the Roman Empire. Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. when General Titus of the Roman Army conquered the city thus ending Judaism. The apostle Paul wrote in the early 60's A.D. that the gospel, "Was preached in all creation under heaven" (Colossians 1:23). Therefore, the prediction of our Lord came true.

The Key word in our evangelizing the world is the word "Go." Jesus said to go. It is good for us to invite people to come worship with us; however, let us remember that, should they not come, our obligation

is not over until we have brought the gospel to them. One writer has expressed it well when he said "it is time we stop polishing the fire engine and proceed to some fires." Let us go and preach the gospel. We need not preach politics or read a nice book review. We need not give our opinions on social and political activities in the community. We must go with the gospel.

If a man does not believe in the Christ, he is condemned already for his unbelief (John 3:18) If a person does believe, he then has a right to become a

child of God (John 1:12). A believer alone is not at that time a child of God since one cannot become that which he already is. Our Lord says that the person who both believes and is baptized shall be saved. This is contrary to what many say today. Some state that, "he that believes shall be saved and then may be baptized if he desires." Many today are asking the question, "who shall be saved?" Jesus has answered that question in Mark 16:15-16. Do you believe in what Jesus taught about baptism?—4763 Skyline Drive Ashline, Kentucky 41101

A Great New Book: Jesus Christ - Hope Of The Home

Readers of WORDS OF TRUTH will be happy to learn that Robert R. Taylor, Jr. staff writer for WORDS OF TRUTH, has recently authored and had published a new book entitled, JESUS CHRIST—HOPE OF THE HOME. As always, a man's writings tell the true story behind his actions—and Robert Taylor's writings speak eloquently to us of sound doctrine, love for brotherhood, and a deep admiration for Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.



BERT THOMPSON

It is on this last theme that brother Taylor has written in his new book. The book contains 13 chapters, which make it a "natural" for a quarterly study dealing with Jesus Christ's relationship to the home. The 13 chapters are as follows:

1. Jesus Christ--The Hope of the Home
2. What Will You Bring To The Marriage Altar?
3. What Is Marriage? (No. 1)
4. What is Marriage? (No. 2)
5. The Divorce Syndrome
6. Who May Remarry?
7. Jesus Christ: The Family Hope of Home

8. Who's In The Driver's Seat?
9. Jesus Christ: The Preventive Hope of the Home
10. Battered Wives, Battered Lives
11. Is it Well?
12. Jesus Christ: The Moral Hope of the Home
13. Jesus Christ: The Heavenly Hope of The Home

Each chapter is complete with various types of questions for classroom use.

The reader will find the book a veritable storehouse of important topics. As always, Robert Taylor dwells on "proof-text" teaching, not human opinions and platitudes. Chapter 5 on "The Divorce Syndrome," with its section on "The Divorce Syndrome: A Perveted Portrait of Violated Vows" is worth the price of the book just in itself. Chapter 6 on "Who May Remarry" is a refreshing change from the compromise so often coming from many in the church today.

Brother Taylor shows his love for God and his fellow man in the book by aiming for our hearts, not our toes. It is obvious on every page that brother Taylor simply wants us to know what the book he calls the "Valiant Volume" has to say about the home, husbands, wives, children, morals, and a host of other important topics.

In chapter 8 of the book, brother Taylor speaks to those of us who are parents, dealing with parental permissiveness and asking us the question, "Who's

in the driver's seat?" In his own kind, yet forceful way, brother Taylor leads us to the biblical conclusion that respect for authority in a child is instilled by firm discipline, not requested as an afterthought. As brother Taylor so aptly states: "Parents need to be in the driver's seat because: (a) the Bible commands it, (b) it is for the good of the child, (c) it is for the good of generations to come, (d) it is for the preservation of law and order, (e) there needs to be a basis for discipline in other layers of society, and (f) the salvation of their children's souls is at stake." Each of these topics is expanded in its own section in the book. The book is literally full to overflowing with wisdom from the "Valiant Volume" which brother Taylor has applied in an ever-so-powerful way to our daily lives.

I cannot recommend this book to highly. The book can be ordered from Lambert Book House, Box 4007, Shreveport, LA. 71104, or directly from brother Taylor at Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063, at a cost of \$1.50 (plus 50 cents postage). Teachers in adult classes dealing with Jesus, the home, children, or other similar topics ought not only to have their own copy of this great book, but ought to purchase copies for every member of the class as well. This book deserves a wide distribution among our brethren. Would that we had it in our power to take its contents to many outside the church as well! What good it is capable of doing! I urge every reader of WORDS OF TRUTH to purchase a copy for your own library, and a copy or two to give away. This is the kind of book people would be happy to receive, and blessed in having read.—Box 532 Cookeville, TN 38501



Words Of Truth

... noble Festus; but speak forth
... ness."

— Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, AUGUST 24, 1979

NUMBER 34

What Church Buildings Are And Are Not

Most modern people cannot conceive of a congregation without a "church building." Far too many present-day Christians have a similar problem.

More money is spent on church buildings than any other one item in most congregational budgets. A fair share of all church quarrels and splits have involved buildings either directly or indirectly.

Precious little teaching has been done to clarify

in people's minds just what the relationship of church buildings is to true Christianity. Perhaps the thoughts herein contained will help us all to have a clearer understanding of this matter. As with other knotty issues, it is often wise to study by antithesis, learning what a thing truly is by first observing what it is not.

A church building is not a church. When Jesus promised to build his church (universal), he certainly did not have in mind an edifice of wood or stone (Matt. 16:18). Nor was the church of God at Corinth (I Cor. 1:2) a building. Rather it was them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints. The very meaning of the Greek term *ekklesia* is a called out body of people. Long before any church buildings were owned or built, God's church, i.e., his saved people on earth, met and functioned. From the Roman Catholics, Protestants borrowed the concept that the building is somehow the church. But it is, obviously, a idea foreign to the Scriptures.

The church building is not the exclusive place where Christians might worship acceptably. Wherever God's children assemble to worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24) is acceptable to Jehovah. Jesus taught the woman of Samaria that true worship



JOHN WADDEY

would not be restricted to any geographical locale in the Christian age (John 4:21). Stephen affirmed that the Most High does not dwell in temples made with human hands (Acts 7:48). Our God, being omnipresent, is not localized and our worship can be offered from any point. And while we agree that it is right and good to meet with an established congregation at the appointed hour of worship if at all possible, we must never seek to limit acceptable worship to a church building. If all other things are done scripturally with proper motive, then worship is acceptable no matter where offered.

Church buildings are not intrinsically holy. Here again we deal with a concept borrowed from our denominational neighbors or perhaps from mistaken equation of church building with the Hebrew Temple. Remember the building is in no way the church. Rather it is a convenience built by men for their comfort and use. For some three hundred years the early Christians functioned completely and more successfully than ever since without church buildings. They met in homes, on the porches of the Jewish temple, in rented or borrowed halls and schools and in times of persecution in caves, mountains and catacombs. When Paul scores the Corinthians for despising the church by eating a common meal therein, he speaks of their assembly for worship, not a church house which they did not have (I Cor. 11:17-22). It is still wrong to mix a common meal with the Lord's Supper under any circumstances, but it has never been wrong to eat a fellowship meal in a church house. This has been a troublesome question that has hurt many congregations when well-meaning but misinformed brethren demanded that church buildings be used only for worship and Bible study and caused trouble if they were used for anything else. Since church buildings are non-Biblical conveniences made by Christians so they will have a suitable place to meet, those who built them have the right to use them for other activities that are otherwise right and good. It is strange to hear a man condemn using the building for the fellowship meal or

bridal shower and then proceed to use it for the marriage ceremony of his daughter or the funeral of his father. Both marriage ceremonies and funeral services are matters of our culture, and not acts of worship ordained of God. Then too we could mention the inconsistency of opposing the cooking, eating and drinking facilities in a building while making use of the water fountain and toilet facilities. They stand or fall together.

A church building can never be an acceptable substitute for soul winning. Too many unthinking saints believe that if they provide a comfortable meeting place and capable preacher, they have fulfilled their obligation to the lost of their community. They forget what Jesus said, "Go...teach" (Mk. 16:15); he did not say, "build a house and let them come if they will."

Similarly, a church house can never be a valid excuse for not engaging in world-wide evangelism. Hundreds of missionaries have heard the tired excuse from the leaders of churches across the land, "we have a building project; sorry we cannot help." Building buildings is of secondary importance to saving souls! Only in judgement will we know how many souls were lost because brethren let church buildings keep them from their sacred responsibility to preach the gospel to every creature (Mk 16:16).

Having observed what meeting houses are not, now notice a few points on the positive side.

A church building is a permanent advertisement that a group of God's people worship and work in that neighborhood. It is a symbol of faith, loyalty and conviction of brethren past and present who are determined to serve God in that area. It proclaims our belief in the existence of the living God and His crucifixion and resurrected Son. It reminds the world that there is in their midst a group of people who live soberly, righteously and godly (Tit. 2:12). It says to the poor and suffering that help is available (Jas. 1:27) from those who meet therein. A meeting house

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

(U.S.P.S 691-760)
I am not mad, most noble Jesus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness

— Acts 26:25

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Interpretation

DAVID R. PHARR

Differences in creeds and practices among the various religious groups are frequently explained as merely being the results of different "interpretations" of the Bible. It is reasoned that all follow the same Bible, but that each "looks at it differently." The Bible, therefore, means "different things to different people." This approach assumes that in religious issues there is no right and wrong, no truth and error: only differences in interpretation.

We do not question the need for Biblical interpretation. We do, however, strongly object to a false view of what Biblical interpretation is. The popular view that most religious differences can be explained as merely differences in interpretation is based on a mistaken concept of what is involved in interpreting the Bible.

Legitimate interpretation is the effort to understand what is said and meant by the inspired writers. This recognizes that *no statement of Scripture means anything except what the inspired writer meant for it to say when he wrote it*. True Biblical interpretation, therefore, is concerned with the meaning of words, grammar, and context. It seeks to know what the Bible exactly says and it believes what it said without trying to change its meaning.

A common, but false, view of interpretation is that one can assume that the Bible means anything which is compatible with his own opinions, preconceptions, or prejudices. This approach is not so much concerned with the intent of the writers as it is with making the bible fit the mold of the interpreter. Obviously this kind of "interpretation" gives the Bible as many differences in its meaning as there are differences in people's opinions and prejudices.

This false view of the interpretation may be illustrated by colored glasses. If a man wears glasses with a green tint everything will look green to him. If he puts on a pair with a red tint everything will look red. We realize, however, that his looking at things through tinted glasses does not make the world he sees actually that color. The tint may cause him to "interpret" things differently, but this "interpretation" is false.

Legitimate interpretation seeks to know what

Continued on page 4



FROM

THE EDITOR

Four Embarrassing Facts About Evolution



BOB DUNCAN

One might get the impression that all open minded people believe in the theory of evolution, and only those blinded by their prejudices refuse to accept the idea that all living forms evolved from lower life forms, including the idea that an amoeba which came into existence quite by chance a few million years ago is our common ancestor. There seems to

be no doubt that the mightiest tool of the evolutionist is his intellectual snobbery, which is so effective that most highly educated people believe in the theory of evolution because they have become convinced that *most highly educated people believe in the theory of evolution*.

There are four simple facts about the theory of evolution which are somewhat embarrassing to the evolutionist. These are not postulations such as are set forth by the evolutionist in reaching his conclusions. They are facts clearly demonstrable and readily admitted by informed people, even among evolutionists themselves.

Fact number one: Evolution is unproved. To hear the evolutionist talk one would think the theory of evolution not to be a theory at all; for what has been proved is not a theory, but a fact. The theory of evolution is called the *theory* of evolution because that is just exactly what it is--a theory. If it had been proved it would no longer be called a theory. It is a *fact* that the *theory* of evolution has not been proved. It has not been demonstrated. No evidence has been found to sustain its validity. This is a *fact* with which the evolutionist is well acquainted, but which he would be content not to discuss.

Fact number two: Evolution is unprovable. A belief in the theory of evolution has been around for quite some time; and some of those who advocate the theory have made efforts to produce in a laboratory some life form. By their own admission their efforts have failed. But even if one should succeed in producing some life form in a laboratory, the theory of evolution would still be unproved. There is a vast difference between saying that some life form has been produced under controlled conditions in a laboratory (though this has not happened), and in saying that all the complex forms of life came into being by accident and chance. It is a fact which the evolutionist must confess that the theory of evolution is not only unproved, but also unprovable.

Fact number three: Evolution is unscientific. It may be argued that this cannot be true, since most scientists believe in evolution. While it may be true that most scientists believe in evolution, it is a fact that no scientist arrived at this belief in evolution through the scientific method. Not one idea peculiarly held by those who believe in the theory of evolution has been arrived at by the scientific method; not one can be stated as a known fact of science. Trying to prove the theory of evolution by

saying that most scientists believe in evolution is like trying to prove Bible baptism is sprinkling by saying that most religionists believe in sprinkling. But the religionist who believes in sprinkling did not arrive at that belief by a study of the Bible; and the scientist who believes in evolution did not arrive at that belief through the scientific method.

To say that every living thing reproduces after its own kind is scientific. Incidentally, the expression "after his (their) kind" is used ten times in the first chapter of Genesis. The Bible is scientific. To say that the amoeba, which came into being without any living ancestor, produced the reptile, and that the reptile produced the mammal, is to say that which is a scientific impossibility. Yet it is, in an abbreviated and extremely simplified form, exactly what the evolutionist believes, and is proud to say he believes. Yet he rejects the idea of fiat creation as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, because, says he, it is unscientific. Unscientific??? And yet he believes in evolution?

Fact number four: Evolution is unprofitable. The arrogant air of the evolutionist might cause one to think that belief in the theory of evolution is responsible for the many advancements which have been made in the fields science, medicine, technology, etc. The truth of the matter is, not one of the many advancements which are so much a part of our lives in the Twentieth Century owes its existence to a belief in the theory of evolution. It can be said further that a belief in the theory of evolution, in and of itself, has not made one single contribution toward these marvelous advancements. In other words, if a belief in the theory of evolution had been non-existent, these advancements would not have been hindered one whit. Regardless of how much importance the evolutionist may attach to his theory, the fact remains that a belief in the theory of evolution is unprofitable, i.e., of no benefit at all.

Now, why should I be considered prejudicial, uncultured, illiterate, unintellectual, and unrealistic simply because I refuse to swallow—hook, line, and sinker—a theory which is *unproved, unprovable, unscientific, and unprofitable?*

Motivation For Godliness

JOHNNY RAMSEY

It ought to be easy for us to want to be spiritual. There are so many incentives for righteous living within the confines of God's grace. In I John 4:19 we learn the motivation for reciprocal devotion: "We love, because He first loved us." Truly, "the goodness of God leads us to repentance." Since Jehovah commended His love toward us *while we were yet sinners* we ought to respond naturally to His commands (Romans 5:8, I John 5:3). Actually, Paul plainly sets forth this very arrangement in Romans 12:1. Based upon the unfathomed, incomparable

Continued on page 4

Your Loved Ones In Heaven

(No. 4)

If you get to heaven and your parents are in heaven, will there be any sort of recognition? If you get to heaven and your marital mate is in heaven, will you recognize him/her? If you get to heaven and your children are in heaven, will you recognize them and will there be reciprocal recognition on their part toward you? Will there be a recognition of elders whom you have known, of prayer leaders and song directors whom you have known and of fellow Christians with whom you have worked side by side in the Lord's work? Unbound affirmatives answer all these oft-raised questions. Is there Scriptural sanction and warrant from the word of God to undergird each affirmative? Most assuredly!



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

There is recognition in the state which is known as Sheol in the Old Testament and Hades in the New Testament. It is affirmed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that each was gathered to his people at death. Of faithful Abraham Holy Writ affirms, "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people" (Gen. 25:8). Of peaceful and serene Isaac Inspiration records, "And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him" (Gen. 35:29). Of the colorful Jacob it is affirmed within Sacred Scripture, "And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people" (Gen. 49:33). How could each of the patient patriarchs have been gathered to his people in Sheol—not the grave—and the joys that such a reunion afforded unless there was recognition beyond death?

At the death of his infant son the Shepherd Monarch spoke of the impossibility of bringing back to earthly scenes the departed one. Yet he affirmed, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (II Sam. 12:23). He would go to the child; the child would not return to him. But if there is NO recognition in the great beyond, how could there ever be a fruition of David's expressed and expected desire? Obviously, there could be none, NONE AT ALL!

But even more germane to the point is the Biblical narrative of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-30. Space forbids our quoting it all but each reader is requested to peruse it with care and profit in his own Bible. The rich man recognized Abraham and designated him as "Father Abraham" in Luke 16:24. Abraham recognized the doomed "Dives" (a Latin expression meaning rich man) and called him "Son" in Luke 16:25. Yet the rich man and Abraham did not live contemporarily on earth; they did not even live under the same dispensations. Abraham was under the Patriarchal Dispensation; the rich man and his brothers were under Judaism (Luke 16:19-26). Both men died. One was buried; no burial is mentioned for the beggar's body. One awoke in Hadean happiness; the other awoke in the sorrows of Sheol. Though both were in the unseen world of departed spirits yet they were not in close proximity. An impassable chasm separated their respective positions from each other. Yet the doomed "Dives" from his position in the horrors of Hades, the sorrows of Sheol, looked to the other compartment of the Hadean realm and saw "Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (Luke 16:22). There was instant recognition here. The rich

man was still the same person he had been though now stripped of his fame and separated forever from his vast fortune experienced on earth. Lazarus was still Lazarus though now stripped of his beggar's apparel and having now said a final good-by to sores

and suffering. In Hades the rich man had identity; he still possessed a sharp and clear memory. Surely there is beyond all doubt recognition after death. —P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN, 38063

The Vine And The Branches

"I am the vine, ye are the branches" (John 15:5). There are various speculations expressed relative to the setting of this well known parable spoken by the Lord. Some have suggested that Jesus saw a vine growing on the side of a wall; others think it may have been the vineyards nearby; while others mention that Jesus had just instituted the supper, containing the fruit of the vine. Nevertheless, he used something very common to bring forth some vital lessons to his disciples. The Bible is replete with nature's symbolisms and made applicable in spiritual matters. Jesus has been referred to as being the rose of Sharon, a rock, a stone, a pearl, a lily and presently in our study, as being the vine. Basically speaking, this parable of the vine and the branches in John 15 deals with the various relationships of Jesus with others.



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

First of all, we observe Christ's relationship with his father. The Lord said: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman" (John 15:1). This would indicate that God is the proprietor as well as being the vinedresser. It is God who is spoken of as being the one who does the pruning and the purging of the branches. The prominent and prevalent attitude of Jesus toward his father is always a submissive one

(John 6:38). Jesus is the "true vine." Israel of old had been "a noble vine" of God in ages past, which was only a figure of the true vine, Jesus Christ (Jeremiah 2:21; Hebrews 9:24).

Secondly, there is Christ's relationship toward man. "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (John 15:5). Jesus is the vine and the individual disciples are the branches; not nations, institutions or denominations. Jesus said: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered" (John 15:6). Herein we learn of the vital connection between Christ and his disciples. Jesus is spoken of as being the head of the body (Ephesians 5:23). The branches must have the vine in order to live; however, the vine can exist without the branches. "For apart from me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). "In Christ" speaks of human redemption. The cleansing agent is the word of the Lord. "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3; Ephesians 5:26; James 1:18). The apostle Paul taught that we are "baptized into Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:16, 27). "In Christ" means that the Christian is in God, because Christ is in God and God is in Christ (John 14:20). The branch abiding in the vine is conditional as we learn in this parable. The symbolism must not be pressed beyond its intended meaning, and, the clear teaching in the scripture of the free moral agency of man.

Thirdly, the parable suggests the relationship of Christ toward good works. Good, productive branches are pruned in order to bear more fruit (John 15:2). Meritorious works of mortal man are

Continued on page 4

Is Baptism Essential to Salvation?

G.F. RAINES

The Bible tells us that "the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 3:20, 21).

R.L. Whiteside said: "But wherein is the figure—the true likeness of their being saved by water and our being saved by baptism? The water transported them from a world of corruption into a world made pure by water; and so baptism takes us out of a life of sin and corruption into a state of righteousness—out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Christ" (*Doctrinal Discourses*, pp. 300, 301).

Only those who are in Christ have "redemption through the blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). There are only two passages in the Bible which tell us how to get into Christ, and both of them emphatically state that we are baptized into Christ:

"Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into

death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3, 4).

"For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26, 27).

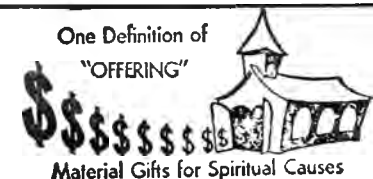
If baptism is not essential to salvation, what is the meaning of the following passages?

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

"Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

"Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins: and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16). —Newton, Ms. 39345



Material Gifts for Spiritual Causes

What Church Buildings Are And Are Not

Continued from page 1

is a beehive of activity for God's workers, a center of operations for his army. It houses a school for education in the wisdom of God. It makes it convenient for the saints to assemble together for worship, exhortation and teaching (Heb. 10:25).

Someone might ask, if church buildings are not found in the Bible, how can we justify using the

money given to God to build them? Since God commands the congregation to assemble for worship, then obviously some suitable place must be found (Heb. 10:25). Any command of God to do something automatically authorizes the necessary tools with which to fulfill that command.

Having seen what our meeting houses are and are

not, let us use them to the glory of God. may we use them to their fullest potential. Let us not be judgmental of brethren who use them for wholesome activities and not contrary to God's will. Always remember that the church is God's people, never a structure of wood and stone.—Route 22, Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN. 37921

Interpretation

Continued from page 2

God has said. False interpretation seeks to make God say what one want Him to say.

When Philip came to the Ethiopian, who was reading from Isaiah, he asked, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The man was trying to interpret (understand) what he was reading. The question in his mind was, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" Philip interpreted the passage for him by showing him exactly of whom the prophet was speaking: Jesus Christ. Philip did not say, "It's all in how you look at it." He did not reason, "Some denominations see it one way and some another." He did not liberalize, "Everyone has a right to his own interpretation." Philip knew that Isaiah had written as he was guided by the Holy Spirit and that his prophecy meant nothing more and nothing less than what the Spirit intended when the passage

was written. It is true that through the years many had "interpreted" this Isaiah passage differently, but they were all wrong. The only correct way to understand it was as Philip did. Any other "understanding" would be a misunderstanding (Acts 8:30-35).

The great commission statement, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." has often been the object of faulty interpretation. In an effort to force this statement to fit certain creeds and opinions, efforts are made to "interpret" it without regard to the words and grammar the inspired writer actually used. The key words are "believeth," "baptized," and "saved." No student should have difficulty with the words. The grammar is also simple. The phrases involving belief and baptism are in the present tense. "Shall be saved" is future tense. The structure shows that "shall be

saved" is the end to be obtained by believing and being baptized. It is certain that the future follows the present. The coordinate conjunction "and" joins together "believeth" and "is baptized," which means both requirements stand in the same relationship to "shall be saved."

This statement from Mark 16:16 is one that involves no difficult interpretation at all. Why is it, then, that some seem to have so much trouble with it? How do some interpret it to mean that one is saved when he believes, but before he is baptized? It is by false interpretation. An "explanation" is given which ignores the force of what is actually said in order to conform to the preconceptions of one's creed or opinion.—P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29730

The Vine And The Branches

Continued from page 3

meaningless. The works ordained of God are essential and are the outgrowth of an obedient faith (Ephesians 2:10; James 2:14-26). The outward evidence of a Christian's union with Christ is seen by the fruit one bears. The inward bond of union which is the cause of fruitfulness is love (John 15:10). The Christian's life is to glorify God (John 15:8; Matthew 5:16). Specifically, we can bring glory to God by leading others to Christ, and, by living in such a manner as to manifest the fruit of the Spirit (John 15:8; Matthew 28:19; Galatians 5:22, 23).

Fourthly, there is Christ's relationship or lack of relationship with severed branches. Unproductive

branches are taken away (John 15:2, 6). This is positive proof that a child of God can so sin as to be eternally lost. The precept of this doctrine is herein presented as well as an example of the same in the person of Judas Iscariot (John 13:2). If the continuing in Christ is conditional and present, so is the purging and casting off of the branches. The final punishment of the unproductive branches shall occur when "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:41, 42).

It was during the spring, when sap flows freely, that we cut off some branches from a grape vine. Later, we observed the life giving fluid actually flowing from the vine to the ground. There was a certain sadness that filled our heart as we contemplated this parable of our Lord. How tragic it is for Christians to sever their ties with the Lord through unfaithfulness. We can only live as long as we sustain the right relationship with Jesus Christ our Saviour.—809 Old Perry Store Rd, Opp, Alabama, 36467

Motivation For Godliness

Continued from page 2

graciousness of the Father we respond to this beneficent relationship by sacrificially offering our very best to Him. Our lives are thereby transformed into the image of the Lord. Because "one died for all, the love of Christ constrains us" (II Corinthians 5:14). In Hebrews 4:12-16 we find four powerful reasons for remaining faithful to the cause of the Master:

- (1) The Piercing Word of God
- (2) The Pervading Eye of God
- (3) The Perfection of Christ
- (4) The Privilege of Prayer

Truly, there are many rich incentives for godliness. Specifically, I want to live for Jesus because of the following salient reasons:

- A. The Vanity of Any Other Way
- B. The Joy of Saving Souls
- C. The Sorrow Hell Would Offer
- D. The Joy Heaven Affords
- E. CHRIST IS COMING!

Blending all five of these thoughts into one essay is not difficult if we let the Bible speak to us on these vibrant themes. In Romans 8:6 the distinction between carnal living and spiritual purpose is clearly spelled out. It is the difference—wide as a chasm—between life and peace versus death! Solomon warned of the vexation that mere existence poses as contrasted with life filled with godly emphasis. Paul makes it clear that his purpose was to magnify Christ

(Philippians 1:20). As parents we must instill this point into the sojourn of our children (Genesis 18:19), or both we and they shall live in vain! Seeking first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33) will provide for us the blessings of the Creator in regard to all that we need.—Arlington, Texas

Gus Nichols

Preachers Lectureship

October 1-5

Full Schedule Next Week



Words Of Truth

the Words of

ut speak forth

Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, AUGUST 31, 1979

NUMBER 35

Your Loved Ones In Heaven

(No. 5)

The previous article set forth Scriptural sanction for there being recognition in the state called Sheol in the Old Testament and Hades in the New Testament. There will be both memory and identity there and these are the two highly recognized and undeniable imperatives that produce such. Will this recognition extend on into the eternal world of the heavenly hereafter? Biblical proof is overwhelmingly in favor of affirmative response.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

AN ARGUMENT FROM MATTHEW 8:11

This cogent argument occurs early in the New Testament and in what we now know as the opening book, Matthew. Jesus said, "That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11). Kingdom of heaven in Matthew's gospel record frequently has reference to the Lord's church or the kingdom of God on earth. Here it evidently means the kingdom of glory or the heavenly kingdom. Why? Because Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had been long gone from earthly scenes when the church breathed its first breath of air as an established institution on that early Pentecostal morning in Acts. 2 Yet the three patient patriarchs, the founding fathers of the Hebrew nation, will all be in heaven. They will be there because they all three died IN the faith. The bible says of them plus the saintly Sarah, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and

pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:13). Abraham was Abraham while on earth; he will still be Abraham in eternity. There will not be so much as even a change of his name from what he wore on earth, what the rich man called him in Luke 16 and what he will be known as in the heavenly hereafter. Isaac was Isaac while he tabernacled in Canaan for ninescore years; he will still be Isaac in the heavenly world. Jacob was Jacob while he spent his one hundred and forty-seven years in Canaan, Padan-Aram and Egypt; he will still be the colorful Jacob in eternity. All three of these lived as contemporaries on earth. Abraham and his son Isaac were contemporary for seventy-five years. Abraham and Jacob were contemporary for fifteen years. Isaac and Jacob were contemporary for one hundred and twenty years. They have experienced Hadean happiness and Sheol sublimity together in Abraham's bosom for close to four thousand years. They will never again know another separation. Does it seem likely that they will not know each other in heaven? Nay, verily!

APPLICATION OF THE ARGUMENT

Jesus affirmed that people will come from the east and west and will sit (literally recline) with the patient patriarchs in heavenly habitations at last. This has reference to people who would be part and parcel of the Christian movement. Those who have lived in the Christian Dispensation, if faithful at death as were these saintly patriarchs of old, will be in heaven with Abraham, Isaac or Jacob within an earthly framework. These patriarchs had been gone from earthly scenes some eighteen centuries before anyone ever wore the noble name of Christian.

CONCLUSION DRAWN FROM THE ARGUMENT

A certain conclusion is drawn irresistibly from the previously laid premises. If we will recognize Abraham as Abraham, Isaac as Isaac and Jacob as Jacob in the heavenly hereafter,

why will we not recognize a Christian father, a Christian mother, a Christian brother or sister, a Christian husband, a Christian wife or a child who died in infancy or in early childhood? We will!! Why would we not recognize the great and godly preachers who moved us by their messages and molded us by their dedication? We will!! Why will we not recognize the godly elders who have overseen us? We will!! Why will we not recognize dedicated deacons, faithful Bible teachers, diligent personal workers—one of whom may have led us to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world—and all faithful sons and daughters of God with whom we have worked and by whose side we have traveled the Christian pathway of life? We will!! Without doubt or debate there will be future recognition in heaven. That forms a cherished part of our hallowed hope for the heavenly hereafter. Thank God for such holy hope!—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063

Why Don't More Preachers Quit?

S.G. GRAY

The brotherhood is concerned, so they say, over the shortage of preachers, over the lack of interest among young men to become preachers, and over the preachers who are leaving the pulpit for secular jobs. Many articles have been written expressing concern over the "preacher shortage" and "preacher exodus" in various church bulletins and brotherhood periodicals. A candid investigation of the general

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

(U.S.P.S 691 /60)

I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness

— Acts 26:25

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The Optimist - The Pessimist

ROGER E. DICKSON

"Don't worry about anything," Paul Harvey jokingly says, "Nothing is going to turn out all right." There are always those in every congregation who believe that things are going to get worse before they get better. The problem is that we have too many Christians in local churches who spend half their time figuring out what we cannot do, and the other half seeing that we do not do it.

Who is this character, the pessimist? Well, you can always spot one a mile away. He's the fellow who looks both ways before he crosses a one-way street. He's the character who believes that things are as bad as they can be, yet always expects them to get worse. Yes, this is the guy who doesn't choose the lesser of two evils; he chooses both.

But such thinking can be devastating to living life. Gene Tunney the famous boxer, once related that before he had his championship fight with Jack Dempsey he woke up one night before the fight having dreamed that Dempsey beat him bloody. He said that he had just been reading all the newspaper reports about the ferocity of Dempsey. So, he decided to read nothing of Dempsey until after the fight. He would think only positive thoughts. And yes, he beat Dempsey.

Paul said it right, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthenth me" (Philippians 4:13).

Yes, this is the key... "all things through Christ which strengthenth me." That's the optimist... and Christianity too. The optimist... this is the one, someone said, who tells you to cheer up when things are... well... going his way? He is the man who spends his last dollar to buy a billfold.

Optimism is an attitude of mind. "Optimism is the belief," it was said, "that even when things come to worst, it won't be so bad." The optmist, as R.H. Bradley said, believes that this world, "is the best of all possible worlds." No, the true optimist is not the fellow who believes what is going to happen will be postponed. His future is optimistic, not petrifying.

Again, Paul exhorts, "All things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28).

In his book *The Results of Positive Thinking*,

Continued on page 4

Gus Nichols Preachers Lectureship

October 1-5 is the date for the 1979 GUS NICHOLS PREACHERS LECTURESHIP

to be conducted at Indian Creek Youth Camp located in a wooded wilderness seventeen miles south of Jasper, Alabama.

Lodging will be furnished free of charge in the camp facilities as space permits. Meals will be served in the camp cafeteria at a cost of \$2.50 per meal; and the camp cooks

have never been accused of allowing anyone to leave hungry. Each person lodging at the camp will need to bring his own pillow, towels and linens. The camp itself can accommodate more than one hundred people. Those wishing to bring their own campers may do so, but there is no way for us to arrange for water and sewer hook-ups for these campers.

The forerunner to the Gus Nichols Preachers Lectureship (the Gus Nichols Bible Workshop) began in 1970, and was conducted by the late and beloved brother Gus Nichols. This workshop was held each year for six consecutive years, and then was dropped about the time of brother Nichol's death. An effort was made on two occasions to revive the workshop, but these efforts were unsuccessful.



BOB DUNCAN

FROM
THE EDITOR

Last year the elders of the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper, Alabama, where brother Nichols preached the last forty-three years of his life, requested of those who had formerly been connected with the workshop permission to move the workshop to Indian Creek Youth Camp, and to allow the Sixth Avenue eldership the oversight of the program. Permission was granted, and an outstanding program has been planned. Since the program planned is not a workshop in the usual connotation of that word, the name "Gus Nichols Preachers Lectureship" has been adopted. A complete schedule of the program may be found elsewhere in this issue.

We repeat, lodging will be free in the cabins at Indian Creek Youth Camp. Three meals a day will be served in the camp cafeteria at a cost of \$2.50 per meal. Call or write us and let us reserve you a place.

Needless to say, the weather man makes no guarantees. But the first week of October was selected because normally at that time of year the weather should be ideal, and the countryside should be beautiful in this section of Alabama.

We are anticipating a wonderful spiritual feast as we sit at the feet of some of our brotherhood's outstanding preachers; and we are anticipating a marvelous week of fellowship in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. We hope you will be one of the preachers, elders, deacons, or other church leaders who will take part in this great Lectureship.

A Man Needs A Balance Wheel

Back during my years as a student at Alabama Christian School of Religion, brother Rex A. Turner often reminded us that "a preacher needs a balance wheel." He meant by this that preachers needed to be very careful not to allow themselves to go overboard in any aspect of their preaching or practice. It was another way of saying that preachers should exercise good judgment and not become carried away with one thing to the exclusion of other matters of importance.

Jesus chided the Jewish leaders of his day for becoming so obsessed with some of the minute requirements of the law that they completely neglected "weightier matters of... judgment, mercy, and faith" (Matt. 23:23). If you please, Jesus was saying the same thing that brother Turner used to say: "You need a balance wheel." It wasn't that the tithing of herbs, such as mint, anise, and cummin, was not important. Jesus said that this should be done

(cf. Deut. 14:22). But the problem was that they had lost their balance. Truth in one area had been so emphasized that matters of even greater importance were being totally ignored.

From reading some of the articles written in the last year or so by some of my preaching brethren, it would seem that the sum and substance of Christianity centered upon what translation of the Bible one uses, or whether or not a church operates a bus program, or whether or not a church has a "Children's Bible Hour," or a dozen other things. I readily acknowledge that these matters are important, but brethren should not become so overbearing on these points that they lose sight of the fact that there are honest differences of opinion on these matters. Just as the questions about a Christian's participating in war and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit are very important, our differences should not be pressed to the point of splitting the church.

Obviously, we must contend earnestly for "the faith" (Jude 3), but let us make sure that our balance wheels are operating so that we do not drive wedges between good brethren who are still studying these "difficult" issues. One of the most important lessons that I learned in the two years that I worked as an associate preacher with brother Gus Nichols was that a person can stand firmly for the things he believes



RAY DUTTON

Continued on page 4

Criticism

Who among us has never been criticized? Many of us wish we could lay claim to never having been criticized, but in reality few (if any) of us can. There are, to this writer's knowledge, only two kinds of criticism: **CONSTRUCTIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE**. It is commonplace for people to talk about each other. And this can be done without gossiping (condemned in both the Old and New Testaments.... see Leviticus 19:16,



BERT THOMPSON

Psalms 15:1-3, Proverbs 18:8, I Timothy 5:11, Romans 1:29-30, II Corinthians 12:20, and James 4:11). Many of the things we say about people may be genuinely sincere and complimentary. This is as it should be. Unfortunately, a great deal more of the things we say (and hear) about others is far from complimentary. In fact, it is actually cruel and derogatory. All of us, at one time or another, have been the subject of such criticism. It is not a pleasant experience we wish to repeat.

It is not the purpose of this article to explore constructive criticism. Such criticism, given in love, should be accepted in the same manner. Constructive criticism (by its very nature, intended to build us up) should be welcomed by every Christian. Neither is it the purpose of this article simply to encourage more compliments for those around us (although we all would probably agree such is in order, and badly needed). This article is written to those of our number who constantly employ *destructive* criticism as a tool to let others know we do not agree with their actions, or to let others know their opinions are not shared by us.

It has been said, "To escape criticism, say nothing, do nothing, be nothing." Such a description hardly encompasses the Christian life. Progress comes only when action is taken. The old motto, "Consider the turtle—he makes progress only when he sticks out his neck" might also be applied to us. Without doing something decisive, it is impossible to move forward. And, as soon as we launch out, we are certain to draw criticism from some quarter. Even Shakespeare, many years ago, recognized this fact. He wrote (and his character Hamlet spoke) these words: "Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny." Even Jesus Christ, the most righteous, purest, finest, and only sinless person who ever lived on this earth was not immune. Some folks (few though they were) applauded his actions while mobs of others criticized him for those same actions. The Pharisees constantly criticized him, even though his works were good. Such is often the case in our day. Criticism comes from all ranks, whether our works be good or bad.

Destructive criticism has no place among members of the Lord's church. Paul instructed the Thessalonians (I Thessalonians 5:11) to "exhort one another and build each other up...." The Hebrew writer admonishes us as he says, "Let us consider one another to *provoke* unto love and good works" (Hebrews 10:24). There is a vast difference between edifying one another (or provoking one another to good works) and destroying one another through destructive criticism. Christians have no right to use destructive criticism!!

To those of us who are *members* of Christ's church, may I speak these admonitions through this brief article. Many of us criticize because of our own evil motives, be they envy, jealousy, covetousness, etc. We seem to feel that we add some "extra stature" to our own lives by besmirching someone else's. How

sad a situation this is indeed. How wrong we are in this concept. Many of us criticize others because of our own narrow mindedness. Because a brother or sister's opinion or method of action does not agree with our own, we criticize him instead of re-evaluating our own position. We become, in Paul Bunyan's words, "a man that could look no way but downward with a muck-rake in his hand." Some of us criticize because we know how to do nothing else. It has been said that "rudeness is the weak man's imitation of strength." The same might be said of criticism. Benjamin Disraeli once said, "It is easier to be critical than correct." Zeuxis (400 B.C.) said, "Criticism comes easier than craftsmanship." Brethren, let us resolve to criticize less and edify more, heeding James' advice (James 3:5-6): "So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how much wood is kindled by how small a fire! And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell."

To those who are both *members* and *leaders* in Christ's church, may I give these admonitions. Destructive criticism from an elder of the church becomes even more powerful because it comes from a man who holds the most important office on the earth. Those of us who are Christians are aware of the fact that we are to obey the elders and be in subjection to them (Hebrews 13:17). True Christians are ever aware of this commandment from in subjection to them (Hebrews 13:17). True Christians are ever aware of this commandment from the pen of the writer of Hebrews. And we do not take it lightly! Therefore, *any* criticism from an elder

causes us immediately to re-asses our position. But destructive criticism does much damage to a Christian who is trying to live a Christ-like life. Perhaps the advice of Charles Buxton would be useful here: "The rule of carving holds good as to criticism: never cut out with a knife what you can cut with a spoon." One kind word, perhaps in the form of a suggestion, will do much good in the long run than a bushel of words in the form of destructive criticism. Elders, above all, should not be associated with destructive criticism. Even if a person has a realistic reason for offering criticism, this does not give him the right to express it inappropriately! Destructive criticism, in any form, cannot be appropriately expressed. Elders, please admonish the flock without the use of destructive criticism.

In conclusion, we may examine ourselves to see if we are guilty of destructive criticism. Plutarch once said, "It is a thing of no great difficulty to raise objections against another man's oration—nay, it is a very easy matter; but to produce a better in its place is a work extremely troublesome." Unless our criticism is constructive, we may be assured it is not needed.

One last word, from the pen of Guy N. Woods, to members of the church who are the targets of destructive criticism. "Paul was one of the most criticized men of his day, or any day. Yet he did not suffer himself to be impeded by adverse opinions of others. In spite of abuse and criticism, he went on with his work, assured that he would eventually find triumph. Said he: 'But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self...He that judgeth me is the Lord'" (I Corinthians 4:3,4). — Box 532 Cookeville, TN. 38501

When Jesus Comes Again

Just before taking His leave from this world, Jesus said to His disciples, "I will come again" (Jno. 14:1-3). In this passage, three great truths are affirmed: (1) Christ has gone to prepare a place for us; (2) He will come again; (3) He will receive us unto Himself.

When Jesus comes, He will raise the dead. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel...and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (I Thes. 4:12-18). But when the righteous are raised, all the dead shall be raised. Christ said, "Marvel not at this; for the hour cometh in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jno. 5:28-29).

Jesus said nothing about coming again, and then again; once to raise the righteous, and a thousand years later to raise the wicked. Both groups will be raised in the same "hour." The righteous and the wicked shall be raised and judged in "the last day" (Jno. 6:44, 54; 12:48).

When the righteous are raised, they will be given new bodies, changed bodies, spiritual bodies; "(Christ) shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). The wicked will have bodies (Matt. 10:28), but

inspiration gives no discription of them.

When Jesus comes again, he will change the righteous living. "We shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump" (I Cor. 15:51-54). But "the dead in Christ shall rise first" (I Thes. 4:13-18), that is, before living saints are changed.

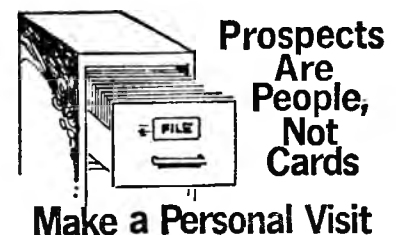
When Christ comes, he will judge the world in righteousness. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of this glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another as the shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matt. 25:31-46).

To those on his right hand, he will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." But to those on his left, he will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

"When Jesus comes to reward his servants: whether it be noon or night; Faithful to Him will He find us watching, with our lamps all trimmed and bright?" — P.O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, TN 38464



W.C. QUILLEN



Why Don't More Preachers Quit?

Continued from page 1

attitude toward preachers and their families, the double standards expected of a preacher's family to the other families in the congregation, and the financial treatments of the preachers, plus the lack of support given to their efforts to preach the gospel, makes us only to ask, "why don't more preachers quit?"

From my observation, in the minds of many brethren and congregations, a preacher is a "necessary evil." Very few preachers are made to feel that they are accepted by the congregation, or are made to feel that they are more than temporary. This lack of acceptance is shown in many ways, some ways being almost cruel. The preacher is blamed for everything that does not please the members even to the temperature of the building. He is often spoken to with a sharp and cutting tongue. He is often obviously uninvited to social gatherings, with such gatherings discussed and planned in his presence, or the presence of his wife.

The preacher's family must preface every decision

with, "what would the brethren say or think if we do this or that?" His children are made to feel that they are in an invisible prison with guards watching from every side. The member's children have liberties and privileges the preacher's children would be criticized for if they did the same things. The preacher's family must not be seen at a movie regardless of how clean it may be. They cannot wear certain clothing (and should not) that others wear with impunity: shorts, halters, etc. Is there any wonder that preacher's kids are often resentful? Of course, no one should wear clothing unbecoming a Christian.

Concerning financial matters: The preacher is expected to be a liberal giver. The preacher's "salary" is considered "too high" by many in the congregation. The preacher is expected to have talents, training, schooling and experience far "above average" but to be satisfied with an "average" salary. Everything the preacher receives, including fringe benefits, is stated as "salary" while the members think only of "take home pay" as their

salary. The preacher is expected to consider his "free rent" as a part of his salary and base his contribution accordingly, but the members do not consider the appreciation on their homes when they plan their contribution. The preacher is reminded that he is getting his home "rent free" but the estimated rental value of his house is quoted when the preacher is reminded of what he makes. The preacher, in most places, is forced to live in a house provided by the church (where did this idea come from?) and when he is too old to preach he has no home and the brotherhood has made no provisions for him, or his widow.

Again the question, "why don't more preachers quit?" The answer is not because they have security; it is not because of special appreciation for their work; it is not because it is an easy life. Those who stay on do so only because they love the Lord, his cause and the lost. By the way, have you "hugged" your preacher lately?—704 Cleveland Avenue Gadsden, Alabama 35901

The Optimist - The Pessimist

Continued from page 2

Norman V. Peale said, "A positive thinker does not refuse to recognize the negative, he refuses to dwell on it. Positive thinking is a form of thought which habitually looks for the best results from the worst conditions. It is possible to look for something to build on; it is possible to expect the best for yourself even though things look bad. And the remarkable fact is that when you seek good, you are very likely to find it."

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." We must always act as if it were impossible to fail. There was the businessman who was asked how he always went through times of trouble. "First, I try to go around it," he said. "Then I try to go under it or over it. If I do not succeed, I just plow right through it." That's the way of a true optimist.

The greater attitude of optimism is really shown when compared with the "pitts attitude" of Mr. Pessimist. You can always tell who's who in this area of mental behavior.

A Man Needs A Balance Wheel

Continued from page 1

are true without pressing every view to the point of division. Brother Nichols held and preached views on the covering, marriage and divorce, the Holy Spirit, and other matters with which many in the brotherhood would disagree. Yet, he never divided his local congregation or the brotherhood over these issues. If we are not careful some of these same issues will be made tests of fellowship by some of us who have lost our balance wheels.

Some of my preaching brethren seem to be determined to label everyone who doesn't agree with their pet obsession as unsound or unfaithful. Such an attitude will soon drive wedges just as certainly as it did during the 50's regarding orphan homes, church cooperation, multiple communion cups, bible classes, etc. May God help us to oil our balance wheels and make sure that they are operating properly, lest we once again see the church of our Lord ravaged with division over difficult matters which should never have been made tests of fellowship. "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 longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1-3).
—713 Mary Ethel Drive, Montgomery, AL 36109

J.B. Cabell said, "The optimist proclaims that we live in the best of all possible worlds, the pessimist fears that this is right." Sure, the pessimist may be more often right, but the optimist is more often happy. And really, if it were not for the optimist the pessimist wouldn't know how happy he isn't.

Yes it's the pessimist we've been told who says that the glass is half empty, but the optimist comes back with the statement that it is half full. "The optimist consoles himself that things could be worse," someone related, "but the pessimist just waits a while, and sure enough things get worse...for him, that is." That's true, for you see, the optimist sees an opportunity in every calamity; the pessimist sees a calamity in every opportunity. This pessimist is

always the fellow who says we're half done while the optimist keeps thinking that we're nearing the end.

The road to a happy optimistic life requires storing up good thoughts as a squirrel stores up nuts. When the times get tough he always has a good supply from which to draw sustenance. The optimist always has a good store of positive mental attitudes from which to draw comfort in times of trouble. He is like the teakettle. When he's up to his neck in hot water, he just whistles. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." That's a good mental attitude. That's whistling in times of trouble, for the man who wrote those words was about to be put to death for his beliefs.—White's ferry Road School of Biblical Studies 3201 N. 7th St. West Monroe, La. 71291

THE SIXTH AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST PRESENTS "THE GUS NICHOLS PREACHERS LECTURESHIP"

October 1-5, 1979

The Gus Nichols Preachers Lectureship will be held Monday October 1 through Friday October 5 at the Indian Creek Youth Camp which is located just 17 miles south of Jasper, Alabama.

There will be no charge to those attending except for meals. Accommodations at the camp are being provided by the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ.

SCHEDULE

Monday through Thursday
1:00-2:30 Roy Deaver—"Establishing Bible Authority"
3:00-4:30 Winfred Clark—"Practical Studies In Hebrews"

Tuesday through Friday
8:00 a.m.-9:30 a.m.—Johnny Ramsey—"The Prophet of the Old Testament and the Preacher of Today"

10:00-11:30—William Woodson—"Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus"

Evening Sessions — 7:00 p.m.

Monday—Winfred Clark
Tuesday—Roy Deaver
Wednesday—Johnny Ramsey
Thursday—William Woodson

For further information and reservations write Gus Nichols Preachers Lectureship 1501 6th Avenue Jasper, Alabama 35501 or call (205) 384-6446 or 387-1670.





Words Of Truth

most noble Festus; but speak forth

- Acts 26:25

(USPS 65)

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1979

NUMBER 36

Challenges To The Church

When we think of challenges to the church, we are usually thinking of outside forces which attack the Lord's cause, or evil doctrines or practices being promoted by false brethren. This type of challenge is real and prevalent. But the challenges I have in mind at this time are of a different kind. They are subtle, hard to identify challenges that are found in the heart of every Christian leader. They are the roots of many of



JOHN WADDEY

our more visible problems such as conflicts and divisions. The problems I contemplate are not often thought about or written about, but they should be. The solutions are not easy to come by and I am confident that I have not solved all of them satisfactorily. Perhaps our discussing them will help all of us some...at least by making us aware that they exist.

It is a challenge to maintain the unity of the Spirit and avoid sectarianism (Eph. 4:1-3). Our message on Christian unity has been correct in content and consistent in delivery. Yet our ability to demonstrate to the world unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace has been one failure. Our brotherhood has repeatedly suffered major splits and most of our congregations have had at least one internal "blow up." Some I know have had three or four that resulted in broken unity. It appears that part of the problem has been in inability to distinguish between things essential, and non-essential. We talk of respecting a man's right to a private opinion but usually clobber him if it differs from ours. We have a problem with personalities and organizations being the causal factor in our conflicts more often than doctrine. One real problem is that many brethren are suspicious of and militant toward any brother who even talks about our failures here

and the need to improve. May God help us solve this pressing problem. Let us all pray for wisdom (Jas. 1:5) to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

It is difficult to distinguish between our local customs, mores and traditions and the real essence of Christianity. As long as all our Christian associations are from our own racial, social, financial, regional, and religious background we get along pretty good. But in an age of world-wide Christianity, easy mobility and a heterogeneous society we have serious problems caused by conflicts that have to do with "the way we have always done a thing." This was the major cause in the controversy over multiple communion cups and classes. It makes tensions between rural and city congregations. It is sometimes a major problem in mission fields as the missionary from Middle Tennessee insists that people in India function just like they did back home. The tragedy is that most often those involved in the contention are not even aware that the issue is not one of scripture but human custom. One example will illustrate my point. We are to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs unto God (Eph. 5:17-20). Nothing is said of song leaders, song books, shaped notes, publishing companies, book compilers, song writers, pitch pipes, tuning forks, amplifiers, which song book to buy, how many verses, how many songs to sing, singings, singing schools, singing groups, opening hymns, prayer songs, closing songs, invitation hymns, the dress of the song leader, his training and skills, the number of song leaders, paying song leaders, the type of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. We have never disputed over the command to sing, but the problems over the other matters have been myriad. Every Christian leader should sit down and draw up a list of things commonly used/practiced among us that are not Biblical essentials but merely American ways (East Tennessee way) of doing things. Then share these with his people. With a proper understanding of these matters much grief could be avoided.


We are challenged to avoid the stagnation of institutionalism. The church that Jesus built (Matt.

16:18) was his community of saved people on earth (Eph. 2:15-22). That is still the church today. We have chided and scolded the denominational world for their hallowing of buildings and building of cathedrals as shrines unto God. We have taught truth on the nature of the church. However, in practice we have fallen into the same trap. Our buildings dominate our budgets, crowding out missions and benevolence in many instances. Unnumbered battles have been fought over "church buildings." We fight over what we can do in our church buildings such as wedding showers, parties, eating of fellowship meals. The apex of many congregations' goals is a commodious building. The major business of our elders and deacons is maintenance of our properties and acquisition of yet more. Programs take the place of evangelism. Often the church dies or moves away and the building stands empty, a monument to our failure to meet the challenge.

There is a constant challenge to keep the fires of evangelism burning bright in our congregations. What was once a prairie fire growth has settled into smoldering embers. So many of our members and churches are like those in Ephesus; they have left their "first love" (Rev. 2:4). The Ephesians still went to worship every Lord's day but the fire was gone. We buy personal evangelism books and magazines, we have giant soul-winning workshops, we have specialists in, we exhort, we threaten and we stagnate. It always seems easier to hire a "personal worker" or to put a radio broadcast on the local station. We invite a group of college students to come knock on the doors of our community, but our people are not able to help. The most basic, simple and easiest to be obeyed command seems to be the hardest to implement. Go teach all nations! (Matt. 28:19).

We are challenged to maintain a separate, holy, moral life as we live in the sinful world. Jesus said we are not to be "of the world" (John 17:16). We are not to be "conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). We are to be "separate" saith the Lord (II Cor. 6:17). But the

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

(U.S.P.S. 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 26:25

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Does It Really Do Any Good To Preach Against Things?

Some weeks ago I said to myself, "There is no sense in ever preaching against smoking anymore. After all, the *Readers Digest* and newspapers continually have articles pointing out its danger. The Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare (Califano) has begun a personal campaign against it. Why should I be concerned with explaining to people how it causes lung cancer, emphysema, heart attacks, and shortens life? Let the media do it."



MARTEL PACE

But then Califano got fired! I later thought that many people don't read newspaper or magazine articles. Besides, was I just going to give up the battle and stop letting the devil know who's side I was on? Perhaps I could still help someone who had never really thought about stopping even though I knew it was hopeless trying to help some others. So, when the study in James 4:4 came up last Sunday night I decided I had to point out once more something that surely indicates a symptom of worldliness. Thus, along with other things I dealt with smoking.

Did it do any good? On Monday one man said, "I have quit smoking because of what you said yesterday!" I couldn't believe it for a moment; it really has done some good. Perhaps here was a man who could extend his life 15 years because of a few words I had said! He was young enough to do so if he quits now. Think of those 15 more years!

During that time he may enjoy his grandchildren, may still be able to romp with them rather than wheeze and cough while scarcely able to do anything with his emphysema. Perhaps he'll then be a strong leader in the church and influence many others. He may even retire and spend those 15 years in soul-winning.

Continued on page 3



What Is The "Fire" Of Matthew 3:11?

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Matthew 3:11).

Before commenting directly upon this verse let us refresh our minds concerning the significance of the word "baptize." We must keep clearly before us the fact that while the idea of something's being immersed or submerged is inherent in the word, the element in which this immersion or submersion takes place is not inherent in the word itself. It seems certain that the common and ordinary use of the words translated "baptize" and "baptism" in the New Testament involved water as the element. This is the reason Jesus, in announcing conditions of pardon, could say, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." (Mark 16:16). He did not have to say, "He that believeth and is baptized in water..." In Matthew 28:19, he was able to say, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of ..." It was not necessary for him to say, "...baptizing them in water..." On Pentecost day, when the terms of pardon were being announced to a great multitude for the first time, Peter said simply, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you..." (Acts 2:38). He did not have to say, "Repent, and be baptized in water every one of you..." So it would seem from these passages, as well as from many others (Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3; Galations 3:27), that while the element in which baptism takes place is not inherent in the word "baptize," in common usage water was understood to be element. But let it be emphasized that inherent in the word "baptize" is the idea of a burial, a submersion, an immersion, a covering over.

Now there are cases in the New Testament where reference is made to baptism, and in which cases the element is not water. Our text mentions water baptism; but it also mentions baptism "with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." In Matthew 20:22 Jesus refers to the suffering he was to endure as a baptism: "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? Why did Jesus call his suffering a baptism? Clearly because the word "baptism" conveys the idea of something's being covered up, immersed, submerged; and this is precisely the idea that Jesus intended to convey. He was to be immersed, overwhelmed, submerged in suffering. Moulton and Milligan (*The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans) state that the word *baptizo* 'baptize' was used as early as 153 B.C. to "mean 'flooded' or overwhelmed with calamities." They refer to this usage as being in the "metaphorical sense," and state that it "strikingly illustrates our Lord's speaking of His Passion as a 'baptism.'"

What is the "fire" in Matthew 3:11? Some insist this is a reference to the "tongues of fire" which came upon those baptized with the Holy Ghost on the



BOB DUNCAN

day of Pentecost. But the Bible says absolutely nothing about any "tongues of fire" in connection with the events of Pentecost. What it does say in Acts 2:3 is this: "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." If the cloven tongues were *like as of fire*, then they were not fire. If the cloven tongues had been tongues of fire, then most certainly the Bible would not have said they were *like as of fire*.

The context of Matthew 3:11 leaves no doubt as to the meaning of the fire in the passage. Verse ten says, "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Can there be any doubt that fire mentioned here is the fire of Hell which punishes the wicked? Now look at verse twelve: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Could there be any question about the fire in this passage? Is it not also unquestionably the fire of Hell? Well, if the "fire" of verse ten and the "fire" of verse twelve both refer to the fire of Hell, why would one think the same word in verse eleven refers to something entirely different?

In this passage John the Baptist was addressing a multitude which included many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, whom John called a "generation of vipers" (verse 7). He knew that some in this multitude would remain in their sins and would be lost eternally. Revelation 21:8 teaches that the wicked "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." This is the same as the baptism of fire in Matthew 3:11. Actually there are three baptisms mentioned in Matthew 3:11: (1) water baptism, which was administered by John the Baptist, (2) Holy Ghost baptism, which the Lord was to administer to the apostles, and (3) the baptism of fire, which shall be administered to the disobedient and wicked. Later on the Lord mentioned the first two of these, but said nothing about the baptism of fire. Look at Acts 1:5 "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Why did Jesus not say, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire not many days hence"? Because Jesus was not addressing the multitude John was addressing in Matthew 3; he was rather speaking to the apostles only. These were the ones who were to be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Those who were to receive the fire baptism were not present on this occasion, and so the Lord makes no mention of it.

WORD of GOD

There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a

necromancer.

For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Deuteronomy 18:10-12

Your Loved Ones In Heaven

No. 6

Recognition in the heavenly world has been the object of our previous two or three studies in this continuing series of short articles. It is a fascinating field of thought and one that strikes the chords of interest in every heart in which heavenly hope resides. Unless there is recognition in the sweet by and by we will not know whether any of our loved ones are in heaven nor will they know that we are there. But now to other arguments to support our case for future recognition.



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

AN ARGUMENT FROM FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:12-15

In this Pauline argument the peerless apostle reasons, "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." This passage has been a frequently misunderstood one. Paul is talking about the laborers in the vineyard such as himself and Appollos. The one (Paul) planted; the other (Apollos) watered. God gave the increase (I Cor. 3:4-10). Paul speaks about the laborer's works or his converts. Some are like gold, silver and precious stones; others are like wood, hay and stubble. The former will stand the testing elements; the latter will not stand the time of testing. The man whose converts are saved will be rewarded with the happiness of knowing that they are saved; the man whose converts turn out to be like the wood, the hay and the stubble and thus not saved will suffer the tragedy of seeing them lost. Yet, if faithful himself, he will be saved. Perhaps you are thinking, "Just what has this to do with the topic at hand?" It has much to do with it. Unless there is recognition in the next world, how will a Christian laborer be able to recognize and receive his reward—a reward of seeing and sensing that his converts are in heaven? Unless there is future recognition how will the Christian laborer sense his loss of fallen converts? Indirectly, Paul presents an exceptionally strong argument in behalf of future recognition.

TWO ARGUMENTS FROM FIRST THESSALONIANS

To the Thessalonians Paul wrote, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For yea are our glory and joy" (I Thess. 2:19-20). Paul expected to reap much joy at the time of Christ's second coming. How? By seeing his Thessalonian converts approved and on the right hand of commendation in that great day of judgment. But how would he receive any such joy if there is no recognition in the day of the resurrection and in the everlasting day of life eternal? This passage is robbed of all intelligent meaning if future recognition is fanciful and not factual? This needs an answer from those who deny future recognition!

The Thessalonians were greatly concerned about the state of the righteous dead at the second coming. The Bible says, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have

no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede-ASV) them which are asleep. 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. 4:13-18). These were their loved ones who had already departed earthly scenes about whom they were so strongly concerned. Somehow they felt these loved ones would be at serious disadvantage at the Lord's second advent. Paul erased this thought from their minds in this sparkling section of Sacred Scripture. He affirmed a reunion of the righteous dead with the righteous living at the second coming. Paul counseled that they comfort each other with these words. But

wherein is there full comfort unless there is recognition of a former union? If Paul is not teaching future recognition, what would be required to set forth such?

AN ARGUMENT FROM THE PROPHET OF PATMOS

According to that disciple whom Jesus loved the redeemed will sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb in the heavenly hereafter. The Bible says in Revelations 15:3, "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Will those who sing the song of Moses recognize Moses as Moses? Will Moses recognize himself as Moses? Will we recognize Jesus as the lamb of God. If there be recognition in these two departments, what will hinder there being a full and comprehensive recognition of loved ones? Will we really know our loved ones there? Most assuredly!—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063

Samson, The Bible Class Hero

The book of Judges is one of the most interesting books of the Old Testament. Judges ruled over God's people for about 300 years. There are many practical lessons in Judges for the careful student of Old Testament history. Toward the end of the period of the Judges, we people take great delight in the stories of the unusual strength of Samson and the various ways he used that strength. In this writing, we shall attempt to examine more closely this Bible class hero.

Samson's parents lived in the little town of Zora which was located west of Jerusalem about halfway to the sea. His father's name was Manoah. The name of his mother is not mentioned. It appears that Samson's parents were good parents, for everything that is said of them is good. Before the birth of Samson, an angel had appeared to Manoah's wife, who was barren, and told her that she was to have a son. She was also given instructions as to how to take care of herself during the time the child was in the womb. Furthermore, the angel said that the child was to be a Nazarite. In the sixth chapter of Numbers, we learn the law of the Nazarite. The Nazarite was to refrain from anything that came from the grapevine. No razor was to touch his head during the time of the vow. Since Samson was to be a Nazarite all his life, no razor was to ever touch his head. The Nazarite was not to come near a dead body, even that of his own family. The reader may wish to consult Numbers 6 on this Nazarite vow. There were only three men in all of recorded Bible history who were Nazarites for life. These were Samson, Samuel and John the Baptizer.

The work of Samson as stated by the angel was, "he shall begin to save Israel." This is indeed the correct way to state his work. His work was a beginning and not a finishing of the deliverance of Israel from the hand of the Philistines. This work was later continued by a more worthy successor. Samuel, and was completed during the days of David.

The great strength of Samson was first manifested when he tore a lion with his bare hands.



MICHAEL D. STONE

Later, when he failed to get the girl he wanted for his wife, he caught 300 foxes and tied the tail to tail with a torch between them and set them loose in the grain fields of the Philistines. Then, he slew 1,000 men with the jawbone of an ass. When his enemies (the Philistines) tried to capture him in Gaza, he arose at midnight and pulled the gateposts of the city up and carried them on his shoulders to the top of a mountain. Perhaps, Samson is best known for his relationship with Delilah in whose house he was finally captured after she accepted a handsome bribe to deliver him into the hands of the Philistines. After his capture, his eyes were put out. His death came as a result of his pulling pillars from under a building, killing himself and many Philistines in and on the roof of the building.

Let the reader take note of several lessons from Samson. Samson was not a good moral man. His morals were very low. Each one who desires to serve God must feel the responsibility of living like God. Samson did not. In the person of Jesus, God has shown us how to live.

Second, if we are blessed with unusual mental or physical abilities, these abilities must be used for God. Samson used his strength for his personal gratification. It is good that Christians have the talents to earn a good living. It is also good when these Christians remember the God who gave them these abilities. Do you give as God would have you to give?

Third, when one flirts with temptation as Samson did with Delilah, one will get caught. He teased her about what it would take for him to loose his strength. What started out as fun and a game to Samson later resulted in his capture and death. In Samson, we learn that we reap what we sow.

These events can be found in Judges 13-16. Is Samson really your hero?—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101

Does It Really Do Any Good To Preach Against Things?

Continued from page 2

He may add many stars to his crown because he is healthy and able to serve the Lord those extra 15 years. Suddenly, and all this occurred to me after going to bed Monday night I felt good all over and had one of my best night's sleep since the family all left for Michigan 10 days before. Yes, I still think preaching does some good!—816 Holly Kennett, MO 63857

Challenges To The Church

Continued from page 1

sins of the world constantly beat upon the sides of the ship of Zion. Inevitable the waves and spray slosh over the walls to taint and defile. Pressure is constantly upon the church to accept the world's standard of conduct in her members. We saw this when some of our sisters began wearing the immodest mini skirts; some of our brethren light their cigarettes; others take their social drink. The world's low esteem of marriage and promiscuous practice of divorce and remarriage has created a clamor among brethren to change our position on these matters. The challenge is not being met.

It is difficult to be militant against sin and yet not be

calloused toward sinners. There is no dispute that we must fight the good fight of faith (I Tim. 6:12). We are to hate iniquity (Heb. 1:9). The problem is that we get so engrossed in fighting the evil that we leave the distinct impression that we are hating the sinner. While this may be inadvertant, the results are destructive. The average sinner is not sure he has a friend in such a warrior-type. Even worse is when brethren are disagreed over a doctrine or practice. It commonly happens that the lofty intention of a discussion of issues degenerates into a hostile battle between persons. There must be a way to contend for the faith (Jude 3) and not be contentious with

brethren (Titus 3:9). We must learn to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15).

As indicated at the beginning, this scribe does not profess to know the answers to these complex problems. Maybe someone does. If so, he would bless us all if he would share them with us. It is not so much the facts of faith that we have trouble with, rather it is in the acts wherein we stumble. May God grant us wisdom to recognize our flaws and failures; the determination to change for the good; the ability to succeed; and patient longsuffering for our brethren who, like we, fall short of perfection.—Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37921

Series On Evolutionary Creationism Now Available

BOBBY DUNCAN

Recently we published in *Words of Truth* a series of articles by Wayne Jackson and Bert Thompson dealing with the teaching of John Clayton. We received more requests for copies of that series than any other we have published during the past three and one half years while I have served as editor of the paper. We have been able thus far to fill all these requests from our files, and have gladly done so. We appreciate brethren Jackson and Thompson for their

thoroughness and clearness in this series. To our knowledge, no one has accused them of being unfair in the way they dealt with the issues involved. Many expressions of appreciation have come to them for writing the articles, and to me for publishing them. We appreciate all these words of encouragement.

It will be of interest to our readers to know that brethren Jackson and Thompson have, at their own expense, republished these articles in booklet form,

and are making them available at no cost to all who request them. You may send your request to Wayne Jackson, 3906 E. Main St., Stockton, Ca. 95205, or to Bert Thompson, Box 532, Cookeville, TN. 38501. I also have a limited supply of these booklets here at 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Al. 35501.

We repeat, these booklets are free to those who request them. We would suggest a small donation to defray costs of postage, however.

Dickson Bible Price Increase October 1!

We do not ordinarily make announcements of a commercial nature in *Words of Truth*, but we want to be of as much help to our readers as possible. We feel it will be of interest to some to learn that as of October 1, 1979, there will be a big price increase on the New Analytical Bible published by the John A. Dickson Publishing Company. They now range in price from

\$36.95 to \$49.95, the only difference being in the binding. On October 1 there will be an increase of price of from four to six dollars.

The most popular, and the one we recommend, is the number 100, which sells presently for \$46.95. It has the very best black Morocco leather binding. The one which sells for \$49.95 has a white binding. Thumb indexing on any one of the Dickson Bibles costs \$3.75 extra.

The New Analytical Bible is a Bible used and highly

recommended by our late beloved brother Gus Nichols. Brother Roy Deaver recently called it "THE WORLD'S FINEST" study Bible.

You may order your Dickson Bible from Bobby Duncan, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Al. 35501. You will save more than ten percent by ordering before October 1.

Happiness

If we are ever to be happy, we must learn these two important lessons: (1) Happiness is not dependent upon circumstances, but upon attitude. Take a look at the apostle Paul and his circumstances. He was mocked, maimed, and finally martyred for the cause of Christ. The latter portion of II Corinthians 11 catalogues a pathetic list of persecution which Paul underwent because of his preaching. By the standards of many, Paul's life should have been miserable. Yet this man of God was the very one to exhort others to rejoice. "Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice" (Philippians 4:4). (2) Happiness will not come until we, to a large measure, ignore that which surrounds us and concentrate upon Christ who dwells within us (Colossians 1:27). Happiness comes from within and not from without. Don't change your house, change your heart.



DALTON KEY

Are you happy? Why not follow the above two steps? Yes, let's go to work on ourselves!—Box 126, Aurora, Mo. 65605.

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

Testus; but speak forth

Acts 26:25

VOLUME 15

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NUMBER 37

Is Doctrine Important?

Hugh Fulford

There is a growing tendency in the church today to minimize doctrine and to suggest that it is not important. The contention is being made that it is love that unites us and not doctrine.

While surely we realize the importance and necessity of love, we wonder what the advocates of "love only" think will be accomplished for the cause of righteousness by minimizing and, in some instances, eliminating the importance of doctrine? Why must it be an either/ or proposition -- either "love" with no doctrine or "doctrine" with no love? Why can't it be true love *and* right doctrine? Jesus tied the two together when he said, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). John declared, "And this is love, that we should walk after his commandments" (II John 6). Obviously, in the light of these statements, love for Christ is evidenced in one's obedience to Christ, one's adherence to the doctrine of Christ.

Is doctrine important? Consider the following Bible facts:

(1) Right doctrine is so important that all professions of good works to the contrary, entrance into the kingdom of heaven is dependent upon doing the will of the Father in heaven (Matt. 7:21)

(2) Right doctrine is so important that to follow the *wrong* doctrine (the doctrines and commandments of men) makes one's worship of God vain (Matt. 15:8,9).

(3) Correct doctrine (and obedience thereto) is so important that any acknowledgement of Christ as Lord is made void by a refusal or failure to do what he says (Luke 6:46).

(4) Right doctrine is so important that continued faithfulness to Christ after baptism involves continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42).

(5) Correct doctrine is so important that gospel

preachers must be faithful in not teaching a "different doctrine" (I Tim. 3:5).

(6) Right doctrine is so important that genuine love for God requires that we keep his commandments (I John 5:3).

(7) Correct doctrine is so important that "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 John 9).

What about it? Is doctrine important? Is it important that we be concerned about doctrinal correctness? What saith the Scriptures? - 101 Dow Drive Sheltonville, Tn. 37160

The Precious Privilege Of Priesthood

Curtis R. Dowdy

All Bible students are aware of the value placed upon the priesthood under the arrangement of Moses. There was the high priest who performed certain functions not open to another (atonement in the most holy place). There were other priests who performed the day-to-day sacrifices at the altar, first for himself and then for others. However, with the coming of the New Covenant of our Lord Jesus Christ some very important changes took place regarding the priesthood.

The book of Hebrews gives much information and records many details about the priesthood of Christ. Christ was the fulfillment of the shadow cast by the high priest under the Levitical system. In contrasting the two, the record says, "For such an high priest

became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself" (Hebrews 7:26, 27). In short, Jesus is now our high priest.

But who are the priests who take care of those daily sacrifices offered for the sins of the people, in the fulfillment? The answer to that question is given by the apostles Peter and Paul. First, Peter's answer: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an *holy priesthood*, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Second, Paul's answer: I beseech you therefore,

brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (I Peter 2:5; Romans 12:1, emphasis added).

Only priests have the right to offer up sacrifices, but Peter says that even "newborn babes" (spiritual babes) have that privilege now (I Peter 2:2). Paul makes known to *all the brethren* at Rome, not a select few, that they have the sacred privilege of offering a "living" sacrifice, and he assures them that God will accept it. Thus all the brethren, from spiritual babes to spiritual giants, have the precious privilege of

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness.

— Acts 26:25

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Love Thyself

"And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:39). This statement made by our Lord was a partial answer to the question, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" The Saviour had replied firstly that "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matthew 22:35-37). The thought of loving oneself might seem to be rather selfish



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

and arrogant. However, Jesus has taught us to love others in the manner that we love ourselves. The apostle Paul wrote: "Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself" (Ephesians 5:28). But, the question might be raised as to the why a person should love himself.

We learn in Genesis 1:27 that "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." While man's physical body was formed of the dust of the earth, that part of man which pertains to his spirit, mind and soul was made in the likeness of the Creator. Man is not a product of a natural evolutionary process. He is not a being of a mere accident or chance. The great, August God, the Creator of heaven and earth was both the designer and maker of man. Such knowledge caused the Psalmist to declare: "I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Wonderful are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well" (Psalms 139:14). Furthermore, God loved us and demonstrated that love in the giving of his only begotten Son for our sins (John 3:16). Jesus tasted of "death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). Since God has made us and loved us, surely we ought to love ourselves.

We can have self-respect without conceit; concern for self without selfishness; and, love for self that is void of self-centeredness. We should not be possessed with an inferiority complex or an attitude of, "I'm not worth anything." Jesus taught that the worth of one soul is more than the whole world (Matthew 16:26). Each one is indeed important in the

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FROM THE EDITOR

Preaching That Doesn't Answer The Questions People Are Asking

One of the criticisms brought against plain, fundamental Bible preaching is that it does not answer the questions people are asking. The idea seems to be that the gospel, as it is, is not adapted to man as he is; and, therefore, the gospel preacher has the task of adapting the gospel to each succeeding generation, and each class of people in every generation, so that it will appeal to them in their own area of interest, whatever that might be. To fail to do this in preaching is to fail in answering the questions people are asking.

This writer does not for one moment deny, or even question, the accusation that his preaching, for the most part, does not answer the questions people are asking. In fact, he pleads guilty to the accusation. But this fact within itself neither argues nor proves that his preaching is not the kind of preaching that is approved of God and the kind upon which the world must depend for its salvation.

The apostle Paul realized that the preaching he and the other apostles did was the kind of preaching that did not answer the questions people are asking, and that, for the most part, did not appeal to the people of his day. But this realization did not cause him or the other apostles to change their preaching. It was to this very idea that Paul addressed his remarks in I Corinthians 1:18-24:

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise?"



BOB DUNCAN

Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

When Paul was about to preach to a Jewish assembly, he might have reasoned this way: "These Jews are looking for signs. So I'll just perform a few miracles and they will really be impressed." Or when he was about to preach to a group of Greeks, he might have chosen to out-philosophize Socrates and Plato combined. That would be impressive to the Greeks, and would, no doubt, answer the questions they were asking. But Paul didn't do either of these. The Jews were looking for a sign, and the Greeks were seeking after wisdom. So what did Paul and the other inspired apostles do? They preached Christ crucified? What effect did this have on the Jews who were seeking a sign? It was a stumblingblock to them. What effect did it have on the Greeks who were seeking after wisdom? It was foolishness to them.

Then why preach it? Because all who are to be saved, both Jews and Greeks, will be saved by the preaching of the gospel. It is a fact that most people are looking for something else, and relatively few are interested in the gospel of Christ. But preaching to answer the questions people are asking is of no benefit, unless they happen to be interested in questions that pertain to their eternal welfare and their salvation from sin. Most people, it is true, are not attracted by the faithful proclamation of the pure and simple gospel of Christ. But the pure and simple gospel of Christ is the only thing that will save, and those for whom it has no appeal cannot be saved regardless of how well our preaching answers their questions.

Do You Really Love The Truth?

by Ray Dutton

Are you a member of the church of Christ because you followed the Lord or because you followed your parents? Are you in the Lord's church by scriptural choice or just by sheer chance? Is your religion based on your love of the truth or just your love of tradition?

While these questions may seem downright insulting when asked of members of the Lord's church, they obviously seem quite natural when directed at our denominational neighbors. But insulting or not, it just might be that many of us are members of the church for reasons far less noble than the Bereans who "searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). The increasing number of congregations which have allowed false teachers to stand in their pulpits and preach everything from tongue speaking to fellowship with the denominations is just one evidence of this fact. But in addition to this are the countless church members who recognize the truth

only because it is what they've always "heard" and not what they've "learned" from a diligent study of God's Word.

Though it is no doubt true that denominationalism exists primarily because some men "receive not the love of the truth" (II Thess. 2:10), we should be careful about pointing accusing fingers until we can confidently affirm that the same is not true of us (cf. Rom. 2:1). Surely there is very little virtue in being religiously right if it is only because of chance or who our parents were. As children of God, we ought to love the truth, hunger and thirst after righteousness, and seek first the kingdom of God more earnestly than any of our religious neighbors. Without this attitude we have no assurance that we will not likewise perish (II Thess. 2:10).

Some church members brag about being members

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Your Loved Ones In Heaven

No. 7

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

All of your loved ones who died in infancy will surely be in heaven. There will be NO babies in hell, cold and calloused Calvinism to the contrary notwithstanding!! This egregious error has taught through the years that there will be babies in hell not a span long! The Bible teaches that ALL those who die before reaching the age of accountability are safe and will surely be in heaven. This includes all those who never knew a day of mental competence. All your loved ones who have died in the faith or in the Lord will be in heaven. The Bible says, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, 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". (Rev. 14:13). The penman of Hebrews 11:13 spoke of certain ones such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Sarah as having "all died in faith...." There is neither debate nor doubt about the destinies of these foregoing classes in the eternal world of tomorrow. But do YOU plan to be where your loved ones who died in infancy or in faith will surely be? That is truly an important question and one which previous articles in this series for *Words of Truth* have paved the way for its earnest consideration.

Recall the precious child that was taken from you either in infancy or in early childhood? You have not forgotten it for so much as a day have you? The child may have been a darling daughter or a beloved boy. The child may have been a brother or a sister, a

grandson or granddaughter, a nephew or niece or one that you loved as your very own. The preacher at the funeral gave you every assurance that the little budding child taken in infancy will bloom forever in the heavenly hereafter. This he could do and be eminently correct in his sympathetic analysis of what the future held for the deceased. You then went to the city of the sleeping dead to deposit your precious one in the opening embrace of Mother Earth. You left the sad scene with a glorious hope filling your heart that in the morning of the resurrection that grave will be opened, your beloved one will be raised and will be clothed in a spiritual, heavenly and incorruptible body that will never know pain or death again. Did you not resolve to live just as close to Jesus as possible and to walk with Deity the remnant of your days in order that you might see that precious and treasured one again on the plains of that eternal day? But have you kept that resolution? Have you remained a daily Bible student since then or allowed the Holy Book to become a dust collector on a forgotten shelf of your library? Have you continued steadfastly in prayer or allowed the regular communications with the Heavenly Father to become a neglected part of your earthly oriented life? What about your church attendance? Has it been kept up with faith and fervency or has it been months, years or even decades since you attended a worship period based on New Testament truth? Hebrews 10:25 is still in your Bible and it still classifies as sin the forsaking of assembling

ourselves together. Is worship absenteeism really the proper preparation to meet Jesus in peace at judgment and go home to meet your loved ones who have preceded you in death? What about your manner in life? Since the death of that child have you DENIED worldly lusts or DELVED deeply into worldly lusts? Have you DENIED ungodliness or been a PRACTITIONER of ungodliness? Have you been a person of sobriety or intemperance; a person of righteousness or unrighteousness; a person of godliness or impiety and ungodliness? Many years ago a Christian wife and mother lost a godly husband and an innocent child. I helped preach the funerals for both. My last contact with the surviving wife and mother was sad. She had not stayed the fine Christian she formerly had been. Many others are in a similar category. Their loved ones who died in the faith or short of reaching accountability will surely be in heaven. Because they have turned their backs upon God and his book, upon Christ and his church and upon Christianity and its plan for redeeming man, they will not be going where their loved ones who now sleep in Jesus will be in the heavenly hereafter.

Reader friends, heed this message if it is applicable to you. It has not been my purpose in this article to touch toes by stepping on shoes but to touch heart chords by some plain, realistic and sobering observations. This articles needs application -- not evasion!!! P.O. Box 464 Ripley, Tn. 38063

Roy Deaver Moves To Cookeville, Tenn.

On January 28, brother Roy Deaver announced his resignation as Director of Brown Trail Preacher Training School, effective in August, to move to Cookeville, Tennessee to work with Tennessee Bible College. Brother Deaver was the motivating force in the founding of Brown Trail School of Preaching and has served as its only director since its beginning in September, 1965. During that time the school has trained over 100 men for service in the church throughout the land. The Brown Trail elders reluctantly accepted brother Deaver's resignation, and expressed to him their prayers in his behalf in his new work with Tennessee Bible College in Cookeville, Tennessee.

Brother Deaver was founding President of Fort Worth Christian College, and was a member of the faculty of Fort Worth Christian for over twelve years.

He graduated from Freed-Hardeman College where he was awarded the "Faculty Scholarship Medal" and graduated "Summa cum laude" from Abilene Christian College in 1945. He holds the Doctor of Laws degree, awarded in 1967; the Doctor of Philosophy Degree, awarded June 1, 1968; and the Doctor of Theology degree, awarded August 7, 1969. These degrees represent over twelve years of graduate studies in the field of "Biblical Sociology", the application of sacred principles to everyday human needs and problems.

He is the author of numerous works: tracts, articles, books. He writes for *The Gospel Advocate*, *The Spiritual Sword*, and is the editor and publisher of *Biblical Notes*.

Brother Deaver has preached the gospel for 39 years (1979), with most of his work being in the state

of Texas. He holds six to eight meetings each year, and has been involved in numerous debates throughout his preaching work.

In 1940 Roy married Wilma Ruth Gibson, who has remained through the years a faithful and devoted companion. They are the parents of three fine sons: Roy, Mac and Dan. Roy and Mac are both gospel preachers, and trainers of gospel preachers. Both have served for several years on the faculty of the Brown Trail Preacher Training School. Mac has moved to Cookeville and is serving on the faculty of Tennessee Bible College. Dan is an Emergency Medical Technician at Harris Hospital, Fort Worth, Texas.

Brother Deaver served as one of the elders of the Brown Trail Church of Christ in Hurst, Texas for 16 years.

The Fourth Annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship

Garland Elkins

"The Home As God Would Have It-And Contemporary Attacks Against It"

The dates for this lectureship are October 21-25, 1979. The place is: The Getwell Church of Christ, 1511 Getwell Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38111.

The present day degeneration of morality in our nation and around the world is alarming. There are many direct and indirect attacks upon the home. The Fourth Annual *Spiritual Sword* Lectureship will not only point out the enemies of the home (particularly the Christian home), but will also expose these erroneous doctrines and attacks upon the home.

The home was instituted by God for the welfare of mankind. It is to be regulated by God's law. Many of these lectures will give great emphasis to the positive

side of marriage and the home. It is anticipated that the Fourth Annual *Spiritual Sword* Lectureship will be one of the most important lectureships of recent years. This view is underscored by many facts, a few of which we mention. (1) The theme is crucial. (2) Everyone's welfare is either explicitly or implicitly involved. (3) The home plays an important part in the welfare of the church, the nation, and plays a tremendously important role relative to our eternal welfare. The Getwell Church of Christ appreciates all who will advertise the lectureship, pray for us and attend.

Love Thyself

(continued from page 2)

sight of the Almighty God.

True happiness in this life comes from accepting ourselves as God has made us, and, in responding to the grace and love of the Heavenly Father by giving ourselves completely to his Son Jesus Christ.

809 Old Perry Store Rd. Opp, Al. 36467

WORD of GOD

And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Luke 19:9-10

The Precious Privilege Of Priesthood

(continued from page 1)

priesthood.

BUT WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

First, it means I can come directly to God through my high priest. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2:5). I don't have to stand in line and wait my turn. I can offer praise, confess my sins and ask his forgiveness day or night. Oh, how thankful I am for my priesthood!

Second, it means that I have been clothed with the priestly garment. "For as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27, emphasis added). This means that I don't have to worry about all the ritual of ceremonial cleansing as did my counterpart under the law. The apostle John assures us, "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 John 1:7). Oh, how thankful I am for my priesthood!

Third, it means that I don't have to worry over my daily needs. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33, emphasis added). Just as my counterpart, who served God faithfully, was cared for under the Law, so I need not be anxious over things as others are; as God's priest I have his word on that. Oh, how thankful I am for my priesthood!

Fourth, it means that I am responsible before God for my convictions. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:14). "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Romans 8:33). As one of God's priests (elect), I have the privilege of doing my own study (learning and thinking) just as my own praying. What is the difference in the Roman Catholic who allows his priest and/or pope to do his thinking and the brother who accepts his set of convictions filtered through his "pet" school, paper, or champion? Some seem to prefer counting noses and names in determining what they believe. Nevertheless, the true priest of God will determine what the Record says and will stand on that conviction, should he stand alone. (Could laziness be part of our problem?) We err as a brotherhood when we accept or allow a few well meaning brethren to do our thinking for us. Take any of the divisions that have come and you will find one or two strong personalities who were responsible for the thinking, while the rest simply followed without question. There are many fine and able Bible students in whom I have great confidence, but I must never be guilty of thinking of them above that which is written (I Corinthians 4:6). In short, we must never become the disciples of men (I Corinthians 1:12, 13).

It is this student's judgment that God intended his will be understandable to the ordinary (regular, usual, customary) individual who would take the time to read and study carefully the scriptures. Still it seems that some have come to the conclusion that the Bible can be understood only by those few who have certain credentials and who speak in such high sounding terms that the average person doesn't know what has been said. You may be impressed by that approach but there's one who isn't! Keep it simple and I will understand what is being said, and I will know that the speaker understands what he is saying.

I'm thrilled to get hold of truth from anyone, but if it is indeed truth (religious) it was in the Book before he got it and it is to the Book I will go to find it before my final acceptance of it. "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). I may come to believe what you do, but it will be because I find it in the Book and not because you taught it. True, of course, means that I should keep an open mind as I read and study the Bible.

Some brethren, possibly without realizing it, use subtle pressures in an effort to sway others to their position. Some even resort to a form of censorship in

order to bring others into "line." As a priest of God I owe allegiance to no man and to no position. My allegiance is to God, Christ Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. I am willing to hear anyone who thinks he has truth, but I will reserve the right of priesthood to draw my own conclusion based upon my own study of the sacred text.

In religion, as in other fields of study, there are those who have "big" egos to inflate and feed. The means some teachers use to "care" for that ego would rob one of individual initiative in Bible study. In short, one who deems himself a great light must have lesser lights revolving around offering amens to his pronouncements. When it comes to the *precious privilege of priesthood* there is but one LIGHT, and John knew it (John 1:9). It is to the true LIGHT that we owe our amens and to him alone. I refuse to be counted in anyone's camp who requires of me that I accept his "creed" — written or unwritten.

Let no one misconstrue the foregoing into, "He is advocating that every Christian is a law unto himself." Not so, and far from it! What I am saying is that every Christian (priest) has the right, yea, the responsibility to study and know God's will personally; not just accept the understanding of one or a few. This principle rightly applied will cut down on the neat "little labels" that too often exist today and will provide a little less pressure in areas of judgment.

Now, what is the bottom line in this matter? Simply that each one will be judged by the word (John 12:48); therefore, each one should know what the Book teaches and not just what someone says it teaches. Oh, how thankful I am for my priesthood!

Acts chapter eight tells about a babe who wished to purchase apostolic power (Acts 8:18-20), but Peter informed him, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God" (Acts 8:21). This rebuke was necessary but, what could Simon do about it? "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22). What Peter is telling Simon is exercise your precious privilege of priesthood. I believe that it is commendable that Simon was humble enough to ask

Peter to pray for him, but it must be understood that, as a priest, *Simon could have done his own praying.* However, because of Simon's immaturity and without access to the New Testament, we can easily understand why he would ask Peter to pray for him.

There are times when every Christian feels the need to ask brethren to exercise their priesthood on his behalf, but one should never lose sight of his own precious priesthood. Why not pause right now and exercise your priesthood before God.

OBION, TN 38240

Do You Really Love The Truth

(continued from page 2)

of the "one, true church" in the same way that an arm-chair quarterback brags about how "his" team won the ballgame. Neither of these did anything to accomplish that which has been done, but like Saul (I Sam. 13:3,4) they are the first to blow the trumpet. Many great men like Barton W. Stone, Raccoon John Smith, Alexander Campbell, David Lipscomb, J.W. McGarvey, B.C. Goodpasture, and Gus Nichols have paid the price of countless hours of diligent study to establish and maintain the true gospel and the true church of the New Testament. We are pitiful excuses for heirs of this great restoration movement if all we do is sit back and boast that "we're the only ones going to heaven and everyone else is going to hell" and yet could not give one scriptural reason as to why instrumental music in worship is wrong or why baptism can only be immersion.

If you do love the truth, then "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15), "and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (I Pet. 3:15).

713 Maryethel Drive, Montgomery, Al. 36107

THE SIXTH AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST PRESENTS "THE GUS NICHOLS PREACHERS LECTURESHIP"

October 1-5, 1979

The Gus Nichols Preachers Lectureship will be held Monday October 1 through Friday October 5 at the Indian Creek Youth Camp which is located just 17 miles south of Jasper, Alabama.

There will be no charge to those attending except for meals. Accommodations at the camp are being provided by the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ.

SCHEDULE

Monday through Thursday
1:00-2:30 Roy Deaver—"Establishing Bible Authority"
3:00-4:30 Winfred Clark—"Practical Studies In Hebrews"

Tuesday through Friday
8:00 a.m.-9:30 a.m.—Johnny Ramsey—"The Prophet of the Old Testament and the Preacher of Today"

10:00-11:30—William Woodson—"Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus"

Evening Sessions — 7:00 p.m.

Monday—Winfred Clark
Tuesday—Roy Deaver
Wednesday—Johnny Ramsey
Thursday—William Woodson



For further information and reservations write Gus Nichols Preachers Lectureship 1501 6th Avenue Jasper, Alabama 35501 or call (205) 384-6446 or 387-1670.



Words Of Truth

"I am r...
the Words of ...

3:25

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VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1979

NUMBER 38

Who Will Destroy America?

Recently, our nation has been alarmed by the discovery of 2,000 or 3,000 Russian combat troops in Cuba just 90 miles away from the coast of Florida. Some U.S. senators like Church and Jackson have characterized this move by the Soviets as a grave danger to our national security. But are the Russians in Cuba the



RAY DUTTON

REAL threat to America's security? I think not. I do not believe that the greatest threat to America is from the bombs of Communism or any other external force, no matter how Satanic that force may be. I believe the REAL threat to America's future is the growing rottenness from within. "No great nation has ever been overcome until it has destroyed itself," said Will Durant.

America is destroying herself with greed and materialism. To a great extent the objectives of Americans have become success, status, and security. These are followed closely by self-indulgence, pleasure, and comfort. Even President Theodore Roosevelt realized this when he warned, "The things that will destroy America are prosperity-at-any-price, safety-first instead of duty-first, the love of soft living and the get-rich-quick theory of life." Yet in our materialistic society we find it difficult to accept this advice. We have come to believe that life DOES consist in the abundance of things which a man possesses (Lk. 12:15), and so it is no longer "in God we trust" but in "uncertain riches" we trust (I Tim. 6:17). Truly we have traded God for gadgets. But eventually the inevitable moment of crisis will come. Then we will learn that we can't meet a crisis with a Cadillac or clean a guilty soul with a vacuum cleaner. God will say to us, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required

of thee, then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Lk. 12:20).

America is destroying herself with indifference and apathy toward truth and justice. Dorothy Thompson once said, "And it is these sophisticates, neither for nor against communism — nor God, nor love, nor truth, nor duty, nor faith — who, far more than conscious communist agents, have undermined the moral bastions of this country and of the countries of the West." These are words of truth and soberness in regard to our national problems; but these words are also characteristic of religious sophisticates that are neither for nor against anything that matters. Since they believe "much can be said on both sides" they refuse to take sides, even with God against Satan. But Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me" (Matt. 12:30). Paul declared that he was "set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). This indifferent and apathetic attitude toward the cause of truth and justice will soon sign America's death warrant. Though 200 years old the word of Edmund Burke should serve as a warning to us all: "The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."

America is destroying herself with unrighteousness. "When America ceases to be good, it will cease to be great," said Alexis de Tocqueville. The

greatness of a nation does not rest in its military power, technological advancements, political acumen or its national wealth, but rather a nation's greatness is found in the quotient of its goodness. The wisest of all men said, "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). Morally and ethically our country is decaying. Sexual licentiousness and perversion is the order of the day. Drug abuse is almost out of control in our schools. Venereal disease has reached epidemic proportions. Businesses are collapsing because employees are stealing their companies blind. Our permissive society has turned freedom into license, rights into riots, and pornography into profit. Riches have been elevated above righteousness; power over piety; and science above the Savior. We have abandoned God's moral law, and yet we shake our heads in disbelief as crime rages out of control.

Who will destroy America? We will! Just as Durant said, "No great nation has ever been overcome until it has destroyed itself." Unless we Americans begin to turn our eyes back to our Maker and to his righteous precepts, America will not continue to stand as the land of the free. Of a truth the Psalmist said, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the NATIONS that forget God" (Psa. 9:17). — 713 Maryethel Drive, Montgomery, AL 36109

Would You Like To Stop Smoking?

JERRY OLIVE

Many people who smoke would really like to quit but seem unable to do so. Most smokers know how cigarettes affect the body, and few smokers claim that smoking is good for the body. The cost of cigarettes creates financial hardship for some smokers. People who smoke give many different reasons why they smoke. The purpose of this article is not to discuss reasons, effects, or costs of smoking. My only purpose is to help Christian smokers quit, if they wish

to.

I last smoked in August, 1975. My last cigarette was on a Thursday night. My crisis period was that Friday night, Saturday, and Saturday night. After that I found the temptation to smoke easier to resist each day. By Wednesday of the following week, I no longer desired cigarettes. I "kicked" the habit, and



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Ven-
tus; but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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God Gave The Increase

"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (I Cor. 3:6).

How does God give the increase? Luke tells us, "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). Again, we are informed, "And the Lord

ADDED to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Luke tells us on another occasion, "And believers were the more ADDED to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:14). Lastly, we are told in another place, "And much people was ADDED unto the Lord" (Acts 11:24).

Some may have the idea that God adds whether we plant or water but this is not the case. Act 2:41, 47; 5:14 and 11:24 indicate teaching was in evidence before adding took place. There must always be teaching before people may be added. God increases the number of the church ONLY from that group that we teach (plant and water). Forgiveness takes place in the mind of God. He hinges forgiveness upon the gospel's being taught (Rom. 10:13-17) or "delivered" (Rom. 6:17). When folks "gladly receive the word" (Acts 2:41) God adds them to the church and thereby "increases" the number of the saved.

This means that we are responsible for the planting and watering. How much "increase" will there be from our activities? Are we really doing our part? Remember, God placed two thirds of the responsibility in this matter on our shoulders!—1461 East Chester Stree Jackson, Tennessee 38301.



RAYHAWK

WORD of GOD

The wicked flee
when no man pur-
sueth: but the

righteous are bold
as a lion.

Proverbs 28:1



FROM

THE EDITOR

An Evasive Problem



BOB DUNCAN

In order for faithful gospel preachers (and editors of religious journals) to accomplish the most possible good it is essential that they speak out *for* the things that are right and *against* the things that are wrong. Doing so is not always pleasant or popular. We have never knowingly preached a sermon or published an article with a view to increasing our popularity or pleasing any person or group of people. We have never knowingly refrained from preaching or publishing any truth for fear of displeasing some or diminishing our popularity. We do not, however, hold to the view that soundness is synonymous with rudeness or that a man's faithfulness is directly proportionate to the number of people he has insulted.

What some have elected to call the Crossroads Philosophy is being attacked by some and defended by other brethren. Both groups are equally sincere and zealous in their contentions, so far as we know. This does not mean that both groups are right.

Up to now we have refrained from getting into the discussion. The reason we have done so is because of the difficulty of knowing for sure what is actually being advocated by the brethren at Crossroads in Gainesville. It seems that as brethren who have been trained at Crossroads go out into different sections of the country to work, problems so often follow. And when the problems are traced to some teaching or practice of those who have gone out from Crossroads, those at Crossroads disclaim any responsibility and say, "They didn't get it here." For this reason it is extremely difficult for one to put his finger on a specific doctrine or practice which he can be certain is a part of the Crossroads Philosophy and which he can mark as being unscriptural.

It is safe to say, albeit exceedingly sad, that there is a long list of churches that have split or had serious problems centered around those who received their training at Crossroads in Gainesville. If we knew nothing else about the matter, we would know this is not right, and would look with suspicion upon the fountain from which the stream flows.

There are some things that are wrong and sinful, and which seem to be a part of what is called the Crossroads Philosophy. Whether these are advocated or endorsed by anyone at Crossroads we cannot say. We can say these things have been involved in numerous church problems centering around those who came from Crossroads. We realize the names we give these characteristics in this article will be disowned by those who are guilty, though the characteristics themselves are there, and are perhaps thought of in more complimentary terms.

First, there is the matter of *spiritual snobbery*. They prefer to think of it as faithfulness. What it amounts to is looking down one's nose at those who do not conform to a definition of faithfulness that involves "soul talks," neglecting one's family or one's school work, limiting one's association with Christian friends to a bare minimum, etc. The faithful

congregations where they grew up are considered as being at best nothing more than second rate churches. They think of themselves as the elite among the saints. The apostle Paul had something to say about them in Romans 12:3; "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

Next, there is the matter of *cultism*. Naturally they do not call it that; but the control exercised by the group over the lives of those who are in the group reminds one of the things characterizing the hundreds led to their death by one, Jim Jones. This control is exercised in at least two ways. It is exercised by the radical demands that are made by the group upon its members, and by the Romish type confessional. By radical demands we mean the kind that would cause a fine Christian girl to leave home in tears to attend a "soul talk," despite the fact that her parents, both Christians, had forbidden her to go because she had so much homework. She really didn't want to go, but had become convinced that putting the Lord first demanded that she go, even in disobedience to her parents. We mean also the kind that would cause a young gospel preacher and the Christian girl he was soon to marry to be rebuked for dating more than once a week. Putting the Lord first, they were told, demanded that they spend more time with those not Christians to influence them, and less time with each other. We mean the kind of demands that would take a father away from his wife and children practically all the time. He is told that he should love the Lord more than he loves his family, and the impression is left that unless he neglects his family to "work for the Lord" he doesn't love the Lord as much as he should.

By the Romish type confessional we mean what they prefer to call having a prayer partner, to whom one confesses every sin, including the innermost thoughts of his heart. We certainly would not take the position that it is wrong for two people to pray together. But the Bible teaches that sins which are private need to be confessed privately to God. Sins which need to be confessed to others need to be confessed to others who know of the sins, so that they might also know of the repentance. The idea of having some special human to whom I confess my sins is foreign to the Bible. It's sinful for the Catholics to do it that way, and it is also sinful for us to do it that way.

Then there is the matter of *rebellion against authority*. Elders in faithful congregations are looked upon as nothing but old fuddy duddies who stand in the way of this new breed of religion. Since those in the group consider themselves much more spiritual than the elders, then certainly they cannot be content to function under the oversight and by the direction of the eldership. If they cannot get their programs approved by the eldership, they will launch them over the protest of the eldership, or keep them secret from the eldership. This is a clear violation of Hebrews 13:17: "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."

Finally, there is the matter of *unscriptural prerequisites to baptism*. There was a time when a

(continued on page 4)

Your Loved Ones In Heaven

(No. 8)

This will be the eighth and final installment for WORDS OF TRUTH on this vein of thought. It is hoped that this series of articles has made your soul desire to go home to heaven with greater determination. If that noble aspiration has been reached, then our time has been spent profitably and pleasantly.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

No doubt every one who receives WORDS OF TRUTH anticipates that he will have loved ones in heaven. Have you gone a step or two deeper in your anticipation and inquired into the basis of this anticipation? Before any of your loved ones can go to heaven it was necessary that they come into the Lord. This they did by obeying the gospel. They heard the word of the Lord (Matt. 17:5; Rom 10:17). They believed in the Deity of Jesus Christ (John 8:24). They repented of their sins (Luke 13:3, 5) Acts 17:30). They confessed Christ in the *here* and *now* with the hallowed hope that he would surely confess them in the *there* and *then* (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10). They were then immersed in water that they might come *into* Christ or *into* the name of the Sublime Three (Gal. 3:27; Matt. 28:19). But that was not all that was required of your loved ones, now in the spirit world, in their preparation to go home to heaven. They were required to be faithful to the end or even to the point of death (Matt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10). Your loved ones will be in heaven only if they died in the faith and were safe and secure in the Lord at the time of their demise (Heb. 11:13; Rev. 14:13).

Reader friends, did you think seriously in the reading of the previous paragraph that what God required of your loved ones to go to heaven he also requires of you? If he required them to have obeyed the gospel in their lives, then he requires no less of you. How could he, and retain his character as one who does not respect persons? Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11 and I Peter 1:17 all teach that he is NOT a respecter of persons. If he required them to be faithful till death, and he did, then he requires the same life of faithfulness till the end of you. If your loved ones were faithful to the Lord prior to death, they will be in heaven. But if you are not faithful to the Lord, you are not going to be with the Lord and your loved ones in eternity. Make no mistake about that! If your loved ones so lived that they could fall asleep in the arms of Jesus at death, then they will surely be in eternity in heaven. But you are not going to be with the Lord or with them in eternity unless you so live as to die in faith.

Some who read these lines have had Christian loved ones to go on beyond. They were Christians, but in this you are not emulating them, for you have never obeyed God's gospel. Do not deceive yourselves. In your unconverted state you do not have a chance to be with the Lord and your loved ones in eternity. Only by obedience to the gospel and the faithful living of the Christian life can you possess the hope of seeing that Christian loved one again.

Some who read these lines have given up Christian loved ones. Perhaps it was a father or mother, a Christian husband or wife, a Christian brother or sister, a Christian son or daughter, or a Christian friend whom you loved as a brother. What were your feelings as a Christian when you left their mortal remains in the silent city of the dead? Did you not resolve to live closely to the Lord and walk daily with him in order that one day you, too, might live in

heaven with the Lord and your loved one that you buried in the embrace of fervent hope. Have you kept that resolution? Have you kept it by being a daily student of Sacred Scripture or has the Bible been lost to you? Have you kept it by daily prayer or have you lost the right of prayer you once possessed as a Christian? What about your church going? Been lately? Why not? Do you REALLY think you can deliberately reject the Lord's church and be found on the right side in judgment's coming day? Being faithful for only a part of your life will not meet the

total demands of the Lord. Yes, you no doubt will have loved ones in heaven, but will YOU be there to greet them and be with them throughout a never-ending eternity? If after reading this, you ask the question, "Did he mean these articles for me?", the answer is yes, Yes, YES!!! They are meant for the writer and every reader. In these eight articles we have not aimed for toes—but for hearts. I trust that the aim has not missed its intended target!—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063

A Real Miracle

ROGER JACKSON

No one living today has seen a real miracle. There are many deceived souls who believed they have, but they are manifestly mistaken. I always advise people to take any case they want from the Bible and use it to compare with what they observed to be a miracle. All one needs is one case, and Acts 3:1-11 is about the best one in the Book. It is too long to record in this short space, so please read it before going any further.

In the case of a real miracle the close observer will notice that the possibility of a natural explanation is precluded by the very nature of the case. The details stand out. What happened, and the very way it happened is a matter of careful explanation. The purpose of the miracle is always clear, whether stated or implied. The purposes fall into at least three different categories, and it may often fit into all three: (1) confirmation of a thing as divine, as in the case of tongues (Acts 2:1-16; I Cor. 14:22), (2) as transpiring in the working out of some divine plan, as in the case of the Scheme of Redemption (Daniel 4:25; 5:5), and (3) the glorification of God as God, as in the case of the creation of all things (Psalm 19:1).

No matter how effectively one may present the truth about miracles, in certain quarters the proof will be rejected. We are not without an explanation however, and experience has proven to be a valuable teacher. Here are four of the most common reasons people accept the concept of modern miracles: (1) DECEPTION: The informed Bible student is keenly aware of such passages as II Cor. 11:3, Gal. 1:6-9, and I Tim. 4:1, etc., which warn us that some will pervert the truth and never lack for disciples. II Thess. 2:11, 12 sadly assigns such duped individuals to eternal flames. (2) Determination to see a miracle any way. The disposition to call something a miracle even if it is nothing more than coincidence, quaint happening, or just something not completely understandable (such as childbirth, baptism, or the Braves winning a baseball game). (3) Mental incompetence. Yes, there are always a certain number of people among the miracle crowd who are not responsible. We cast no reflection upon them, but wonder how the great Master of heaven feels when fake healers take advantage of them and steal their living. (4) Ignorance. Knowing far more about inner glows and subjective feelings than the Bible, and not caring ever to learn any better. You can't even get away with ignorance of man's law, and it will not certainly be excuse in heaven's court.

As we compare the case under consideration with what we have observed among miracle workers today (supposed miracle workers) we may divide them into four different groups:

As to the impotent man's disability; He never had walked. If he had, the witnesses might well have asked how came about his disability. I have seen men "healed" who had an "acquired" disability, but

never yet seen one healed of an organic disability possessed at birth. Neither has anyone else of contemporary existence.

This man was carried to his place of benevolent expectations. This further emphasizes his complete disability. He did not limp there, stagger there, or arrive on crutches. Brother, there wasn't any way he could walk! He was locally known. The story was not reported in Jerusalem of one who lived in London, had no home address and no telephone. The people could look him up if they had any questions.

As to the impotent man's mental condition: He had no discernable faith. Not one inkling who Jesus was, or even who these two men were. We do not mean to infer that no faith was ever required on the part of the person to be healed miraculously, but this case proves that it is an error to preach that you can't see a miracle unless you believe. Furthermore, the impotent man did not expect a miracle, he expected ALMS. Therefore, it is equally erroneous to preach that one cannot see a miracle unless he expects one.

As to the cure proper: It was immediate. He did not begin to get better after a few months. He did not limp a while, and he did not undergo any therapy, HE LEAPED, HE STOOD, HE WALKED! He did not even have to learn to walk, which thing he had never learned. His cure was complete, not partial. His cure was irreversible. We never again read of his being brought to the gate Beautiful. God doesn't deal in setbacks. His cure was public. It was not done in a corner of the house. Every part was clearly observable and beyond successful refutation.

As to those things noticeably absent: (1) There was no big campaign advertising a great healing campaign or healing meeting. (2) There was no healing line before the Apostles. (3) There was no screening committee to counsel with the hard cases. (4) There was no collection taken.—17 W. Vandiver, Montgomery, Ala. 36110

WORD of GOD

Blessed be the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.

Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

Would You Like To Stop Smoking?

(continued from page 1)

you can also. If you wish to quit smoking, read on.

Christian, the first and most important step in quitting cigarettes is prayer. As a child of God, you have the most powerful ally for the struggle that will follow your decision to quit smoking. Let Him help you. In Phil. 4:6, Christians are encouraged, "...in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. James 5:16 tells us that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. By opening your heart in prayer to our heavenly Father, you show your faith in his power and your trust in his promise that he will not let us be tempted above that which we are able to withstand, but will with temptation provide an escape (I Cor. 10:13). Ask God to help you

quit smoking as soon as you put out your last cigarette. Take advantage of his strength and his promises. Pray earnestly and often. Be sure to thank him for his help each day that you don't smoke.

God will, with temptation, provide an escape. When you quit smoking and the temptation to smoke again arises, find a substitute for cigarettes. Chewing gum helped me during this critical time. Food, especially hard candy which dissolves slowly provided me another substitute for cigarettes. During my first few days, cigars were especially helpful. From Friday until Wednesday, I smoked 3 or 4 cigars each day. Those cigars were valuable substitutes for cigarettes during a crucial time because they

provided the action of smoking without inhaling the smoke and lessened the effect of nicotine withdrawal upon my body. After Wednesday, my sixth day without smoking cigarettes, I no longer felt the need to smoke cigars, so I quit them. Quitting cigars was fairly simple since I had not smoked cigars regularly while I smoked cigarettes.

As you progress toward your goal of being free of the habit of smoking cigarettes, think of each day you don't smoke them as money that you put into a savings account. When you feel a strong desire to smoke, remember that if you give in and smoke, you will be spending all the "money" you have saved. Also, if your health permits, exercise. Begin exercising lightly and increase your pace gradually. Walking or jogging is good. Tennis or some other brisk, competitive hobby will help. After a few days without cigarettes, you will feel stronger and breathe easier. Food will taste better and flowers will smell sweeter. Remembering these positive facts will strengthen you when you feel the urge to smoke. Remember also the bad taste you no longer have in your mouth when you wake up each morning. Look at your fingers where you used to hold cigarettes. After a time, they will not be as yellow with nicotine as they once were. Think about your family. They know and appreciate the importance of what you are trying to do. They love you even more because they realize that you are fighting this battle for them as well as for yourself. Make an appointment with your dentist and have your teeth cleaned because knowing that your teeth are clean and white will help you keep from smoking again. Pray often. Remember to thank God for helping you stop smoking and ask him to continue to help you resist the temptation to smoke.

Quitting smoking is not easy, but few endeavors worth undertaking are easy. Pray fervently and often. God will provide you an escape from the temptation to smoke. He did for me. I realize what Paul meant when he wrote, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). Why don't you take advantage of God's unlimited means, power, and love by casting this burden at his feet?—Fayette, AL 35555

An Evasive Problem

(Continued from page 2)

penitent believer could be baptized upon a simple confession of his faith in Christ. We chided the denominational people because they could not baptize one like Philip baptized the eunuch in Acts 8. Now those of this philosophy would put us right alongside our denominational neighbors by making it impossible for us to baptize one like Philip baptized the eunuch. Before one could be baptized they would subject him to a long period of intense questions to be sure he is ready for baptism. Now we have always taught that people being baptized should know what they are doing; but in the absence of evidence to the

contrary it is not reasonable to assume that those to whom the gospel has been preached time and again understand the plan of salvation when they request baptism? What right do we have to require more than the scriptures require?

In bringing this article to a close we want to make it plain that we do not attribute these positions or practices to the leadership of the Crossroads church in Gainesville, nor to anyone simply because he may be a part of the Crossroads church. But these are positions and practices which have characterized some who have come out of the Crossroads church and have worked in other places. These things are wrong, and are tearing up churches over the country. If the leadership of the Crossroads church is not responsible for these positions and practices on the part of those who come out from there, perhaps they need to incorporate something into their teaching program which would keep so very many of those coming out from there from going astray in these very vital areas, and from dividing churches.

The Upward Climb

EARLENE ROSE

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:13, 14

When the climbing rose mounts the top of the wall,
We feel the prize has been won,
But the goal of the rose was not the top of the wall,
It was reaching for the sun.

It is the upward climb, not the peak of the summit,
That sustains and supports man;
And his life will be beautiful when he sets his goal
High, Then reaches as far as he can.—1608, 24th
Street, Northport, AL 35476

WORD of GOD

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

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3:00-4:30 Winfred Clark—"Practical Studies In Hebrews"

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10:00-11:30—William Woodson—"Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus"

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Tuesday—Roy Deaver
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Thursday—William Woodson

For further information and reservations write Gus Nichols Preachers Lectureship 1501 6th Avenue Jasper, Alabama 35501 or call (205) 384-6446 or 387-1670. There is no charge to those attending. However we do need to know in advance how many are coming.





Words Of

"I am not mad, most noble Festus,
the Words of Truth and soberness."

forth

— Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1979

NUMBER 39

Daniel's Seventy Weeks — A Study In Prophecy

(No. 1)

In language unequivocal Jesus Christ declared that the Old Testament scriptures spoke of him (Luke 24:27,44), and Bible scholars have catalogued more than three hundred OT prophecies that find precise fulfillment in the Son of God. One of the most amazing of these is the remarkable narrative of Daniel 9:24-27, commonly known as the prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks. A study of these ancient passages



Wayne Jackson

is important for at least two reasons: (1) This prophecy is greatly abused by those who hold to the doctrine of dispensational premillennialism; accordingly, it ought to be studied so that the premillennial error might be refuted. (2) Daniel 9:24ff is a tremendous apologetic; it is powerful testimony to the ancient reality of divine prophecy, hence, the inspiration of the Holy Bible. And so, in a series of articles to follow, I propose to study with you this famous prophecy.

Introductory Matters

A proper consideration of Daniel 9:24ff demands a three-fold approach. First, a contextual survey of the *historical background* of this passage is imperative. Secondly, a *theological study of the Messiah's work*, as well as the consequences of rejecting him, must be carefully pursued. And then thirdly, the *chronology* of the numbers given must be studiously examined for precise fulfillment in time. Attention is now directed to the first of these points.

Historical Context. Because of Israel's sinfulness,

the prophet Jeremiah had foretold that the Jews would spend seventy years in Babylonian Captivity (Jer. 25:12; 29:10). He was the only prophet to specify the actual number of years that would be involved in the Captivity. Well, Jeremiah's prophecies were literally fulfilled. The general time of the confinement was seventy years (Dan. 9:2; II Chron. 36:21; Zech. 1:12; 7:5). But why was a *seventy* year captivity decreed; why not sixty; or eighty? The law of Moses had commanded that Israel should observe every seventh year as a Sabbatical year. The ground was to lie in rest (Lev. 25:1-7). Apparently, down through the centuries Israel had greatly ignored this divine law. One scholar noted that "there is not a single recorded place in all of Israel's pre-exilic history where this Sabbatical law was observed" (Wick Broomall). Accordingly, in addition to being punished for their other sins (idolatry, etc.), the Jews were sentenced to seventy years of punishment until the land of Canaan "had enjoyed its sabbaths" (II Chron. 36:21).

If each of the seventy captivity years represented the violation of a Sabbatical year, as II Chronicles 36:21 appears to indicate, this suggests that Israel had ignored that divine requirement for at least some four hundred and ninety years (seventy years times seven — the Sabbatical coming each seventh year). The Babylonian Captivity was, therefore, sort of a *mid-way historical point*. It looked *back* upon some four hundred ninety years of sinful conduct; and then, looked *forward* four hundred ninety years to the "end of sin."

SIN	70 Years	END OF SIN
490 years	Babylonian	490 years
II Chron. 36:21	Captivity	Dan. 9:24-27

In the first year of Darius, who had been appointed king over the realm of the Chaldeans (approximately 538 B.C.), Daniel calculated that Jeremiah's prophecy regarding the seventy years of captivity was

almost fulfilled (Dan. 9:1,2). So, he went to God in prayer. He confessed his sins and the sins of his people. He petitioned that Jehovah would turn his wrath away from Jerusalem and permit the temple to be rebuilt (cf. 9:16, 17). His prayer was answered in a message (9:24-27) which foretold that the temple would be rebuilt, but that a greater blessing would come in the Person of the Anointed (Christ), who was greater than the temple (cf. Matt. 12:6). This prophecy, therefore, was a word of consolation to the distressed captives.

Babylonian Captivity Chronology. In order to appreciate the chronological computation which will be done later, the following data, regarding the Captivity deportations and returns, are introduced.

DEPORTATIONS	RETURNS
606/5 B.C. (II Kgs. 24:1; Dan. 1:1-6)	536 B.C. (Ezra 2:2-Zerubabel)
597 B.C. (II Kgs. 24:10; Ezek. 1:2)	457 B.C. (Ezra 7:6,7 - Ezra)
586 B.C. (II Kgs. 25:8)	444 B.C. (Neh. 2:1, 11 - Nehemiah)

Prophetical Time Frame. At this point the student should again carefully read Daniel 9:24-27. Observe, please, that the prophecy involves a time frame of seventy weeks. These are not literal weeks; they are *prophetical weeks*. The seventy weeks of seven days each would compute to four hundred and ninety days. or, in prophetical language, *four hundred ninety years* (Cf. Ezek. 4:6; See the essay, "year-Day Principle" by Robert Few in Albert Barnes' *Commentary on Revelation*, pp.xiff). This view is accepted by virtually all conservative Bible scholars with which I am familiar.

Design of the Prophecy. The following verse by verse outline sketches the general function of the prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks.

(1) The Messiah's earthly advent and its purpose
(continued on page 4)



Words Of Truth

Vol. 1, No. 631, 1960
I am not mad, most noble Sen-
tus, but speak forth the words of
truth and soberness. — Acts 26:25

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We Came From God

George Gallup, well-known pollster, has commented, "I could prove God statistically. Take the human body alone...the chance that all the functions of the individual would just happen is a statistical monstrosity."

Experts in the field of Biology inform us that the human body is composed of 200 bones, 500 muscles, 1,000 ligaments, and billions of cells.



DALTON KEY

In the brain alone there are more than ten billion nerve cells which comprise a communications network far more advanced and complex than the entire communications system of the United States. The human brain is far more complex than even the most sophisticated computer. If we were able to force our brain to work at only one-half its capacity, we could without any difficulty learn over forty languages, memorize the entire encyclopedia from cover to cover, and complete the required courses of many dozens of colleges. Can such intricate workmanship be accounted for apart from God?

The wonder of the human body proves the existence and power of God. The Psalmist wrote, "I will give thanks unto thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalms 139:14). Paul proclaimed, "(God) giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men...for we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:25, 26, 28).

We came not into being by accident. Neither did we mysteriously evolve from lower forms of life. We came from God! — Box 126, Aurora, Mo. 65605.

The experiential philosophy of so many in the world has found its way into the thinking of some in the church, and perhaps without their realizing it. Experiential philosophy is the philosophy that says the only source of real knowledge is experience, or that one actually knows only that which he has experienced. This philosophy accounts for the fact that so many religionists place so much stock in what they have seen, or felt, or experienced. It accounts for the fact that some never obey the gospel, for the simple reason they are led to believe that they must have some kind of mysterious experience telling them they are saved.

But when I hear brethren say they know God answers prayers because they have seen it happen, I realize experientialism is not as far from the church as we like to think. Please be assured that we are not for one moment questioning whether God answers prayer. We know that he does. But the question is, how do we know? Is it that we have seen things for which we have prayed come to pass? If this is the proof of God's answering prayer, then what about the false religionist who has seen some of the things for which he prayed come to pass? Does this prove that God answers his prayer? What about the person who is not at all religious, but who gets sick and is afraid he is going to die, and prays for God to heal him. If he gets well, does this prove God answered his prayer? Or what about the man who bows in worship to a god of wood or stone, and ask

Hope, what would our lives, our world be without it? We live in hope, we survive on hope, we seek for hope! The message of the gospel is the only true hope given to a world which lies in despair. The agnostic says he doesn't know if there can be genuine hope. The materialist can live only for things, "for tomorrow we die" (I Corinthians 15:32). The atheist offers only the tomb for the naked ape of his evolutionary scheme. But the Bible, God's

How Do You Know God Answers Prayer?



BOB DUNCAN

for that god's blessings upon him in some special way? If the blessing he had in mind comes to him, does that prove his god answers prayer?

The truth of the matter is that we can know that God answers prayer in the same manner and for the same reason we know that baptism is a burial in water — because the Bible teaches it (Matthew 6:6; 7:7-11; James 5:16).

This is also the reason I know that the providence of God works in the lives of his children — because the Bible teaches it. I do not know how God answers prayer, nor do I know how his providence works in my life. Furthermore I cannot put my finger on a specific incident in my life and say, "this was the providence of God." When I read in reports made by brethren about the work they are doing, and they cite certain experiences they have had as evidence of the providence of God, it tells me they have been influenced by the experiential philosophy, whether they are aware of it or not.

In this same connection, care should be taken that we not make foolish accusations against God. How often when some tragedy strikes do we hear someone remark that it was God's will, and we should not question the will of

God. Those of us who are the children of God have the assurance that God will make all things work together for our good (Romans 8:28), but this is a far cry from saying that everything that happens is good or was brought to pass by divine providence. It is no wonder that some have thrown out belief in God, when some leave the impression that everything which happens is directly traceable to a decision made by the Almighty.

It is certainly safe to say that God created man to be a free moral agent, and in this sense, whatever man may do is *permitted* by God. But let us not lay at the feet of God the responsibility for tragedies and troubles which should be laid at the feet of Satan.

"In Hope..."



DON PRESTON

message in the text before us and in countless other passages, offers true hope! Let us carefully examine the text, which reads, "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2).

"In hope..." What is hope? I think of it as the idea of a better tomorrow. We have all heard it described (and rightly) as a desire to obtain with an expectation to obtain. Someone said, "hope belongs chiefly to those that suffer." Hope is the light at the end of the tunnel, the rest after labor, the relief after stress. How true are Paul's words — we are saved by hope. We do not receive forgiveness when we hope but forgiveness will be one of the objects of hope.

Hope's value is inestimable! Because of hope, we cleanse ourselves of unrighteousness (I John 3:1-3; II Corinthians 6:17-7:1). Hope *protects* us from being destroyed by discouragements (I Thessalonians 5:8).

(continued on page 4)

Paul's Writing To Ascendants And Subordinates

Some have wisely said that perhaps the greatest problems facing the church and our nation are the problems of human relationships. There are three basic areas of human relationships: (1) the husband and wife relationship (2) the parent and child relationship and (3) the master and servant (employer and employee) relationship. In dealing with any area of human relationships, one must realize



Michael D. Stone
that someone in that

relationship has rightful authority over the other. If there is no authority authorized, then, anarchy is possible. It is Paul's desire that rightful authority in all human relationships be maintained and that anarchy be condemned.

The ascendants are those who have a higher authority in the relationship. On the other hand, the subordinates are those of lesser authority. When this pattern is followed, there is no injustice involved. It seems probable that the subordinates are the ones most likely to cast aside the restraints placed upon them by God; therefore, in a discussion of the three basic human relationships, Paul gives instruction first to the subordinates. In the husband and wife relationship discussed in Ephesians 5:22-23, the wife (the subordinate) is dealt with first. In the parent and child relationship

discussed in Ephesians 6:1-4, instruction is first given to the one lesser in authority in that relationship (the child). The same is true of the employer and employee relationship discussed in Ephesians 6:5-9.

Just as there was a danger of the early Christians abusing their new found liberty in Christ, can there not be the same danger today?

It seems to this writer that most of the abuse of authority prevalent now is abuse caused by the subordinates, that is the wife, the child and the servant in their respective relationships. There are restraints placed on each one of us regardless of whether we are an ascendant or a subordinate. This is God's way and his way is the best way.—321 Lynwell Drive, Orlando, Florida 32809

"Our Child Is Dying"

This was the title of a human interest story in a recent issue of the Reader's Digest. A couple related how their 22-month-old daughter was bitten by a rattlesnake. One could not help but become involved in the emotional turmoils of a hurried trip to the local hospital and all the heartaches and agonies relating to this terrible experience. Several times, it seemed certain that little "Suzy" would die.



Raymond Elliott
Eventually, after some

three weeks of intensive care in the hospital, the parents were able to pick up their daughter and hold her for the first time. Because of the nature of the story, one could not keep tears from flowing freely as he followed right along with parents and their concern for their sweet, innocent daughter who was so near death.

Our thoughts kept centering on many families of our acquaintance who need to learn an important lesson before it is eternally too late. That is, those children who are not being brought up in the "chastening and admonition of the Lord" are dying—spiritually. We could envision that one of the most difficult things to accept in life would be the death of a child. Oh, but to lose a son or daughter unprepared for eternity is infinitely worse. Somehow, we can hear the mournful cries of an Eli or perhaps

a David among many families today in our society who have failed their children in this matter. However, there are many parents who remain insensitive to our pleas to bring their children to the periods of Bible study and worship of the local church. Some weeks ago, two sweet children approached us about visiting their parents and encouraging them to bring the family to worship on the Lord's day. Children want to learn of God and Jesus. How can fathers and mother refuse to do otherwise is a mystery.

Parents need to understand that there is nothing greater to give to their children than a knowledge of Jesus Christ and his word. Parents who are negligent in this responsibility will have to answer to God on the judgment day for such disobedience.—809 Old Perry Store Road, Opp, AL 36467

The Question Of Authority

Both Christ and the Jewish Synagogue recognized the need of authority for religious action, and that without divine authority no action can be acceptably rendered (Matt. 21:23-27). This is a lesson sorely needed in our time. Failure to recognize and (or) to respect divine authority by modern religionists is the basic cause of error, confusion and division in the religious world. When this question of divine authority is correctly settled, acknowledged, respected and accepted, error, division and confusion will vanish.



W. C. Quillen

Peter is successor to Christ, and that all popes are successors to Peter is false. Christ has no successor. Peter never made such presumptive claims for himself. He insisted that Christ is the Stone upon which the Church is built, and He is precious to all who believe, but a stone of stumbling to all the disobedient; and there is no other (Acts 4:8-12; I Pet. 2:3-10).

While claiming to be an apostle of Christ, Peter was still his servant, not his successor (II Pet. 1:1). And acknowledging his own position as an elder (bishop, shepherd) in the church, he said that Christ is the Chief Shepherd of the church (I Peter 5:1-5). And "the Shepherd of your souls" (I Peter 2:25).

The original word from which "chief" comes is the

same as "arch." Hence, Christ is the Chief Shepherd, or the Arch Shepherd, the only "Arch Bishop" the church has.

Christ appointed his own apostles, taught them, delivered the message of salvation to them, and sent the Holy Spirit to "guide them into all truth" (Jno. 16:7-14). He gave them authority without diminishing his own, because he works through them. The apostles delivered, recorded and confirmed heaven's final message to man. When we receive their message we receive Christ; when we receive Christ we receive God (Mt. 10:40).

The apostles have no successors. The claim to apostolic succession is presumption and deceitful usurpation. P.O. Box 212 Lawrenceburg, TN 38464.

The Message

EARLENE ROSE

Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?—(Matthew 6:30)

In the heart of a mountain on a winding trail
At the quiet of dawn, I watched the world
unveil,

And the breeze told a story that thrilled my
soul,
A message from God written on nature's scroll.

Resplendent in beauty, the trees all arrayed,
Seemed waiting in line for their gala parade.
I remembered that God, who so clothed the
trees,
Has promised His children much more than
these.—1608 24th St. Northport, AL 36576

The claim made by all papists and some others that

Daniel's Seventy Weeks—A Study In Prophecy

(continued from page 1)

(24). The beginning point of the prophetic seventy weeks (25a).
 (3) The initial phase of the prophecy — rebuilding Jerusalem (25b).

(4) The Messiah's death (26a).
 (5) Jerusalem and the temple to be destroyed because of the Jewish rejection of the Messiah (26b).
 (6) The Messiah's covenant replaces the former

(27a).

(?) The full end of the Jewish system (27b).
 In our next installment, we will commence with a consideration of the text itself. — 3906 East Main St., Stockton CA 95205

“In Hope”

(Continued from page 2)

It is because even in the midst of these difficulties we can hope that we are said to be saved by hope.

“...of eternal life...” The object of our hope, eternal life! And not just life but blessed, happy life. We hope for a body that cannot die (cf. Philippians 3:20-21; I John 3: 1-2). We hope to participate in the very glory of God (Romans 5:1-2). Our hope is reserved for us (Colossians 1:5-7). It is incorruptible, undefiled and can never fade away. That is, it's nature. It is not the world which perisheth, but a country and a city whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11:10! Truly, what a hope it is!

“...which God...” And whence cometh this hope? What is its source? Paul said, “Now the God of hope...that ye may abound in hope, through the

power of the Holy Ghost.” In I Timothy 1:1 we are told that Jesus Christ is our hope. Colossians 1:27 asserts, “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” And Romans 15:4 states “...that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” Our hope then springs from God the Father, the Holy Spirit, Jesus the Christ and the inspired scriptures which testify of our God. There is no hope, nor even knowledge of God without the scriptures. Hence, our hope, based in God, springs from his holy word.

“...that cannot lie, promised...” The assurance of hope. How detestable is a liar! How Cruel! There are those who promise and will not fulfill and there are those who promise and cannot fulfill. But our hope of heaven is secure because God promised it and God cannot lie. But not only did he promise, he swore with

an oath (Hebrews 6:17-18). Just check your concordance and you will be surprised at how few times God swore an oath. But concerning our hope, he swore! Blessed assurance!

How may you obtain this hope? Romans 5:1-2 says faith gives us access to it. In I Peter 1:3-5, Peter says that we are begotten unto this hope. James tells us we are begotten by the word of God (James 1:18). And Peter says likewise (I Peter 1:23). We are begotten to hope when we are born again of water and the Spirit (John 3:3-5). This means being baptized in water (not physical birth, John 1:11-12) as instructed by the Spirit in God's word (Ephesians 5:25-26). That hope can be YOURS! Why not accept it? — 1224 E. Main St. Shawnee, Ok. 74801.

Worldliness In The Church

Scripture teaches us to “love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” The reason being, “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (I John 2:15). While all agree that worldliness is a major problem of the church today, not all are agreed as to just what “worldliness” is. To help us properly deal with the matter we must understand what is involved in worldliness.



John Wadley

Webster offers the following. “World: concern to this life, life as distinguished from those of the life to come, hence secular affairs or interests”. Under worldly he says, “Of or belonging to this world...not heavenly or spiritual.” Paul speaks of two kinds of minds in Romans 12:2: One that is fashioned or conformed according to this world; another that is transformed and renewed according to the will of God.

Both Scripture and observation tell us that there are two levels of worldliness to contend with. There is that *carnal wickedness* such as drunkenness, fornication, homosexuality, dancing, gambling, and immodest dress.

But there is also a *worldly mindedness*. Paul addresses the Corinthian brethren as “carnal” minded because they were thinking and acting as immature babes (I Cor. 3:1-3). It is interesting to note that in cataloguing sins, both types were lumped together. “The works of the flesh are...fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revealings...” (Gal. 5:19-20). Thus sins of the spirit are evidently no less evil than those of one's conduct.

There are *worldly habits* such as smoking, use of alcoholic beverages or drug abuse. While sinners might indulge in these, the saint respects his body and refuses to defile it (I Cor. 6:18-20).

There is *worldly speech* such as cursing, taking God's name in vain, suggestive sensual talk and vulgar jokes. A carnal mind might use such corrupt

speech, but the spiritual man will use words reflecting a pure heart (Eph. 4:29).

There is a *worldly style of dress* that is extravagant or sexually provocative. People of the world think little of this, but God's children adorn themselves in modest apparel (I Tim. 2:9).

There is a *worldly type of recreation*. This includes such as risque movies or television, gambling or dancing. Because it appeals to unwholesome fleshly appetites, Christians refrain from such (I John 2:15).

There are *worldly professions or careers*. Disciples of Christ have no desire to pursue a career that would involve them in sinful activities or commitments, or encourage others to sin. Most careers in the entertainment world would fail here, as would selling alcoholic beverages, etc. (I Cor. 8:11-13).

It is worldliness to put secular interests before the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33). This could be one's home, one's business, or one's career. It means to be more interested in the possessions of the world than the spiritual things of Christianity. Here we see folks with no time to improve their spiritual skills or knowledge, but plenty of time to develop the same for needs of this life. The cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches always choke out the spiritual interests (Matt. 13:22). Such a person is more interested in the here and now than in eternity. The spiritual minded see themselves as but pilgrims here, on their way to a heavenly land (Heb. 11:13-16).

A worldly soul is more concerned about the physical man, his needs and wants than he is with the spiritual man. “He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal” (John 12:25). This type is more concerned about adorning the outer man than the adornment of the heart (I Pet. 3:3-5).

Worldliness is preferring the friendship and company of worldly, non-Christian's over that of God's children. Spiritual souls prefer one another (Rom. 12:10). A carnal brother is more concerned about how the world views his conduct than how God and his fellow Christians do. The devout soul pleases God above any and all men (Gal. 1:10). Because of this attitude the worldling is afraid to identify himself as a Christian around worldly people (Mk. 8:38). The godly man gladly confesses his Lord (Matt. 10:32).

Worldliness is seen when we desire to be served rather than to serve our fellow man (Matt. 20:25-28). To consume our blessings on ourselves selfishly rather than sharing with others is worldliness (Jas.

4:3-4; Eph. 4:28).

We are worldly if we allow our career or profession to crowd the church and spiritual interests out of our lives (Matt. 13:22). The same is true when our business and financial interests keep us from talking to a man about his soul. Mark 8:36 applies to our business contacts as well as ourselves. If we allow even harmless recreation to keep us from Christian duty we are worldly. It would take pages to tell of souls who have allowed golf, football and other sports to interfere with Christian service.

One is like the world if he accepts or rejects a man on the basis of his race or wealth or social standing rather than his moral and spiritual character (James 2:1-9). The same is true if we are envious of the success of others and find it hard to rejoice with them (Rom. 12:15).

Christians are worldly when gaining the knowledge of the world is allowed to interfere with securing knowledge of God's word (I Cor. 1:20-21). It is worldliness to accept public opinion over Biblical authority in matters of dispute (Matt. 15:6). When we choose the methods of the world over God's revealed way of doing his work and worship we are worldly (Is. 55:8-9). Worldly brethren love compromising preachers who tickle their itching ears and justify their carnality (II Tim. 4:3). Those who seek positions of prominence and power in the church, even as do sinners of the world in their realm, are carnally minded (III John 9, 11).

We could sum up all of these under the one general heading: Worldliness is a failure to crucify self and enthrone Christ as the Lord of one's life (Gal. 2:20).

Strangely in some congregations it is easier to deal with smoking, drinking and gambling than with envy, pride and materialism. We have many folks who are proud of their “lack of vices” yet become very sensitive when these inward, worldly attitudes are touched upon. Legalism would classify sins as to degree and then carefully avoid the bad ones while tolerating or even indulging in the more respectable ones (Matt. 23:24).

The church today is seriously compromised because the spirit of the world prevails in so many hearts. She desperately needs faithful prophets who will cry aloud and spare not, lifting up their voices like trumpets to declare unto God's people their transgressions (Is. 58:1). — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37921



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1979

NUMBER 40

"The Church Ain't Doing Nothing"

How often have we heard that statement from a brother in Christ. And it is to be admitted that we often fail in fulfilling the many obligations that God has given to us. But, there are some pertinent observations that need to be made relative to this broad statement.

First of all, we could say that the brother who makes such an accusation has taken to himself some of the attributes were formerly considered as belonging only to God. In Psalms 139, we learn that God is omnipresent (present in all places at the same time, if he chooses) and omniscient (all knowing). Thus, for a brother to be absolutely correct in saying that "the church ain't doing nothing," he would have to possess all the knowledge of what all the brethren may or may not be doing. Otherwise, where he could not be and what he could not know, some brethren could be doing some work for the Lord. It is humanly impossible for a mortal man to have a complete knowledge of every good deed done by Christians. One may not know of a marriage saved because an elder or a preacher counseled with the husband and wife in privacy...A letter of encouragement written to a friend...A family providing transportation to worship for an elderly person...A sister caring for a loved one who is an invalid...Members visiting those who are shut-ins and/or sick...A young person carrying a gift to an aged Christian...Another reading the Sacred Scriptures for one whose eye sight is dimmed...A concerned Christian providing food for indigent parents...One contributing money for the care of orphans or the support of a Christian school...A mother teaching her daughter how to become a good homemaker...A Christian encouraging a brother who has become weak in the faith...A father instructing his son in the way of the Lord...Parents providing



Raymond Elliott

opportunities for a Christian education for their children in the home, in a Christian school and in Bible classes...Teenagers standing firm on their convictions not to engage in acts of worldliness...Prayers to God in secret for the spiritual welfare of loved ones, friends and brethren...Quiet meditation on the grace of God and his word...Faithful attendance by brethren to the various periods of Bible study and worship...The teaching of the Bible to prospective members in their homes...And countless other acts of love and loyalty.

Secondly, the brother who says that the church is not doing anything may, in fact, be projecting his own lack of involvement in the local work. William Thackeray, an English novelist, wrote: "The world is a looking glass and gives back to every man the reflection of his own." This is so often true with the critic who beholds the church as being complacent and inactive. The truth of the matter is, such an one seldom responds to the various work programs and periods of fellowship afforded by a local eldership. On the other hand, inquire of the brother or sister who participates in the suggested areas of service and you will discover a more positive attitude. Jesus condemned the judging of brethren in such a manner as is found in the critic (Matthew 7:1-5).

Thirdly, what the brother usually means when he says, "The church ain't doing nothing," is that the church collectively, in a highly organized manner is not doing anything. Most of our larger congregations are geared to organized machinery. Organized work programs can be productive and expedient in the local work. However, organization for organization's sake is worthless. But we have always encouraged some degree of organization with reference to general

visitation and personal evangelism. What one must understand is that each Christian is a living stone and a priest in the house of God (I Peter 2:5). This means that one does not have to be told when and what to do for the Lord. Furthermore, when the individual Christian is faithful and active, so is the church collectively. The Christian life is practical in every respect and consists of living and doing for others (Matthew 25:31-46). Since the Christian is not to shine his light but rather to radiate a glow by one's life of service, many deeds will go unheeded by the majority of people (Matthew 5:13-16).

Fourthly, we need to cease from comparing ourselves with ourselves. The thought is that it is unfair to compare one congregation with another congregation. It is common to assume that one local church is very active when visited one time. A visitor to the congregation where you attend may be highly impressed with the activities taking place at that particular time. It is often the case that one church located near a college campus or in a metropolis has more people to draw from and more opportunities for service. On the other hand, we know personally of small rural congregations that do more, percentage wise, than larger churches in mission work. One congregation should not be condemned for another congregation's achievement. Each local church has a distinct personality of its own.


Each member of the church should seek every opportunity to do good (Galatians 6:10). Zeal is contagious. When we work, it inspires others to do the same. When we are busy, we have the feeling that the church is active, and it is. — 809 Old Perry Store Rd Opp, Al. 36467.

The Charge Is Carnal Knowledge

S. G. GRAY

While serving in the U.S.A.F., and overhearing conversations between airmen as they discussed their dates with the girls, sometimes, they would refer to a girl as "jail bait." Not being familiar with all the ways of the world, I wondered what they meant. Finally I

was able to ascertain that a girl who was "jail bait" was a girl who was under age and having sex with her could result in being sent to jail, even with the girl's consent for sex, with the charge of statutory rape (continued on page 4)



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Acts 26:25

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Baptism - What Peter Taught

The book of Acts is a most interesting book. Luke, the author of this history book, wrote almost one-half of our New Testament. He wrote more than any other New Testament writer. Acts covers a period of approximately thirty years from chapter one through chapter twenty-eight. So, we might say the time span is from 33 A.D. to 63 A.D. We are now ready to notice from this great book what the apostle Peter had to say about baptism. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37-38).

It was fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus and only ten days after the ascension when the events of the aforementioned text took place. Peter, in Jerusalem, had preached the gospel to those who only a few days ago had crucified the Son of God. Jesus was crucified by the ignorance of man, yet God reversed that decision and raised him from the dead. After having heard the message of Peter, they were pricked in their minds and asked, "what must we do to have our sins forgiven?" If they had not asked that question, then we must conclude that Peter had missed the point, and, furthermore, had failed to answer their



Michael D. Stone

Continued on page 4



"The Christian Church"

A few days ago our mail brought us a photostatic copy of a church bulletin, and across the bottom of the page were the handwritten words, "Would you review this article?" Upon examination of the article we found some very fine points made about the matter of tradition. It was pointed out that traditions are fine as long as everyone understands they are traditions; but that non-thinking, legalistic people are prone to forget that certain things are traditions and begin to teach and defend them as the will of God.

With all of this we are in agreement. But when the writer gave four examples of the positions taken by these "non-thinking, legalistic people," he made an effort to parallel some things that are not parallel. He told of two churches of Christ that met across the street from each other, but could never merge; because one of them had only two songs before prayer while the other had three. He told of some who think the only valid translation one can use is the King James Version. He told of one lady whose baptism had been questioned because the congregation she was attending at the time she was baptized did not have a baptistery, and they used one "in a church building that didn't belong to a congregation in our fellowship."

These are extreme cases, and we agree with the



BOB DUNCAN

writer of the article, that such foolishness is sad indeed. But a fourth thing he referred to and placed in the category with these three simply does not fit. He told of some who questioned his use of the term "Christian church" when referring to the church we read about in the New Testament. He proved by Webster that the term "Christian church" means exactly the same as "the church of Christ."

There are few people who use Mr. Webster's great work more than we, but with all due respect to Mr. Webster, since when has he become the final word in settling questions of a religious nature among those who "speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where the Bible is silent"? One could take Webster's definitions and prove that there is nothing wrong with referring to the church as the Baptist church, or as the Catholic church. But the church is never called that in the Bible. If we are going to speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent, then we will not refer to the church as the Christian church. If we are going to call Bible things by Bible names and Bible things in Bible ways, we will call the church by one of the terms used to designate it in the Bible.

Why would one want to create some problem and cause some excitement among his brethren by insisting on his right to call the church the Christian church, when there are any number of other terms he could use which would be unquestionably scriptural? Is one who insists on speaking as the oracles of God (I Peter 4:11) to be equated with one who insists the only acceptable way to worship is with three songs before prayer instead of two?

Have you noticed that when one wants to bring in some denominational teaching or practice, he often prepares the way by cautioning his audience against being tradition bound?

Worldliness, Some Inadequate Approaches To The Problem

In an earlier article we discussed the problem of worldliness in the church and sought to identify the nature of the problem. In this we deal with some inadequate approaches to the problem of worldliness.

Some preach as though they never knew there was such a problem while others become so obsessed with preaching against worldliness that they neglect to deal with other important matters (Acts 20:20).

Some pound away on the "great public sins" like drunkenness and adultery (which few in the assembly engage in) while never dealing with the more common worldly attitudes.

Some are tough on the kids' worldly problems such as dancing and petting while strangely silent on the adult vices which are a

little more respectable.

Some attack the problems in such a way that worldly disciples are driven away rather than reformed. They leave the impression of hating not only the sin but the sinner as well.

Some react and preach explosive lessons after the problem has already occurred and the damage is done.

Some seek to enforce an outward righteous conformity without real spiritual conviction. All of these are patently inadequate to solve the problem of worldliness.

WHAT IS NEEDED

We need an on-going program of education and teaching about holy living and Christian attitudes. Folks must grow in the grace and knowledge of godliness (II Pet. 3:18).

We need an accurate presentation of facts about these matters rather than an emotional, bombastic, declamation which discredits itself.

We need current information and documentation, not obsolete figures from yesteryear's sermon books and tracts.

We need compassionate teaching of the truth



JOHN WADDEY

Continued on page 4

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

(No. 2)

In this article, we wish to begin our textual exegesis of Daniel 9:24-27.

Purpose of the Messiah's Advent. Daniel 9:24 sets forth the primary goal of Christ's coming to earth. The Anointed One was coming to finish transgression, to make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity. How wonderfully this was fulfilled by Jesus. The NT repeatedly stresses



WAYNE JACKSON

that the purpose of the Lord's earthly sojourn was to deal with the problem of sin (Matt. 1:21, 20:28, 26:28; I Cor. 15:3; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 1:4, Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:20; I Pet. 2:24; Rev. 1:5). The ultimate finality of Christ's work in dealing with sinful humanity is underscored in Hebrews 9:26, 28. He was manifested to put away sin! In connection with this mission of the Messiah, Isaiah 53 is strikingly similar. Note Isaiah's use of "transgression" (53:5, 8, 12), "sin" (10, 12), and "iniquity" (5, 6, 11). Now here is a vital point: Isaiah 53 is frequently quoted in the NT and applied to the first coming of Christ. Obviously, therefore, since Daniel 9:24ff is parallel in emphasis, it points to that initial coming of the Lord, and not to his second coming as alleged by dispensationalists.

Daniel announced that the Anointed One would bring in everlasting righteousness. It was, of course, fitting that Jesus should "fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). The burden of the Holy Spirit's ministry, whom Christ sent (John 16:7), was to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). The gospel of Jesus contained God's plan for making man righteous (Rom. 1:16, 17), and Paul, speaking concerning the Christian age, declared that God's righteousness was made manifest "at this present season" (Cf. Rom. 3:21-26). Assuredly this is not a promise regarding some future "millennium." It is receivable now by means of gospel obedience!

The prophecy further foretold that "vision and prophecy" would be sealed up. Christ, of course, fulfilled the testimony of the prophets regarding himself (Luke 24:25-27; 44). Concerning the redemptive work of Jesus, Peter affirmed that all of the prophets from Samuel and onward, as many as spoke, told of "these days", i.e., the gospel dispensation (Acts 3:24). The major mission of the prophets was to testify, by the Spirit, of the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories (I Pet. 1:10, 11). Moreover, with the coming of the Savior to effect human redemption, and the completion of the New Testament record setting forth this glorious system, the need for visions and prophecy became obsolete. Accordingly, prophecy ceased (cf. I Cor. 13:8-13; Eph. 4:11-16) with the complete revelation of that gospel system (called "the faith" Eph. 4:13, cf. Gal. 1:23; Jude 3). So, there are no supernatural visions and prophecies today.

It was then stated that the "most holy" would be anointed. What is the meaning of this? Dispensational premillennialists interpret this as the renewed Jewish temple of the Millennial Age. Such a view is completely false. In my judgment, the reference is most likely to the anointing of Christ by the Spirit at the commencement of his ministry. Here are my reasons. (a) The grammar alone is indecisive. The form can be neuter gender—most holy place or thing, or masculine gender—most holy one.

The immediate context favors the masculine rendition, for the "anointed one, the prince" is mentioned in verse 25 (b) The anointing obviously belongs to the same time frame as the events of the previous clauses, thus, is associated with the first advent of Christ, and not the second. (c) The act of anointing is never applied to the temple's most holy place in the literature of the OT (*Pulpit Commentary*, 13, p. 268). (d) Anointing was practiced in the OT as a rite of inauguration and consecration to the offices of prophet (I Kgs. 19:16), priest (Ex. 28:41), and king (I Sam. 10:1). In the NT Christ is identified as prophet (Acts 3:20-23), priest (Heb. 3:1), and king (Matt. 21:5; Heb. 2:9). (e) Finally, the anointing of Jesus was foretold in

the OT (Isa. 61:1) and fulfilled in the NT (Luke 4:18ff; Acts 10:38; see also Psa. 2:2 compared with Heb. 1:5). The fact of the matter is, the meaning of the name "Christ" (Grk., *Christos*) is anointed. The OT form of the term is "Messiah" (see John 1:41, 4:25).

It might be observed, however, that some see the expression "to anoint the most holy" as a figurative reference to the establishment of the Lord's church. Such a view is certainly possible and does no injustice to the context, either immediate or remote.

Daniel 9:24 is, therefore, an amazing description of that which was effected by the Lord's atoning death.—3906 East Main St., Stockton CA 95205

Are There Two Holy Spirits?

When some have taught that one is immersed in water into Christ he receive the nonmiraculous, ordinary gift of the Holy Spirit and give Acts 2:38 as proof of this statement. Is there such a thing as the nonmiraculous, ordinary gift of the Holy Spirit? Does the New Testament distinguish between a non-miraculous ordinary gift and a miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit? Most brethren quote Acts 2:38 to show this is the non-miraculous gift, along with Acts 5:32 and other passages. But, do these passages say anything about a "non-miraculous, ordinary gift" of the Holy Spirit? Are we not guilty of "adding" something to these passages that the Holy Spirit never thought of putting there?



RAY HAWK

In Acts 8:12 the Samaritans "believed" and "were baptized." According to many today, they had "received the Holy Spirit." However, Acts 8:16 informs us "(For as yet he [the Holy Spirit] was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)" "Oh, but that was the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit," someone will say. But, notice the word ONLY! "Only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." If you put Acts 8:16 with Acts 2:38 you find they had not received "the gift of the Holy Spirit" until Peter and John came and laid hands on them. All they had was the baptism in Jesus name!

If the Samaritans had the "non-miraculous ordinary gift" of the Holy Spirit when they were immersed in water, they would have had "the Holy Spirit." But, Acts 8:16 says they did not have the Holy Spirit. In fact, Acts 8:15 says the purpose of Peter and John's coming from Jerusalem was "that they might RECEIVE the Holy Ghost." If they already had it, why did they need to RECEIVE it? Again, someone may object by saying they had received the non-miraculous ordinary gift of the Holy Spirit, and when Peter and John laid hands upon them, they received the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit. This is exactly what I am hitting against! Brethren say the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit at the hands of Peter and Paul. 1 plus 1 = 2!!! Now, how many Holy Spirits did they receive? It seems to this writer that if one has received the Holy Spirit, he has received the Holy Spirit. If you receive me without miracles, do you receive me again when I have miracles? Is there really a Holy Spirit without

miracles and another Holy Spirit with miracles? We have been arguing two Holy Spirits. I thought there was only one (Eph. 4:4).

Acts 8:12 says the Samaritans were baptized. Acts 8:15, 16 says they had not RECEIVED the Holy Spirit. Since there cannot be TWO Holy Spirits — a miraculous and a non-miraculous one — Acts 8:15, 16 shows they had not received THE Holy Spirit at all. "Only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 8 shows the Samaritans did not receive a non-miraculous ordinary gift of the Holy Spirit. Notice again the parallel between Acts 2 and 8! (1) Repent (2) Baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (3) gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38). (1) Believed (2) Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (3) only (Acts 8:12-16.)

In Acts 10:44,45,47 we are told the Gentiles received the Holy Ghost before water immersion. In fact, the passage not only says they "received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 10:47), but specifically states, "the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 10:45). The expression "gift of the Holy Ghost" is the same in English and Greek here as it is in Acts 2:38! Since Cornelius and household received "the gift of the Holy Ghost" before baptism, what did they receive AFTER baptism? Someone might say that they received the non-miraculous ordinary gift of the Holy Spirit. But, that would have the Gentiles receiving TWO Holy Spirits: a miraculous Holy Spirit and a non-miraculous Holy Spirit! There is only one Holy Spirit. When they received the gift of the Spirit, that was THE one and only Spirit.

If I received the "gift of the Holy Spirit" before baptism as did the Gentiles in Acts 10, I would not need to receive the Holy Spirit at baptism for I would already have him! If I had been baptized, as were the Samaritans, and already have the Holy Spirit at that point, I would not need the Holy Spirit through the hands of the apostles. All I would need would be the gifts of the Spirit. Yet, the text says they had not "received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:15). How then can we come along and say they had received the Holy Spirit when the text says they only had water baptism?

Joel prophesied of the Spirit. The Spirit was poured out on Pentecost to the apostles. The apostles laid hands upon people in the first century so they could receive the "gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38; 8:15,19). The house of Cornelius received "the gift" directly (Acts 10:44-47). The miraculous ceased as indicated by Peter and Paul at the time they said it would (Acts 2:19,20; I Cor. 1:7,8; 13:8-10; Eph. 4:11-13). The Spirit by "the gift" gave the word and confirmed it (Heb. 2:3,4; Mark 16:17-20). It was then and is now the Spirit's sword (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12) cut or prick the heart of the sinner (Acts 2:37; 7: ;

Continued on page 4

The Charge Is Carnal Knowledge

(continued from page 1)

and/or carnal knowledge.

Peddlers of pornographic magazines and books are subject to being charged with "carnal knowledge" by selling their filth to minors, resulting in a steep fine and/or jail sentence. Parents of minor children should always press charges against the peddler should they find pornographic literature in their child's possession. Only adults with corrupt and evil minds would engage in sexual acts, even fondling, in the presence of their children or anyone else's.

Yet, on public T.V., especially H.B.O., nudity,

sodomy, masturbation, sexual intercourse and incest are shown accompanied with erotic groans and sounds, indicating pleasure. To keep minors from seeing this, parents have to guard the T.V. day and night, never leaving the children at home alone. Parents who allow their minor children to watch such programs should be charged with "carnal knowledge" along with the producers, sponsors and the T.V. network. If not, why not? The same could be said about some of the songs that are played on the radio.

In my judgment, the day has come when the evils of T.V. outweigh the good. Parents of minor children and grandchildren should especially take necessary precautions to protect the innocent and impressionable minds under their care, even if it means getting rid of T.V. and radio. — 704 Cleveland Ave., Gadsden, Al. 35901.

Are There Two Holy Spirits?

Continued from page 3

Titus 1:9). It is not a dead letter, but living and active (Heb. 4:12). It is the ministration of the Spirit (II Cor. 3:8), a perfect law (Heb. 8:7; 13:20,21), the mind of Christ (I Cor. 2:16) and the word that liveth and abideth forever (I Pet. 1:23; Matt. 24:35). The Spirit is still active today through the wielding of his word by

our teaching and preaching it. The "gift of the Holy Spirit" was given in the first century to teach and confirm the New Covenant which we have in written form today. Thank God that we live and work with the

spirit by teaching his complete covenant, the New Testament. We live in the time of the perfect, not the partial (I Cor. 13:8-10). — 1461 East Chester Street Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

Worldliness, Some Inadequate Approaches To The Problem

Continued from page 2

of God in love (Eph. 4:15) to transform hearts into the likeness of Christ (Rom. 12:2).

We need plain Bible preaching that teaches brethren the correct way to determine right and wrong.

We need positive Christian activities to teach and demonstrate spiritual attitudes and actions.

We need appropriate corrective exhorting and discipline by spiritual leaders for those who are in love with this present evil world (Gal.

6:1).

Are you willing to stand up against all worldliness in the church? May God use us to strengthen the brethren (Lk. 22:32).—Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37921

Baptism - What Peter Taught

Continued from page 2

question. He told them to do two things. Therefore, we conclude that they had to do two things to receive the remission of their sins. Let the reader keep in mind that these people were believers. I know that because they were pricked in their minds and promptly asked what was necessary for their salvation. Unbelievers are not so minded. These believers were told to "repent and be baptized...for the remission of sin." We should carefully notice that repentance and baptism bear the same relation-

ship to the phrase "for the remission of sins." Therefore, if baptism is because our sins are already forgiven as some claim today then repentance, too, is because our sins are already forgiven. On the other hand, if we agree that we must repent in order for our sins to be forgiven then we must of necessity also agree that we must be baptized in order for our sins to be forgiven. If not, why not?

...the longsuffering of God waited in the

days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doeth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 3:20-21).— 4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101.

Handle With Care

EARLINE ROSE

*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow,
For what is your life? It is even a vapour that
appeareth for a little time, and then
vanisheth—James 4:14*

Today I lost an hour:
It went so swiftly by
While I was sitting, watching,
And yet I did not try
To use it while I had it
Though I knew it could not stay,
And carelessly I let
A golden hour slip away.

Today I lost a minute:
I used it carelessly—

This precious little minute
That God had given me.
It slipped into eternity
Where I cannot recall
That precious little minute
That seemed so very small.

One precious little minute
That once was mine today;
One golden little hour
Forever gone away.
Oh, Father, give me guidance

To handle time with care,
And fill each day with service,
That is my humble prayer.

1608, 24 Street, Northport, Alabama 35476

WORD of GOD

Give unto the Lord, O
ye mighty, give unto the
Lord glory and strength.

majesty.

Give unto the Lord the
glory due unto his
name; worship the Lord
in the beauty of holi-
ness.

The voice of the Lord
maketh the hinds to
calve, and discovereth
the forests: and in his
temple doth every one
speak of his glory.

The voice of the Lord
is upon the waters: the
God of glory thunder-
eth: the Lord is upon
many waters.

The Lord sitteth upon
the flood; yea, the Lord
sitteth King for ever.

The voice of the Lord
is powerful; the voice
of the Lord is full of

The Lord will give
strength unto his peo-
ple; the Lord will bless
his people with peace.

Psalm 29:1-4, 9-11



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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ts 26:25

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, OCTOBER

NUMBER 41

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

(No. 3)

The time element of the famous prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 allowed the studious Jew to know when the promised Messiah would die for the sins of mankind. The chronology of Daniel's recorded prophecy was to commence with the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (25a). First, seven weeks would pass (i.e., 49 years); then sixty-two weeks would lapse (434 years.). After this time (26a), specifically in "the midst" of the seventieth week, the Anointed One would be cut off. Actually, therefore, from the starting point (the command regarding Jerusalem's restoration) until the termination point (the Messiah's death), some four hundred eighty six and one half years would pass.



WAYNE JACKSON

There are three generally recognized possibilities for the starting point of the prophecy. The following chart lists each of these and computes where a passing of 486 1/2 years would put the terminal point.

Zerubbabel's Return	536 _____	50 B.C.
Ezra's Return	457 _____	30 A.D.
Nehemiah's Return	444 B.C. _____	43 A.D.

Let us consider each of these.

(1) Though some believe that Zerubbabel's commission (536 B.C.) was the one alluded to by Daniel, such would appear to be unlikely. Zerubbabel's charge was primarily to rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:2,3). Moreover, the terminal point would be a half century before the birth of Christ, and thus, eighty years before his death.

(2) Others see Nehemiah's charge (444 B.C.) as the beginning time of the prophecy, especially since Nehemiah was definitely commissioned to rebuild the city of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:3,5). However, this would place the terminal point approximately twelve to thirteen years beyond the death of Christ. It is

claimed, however, that such a few years are really insignificant compared with the fact that the prophecy spans nearly five centuries. While this may be a possibility, it is not favored by this writer in view of the precision of OT prophecy concerning the time of the coming of Christ and the accomplishment of his work. Note some of the following time indicators concerning Jesus' first coming.

(a) Christ, the branch, would not come until the kingly lineage of Jesse became a stem (or stock - ASV) (Isa. 11:1). "Stem" is "the trunk of a felled tree" (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 166). The last political king of that family was Jeconiah (Jer. 22:24-30).

(b) The Messiah and his kingdom would come in the days of the Roman kings (Dan. 2:44), between approximately 63 B.C. and 476 A.D.

(c) Shiloh would come before Judah lost her right of self-government (Gen. 49:10). That privilege of political independence enjoyed by Judah was lost in 6 A.D. when Archelaus, son of Herod the Great (Matt. 2:22), was deposed (see H. E. Dana, *The New Testament World*, p. 97,98).

(d) As the anti-type of the Passover lamb (I Cor. 5:7), Christ was slain at the time of the Passover (John 13:1); in fact, as the Passover lamb was killed "between the two evenings" (Ex. 12:6, ASVfn; i.e., between the 9th and 11th hours - Josephus, *Wars*, VI, IX, 3), so Jesus died at the 9th hour (Mark 15:34,37).

(e) The Lord repeatedly spoke of his approaching "hour" as though such were a fulfillment of a scheduled program of death (John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23,27; 13:1; 16:32; 17:1).

(f) In view of the precision of these prophetic indications, therefore, it seems unlikely that the prediction of Daniel 9 was so general as to miss the time of the Messiah's death by a dozen or so years. (3) If Daniel's prophecy is calculated from the return of Ezra (457 B.C.), the terminal point is 30 A.D. - *the exact year of the death of Christ!* (Note: the commonly accepted date of Jesus' death as 33 A.D. incorporates the three year error of the Dionysian Calendar.)

One of the objections charged against this view is the allegation that Ezra's commission involved *only*

the restoration of the law. Apparently, however, Ezra's mission entailed more than that. OT scholar Gleason Archer observes that Ezra's commission:

"...apparently included authority to restore and build the city of Jerusalem (as we may deduce from Ezra 7:6,7, and also 9:9, which states, 'God...hath extended lovingkindness unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of God, and to repair the ruins thereof, and to give us a wall in Judea and in Jerusalem,' ASV). Even though Ezra did not actually succeed in accomplishing the rebuilding of the walls till Nehemiah arrived thirteen years later, it is logical to understand 457 B.C. as the *terminus a quo* for the decree predicted in Daniel 9:25..." (*Old Testament Introduction*, p. 387).

It is the view of this writer, therefore, that the general period known as Daniel's seventy weeks involves substantially that era of time between Ezra's return (457 B.C.) and the death of Christ (30 A.D.). In our next installment, we shall discuss the chronological break-down of the seventy weeks. 3906 East Main St., Stockton CA 95205

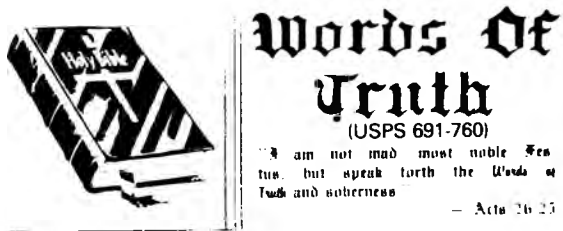
Make Your Donkey Bray

JAMES PILGRIM

We continued to see a number of bumper stickers, some of which are amusing. Some teach truth, while others suggest error or are profane. We applaud good bumper stickers used to good advantage. We detest unholy bumper stickers. Slogans that we continue to see displayed on cars, is "Honk your horn if you love Jesus." Let us consider what might have happened in A.D. 30.

As Jesus walks along a Judaeen road he

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FROM
THE EDITOR

The Pope

THE POPE

For the past several days the people of America have been fed a steady diet of the goings on of the Pope of Rome during his visit to our country. If the good people of this country would take the time to investigate the official position of the Roman Catholic Church with reference to those who are not Catholics, it is certain that feelings toward the Pope would be different. If the persecutions brought against what the Roman Catholic Church called "heretics" were remembered, chances are many who are presently Catholics would even have some second thoughts. And be it remembered that the Roman Catholic Church has never one time admitted any wrong in connection with burning at the stake those who chose to advocate religious practices not in harmony with her official positions. In fact, she has indicated that, were it not for the "extraordinary conditions of these times," she would do the same thing now. (See the *Great Encyclical Letters of Leo XIII*, a portion of which is bound in with the *New American Catholic Edition of the Bible*.)



BOB DUNCAN

trying to get one elected as Pope who is married! If Peter were on earth today he would not qualify to become the Pope. (2) Paul withstood Peter to the face and accused him of dissimulation (Galatians 2:11). Peter evidently received the rebuke in the proper manner and repented. Can you imagine such a thing's taking place with the Pope? Some women in this country approached the Pope about granting women their full "rights" in the Catholic church, but there was no acknowledgement of error on the part of the Pope, and no indication he would make any changes. (3) The Pope permitted people all over this country and around the world to bow down to him. But Peter did not permit such. When Cornelius bowed down before Peter, Peter "took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man" (Acts 10:26). In all of the television coverage of the Pope's visit to the United States, did you ever once see or hear of the Pope's saying anything like that?

In Matthew 23:8-12 Jesus made it plain that among his disciples there would be no Popes. "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." Wouldn't it be interesting to sit in a Bible Class taught by a priest in the Roman Catholic Church, and hear him explain these verses? How would one go about obeying a command which says, "call no man your father upon the earth"? And if what the Catholics do in calling their priests "Father" is obeying this command, then how would one go about disobeying it? The word "pope" itself comes from a Latin word which means *father*.

Certainly we should be able to recognize the language of II Thessalonians 2:4 as embracing all such as the Pope: "Who opposeth and exaltheth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

The Resurrection

JERRY A. JOHNSON

God, through nature, teaches the resurrection. Every Spring, that which was dead takes new life. God causes the trees, the grass and the flowers, etc., to live again. Since man is the crowning act of God's creation, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead" (Acts 26:8)?

A long time ago Job asked this question: "If a man die, shall he live again" (Job 14:14)? Years later God showed Ezekiel the valley which was full of dry bones and asked him this question: "...Son of man, can these bones live" (Ezek. 37:3)? The answer to these questions is "yes."

The Bible records that God demonstrated the truth of the resurrection many times. In the time of Elisha, the Shunammite's son was raised from the dead (II Kgs. 4:8ff). Christ called Jairus' daughter and Lazarus from the sleep of death (Mk. 5:35 ff; Jno. 11). God raised Dorcas and Eutychus at the hands of Peter and Paul, respectively. But the most important resurrection in the history of the world is that of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

On various occasions during the Lord's personal ministry, he taught his disciples that he would be resurrected from the grave (Jno. 2:18-22; Matt. 12:38-40; 16:21). This marvelous event is recorded in all four accounts (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) of the earthly life of Christ. The apostles preached Jesus and the resurrection (Acts 2:22-23; 17:16-18). "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead" (I Cor. 15:12)?

The resurrection of Christ is a fundamental truth of the gospel (I Cor. 15:1-4). The apostle Paul wrote the Roman brethren "concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:3,4).

If Christ did not rise from the dead, our faith is vain, and we are still in our sins (I Cor. 15:17). Without Christ's resurrection, death is an eternal sleep, the grave is an everlasting prison-house. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made

But were such not even the case, those who are familiar with Bible teaching would certainly recognize violations of Scripture in connection with the office of the Pope. Since the Pope is the head of the Roman Catholic Church, and since Christ is the head of his church (Ephesians 1:22,23; Colossians 1:18), it follows that the Roman Catholic Church is not the church of Christ.

There are at least three things that disprove the theory that Peter was the first (or second or third, for that matter) Pope. (1) Peter had a wife (I Corinthians 9:5) and a mother-in-law (Matthew 8:14). Imagine

A Little Child Shall Lead Them

EARLENE ROSE

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

— Isaiah 11:6

His soft and tiny hand clung closely to my hand, And as we started walking, it was I who planned To point to him the path and instruct his little feet Just how to travel life's road and each challenge meet.

But his little feet moved slowly, and soon I found that I Had slowed my pace to his pace, and then I wondered why I had passed this way so often, but its beauty did not see, And I realized the answer — I had rushed by

hurriedly.

Then he said he had a secret that he wanted me to hear, And kneeling to his level so he could whisper in my ear, I found such fragrant flowers, so delicate and small. I had passed so many times and never noticed them at all.

A little slower pace and a little closer look; A little more awareness was really all it took To change my life's perspective and make me understand

That it was I now clinging to his soft and tiny hand.
1608 24th Street
Northport, AL 35476

The Lord's Prescription For Gain

In all walks of life there are both desire and effort for gain. Life is made up of investments; some good and some bad, some profitable and some unprofitable. All of us who have lived long have a credit and a debit column in our lives, and we know something of gains and losses. Everyone wants to gain and get ahead, or at least to keep up; no one wants to lose or fail.



W.C. QUILLEN

Have you ever considered the Lord's prescription for gain? He declares that "godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we

can carry nothing out" (I Tim. 6:6-7). Yet many people go through life "destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness" (V.5). Gain is not godliness, "but godliness with contentment is great gain." For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (I Tim. 4:8).

Godliness is that state of existence which results from godly living; and a godly life is one that is "religious, pious, devout, devoted to God." (Webster). It is to be God-like, just as to be a Christian is to be Christ-like.

Godliness is not something that we inherit, buy, beg, or borrow; neither something we get or catch. Rather it is something that, by the grace of God, we are taught; something we learn and practice. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and

worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit. 2:11-12).

Now if you would really gain, both this life and the life to come, why not be taught of God, and live by His formula. Godliness is a synonym for righteousness and is always a virtue.

Contentment is the other ingredient in God's prescription for gain. The world is filled with worry, fear, frustration and discontent, even as it is filled with ungodliness. Contentment may be a virtue or a vice, depending on one's area of contentment. Some people are content in sin, or religious error, or in refusing to work, even when they can, and letting others support them.

But the contentment God prescribes is in godliness, and it must be learned. Paul said he was instructed, he had learned, and, therefore, knew how to be content with little or much, (Phil 4:11-12).—P.O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

Sleeping Sickness

Some time ago, there were some articles in the newspaper concerning a school teacher in a city in Alaska who lost his job because of his lengthy record of being tardy for classes. It was revealed that the teacher had a real problem about being hard to wake up in the mornings. His wife related that it was nearly impossible to awaken her husband. Instead of



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

one alarm clock, several were used, but to no avail. Various methods were also used to arouse the deep sleeper, but such were generally unsuccessful. This individual stated that his problem was inherited and was actually a sickness. One could not help but have some sadness

in learning his plight. But, on the other hand, the story could be considered humorous except for the seriousness of the matter. We were reminded of the passage in Proverbs 20:13 which reads: "Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; Open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread."

The "sleeping teacher" is not alone. We are blessed with many "sleeping brethren" who are very difficult to arouse out of slumber. While we speak not simply of physical encephalitis, spiritual sleepiness is quite often manifested by the outward actions. Take for example, members who drag in late for the periods of Bible study on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening (that is, if they come at all). If they treated their employers in the same manner they treat the Lord, they, like the teacher, would be fired from their jobs. And then, there is the slothful singing of many Christians that is indicative of a drowsy heart. The spirit of Eutychus is still with us also. Jokingly, we often say that after the preacher's sermon, there is a

"great awakening". How often have you endeavored to get brethren to work and they habitually drag their feet. The root of the problem is not so much a physical malady as it is a diseased heart.

It is rank apathy and lethargy, that is, a state of drowsiness and listlessness brought on by a lack of concern for spiritual matters.

We well remember the unique manner of one of our college instructors in awakening students from their slumber during class. He would speak loudly the student's name and then he would quote the passage found in Ephesian 5:14: "Wherefore he saith, awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee."

Brethren, we need to know "that already it is time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed" (Romans 13:11). Otherwise, it is most likely that many of us will lose our souls in eternity.—809 Old Perry Store Rd, Opp, AL 36467

Shortages

JERRI MANASCO

The threat of shortages of various items in the past few months has been a cause of alarm in our nation. It is difficult for Americans to conceive of the possibility of being without even the luxuries of life, much less the necessities. Having been reared in the midst of prosperity, we are scarcely aware that we may some day be faced with want. Such a situation, however, should cause us to reflect on the transient nature of worldly things. We can learn that our affections need to be heavenward (Col. 3:1-3; II Cor. 4:16-18). Much of our anxiety can be relieved by consideration of those things which are not and cannot be scarce.

There is no shortage of divine mercy. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the RICHES of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). Grace is freely given. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"

(Rom. 3:24). It is by this grace that we are saved (Eph. 2:5,8). What abundance there must be in this grace that even the most heinous offenses can be pardoned (I Tim. 1:13-15)!

The condescension of grace demonstrates its richness. By grace Jesus, having emptied himself of his heavenly glory, took on himself the nature of flesh and blood (II Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6-8; Heb. 2:17). He did this in order to endure life's sorrows, suffer life's temptations, and surrender his own life for us that he might deliver us from this present evil world (Heb. 4:15; Matt. 20:28; Gal. 1:4). He became sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (II Cor. 5:21; I Pet. 3:18; 2:24). He is the ransom paid for our sins (I Tim. 2:4-6; Rom. 3:25).

The effect of grace is vastly superior to and so much more abundant than our sins. When we were DEAD IN SINS, Jesus was

manifested to be our Saviour (Eph. 2:4-7). Man's worthlessness is greatly overcome by God's abundant grace toward him. God's love down when we were "yet without strength... while we were yet sinners...when we were enemies" (Rom. 5:6-10). Such love commends itself to us as worthy of our gratitude and positive response in obedience.

That grace has a universal quality bears witness to its abundance. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Tit. 2:11). By grace Jesus tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9). Jesus promised, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn. 12:32). The last grand invitation of the Bible is extended to "whosoever will" (Rev. 22:17). God's grace is an unfailing source of hope and salvation to man.

Continued on page 4

The Resurrection

Continued from page 2

alive" (I Cor. 15:20-22). The resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of our own resurrection (Rom. 8:11; I Cor. 6:14; II Cor. 4:14). "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" (Jn. 5:28,29; cf. Dan 12:2; Acts 24:15).

As brother Virgil Bradford has well stated: "To prove the resurrection is to establish Christianity; to disprove the resurrection is to destroy Christianity. If Jesus is dead today, he was an imposter; if risen, he is the Son of God. Then all depends upon the resurrection of Christ. Christianity stands or falls by it."

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Pet. 1:3). "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (I Cor. 15:19). P.O. Box 425 Double Springs, AL 35553

Make Your Donkey Bray

(continued from page 1)

meets a man on a donkey. He notices a sign hung around the donkey's neck. It reads, "Make Your Donkey Bray If You Love Jesus." The Lord wonders why the donkey is not braying, especially since he has met him face to face. Maybe the man really did not know Jesus. Perhaps he did not understand his will. Whatever, Jesus quickly seizes an opportunity to teach a lesson on loving him.

Jesus begins talking to the man, telling him that love for him is not shown by making donkeys bray, but by doing the truth (Cf. I John 3:18). The Lord then proceeds to tell the man, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15), and, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you"

(John 15:14; John 14:21, 23). Jesus then begins to point out things to be done to show one's love for him, none of which included making donkeys bray. The Jew is told not to murder, commit adultery, steal, or bear false witness, but honor father and mother, and his neighbor as himself. He is even told to sell his goods, and give to the poor (Cf. Matt. 19:16-22).

The man is now pointed to the Christian Age. He is told what will be required to show one's love for Jesus. A few examples of expressions of love for Jesus include obedience to the gospel (Rom. 10:16), by believing (John 8:24; Heb. 11:6, repenting (Acts 17:30, 31), confessing Rom. 10:9, 10), and being baptized (Acts

2:38; Rom. 6:3, 4). He is admonished to show his love for Jesus as a Christian by worshipping God in spirit and truth (John 8:24). He is told that this will include teaching, giving, communion, prayer, and singing (Acts 2:42; Heb. 2:12). The man is further told to live a changed life (Col. 3:1ff; II Cor. 5:17; I Tim. 5:22).

Neither this man nor his donkey will be the same again. When his donkey brays in the future, it will be for food, due to excess burden, or maybe to greet another donkey; but none will interpret its braying to suggest the rider's love for Jesus. Beloved, keep the commandments, and all will know that you love Jesus.—P.O. Box 3022, Hueytown, AL 35020

Indifference To False Teachers

In II Peter 2:1, Peter, writing by inspiration, declares that there were false teachers among the nation of Israel in times past. In like manner, he states there will be false teachers among you (Christians). In view of this, it was needful for them to be on guard against these that could destroy the faith of so many. It is interesting to note how false teachers would come in and operate among God's people. Peter says they shall "privily" come in. Elders in the church today must realize that they are not watching for a man to come in and say, "I'm a false teacher, hear me." Today our false teachers slip in and begin to plant the seed of their false ways without many's knowing about it.



MICHAEL D. STONE

Why have false teachers made such inroads in the church today? This is a most interesting question, because it gets to the root of our problem. It is because we, generally speaking are no longer a people of the Book. Many in the church, because of a lack of Bible study, would not recognize false teaching if they heard it. I heard the late beloved Gus Nichols say that the greatest threat to the church in this century is ignorance gone to seed among our brethren. How much Bible study do you do?

Second, many in the church today just don't care what is taught. They have developed an attitude of indifference to the teaching of the Bible. Do you care what is taught in the congregation where you worship? Brethren, let us appreciate and not destroy the work of great defenders of the faith like Gus Nichols, Guy N. Woods, and others who have fought in the heat of the battle. Let us know the Bible and

defend it at all cost.

In the second verse of this same chapter, Peter tells how the church was spoken against. Because of the corruption of God's people, the lost world was not impressed by hearing the Gospel. Could you blame them? God's people are to be an example in teaching and in life to the rest of the world. When we succumb

to pressure to compromise the truth by allowing false teachers to have their way, we destroy ourselves and the lost world. Let all church leaders understand that God will not hold them guiltless if they do not protect the church and her influence in the world. — 321 Lynwell Drive Orlando, Florida 32809

Shortages

Continued from page 3

There is a supply to meet the most strenuous demand, for Christ is "able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him" (Heb. 7:25). The WORLD, not an elect few, can tap the rich flowing love of God (Jn. 3:16). God is rich unto all that call upon him (Rom. 10:12).

By the abundant mercy of God we are

supplied with a lively hope laid up in heaven, which hope does not fade away or go the way of corruptible things. (I Pet. 1:3-5). Truly this is firm ground upon which to stand as the abundance of saving love floods the soul that accepts such a gift through obedience (Heb. 5:8, 9; Mk. 16:16; Phil. 2:12, 13).—Rt. 2 Haleyville, Alabama 35565,

WORD of GOD

While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

Matthew 17:5

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

I Peter 5:6, 7

Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth; and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.

Isaiah 47:11



Words Of

(USPS 691-76L)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1979

NUMBER 42

"If A Man Has Not Heard The Gospel, He Is Not Lost"

Increasingly we are hearing brethren say, "If a man has not heard the gospel, he is not lost!" This kind of thinking is why we have not evangelized the world in our day. Many brethren, when questioned regarding the spiritual condition of one who has never heard the gospel will say, "Surely, if God is a loving God, he would not hold one who has not even heard what to do to be saved eternally responsible. Is a man condemned for not obeying God's will when God's will is not available to him? What if one cannot read? Is it fair for God to save a sinner like me who can read and punish a sinner like him who cannot read?" These questions strike at the heart strings and bring man's emotions into play and in fact, in many cases, take over, often causing him to become emotionally blind. When this happens he disregards what the Bible actually says relative to this matter. Let us realize, that God and man do not always view matters exactly alike.-



DEMAR ELAM

First, one must realize that man is not lost because he has not heard the gospel, but he is lost because he is a sinner. Paul said in Rom. 3:10, "As it is written there is none righteous, no, not one." Rom. 3:23 says "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." So often we hear someone say, "Surely the man in Africa who has never heard is not lost." Brethren, he is lost! Why? Because he is a sinner and sinners are lost without the atoning blood of Christ in their lives. If the man who has not heard in "Your Town U.S.A." has to have the blood applied to his soul for salvation, what makes the man in Africa, New Zealand or anywhere else any different? All men need the blood of Christ applied to their lives to be saved.

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). Then in I Pet. 1:18-19 we read, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition of your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." The blood of Christ was shed to save all men from their sins, but does not serve its designed purpose with man until man meets the conditions God requires for its reception. In other words, God has a designed plan whereby man receives the benefits of the blood. However, it is not until all of God's requirements are met that a man receives the blessings of that atoning blood. We have long taught, and rightly so, that one receives the benefits of the blood by believing (Heb. 11:6), repenting (Lk. 13:3), confessing (Mt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10), and by being baptized into Christ's death where his blood was shed (Rom. 6:3-8). These, we have said are essential because they are the steps that finalize in the "New Birth" spoken of in John 3:1-13. Can the man who has not heard be saved in heaven without experiencing the "New Birth"? If Jesus was correct (and he was; then one cannot be saved without the new birth because Jesus said, "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." Did Jesus really mean this or is the man in Africa saved because he has not heard?

There was a time when God winked at ignorance, but no longer is it so. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). God winked at ignorance in times of old but in this, the New Testament age, he does not do so. The man in Africa who has not heard has not repented, and yet he is most certainly a part of the *all men everywhere* of Acts 17:30.

The man who knows not God is lost according to II Thess. 1:7-9. Notice it: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed

from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Wouldn't the man who hasn't heard be the man who knows not God?

Another consideration is that the saved are added to the church (Acts 2:47), or the body of Christ, which are one and the same (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4). Christ is the savior of the body or the church (Eph. 5:23). The man who has not heard is not a part of the body which Christ will save. The Bible speaks of no other group's being saved on that final day.

Baptism is required if a man is to put on Christ. Gal. 3:27 says, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." If a man hasn't been baptized then he hasn't put Christ on. The man who has not heard has certainly not been baptized; therefore, he has not put Christ on. He doesn't have Christ. Can a man go to heaven outside of Christ? Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the father, but by me" (John 14:6). Jesus said, "no man," and that includes the man in Africa or anywhere who has not heard.

When will some stop accusing God (and also preachers who preach the truth of God on this subject) of being unfair? Men should be careful about so readily saying that God is being unfair to punish the man in Africa for his sins even though the man has not heard. God has the divine prerogative and responsibility to deal with sinners as justice and righteousness demands. You see, sinners deserve to go to Hell because of their sins. But, man doesn't view sin like that. Mankind imagines that sin is not so bad that one should lose his soul in a lake of fire and brimstone over a little adultery, a little drinking, a little dishonesty, a little bad language or a little white

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble King,
I see, but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness"

— Acts 26:25

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Who Murdered Daniel?

By DELBERT J. GOINS

Little Daniel died today a victim of legalized murder. If allowed to live he should have been born in another five months. But, at 9 a.m., Daniel was "rubbed-out" in a modern abortion clinic located only a few minutes from the U. S. Supreme Court building where a high Court ruling made Daniel's murder legal.

Of course, that 7-2 decision was back in January 1973. The Court announced that an unrealized liberty existed in the U.S. Constitution allowing a woman to procure termination of her pregnancy at any time in its course, although the Court was confused as to where that "liberty" was explained by the Constitution, but affirmed the word "person" as used in the 14th Amendment does not include the unborn." Dissenting Justice Byron R. White wrote, "The Court apparently values the convenience of the pregnant mother more than the continued existence and development of the life or potential life which she carries."

In a brutish exercise Daniel was put to death, yet there were no tears! Newscasters never heard about it and it didn't make the headlines. Regarded as ordinary eventuate, area folks never gave Daniel's death a second glance. Friends of the mother rejoiced, the father sighed with relief, the neighbors said, "Ho hum".

Daniel died by the method used in over 75 percent of all abortions. He was taken from his mother by a suction procedure where a tube was inserted into the womb creating a powerful vacuum which tore the fetus from the womb in a mass of blood and tissue. The powerful suction ripped apart the body of the developing Daniel and his placenta, sucking the "products of pregnancy" into a jar where the smaller mangled body parts were recognizable.

A neatly dressed nurse deposited Daniel into a special garbage disposal. The fetus measured over 5 inches. His feet were perfectly formed, he even had tiny fingertips and was able to learn things. You see, after 14 weeks no new organs begin to function: a body just grows more mature. When you were

Continued on page 4



FROM

THE EDITOR

Women Preachers And The Hualapai Firebug

I have before me at this writing a bulletin from the Cahaba Valley Church of Christ in Birmingham, Alabama. We are happy that the churches in the Birmingham area recognize the fact that Cahaba Valley does not walk the old paths, even though some gave them the benefit of the doubt a good while after others had lost all doubts about their departure from the faith.



BOB DUNCAN

The bulletin before me contains an article about the hualapai firebug, and how it is to be feared and dreaded. It is concluded that those who publish papers and who mark false teachers as heretics are like the hualapai firebug. Indeed, it is said that God's purpose in creating the hualapai firebug is to strengthen our faith "against spiritual hualapai firebugs."

In the same issue of this bulletin there is an article by the minister of the Cahaba Valley church in which he answers a question about a rumor to the effect that Cahaba Valley used women to serve communion on Mother's Day. His answer to the question is as follows:

It is not true. I wish it were. The Church of Christ is a long way from restoring women to the place they had in the first century church — at least as far as their place in public worship. We refuse them the right to pray and teach that the Apostle Paul gave them. May God forgive us. We impoverish ourselves by refusing them the proper use of their gifts.

I do not enjoy being compared to a hualapai firebug, but truth must be preached and error must be exposed. No man is worthy to be called a gospel preacher who will refuse to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Timothy 4:2). And when a brother writes an article like the one on the hualapai firebug you can rest assured he knows something he has done or said that likely will be attacked by those who believe in speaking as the oracles of God (I Peter 4:11).

We deny that women in churches of Christ today are refused the right to pray and teach that the apostle Paul gave them. What the brother is really saying is that he wishes women in churches of Christ today would be allowed to ignore the restrictions placed upon them by the apostle Paul in such passages as I Corinthians 14:34 and I Timothy 2:11, 12. With the exception of our anti-class brethren, where is the case of women's being refused the proper use of their gifts? It would be interesting to hear an explanation of I Corinthians 14:34 and I Timothy 2:11, 12 by this preacher.

From reading what this preacher wrote one

might get the impression that women in churches of Christ are refused the opportunity to pray and to teach. We know better, but some reading the bulletin might not know any better. The truth is that a woman can pray and teach. But God (not we) has placed certain restrictions upon her, as he has upon the man. I Corinthians 14 shows that even men were restricted in their teaching and praying. Only one can speak at a time (verse 31). That's a restriction! Only two, or at the most three, could speak in an unknown tongue (verse 27). That's a restriction! The man leading prayer in an unknown tongue had to pray in such a way as to enable the interpreter to interpret (verse 13). That's a restriction! I am sure some in Paul's day must have accused Paul of taking away their right to preach and to pray, but such was not the case. Paul, by inspiration, set forth the conditions under which preaching and praying was to be done.

Women are not forbidden the right to teach or to pray. But there are restrictions which God has imposed. We must respect and abide by those restrictions. Even though some may wish it were otherwise, as this preacher indicated he does, the will of God is that women not teach or usurp authority over man (I Timothy 2:12).

How long will it be before Cahaba Valley has women preaching? The preacher there already wishes that churches of Christ would allow women "the proper use of their gifts." What are they waiting for? Could it be that they are by this matter as a former preacher of that church told me he was about the matter of instrumental music? He said he did not feel that those who use the mechanical instrument in their worship sin in so doing, but he had no intention of trying to bring it into the Cahaba Valley church because, among other things, it would likely cause some confusion.

Handle With Care

EARLENE ROSE

*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow.
For what is your life? It is even a vapour that
appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth
away. James 4:14.*

Today I lost a minute; I used it carelessly —
This precious little minute that God had given me.
It slipped into eternity where I cannot recall
That precious little minute that seemed so very small.

Today I lost an hour; it went so swiftly by
While I was sitting, watching, and yet I did not try
To use it while I had it though I knew it would not stay,
And carelessly I let a golden hour slip away.

One precious little minute that once was mine today;
One golden little hour forever gone away.
Oh, Father, give me guidance to handle time with care,
And fill each day with service; this is my humble
prayer. — 1608 24th Street, Northport, AL 35476

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

(No. 4)

The prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks, chronologically considered, falls into three sections. There were seven weeks (9:25); then three score and two weeks, or sixty-two weeks (25); finally then, there was the "midst" of the seventieth week. Each of these will be briefly considered.



WAYNE JACKSON

(1) The first division of seven weeks (actually forty-nine years in prophetic computation)

was the time span in which Jerusalem was to be rebuilt (25b). This was, of course, an answer to Daniel's prayer (9:16). However, that rebuilding was to be characterized by "troubled times." The Jews' enemies had "troubled" them in previous construction efforts (cf. Ezra 4:1-6), and continued to do so in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. Professor John C. Whitcomb describes this period:

One of the by-products of the revival under Ezra seems to have been an effort on the part of the Jews to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. This in turn provoked the wrath of Rehum and Shimshai, who wrote an accusation against them to Artaxerxes (Ezr. 4:7-16). The king commanded the work to cease until a further decree should be issued (Ezr. 4:21). Rehum and Shimshai, upon receiving the decree from the king, hurried to Jerusalem and "made them to cease by force and power," presumably breaking down the wall that had been started and burning the gates (Ezra 4:23; Neh. 1:3). It was the news of this fresh disaster that shocked Nehemiah and brought him to his knees before God (*Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, p. 435).

(2) The second division of sixty-two weeks (or 434 years), which commenced following the completion of the seven weeks, would culminate with the beginning of Jesus' personal ministry (approximately three and one half years prior to his death). Thus, starting from 457 B.C., and counting forward for 483 years (49 plus 434) would bring one to 26 A.D., the approximate time of the baptism of Christ (Matt. 3:13ff). (Note: For the chronology of Jesus' ministry, see *Zondervan's Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, I, p. 819).

(3) The third division of Daniel's chronology is "the midst" of the seventieth week (i.e., approximately three and one half years after the end of the sixty-ninth week). This was wonderfully fulfilled in the three and one half years personal ministry of Christ. That the Lord's ministry spans this approximate time-frame may be observed by noting that this period encompassed four yearly Passovers (John 2:13, 23; 5:1; 6:4; 12:1), in addition to the weeks which preceded the first one of John 2:13.

At this point it is imperative that we mention that the dispensational theory contends that the sixty-ninth week of Daniel's prophecy culminates with the death of Christ. It further alleges that there is a vast gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, known as "the church age," which was completely un-

known of to the OT prophets. According to the dispensational premillennial scheme, therefore, the seventieth week is the so-called "tribulation period" (of seven years), which is supposed to precede the battle of Armageddon and the 1,000 year, earthly reign of Christ! The utter falsity of this view is revealed by the fact that the passage does not suggest that the Messiah's death terminates the sixty-ninth week. Rather, the text is very clear that the Anointed One is cut off at some point AFTER the sixty-ninth week (26a).

There is absolutely no justification for assuming that there is a vast gap of hundreds of years between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks

of this prophecy. The truth is, more than two hundred and seventy eight weeks have already lapsed since the death of Christ. How in the name of common sense can we still be waiting for the *seventieth*?! Is it not reasonable to conclude that if there was historical continuity between the first seven weeks and the following sixty-two weeks, that there was also continuity between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks? How tragic it is that some religionists will butcher the text of the Bible in order to make it conform to their pet theories. Our next article will discuss the Messiah's death and his new covenant.—3906 East Main Street, Stockton, CA 95205

Advice To Christian College Students

The following words of counsel were first given to the author's own daughter, then to a class of young people preparing to leave for one of our Christian colleges. It is hoped that they will prove helpful to others, also.

DO NOT EXPECT EVERYTHING TO BE PERFECT JUST BECAUSE IT IS A CHRISTIAN COLLEGE. Some young Christians go with this false expectation and are disillusioned when they find fellow students who

do not measure up to the Christian ideal. Remember that not all students who go to Christian colleges are Christians. A number of non-members will be enrolled. Their values will not be those of Christ. Some students are problem children whose parents send them to a Christian college hoping to reform them. Some in this category will be rebellious and unwilling to conform to the rules. Then, too, not every young person who has been baptized is a faithful child of God (Rom. 9:6). Just as we have such weak, worldly members at home, you will have them at a Christian school.

DO NOT EXPECT EVERY TEACHER AT A CHRISTIAN SCHOOL TO BE A SPIRITUAL GIANT. We are so accustomed to hearing the names of great preachers who are on the teaching staff of our colleges, that some students expect every professor to be of this calibre. If they are faithful Christians, competent in their field, that should be enough.

DO NOT FIGHT THE STRICT RULES OF THE COLLEGE, RATHER GLADLY ACCEPT AND ABIDE BY THEM. Some of the rules may be stricter than you are used to at home, yet they are necessary for the proper supervision of several hundred students. You may not personally need such close supervision but many do. The school will not change its rules for you; you will only make life hard for yourself if you strive against them. Christians seek to obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake (I Pet. 2:13). We should gladly go the extra mile (Matt. 5:41).

COUNT YOUR TEACHERS AND THE STAFF OF THE SCHOOL AS YOUR FRIENDS AND LET THEM HELP YOU WITH YOUR PROBLEMS AND NEEDS. Some regard all teachers as adversaries to be resisted and resented. What a shame to set yourself in opposition to those who would gladly be your best



JOHN WADDEY

friends. Their wisdom, counsel and guidance will be worth more than silver and gold (Deut. 32:7). Since you will be separated by many miles from your parents you will need their Christian advice in making the many adjustments of college life.

STUDY HARD AND BE SERIOUS ABOUT YOUR WORK, BUT BE SURE TO LEAVE TIME FOR SOME RECREATION, SOCIAL LIFE AND EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES. After college comes profession, marriage, family, and responsibility. There will not be much time left for the reveries of youth. Enjoy these wonderful years of college and then be prepared to settle down to the adult life.

DO NOT BE SO BUSY BEING A STUDENT THAT YOU NEGLECT THE LORD'S CHURCH. Some will absent themselves from midweek service or Sunday evening because of "study." That is not an acceptable excuse. Find a good congregation with which you can be happy and get involved from the very start.

Seek out a church with good teaching. You want to grow spiritually and become stronger while there. It might be more fun to go where a fellow student preaches, but not necessarily the most beneficial for your spiritual welfare.

DO NOT EXPECT THE CONGREGATION WHERE YOU ATTEND TO BE JUST LIKE YOUR HOME CONGREGATION. While it may actually be better, in churches as in families there is no place like home. Get to know all the members there that you can. Look for the best attitudes in the preacher, elders and members. You will learn to love them and be loved. If you do not have this positive attitude you may grow discouraged and disinterested.

DO NOT GO TO COLLEGE JUST TO CATCH A MARRIAGE PARTNER. Granted one of the advantages of a Christian college is that there will be a large reservoir of eligible prospects on campus. Also, since most young adults choose their mates during their college years, you will likely find a mate there. Let marriage to a fellow Christian student be one of the serendipities of your college years. There is a certain undesirable impression conveyed by the girl or boy whose main goal in going anywhere is to capture a mate.

DO NOT BE CLIQUISH WITH JUST A FEW FRIENDS. There is the temptation to stick with just a few close buddies, especially friends from back home. Take full advantage of the opportunity to have hundreds of new friends. Remember he "that hath friends must show himself friendly" (Prov. 18:24 KJV). In this same connection, do not forsake and neglect your old friends because of new friendships. Some tend to snub their old friends when they discover thriving new friendships in a different

Continued on page 4

“If A Man Has Not Heard The Gospel, He Is Not Lost”

(continued from page 1)

lie. Man views sin through human eyes and not as God, through divine or purely holy eyes. God is a righteous God (Ps. 145:17). God is a God of justice and judgment (Ps. 89:14; Jer. 23:5-6). Righteousness and justice demand that sinners be punished. God, because of his being divine and not human, cannot overlook one unrequited sin without ceasing to be God. Here is where the love and mercy of God come into the picture. The cure for man's sinful state is the gift of his only begotten Son on the cruel cross of calvary. That cure has been provided by a loving and merciful God. Let us try to illustrate the condition of the man who has not heard in this way. Suppose a man has a terrible disease and a cure has been provided for this disease, but the man does not have access to the cure. He dies! Did he die because he did not have access to the cure or because he had the disease? To draw a parallel, those who say the man who has not heard the gospel is saved would say that he died because he did not have access to the cure, but that isn't the case at all. He died because of the disease he had. If the man in Africa goes to Hell it will not be because he has not heard of the cure (the gospel), but because of the disease (sin) that he has.

World evangelism is being hindered because we have untold numbers in the church who believe that a man who has not heard is not lost. Why did Jesus give the apostles a commission to preach the gospel to every creature? If the man who has not heard is saved because he has not heard it would be best if the Lord

had not given the commission found in Matt. 28:18-20, Mk. 16:15-16, Acts 1:8. If the apostles went and preached and the men who formally had not heard, listened, but then rejected Jesus they would be lost. How sad! They were saved before hearing because they had not heard, and now because they have heard and rejected they are lost. Brethren, if this is the case the Lord made a mistake in giving the commission. But dare we make such an accusation? Saints who carry the gospel to distant lands are doing the people of those lands a grave injustice if they are already saved. Cannot we see the fallacy of such reasoning?

The answer is simple! Men are not lost because they have not heard, but they are lost because they are sinners, having never been born again and without the benefits of the blood of Christ. They aren't a part of that group that comprises the saved, the church or body of Christ. This is why the commission was given. Men are lost until they accept Christ and receive the benefit of his blood in their lives.

If someone must be blamed for this situation it is not God. Firstly, the *sinner* must shoulder the responsibility; for it is he that has sinned unto death, not God. Secondly, if anyone else is to be blamed it must be the *saints* who sit back and fail to go and teach the man in distant lands who has not heard, thinking that he is saved anyway. Ezek. 3:18-19 says, "When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die;

and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked 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 his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." Please notice that the wicked man shall die in his iniquity if he is not warned and also that God's representative is held accountable for seeing that the wicked man is warned. Two things are obvious from this passage: (1) men in wickedness are lost and must be warned of their wickedness or they will die in that wickedness, and (2) God's representative is to deliver his soul by warning wicked men of their wickedness or else their blood will be upon his hands.

In closing I want to include two verses from Luke. "And that servant, which knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that *knew not*, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be *beaten* with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:47, 48). Surely we can see from a careful study of God's word that the idea that if a man has not heard the Gospel, he isn't lost is completely false! Brethren, the belief of this idea greatly hinders World Evangelism! — P.O. Box 412, Hamilton, New Zealand

Advice To Christian College Students

Continued from page 3

environment (Prov. 27:10).

BE SELECTIVE ABOUT THE BOYS YOU DATE. Not every boy who has been baptized along the way and attends a Christian school will display Christian manners toward a girl. Be careful to choose those that share the same love and zeal for God and his ways that you hold. The boy you date may be the man you will marry.

PLAN TO GROW SPIRITUALLY AS IN EVERY OTHER AREA WHILE YOU ARE IN SCHOOL. Take courses and participate in those activities that will

help you to be more Christlike and useful in the kingdom.

DO NOT MURMUR AND COMPLAIN ABOUT THE CITY WHERE THE SCHOOL IS LOCATED, THE CAMPUS CAFETERIA, THE DORMS, ETC. No place will be like home. No one likes a complainer. You will only make yourself miserable with such. Seek out the good points in these areas. Like Paul, be ye thankful (Phil. 4:6) and learn the secret of being content in whatever place you find yourself (Phil.

4:11).

What a grand privilege it is to live in a land and time where the marvelous blessing of Christian education is available for the youth of the church. May God help every parent see the rich benefits it affords their children and may the young people desire to take advantage of this golden opportunity. Thank God for those faithful men and women who make Christian education possible. — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37921

Who Murdered Daniel?

Continued from page 2

Daniel's age you were then everything you are today!

Daniel's mother is recovering from the ordeal. Considering it a fulfillment of a life time dream to have a son, she had named the baby Daniel. Another deplorable note in this pensive recrudescence is she planned to carry the pregnancy full term, but her reasoning became blurred by emotional pressures advanced through ungodly friends, relatives, and the unmarried father. She sought answers from the preacher who had baptized her. For weeks she was encouraged to bring the baby to full term delivery.

There can be no doubt that a pregnancy is a fearsome, though beautiful, event; and it is not hard to understand that one might be rather reluctant to go through with it. Furthermore, the dynamics of a family situation also might point in the direction of abortion. But the preacher held out for *LIFE*, pointing to the potential of Daniel's following in the steps of the Bible Daniel: to be a preacher of righteousness, a lover of truth, a man of prayer, a man of God. To those ends we began praying. We could not adopt a take it or leave it attitude toward little Daniel, as though we were discussing whether to purchase a puppy. A developing fetus is human life surrounded by the

protective care of his mother. A woman's fundamental personal liberty must not be merged with murder. Our highest court made abortion legal but the maker of life calls murder *SIN*. Women must not become deluded with the "philosophies of men" (Col. 2:8-10). Women should increase their faith by increasing their godliness (I Pet 2:1,2).

Finally, sin won the debate. The lamentable circumstances allowed a mother to exercise her legal right to kill another in order to solve her own personal social problems. The mother had long ago left the faith (a regrettable fulfillment of the proverb in II Peter 2:20-22), had separated from her husband, had several "affairs," and was now "living-in" with Daniel's father whose selection was by deliberate plot. Had she been converted to God's will (Titus 2:11-13) there would have been a glorious shift of events: a separation of the unholy union, a denial of ungodliness, a spurning of worldly passions, a return to purity. But she yielded to unholy advice.

It is my hope and earnest prayer this bleak and grim true episode may become evidence in use among those considering the abortion alternative. Remember, a woman cannot help but know the small

developing baby within her has the latent potential for being another person who will not be just a human being but a person who will have the opportunity to respond to the gospel of Christ.

Sin evolves: fornication here, lies there, lasciviousness on every hand, and now murder. What will be next? Unhappiness, lack of peace, the sense of shame and guilt will continue until one returns to embrace the true and living God (Matt 11:28). Only in Christ Jesus can pure happiness be achieved (John 14:6).

Abortion is not the answer. — 111 E. Braddock Rd. Alexandria, VA 22301

WORD of GOD

I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the

rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

II Samuel 7:14



Words Of

Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 15

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NUMBER 43

Resisting The Holy Ghost

When some speak of resisting the Holy Ghost they think of some mysterious influence that tries to take control of them while they refuse to give in. However, the Bible presents a totally different picture.

After having reviewed the history of Israel as a nation, Stephen accused his hearers of resisting the Holy Ghost just as their fathers had done centuries before. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51). Two questions naturally arise: (1) How had their fathers resisted the Holy Ghost? (2) How were they now resisting the Holy Ghost?

The first question is answered in Acts 7:52: "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." But what did the prophets have to do with their resisting the Holy Ghost? The answer is supplied by Peter: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21). In short, the fathers had resisted the Holy Ghost by resisting the prophet's message, which came by the Holy Ghost!

The second question is solved by Acts 6:9, 10: "Then there arose certain of the synagogue...disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." Although they could not refute the truth spoken by Stephen, they could and did reject the message preached, and were thus resisting the Holy Ghost.

Acts 6:10 says, "they were not able to resist," but that does not mean that they were not able to "resist"



CURTIS DOWDY

the Holy Ghost. The word "resist" here is from a root word which means to "stand out against." In short, they could not refute, gain say or disprove the message. Since the synagogue leaders could not refute the words of Stephen they had but two alternatives: (1) admit the teaching was correct and accept it, or (2) stir up the people to kill the teacher and reject the teaching. What they did do was to get some who would lie and then use the lie to stir up the people against Stephen (Acts 6:11, 12).

The word "resist" at Acts 7:51 is from a root word which means to "resist by force, strive against." Thus, they resisted by force the Holy Ghost just as their fathers before them had done, by rejecting the message.

Since we have the message given by the Holy Ghost (inspired Word of God, II Timothy 3:16, 17), we, too, can resist the Holy Ghost (although we can't refute the message) by:

Failing to read and study the Bible. If we could know, but fail to do so we are resisting the Holy Ghost. Timothy was instructed (and so are we): "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," and, "Till I come, give attendance to *reading*, to exhortation, to doctrine" (II Timothy 2:15; I Timothy 4:13).

Perverting the teaching. To pervert (change, contradict) the teaching is to be guilty of resisting the Holy Ghost; it has been done. "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is *no resurrection of the dead?*" (I Corinthians 15:12). "Who concerning the thruth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and *overthrow the faith* of some" (I Timothy 2:18).

Acknowledging the truth, but rejecting a personal application. If we admit that the teaching is correct, that it is indeed truth, but do nothing about it we are resisting the Holy Ghost. "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also *many believed* on him; but because of the Pharisees *they did not confess* him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42, 43). "Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man *examine himself*, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (I Corinthians 11:27, 28).

Brethren, we may not be ready to throw the Bible into the fire nor to stone the preacher or teacher, but we can still be guilty of resisting the Holy Ghost! AM I??—P.O. Box 456, Obion, Tennessee

Announcement Of Interest

As we have said before, we do not make a practice of making commercial announcements in *Words of Truth*. We do, however, like to pass on to our readers information we believe can be of special benefit to them and to the church. Such is the nature of the following announcement.

A plan has now been devised whereby churches of Christ may furnish their preachers group life insurance coverage, just as other organizations do for their employees. Since employees generally are given this consideration by their employers, it certainly seems to us that faithful gospel preachers, of all people, should be given this consideration by the

congregations for which they labor and upon which they and their families depend for a livelihood.

Elderships interested in providing this benefit for their preachers may write to Ministers Insurance Group, P.O. Box 8302 Ensley Station, Birmingham, Alabama 35218, or call (205) 787-9683.

Until December 15 there is an open enrollment period, which means that under this group plan certain amounts of life insurance are available to churches for their preachers regardless of the preacher's health and without any medical examination.



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"I am not made, most noble Jesus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness"

— Acts 26:25

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"The Tragedy Of Unbelief"

In one way one of the saddest chapters in all of the Bible is Deuteronomy thirty-nine. There can be no doubt that Moses was one of the greatest men God ever had. Of how many has it been said, "My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold" (Numbers 13:7, 8). Moses was a man of remarkable patience. Perhaps in this area he was second only to Job. Moses had the thankless job (from a human standpoint) of leading the great nation of Israel out of Egypt and to the promised land. To make the task even more difficult the Israelites were constantly complaining about something (Numbers 11:1-3, 5-10; 16:41; 20:1-5). Many times they accused Moses of bringing them out into the wilderness to die. In spite of their ingratitude, Moses interceded many times to keep God from destroying them (Numbers 14:13, 14; 16:46; 21:7).



RON HARPER

In spite of his greatness, there is a sad story at the end of the life of Moses. As God was showing the land of promise to Moses he said, "This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, and unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither" (Deuteronomy 34:4). No doubt we have all wondered what went through the mind of Moses as he stood on lofty Pisgah viewing Canaan realizing that after

Continued on page 4

Brethren, We Must Be Honest

In the late fifties or early sixties I bought a new automobile, and traded in my old one. A few days later a gentleman telephoned me to talk about the car I had traded in. He was considering buying it, and the dealer had given him my name as the former owner of the car. He asked several questions, all of which I answered to the best of my ability. At the last he said, "By the way, is the mileage that is showing the correct mileage?" When he told me that the mileage indicator showed thirty thousand miles, I had to tell him that the mileage indicator had been turned back more than fifty thousand miles since I had traded in the car.

Did I do the right thing? I probably could have evaded the question by saying that I did not remember *exactly* how many miles the car had on it, because I really didn't remember *exactly*. Those of us who are Christians know that I did the only honorable thing I could do under the circumstances. It would have not been fair to the one who asked, and it would not have been right in the sight of God, for me to pretend that things were just as they had been made to appear. Even if the car dealer could give sufficient justification for turning back the mileage, still I was obligated to tell the truth.

If the man who was thinking of buying the car told the dealer what I said, the dealer may have become my enemy. If such is the case, it is not my fault for telling the truth, but it is his for expecting me to tell a lie. Remember, I did not advise the man not to buy the



BOB DUNCAN

car. I simply tried to tell him what I believed he was interested in knowing. After learning these things about the car, if he still wanted to buy it, that was his business, and I wished him well.

Now let's move over into a more important area. The telephone rings at the home of an elder in the church. On the other end of the line is an elder in another congregation, perhaps in a distant city. He wants to know about a certain preacher who has applied for employment. What is the duty of the elder receiving such an inquiry? Suppose the preacher has been a trouble maker. Suppose he has neglected to pay his debts. Suppose he has been unfaithful to his wife. Suppose he is a false teacher, or a drunkard. Should these things not be brought to light? Would it not be dishonest to conceal these matters? Furthermore, would it not be a great disservice to the church to keep these matters secret?

Yet it seems this very thing is being done in some cases, and preachers still sometimes be allowed to move from one place to another, to another, to another without the brethren's being able to find out ahead of time what he has done in places where he has been before.

But we are convinced that the fault, more often than not, lies in the congregation employing the preacher instead of the congregation which the preacher is leaving. The reason is simply that some brethren will hire a preacher without ever bothering to find out why he is leaving the church where he is. Employers in the business world do not act so foolishly. Why should the church?

One thought in closing: Preachers investigating prospective congregations should also be dealt with honestly. They should not be led to believe that the situation is one way when it is another. "All liars [including preachers and elders] shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone..." (Revelation 21:8)

Women May Not Serve As Priests

By RAY HAWK

Recently Pope John Paul II informed American Catholics that women cannot serve as priests. He said that men are called to be priests and not women. He said it is not a matter of human rights, but rather what God said that determines this policy. He also spoke on celibacy. He stated that marriage for the priesthood is forbidden because priesthood is forever.

Many Catholics disagreed, and rightly they should. In fact, God disagrees with the Pope. The apostle Peter stated, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, AN HOLY PRIESTHOOD..." (I Pet. 2:5). "But ye are a chosen generation, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD..." (I Pet. 2:9). These two passages in the Word of God prove that ALL Christians are "an holy priesthood" and "a royal priesthood." This includes men AND WOMEN! In the churches of Christ, all women serve in the priesthood as do all men.

The scriptures also prove that all priests (men and women) may marry. Paul said, "Have we no right to lead about a wife that is a believer, even as the rest of

the apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" (I Cor. 9:5 ASV). In writing to Christians in the church at Corinth (I Cor. 1:2), Paul wrote, "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (I Cor. 7:2). The "every man" and "every woman" here is every Christian. Every Christian is a priest! Therefore men and women are priests and priests may marry. — 1461 East Chester Street Jackson, Tennessee 38301

WORD of GOD

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are four-

teen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

Matthew 1:17

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

No. 5

A main item of emphasis in the great prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks is the death of the Anointed Prince. The English translation of the Septuagint speaks of the coming of "Christ the prince" (25a). The term "prince" is used in the sense of "royal dignity" (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 531), and is frequently applied to a king in the OT (I Sam. 9:16, 10:1, 13:14). Christ was that king (Matt. 2:2; 21:5; I Cor. 15:25).



WAYNE JACKSON

It was foretold that the Messiah would be "cut off" (26a). The Hebrew term suggests the punishment of death in general, without any definition of manner (Gesenius, p. 417—Cf. Gen. 9:11; compare Ex. 31:14 with Num. 15:32). The Syriac version renders the phrase: "the Messiah shall be slain." Though a different Hebrew term is used, notice the similar expression in Isaiah 53:8—"he was cut off out of the land of the living."

The King James Version rendition that the Messiah shall be cut off "but not for himself" is not justified by the original. Better is the ASV (text and margin) that the Anointed One would "have nothing" or, "there shall be none belonging to him." The meaning may be that, with the death of Christ, from the viewpoint of his generation, it appeared that he had nothing; his movement was finished! See Luke 24:21 where the expectation is expressed that Christ might have politically redeemed Israel. Or the meaning may be, as expressed by the ASV footnote, that as Israel rejected him by killing him, so he would renounce physical Israel and they would belong to him no longer — a hint of their impending destruction.

The prophecy also states: "And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" (27a). As was noted in a previous article, the midst of the week (i.e., three and one half years) denotes the Lord's personal ministry, which was climaxed by his death. As a result, the law of Moses with its sacrifices and obligations was terminated. The law was nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14); as a "middle wall of partition," the law was abolished by the death of Christ (Eph. 2:13-17). Christ fulfilled that first covenant (Matt. 5:17), and hence, took it away that he might establish the second (Heb. 10:9, 10). Accordingly, the old covenant having been removed, Christ made a new covenant. This covenant had been foretold by Jeremiah (31:31-34; cf. Heb. 8:6ff), and it was inaugurated by the shedding of Jesus' blood (Matt. 26:28).

But this question naturally arises: if Christ was cut off in "the midst" of that final week, why does the text state that the Lord would make a covenant with many for "one week." In other words, what is the significance of the full seventy weeks? Possibly the termination of that full final week extends down to the time of Paul's conversion, at which point the gospel accelerated predominately among the *Gentiles*. Paul's conversion is generally dated three to four years after the death of Christ (*Zondervan's encyclopedia*, I, p. 822).

Finally, a word about the premillennial view of this "covenant" is needed. Dispensationalists hold that

the "covenant" is an agreement between the "Anti-christ" and Israel during that so-called "tribulation Period" to precede the Millennium. These errorists further maintain that the cessation of sacrifices is a reference to the termination of a restored Judaism (with all its bloody offerings) in the early phase of the Tribulation Period. In other words, it is alleged that due to a covenant made with the Anti-christ, the OT system will be restored during the first three and one half years of the Tribulation Period. But the Anti-christ will break the covenant, hence, the sacrifices will cease in the midst of that week (i.e., at the mid-way point of the final week).

I want to say two things about that. First, it contradicts all those Biblical passages which affirm the *permanency* of the abrogation of the law of Moses. In Colossians 2:14 Paul says the law "hath

been taken away." The Greek verb is a perfect tense; it stresses the permanent abolition of the law (cf. A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, IV, p. 494). The OT law served its function (Gal. 3:24,25), and it will *never* be restored.

Secondly, to take a Biblical prophecy that has to do with Christ and his covenant, and then to apply that prophecy to some Anti-christ and a covenant which he is supposed to make, is the very epitome of Scripture perversion. It is no less than infidelity. (For further study, see the author's booklets: *Premillennialism - A System of Infidelity*, and *The Battle of Armageddon*.)

In our final installment of this series, we will study the horrible consequences which fell upon the Jewish nation as a result of their rejection of the promised Messiah. — 3906 East Main St., Stockton CA 95205

Tennessee Bible College Hosts Marriage Seminar

Tennessee Bible College in Cookeville, Tennessee, which began its first year of full-time operation in September of this year, is preparing to host a seminar under the theme of "Your Marriage Can Be Great." The seminar, which will be held each evening beginning at 7:00 p.m., is scheduled for December 3-6, 1979. Each evening a short devotional will be held from 7:00 until 7:15 p.m. Following the devotional period, the keynote address will be given. After the keynote address, which will last about 45 minutes, participants may then choose from a variety of seminar classes which they might like to attend. These classes, dealing with various aspects of the marriage relationship, will last approximately one hour, and will be of a discussion nature.

Tennessee Bible College, which offers both graduate and undergraduate work in Christian Doctrine and Apologetics, has as one of its goals not only the training of men for the proclamation of the Gospel, but service to the brotherhood and community as well. It is the opinion of the administration and faculty of the college that one of the best means of serving the community, brotherhood, and nation is through seminars and lectureships dealing with such vital topics as marriage, joy in life, and other such topics of interest to almost everyone. It is with this goal in mind that this particular seminar on marriage, and others soon to follow have been planned.

A listing of the keynote topics and evening class topics, with speakers, is given below.

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Monday Evening: "Why So Many Marriages Fail" — Thomas B. Warren, Tuesday evening: "Marriage Is Not For the Immature" — Thomas B. Warren; Wednesday evening: "The profound Significance of 'I Do'" — Thomas B. Warren

Thursday evening: "Your Marriage Can Be Great" (Including "The Emotional and Spiritual Aspects of the Sexual Relationship") — Thomas B. Warren.

EVENING SEMINAR CLASSES

Monday through Thursday evening

*"The Physiology and Anatomy of the Sexual Relationship" — James H. Boring; *"Counseling Troubled Marriages" — David Hanson;

*"Divorce and Remarriage" — Roy Deaver; "Preparation for Marriage: Understanding Commitment in Marriage" Bill Collins (Monday evening); "Understanding Pre-marital Principles" — Mac Deaver (Tuesday evening); "Understanding God's Gift To You — Human sexuality" Bert Thompson (Wednesday evening); "Understanding Preparation for the Home as God Would Have It" David Lipe (Thursday evening).

Those classes marked with an asterisk (*) are classes which discuss different aspects of the same topic each evening, thereby building information on the session from the previous evening. It is suggested that once a person enters such a class, he would receive the most benefit by continuing in that class. The class taught by brother James H. Boring will address itself the first two evenings only to men, and the second two evenings only to women.

The faculty and administration of Tennessee Bible College extend a hearty, warm welcome to everyone to attend this first annual seminar on the important topic of marriage. Housing is available free of charge to those from out of town who might wish to attend. For further information on this, or other TBC seminars, please contact: Malcolm Hill, President, Tennessee Bible College, Box 532, Cookeville, Tennessee, 38501

Joyful Hearts

By EARLENE ROSE

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

On gossamer wings the sunbeams float
Down through the morning mist
Until each flower's head is raised
And every petal kissed.

Like rays from the sun, God's love shines down
On His children everywhere;
As hearts reach up, He fills each one
With joys beyond compare.

1608 24th Street,
Northport, AL 35476

"The Tragedy Of Unbelief"

Continued from page 2

his long years of service he would not go over. Human nature would suggest to us that he would have some regrets. Perhaps his thoughts went back to the time in the wilderness of Zin when the chiding of the people finally got to him. God told Moses to take his rod and speak to the rock. Moses took his rod but he did not speak to the rock as God had commanded. His actions remind us of times when in a moment's anger we have said or done things that we have regretted for years. "And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice..." (Numbers 20:10, 11). The Lord was very quick in replying to Moses: "Because ye have believed

me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them" (v. 12). Moses was a faithful servant, yet in one moment of unbelief he lost the right to go into Canaan. Notice that his action is classified as unbelief. Belief is the same thing as faith. Faith without works is dead (James 2:26). Therefore this is one time that Moses did not have faith in what God said. His actions express his lack of faith.

How tragic it is to see some who have been faithful for a time to lose their souls in a moment's weakness. We are not implying that Moses lost his soul, but the point should be very clear. We cannot live for God most of our lives, become unfaithful, and still expect to see our land of promise. It is not enough to be faithful

nearly all our lives. The Bible admonishes, "Be thou faithful unto death..." (Rev. 2:10).

Another lesson is that as children of God we must learn to control our tempers. If we had been standing on Pisgah no doubt we would have thought, "If only I had spoken to the rock as God commanded I could go over into Canaan." Friendships have been broken, enemies made, and lives lost because someone lost control of his temper for just a moment. How tragic! The Bible teaches us to add temperance to knowledge (II Peter 1:6). Temperance is self-control.

Let us so control ourselves and live our lives that when we come to the end of our way we will not look back on our lives with regret. The fruit of unbelief is most tragic.—1501 6th Ave., Jasper, Alabama 35501

You Are Truly Missed

"And thou shalt be missed" (I Samuel 20:18). I did, I truly missed you last Wednesday evening during the mid-week Bible study period. I looked, but I didn't see you. I was sure that some brethren were working and others were absent due to sickness. And while I missed them, my main concern was for you. You see, I was uncertain about your reason for not being present for the Bible study period.



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

As a PREACHER and a fellow-laborer with you in the gospel of Christ, I missed you. Whenever I stood in front of the congregation to make a few remarks before the classes started, I observed that you were not present. Your absence bothered me. I know that I should be more positive and grateful because of the brethren who do attend this particular assembly, but I cannot help having a negative feeling in my heart when you are absent. Whether or not you realize it, you are a source of personal encouragement to me when you are present for the various periods of Bible study and worship. On the other hand, when you habitually absent yourself, you discourage me in my work as an evangelist.

Since I am a TEACHER in one of the Bible classes, your absence discourages me. The fact is, I have spent quite some time in the preparation of my lesson. And, when you don't come, it hurts. I wonder if I have offended you or whether or not I am doing an effective job in the presentation of my material from the Holy Scriptures. Even while studying for next week's lesson, I often wonder why you don't attend my class.

I even consider your absence from the mid-week Bible study period from the view-point of a PARENT. As you know, my wife and I have four children. It is important to me that they develop good habits. I feel that my influence upon their lives is tremendous and lasting. I know that they will most likely imitate me in this matter of church attendance. It makes me sad, therefore, when I know that you are not setting the proper example as a parent before your children. It is difficult for

me to understand why you will not bring your children to the Bible classes on Wednesday evening.

As a BROTHER in Christ, I missed you. I do enjoy having fellowship with you in the various assemblies of the local congregation. Just seeing you, shaking your hand and speaking to you means a great deal to me. And then, as we sing and pray together, my heart is strengthened in the Lord. You and I have something in common that even many of my fleshly kin do not enjoy, and that is our salvation in Christ. I do love you as my brother/sister in the Lord. I cannot help but to miss you when you are absent.

As a DISCIPLE of Christ, I felt your absence. It is always good for brethren to gather for the purpose of studying the Holy Scriptures. One marvelous aspect of the Bible is that one can meditate upon its teaching for a life time

and never learn all there is to know about it. Also, I am aware that the elders have set aside this particular time to help fulfill their obligation to feed the flock spiritual food. If I flagrantly forsake these assemblies, I am disobeying those who have the rule over me. Surely, as a disciple, you want to know more of God's will. That's one of the reasons why I cannot understand your absence.

As a FELLOW PILGRIM traveling down the road of life with you, I believe that you and I need that mutual encouragement that can come from being together at the frequent assemblies of the church. I hope to see you this Wednesday evening at Bible study. You make sure that I get the opportunity to greet you as my brother/sister and I'll appreciate it very much.—809 Old Perry Store Rd., Opp, AL 36467

Enthusiasm

JERRY A. JOHNSON

During football season, a great amount of enthusiasm is in evidence. The fan regularly makes his way to the stadium to view the games. The seats may be of concrete, the weather extremely cold or rainy, but his attendance is a foregone conclusion. He will be present if at all possible. Why is this so? Because of his love and enthusiasm for the game of football.

Enthusiasm for God and righteousness is not nearly so evident. Worship assemblies are most often in a comfortable building with padded seats. Yet, when one experiences inconvenience in the least, he may absent himself. Why is this so? Because he does not love God supremely (Matt. 22:37). Consequently, he does not have enthusiasm or zeal for God.

It is said of Phinehas, "He was zealous for his God" (Num. 25:13). Jehu said to Jehonadab on one occasion, "Come with me and see my zeal for the Lord" (II Kgs. 10:16). The apostle Paul said, "I...was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day" (Acts 22:3). To the Galatian brethren he wrote: "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing" (Gal. 4:8). There is no better thing than living the Christian life. Thus, one's zeal (enthusiasm) for God should be in evidence every day, and not spasmodically.

The opposite of enthusiasm is discouragement. Moses accused the children of Gad and Reuben of discouraging the children of Israel from going into the promised land (Canaan). He told them that their

fathers (ten of the twelve men sent from Kadeshbarnea to act as spies) were guilty of the same (Num. 32:6-13). "And the Lord's anger was kindled against Israel" for these acts of discouragement (vs. 13). He said, "Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land" (vs. 11).

Spiritual Israel (the Lord's church) is plagued with great discouragers. They are continually saying "we can't," "we are unable," "we are bound to fail." Consequently, there are many in the Lord's church today whose hearts are filled with pessimism, doubt, fear, and unbelief. "But the fearful, and unbelieving...shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8).

On the other hand, there are those who "have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Rom. 10:2). They have enthusiasm, but they do not have a knowledge of the truth (Jn. 8:32), as revealed in the New Testament (Jn. 17:17). "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness (Psa. 119:172; Rom. 1:16, 17), and going about to establish their own righteousness (Judges 17:6; 21:25), have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:3). The football player may be filled with enthusiasm, but he must also play by the rules.—P.O. Box 425, Double Springs, Alabama 35553.



Words Of

(USPS 691-7)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1979

NUMBER 44

Go, Stand And Speak

The book of Acts presents the thrilling story of the establishment and expansion of Christianity in the first century. It presents a method for the evangelization of the whole world that serves as a pattern for us today. Acts is the record of human lives filled with the love of God and dedicated to serving Christ in the saving of lost humanity. They were men ready to die for their Master and his glorious cause. In



JOHN WADDEY

In Acts chapter 5 we read of the arrest and detention of the apostles. Luke relates how an angel opened the prison doors and brought them out. Then they were instructed to "Go... stand and speak" in the temple to the people all the words of this life (Acts 5:18-20). Risking repeated arrest and even harsher penalties, they did precisely what God commanded. This is one reason why their cause was invincible.

Christianity is uniquely a transient religion. This is not a characteristic of the world religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism. Going is imperative, not optional (Matt. 28:19). "Go" implies a note of urgency. We cannot do God's work at our leisure. We must go to every nation, i.e., ethnic group or tribe of men. Our purpose in going is to "disciple" men. This means to teach them, to enroll them in the school of Christ. Our mission extends to every nation. No one is to be excluded. This charge from God's angel is but a repetition of that "great commission" of Jesus.

These men were ordered to go into the Jewish temple and preach the gospel. This would be like entering the lion's den, yet God said go. Shrinking, fearful men would not make good apostolic material. They went; they succeeded. We are challenged today to enter the lion's den of China and the forbidden fields of Russia. The same God will make a way for his

people.

They went and taught even when forbidden by men to do so (Acts 5:28). No man has the right to shut up the doors to the kingdom of heaven or to forbid God's men to speak. Like them, we must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).

God expected them to go and stand. This implies more than a fleeting trip or momentary pause. The world will not be saved nor the church planted by vacation trips. One or two year mission stints will not suffice. God needs 10,000 brave men and women who will go and stay in a chosen field for 5-10 years; even for a life time. Only by so staying can an effective work be done. Christian soldiers are exhorted to put on the whole armor of God and stand (Eph. 6:10-11).

Standing also suggests that we must take a firm, strong stand against all error and for the truth of the gospel. Those who go to foreign fields will have to stand against paganism, superstition, false philosophy, Catholicism, and denominationalism. Sadly, they will sometime have to stand against heresy among their own brethren. The student of missions knows that missionaries of most of the older Protestant churches have reached accommodation even with the pagan religion. Catholicism easily absorbs the superstitions of any tribe. This a New Testament Christian can never do.

God's men have no time to compromise with the prevalent sin of society whether it be polygamy, social drinking or nakedness. There is no room for compromise with false brethren (Gal. 2:4-5). There is a danger that we can be so excited about encouraging missions that we close our eyes to serious faith problems in a man just so he is "gung ho" for missions. We must ask, what gospel will he teach? What kind of church will he leave in the foreign field? What kind of influence will he have on young Christians? Only those who hold fast the faithful word should be sent to lead on foreign soil, even as here at home (Tit. 1:9).

God's people must stand even though the fires of hell rage around their feet as Satan strives to drive them out. A third century Christian wrote, "Bassus is in the metal mines (slave labor JW). Mappalicus

under torture. Fortunio in the dungeon. Paulus has been tortured. Victor, Julia (and several others) were put to death in prison by hunger. In a few days you will hear that I have died the same." Another wrote, "the brave Saturninus, who would not abjure Christ even when they tore him with pincers of iron" (*The History and Teaching of the Early Church*, p. 85). The great Tertullian c. 200 A.D. wrote, "Go on, zealous governors, sacrifice the Christians at the will of the people, kill us, torture us, condemn us, grind us to dust, your cruelty will not avail you; the oftener we are mown down by you, the more in number we grow; the blood of Christians is seed" (*The Apology*).

The gospel is to be proclaimed (Mk. 16:15). God entrusted the salvation of all mankind to human hands. He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35), therefore his gospel must be taught to all men. We must speak the message with urgency (II Tim. 4:2). Souls are at stake. Eternal life and death are the issues. The words must be spoken in season or out. God's evangelist will not check the popularity charts before speaking the needed word. The Lord would have his gospel taught both publicly and from house to house (Acts 20:20); the good news must be conveyed through every available medium. The church cannot afford to neglect to use radio, television, or the printed page. Preach, proclaim, produce, publish! The King's business demands it. Like seed in a wheatfield, the more sown, the more will be reaped. We need not get a permission slip from the enemy, our job is to preach the word.

God has only one saving message (Rom. 1:16). No other will do (Gal. 1:6-7). In fact any other gospel will defeat our purpose for preaching. The same message must be delivered to every creature of every culture. Missionaries are sometimes tempted to adjust the message to the peculiar vices of a given people. Such compromise helps no one. There is but one faith (Eph. 4:5). It meets the need of the prince and the pauper, the sophisticated and the simple. We dare not edit it.

The gospel of God is communicated to men through words (II Tim. 4:2), not emotional experiences and

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

I am not mad, most noble *Senatus*, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness

— Acts 26:25

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Inducements To Trust In God

"No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore, I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Be-



MICHAEL D. STONE

hold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: Yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not therefore anxious for the morrow; for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matthew 6:24-34).

In the foregoing text, Jesus tells of the anxieties of most of the human race. What are we

Continued on page 4



"Christ Sent Me Not To Baptize"

Paul's statement in I Corinthians 1:17, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel," is sometimes offered as an argument against the necessity of being baptized. It is said that, since Paul was sent to preach the gospel, but was not sent to baptize, it must follow that baptism is no part of the gospel. One who makes such an argument demonstrates both his ignorance of the Scriptures and his inability to reason logically.



BOB DUNCAN

In the first place, any interpretation one might place upon a passage which would cause it to contradict other passages is a false interpretation. The forementioned interpretation of this passage would cause it to contradict a number of other plain passages; therefore, the aforementioned interpretation of this passage is a false interpretation.

If baptism is no part of the gospel preached by Paul, how does one account for the fact wherever Paul preached the gospel, including Corinth, people were baptized as a result of his preaching. Acts 18:8 tells us that "many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." In the very context of I Corinthians 1:17 Paul mentioned the fact he baptized Crispus, Gaius, and the household of Stephanas (verses 14-16). It would be the height of folly for him to write with the very next stroke of the pen that baptism is no part of the gospel he preached. Later on in this same letter he wrote that it is by baptism that all get into one body (12:13).

As a result of Paul's preaching, Lydia was baptized (Acts 16:14, 15). When Paul and Silas had preached the gospel to the keeper of the Philippian prison, he wanted to be, and was baptized the same hour of the night (Acts 16:27-34). At Ephesus Paul found certain ones whose baptism was not valid; and when he had sufficiently instructed them about the matter, they were immediately baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:1-5). He later wrote a letter to these and reminded them that there is one, and only one Scriptural baptism (Ephesians 4:5).

To the Romans Paul wrote that we are baptized into Jesus Christ, and that we are baptized into his death (Romans 6:3). He wrote to the Galatians that those who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Galatians 3:27). To Titus he wrote about "the washing of regeneration," which reputable commentators generally agree refers to baptism (Titus 3:5). In telling of his own conversion he relates how he was told to "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

In view of all this, there certainly must be another explanation of his statement in I Corinthians 1:17! He simply could not have been saying that baptism is no part of the gospel which he preached!

A careful examination of the passage will reveal to the honest reader that Paul did not say or imply that baptism is no part of the gospel. A clear implication of his statement is that baptizing people and preaching the gospel are two different things — a fact which no

one would want to deny. To conclude from Paul's statement in I Corinthians 1:17 that baptizing is not preaching the gospel is logical. But to conclude from that statement that baptism is no part of that gospel which Paul preached is illogical and contradictory to obvious Bible truth.

The real significance of Paul's statement in I Corinthians 1:17 will forever elude those who seek to find within it some justification for their doctrine of the non-essentiality of baptism. Those willing, on the other hand, to lay aside their prejudices and consider Paul's statement in the light of its context will be made aware of a truth overlooked by the religious world in general. Paul is referring to his work as an apostle. The word *apostelen* 'sent' is a form of the same word from which the word 'apostle' is translated. The idea of one's being *sent* is inherent in the word 'apostle.' Paul was pointing out that he was not made an apostle so that he might baptize, but so that he might preach the gospel. Baptizing is not an act which must be administered by an apostle. Others could handle this matter, which is exactly what had taken place at Corinth. Many had been baptized as a result of Paul's preaching at Corinth; but Paul himself had personally baptized only a few of them (Acts 18:8; I Corinthians 1:14-16).

One final thought: The New Testament clearly teaches that baptism is essential to salvation. It saves (I Peter 3:21), puts one into Christ (Galatians 3:27), brings one into contact with the death of Christ (Romans 6:3), washes away sins (Acts 22:16), is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), etc. The New Testament also teaches that one does not have to be "officially commissioned" or licensed to administer baptism. That is the very point of Paul's statement in I Corinthians 1:17. But the religious world as a whole has completely reversed the situation. They deny that baptism is essential or has anything at all to do with forgiveness of sins, but require one to be officially licensed or commissioned before he can administer baptism. In the New Testament baptism was required, but did not require a special administrator. In the religious world today baptism is not required, but requires a special administrator. How far afield some have gone!

Don't Give Up!

The legendary Babe Ruth is said to have struck out 1,333 times. This is a little known fact. We remember the Babe, not for strike outs, but for his home runs — 714 of them. It seems that in order to hit home runs it is necessary to strike out part of the time.

A reporter called on Thomas Edison one afternoon to interview him about a substitute for lead in the manufacture of storage batteries that the famed scientist was seeking. Edison told him that he had



DALTON KEY

Continued on page 4

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

(No. 6)

The book of Daniel records prophecy of the Roman invasion of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple. It was written that "the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" (Dan. 9:26b). It was further announced that desolations and war had been determined, and the destruction would come like an overwhelming flood. The historical



WAYNE JACKSON

facts of the situation were these. During the procuratorship of Florus (66 A.D.), the Jews revolted against the Roman government (see H. E. Dana, *The New Testament World*, pp. 103-105). This plunged the Jews into several years of bloody, horrible war with the Romans. The "prince" who led the Roman forces was Titus, son and successor of the renowned Vespasian. (Note: the "prince" of verse 26a is not the same prince as the Anointed One, Christ, of verse 25. The prince of verse 26 comes after the Anointed One has been "cut off.")

During this terrible holocaust, the city of Jerusalem was burned (cf. Matt. 22:7, where Jesus prophesied this very thing), and the sanctuary (the temple) was demolished. Jesus told the Jews on his day that the temple would be left desolate (Matt. 23:38); that it would be thrown down and not one stone would be left upon another (Matt. 24:2). Significantly, only one stone from that temple, and parts of another, have been positively identified by archaeologists (H. T. Trank, *An Archaeological Companion to the Bible*, p. 249). J. N. Geldenhuys, summing up the horrible scene, says that Titus:

"...overran the city with his mighty army, destroyed and plundered the temple, and slew the Jews—men, women and children—by tens of thousands. When their lust for blood had been sated, the Romans carried off into captivity all the able-bodied remnant of the Jews (for they had done away with all the weaklings and the aged), so that not a single Jew was left alive in the city. For many years after the destruction of Jerusalem, no Jew was allowed in the city or its vicinity. Only one day in the year—the day of remembrance of the destruction of the temple—were they allowed to mourn over the city from neighboring hilltops" (*The Biblical Expositor*, Carl F. H. Henry, Ed., III, p. 141).

It is not without great interest to observe that apparently the Jews recognized that the destruction of their city and temple was a fulfillment of Daniel's record. Josephus declares that "Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them" (*Antiquities*, X, XI, 7).

In connection with the destruction of Jerusalem, Daniel said "upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate" (27b). Gesenius identifies the "wing" as "the highest summit of the temple" (*Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 406). "Abominations" is frequently used of idols in the OT (cf. I Kg. 11:5; II Kg. 23:13; Dan. 11:31; 12:11). Within this context it doubtless refers to the idolatrous ensigns of the Roman armies. Josephus says that when the Romans burned the temple they "brought their

ensigns to the temple, and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them..." (*Wars*, VI, VI, 1). Thus, the Roman armies, with their abominable idolatries, desolated the holy city and the holy place. Observe how Christ confirms this in Matthew 24:14 (cf. Luke 21:20).

One may wonder how the destruction of Jerusalem can be a part of the prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks, since that event occurred forty years after the death of Christ. It must be noted, however, that Daniel does not affirm that the actual desolation of the city would occur *within* the seventy weeks. Rather, the text suggests that Jerusalem's fate would be "determined" (26b, 27b) within that span. When the Jews reached the epitome of their rebellion, and crucified (cut off) their own Messiah, the decree or determination was made that they be destroyed. By killing Christ, they had filled up the measure of wickedness characteristic of their rebellious ancestors (cf. Matt. 23:32). And Jesus indicated that that accumulative rebellion would be required of "this generation" (Luke 11:50, 51). And so, this marked the "full end" of Judaism, both religiously and politically, from the divine vantage point.

Finally, a brief comment concerning the pre-millennial view of all of this. The dispensational theory alleges that the "abomination of desolation" standing in the holy place (Matt. 24:15) is

a prophecy of a powerful dictator yet to arise, the Antichrist. It is claimed that he will desecrate the "restored temple" in that so-called Tribulation Period, which is supposed to precede the Millennium. There are several things wrong with this. First, the participles *rhethen* 'which was spoken' and *hestos* 'standing' in Matthew 24:15 are neuter gender, and hence, do not refer to a man (cf. R.C.H. Lenski, *Commentary on Matthew*, p. 938; *Commentary on Mark*, p. 574). Secondly, there is no specific *solitary* character in the Bible isolated as the Antichrist. The apostle John, the only Biblical writer to use that appellation, declared of his own day: "... even now have there arisen many anti-christs..." (I John 2:18). Thirdly, nowhere does the Bible even hint of a seven year Tribulation Period. And fourthly, there is not the slightest indication that the holy place (i.e., the temple) will ever be restored. Jesus said to the Jews, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:38). The verb "is left" is a prophetic present tense, and it means "to abandon, to leave destitute of God's help" (J. H. Thayer, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 89).

Conclusion—The study of Daniel's seventy weeks is truly fascinating. It is my prayer that this investigation has been a blessing to our readers.—3906 East Main St., Stockton, Ca. 95205.

Boldness To Preach The Gospel

MIKE BARRETT

"And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that will all boldness they may speak thy word" (Acts 4:29).

Peter and John had just been released from imprisonment. Their only crimes were healing the lame man at the temple gate and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 3,4). They were told not to preach or teach in the name of Christ. However, it was impossible for them to withhold the message of Christ from humanity.

Upon their release the apostles made the above supplication to God. They prayed that even with the threat of harm the Lord would give them the ability to proclaim boldly the message of truth.

There has never been a time when the world needed more fearless, uncompromising gospel preachers than it does today. Millions are being lost without hearing the gospel. Others are dying while feeding upon a steady diet of error and false doctrine. A dangerous attitude of complacency exists among many of our brethren when it comes to preaching a gospel condemns unbelief, exposes error, denounces hypocrites, and declares the whole counsel of God on some very unpopular subjects.

The gospel must be boldly preached to the alien sinner. Peter held back nothing when he declared that those present on Pentecost were guilty of the blood of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:36). Stephen was not timid in his sermon to the Jews (Acts 7). The Apostle Paul wrote, "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 the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27).

Many times Paul is remembered for his sermons to unbelievers. He preached Jesus before Elymas the sorcerer (Acts 13). He preached Jesus to the Greeks on Mars Hill in Athens, Greece (Acts 17:18-34). He preached Jesus to the unbelievers while he was in prison in Rome (Acts 28:30, 31). Yet, Paul never apologized or was ashamed for preaching the truth. He gave a frank, forward, and complete declaration of God's message for lost and dying men. Paul was seeking lost souls. He had no time for pretty

speeches, fancy phrases, or a message weakened in order that it not offend any outside the body of Christ.

Likewise, it is time for gospel preachers boldly to expose error and false teaching. There are those in the Lord's church who do not want error exposed. We know this to be true when we hear statements as, "We don't believe in debating" or, "Don't speak against So and So's doctrine publicly; they'll be offended". Those who adhere to such ideas are not servants of the Master.

The Bible plainly records that Jesus engaged in spiritual confrontations with Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, and even lawyers (Matthew 22, Mark 12). Jude 3 states that Christians must "contend earnestly for the faith." Paul said that he was "set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). How can we follow the New Testament and not expose erroneous doctrine?

God's people must boldly stand up, speak out, and expose the doctrines of devils. May God help us rear a generation of defenders of the faith that will cause Satan himself to tremble! John recorded that many false teachers have already gone out into the world (I John 4:1).

Finally, the gospel must be boldly preached to denounce the hypocrite and declare the whole truth on unpopular subjects. It took great boldness for the apostle Paul to pen the following to the Corinthian church: "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you..." (I Cor. 5:1). It took just as much boldness for John the Immerser to denounce the sinful relationship that existed between Herod and his brother's wife.

The gospel cannot be changed to fit man. Mankind must be changed to fit the gospel. Paul warned, "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" (Gal. 1:8). Often it is difficult for a gospel preacher to do this; however, we must remember that Christ plainly stated that only the truth would make one free (John 8:32). — 101 Lynn Avenue, Watertown, Tennessee 37184

Go, Stand and Speak

Continued from page 1

subjective feelings. We must speak all the words of life if we would be faithful servants. A partial gospel will not save!

"They went, they stood, they preached. The adamant defenses of Jewish opposition crumbled.

Truth triumphed. The battle waxed furious and hot. Good men fell to the sword, but through Christ they were victorious over all.

"They overcame because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they

loved not their life even unto death" (Rev. 12:11). So will we, when in the name of King Jesus we go, stand and speak all the words of this life. — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37921

Inducements To Trust In God

Continued from page 2

going to eat? What are we going to drink and how are we going to be clothed? These are the things which the Gentiles sought after day by day to the exclusion of the spiritual matters of their lives. Jesus uses the word Gentile in the sense of the Jewish meaning of the word at that time which was to characterize those who had no religion and who did not depend upon the providence of God in their lives.

It is impossible to serve God and mammon

at the same time. If God is not first in our lives, then mammon is, as they both cannot be first. The righteousness of God should be sought after first and the material necessities to sustain our lives will be added.

When we learn to trust in the providence of God, we learn that human life is more important than the food, drink and clothing. Since God has given us the greater gift, that is the human life, will he not then provide for us the lesser gifts of food, drink and clothing which are

necessary to sustain the greater gift? This is so if we believe in the providence of God.

Which is of greater value, bird life or human life? God provides for the birds, therefore, will he not provide for us as our life is of greater value? If God also provides for the grass which lasts only a day and is dried and cast into the cooking oven, will he not provide our necessities of life since we are of greater value?—321 Lynwell Drive, Orlando, Florida 32809.

When Thou Prayest!

Man by nature is a worshipping creature. He looks to some being, or power outside of himself which he believes to be greater than himself for refuge and comfort. Even heathens, who know not the true God, make their own gods to whom they pray. Most atheists and infidels, who deny God, reach out for help beyond themselves.



W. C. Quillen

One noted atheist who had preached and practiced atheism all his life is reported to have said just before his death, "O God, if there is a God, save my soul, if I have a soul, from hell, if there is a hell." All people, when facing the realities of the great beyond, feel so helpless, and they reach out.

In far greater numbers, people who acknow-

ledge that there is a God, refuse him a place in their lives. They never worship him, nor pray to him, until they come to die. There are children whose parents claim to believe in God, who have never heard their parents pray and seldom see them in worship. Isn't that sad: What is the difference in people who claim to believe in God, but refuse to worship and serve him, and the atheist who denies God?

"When thou prayest," Or do you? Do you have the right to pray? Is your life, your relationship to God, such that God hears and accepts your prayers? Did you know that some prayers are an abomination to God? "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Pro. 28:9). Jesus asked, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Lk. 6:46). "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (I Pet. 3:11).

According to the conception that most people have of prayer, God is not God, but like a puppet, being pulled in all directions in response to the contradictory desires and petitions of people

who pray. If I am not willing to do, what the Lord wants me to do, why should I expect him to do what I want him to do? If he does everything that I want, but I refuse to do his will, who is God? He or I?

"Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (I Jno. 3:22). That's as it is, and that's as it should be. This recognizes God as God, and man as man; all men alike dependent on God, and in submission to his will, if they hope to be heard.

Now when one does God's commandments, he becomes a child of God, and has the right to call on him, and pray to him as his Father. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27). Jesus said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7). "When Thou Prayest," recognize these truths!—P.O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tn. 38464.

Don't Give Up!

Continued from page 2

made 20,000 experiments but none of them had worked. The reporter asked Edison if he was not discouraged by all his wasted effort. "Waste?" exclaimed Edison. "There's nothing wasted. I have discovered 20,000 things that will not work." Edison said his discoveries were the result of one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration.

An evil work ought never to be begun. A good work

should always be seen through to the very end. As B. C. Goodpasture once said, "One would rather fail in a good cause than succeed in a bad one."

Paul admonishes, "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9). Again, "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing" (II Thessalonians 3:13). We are divinely exhorted to "hold fast that which is good" (I

Thessalonians 5:21).

If you are involved in a sinful, evil work, by all means, and at all costs, stop! But if you are engaged in good works, don't become discouraged. Don't give up. If you strike out, just do what Babe Ruth did — just go on in and swing all the harder. — Box 126, Aurora, MO 65605

Get A Friend To Help!

EARLENE ROSE

A man that hath friends must show himself friendly, and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. — Proverbs 18:24

When the weight that you carry is growing so great
That your back with pain starts to bend,
Don't struggle beneath that load all alone,
But ask for the help of a friend.

When problems arise and solutions aren't there,
And the road of life seems to end,

Perhaps a new view can make your way clear;
Solicit the aid of a friend.

When sorrow has broken your heart into bits,
And you think it never will mend;
Don't dwell all alone and drown in your grief;
Let your tears be dried by a friend.

When joy bursts your heart with something so grand

To the clouds your spirits ascend;
Put the world with its cares behind you awhile,
And have a good laugh with a friend.

By caring and sharing our joys and our griefs,
The lives of all people can blend
In a love-filled world where pleasure derives
From having and being a friend. — 1608 24th
Street, Northport, AL 35476



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus,
the Words of Truth and soberness.

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A Changing World

DAN JENKINS

We live in a world that is constantly in a state of change. Things that just a few years ago were seemingly pillars of our society are crumbling around us. The wise Christian would consider carefully what the Bible says about these matters.

"Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help" (Ps. 146:3). In the day of kings men tended to look at world rulers as leaders in times of crisis. The very reason stated as to why Israel asked for a king was for one to "go out before us, and fight our battles" (I Sam. 8:20). In our own day we look to Washington believing that the one thing that will determine the future is who will be the next leader of our country. Thousands in our land are ready to place their hope for the future in a world leader. Suppose it were true that we had the best leader that has ever lived at the head of our country, what comfort would it be? Let his life come to an end, as the Psalmist goes on to say, "...he returneth to the earth, in that very day his thoughts [Purposes] perish." There is no certainty in world leaders.

"Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Prov. 23:5). With these words the sage of the Old Testament shows the uncertainty of riches. Certainly living in an age of such tremendous inflation we should be aware of how uncertain riches are! Many who set aside retirement funds find themselves with no security. Did not Jesus speak of the uncertainty of riches when he said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal..." (Matt. 6:19). Hear Solomon again on this matter, "Riches are not forever..." (Prov. 27:24). Yet in spite of this millions look to the future, and risk all by placing their trust in fleeting riches.

Life itself is uncertain. "What is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14). Foolishly there are millions who fail to understand our frail nature and

live as though they are assured of a long existence on this earth. The words of Solomon seem so fitting in this connection. "Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1). Perhaps the prayer of the Psalmist should be our daily prayer, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps. 90:12).

Some Certain Things

In a world filled with uncertainty, God has, in His divine wisdom, given us some certain things to build our lives around.

The promises of God are certain. "There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (Josh. 21:45). When Solomon dedicated the temple he echoed this same truth. "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised; there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant" (I Kings 8:56). *All that he spake came to pass! Not one thing failed!* What a blessed thought, that all God has promised has come about. This is the kind of thing around which a successful life can be built.

The foundation of God is certain. In reference to the coming of Christ God promised, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste" (Is. 28:16). No building or life is any stronger than its foundation (remember the parable of the wise and foolish builders!) and the life founded upon Christ is built upon the surest of foundations! He is one who is tried (and has passed the test), one who is precious (the value of which cannot be measured), and one who is sure (steadfast, abiding). You can safely risk your life by building on this foundation.

The reward that awaits us is certain. "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his


reward" (Mt. 10:42). Since God has promised to bring every secret deed into the judgment (Ecc. 12:14), since secret prayers are heard and answered (Mt. 6:6), and since even a cup of cold water does not escape his notice we can take confidence in the reward that awaits us. The words of Paul should be our words: "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).

Our new body is certain. In II Corinthians 5 Paul discusses the groanings we now have in this body. He then looks to the future in these words, "For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." If we can accept the actuality of the groanings we have in this tabernacle we should also accept the reality of the future body that awaits us! The assurance of our new body is a certainty around which we can build our lives.

The love of God is certain. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38, 39). Man is fickle, his devotion and love is unpredictable; but the love of God is not like this. He is eternal as is his love. We can risk our lives around his abiding love.

God has made it possible for us to live in a changing world. He has given us pillars around which we can build our lives. Let the world change and the child of God will not be swayed. His life is built upon surer foundations than those that men of the world build their lives upon. Thanks be to God who makes it possible for us to live in times like these. — P.O. Box 26156, Birmingham, AL 35226

"Two young men were discussing their talents. Said one: 'My talent is to speak my mind.' Said the other: 'That's a good talent to bury!'"



Words Of Truth
(USPS 691-760)
"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness" — Acts 26:25

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Confessing Our Sins



BOB DUNCAN

A reader has asked that we address ourselves to a question about the matter of confession our sins. Specifically, is it necessary for a child of God who has become unfaithful to make a confession of his sins to the church in order to receive God's forgiveness?

In dealing with this, as well as most other Bible questions, it is necessary for us to understand that the Bible teaches implicitly and explicitly. In other words, the Bible teaches much which it does not explicitly state. For example, Genesis 13:1 explicitly states that Lot came up out of Egypt. If you should be asked for Bible proof that Lot went down into Egypt, this verse would suffice. Since Lot could not have come out of Egypt without first going into Egypt, it necessarily follows that the Bible teaches that Lot went into Egypt. And the fact that Lot went into Egypt is as clearly taught as the fact that Lot came out of Egypt.

In connection with the public confession of sins the Bible teaches some things very clearly and emphatically which it does not state explicitly. That we must confess our sins is clearly and explicitly stated. "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). That we are to confess our sins publicly, to the church, as well as privately to God is taught by clear implication. The following passages clearly teach, by implication, that sins that are known by the brethren must be acknowledged to the brethren:

"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" (Matthew 18:17). This verse clearly states that this man's sin has been told to the church. If he neglects to hear the church, then he is to become as "an heathen man and a publican." This verse teaches implicitly that the church can know if the offender has repented of his offense, or if he will persist in his impenitence. But unless a man confesses his sins there is no possible way for the church to have such knowledge. This passage teaches the necessity of a public confession of sins just as surely as Genesis 13:1 teaches that Lot went down into Egypt.

"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it" (I John 5:16). Clearly taught in this passage is the fact that God will forgive brethren all sins except a "sin unto death." There is no need to pray for the forgiveness of a brother who sins "a sin unto death." Since chapter 1:6-10 teaches that God will forgive all sins which a brother will confess, it follows that the "sin unto death" is any sin which a brother commits and refuses to confess. We are to pray for him if he confesses his sin; but if the confession is made privately and secretly to God, and not publicly to the church, how can we know whether to pray for his

forgiveness or not? This passage teaches the necessity of a public confession of sins just as surely and as clearly as Genesis 13:1 teaches that Lot went down into Egypt.

Passages which teach the necessity of withdrawing fellowship from those who are disorderly (Romans 16:17; II Thessalonians 3:6; I Corinthians 5:1-5) all imply that a public acknowledgement of sin is in order. If one is guilty of sin, and will not repent, he is to be withdrawn from. Those who repent are to be forgiven (Luke 17:3; II Corinthians 2:7). But how can the church forgive those who have repented unless the church knows of their repentance? And how can the church know of their repentance unless they acknowledge their sin to the church. Jesus's statement in Luke 17:3, 4 shows that we cannot forgive one until we know of his repentance, and that we cannot know of his repentance until he tells us he has repented. "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. 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." Please notice that before we can forgive one who has sinned against us, he must let us know of his repentance by telling us he has repented.

The purpose of the public confession is to let all those who know of the sin know also of the repentance. Since the way we are to treat the impenitent differs from the way we are to treat the penitent, it is essential that we know who the penitent are. Since the purpose of the public confession of sin is to advertise the repentance, and not the sin itself, private sins do not need to be confessed publicly. If the church knows you have been unfaithful, confess your sins to God and to the church. If you are guilty of sins known only to one or two others, confess your sins to God and to the one or two others who know of your sins. If you are guilty of sins known only to you, confess your sins to God. Needless to say, God knows of your sins. The forgiveness of sins for the child of God is as much conditioned upon the confession of those sins as the forgiveness of sins for the alien sinner is conditioned upon baptism.

It would be difficult to find a statement more explicit than the one in James 5:16 "Confess your faults one to another..." This is exactly what we are discussing in this article. How could one guilty of public sins obey this verse while refusing to make a public confession?

Needless to say, merely confession one's sins is of no benefit at all. Genuine repentance must precede the confession. And in cases where one insists that his public sins do not have to be publicly confessed, the problem is likely that he has not genuinely repented. When he genuinely repents, like the prodigal son (Luke 15), he will come dictating to the church the terms of his pardon.

WORD of GOD

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the

broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Isaiah 61:1

Sexual Harassment

James Roy Fuller

Much attention and publicity is currently in vogue by the news media of all type regarding complaints from the female populace concerning what they have chosen to label "Sexual Harassment." A Redbook magazine survey of 9,000 readers found sexual harassment widespread. A whopping 92 percent reported sexual harassment on the job, and 50 percent said that they or someone they knew had quit a job because of it. Another similar survey of less magnitude was taken recently at Fort Gordon, Georgia. Some of the opinions of those queried are repeated herein for our edification.

"Women are at a disadvantage because they have been brought up to play games instead of being open about what they want and expect. Some women play these games on purpose and others find their intentions misread because they've unwittingly played them." —Female Officer

"Its just another bandwagon for a bunch of dissatisfied women. When their skimpy clothing gets them the guy they want, you don't hear any complaints. But if it attracts the older buzzards, its sexual harassment." —Senior NCO

"Most women are probably prepared to deal with it and only a small percentage of men will cause any real problem. If a woman seems to encounter a lot of it, she should probably take a close look at herself and how she may be inviting it." —Staff Sergeant

"Most sexual harassment is invited consciously or unconsciously by the woman involved." —Civilian Employee

"I think a lot of women do invite it, some of them I think have actively encouraged it." —Female Secretary

A woman officer said she had suffered very little sexual harassment and attributed it to her bearing. "I always try to conduct myself in a professional manner. A woman who acts silly or tries to use her sex to get her way can expect to receive sexual harassment. But if she works at projecting a businesslike attitude, she'll encounter very little harassment." —Female Officer

When we get what we ask for, we have no right to complain. The Bible still says, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." —Route 4, Elba, AL 36323

Are We "Campbellites"?

Occasionally you hear some talk about members of the church being called "Campbellites." Personally, I have been called a "Campbellite" only once, since in our age of religious ecumenism, "name calling" is no longer done very often. But where did this name come from? This nickname comes from the erroneous idea that the modern day church of Christ was founded by Alexander Campbell.



Bob Prichard

Alexander Campbell was very influential in the restoration movement. Unknown to most denominationalists, however, is the fact that he did not originate the restoration plea nor the restoration movement. The restoration plea, or plea to return to the old paths of the New Testament church, was a plea heard down through the ages, even before the Protestant Reformation. In the United States, several restoration movements were begun, including one led by James O'Kelly of North Carolina. O'Kelly and 7000 others left the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1793 to be Christians only. Another completely independent movement in New England was led by Abner Jones and Elias Smith, both Baptists, who sought to be Christians only. A third independent movement began in Kentucky, as several Presbyterian leaders, the foremost of which was Barton W. Stone, left the Springfield Presbytery in 1804 taking "the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven."

Who then was Campbell, and what did he do for the restoration? Alexander Campbell was preceded to America by his father, Thomas Campbell. In 1809, both Campbells realized the necessity of restoring the New Testament order. The elder Campbell wrote "The Declaration and Address," in which he said, "Nothing ought to be admitted, as of divine obligation, in the constitution and management of the church, but what is expressly enjoined by the

authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles upon the New Testament church, either in express terms or by approved precedent...Nothing ought to be received into the faith or worship of the church, or be made a term of communion among Christians, that is not as old as the New Testament."

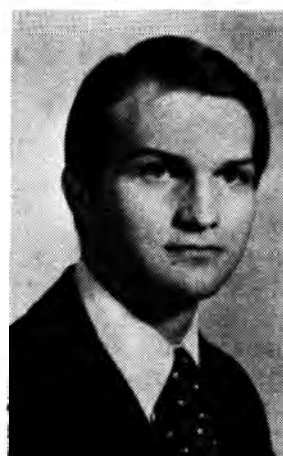
In time, Alexander Campbell became the foremost spokesman for the Restoration plea, editing *The Christian Baptist* and *The Millennial Harbinger*, as well as founding Bethany College. Perhaps Alexander Campbell's greatest achievements were in helping to unite the various groups of non-denominational Christians, and in showing clearly and forcefully the distinctions among the Biblical dispensations and the distinction between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Alexander Campbell was a noted and eloquent speaker, being one of the few preachers to speak to

both houses of Congress of the United States in joint session. Campbell held several widely publicized debates, including a monumental debate with English atheist, Robert Owen.

How then, did this epithet of "Campbellite" come about? It came from sectarians, from those who were limited by their own ignorance. They could think of Christianity only in their own limited denominational thinking. It is a name based on prejudice, with the only remote connection with reality being that Campbell was a great restoration leader. But, of course, taking the name "Campbellite" as a correct appellation goes against all that Alexander Campbell stood for. Our sole guide in religious matters is the Bible. We neither do nor teach anything by the authority of Alexander Campbell. No, we are *not* Campbellites. — 503 Plymouth Street Kannapolis, NC 28081

Modern Revelations?

Many religious people are tossing their Bibles aside and turning instead to what are called exciting "revelations" and "encounters" with the Holy Spirit. One man went so far as to exclaim, "I don't want anything, including this old book [the bible], to get in the way between me and God." This statement revealed not only a poor knowledge of grammar, but manifested faulty understanding of spiritual truth as well.



DALTON KEY

What need have we for the Bible if God will speak to each of us personally and directly? Frankly speaking,

we know almost nothing of God aside from that which he has chosen to reveal about himself in the Scriptures. Rather than the Bible's being a barrier between God and man, it is a blessed bridge connecting God with the obedient reader. As God's inspired book, the Bible is that medium through which he speaks to men today (II Timothy 3:16).

Do we have the promise of modern day revelations from the Holy Spirit, separate and apart from the word of truth? No. In fact, the Bible clearly said that all miraculous manifestations of the Spirit were to cease when "that which is perfect" or the New Testament as God's "perfect law of liberty" was completed (I Corinthians 13:8-10; James 1:25).

Within the Bible, we now have all that we need in terms of divine guidance. The Bible, as it is, is capable, by itself, of thoroughly furnishing us unto all good works (II Timothy 3:17). By means of the written word, the Holy Spirit has delivered the faith "once for all" (Jude 3, ASV). — Box 126, Aurora, Mo. 65605

Days Like These

EARLENE ROSE

Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High.—Psalms 50:14.

On a mellow autumn morning when the world is white with frost,

And the sun rays shine like amber on golden grain that's tossed

To the rhythm of the wind blowing from a clear blue sky,

Prepare, Oh happy hearts, Thanksgiving Day is nigh.

When good odors from the oven tantalizingly drift by,

And appetites keep wishing for a slice of pumpkin pie,

Then hands clasp around the table in a reverent atmosphere,

Rejoice, Oh happy hearts, Thanksgiving Day is here.

When the youngsters start a football game and menfolks start to doze,

When the girls have slipped away upstairs to talk of latest clothes,

And the women clean the kitchen and exchange their recipes,

Praise God, Oh happy hearts, give thanks for days like these.—1608, 24th Street, Northport AL 35476

Purity Of Life

JOHNNY RAMSEY

We truly live in an age of immorality, pornography and sensuality. It is nothing short of tragic to view the world our children must endure. The decadent Roman Empire of the first century was no more licentious than the United States of 1979. The filthy morals of Corinth, Pompeii and Crete could never have superseded the vile carnality of our own day. Eighty percent of the New Testament was written to tell Christians how to live for the Savior and how to follow the example of the Lord (Colossians 3:1-3; I Peter 2:21-22). This is the urgent need today, also. Due to the influence of Hollywood, television, the recording industry, salacious literature and the sex craze we have become a nation overwhelmed with the *works of the flesh*—mentioned and condemned by God in Galatians 5:19-21. The sanctity and beauty of marriage—ordained by Jehovah—is threatened by homosexual behavior, adultery and nonchalant attitudes concerning the monumental divorce rate (Romans 1 and Matthew 19). The modesty demanded by the Lord in I Timothy 2:9-12 is mocked by a society that thrills to indecency, vulgarity and enticement. Instead of abstaining from evil and departing from iniquity (II Timothy 2:19) many see how close to nudity they can go. It is way

past time that faithful Christians speak out against the Devil's influence (I Peter 5:8-9). We must think on matters that are *pure and holy* (Philippians 4:8) and practice an undefiled life of genuine Christianity.

Scholars of ancient Rome admit that a lack of morals ruined a once strong civilization. America could well be on the brink of spiritual suicide right now unless we turn things around for God! In the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 5:8, Jesus said: "Blessed Are The Pure In Heart." Let us strive for that depth and purpose in our conduct.—3307 Hanover, Arlington, TX 76014

WORD of GOD

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at

liberty them that are bruised,

And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Luke 4:18, 21

The Servant Of The Lord

"The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him at his will" (II Tim. 2:24-26).



W. C. QUILLEN

Not all people who claim to be servants of God are. Jesus spoke of some who would persecute and even kill his own servants, thinking they were doing God

service (Jno. 16:2). Paul said of some, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." He also describes them as being "unruly and vain talkers and deceivers" (Tit. 1:10-16). And again: "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:18-19).

It is still true, "That to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey" (Rom. 6:16). Unless one obeys God, and keeps on obeying him, he is not God's servant.

In the passage introducing this article, Paul gives some characteristics of the Lord's servant. The first one is negative: "The servant of the

Lord must not strive." If he does strive, he stirs up strife. "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work" (Jas. 3:14-16).

Therefore, the servant of the Lord must not strive. When he starts striving and causing trouble in the Lord's house, he ceases to be a servant of the Lord, and is serving earthly, sensual, and devilish interests. Strife is classed as a work of the flesh, of which none can be guilty and inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21).

Read again the introductory Scripture and see just what a servant of the Lord must be in a positive way.—P.O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

Why So Much Emphasis On Baptism

DAVID R. PHARR

We are sometimes asked why we give so much emphasis to baptism. The truth is that every command of the Lord should be emphasized in our preaching. As regards baptism, however, the following facts indicate the need for careful attention to Bible teaching on it.

Jesus Christ named baptism as a part of the great commission. See Matt. 28:19 and Mark 16:16. In the commission statement in Luke the word is not found, but the order to preach "repentance and remission of sins" was understood by Peter on the day of Pentecost to include it. See Luke 24:47 and Acts 2:38.

Baptism is in the name of (by the authority of) Jesus Christ. See Acts 2:38, 8:16, 10:48; 19:5. Can anything which is in his name be unimportant?

The apostles and other Spirit-guided New Testament preachers always taught penitent

believers to be baptized. See Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12-13, 36-39; 9:18; 10:48; 16:15, 32-33; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16. Baptism is specifically mentioned in connection with examples of conversion even where faith and repentance are not specifically mentioned. These things were involved, of course; but they were not always specifically mentioned. Baptism is named in connection with each specific case of conversion in Acts.

Every reference to baptism and salvation (or any equivalent term) always shows that baptism comes first. It comes before salvation (Mark 16:16); before remission of sins (Acts 2:38); before washing away sins (Acts 22:16); before newness of life (Rom. 6:4); before being in Christ (Gal. 3:27); and before being saved (I Pet. 3:21). Surely anything that is so clearly involved in salvation needs to be emphasized.

Baptism is connected in the Scriptures with

the blood and death of Christ. We are baptized into the his death (Rom. 6:3). The blood and baptism are both said to be "for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28; Acts 2:38). Further, both are involved in the "washing" away of sin (Acts 22:16; Rev. 1:5).

Bible truth about baptism needs to be emphasized because so many religious groups today are ignoring and contradicting it. In spite of plain Bible statements some are teaching that baptism is not essential for salvation. Others don't baptize at all, but have substituted "sprinkling." Most have a very casual attitude toward baptism, with apparent unconcern for what the Bible teaches. As long as there are those who reject the word of God, we will be compelled to emphasize any gospel command which is being pushed aside. Baptism is such a command.—P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29730

"They Shall Not Appear Before The Lord Empty"

GLENN A. POSEY

Did you ever attend a worship service and receive absolutely nothing from it? Empty lives mean empty worship. In Deuteronomy 16:16, Moses said that the males were to appear before God three times a year in God's chosen place, and when they appeared they were not to be empty handed. Nothing plus nothing makes nothing, and nothing doesn't please God.

David said, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" (Psa. 116:12). With all the provisions which God has provided, and all the blessings we receive, we should ask the question, "What shall I do in return for all the benefits?" When I come to appear before the Lord, what shall I bring? I must not come empty handed. Let us consider some things we should bring to worship when we appear before the Lord.

A Pure Heart. Jesus said, "Blessed are the

pure in heart" (Matt. 5:8). Our hearts must not be empty of pure love, humility, gratitude, and forgiveness. Solomon said, "As he thinketh in his heart so is he" (Prov. 23:7).

A Forgiving Spirit. Jesus taught, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). I must not appear before God on Sunday with malice, hatred, envy, and an unforgiving spirit. God wants us to appear before him with a heart FULL of forgiveness. I will appear before God in worship with the spirit of Jesus and Stephen: "forgive them."

Respectful Attitude. When I appear before God, my heart will not be empty of respect. Isaiah said, "At that day shall a man look to his maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 17:7).

Worshipful Spirit. Jesus said, "God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him

in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). I will not allow my soul to appear before God empty of spiritual things. I will not allow material things to accompany or fill my heart during my worship.

WORD of GOD

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest

upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

Isaiah 11:1-2



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not
the Words . . .

but speak forth

Acts 26:25

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Hell, The End Of The Wicked

A cardinal doctrine of the faith is that a hell of fearful punishment awaits every lost soul in eternity. Modern man fondly hopes that there is no such thing. Satan gladly encourages this vain and foolish dreaming. Even many apostate preachers and denominations boldly deny this divine teaching, i.e., Jehovah's Witnesses and Unitarians. Jesus warned, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).



JOHN WADDEY

Does Hell Really Exist? Man is universally conscious of sin. Every tribe has its totem, its altar, its sacrifice. The guilty conscience is experienced by every responsible soul. All sin and know the condemnation of their own heart (Rom. 3:23). The universal cry of every lost person is, "Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). The reality of sin cannot be denied. Every marker in the cemetery is a silent witness of it. Every war fought is a demonstration of it. Every crime committed perpetually proclaims it. Every liquor store and beer parlor testifies to the fact of sin.

But there can be no sin without law. The great English doctor of jurisprudence, Blackstone, wrote, "Where there is no law there can be no wrong, or violation." *Commentary*. Paul said the same: "Where there is no law, neither is there transgression" (Rom. 4:15). If there be no law to break, then no one can commit sin. But God's law is manifest to all men (Rom. 2:11-16).

Law is of any consequence only when there is a penalty for disobedience. We quote Blackstone again: "Where there is no penalty, the law is

null and void." If the State has a law against speeding while driving a car, yet when one is found guilty, no penalty is imposed, then that law becomes null and void. No one will feel obligated to obey it. A law without a penalty attached for violation is inconceivable and absurd.

Now if there is no hell or punishment for the wickedness, then there is no law, for "law without penalty is null and void." If there is no law, then there is no sin, for "where there is no law there can be no wrong." If there is no sin, then there is no moral or spiritual responsibility incumbent upon man. If there is no moral or spiritual responsibility upon us then why do we find all over the earth churches, courts and prisons? Even Christianity itself is a useless joke if there is no punishment for disobedience. To deny hell is ridiculous, for to do so is to deny that which is every day demonstrated before our eyes, i.e., sin and law.

Jesus declared the existence of hell: "I will warn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell..." (Lk 12:5). Our Lord makes no idle threats. He uses no vain repetitions, yet this theme is mentioned continuously in his teaching.

Hell is a Future Punishment. Some claim that the pangs of a guilty conscience constitute all the hell there is. A little thought will show the folly of this assertion. It is well-known that the more one commits sin the easier it is to do so. The conscience grows calloused with repeated sin (I Tim. 4:2). If this theory were true then the worse a man is the less hell he will suffer. On the contrary, the more devout a person is the more sensitive will be his conscience about sin. Per this theory, the more spiritual a man becomes the more desirous he is of pleasing God, the more hell he will experience. To escape hell, one would simply harden his heart and plunge into unrestrained sin. The theory is absurd. Believe it, who will?

If conscience is our hell, it would also be our heaven! As a rule, however, all those who deny hell want to cling to a literal heaven. The same verse proclaims the reality of both heaven and hell (Matt. 25:46).

Others claim that we get our *hell here on earth* through pain, suffering and misfortune. But often the wicked prosper in this life while the righteous suffer. The psalmist was envious when he saw the "prosperity of the wicked." He wondered if it really paid for him to be righteous because of the apparent inequities of this life (Ps. 73:3-5, 12-14). Consider righteous Job and his suffering. Absolute justice is rarely seen here on earth. There must be a future judgment to right these wrongs. Martyrs for Christ are seen reigning in glory (Rev. 20:4, 6). The wicked who escaped justice in this life will pay their price in hell (Is. 14:9-11). If this foolish theory were true then the godly mother who because of her saintly life deserves heaven, receives hell on earth because of the thoughtless follies of her wicked son. Our lives are so interwoven here on earth that it would be impossible for a wicked husband to suffer hell while his wife enjoyed heaven in the same house. To be properly rewarded and punished they must be separated so far that one can have no influence on the other.

The truth is, hell will be experienced only after Jesus raises the dead and judges them (Rev. 20:11-15).

What is Hell Like? The Lord used numerous comparisons to teach us the reality and nature of hell. Hell is like the valley of Hinnom or Gehenna (Matt. 5:22). This was the refuse dump of Jerusalem. It was no modern sanitary landfill. Sewage, carcasses of dead animals, even the bodies of executed criminals, were cast there and left to decay. Perpetual fires smoldered throughout the valley. Hell is like that.

Hell is like a lake of fire and brimstone into which sinners will be cast (Rev. 20:10). It is like unto a bottomless pit such as we often dream of in our nightmares (Rev. 20:3). It is like an oriental death house with weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:12). Hell is like outer darkness (Matt. 8:12). Seldom do we experience utter darkness but the horrors of hell will be like that. Such conveys an idea of lostness and hopelessness.

Hell is a place of immeasurable loss. Those who

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

I am not mad most noble
 tis, but speak forth the words of
 truth and soberness

— Acts 26:25

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Ponderings Of A Grouch At Thanksgiving

JOHNNY P. HESTER

On the children's program Sesame Street there is a character with whom many of us can sometimes identify. His name is Oscar. Oscar lives in a garbage can—not because he is forced to, but because he prefers to! You see, that's because he's a fantasy creature called a Grouch. Any Grouch has the inborn ability to find something, even in the most pleasant circumstances, about which to complain. Oscar just loves to complain. It occupies a major part of his time and energy.

Oscar the Grouch must be a popular fellow for he has a number of imitators. I do not mean to appear boastful, but there are times when I do a pretty good impression of old Oscar.

"Johnny, isn't this unbelievably beautiful weather for November?" "Yes it is, but it just can't last. When the temperature is this pleasant in November you can just count on a deathly cold and icy late winter. And besides, this is ideal flu weather. I remember a November like this about five years ago and...(grumble, grumble)..."

Sound familiar? Why, I'll bet your impression of Oscar is almost as skillful as mine. Come on—be honest now, am I right? We are all guilty at times. And we know that this attitude and action is *opposed* to the spirit of *thankfulness*. This knowledge combined with what God's word teaches places us in quite a dilemma. The Holy Spirit instructs: "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (I Thessalonians 5:18). "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts...and be ye thankful" (Colossians 3:15).

It is apparent that we must do something about this destructive predisposition to nag, complain and grumble so often and vehemently. Let me share with you a true account that should help you, as it has helped me, to fill your Thanksgiving with true thanksgiving.

Some time ago Janie Russell was interviewed by an NBC newswoman. Janie is a very special person. At the time of the interview she was painting. The beauty of her masterpiece was even more striking as

Continued on page 4



FROM
THE EDITOR

Isaiah 7:14-16

In a recent lecture program at Alabama Christian School of Religion in Montgomery, Alabama I spoke on "Prophecies Concerning the Virgin Birth." Most of the time was spent in discussing Isaiah 7:14, since this is the only prophecy in the Old Testament that is specifically quoted by a New Testament writer and applied to the virgin birth. Some who heard the lecture



BOB DUNCAN

suggested that we include the material in some articles in *Words of Truth*. Since the views of brethren concerning this prophecy have differed through the years, we certainly have no reason to hope the view we present will be accepted by all; but perhaps it will stimulate further study of the passage, and if so, it will have accomplished that much. In the King James Version the passage reads as follows:

14. Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.
15. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.
16. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

For those who believe the New Testament there is no questioning the fact that at least a part of this passage has reference to Christ, for the inspired writer said so in Matthew 1:22, 23. But among those who believe the New Testament there are three prominent views of the passage quoted above. (1) Some say the entire passage refers only to Christ, and to none other. (2) Others believe the entire passage has a dual fulfillment. By this is meant that the language applied to a child already born or soon to be born at the time Isaiah spoke, and also to the Christ who was to be born some seven centuries later. (3) A third view, and the one we believe to be most accurate, is that there are two separate and distinct prophecies in this passage. One of them is in verses fourteen and fifteen, and the other is in verse sixteen. The former applies only to Christ, while the latter applies to a child of Isaiah.

Before discussing the evidence for the accuracy of this third view, we will mention some reasons why we do not believe the entire passage applies to Christ, nor that the passage in its entirety has a dual fulfillment. There are two reasons why the things said in verse sixteen do not apply to Christ: (1) The prophet would not have said that these two kings who were threatening Judah would vacate their thrones before Jesus reached the age to discern between good and evil if, in fact, they were going to vacate their thrones seven hundred years before he was even born. (2) It would

not take a prophetic utterance to assure Ahaz that Rezin (king of Syria) and Pekah (king of Israel), would not still be on their thrones after the passing of seven centuries.

But it is argued that what the verse means is that Syria and Israel would be forsaken of their kings in fewer years than it would later take for the Christ to grow from infancy to the age of being able to discern good and evil. But this is simply not what the passage says.

What about the idea of a dual fulfillment? Can the entire passage refer both to a child already or soon to be born and also to the Christ who was to be born some seven centuries later? We do not believe that it can. Have there been two virgin births? It is suggested that the word "virgin" actually means young woman (as per the Revised Standard Version), or that it simply means one who was a virgin at the time of the prophecy, but not at the time her son would be born. This, they say, is the primary fulfillment, and the secondary fulfillment is the birth of Jesus.

If such is the case, then we have a prophecy concerning the virgin birth being fulfilled once without a virgin birth at all and once by a virgin birth. This view seems to overlook the statement by Matthew, who said: "Now all this was done, *that it might be fulfilled* which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin...." Jesus was born of a virgin *that the prophecy might be fulfilled*. If he had not been born of a virgin, the prophecy could not have been fulfilled. Question: Did Mary have to be a virgin at the time Jesus was born in order for the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 to be fulfilled? Not if the prophecy had already been fulfilled one time by a child born of one who was not a virgin at the time the child was born. If one says the prophecy was fulfilled once by the birth of a child to one who was not a virgin at the time of the child's birth, then he would have to say that Mary could fulfill the prophecy without being a virgin at the time Jesus was born. Why did Mary have to be a virgin when Jesus was born to fulfill the prophecy, when some woman seven hundred years earlier could fulfill the prophecy by conceiving and giving birth in the ordinary way? We do not see how the prophecy could have a dual fulfillment unless there have been two virgin births.

Next week, the Lord willing, we will give some background of the prophecy and show why we believe the passage contains two separate and distinct prophecies.

WORD of GOD

And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

I Corinthians 12:5-9

Naromiyocknowusunkalankshunk

BY BOB PRICHARD

You may be your own judge in pronouncing this word. It is the name of a creek near Milford, Connecticut. This strange Indian name means, "You fish on your end of the stream; I'll fish on mine." To update the expression, we might say, "You mind your own business, and I'll mind my own." People who take this attitude may avoid the outbreak of open hostility, but very few problems are ever settled when this attitude prevails.

Unfortunately, many in the church today have this attitude. They feel that just as long as they don't bother anyone, God will be satisfied with them. This, however, falls much below the Christian ideal. The standards Jesus set forth do not allow brethren

merely to coexist. Brethren must love one another, and go out of their way to try to resolve differences. Jesus used as an example a Jew who brought a gift to the altar, there remembering a brother with whom he had a grievance. Jesus said that the one bringing the gift should leave and "first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Until he had made things right with his brother, this Jew was not ready to offer properly his sacrifice. This passage from the "Sermon on the Mount" applies to us today. If we want our worship to be acceptable to God, then we must be sure that the seeds of bitterness and anger are removed from our hearts. Our feelings toward the brethren must be that of mutual love. Just avoiding open confrontation is not enough.

An unknown author wrote:
 Seek not a way to make excuse
 For hatreds you may feel;
 Love goes beyond a silent truce,
 It reaches out to heal.

Consider the life you are leading, and your relationship to your brethren. Is it what it should be? Are you living by the motto, "You fish on your end of the stream; I'll fish on mine"? It has been said that our love for God can be measured by our love for others. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35). — 503 Plymouth Street Kannapolis, NC 28081

Overcoming Life's Sorrows

Many times our hearts are saddened over the death of a faithful Christian. Therefore, let me make some suggestions to help us during this period of sorrow which death brings.

I believe that John chapter 11 gives us a divine commentary to help us overcome the sorrows of death.

During times of sorrow one should express his emotions. John 11:35 reads, "Jesus wept." While Jesus wept because of the deep realization that sin brings death there was also in this an expression of grief. There is a difference between one's expressing his emotions and one's losing complete control. I Thessalonians 4:13 does not only state "that ye sorrow not," but rather "that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."

We should turn to God in trust. In John 11:22 Martha expresses her confidence in Christ by the statement, "But I know, that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." We who are Christians should remember that even in death we have not been forsaken by God. God saw his own Son go to the cross that we might have eternal life. Death to a Christian is not a closed door, but an open one.

Martha could turn to the Lord in person during this time of his fleshly life. She took comfort from the words of Jesus. You and I may turn to the Lord in trust through the very words spoken unto Martha (John 11:23-26).

The Bible is a great source of comfort, consolation, and encouragement during our times of need. Let us turn to God's inspired Book.

Our friends can comfort us. John 11:19 says, "And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother." Death and the sorrow and pain that death brings is something that is common to all. Each of us needs to encourage one another during the trials which surround death. One in sorrow can relieve some of the pains of his heart as he empties himself in encouragement to others who experience similar circumstances in life. "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15).

We can and should express our feelings in words. Sorrows and doubts harbored on the inside will only increase. Martha expressed her feelings in words. There is a therapeutic value in one's simply talking about the thoughts of his heart.

Always pray to God. Prayer will empty one's heart.



DON MURRELL

In Phil. chapter four Paul reminds us, "...the Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and mind through Christ Jesus. 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." Through this process one can find contentment.

Do not brood over what might have been. Both Martha and Mary expressed to the Lord, "if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died" (John 11:21 & 32). Life cannot be lived upon "if's." We must live life as it really is. Changes must be made, if they are to be made, before it's too late to make them.

We can take consolation in the resurrection and eternal life. "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believe in me: thou shalt live." Death is only a step in the life of a faithful Christian. Death is not the end. There is birth, life, re-birth, abundant life, death, and eternal life.

In order to overcome sorrow let us lose the burdens of our hearts in living the abundant life. Then one day when we too come down to the dark valley of the shadow of death, let us have the confidence, the courage, and the strength to know that death brings life. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor" (John 12:24-26). — 102 Avery Drive LaGrange, Georgia 30240

The Gospel Is For All The World

I am a member of The Church Of Christ. The one we read about in the new testament. Jesus' words at Mark 16:15 were obeyed by the infant church according to Paul's statement at Co. 1:6, and it may be safely inferred that this obedience was to continue; that the preaching of the gospel to every creature throughout the world was to be an ongoing process not confined to the first century. The following is taken from World Radio News of March—April 1979.



Harvey D. Ingram

The World: Its Religions	
Those claiming Christ	One billion.
Muslims	700,000,000.
Hindus	600,000,000.
Marxists and "secular religionists"	500,000,000.
Traditional Chinese	500,000,000.
Buddhists	250,000,000.
Animists	200,000,000.
"Other religions"	100,000,000.
Traditional Japanese	60,000,000.
Jews	15,000,000.

Of this total of nearly four billion people notice that only one fourth profess Christ after 19 centuries have

passed since the most momentous event in the entire history of humanity, the death of God's son for the atonement of the world's sins. Notice too that the first figure includes Catholics, Protestants and sectarians of all sorts who together make up by far the bulk of the total.

In examining these figures one could take comfort in knowing that only 1/4 the earth's population believed in Jesus as God's son, if the earth were thoroughly evangelized by preachers of the gospel. But such is not the case. From the same publication named above there is this:

Continent	Population	Missionaries (Including whole families).
Africa	423,000,000	99
Asia	2,287,000,000	41
South America	326,000,000	81
Europe	476,000,000	135
South Pacific	22,000,000	111
The World	Four Billion	600

To the devout student of the Bible and member of the church depicted there, these figures are no less than shocking and quite saddening, whether entirely accurate or not. The list given does not show NORTH AMERICA. If it did it would show perhaps 250,000,000 population in the U.S. and Canada. And how many gospel preachers? No exact figure is available to me, but estimates range as high as 10,000 fully or partially supported, not including brethren who preach without support.

The gospel did not originate here. It was brought
 Continued on page 4

Hell, The End Of The Wicked

Continued from page 1

end up in hell will have lost all the pleasures of this life. All things they were fond of will be lost. Their place with Abraham and the righteous in Paradise will be forfeited (Lk. 16:19ff). They will lose heaven and the eternal fellowship of the Father and the Son (Rev. 22:14-15). All hope will be lost, even the hope of dying. In hell "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mk. 9:47). "The smoke of their torment goeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night..." (Rev. 14:11). There is no annihilation of the wicked as so many fondly wish.

Hell is a place of repulsive, horrible people. Look around you at the most abandoned wretches on earth...they will be there. Here there is hope for any person. There is a little

good in the worst of men. There they will be completely abandoned in their wickedness and you in their midst. There will be no more restraints upon them, for God will have given them up forever.

It will be a place of painful remorse. Sorrow, shame and self-condemnation will be in every heart. The hopelessness and despair will be overwhelming.

The duration of hell will be eternal. "And these shall go away into eternal punishment" (Matt. 25:46). Every link of the chains of hell will be stamped "forever." Hell is no reform school from which you will graduate. Purgatory is but a wistful dream. Hell is not a preparation for heaven. No missionaries will ever be sent

there.

We leave this dreadful scene with good news. No man or woman has to go to hell. You may choose heaven if you so desire. The cross of Christ stands as a flaming beacon squarely in the path of every hell-bound soul. Every sinner who goes to hell must walk over the crucified body of Jesus and trample the blood of the covenant under foot.

Only the tender mercy of God has spared us thus far from the hell we justly deserve. Will you not turn away from that dreadful cliff on whose edge you have stood so long and with a thankful heart accept the salvation he so graciously offers?—Route 22, Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37921.

The Gospel Is For All The World

Continued from page 3

here. The U.S. was 1700 years into the future when Jesus went to the cross. The English language did not then exist. The obvious question then: why the heavy concentration of gospel preachers in the U.S.? Why several thousand here, and a mere 600 or so in all the rest of the world combined? Why are American preachers apparently concerned only with the salvation of Americans? Since Mark 16:15 still applies, this circumstance cannot be justified.

Is not the oriental in the mud of a rice paddy entitled to hear the good news? Or the black who smears red mud in his hair as a beauty aid on some African river? Shall not the converts of the hysterical founder of Islam know the truth that makes men free? Does Christ want the gospel preached to North Americans first and others later if possible? To ask such questions is to answer them. To know these self evident facts and remain silent is to give tacit approval to the status quo. We are all in this together,

and silence is not the answer when voices need to be heard. Jesus was outspoken where apathy was found. So was Paul. The elder is to rebuke the gainsayer. Stephen died rather than keep silent, as did John before him. Should we now, for "fear of hurting feelings" do less: What of Jesus' feelings?

There is no comfort in these words. Far better would it be if there existed no occasion for them. But there does. The gospel began to be preached in Asia, and went out rapidly into all the world. But now it seems to be centered in America from whence it goes with reluctance. This is unjust; no man will gainsay that. Paul was on two, possibly three continents, not states merely, or even countries. Often alone. I need not recite here what he suffered. If the reader knows the New Testament, he knows. Evangelism was carried on then under barbaric conditions. It can be carried on now. It would be desirable for the preacher

to have at hand the creature comforts of home wherever he preaches; the schools, shops, clubs etc., for his family. But we all know the real world is not like that. And it is the real world that needs the gospel and the real world to which it must be taken. That is how it was done in the early church, and no other way can be devised to improve on going into all the world.

Statistics show 85 percent of the members of the Church Of Christ to be in eight of the states of the U.S. (World Radio News Jan., Feb. 1979). And doubtless a majority of the preachers are with that membership. Since our only desire is truth we must face the fact that apathy and lethargy in the body must be excised. The world will never be converted to Christ under the present system. Let elders take the reins of direction of the church, and preachers go to the lost where they are needed. That is the system, and only system, that will work. That is Bible. — 1010 Star Ave. Parkersburg, W. Va.

Ponderings Of A Grouch At Thanksgiving

Continued from page 2

it became obvious that Janie was blind. Her sense of touch was so highly developed that she could literally feel each stroke. Amazing! But wait—there's more. This beautiful woman had experienced many other hardships in addition to becoming sightless. She had never known even nominal good health. Janie has had two mastectomies and is an epileptic. She has been married three times. Her first two husbands died while still young and the third one left her because he was "embarrassed to lead around a blind wife." Janie had borne eleven children, including two sets of twins. Out of the eleven, only two survived!

There I sat in front of the T.V. watching this woman who had seen so much of the ugliness of life. And there she sat creating beauty. "Aren't you depressed," she was asked. Her reply stunned me, and made me a little ashamed. "Why should I be? You can't live in the past; you have to live today!" Beautiful!

I thank God for allowing me to see and hear Janie Russell. How our loving Father has blessed us! How ungrateful we sometimes are!

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his

presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting;

and his truth endureth to all generations" (Psalm 100).

Have a lovely Thanksgiving and fill up the day, and every day, with true thanksgiving to our generous Father in heaven. — Rt. 2 Box 350 Aberdeen, Mississippi 39730

Magnolia Bible College

The Board of Directors of Magnolia Bible College, Kosciusko, Mississippi recently held its fall meeting and named Cecil R. May, Jr. the new president of the college. Mr. May is presently Dean of International Bible College of Florence, Alabama, and will begin as President of Magnolia Bible College on May 6, 1980. A native of Memphis, Tennessee, Mr. May is a highly respected preacher and is especially appreciated throughout Mississippi. Twenty of his twenty-five years preaching have been spent in Mississippi. He received his B.A. from Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas and has earned his M.A. and has done work on the M.Th. at Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis. Mr. May is a faithful and evangelistic preacher with a great Christian spirit. He will be a teaching president.

During the current school year, Mr. Bill Lambert, Academic Dean of MBC, has been named by the Board to serve as Interim President. Mr. Lambert is a

native of Tylertown, Mississippi. He holds a B.A. in Greek from Belhaven College, Jackson, Mississippi, and an M.A. in English from Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi. His post-graduate studies have been pursued at Alabama Christian School of Religion, Harding Graduate School of Religion, and Reformed Theological Seminary. Magnolia Bible College is very fortunate to have such able men in positions of leadership.

Magnolia Bible College is a four year Bible College located in Kosciusko, Mississippi offering B.A. degrees in Christian Education, Apologetics, Missions, Communications, Greek Exegesis, Biblical Studies, and Old Testament. MBC has been granted accreditation by the Mississippi Commission on College Accreditation and on October 27, 1979, was granted Applicant Status for accreditation from the American Association of Bible Colleges.

WORD of GOD

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile

the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad
the Words of T.

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1979

NUMBER 47

Hallowed Be Thy Name

One thing we should all be careful of is how to use God's name. One of the ten commandments given to Israel was very plain in commanding respect for God's name. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Exodus 20:7). The Israelites were taught to respect the name of God. "And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord he shall be put to death" (Leviticus 24:15, 16).



RON HARPER

Surely taking God's name in vain is a serious thing if the Jews could be put to death for doing so. To take God's name in vain is to use it in a flippant or profane manner or to use it in an oath. "And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord" (Leviticus 19:12). God's name was not to be taken in vain because "holy and reverend is his name" (Psalm 111:9).

The ancient Hebrews had the highest respect and admiration for God's name. "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth" (Psalm 8:1,9). "Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise" (Nehemiah 9:5).

In the New Testament we see that Christians are to have the same respect for God's name. Jesus taught his disciples to address God as "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2). According to Arndt and Gingrich the phrase "Hallowed be thy name" means "may thy name be held in reverence" (*A Greek English Lexicon*

of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature).

In seeing the importance of the name of Jesus we will see that reverence is also due his name. "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life *through his name*" (John 20:31, emphasis mine, R. H.). "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, emphasis mine). "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Philippians 2:10, emphasis mine).

When we use the name of God or the name of Jesus we are not using common ordinary names. We are using the name of the almighty creator of the universe and the name of the saviour of the world. We must not use them in vain. How disgusting to hear someone cursing and taking God's name in vain. A true Christian will refrain from such.

While most of us would never curse and use God's name in vain the way some people do we are sometimes guilty of using the names of the Godhead in a light or flippant manner. We have heard Christians use such terms as Gosh, Golly, good Lord,

Lordy, etc. We need to remember that Gosh, Golly, Gee, etc are euphemisms for God and Jesus. If you do not believe this check Webster's dictionary. When we use such terms we are actually taking God's name in vain. One who is a true Christian would not want to blaspheme the Lord's name. Paul said, "No man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed" (I Corinthians 12:3). We realize that this passage is speaking of those in New Testament times who were inspired. The principle, however, is valid today. True children of God will reverence these holy names. A. T. Robertson makes an interesting observation concerning this passage. "One is reminded of the demand made on Polycarp that he say Kurios Caesar [Kurios being Greek for Lord. R. H.] and how each time he replied Kurios Jesus. He paid the penalty for his loyalty with his life. Lighthearted men today, can say 'Lord Jesus' in a flippant or even in an irreverent way, but no Jew or Gentile then said it who did not mean it" (Word Pictures in the New Testament, Vol 4).

"Our Father Who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." — 1501 6th Ave. Jasper, AL 35501

Is It Wrong To Dance?

This question was asked me last week. With the beginning of the holiday party season, many of our young people will have to face this question. Each one faced with this should study this subject under the following questions.

Could dancing be a form of wantonness or lasciviousness? The Greek word ASELGEIA, which is translated "wantonness" in Romans 13:13 and lasciviousness" in Galatians



DON MURRELL

5:19, means, "wanton (acts or) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females, etc." (Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, pp. 79-80). Read carefully Galatians 5:19-21, I Peter 4:1-4, and Romans 13:10-14. Would the modern dance be the unchaste handling of males and females?

Could modern dances and their related activities be considered as revelling? The Greek word KOMOS is defined by Thayer as, "...used generally of feasts and drinking parties that are protracted till late at night and indulge in revelling" (Romans 13:13, Galatians 5:21, and I Peter 4:3). Would it be possible that this would describe what takes place at many modern dances?

Could dancing be a form of worldiness? Thayer

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Feat-
tus: but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness." — Acts 26:25

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“Kickin’ ‘Em Out”

The matter of church discipline and withdrawal of fellowship is more often than not misunderstood as an act of “kickin’ ‘em out of the church.” This view is of course incorrect, it is simply a misunderstanding of the intent and purpose of church discipline as commanded by our Lord. God alone adds to his church (Acts 2:47) when a person has met all of the terms and conditions for admission. This is an act of God and his alone. No human being has ever been given the authority to revoke another’s membership in God’s church. The question arises then, just what does it mean to disfellowship a member?



ROY FULLER

The Lord has commanded: (1) Mark and avoid them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine (Rom. 16:17). (2) Put away that wicked person from among you (Rom. 16:17). (3) Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly (II Thess 3:6). (4) Note that man and have no company with him (II Thess. 3:14).

All of these commands come to us from God by revelation and inspiration directing certain actions to be taken toward sinful brethren. Our obedience to these commands does not involve the giving or taking of church membership in any way. Disfellowship simply means that we are not to recognize him as a faithful brother and are not to company with him socially until he repents and changes his sinful way. It is God’s way, through the local congregation of letting the wayward and impenitent know that his conduct is unacceptable in the house of the Lord.

The action of disfellowship on the part of the entire congregation should cause the person to become ashamed that his conduct has brought about this alarming state of affairs. It should cause him to think seriously about his condition and hopefully bring him to repentance. The purpose of this action is twofold: (1) To maintain the purity of the church. Specifically to keep others from becoming contaminated by the leavening influence of sin (I Cor. 5:6-7). (2) To make

Continued on page 4



FROM THE EDITOR

Isaiah 7:14-16

(No. 2)

This article and the one last week are published in response to several requests following a discussion on the lecture program at Alabama Christian School of Religion. In the first article we gave reasons why we do not believe this entire passage ragers only to Christ, and also why we do not believe it is one prophecy with a dual fulfillment. The reader should read that article before reading this one. In this article we will show why we believe the passage contains two separate and distinct prophecies: one in verses 14 and 15, and another in verse 16. For convenience of reference the verses under consideration are copied here.



BOB DUNCAN

14. Therefore the Lord himself shall give you sign; Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

15. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

16. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

An understanding of this passage depends to some degree upon an understanding of the background against which it is set. Because of the wickedness of Ahaz, king of Judah, God had brought first Syria, and then Israel against him. From II Chronicles 28 we learn that the king of Syria took a great multitude captive. From the same chapter we learn that the king of Israel slew one hundred twenty thousand in one day, and carried away two hundred thousand into captivity. It is not surprising that when these two kings decided to join their forces to attack Jerusalem, Ahaz and the whole house of David were filled with consternation. The stated purpose for their attack was to depose Ahaz and set upon the throne of Judah “the son of Tabeal” (Isaiah 7:6). Ahaz had sent for the king of Assyria to help him, but when he came he “distressed him, but strengthened him not” (II Chronicles 28:20).

It was in the midst of all this fear and consternation that God sent Isaiah to meet Ahaz “at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller’s field” (Isaiah 7:3). This was a public place, and others would be present to hear the words of Isaiah. Please note that God specifically told Isaiah to take with him his son, Shearjashub, whose name means, “the remnant shall return.” (Could it be he had been born the year before, when so many had been taken captive out of Judah?) Now there just had to be some reason why God told Isaiah to take his son with him to go and meet Ahaz. We will see what that reason was.

In verses 5 to 9 of Isaiah 7 the prophet assures Ahaz that these two confederate kings would not be successful in accomplishing their stated purpose. He calls them “the two tails of these smoking firebrands.” He warns Ahaz that unless he believes, he will not be established. He then tells Ahaz to ask

for a sign. But Ahaz refuses, pretending that the reason is that he does not want to tempt the Lord. In verse 13 Isaiah says, “Hear ye now, O house of David...” Please note that these words are not addressed merely to Ahaz, but to the house of David. The house of David needed to be reassured that God’s promises concerning the throne of David were not about to be overthrown by the threat to depose Ahaz and set upon the throne the son of Tabeal. This assurance was in the promise of the virgin birth of one who would be called Immanuel (God with us). God has not forsaken his promise to the house of David. Isaiah 55:3 speaks of the “sure mercies of David.” The fact of the virgin birth and the name Immanuel point up the deity of this son which was to be born. The fact he would be born of a woman and that he would eat butter and honey point up his humanity. The meaning of verse fifteen is probably that the child born of the virgin would eat ordinary food given to Jewish babies until (instead of *that*) he reached the age to discern good from evil. To this agree *The preacher’s Homiletic Commentary, Pulpit Commentary, and Barnes’ Notes*.

But this language suggests the next thought—this one concerning the child of Isaiah which he had brought with him. Verse 16 could be accurately translated: “*But before this child shall know to refuse...*” (See the discussion in *Preacher’s Homiletic Commentary*.) Perhaps Isaiah was holding his own son in his arms and pointed to him when he made the statement. Here was a promise to Ahaz that the immediate threat of overthrow by Israel and Syria would be past and gone before Shearjashub was old enough to refuse evil and choose good.

If this is not the meaning of the passage, then how would one go about explaining why God told Isaiah to take Shearjashub with him?

NEW QUARTERLY TO BE PUBLISHED

The Southwest Church of Christ in Austin, Texas will begin publication soon of a new quarterly magazine called *THRUST*. It will be solely devoted to a refutation of denominational doctrines. The first issue, to be published soon after the first of the year, will deal with the Jehovah’s Witnesses. For a FREE subscription write: Jerry Moffitt, editor, 6901 Skynook, Austin, TX 78745.

We Are All Unworthy

BOBBY KEY

A preacher commented to me that he no longer preached on grace for fear that people would get the idea they had not earned salvation!

My friend, that is the whole idea! No man will ever be saved because he was worthy of salvation or because he earned his way into heaven. We can never merit salvation. The gospel is called the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24). The gospel is the good news that tells us the grace of God. The word “grace” means unmerited favor: unearned and unachieved blessings and benefits: an undeserved bestowal.

In the parable of the two sons, neither son was what he should have been. The feast described in Matthew 22 tells of guests that were both good and bad. The total population, in the truest and highest sense, were not entitled to be invited to the marriage feast. How can any one feel that God “owes” him

Continued on page 4

Why Don't You Write

The gift of communication is truly one of God's greatest gifts to mankind. Second to oral communication is the ability to write our thoughts one to another. Historians credit the ancient Sumerians with first developing a system of word writing prior to 3,000 B.C. From that date multiplied billions of sheets of communication have been written in virtually every language of the human family.



JOHN WADDEY

Although the telephone has greatly increased our ability to communicate quickly, still billions of pieces of mail are processed by our postal system yearly. With this marvelous gift at our fingertips, and the postal service to deliver our messages speedily, it is shameful how few of us use this tool to its fullest potential. How often have you been asked, "Why don't you write?"

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly," said Paul (I Tim. 3:15). Much of our New Testament is in the nature of letters written by the apostles to congregations and co-workers. John was commissioned to write letters to seven churches (Rev. 2:1).

There are letters that every Christian needs to write. Consider these suggestions and then take up the pen.

Why not write your parents. Whether you are a student away at college or an executive, you owe it to your parents to let them hear from you once in awhile. Tell them you love them. Paul's admonition to honor our father and mother would include being considerate of them in this way (Eph. 6:1).

Parents, write your kids that are away in college or in the service. Let them know you are concerned for them. Tell them of your prayers for them. Your letter might be the encouragement that will help keep them on the right road. In this way we can extend our "nurturing them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). A brother related to me how the reminder of his parents' prayers each night for him helped keep him from many evils during his years in the navy.

Write a missionary and his wife. No one knows how lonely it is in a strange land, thousands of miles from home. When no mail arrives for days or weeks it is doubly oppressive. Money could not equal the value of a personal letter from folks back home. Even if you have never met the family, your kinship in Christ will make it a beautiful gift. In this way we help to hold up the hands of those noble trailblazers (Phil. 4:14).

Write a note to thank gospel preachers, elders, and other brethren and sisters who have blest your life. We owe so much to those who taught us the gospel, who helped us grow up in Christ. Without them we might have perished. Nothing would be more cherished by an aged teacher than a note from his student who is now a stalwart in the faith (II John 4).

Write a sympathy note to someone who has a lost loved one. Such a little thing as this can mean so much in an hour of sorrow. It says you care. Your light is shining for the Lord (Matt. 5:16). You are truly helping to bear another's burden (Gal. 6:2). These need not be sent only to personal acquaintances. Some Christians check the obituary column and send cards to all sorrowing families.

Send a get well card to someone sick or shut in. Your life will be more meaningful as you brighten someone else's day. We all look forward to such remembrances when we are sick. The golden rule tells us we shall thus encourage our friends and brethren (Matt. 7:12).

Surprise an aged brother or sister in the church or a

neighbor in the community. Send them a birthday card. Put a little personal note within it. Just a little pinch of salt will flavor their whole day good (Matt. 5:13).

Write a sinner a letter about his need for the Savior. You might win him in this way. You can polish and smooth a letter. You can even rewrite it to make sure it says just the right thing. Perhaps he or she will write back and you can teach him just as surely as if you were face to face. Enclose an appropriate tract. Seal it with a prayer for heaven's help in your mission. Paul wrote urging men to be reconciled unto God (II Cor. 5:20). So can you.

Write for a World Bible School student from overseas who wants a partner for a Bible correspondence course. Write to the Webb Chapel Church of Christ, 13427 Webb Chapel Road, Dallas, Texas 75234. In so doing you will help to evangelize the world for Jesus (Mk. 16:15).

Write a fellow Christian who has wandered away from God. We who are spiritual must seek to restore these lost sheep (Gal. 6:1). Sometimes a letter will enter where a personal visit might be spurned.

Write a letter to your newspaper editor. Affirm

your faith in those good and wholesome things that need to be promoted. Defend truth from error. Reprove the sin and error of our day. You can have a one-page double spaced letter printed in nearly any paper if it is timely and well done. You will "preach the Word" to thousands in this way (II Tim. 4:1-2).

Write your TV stations and program sponsors. Commend the good broadcasts they offer, protest the obscene and immoral. You can make things change for good. "Cry aloud and spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and declare unto my people their transgressions..." (Is. 58:1).

Write your elected officials. Let them know what you expect of them. Encourage them in the right and "chasten them" when they endorse and vote for evil. Most politicians want to be reelected to office. To do so they need votes. You are important to them. Many will count their constituent mail before a crucial vote. This is how righteousness can be preserved and maintained in the land.

Thank God for his manifold gifts, especially the gift of written communication. Let's use it to his glory. — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road Knoxville, TN 37921

Why Have We Grown

An article, written by Allen E. Highers in the Gospel Advocate in 1967, was reproduced in the July 1979 issue of The Spiritual Sword. In the article brother Highers quotes from the Memphis Commercial Appeal dated June 17, 1967:

"The fastest-growing major religious body in the United States is the Churches of Christ, an evangelical Protestant communion which has its greatest strength in the South and West.

Its membership has increased 135 per cent—from one million to 2,350,000—since 1950."

The article then gives the rate of growth of other religious bodies over the same period as reported by a UPI Survey. The second group was the Mormon Church, with a growth of 61 percent. All other religious bodies experienced a percentage of growth less than this. The more conservative groups reported the greatest growth.

The period of time covered by the report included the turbulent sixties,—a period of social unrest, racial clashes, moral permissiveness, political corruption, destructive demonstrations, court reversals, civil revolution, and religious liberalism.

Many of the major religious bodies jumped into the political battle and joined the marchers and demonstrators. They began to merge into larger denominations and supported with little reservation the ecumenical movement with overtones toward the papacy of Rome to head the world church.

Situation ethics and existentialism became popular in society, resulting in moral permissiveness, civil lawlessness, and religious rationalism and liberalism.

The churches of Christ became alarmed, they became more active in the religion of Christ and increased their efforts to evangelize the world. They introduced nothing new but stood for the old paths, preached the pure gospel with zeal and determination, and opposed the liberal innovations and permissive trends of the times. They stood for something while most religious groups endorsed most everything. The purity of the gospel stood in

open contrast to the worldliness and humanism sweeping society and denominations. Churches of Christ grew.

During the past fifteen years, churches of Christ have slipped and are no longer the fastest growing group in the United States. Could it be that we have been infiltrated by some of the liberal ideas and socialistic actions which hindered the growth of other religious groups? Are we aping them too much? Are we compromising the truth of the gospel? Have we lost our interest in serving the Lord and in saving souls? — P.O. Box 212 Lawrenceburg, TN 38464



W. C. QUILLEN

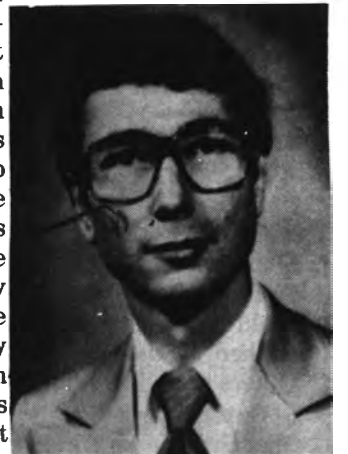
The Holy Spirit Confusion

Much of late has been said and written concerning the Holy Spirit. That there is wide confusion over the Holy Spirit can be admitted by all of us and denied by none who are honest about the matter. However, this confusion does not have to exist. It is my contention that the Bible can be understood by man. Only the foolish would say that God has given us a Bible that cannot be understood.

Our confusion over this subject has been brought upon us by none other than ourselves, mostly because of our lax Bible study habits and our unwillingness to accept God's truth about the subject, since it is easier for some to search for the new and mysterious rather than to accept the "old" truth as revealed in the Bible. When one understands the work of the Holy Spirit and how the Holy Spirit does that work, then our confusion is solved. Therefore, we will notice these in this writing.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto

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MICHAEL D. STONE

Is It Wrong To Dance?

Continued from page 1

defines the Greek word KOSMOS in part, "...stir desire, seduce from God and are obstacles to the cause of Christ." Would dancing stir up evil desires on the part of those who are dancing or even on the part of those who are watching?

Would dancing hurt my Christian influence? In I Timothy 4:12 Paul states, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Matthew 5:16 reads, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and

glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Also read I Peter 2:12 and I Peter 4:4.) I do not believe that dancing will edify or set a good example. I heard a preacher state in a sermon a few weeks ago that he asked his date at the only dance he ever attended to attend church services with him the next day. Her reply was, "If you are a Christian, what are you doing here?"

Could dancing lead others to sin: The American Standard Version of II Corinthians 6:3 reads, "Giving no occasion of stumbling in anything..." (Also read

Romans chapter 14.)

Ask yourself the following questions about any recreation? (1) Is it right? (2) Do good people approve it? (3) Will it carry me to questionable places? (4) Will it hurt others? (5) Will it hurt my influence? (6) Will it weaken me spiritually? (7) Will it cause a brother to stumble? (8) Will it harm my body? (9) Would Christ and the Apostles do it? (10) Would I like for Christ to come while I am doing it? — 102 Avery Drive LaGrange, Georgia 30240

“Kickin’ ‘Em Out”

Continued from page 2

the sinful brother ashamed, ultimately bringing about a working of repentance (II Thess. 3:14).

This action by the brethren does not in any way sever him from the Church. If it did his only way of return would be through obedience to the same terms and conditions by which he was added to the church in the first place. In other words, God would have only one law of pardon in effect. The action of disfellowship merely *identifies* the sinful brother as one who is in rebellion to God, and thus is not entitled to enjoy the same blessings and privileges as a faithful child of God, Disfellowship also means that we cannot participate in his evil ways, we must avoid him, and we cannot company with him socially. We

are to continue to admonish him as a brother as we have opportunity (II Thess. 3:15). A brother or sister who persists in sin and refuses to repent will be eternally lost (Heb. 10:26-27).

If after much patient teaching, persuasion, and admonition by the brethren it becomes evident that the brother steadfastly resists and refuses to repent, it is the will of God that he be marked and avoided (Rom. 16:17). The only choice that the faithful have in this matter is to OBEY or DISOBEY God. To disobey makes us no less rebellious in God's sight.

When it has been determined by the leadership of any congregation that disfellowship action has become necessary the following points should be

emphasized to the entire congregation: (1) That the person has made the action necessary by refusing to repent. (2) That the person is not to be treated as an enemy. (3) That he is to be avoided until he repents. (4) That he is to be considered as a rebel, not an alien. (5) That we are not to sin by treating him with scorn and hate. (6) That we are to admonish him as a brother as opportunities arise. (7) That the entire congregation is scripturally bound to support the action.

The true spirit of Christ demands that we always hope for, pray for, and work for that day when our erring brother returns home again. — Rt. 4 Box 479 Elba, AL 36323

The Holy Spirit Confusion

Continued from page 3

you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world hat been judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he

speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come" (John 16:7-13).

Please notice that the Holy Spirit is a person. Jesus called him the "Comforter" and "He." In verse seven, Jesus said, "I will send him unto you." The "you" refers to no one except the apostles. Verse thirteen says the Comforter would come speaking. What is he going to do when he comes? Verse eight says, "And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement."

We have thus learned the following facts:

(1) The Holy Spirit is a person.

(2) The Holy Spirit was promised to the apostles

(3) The Holy Spirit was to the apostles, speaking. This he did in Acts 2.

(4) The Holy Spirit was to speak through the apostles for the purpose of convicting the world.

Notice too, beloved, that the Holy Spirit was NOT sent to the WORLD to convict the world. The Holy Spirit was sent to the apostles to convict the world through them. There is no miraculous impact of the Holy Spirit upon human spirit, notwithstanding the claims of many to the contrary. The Holy Spirit speaks today through the written word of God. — 321 Lynwell Drive Orlando, Florida 32809

We Are All Unworthy

Continued from page 2

eternal life? We might do well to take a look at Matthew 20 and read about the laborers in the vineyard. I cannot see how the owner of the vineyard could be overly impressed with either class. Some worked all day and then murmured that evening. Others were idle all day except for an hour's work.

Surely every Bible student should be able to see that Grace is what enables us to stand justified in the sight of God. Our salvation from sin and our hope of eternal life comes as a free gift from God and does not depend on human worth. This salvation has already been brought to man and is offered upon the terms of the gospel which terms are embraced in the one word, "believe." The whole story of human redemption is comprehended in two words: "grace" and "faith." It is grace on God's part and faith on man's part. This does not mean that we have nothing to do in order to receive God's grace. The word "believe" embraces the doing of the will of God. In fact the words "believe" and "obey" are used together to describe the same thing. "He that believeth on the Son hath

eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him" (John 3:36). "he that believeth...he that obeyeth not..." An obedient faith saves. Salvation by "faith only" is an erroneous doctrine from human creeds. It is not the teaching of the Bible. One who refuses to obey the Son of God is an unbeliever in a very practical sense. Without this faith and obedience we reject God's grace.

However, we must never get the notion that we merit salvation. Salvation is by the grace of God. It is a free gift depending not upon man's deserving or man's worth. This gift of God's grace has already been given (John 3:16; Heb. 2:9). This grace of God has brought salvation to all men (Titus 2:11). We come into the enjoyment of this salvation by faith, and this faith is expressed, actualized or made perfect by obeying Christ or by complying with the terms named by Christ and the Holy Spirit as conditions of salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 16:30-34). When we have, through faith, surrendered to Christ,

submitted to his will, we have purified our souls in obeying the truth (I Peter 1:22), and our hearts are purified by faith (Acts 15:9).

One who properly understands the above points based on the Sacred Scriptures is ready to receive God's grace by faith, repentance and baptism. "Amazing grace how sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found — Was blind but now I see." — 124NW, Miami, OKLA 74354

WORD of GOD

Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall

be taken, and the other left.

Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

Matthew 24:40-42



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1979

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Writing An Article For Words Of Truth

BOBBY DUNCAN

We appreciate so very much those who take the time to write articles for publication in *Words of Truth*. They do so without any reward other than the satisfaction of seeing their work in print and knowing they are accomplishing some good in the lives of those who read. Without those who write, we could not have a paper like this.

Words of Truth is published every week in the year, and consists of four large pages of scriptural teaching. As a rule we do not have an extremely large supply of articles on hand from which to select. This means, of course, that we always welcome good, scriptural, well written articles. Needless to say, we receive a number of articles which we do not publish, either because we think the content is not worthwhile, is unscriptural, is ambiguous, etc., or else because it is poorly written from the standpoint of grammar, punctuation, etc. Our task as editor is difficult enough without having to rewrite articles submitted for publication.

Last year we mailed some guidelines to those who were writing regularly for *Words of Truth*. We are reproducing these guidelines here for the benefit of others who may wish to write for this paper. If you choose to write an article, please keep these guidelines handy and use them in preparing your article. It will make our job as editor much easier, and will help maintain a high quality publication.

GUIDELINES

1. Article should be type written, double spaced, on letter size white sheets (not onion-skin paper). Margins of about an inch should be left on all four sides of the paper. We prefer articles no longer than three pages; and we rarely publish one longer than four pages. Please do not send photostatic copies of articles.

2. The Title of the article should be centered at the top of the first page and the name of the author immediately under the title. The author's address should appear at the end of the article. If you sometimes write for other publications please send a note telling whether the article has been submitted to others for publication. We prefer to publish only

material which has not already been circulated in other brotherhood papers. We believe we owe this to those who pay good money for their subscriptions.

3. If we do not already have a recent picture of you, please enclose one with the next article you submit.

4. Commas and periods should normally be placed inside quotation marks. "Jesus wept." If a reference is to follow a quotation withhold the period or comma until after the reference is given, and place it outside the parentheses. "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). Do not do it as follows: "Jesus wept". or, "Jesus wept." (John 11:35.) References to books other than the Bible should be handled in the same way as a rule, instead of in footnotes. If footnotes are necessary or more practical, place them all at the end of the article — not at the bottom of each page.

5. Ellipses should be designated by a *space* followed by three *spaced* period. "For God so

loved . . . that he gave . . ." Please note the ellipsis at the end of a sentence is followed also by a period, which means four spaced periods if it is at the end of a sentence. Note also there is a space before the first period and a space between each period and after the last one.

6. A dash is indicated by two unspaced hyphen -- not one.

7. Roman numerals should be used for volume or book numbers, i.e., II Timothy 2:15 instead of 2 Timothy 2:15.

8. Do not capitalize pronouns referring to deity. "Christ saves those who obey him."

One final word: We like to know something about those whose articles we publish. If we do not know you, we would appreciate your enclosing with your first article a brief biographical sketch.

The Sinner Dies To Sin In Baptism

I. E. JOHNSON

In I Cor. 15:3-4, Paul shows that Christ did three things for us that we cannot do for ourselves: (1) he died, (2) he was buried, (3) he rose from the dead. We cannot do any of these things for ourselves. But we do, in a figure, go through all three of these things in the act of baptism. Some argue that the sinner dies to sin in repentance. They reason that since in the natural realm, a man dies and is buried later, that the same must be true in the spiritual realm. Thus according to such reasoning, baptism shows TWO things; the burial and resurrection of Christ. By that logic, baptism cannot in any way show the death of Christ, nor the death of the old man of sin.

But we believe that baptism shows THREE things; the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. We do not know of any brother who would deny that baptism shows the burial and

resurrection of Christ, but some would deny that baptism shows the death of Christ.


In view of the foregoing, we herein set forth five reasons for believing that the Holy Scriptures teach that the sinner dies to sin in the act of water baptism, and not in the act of repentance:

(1) We are "baptized into his death" (Rom. 6:3-4). No man has ever repented into the death of Christ!

(2) We are "buried with him by baptism into death" (Rom. 6:3-4). Note that Paul did not say that we died first, and then were buried with him by baptism—but we were buried into his death. The burial and the death take place in the same act—baptism!

In Roman 6:3-4, Paul does not say that the

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— Acts 26:25

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Ananias' Statement To Saul



BOB DUNCAN

Jesus told Saul, when he appeared to him on the road to Damascus, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6). This was Saul's assurance that he would be told what to do when he arrived in Damascus. He went into the city fully expecting someone to tell him what he must do. What he was told to do after he arrived in Damascus is recorded in Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." An analysis of the admonition contained in this verse should be of interest to all who desire to do the will of the Lord.

"ARISE, AND BE BAPTIZED...." How many modern day preachers would tell a man this under these same circumstances? This man has seen the Lord, and is praying? Would most modern day preachers tell a man who has seen the Lord and is praying to arise and be baptized? Most would not, but would tell him instead to keep on praying. Prayer is no substitute for obedience. In fact, there is no substitute for obedience. Samuel told king Saul: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (I Samuel 15:22).

Remember that Christ had told Saul of Tarsus, "it shall be told thee what thou *must* do." Now he is being told to arise and be baptized. Baptism is a *must*. Popular religionists of our day have made baptism an optional matter, but the Lord made it a *must*. In a sermon on the new birth, Billy Graham did not read or quote a single verse alluding to baptism. If being baptized was something Saul *must* do, why do so many preachers argue that baptism

is not essential?

"AND WASH AWAY THY SINS...." Some stumble at this statement, not being able to see how baptism could possibly wash away sins. Certainly baptism does not stop the desire or practice of sin. Repentance does that. Baptism washes away the guilt of sin. This is in perfect harmony with every passage on the subject of baptism, such as Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, I Peter 3:21, etc.

But how does baptism save? Why is it so important? Because God commanded it and made it a condition of salvation, just as he made dipping in Jordan a condition upon which Naaman would be healed (II Kings 5), and just as he made washing in the pool of Siloam a condition upon which the blind man would receive his sight (John 9). Baptism is that which puts the sinner into contact with the death of Christ (Romans 6:3, 4).

"CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD." Calling on the name of the Lord is more than saying, "Lord, Lord" (Matthew 7:21). Proverbs 28:9 and John 9:31 show that one might pray and still not be saved. Calling on the name of the Lord, for the alien sinner, involves being baptized. The phrase, "calling on the name of the Lord," is in apposition to and in explanation of the exhortation to arise and be baptized. Those who were converted in Acts 2 called on the name of the Lord (verse 21) by repenting and being baptized for the remission of sins (verse 38). In Romans 10:13, calling on the name of the Lord is made equal to believing and obeying the gospel in verse 16.

In commenting on Acts 22:16, John Wesley said: "Baptism, administered to real penitents, is both a means and a seal of pardon. Nor did God ordinarily in the primitive Church bestow this on any, unless through this means" (Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament). It would be interesting to hear those of that denomination which Wesley founded explain when God changed his practice with reference to this matter. Was it when most preachers began preaching it otherwise?

Plain Speech

There are several things that should characterize preaching. It should be sound. "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1). Paul went on to tell Titus what would be involved in teaching sound doctrine. Most of the discussion was taken up with holiness of life, something most people do not equate with sound doctrine. In verse eight Paul mentioned "Sound speech, that cannot be condemned." Titus would be a faithful preacher by exhorting others to keep their lives pure, by keeping his own life pure, and by preaching the truth. Paul's charge to Timothy was essentially the same (II Timothy 4:2-5).



RON HARPER

Clarity should characterize preaching to the same degree as soundness. Actually it is hard to conceive of sound preaching without clarity. When we get through preaching there should be no doubt in the minds of those in the pew as to what we said. What a shame that many can listen to some preachers and never get the idea that they are lost. We need the kind of preaching done by Peter that will cause people to be pricked in their hearts (Acts 2). The greatest compliment ever given preachers of the gospel was given to Paul and Barnabas in Acts 14:1 when it was stated that "they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of Jews and also of the Greeks believed." Their preaching was of such a nature that it caused people to be converted.

There is one other area wherein we should be clear. When we write reports of those converted we should speak in terms that will let the readers know what has taken place. Why write of people "changing fellowships" or "joining our forces" or the such like when we

"What Thinkest Thou?"

This is a question addressed to the Jews by some who really didn't know what Jesus thought (Matt. 22:17). They asked about paying tribute to Caesar but they were not really that concerned. They sought to trap Jesus in what he said. They had a great opportunity to listen to the world's greatest teacher and learn, but they abused that opportunity.

We don't have to be too concerned about what some people think. But, we dare not ignore the mind of Christ on any matter.



WINFRED CLARK

We need to know what he thinks as concerns the soul. This we can learn by looking to see what he had to say. Even those who asked the question of the tribute money learned what he thought (Matt. 22:19-22). So by taking the New Testament we can see what he thought relative to matters that concern our souls.

He thought the Church ought to be preached. I am aware that this is not according to current thought. Many will make it a point to say "preach Christ, not the church." I also realize that Christ is to be preached, but I dare say one cannot preach one without the other. Would you observe please, that the first preaching Jesus did concerns the church. Note Matt. 4:17: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This has long been a proof

Abusing Scriptural Principles

"Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But



RAY HAWK

ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites" (Matthew 15:1-7).

The Pharisees and scribes neglected one command to do another. They were guilty of abusing their "gift devoted to God" by neglecting their parents. As did they, so do we at times.

It is right to commit oneself to God. So often we see our failure to have enough dedication in this area of our lives. We must constantly edify one another and exhort each to give himself fully to Jesus Christ (Romans 12:1, 2). However, when a preacher (or others) brow beats the membership constantly into a state of paranoia because he thinks the membership is not fully committed, a scriptural principle has been abused. When a person "commits" himself to the point of a nervous breakdown or neglecting his family or job, he has fallen into the same trap which ensnared the Pharisees. On the other hand, if a person uses his family or job as an excuse to neglect the Lord, he has gone to the opposite extreme.

It is wrong to divide the church because the splitters think the church today, as is, is dead. It is sad when brethren begin thinking that because they are immersing three hundred a year that any congregation which does less is unsound. We cannot be critical of three hundred immersions for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). However, if guilt is used as a tool to drive people to use pressure tactics to convert people while families are neglected at home, the whole business becomes hypocritical (Matthew 15:7). When one church screams, "We are the only sound congregation in the brotherhood because we have buses and bring in two hundred and convert one hundred each year" and another shouts, "No, we are sounder because we have in excess of one thousand for services and are converting three hundred a year," they use some other standard for soundness than did the Lord. Keep in mind that I am not critical of busing nor of a church's size or the number they immerse into Jesus Christ each year. I am concerned with the abuses and the attitude that if one doesn't do as do they, he isn't sound. Soundness is based upon methods as its standard rather than scripture!

If one church uses numbers as a standard of soundness, why couldn't another use its contribution as a standard? One church could say it is sound because it had a \$2,000,000 plus contribution one Sunday and until others do the same, they are not sound. When will some church claim they are the only sound church in the brotherhood because they have the largest enrollment in their school of preaching? I can just see some church claiming it is sounder than the rest because they send more full time missionaries than any other church in the brotherhood. My, my, where will it stop if we begin using such standards for soundness?

The above illustrations are abuses, but are they any

worse than those who believe they are sound because they preach with vindictiveness, arrogance, or harshness? Just because a preacher is fired does not mean he is a "sound" preacher. Brow beating and pressure tactics are not limited to just one preacher in our brotherhood! If members leave one congregation because of its cultic practices are they any different from those who leave a congregation where the preacher continually saddles them with guilt because they do not meet the budget, convert "X" number of people, or do everything he thinks they ought to do but seldom engages in himself? Those who are guilty of cult practices can justify themselves when members leave by calling it "growing pains," or accusing those who depart of being shirkers and backsliders. However, there is little difference in that

attitude and the one held by the preacher who is vindictive in his preaching and drives people away. When they leave, he thinks they could not hold their feet to the fire and left because they did not appreciate "sound gospel preaching." Is this not an abuse of scriptural principles too? Would Jesus not say to such individuals, both cultic and the other, "You hypocrites"?

May we all look inward and try to correct our own abuses of scriptures as we try to help others correct theirs. When someone tries to help us see some abuse in our own lives, let us not be defensive and try to justify our mistakes while we continue to correct the mistakes of others. We need all to practice the Golden Rule, especially this writer! — 1461 East Chester Jackson, Tennessee 38301

What Shall I Preach?

Many men enter the pulpits of our land without the slightest idea of what Biblical preaching involves. They relate to the poor, misguided congregations they serve, "I have been called by God to preach." These men are not only lying to those who hear them, but to themselves as well. The God of heaven calls his preachers only through his infallible word (II Thess. 2:14), and not by some subjective experience! These so-called preachers have not prepared themselves for the task at hand, and therefore, have not prepared the message of God as he would have it prepared. These misguided servants of Satan are leading many poor, honest souls into the Devil's burning abode by their inability to deliver the true message of God, and in turn are delivering lies and deceit in its place. The apostle Paul pointed out by the pen of inspiration what preaching the wrong message could bring upon the bearer of that message (Gal. 1:6-9). But the most fearful thing in my mind is the condemnation placed upon those poor misguided souls who believe this distorted message (II Thess. 2:10-12). The Bible is explicit with reference to the message that God wants proclaimed by preaching, and is too clear on this matter for preachers to be confused as to what should be preached!



JOHN G. SHAVER

What shall I preach? I shall preach Christ. This concept should govern all gospel preachers (I Cor. 1:17-24). Philip went into Samaria and preached, but what does Holy Writ tell us about his preaching? He preached Christ (Acts 8:5). This same man of God preached to a man of Ethiopia, a man whom he ran to meet. What did he preach? Jesus (Acts 8:35). One who preaches Christ must first begin with scripture. This excludes one's own emotional reactions or subjective responses. Preaching Christ involves preaching from Christ. The preacher of Christ is a herald, proclaiming the message of his king, and by his authority (Lk. 24:46-47; Col. 3:17). The herald of the Lord in the first century did not deliver a message born of human wisdom (I Cor. 1:21). When men of old preached Christ they did not preach something that could not be proven. They preached concrete facts, realities, or truths about God's Son that no honest person could deny. Paul preached the facts of the gospel, and not some weird conglomeration of illiterate, misguided devotions (I Cor. 15:1-4). The death, burial and resurrection of Christ are the

foundation principles upon which the forgiveness of sins, morality, and hope of eternal life are based. The gospel must be preached in its simplicity, purity and truth without the slightest change because of some man's opinion. The gospel of Christ is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16-17), and it is the gospel that must be obeyed (Rom. 6:16-18; II Jno. 9-11).

What reason can I give for preaching Christ? It is the charge of every gospel preacher to preach Christ, and only Christ because we are committed to him. Paul instructed Timothy concerning the message of God (II Tim. 4:1-2). Why should Timothy, and the preacher of today heed Paul's admonition (II Tim. 4:3-4)? The preacher of God's message cannot preach God's message without a thorough knowledge of his subject (II Tim. 1:12). The preacher who stands before a congregation relating experiences, emotional stories, and death-bed stories in order to get responses, has failed his Lord, those that hear him, and himself. The only way to understand Christ is to understand the divine revelation given us by God through his infallible word. Paul instructed Timothy to study, and thus be approved of God (II Tim. 2:15). Shallow, ineffectual preaching is the result of a superficial study, and a lack of love for God and his word. The preacher of God must not let the whims, likes and dislikes of his spiritually weak brethren determine that which he preaches. I have heard people say, "Oh preacher, don't preach so hard on the doctrine of the church; you'll drive people away." or, "Preacher, can't you take it a little easier next week? My uncle is coming, and he's a Baptist," or, "Preacher, you're going to make somebody mad." Our attitude seems to be, "Let them go to hell happy." The preacher of the Lord must speak with authority. The authority we're speaking of rests not in the speaker, but in his message. The preacher of God must speak God's message confidently, and those that hear should believe the message because it is from God and not man. Paul related to Timothy where the scriptures originated and their purpose (II Tim. 3:16-17). The word of God is power in the hands of the true messenger of God (Heb. 4:12), and the messenger of God must at all times remember with what he is working. The most powerful thing that man has ever known is the word of God. It must be used wisely, and well.

God. It must be used wisely, and well.

One who is guided by the truth that he must preach Christ crucified, that he must proclaim the gospel in simplicity and truth, who is committed to the declaration of God's word, who speaks from knowledge, who speaks with the authority from Christ that which is needed, will be a faithful servant of God, and a blessing to his fellow man. — Rt. 10, Box 186 B Jasper, AL. 35501

The Sinner Dies To Sin In Baptism

Continued from page 1

sinner dies first and then is buried by baptism, but the foregoing verses teach that we are buried into the death of Christ—the believer is buried—then he that is dead in sin dies to the old life of sin WHEN he contacts the blood of Christ.

In Ephesians 2:1, Paul teaches that the Ephesians, before their conversion to Christ, were “dead in trespasses and sins.” In verses 5 and 6 of this same chapter, Paul further states: “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

In I Tim. 5:6, Paul teaches that the person who lives in pleasure is dead while he lives. Moreover, in Luke 9:60, Jesus says: “Let the dead bury their dead.”

(3) “For he that is dead is freed from sin,” wrote Paul (Rom. 6:7). Let us put this in the

form of a syllogism, using as our major premise the idea that many hold:

Major premise: The sinner dies to sin in repentance.

Minor premise: “He that is dead is freed from sin.”

Conclusion: Therefore the sinner who repents is freed from sin.

Now are we ready to accept this conclusion? We either have a faulty conclusion, or a faulty premise. If the major premise is true, then the denominational world is right in arguing that baptism has nothing to do with freeing the sinner from sin.

(4) “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him” (Rom. 6:8). How can one be dead with Christ? Paul said that we are “baptized into his death” (Rom. 6:3), and that “we are buried with him by bap-

tism into death” (Rom. 6:4). No man has ever been buried with him by repentance into death. It is only by baptism that we can be dead with Christ, and live with him.

(5) But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Rom. 6:17-18). We do not know of any brother who would deny that baptism is essential to obeying “that form of doctrine.” Notice: “being THEN made free from sin....” When was the sinner made free from sin? After obeying “that form of doctrine,” which includes baptism. The sinner is not made free from sin when he repents of his sins, but when he repents of his sins and is baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of his sins (Acts 2:36-38; Acts 22:16; I Pet. 3:21).—Route 2, Box 354B; Oakman, Ala. 35579.

Plain Speech

Continued from page 2

could just as easily write of people's being baptized, obeying the gospel, or being converted. Now we realize that some will accuse us of being legalistic or binding tradition. In answer to this we would simply ask two questions: (1) Is it Biblical or traditional to refer to people's being obedient to the truth, being baptized, obeying the gospel, or being converted.

The Bible refers to people's being baptized. We read of those who do not obey the gospel's being lost. We read of those who have been baptized for the remission of sins and have become unfaithful being commanded to repent.

(2) Does the Bible refer to people “changing fellowships” or “joining our forces” or are these “traditional” terms? Of course, the Bible does not use such terms. Let it be clear that we support and endorse every effort to teach the lost. All of us, this writer included, need to be more involved in trying to convert people. We do, however, feel that when reports are written they should be written in such a way that we can know beyond any doubt that aliens have obeyed the gospel and that the erring have repented of sin.

We would like to commend the publishers of

the World Radio News. In a recent issue we see the following captions: “Whole Churches Restored Hindu Temple converted Denominational Preacher Baptized” “Dozen Baptisms In Trinidad” “Ten Converted In Two Villages” “Denominational Leader Baptized In Mexico.” We could go on to list many more but these are enough to show that it is a simple thing to use plain speech. In using plain speech everyone will know where we stand and there can be no just criticism so long as we teach the truth. Sound speech cannot be condemned.—1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501.

“What Thinkest Thou?”

Continued from page 2

passage that the church had not been established at that time. Surely this is so, but it is also true that it shows Jesus preaching the coming of the church. In the sermon on the mount there are repeated references to the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 4:3, 10, 19, 20). Remember that this is a sermon preached by Christ. Surely nobody would conclude that Jesus thought you ought not preach the church.

He thought the church should be first in the lives of men. You don't have to wonder whether Jesus thought this; just read Matt. 6:33. The kingdom of God is to be sought first. It is to come before material things and material pursuits (Matt. 6:28-32). Was it not the most important thing in the mind of Christ? Do you ever find him more concerned about what he would eat than he was about the preparing the material that went into the church. Was he more interested in houses and lands than he was in the church? Can you conceive of his being so worn out by material things that he would have no time for the church? Surely not.

He thought of the church with a sacrificial love. Paul said he loved the church and gave himself for it (Eph. 5:25). I can't think of Christ's not loving the church. But I can't think of Christ's not giving his best for the church either. His love for it demanded his best gift. That gift was his life.

Suppose it could be said of us, “He loved the

church and he gave.” No, we can't give ourselves for the same purpose. Our blood would not purchase the church. But we can give our all for the work God ordained for the church to do. Maybe this would help us see why we have trouble getting people to give. Their thinking is not like that of Jesus. If we all thought of the church with a sacrificial love, the church could do far, far, more than it does.

He thought the church should be on the side of right. Read Matt. 18:15-17. Here Jesus shows that a brother might bring a problem to the

whole church to have it's good influence bought to bear upon it. He thought the church should listen and then cast it's weight of influence on the side of right. Such influence would be a support for a brother that seeks to do right and such should act as a warning to those who persist in the wrong.

Yes, we need to know what Jesus thought. For his thoughts are higher than ours. His are always consistent with truth.—P.O. Box 506, Athen, AL 35611.

WORD of GOD

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering gentleness, goodness, faith,

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

And they that are

Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-25

Have you come all THE WAY - been baptised

with the Holy Spirit, speak in tongues and endued with power from on high to speak boldly that Jesus Christ is Lord? There is more! - Maturity in the Body of Christ and the manifestation of the Fruits of the Spirit:

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

Galatians 5:16-18



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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Are Women Inferior?

Thomas Moore, the famous Irish poet, once wrote, "Ask a woman's advice, and whate'er she advise, Do the very reverse and you're sure to be wise." Though Mr. Moore seems to have been inclined towards chauvinism, he was by no means alone in this prejudice against women. Back in the sixth century, the Council of Macon held a serious debate over the question, "Does the human female have a soul?" They decided "yes" by a one vote margin. Seven centuries later, Thomas Aquinas, the renowned theologian, described woman as "defective and accidental." Schopenhauer viewed women as "childish, frivolous, and short-sighted" while Charles Darwin considered them constitutionally inferior to man.



DALTON KEY

Of course the Bible does not support such biased assumptions. Far from being an accident, woman was intentionally created by God as a suitable helper for man (Genesis 2:18). Because she is of divine creation, she is not defective. Furthermore, she has been given a soul, and may or may not be "childish, frivolous, and short-sighted" depending not upon her sex, but upon her character. There is no biblical sense in which woman is considered "inferior" to man.

However, while woman is not inferior, she is different from man. By God she has been created to look different, act different, and fulfill a different role in life from that of the man. Despite the recent charges of "stereo-typing" and "bigotry," the Bible still pictures the man providing "for those of his own house" (I Timothy 5:8), and the woman marrying, bearing children, and guiding the house (I Timothy 5:14). A "keeper at home" (Titus 2:5) is by no means inferior to a successful business man; she simply fulfills a different role. — Box 126, Aurora Mo. 65605.



FROM

THE EDITOR

An Unusual Radio Program

Nearly every week brings one or more bulletins across our desk in which announcements of radio programs are carried. It thrills us to know of these many programs. We believe radio is still one of the very best and most effective tools for reaching the masses with the gospel.

Many churches are buying short patches of radio time, say from one to five minutes, and are making some good impressions with short, pointed messages. After all, if one knows exactly what he wants to say and how to say it, he can say a great deal in a minute, or in five minutes.

In Jasper, Alabama we have a radio program that is unusual, or maybe even unique. It may be the oldest daily radio program conducted by our brethren. Of this we are not sure. The program was started on November 2, 1946, the day WWWB Radio Station began broadcasting, and it has not missed a day since then, except in cases when the radio station itself was not broadcasting. It is a daily program, and by the word *daily* we mean every day in the year, including Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. So far as we have been able to determine, the program has never, even once, been presented by recording, but has always been live. It is believed to be the most listened to radio program in Walker County, and has been such for many years. It is broadcast on A.M. and F.M.

Brother Gus Nichols conducted the program for its first twenty-nine years, and deserves credit for building it into what it is today. It is a half hour program introduced by a song. In order to give the program universal appeal, and to build and maintain a large listening audience, announcements of general interest are made for about the first six to ten minutes of the program. These announcements include activities of churches, and are helpful in promoting gospel meetings, etc. in and around the county. But the announcements also include information about deaths and funerals, those who are sick, either at home or in the hospitals, births, etc. All the local funeral homes call us each morning to give us their death and funeral announcements. Information about those who are seriously ill is called in to us each morning, so that we can spread the news about how they have fared through the night. Occasionally we even take the time to wish a happy birthday, especially to one who is advanced in years. When the bloodmobile is scheduled to come to town, we promote it and encourage listeners to donate blood. By making announcements like these we demonstrate our interest in people, and provide a service to the community.

Following our announcements, we engage in a brief prayer. Some have criticized the idea of praying over the air. But where there are as many Christians in an area as we have in the area of our listening audience, it is a thrill to



BOB DUNCAN

know that several hundred saints are joining together in prayer at a few minutes after eight o'clock each morning.

After all this, there is still about twenty minutes of preaching the gospel. We know of many who have been taught the truth and baptized as a result of the program. There can be no questioning the fact that one of the main reasons there are some forty-five churches in Walker County is because of the sound preaching done on this program down through the years. The program has also served down through the years as a stabilizing force for churches in the area. For example, a few years ago when anti-ism was sweeping the country, perhaps more than half of the churches in the county would have gone into error on the question had it not been for brother Nichol's powerful preaching of the truth on the radio. As it is, there are only three small congregations in the county where the anti-orphan home doctrine is taught. This is just one example.

We write not these things to boast, for we are simply building upon another man's labors. But these things are written to encourage what appears to be a resurgence of interest in praching the gospel by means of radio, as well as to affirm that there is still a place for longer radio programs

Prophets Today

You may be shocked but keep reading anyway. The question is, Are there living prophets today?

Yes!

When prophets are mentioned one usually thinks of Old Testament prophets like Daniel, Jeremiah, Hosea, etc. However, in this article we will classify prophets by three categories:

Old Testament Prophets. There are three main Hebrew words

that are used to designate a prophet; the most common being "nabi." It is difficult to come up with a concise definition, but we will try. "God's prophet was one chosen to proclaim the message which God put into his mouth by means of the Holy Ghost." This definition is clearly seen at Deuteronomy 18:18: "I will raise them up a Prophet among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put *my words in his mouth*; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" (emphasis mine, C.D.). Too, note Numbers 11:25, "And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders; and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease."

Thus, the message might be for the "then and there" or the "when and where." In short,



CURTIS DOWDY

Continued on page 4

After A Gospel Meeting — What Then?

As I write this article, we have just concluded a meeting at Park Avenue with Bobby Duncan. The question comes to my mind, "After a gospel meeting, what then?" In almost every bulletin I receive I find suggestions given before a gospel meeting suggesting how to make the meeting successful, but I have never heard or read any suggestions as to what to do after the meeting to enhance the success of the meeting.



DON MURRELL

Let me make some suggestions as to some things that we must do in order to assure that any gospel meeting has been successful.

After every gospel meeting let each of us read, respect, and receive our Bibles more. I do not believe that anyone who attended our meeting could have left

without a deeper appreciation of God's Word. We should have a deeper interest in Bible study as the result of every gospel meeting. Faithful preachers will always cause those attending a gospel meeting to have a deeper appreciation of God's Word.

We should be more determined than ever after a gospel meeting that we are going to receive the word of God in our hearts which, in turn, will come out in our lives and on our tongues.

After a gospel meeting let each one of us re-visit our prospects. The fact that some of those who are invited to attend a gospel meeting do attend shows their interest in spiritual matters. We need to continue to invite these people to attend and to encourage them to study their Bible with us.

Always let the preacher and elders know the names and addresses of those who attended a gospel meeting with you so that they may be able to visit them also. These visitors from the community show that there are people in your community who are interested in the truth and interested in serving God.

After a gospel meeting let us rekindle our zeal. Let us allow every gospel meeting to rekindle our zeal. Strong defines the word "zeal" as, "To be hot (boil,

of liquids; or glow of solids), ie (fig.) be fervid (earnest): be fervant."

We need to have a burning desire to teach the gospel to the lost. Let us let every gospel meeting remind us that our primary mission is to teach the gospel to the lost. Let us be busy in carrying out that mission.

What should the results of a gospel meeting be? The results of a gospel meeting will always be determined long after the meeting is over. Our attitude toward the word of God will determine what the results are. When we hear God speaking to us through his Word during a gospel meeting, will we put it into practice? All of the results of a gospel meeting will not be completed until judgement. What will they be?

"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Hebrews 4:2).

A gospel meeting always affects my life. What about yours? — 102 Avery Drive LaGrange, Georgia 30240.

Election Time

ROY FULLER

Fasten your political seat belts, folks, here we go again. Seems like we can't get out of the voting booth but that we're right back into another election of some kind. The presidential race is still a year away and already we have a bumper crop of "non candidates" just fighting for media exposure so they can "not announce." Seems like right now we have more non candidates not running than I can ever recall this early in an election. From all indications this one appears to be shaping up to be a real stinker. It appears that we are in for several months of mud slinging, name calling, dirty tricks, innuendo, and perhaps much worse. Is it any wonder that by the time election day finally gets here the electorate is so thoroughly disgusted many of them just "go fishin" and neglect their civic responsibility? We should remember, however, that we do have a responsibility to express ourselves at the polls, and our votes are important because we may be altering the future for better or worse. Elections are not uncommon to the American way of life, and they hold varying degrees of importance to us, the governed. There is one election however of far greater significance and with more far reaching consequences than any political election ever held.

The Apostle Peter said: "Wherefore brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure" (I Pet. 1:10). What?, Make our calling and election sure? Yes, that's what the inspired word says.

Now, let us consider some important points about this election. (1) It is not political, it is spiritual. (2) Every man is a potential candidate. (3) Every child of God is a bonafide candidate. (4) We are all active participants in our own election. (5) Upon this election hangs eternal life.

It is not the purpose of this article to develop fully each of these points, but simply to remind ourselves of them, and our need to be consciously aware of the fact that we must be casting our ballots each day that we live for eternal life. One of the most heart rending experiences with which we are all familiar is that of seeing our beloved brethren turn their back, on the Lord, cease their faithful service, and go back into the world. Brethren, it hurts, and it hurts awfully bad. We must realize, however, that if it happened to them, it could happen to us. This is why the apostle urges us to be diligent, active, persistent, in making our calling and election sure. He also warns of the tragic consequences if we fail to do so (II Pet. 2:20-22). This is one election I cannot afford to lose. How about you, Brother??? — Rt. 4 Box 479 Elba, AL 36323

THE FORT WORTH LECTURES

Theme: "What Do You Know About the Holy Spirit?"

JANUARY 13-17, 1980

Sunday, January 13

9:00 - 10:00 AM	The Personality, Individuality, Attributes, Deity and Names of the Holy Spirit	Godbel Munc
10:00 - 11:00 AM	Sins Against the Holy Spirit: Grieving, Resisting, Despising, Quenching, Blaspheming	Wendell Winkler
6:30 - 7:30 PM	"Sealed with the Holy Spirit"	George Tippi
(Three 18 minute Sermons)	"Baptizing Them Into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"	Dan Billingsly
	"How Much More Shall Your Heavenly Father Give the Holy Spirit to Them That ask Him?"	Helen Jackson
7:30 - 8:30 PM	"For That Which is Conceived in Her is of the Holy Spirit" (Virgin Birth)	Alan Highers

BOOKS & TAPES
Lectures will be put into book form and will be available for purchase during the lecture.
Cassette recordings will be made of each lecture and may be purchased immediately.

LEADERSHIP DINNER
For all elders, preachers, deacons, Cook, Bible School teachers, and deep wavers — Tuesday, 5:00 P.M. — James O. Baird

Monday, January 14

8:00 - 9:00 AM	The Fruit of the Spirit—Love, Joy, Peace	J. Noel Merideth
9:00 - 10:00 AM	The Measures of the Spirit	Frank D. Young
10:00 - 11:00 AM	The Nine Spiritual Gifts of the Holy Spirit	Nesle Pryor
11:00 - 12:00 NOON	The Holy Spirit and Creation	Tom Gaumer
(Three 18 minute Sermons)	"Be Filled with the Spirit"	Don Deffenbaugh
11:00 - 12:00 NOON	"For by One Spirit are we all Baptized into One Body" — the Blah!	Dan Winkler
12:00 - 1:30 PM	Gospel Advocate Luncheon: "Great Debaters I Have Known—Gus Nichols, G.C. Brewer, Guy N. Woods, W. Curtis Porter, G.K. Wallace"	Alan Highers
1:30 - 2:00 PM	"Your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost"	Maxie Boren
2:00 - 2:30 PM	"The Unity of the Spirit"	Claude Guild
2:30 - 3:30 PM	The Holy Spirit and Conversion	Rex Turner
3:30 - 5:00 PM	Open Forum	Roy Deaver, Moderator
7:00 - 8:00 PM	"Holy Men of God Spoke as They were Moved by the Holy Ghost"	Wayne Jackson
8:00 - 9:00 PM	"He Shall Baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire"	Bobby Duncan

Wednesday, January 16

8:00 - 9:00 AM	The Fruit of the Spirit — Faith, Meekness, Temperance	J. Noel Merideth
9:00 - 10:00 AM	Meeting the Arguments of the "Oneness Holiness"	Johnny Ramsey
10:00 - 11:00 AM	Romans 8 and the Holy Spirit	Roy Deaver
11:00 - 12:00 NOON	The Holy Spirit and the Laying on of Hands	Hugh Pulford
(Three 18 minute Sermons)	"Praying Always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit"	Forster Ramsey
	An Exegetical Study of I Corinthians 2:9-16 "Spiritual Things with Spiritual Words"	Ed Sanders
11:00 - 12:00 NOON	Ladies' Class: Overcoming Boredom ("My Life is a Case of the Humdrums")	Betty Muns
12:00 - 1:30 PM	Lunch: "Some Things I have Learned After 40 Years as a Preacher"	Hugo McCord
1:30 - 2:30 PM	Meeting the Arguments of "The Faith Healers"	Flavi Nichols
2:30 - 3:00 PM	"For as Many as are Led by the Spirit of God, They are the Sons of God"	John Wadley
3:00 - 3:30 PM	The Holy Spirit, Sanctification and Sinless Perfection	Dub McClash
3:30 - 5:00 PM	Open Forum	Flavi Nichols, Moderator
7:00 - 8:00 PM	Do We Have Direct Holy Spirit Leading Today, Holy Spirit Illumination Today, Etc.?	Roy H. Lanier, Jr.
8:00 - 9:00 PM	Can Men Speak in Tongues Today?	Jimmy Jiridin

Tuesday, January 15

8:00 - 9:00 AM	The Fruit of the Spirit—Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness	J. Noel Merideth
9:00 - 10:00 AM	Meeting the Arguments of the "Faith Healers"	Flavi Nichols
10:00 - 11:00 AM	The Gift of Prophecy—An Exegetical Study of I Corinthians 14	Roy Deaver
11:00 - 12:00 NOON	"Strengthened with Might by His Spirit in the Inner man"	Lyn Matheny
(Three 18 Minute sermons)	"The Earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts"	Clem Thurman
	"The Holy Spirit and the Word"	James Watkins
11:00 - 12:00 NOON	Ladies' Class: Overcoming Anxiety (I'm Worried Sick!)"	Lois McCord
12:00 - 1:30 PM	"Honor to Whom Honor" Dinner—Honoring L. O. Sanderson and Tillit S. Teddlie	
1:30 - 2:30 PM	What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit of Acts 2:38—The Holy Spirit Indwelling Us Exclusively Through the Word?	Cecil Wright
2:00 - 2:30 PM	What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit of Acts 2:38—The Miraculous Gift Measure?	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
2:30 - 3:00 PM	What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit of Acts 2:38—The Personal Indwelling?	Roy H. Lanier, Sr.
3:00 - 3:30 PM	What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit of Acts 2:38—A Gift (for example, Salvation and/or Eternal Life) Given by the Holy Spirit?	Richard Black
3:30 - 5:00 PM	Open Forum	Hardeman Nichols, Moderator
5:00 - 7:00 PM	Leadership Dinner — "What Does it Mean to be Really Spiritual?"	James O. Baird
7:00 - 8:00 PM	Are Miracles Still Being Performed Today?	Foy L. Smith
8:00 - 9:00 PM	What is the "Perfect" Thing of I Corinthians 13:10?	Rubel Shelly

Thursday, January 17

7:00 - 8:00 AM	An Exegetical Study of Ephesians 4:7-16	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
8:00 - 9:00 AM	"The Spirit Himself Beareth Witness With Our Spirit"	Roy H. Deaver
9:00 - 10:00 AM	Meeting the Arguments of the "Oneness Holiness"	Johnny Ramsey
10:00 - 11:00 AM	The Holy Spirit and Corinths	James Meadows
11:00 - 12:00 NOON	"Born of Water and of the Spirit"	W. T. Hamilton
11:00 - 12:00 NOON	Ladies' Class: Overcoming Frustration ("This Rat Race is Getting Me")	Val Cardwell
12:00 - 1:30 PM	Lunch: "Humorous Things that have Happened to Me as a Preacher"	
1:30 - 2:30 PM	The Holy Spirit in John 14-16	William Woodson
2:30 - 3:30 PM	The Intercession of the Holy Spirit	Hardeman Nichols
3:30 - 5:00 PM	Open Forum	Roy H. Lanier, Sr.
7:00 - 8:00 PM	The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Christian	Hugo McCord
8:00 - 9:00 PM	"The Spirit and the Bride Say, Come"	Willard Collins

SPECIAL CLASSES FOR LADIES

Theme: "Overcoming What has Come Over Me"

11:00 - 12:00 Monday - Thursday

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The Birth Of Christ: What We Know And Do Not Know

Continued from page 1

the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS" (Matt. 1:18-25).

Luke records these words in Luke 1:26-38: "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose

name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee

shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this in the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God, nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her."

Paul referred to the virgin birth of Jesus when he penned these words to his Galatian readers: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law..." (Gal. 4:4). He was not seed of both man and woman!

We therefore know without any sort of quibbling or wavering in the least that he was born of the virgin Mary. The Old Testament predicted it; the New Testament says it was fulfilled with minute accuracy. This is truly one of the cardinal certainties of his birth.—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063.

Prophets Today

Continued from page 2

because God gave the message it could be either for the "present" or "future," if for the future it would be predictive in nature. So, the prophet was both a forthteller (to his generation) and a foreteller (to future generations). Predictive prophecy with its fulfillment is one of the grand evidences of inspiration.

Although we don't usually think of them as such, Abraham, Gad, Nathan, Ahijah were prophets. There were also a number of others, including what we commonly call the Major and Minor prophets.

In Old Testament times the prophet served God's purpose, be he oral (those who only spoke the message) or be he written (those who spoke and/or wrote the message), and what marvelous lessons are still available to us through the written prophets of the Old Testament.

New Testament Prophets. Prophets had a great part in the foundation of the New Testament Church. We do not refer to those Old Testament prophets mentioned above. The truthfulness of this statement comes from the pen of Paul: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets..." (I Corinthians 12:28). "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets..." (Ephesians 2:20). "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit (Ephesians 3:5).

Our definition above for a prophet has not changed; i.e., "a proclaimer of the message which God put into his mouth by the Spirit." There were many prophets during this period (read I Corinthians chapter 13 and 14). Although we know the names of a few (Acts 13:1; 15:32; 21:10), the vast majority of New Testament prophets are unknown to us by name.

Based upon the statements of Paul, as quoted above, especially Ephesians 3:5 and the history of the written prophets of the Old Testament, it is my own personal conviction (I do not try to bind it on others) that the books of the New Testament were all written by either an apostle or prophet. This would of course put Mark and Luke in the New Testament prophet category. This solves some problems at least for me.

False Prophets. There were false prophets in

Old Testament times: "Behold I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord..." (Jeremiah 23:32). Too, there were false prophets during the time that New Testament prophets were living, "...many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). The false prophet was one who claimed to have a message from God when in fact he did not!

With the completion of God's Holy Revela-

tion and with its confirmation the miraculous age came to a close, and with it the apostles and prophets forever stand, as does their inspired testimony to all ages (I Corinthians 13:8-10; Jude 3). As there are no living apostles of Christ today, just so there are no living New Testament prophets today.

Now, of the three groups above which do we still have?—Obion, TN 38240

The Sovereignty Of God

In the midst of international crisis and upheaval it is important that we recognize that in truth God rules among the nations. For this reason the believer never worries. He knows that God is in control and brings to power whom he wills (Romans 13:1-7). This fact is the overall theme of the book of Daniel. The prophet opens with the statement that God gave Judah into the hands of Babylon (Daniel 1:1-9). In Daniel



CHARLES COOK

2:21 the prophet testifies before the arrogant Nebuchadnezzar that God "removes kings and sets up kings." But like so many proud leaders, Nebuchadnezzar rejected this truth.

The Bible is replete with passages which confirm what Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar. In Psalm 22:28 it says, "...and he (God) is the ruler over the nations." In Psalm 46:10 God declared, "...I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." The psalmist recorded in Psalm 72:11, "...all nations shall serve him." Jeremiah wrote, "...the nations are not able to abide his wrath." And again, God himself declared, "I have made the earth, the men and the beasts that are upon the face of the earth, by my great power and outstretched arm; and I give it unto whom it seemeth right unto me" (Jeremiah 27:5).

In Daniel 4 the prophet was called upon to interpret one of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams wherein he saw a mighty tree that caused the whole earth to marvel. But that great tree fell and Daniel interpreted that to mean that Nebuchadnezzar would be brought down until he understood "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Daniel 4:24-26). The prophet Isaiah often showed the workings of God in the nations. And the most meaningful statement of all comes from the pen of Jeremiah when he recorded God's saying, "I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, MY SERVANT...." If we can see how God used Nebuchadnezzar to effect his purposes in ancient times, is it so hard for us to believe that he can use men of like calibre today? That God works in the affairs of men is evident!

Every Christian needs to make this knowledge a part of his faith. As Nebuchadnezzar was God's "servant," so are those who rule the world today! Whatever decisions they make, God will turn them into ultimate good for those who love him (Romans 8:28). God protects his own! The book of Revelation assures us that when the curtain comes down on time the Lamb will be the victor, and so shall all of those who are with him (Revelation 17:14). — P.O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Exodus 20:12



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble,
the Words of Truth and soberness."

VOLUME 15

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Thy Sins Are Forgiven

Matthew, Mark and Luke all record the case of a man sick of the palsy who was brought to Jesus. Mark and Luke tell us that they could not enter the house for the crowd and they made their way to the housetop, lifted the tiling of the roof and let the man down on his pallet into the presence of Jesus. The Lord "seeing their faith said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven."

It is not the purpose of this article to discuss fully the case of healing before us. Suffice it to say when Jesus' right to forgive sins was questioned he answered them, saying, "For which is easier to know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy), Arise, and take up thy bed, and go into the house" (Read Matthew 9:1-8).

A visible demonstration of the power of Christ was to prove to them that which could not be seen, namely, the forgiveness of sins graciously extended to the palsied man.

But some have said that no sins were forgiven until Jesus died on the cross. Others have said that they were not fully forgiven. And yet others that they were "rolled forward for a year." The first of these three traditional sayings is a direct contradiction to many plain statements of the Scriptures, a few of which we shall point out. In reference to the second one I cannot come up with any true conception of forgiveness which is partial in nature. How can God forgive half way? How could you partially forgive the sin of another? That appears to me to say that I forgive and I do not forgive at the same time. And as to the third, where does the Scripture say, or teach, that the sins of Old Testament characters were "rolled forward year



VIRGIL BRADFORD

by year"?

The "rolling forward" idea is usually drawn from Hebrews 10 in which the apostle declares that the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins and there was a remembrance of sins made every year. And as a result we find a great majority of the church holds to the idea that "no sins were forgiven till Christ died."

Moses prayed for Israel, "Pardon, I pray thee, the iniquity of this people." And the Lord answered him, "I have pardoned according to thy word" (Num. 14:19f).

When David the king was confronted with his crime and showed signs of repentance, saying, I have sinned against Jehovah, Nathan the prophet answered, "Jehovah also hath put away they sin" (II Sam. 12:12f).

In the Psalms we read from chapter 32, verse, 5: "I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity did I not hide: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto Jehovah: and THOU FORGAVEST THE INIQUITY OF MY SIN." There are many such references in the Psalms, but one more will suffice:

"As far as the East is from the West, so far HATH HE REMOVED OUR TRANSGRESSIONS FROM US" (Ps. 103:12).

Just before Isaiah was commissioned to the work God gave him to do one of the seraphim came and touched his lips with a live coal and said, "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin IS FORGIVEN" (Isa. 6:7).

In the New Testament, but while the law of Moses was still in force, Jesus said several times that he forgave sins. The render is directed to Matthew 9:2,5; Mark 2:5,9; and Luke 5:20, 23. Jesus also said of a sinful woman that he forgave, "Her sins which are many are forgiven" (Lk. 7:58). Now those sins of her life were forgiven or they were not. What say you?

None of these facts does away with the necessity of the sacrificial blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Jesus Christ died for the sins that were committed and forgiven under the first covenant as well as for your sins and mine. The truth that the blood of bulls and goats could not remove sins

does not change the truth that some sins were forgiven. Our beloved brother, the late Gus Nichols, once wrote in reference to those sins, "God forgave their sins on credit." And Isaiah said prophetically, "Jehovah hath laid upon him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). Again, He died "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant" (Heb. 9:15).

Therefore, when God forgave the sins of Israel and the king David, of Isaiah and the sinful woman mentioned above, those people did not have to live in fear that their sins were not forgiven. They were not counted righteous by meritorius works nor by the blood of animals but by their faith in Jehovah God and Jesus Christ (Cf. Hab. 2:4).

In R. L. Whiteside's splendid Commentary on Romans he has this to say: "But the record says that Abraham's faith was reckoned, or counted, to him for (eis, into, or in order to, or unto) righteousness. On the grounds of his faith GOD FORGAVE HIM OF WHATEVER SINS HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN GUILTY, and so declared him to be righteous. If no guilt attaches to a man, if there is no sin charged against him, he is a righteous man. If a man never sinned, he would be righteous by works: if he sins and God forgives him, removes sin entirely from him, he is then righteous by grace, or favor" (Page 91) (Emphasis mine, vb). I believe this statement to be true and so pass it along to you.

In reference to the yearly atonement alluded to in Hebrews 10 it should be remembered that that was a national sacrifice, one made for Aaron and his family and then for all the people (Lev. 16). And as individuals under the law sinned, being aware of it, the requirements of the law demanded a certain prescribed offering for sin. This system, therefore, always left a consciousness of sin because no final and satisfactory sacrifice was made until Jesus Christ "made one sacrifice for sins for ever, and sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12).

Sometimes the objection is raised, What if Christ had not died? This question has no particular merit, for, though men might break their promises God

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Truth and soberness

— Acts 26:25

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Your Preacher As An Average Member

S. G. GRAY

When a congregation is seeking a preacher, they are looking for the "best man they can possibly find." A congregation, when seeking a preacher, has the attitude: "To get the kind of man we want, we are going to have to be willing to pay." They are looking for a man who is above the average. However, when it finally comes down to making a decision on how much the preacher should be paid, the attitude is: "He should be paid about on average what the members make." That is to say: His work is not as important as the professional members; as the members who are supervisors on their jobs; as the manager of a store; as the successful business men, including farmers. On the other hand, he deserves more than the widows; more than those who are on social security; more than the unemployed; more than those on welfare; more than a minimum wage.

Let us picture your preacher as an average member of the average congregation: If your preacher were like the average member, he would miss at least one service each week; he would refuse to teach a Bible class; he would give less than five percent of his income to the church; he would never subscribe to a religious paper; he would think nothing of being away on vacation during the week of a gospel meeting; his children would be allowed to put school and social activities above the activities of the church; he would complain more than encourage; he would care but little what the community thought of him. The list could go on and on.

If your preacher were to behave like the average member; bury his talent like the average member; give as the average member; have the Bible knowledge of the average member; show the interest of the average member, you would be ashamed of him; and, if you had any say in the matter, you would fire him! If, on the other hand, your preacher is above the average member, and he is, then treat him with the respect he deserves and support him accordingly. Otherwise, stop complaining about the shortage of "good preachers." — 704 Cleveland Ave. Gadsden, Alabama 35901



FROM

THE EDITOR

Mr. and Mrs. John J. Elliott

On Sunday night, December 9, at about 7:15, an automobile accident claimed the lives of my wife's parents, brother and sister John J. Elliott, Sr. of Carbon Hill, Alabama. They had been to worship, and were returning home.



BOB DUNCAN

It is not the purpose of this paper to bring honor to any man. Our aim is to glorify God. But we believe a few brief remarks about this Christian couple will serve to do that very thing.

In the first place, they were returning home from the evening service when the accident occurred. He was 84 years old, and she was nearing 76; and yet they still went to worship on Sunday evening.

Even though he did not like to drive at night, and the children had warned them about the dangers, still they wanted to worship at every opportunity. The 1971 Chevrolet he drove had less than twenty thousand miles on it, and probably more than half of

all the miles he had driven it were back and forth to worship.

In the second place, they would have celebrated their fifty-ninth wedding anniversary in about two months. This within itself is a great demonstration of the fact that God's plan for marriage will work. In a day when so many are divorcing, it is refreshing to hear of two Christian people whose marriage has survived the storms of nearly six decades.

They are survived by four sons and three daughters. All of them are faithful Christians, and all of them are married to faithful Christians. Not one of them has ever been in a divorce court. Two of the sons are deacons in the Lord's church; two of the daughters are married to elders in the Lord's church. The other daughter is married to a gospel preacher.

Materially speaking, they were not wealthy. But the contribution they have made to the cause of truth, righteousness, and decency cannot be measured in terms of material things.

This old world can ill afford to lose the likes of the man and woman whose daughter I married. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, 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).

On Studying The Book

Before the reading of any book it is helpful to have some knowledge as to its purpose. A good question might be, what was the intention of the author in writing this book? If I can answer that question I will have a head start in coming to understand what the author had in mind and to appreciate that which might otherwise be difficult. This is certainly true of the Book of Books.



CURTIS DOWDY

Although the Bible covers the historical facts of creation and the movement of mankind through his many struggles, nevertheless, the real purpose of the Book is to reveal the history of REDEMPTION. Thus, when one is reading, whether in Genesis or Revelation, let him look at the material with redemption in mind. It all relates to REDEMPTION!

The Bible can change the life because it does relate to YOUR redemption. There is recorded the thoughts and experiences of people just like you who know the problems, sufferings, sorrows, joys and frustrations which are common to all. You will be able to identify with these *real people* in the Bible, and you will find yourself in many of them.

You, no doubt, will come to agree with Robert E. Lee who said, "The Bible is a book in comparison with which all others, in my eyes, are of minor importance, and which in all my perplexities and distresses has never failed to give me light and strength."

May I offer the following ideas and suggestions for

your own personal Bible study: *Expect to learn something definite.* Your attitude is important! If you read expecting to learn nothing your purpose will be well served. However, expect to learn and you will read actively. There is no magic about the Bible; it will not automatically accomplish the purpose intended. Become involved through prayer, concentration and application.

Write down what you learn. Writing is an important part of the learning and understanding process. If you can write it out in your own words it will be remembered and be meaningful to you. So go ahead; outline, write out specific ideas, summary sentences, truths learned, questions that need answers, facts and/or commands to remember and obey, etc. List passages and problems for future study.

Put into practice what you learn. The test of your study is passed or failed in the results found lived out by you. Should your thoughts, attitudes and actions remain the same, you can know that your understanding is superficial. As you study ask God to help you live out the Book in the classroom, office, beanfield, kitchen, ballpark, store, factory or wherever you are.

I might add that you need a *place* and a *time* to study. This will encourage study! At your place of study you should have a dictionary, notebook, Bible with good print, and room to spread it out. By all means have good light available, which will serve to remove eye strain and fatigue. Not only can one study the Book of Books from HIS study place, but watch those grades go up at school, too.

Just remember the Bible is the greatest of all books. Study it FIRST, and it will bring you to REDEMPTION! — Obion, Tn. 38240

The Birth Of Christ: What We Know And Do Not Know

(No. 2)

In the first of this quartet of articles dealing with the birth of our precious Lord we called attention to some facts we know. We know his birth was a historical reality. We know that he was virgin-born. We know that the New Testament details the precise and exact fulfillment of this virgin birth. We continue with more of the facts relative to his birth in this segment of our study.



ROBERT R. TAYLOR, Jr.

WE KNOW THAT HE WAS BORN IN BETHLEHEM OF JUDAEA

Prophecy had indicated in the Old Testament that the city of David would be the place where he would make his entrance into the world. Micah stated in Micah 5:2, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Both Matthew and Luke offer conclusive proof that this Old Testament Scripture was minutely fulfilled many centuries after Micah made his precise prediction. In the opening verses of Matthew 2 we read, "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him" (Matt. 2:1-2). Herod the king did not know where the predicted place was. It was then as it is now. Quite frequently those in the highest places of authority know but little about the Scriptures and the great events taught therein. Herod the king inquired of the Jewish leadership where the Christ should be born. They responded by saying, "In Bethlehem of Judaea; for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel" (Matt. 2:5-6). The Wise men went on toward the South for some six miles until they came to Bethlehem. There they found the Christ child. One of the false religions of our day has long taught that he was born in Jerusalem. But the Bible, not Joseph Smith's pseudo book, teaches that he was born in Bethlehem of Judaea. Any so-called inspired book that misses the place of the birth of the Christ child should be rejected for the false book that in reality it is.

The beloved physician has this to say in the opening verses of the second chapter of his thrilling treatise to Theophilus, "And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger: because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:4-7). The testimony is telling that he was indeed born in Bethlehem of Judaea. We can be just as sure of the place where he was born as you can be sure of the place where you were born. You know of your birth place not because you remember it but because of testimony told you by those in whom you have utmost confidence—your parents or older brothers and sisters. We know where Jesus was born because someone in whom we have the utmost of confidence has told us where he was born. That one is the Almighty himself

and within his Divine Book of Heavenly Testimony—the Bible the Spirit of truth revealed God's testimony relative to the birth place of our blessed Lord.

WE KNOW THERE WAS JOY AT HIS BIRTH

We know that angels rejoiced as they announced his birth to the Judaeen shepherds. The Bible says in Luke 2:8-14, "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." We know that the spirits of the Judaeen shepherds were filled with joy abundant when they heard the good tidings of the Messiah's birth and a short time later saw with their own eyes the infant Saviour in the Bethlehem manger. The Bible says in Luke 2:15-20, "And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

We know that the Wise-men from the East came, worshipping him and honoring him with the bestowal of gifts. We also know that this was several weeks later than his actual birth and the time the Judaeen shepherds witnessed him. Nativity scenes each December throughout this country and other

countries also portray the coming of the shepherds and the Wise-men at precisely the same time. We know they did not come together but at different intervals. The Bible is crystal clear in this. The Bible says in Matthew 2:9-12, "When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way." How do we know the shepherds and the Wise-men did not arrive at the same time? The shepherds found the babe in the manger; the Wise-men found him in the house. There had been an elapse of time between the coming of the two groups of men. Also immediately subsequent to the departure of the Wise-men Joseph took the family immediately into Egypt for protection against the devilish decree of the tyrant-Herod the Great. But if the family left immediately after the departure of the shepherds, then there would not be sufficient time for the presentation in the temple which occurred evidently before they left Palestine for Egypt's protection. By putting all the accounts together we learn that Jesus was born in the Bethlehem manger. The Judaeen shepherds came to see him the very day of his birth as per the record in Luke 2. Enough time elapsed for the circumcision of the child at the age of eight days. Some weeks later, according to the law of Moses, they brought the child to Jerusalem for his presentation to the Lord in the temple. It was sometime after this that the Wise-men came, worshipped him, offered him their gifts and then departed with haste back home without telling the mad monarch in Jerusalem where the child was. Then they went into Egypt, stayed until Herod's death and when they returned to the land of Palestine, they came not back to Bethlehem but went onward to Nazareth where Jesus grew to maturity and then at the age of thirty entered into his ministry after being immersed by John the Baptist. This we know! Why? The Bible said it; we believe it; that settles such! — P.O. Box 464 Ripley, Tennessee 38063

Our Face Is Red

We are embarrassed because of a paragraph in a recent issue of *Words of Truth* (November 30, 1979). The paragraph indicated that one should be baptized with the Holy Spirit, speak in tongues, and be endued with power from on high. Those who regularly read *Words of Truth* and those who know us personally already likely know that we do not believe one can be baptized with the Holy Spirit, speak in tongues, or possess any other miraculous power today. How, then, did such a statement get into *Words of Truth*? And why was it not eliminated when the proof was read?

We do not know who put the statement into the paper. It was probably slipped in to fill up space by some well-meaning typesetter who did not know either what the Bible teaches about such matters or that those who set the type for *Words of Truth* are not at liberty to include their own comments in the paper. We do allow, and even encourage them to put quotations from the Bible at the bottom of a column where

there is a little extra space, but have made it plain that absolutely nothing but quotations from the Bible are to be supplied. Obviously, the person who supplied the comments was not aware of our emphatic instructions.

How did such a comment escape notice when we read the proof? Well, it's like this. Each week, after the type is set, our publisher in Haleyville sends us, by means of a telecopier, a proof of the paper — one page at a time. Pages 1, 2, and 3 of that particular issue were sent as usual; but because of some problem in the machinery, we were unable to receive page 4. After several efforts, we finally gave up and decided to let page 4 go to press without our proof reading it.

We apologize for the error, and assure our readers that we will make every effort to avoid such in the future. To those of you who noticed the error—thanks for being that observant.

Thy Sins Are Forgiven

Continued from page 1

never does. There is no fickleness on God's part. We believe, like Abraham, that what God has promised he is able to do. And he did do what he purposed for the saving of men who would put their trust in him and declare the same by obeying his word.

Hence, we see that Jehovah God has favored these in the forgiveness of sins who "walk by faith and not by sight." Under the Patriarchal period, from Adam to Moses, God forgave those who put their trust in him and demonstrated the same by faithful obedience

to his word. Abraham is the great example of this. Then under Moses' law David serves as an example of one to whom the Lord did not reckon iniquity. See Romans chapter 4 on both these examples and consider again an appropriate comment on David from Whiteside. He says, "The connection in Ps. 32, from which Paul quotes, shows that David had special reference to his own forgiveness. He did not have in mind the forgiveness of alien sinners, but the forgiveness of a servant of God. God counts the man

righteous, whose sins are forgiven. To such a man the Lord does not reckon sin, because his sins have been forgiven, and he is no longer guilty. Such a one is forgiven" (Commentary on Romans, p. 94).

Let us rejoice in this written to God's children: "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 Jn. 1:7). — Rt. 9 Franklin, Tenn. 37064

Why We Sold Our Television

JOHN M. GRUBB

The average American is estimated to be watching four or more hours of television every day. 98 percent of the homes in this country have one or more television sets in them. Yet we are hard pressed to find many people who still *admit* that they watch "that much television." Last summer we sold our television. In this article we want to give some of the reasons why we sold our television.

In the first place, we sold our television because of the time it robbed from us. Paul said, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:16). We would spend hours sitting in front of the television when we could have been reading, studying, visiting, or even sleeping. If you are spending hours in front of the television, you are wasting your time.

Secondly, we sold our television because part of our family was addicted to it. If we had a television, some of us would be watching it hours on end, even if nothing good was on. We are sure this is true in many, many homes in America. *Television* addiction is no

different from *drug* addiction. You just *have* to have it! Television addicts have withdrawal pains when the television set is removed from their house. The television literally controls the thoughts and actions of the television addict. People will refuse to do something because "they can't miss their favorite show." You may be laughing, but we are convinced there are millions of people who are addicted to television.

In the third place, we sold our television because of the poor quality of programming available. Filth is being shown over every major network. Sex and violence are available every night of the week on all three major networks. We did not want to subject our two small boys to this type of programming. As someone said, "You can't walk through a mud puddle without getting some mud on you." Solomon wrote, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). We do not believe television is a *necessary* evil. We can get along very nicely without it. We believe

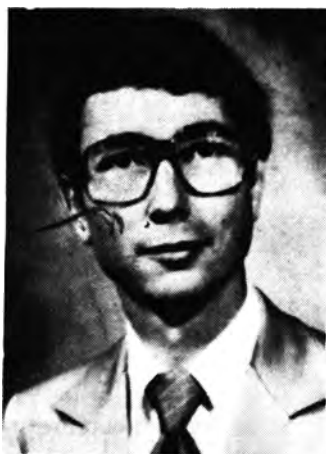
that every family could get along much better without television, if it wanted to. The apostle Paul wrote, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). There are some good shows available, but they are few and far between.

It is our firm belief that we would be better off as a nation and as the body of Christ if we removed television from our homes. The home is the only hope for our nation to remain strong. "As goes the home so goes the nation." We believe this is true in relation to the Lord's church as well. It is our conviction that television is a contributing factor to the breakdown of the home. The "electronic baby-sitter" is no replacement for an interested, helpful parent.

It is our hope that you will give these things serious consideration in your service to God. We hope that this article will provoke further investigation. — 609 Center Dr., Frankfort, In. 46041

Worse Than Preaching In Braces

In the early part of 1979, I joined the ranks of thousands of mostly younger men and women who have braces on their teeth. My braces were originally put on at the University of Louisville in Louisville, Kentucky; however, since I now live in Orlando, Florida, I drive once a month to the University of Florida in Gainesville for the continuation of my orthodontal care. As I write this in December of 1979, I am now 32 years old and will



MICHAEL D. STONE

be in braces for at least another year. Even though there is a little discomfort at times, I am glad that I am in braces. It is not uncommon today to see older people wearing them. The experiences of one in braces are most interesting. For example, shortly before I left Kentucky to move to Orlando, the young people of the church presented me with a shirt which had this written on it: "the tin grin is in." Yes, I wear that shirt on special occasions with pride. A similar shirt has been presented to me in Orlando. I want every preacher and Bible class teacher to know that speaking in braces at the age of 32 is by far not the worst thing that can happen to such a one.

For some years, I have had in my library a little book written by brother Thomas H. Holland entitled, "Sermon Design And Delivery." I suppose I am like some preachers in that I will buy books and then never get around to reading them until after years have

gone by. I pulled this little book of 111 pages out of my library and carried it with me for several days, reading some of it each day until I had finished it. The book is the most practical, easy to read book of its kind that I have ever read. Some of the fourteen chapters in the book are as follows: "Scriptural Reasons For Preaching The Word," "What Shall I Preach?" "Preparation of Subject Sermons," "The Design of Textual Sermons," "Power of Expository Sermons," "The Preacher's Voice," "Preaching Without Notes." Several other things are also found in the book. This book ought to be in the library of every preacher and every person who teaches in the congregation. It ought to be read carefully by all

preachers and it would make a valuable textbook for men's training classes in the congregation. The book may be purchased from the Gospel Advocate, other book stores, or from brother Tom Holland at David Lipscomb College. The price is \$3.50 in the Gospel Advocate catalog.

The preaching event is the greatest event in the life of a preacher, and he dare not be unprepared for the greatest event in his life. That tragedy is worse than preaching in braces.

This article has been written without the invitation, consent or prior knowledge of brother Tom Holland; yet, what I have said needed to be said about this great book. — 321 Lynwell Drive Orlando, Florida 32809

Problems

EARLENE ROSE

Therefore, I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? — Matt. 6:25

I was worrying about a problem
(A small one, I confess),
But I had dwelled upon it
Until it was big, I guess.

When a happy little girl
Came gayly walking by
With a smile upon her face
And a twinkle in her eye.

She looked as though she'd like to chat,
And said, "Good morning, sir."
So I postponed my worrying
To talk a bit with her.

"A pretty dress you have on there."
And pleased as pleased could be,
She said with joy angelic—like
"It's new—I now have three!

My mommy has a better job."
She told it as great news,
"And after rent is paid next month,
She may buy me new shoes.

Brother stays in school this year;
He has an evening job."
Her happy little eager voice
Caused my sad heart to sob.

And as she turned, I watched her leave
In half a skip, half trot —
My problem still remained unsolved.
What was it? — I forgot! — 1608 24th Street
Northport, AL 35476



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1979

NUMBER 51

The Birth Of Christ: What We Know And Do Not Know

(No. 3)

In this short series of articles we are discussing the birth of our Lord. We are seeking to set forth what we do know for a certainty and what we do not know about this stupendous event that occurred nearly two thousand years ago. In the initial articles we discussed some of the things which we do know; now we turn the coin over and discuss some of the things we do not know.



ROBERT R. TAYLOR, Jr.

We do not know the exact place or spot in the city of Bethlehem where the manger was located and the Christ child first cradled his precious head. We know it was in Bethlehem all right for the Scriptures so attest. But the exact spot in the city of David is not revealed within Holy Writ and hence unknown. Perhaps some reader may be thinking, "Why I know where in the city he was born. He first pillowed his head on the spot now occupied by the famed church building known as the "Church of the Nativity." But this is purely traditional. No proof is extant from the first century that this is the exact spot or the precise place where that manger scene first was enacted. Multitudes gather there every December 25th to give some type of honor to the birth of the child known as Jesus. Reader friends, has it ever occurred to you that Jesus spent at least thirty-two other birthdays during his Incarnation period and yet neither he nor his family ever went to Bethlehem for any type of birthday observance during his early youth or maturity period according to the Biblical record? Has it occurred to you that the Bible never mentions him or any of his apostles in Bethlehem during any of his personal ministry? I find that to be amazing in view of the attention the city of Bethlehem receives

each December by the religionists of our era, many of whom go to great expense to be there on December 25th. Had it occurred to you that there is no mention of Bethlehem from the time the church was established in Acts 2 to the final syllable of Revelation 22? Luke wrote the history of the early church for some twenty-five or thirty years and yet he never mentioned any pilgrimage of Christians to Bethlehem on any day of the year to give any type of honor to the birthday of our Saviour. Friends, is there not some significance here in this TOTAL silence? Had they gone to Bethlehem and if Luke had recorded it, it would surely have been the case that they went there to preach Christ-not have a birthday celebration. There is not that first shred of Scriptural authorization for gathering in the city of Bethlehem in general and in the "Church of the Nativity" building in particular for any sort of service on December 25th each year. It is strictly a matter of tradition; it is a matter of faith and truth.

We do not know the exact month or day of his birth. This may come as quite a shock to some of you who read this article. But this is the absolute truth of the matter. Regardless of how many times you may have read your Bible, you have NEVER noted any mention at all of the day of December 25. If so, WHERE? The word December does not even occur on the pages of our beloved Bible. If you think it does, why not accept the challenge to find it? Many have sought it in the Bible before you were born and have searched in vain for its whereabouts. Dates in practically every month of the year have been accepted and defended by religious people down through the centuries. A few of them are January, March, April, May and November. December 25 is a winter month day in Palestine even as it is among us in this country. Shepherds in Palestine do not keep watch over their flocks by night during this season. When I was in the Bible Lands some years back our very knowledgeable guide gave us a lecture just outside the "Church of the Nativity" building right in the heart of Bethlehem. We asked him his view of whether Decem-

ber 25th was really the date of Christ's birth. He declared it to be his strong persuasion that the evidence is definitely against this date as being accurate. Reader friends, if the Lord God had wanted us to know the exact day of the birth of his Son, he would have revealed it within the Bible. We can rest assured of that! But the day of his birth is not revealed in the Bible. Therefore knowledge of the day of his birth is not essential for our salvation.

We would not know how Christ should be honored on his birthday even if we knew for a certainty the exact day of his birth. There are no Scriptural directions given. But one might say we have some guidelines from the shepherds and the Wise-men. But what guidelines? The shepherds went into Bethlehem the very night of his birth in order to see the child in person. Even if we made a pilgrimage to Bethlehem today or on December 25th, he would not be there in a manger scene for our beholding him as he was for them to see. There is no duplication of this again in the New Testament for any of his subsequent birthdays. If so, WHERE? But another may be thinking that from the Wise-men we have some definite guidelines along this line and that gift giving is the proper way to celebrate his birth. But I am quick to remind each reader that these gifts were not given to the Christ on the day of his birth. Most likely it was several weeks or perhaps even months after his birth before they came. When the despotic Herod decided to kill the male babies in the Bethlehem regions he extended the leeway of ages up to two years. Surely there is significance in this! Let it be observed also that these gifts were given directly to the Lord-not to another. Circumstances will not allow our duplicating what they did. It is true that the Lord commands much in the way of personal giving from his people under the Christian Dispensation. But let it be emphasized that the Lord never commanded any giving in honor of his birthday. If so, WHERE is book,

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

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— Acts 26:25

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“I Once Spoke With Tongues”

In reading the book of the above title by Wayne A. Robinson I was impressed by his view of what tongues (the modern variety) were good for. Mr. Robinson became increasingly disillusioned concerning their value even while preaching for a church that required one to claim the “gift” as evidence of possessing the Spirit.

He said, “To receive tongues was worth whatever sacrifice was necessary. And for what? An occasional outburst of strange sounds? What good really is it to be able to make unintelligible noises?” Robinson came to the conclusion that many boasted in their gift of tongues “to counterbalance the occasional ostracism and ridicule” (p. 52).

He critically analyzed their lack of benefit: “And what about my preaching: Had tongues strengthened it in any way? I had discovered quickly that, for the most part, effective preaching depended on a good idea, adequate study, and rapport with the audience. Tongues didn't make me a better preacher” (p. 53).

Even more devastating was the fact that tongues never aided him in winning a single convert. Yet Paul had said that “tongues are for a sign. . . to the unbelieving” (I Cor. 14:22). Why then were the modern efforts at tongue-speaking so ineffective as a “sign” to modern unbelievers?

Wayne Robinson came to see that tongues were not the sole evidence in the New Testament of possession of the Spirit and that many possessed the Spirit who did not speak with tongues. Paul asked, “Do all speak with tongues?” (I Cor. 12:30). His obviously implied answer was, “No!” To the question today, “Do any speak with tongues as did New Testament saints?”, our answer must be an equally clear answer, “No!” — P.O. Box 725 Kennett, MO 63857



MARTEL PACE



FROM THE EDITOR

Spreading Words Of Truth

We are thankful for every effort put forth to increase the number of readers of *Words of Truth*. It is gratifying to know that our circulation during the past four years has continued on a gradual upswing, especially when we realize that some other fine publications have not been able to hold their own, circulation wise, during the same period.

One of the things which has helped to increase circulation of *Words of Truth* is a thing being done by one of our writers, brother Michael D. Stone of Orlando, Florida. Nearly every week we receive a letter from brother Stone asking us to send a bundle of sample copies of the paper to some church. In each case he has already contacted the church and obtained permission to have the sample copies sent. Last week brother Stone sent us the names and addresses of eight such churches.

Needless to say, we are happy to send free samples to churches in such cases. Along with the sample copies, we send a letter, telling about the paper, and



BOB DUNCAN

urging that consideration be given by the eldership to the idea of subscribing for every family in the congregation. The cost is still so small—less than a postcard, and in most cases less than the cost of printing and mailing the church bulletin to each family. Just think! For only ten cents per week per family, your congregation can engage the services of the fine staff of writers for *Words of Truth* to present sound, scriptural teaching. Such teaching, mailed directly to each family every week, could be the means of converting other family members; or it might help inoculate the membership against being led away from the truth by one of the many erroneous doctrines being taught by Satan and his ministers. No doubt, many of the problems, both of a personal nature and of a doctrinal nature, which the church has had in the past could have been largely avoided had enough serious teaching been done to the membership of the church.

We commend brother Michael Stone's actions to others who read and/or write for *Words of Truth*. If each preacher who reads this paper would make it his goal to contact one congregation per month which does not presently receive this paper and obtain permission for us to send a free bundle, we believe we could double our circulation during the coming year. Not only would such enable us to increase our usefulness, but it would be an opportunity also for those helping in this way to multiply the amount of teaching they are doing.

Contentment

JERRY A. JOHNSON

In Philippians 4:11, the apostle Paul writes these inspired words: “I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”

In this world discontentment is manifested on every hand. People are seemingly never satisfied with their lot in life; their place and responsibility. There is change on every hand because of thinking proverbially that the grass is greener on the other side of the fence.

Contentment is something that must be learned. One is not born with this characteristic. The apostle Paul stated that he had learned to be content. It is also the responsibility of every Christian to be content in whatever state or condition he finds himself.

Contentment does not negate diligence, aspiration, or the will to better oneself, but rather it does away with complaining or murmuring about his present status in life.

Contentment is defined as, “rest or quietness of the mind in one's present condition.” It is further defined as, “the state of not being disquieted or disturbed by desire even though every wish is not gratified.” Thus, as Christians we should adjust our desires to that which is holy and right, and strive lawfully to attain them. This is healthy. But when one does not attain to his every desire and whim, it is sinful for him to act as the spoiled child and manifest discontentment and unhappiness because he does not get every desire of his heart.

I Timothy 6:6-8 is a vital passage of scripture on the subject of contentment. “Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.” Contentment alone is of no real value.

Many are content to live worldly. They are perfectly content to continue to live in sin. But when contentment is possessed of the godly, the gain is great. So why spend one's life with every thought, plan, purpose and ounce of energy devoted to the accumulation of this world's goods. We can't carry our material possessions with us at death. Job was aware of this when he said, “Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither” (Job 1:21). Jesus said on one occasion, “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Lk. 12:15). We read these words in Hebrews 13:5: “Let your conversation [manner of life] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” Can't we believe this? We often act as though we must worry and fret as to whether or not these necessities will be provided.

Isaiah 26:3 read as follows: “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” Let us notice Philippians 4:6,7: “Be careful [anxious] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” This peace is brought about with contentment. It is that inner peace, that peace of the soul, that quietness of mind that comes because of a complete trust and reliance upon God who has promised to supply our daily needs. “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding” (Prov. 3:5). — P.O. Box 425, Double Springs, Alabama 35553

Special Events At The Fort Worth Lectures

WENDELL WINKLER

Theme. "What Do You Know About the Holy Spirit?"

Classes. Monday through Wednesday, 8:00-9:00 a.m., Noel Merideth of Camden, Tennessee, will discuss, "The Fruit of the Spirit." On Tuesday and Wednesday Flavil Nichols of Elizabethtown, Kentucky, will speak on, "Meeting the Arguments of the 'Faith Healers'." Then, on Wednesday and Thursday, Johnny Ramsey will be presenting, "Meeting the Arguments of the 'Oneness Holiness'." Each day there will be a special class for the ladies with the theme being, "Overcoming What Has Come Over Me," with sisters Mary Oler, Lois McCord, Betty Muns and Val Cardwell, speaking.

Displays. At the Lectureship each day will be

displays from various publishers, periodicals, benevolent homes, Christian colleges, mission projects, book stores, etc.

Leadership Dinner. On Tuesday, 5:00-7:00 p.m., brother James O. Baird will be speaking on the theme, "What Does it Mean to be Really Spiritual?" All elders, deacons, preachers, Bible school teachers and their wives are cordially invited to be in attendance at this dinner.

Open Forum. Roy Deaver will moderate the Open Forum on Monday, with Hardeman Nichols moderating on Tuesday, Flavil Nichols serving on Wednesday, and Roy H. Lanier, Sr. conducting the forum on Thursday.

Luncheons. On Monday, at noon, the Gospel Advocate luncheon will be held with Alan

Highers speaking on, "Great Debaters I Have Known." Then, on Tuesday, at noon, the "Honor to Whom Honor" dinner—honoring L. O. Sanderson and Tillit S. Teddlie—will be conducted. At noon on Wednesday Hugo McCord will speak on "Some Things I have Learned After 40 Years as a Preacher." Thursday, "Humorous Things that have Happened to Me as a Preacher," will be presented.

For information concerning free lodging, other accommodations, display space, etc., please write to us at the following address: Brown Trail Church of Christ, 1801 Brown Trail, Bedford (Fort Worth), Texas 76021; or call (817) 282-3911.

GLCC's First President Passes

GEOFFREY ELLIS

Charles Gordon McPhee, founding president of Great Lakes Christian College, Beamsville, Ontario, Canada, passed away on November 27. He was in his 87th year.

A leading and pioneer preacher in Canada, he preached actively for seventy years including the Sunday before his death.

In 1950, he joined with other Canadian Christians in establishing Great Lakes Christian College locating it in the strategic center of Canada, the Toronto centered region of southern Ontario. Through his leadership the school was able to open in 1952. He was succeeded in the school's direction by Bruce Merritt in 1954. The college continues to flourish as it approaches its 30th year of institutional life.

Born at Nine Mile River in Nova Scotia in 1882, he came in contact with the Restoration Movement in that area and was baptized in 1905. He attended the Maritime Bible College at West Gore, N.S., and then continued his studies at Nashville Bible School. He became the first foreign graduate of that school, graduating in 1917, the year before the school became David Lipscomb College.

Following the years 1917-20 in Carman, Manitoba, and with the exception of several years at Waco and Denison, Texas, in 1924 and following, he committed his life to preaching the Gospel in Eastern Canada. At times during

the 30's he was the only full-time preacher in Ontario. He served churches in Toronto, Hamilton, St. Catharines, Beamsville, Jordan, Meaford, and elsewhere, and conducted many gospel meetings throughout the region.

During his life-time he was able to see the number of Ontario congregations grow from six to sixty.

His life and ministry touched many lives for

Christ and influenced a number of young men to enter full-time service for their Lord. He was widely respected for his devotion to the principles of New Testament Christianity.

Roy Merritt, Dean of the GLCC School of Bible and Missions, conducted the funeral service. His appropriate text was, "A prince in Israel has fallen."—Beamsville, Ontario, Canada.

Franklin Camp To Be Honored

Franklin Camp, preacher, lecturer and writer from Birmingham, Alabama, will be honored by an Appreciation Dinner February 4 at Freed-Hardeman College.

Since his first local work in 1937 at Munford, Alabama, Camp has been active in gospel meetings, debates, preacher training, and lectureships. He currently teaches classes and serves on the board of directors of Alabama Christian School of Religion.

Camp is the author of three books, *The Work of the Holy Spirit in Redemption* and *Old Truths in New Robes I and II*. For nine years

he has written *Word of Life* which enjoys a circulation of at least 11,000 and is mailed free by the Shades Mountain Church of Christ. Since January 1979, he has been editor of *Virgil*, a paper published by the Adamsville, Alabama church with a circulation of 4,000.

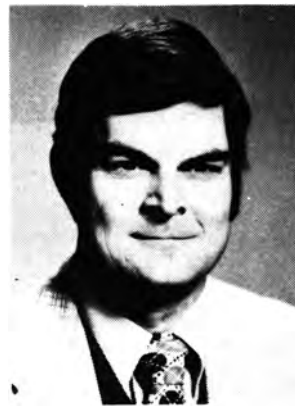
At the dinner, tributes will be given by William Woodson, Rex Turner, Sr., Bobby Duncan, Eulan McCaleb, Willard Collins, and Winfred Clark.

Camp and his wife Hazel are the parents of three sons: Frank, Paul, and David.

Tic-Tac-Tilt!

On November 26, 1979, on the game show, Tic Tac Dough, Wink Martendale asked a contestant, Paul, a question. The question was, "This apostle was the founder of the Roman Catholic Church." Paul replied, "Peter." Wink gave the question to him and said he was correct. Actually, he was wrong if we use the Bible as our authority, but right if he uses Catholic tradition as his authority!

According to Catholic tradition, Peter was the first pope of that church. According to the Bible, Peter did not establish any church, but was a member of the church of Christ. Jesus built the church upon Peter's confession, not Peter (Matthew 16:16-18). Jesus said, "I will build



RAY HAWK

my church." Catholic tradition says Peter went to Rome. If he did, it was not to establish the Roman Catholic Church, for "the churches of Christ" of which Peter was a member, was already there (Romans 16:16). Luke informed us that Jesus bought the church with his own blood (Acts 20:28). The Roman Catholic Church came too late to be the Lord's church. It was too late to be purchased with the blood of Christ.

Not only was Peter not the founder of the Roman Catholic Church, but not one person in the first century was a member of it. They were called Christians (I Peter 4:16; Acts 11:26), not Catholics. If Peter was a pope, Paul did not recognize it, for he withstood him (Peter) to the face (Galatians 2:11). Peter did not know he was a pope, for he did not act like one before Cornelius (Acts 10:25, 26).

Actually, Romanism came as a result of folks falling from the faith. The New Testament faith and the Roman Catholic faith are two different beliefs. The Bible calls us away from man-made traditions and back to God's standard. Let us return to it! — 1461 East Chester Street Jackson, Tennessee 38301

Bible Land Heritage Tour

BOBBY DUNCAN

On May 28 my family and I plan to embark on another tour of the lands of the Bible, including Egypt, Israel, Petra and Rome. This is a thirteen day journey, originating in and returning to Birmingham, Alabama at a cost of \$1649. If you would like to make this trip of a lifetime with us, make your reservation as quickly as possible. We have personally tailored this trip to make it most pleasurable and educational. Write today for a free brochure. (Two day extension to Athens is optional at \$199.00.)

The Birth Of Christ: What We Know And Do Not Know

Continued from page 1

chapter and verse authority undergirding such?

It is surely a fact that if it were proper to honor the Lord in some specified manner on a certain day in December each year, that getting drunk, engagement in revellings, participation in lasciviousness and the committing of overt immorality would not be proper ways of celebrating the birthday of our Saviour. Yet this is what is done. It has been estimated that more liquor is sold during the month of December than any other month of the year. And much of it is bought by people who claim they are cele-

brating the birth of Christ! While under the influence of the fiery liquid they kill the innocent on our highways and maybe break up a good man's home by stealing the affections of his wife. People surely have an exceedingly strange way of honoring Jesus Christ supposedly on a day they have decided in their minds is surely his birthday. They really live it up instead of living truly and soberly for him all the days of each year as they have clear Biblical authorization so to do.

Reader friends, have you realized from your

study of the bible that we are not able to give a single, solitary, Scriptural reason for honoring him on a supposed day of his birth in any particular way? This is obviously true because the Bible is as silent as a tomb on the way he is to be honored on his birthday in Bethlehem. Even if it could be determined when he was born, that is, the precise day, we still would have NO instructions in his Book on how to honor and celebrate such a birthday.—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063

“It's Still Thar”

There is an often told story of the young theologian who returned to his home community filled with new doctrines from the big city seminary (not to be confused with cemetery) where he had been working on an advanced degree, and he wanted very much to show them off. Within hours he had challenged the old local preacher to a public discussion on whether baptism is essential or non-essential to salvation. A proposition was drawn up which stated: “Water baptism is not essential to salvation.” The young upstart took the affirmative position and the



CHARLES COOK

old preacher agreed to argue the negative.

On the first and only night of the debate the youngster expounded beautifully in the affirmative for over an hour. When it came his turn, the old preacher slowly rose to the podium, opened his Bible and read Acts 2:38, closed his Bible and slowly sat back down.

A bit confused, the young man stood for his second speech and expounded his arguments for the non-essentiality of baptism even more eloquently. Again he went for over an hour! And again, the old man stood and read Acts 2:38, and then sat back down.

Flustered and angered, the young preacher stood for the third time and related all of his arguments against baptism, and this time he took almost two hours. For his third rebuttal the old preacher rose to the podium, adjusted his specs, looked at his open Bible, looked at the audience and said, “Brethren, it's still thar!”

We certainly have nothing against religious

training, or ever advanced religious training, but no amount of fancy fingaling can ever change what Acts 2:38 says about the importance of baptism and its relationship to our salvation. Galatians 3:27 still teaches that baptism puts people “in Christ,” and II Timothy 2:10 declares that salvation is found “in Christ.” I Corinthians 12:13 still teaches that baptism puts people in to the “one body” which is the church, and Ephesians 5:23 declares that the church is the body of the “saved.” Romans 6:3, 4 still teaches that in baptism people come in contact with the death of Christ where he shed his blood for their salvation. I Peter 3:21 still says that baptism “saves us.” Acts 2:38 will forever teach that baptism is “for the remission of sins,” and no amount of modern schooling will ever change that fact!—P.O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766

Repentance And Confession

BY IRA E. JOHNSON

In Mark 1:4-5, we find: “John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.”

In Luke 7:29-30, we find: “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.”

In Mat. 3:8, John speaking to the Pharisees and Sadducees, declared: “Bring forth therefore fruits meet (marginal reading — answerable to amendment of life) for repentance.”

In the book of Acts, we find Paul the Apostle speaking before King Agrippa, saying: “Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance” (Acts 26:19-20).

Furthermore, in Luke 8:19-21, we find a very significant statement made by our Lord Jesus Christ which reads, “And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to see thee. And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God and do it.”

I am convinced that the denominational world and

many people in the Lord's church overlook the basic truth of this passage, namely, we must “hear the word of God and do it!”

I have said the foregoing in order to impress upon the heart of the reader that to confess with the mouth only is mere lip service (Mat. 15:8-9). Verily, we must do the word of God, day by day, that we may make

known or demonstrate our genuine confession that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Saviour!

To confess Jesus Christ involves far more than an oral confession! To show more fully this point, I urge the reader to investigate the following scriptures: Jas. 1:22; Mat. 7:21-27; Lk. 6:46. — Route 2, Box 354-B, Oakman, Alabama 35579.

WORD of GOD

Parable of Jesus

And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the

shadow of it.

And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.

But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

Mark 4:30-34

Parable of Jesus

And again he said, Whereunto shall I

liken the kingdom of God?

It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Luke 13:20-21

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above

every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:9-11



Words Of

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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The Chain Of Divine Authority

This subject is of the utmost importance, because whatever authority one accepts determines what he is religiously. If one accepts human authority, he is what man wants him to be religiously. If one accepts divine authority only, he is what God would have him to be religiously. It is the purpose of this article to show how one may know when he has divine authority for what he is and does in religion, or HOW GOD SPEAKS TO MAN TODAY. Nothing less than divine authority will suffice.



W. Douglass Harris

There are two kinds of authority: Primary and delegated. Primary refers to that which is first in position or importance. It is that right which belongs to and naturally resides in the person who exercises it. It is original, absolute, and undivided. Delegated authority is the opposite to primary authority. To delegate is defined thusly: "To authorize, send, or appoint as a delegate; to entrust (authority, power, etc.) to a person acting as one's agent or representative."

God is our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor, by reason of which he has the absolute right to command. It is stated in the very first verse of the Bible. It says, "In the beginning God" (Gen. 1:1). In II Cor. 5:18 Paul states that "All things are of God." The highest authority in the universe IS GOD. His authority rests entirely on his sovereignty. Webster defines a sovereign as "Above or superior to all others; chief, greatest; supreme." God possesses the absolute right to command. Someone rightly said, "The ultimate in respect for the authority of God is to accept it, and submit to it because it is God speaking." By this authority

God gives positive commands—commands for which no logical reason is apparent but must be obeyed because God said it.

Christ stands nearest to God in authority, but it is delegated authority. Paul says, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (II Cor. 5:19). God now speaks to us by his son (Heb. 1:1, 2). We shall learn later HOW the Son speaks to us. We must not disregard any of the links in the chain of divine authority. God delegated authority to Christ (See Matt. 11:27; John 5:26, 27; 17:7, 8; Eph. 1:22, 23). Since the Son was as divine as the Father, no mistake could have been made in the transfer of this authority from the Father to the Son. Jesus said, "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me" (John 14:24; and, "All authority hath been given to me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18 ASV). Christ exercised this authority personally while on earth (Matt. 9:6), but in order to atone for sin he would have to die, be raised and return to the Father. Other provisions for the transferral and continuity of this authority had to be made. So he selected twelve apostles for training to become his personal representatives after he ascended. But at this point the human element entered into the chain of delegated authority. How were these apostles with their human weaknesses insured against error in speaking for Christ? The answer is what follows.

As protection against error in their teaching and in writing the New Testament, the apostles were promised the Holy Spirit in miraculous power. Read John 14:16, 17, 26; 16:13, which were promises the Holy Spirit in miraculous power. Read John 14:16, 17, 26; 16:13, which were promises to the apostles to send them the Holy Spirit and what the Holy Spirit would do for them in making them infallible as they spoke for Christ. The apostles were to speak what the Spirit revealed to them (See Matt. 10:20; John 16:13; I Cor. 2:10-13). Therefore, Christ's authority was executed through the Spirit-guided apostles. In praying to the Father, Jesus said,

"I have given unto them [the apostles] the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (John 17:8). They were given the power to bind and to loose, that is, to state the terms or conditions which when obeyed or rejected sins would be either forgiven or retained (Matt. 16:19; 18:18; John 20:22, 23). They were endowed with miraculous powers to confirm that they were Christ's personal representatives on earth and to confirm that their message came from God or that it was divine revelation (Mark 16:17-19; Heb. 2:1-4). Miracles were their credentials that they were ambassadors of Christ (II Cor. 5:20). This insured them against the possibility of any error or mistake in the exercise of this authority or in transferring it from Christ to the apostles, or assurance that the chain of authority was not broken.

By the use of their credentials (miracles) their confirmed revelation is what we have preserved in the New Testament. Follow Paul's description of the chain of divine authority in II Cor. 5:18-20 from God, the source, to the "word of reconciliation." Note carefully John's affirmation in I John 4:6, "He that heareth us [the apostles] heareth God, and he that heareth us not [the apostles], heareth not God." Paul said, "Every scripture is inspired of God" (II Tim. 3:16).

Various passages in the New Testament affirm the all-sufficiency, completeness, and finality of God's revelation in the Bible (See II Pet. 1:3; II Tim. 3:16, 17; Jude 3). This does not leave any room for creeds, articles of faith, disciplines, and church manuals compiled by men to supplement the Bible. There is no need for further revelation, therefore, no further need for miracles. When perfect revelation was completed, miracles ceased (I Cor. 13:8-10). Anyone who claims the power to work miracles today, or

Continued on page 3



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness"

— Acts 26:25

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Best Wishes For A New Decade

With the beginning of 1980 we begin not only a new year, but a new decade as well. The past decade saw a number of important events: the halting of the Viet Nam war, the Watergate scandal, the impeachment of a president, the legalization of abortion on demand, the near defeat of the so-called Equal Rights Amendment, and then the unfair and unprecedented extension of the dead-



BOB DUNCAN

line for ratification of the same, the illegal takeover of the American embassy in Iran, significant steps toward peace between countries in the Middle East. These are just a few of the many things of great significance that have taken place during the past decade.

In the religious world and in the church we have seen a number of significant things during the past decade. We have failed to grow as we grew in the Fifties and Sixties. Gospel preachers in many cases, have shifted the emphasis of their preaching from the word of God to the philosophies of men. Some have yielded to the temptation to become like the world around them. Some have been deceived into thinking that the newest translation of the Bible must be always the best translation. Television has become filthier with the passing of time, and morality resulting largely therefrom has sagged lower and lower. Members of the church have, in many cases, moderated their views of social drinking, dancing, immodest apparel, divorce, and other such tools of the devil. Some of the greatest gospel preachers ever to live on this old earth died during this past decade—Gus Nichols, B. C. Goodpasture, and just this past week brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr. We must enter this new decade without benefit of the counsel of these great and good men.

What will the 1980's bring? What will those of us who are fortunate enough to see 1990 see as we look back over the decade of the Eighties? Particularly, what can we expect to happen to the church during the coming decade? We must admit that there are great dangers facing the church. Some are saying that by the turn of the century we will have reached a growth rate of zero, and that within a few years thereafter, we will have gone out of existence. These predictions are frightening.

This writer, however, tends to be optimistic. We believe the church can have a bright future if we are not discouraged by the past. Congregations have not always been what they should have been in modern times. But this was true also of congregations in ancient times. The church at Ephesus had left its first love (Revelation 2:4). The church at Laodicea had become lukewarm (Revelation 3:15, 16). The church at Corinth had become infested with gross immorality (I Corinthians 5:1). But neither Jesus nor the apostles became discouraged by these facts, and neither should we. Though the church

has had some set-backs in the past, and has had to struggle for existence, we should not be discouraged. The Lord is still able to give the increase if we will plant and water (I Corinthians 3:6).

The church can have a bright future if we do not live in the past. Past achievements should encourage us, but if we keep looking backward, we will soon be headed that way. If we do nothing but speak of the "good old days" we are likely to lose appreciation for the opportunities which face us now. The glorious victories won by truth and right in yesteryear were not accidental, nor will the triumphs of the future be accidental. We should be proud of past accomplishments; but dwelling upon them may cause us to become complacent.

The church can have a bright future if we do not become satisfied with the present. Some of us see quite a bit to encourage us. We see better meetinghouses in better parts of town, larger congregations, better qualified elders and deacons, better teachers, more interest in mission work, larger contributions, more full time preachers, etc.

But, while we are remembering a time when things were not so good, let us not forget that we must always be moving forward. There is no place to stop. We must move forward, or else we will move backward. We must climb upward, or else we will fall downward. We must grow, or else we will diminish.

The church can have a bright future if we do not allow dangers to dampen our enthusiasm. It is true that there are dangers. But it was being afraid of the dangers that caused the one talent man to get into trouble (Matt. 25:25). It was fear of the dangers that caused the ten spies to give an evil report and to delay the crossing of Jordan for forty years (Number 13). Satan has defeated many good works merely by causing us to be afraid to undertake them. Great things for God have been hindered by a philosophy which says, "We don't know what the next few years may bring," or, "We may not live to see through it." Let us never forget that our God is able to make all grace abound toward us, so that we might, always having all sufficiency in all things, abound to every good work (II Corinthians 9:8).

The church can have a bright future if we are not mere dreamers. There is nothing wrong with dreaming, but we must set about to make our dreams realities. Perhaps never before has the church been surrounded by such opportunities or faced with such challenges. Someone has said that humanity is divided into three classes: (1) those who make things happen, (2) those who watch things happen, and (3) those who have no idea what has happened. Let us be among the number who, by dedicated service to the Almighty, make things that are right and good come to pass. Those who really want to do things find a way; others find an excuse.

The church can have a bright future if we maintain confidence in God, Christ, and the Bible. God has promised that we will not be tempted beyond our ability to overcome (I Cor-

"Happy New Year"

This is a period of the year when we are filled with mixed emotions. The preceding year has just ended with its joys and sorrows, successes and failures. And, with a positive attitude, we view this new year with great anticipation to accomplish many things. We have heard the familiar seasonal greeting "Happy New Year" often in recent days. We are reminded of the desire that the apostle John expressed to his friend Gaius: "Beloved, I pray that in all things thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (II John 2). We take this opportunity to wish all of you a "Happy New Year," but with a deeper significance and meaning.



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

First of all, let us observe the true meaning of the word "HAPPY." Happiness is not experienced by merely possessing material wealth. To be happy is to be in the right relationship with God and his son. In the Holy Scriptures, the word "blessed" is the same as "happy." Those who are mentioned as being happy in the Bible are those whose lives are conformed to the image of the Lord (See Psalms 1:1, 2; Matthew 5:1-12; James 1:12; I Peter 3:10, 11; Revelation 22:7). The Christian can be happy because God is his father, Jesus Christ is his Savior. Even amidst trials, tribulations and persecutions, peace can fill the heart of the child of God (Philippians 4:4).

Now notice the word "NEW" in our greeting. Nineteen hundred and eighty is a brand new year with unspoiled days like unwritten leaves in the ledger of time. The past year of 1979 is now old, not necessarily because it was one day longer out rather than with the bringing of a new year, it was made old. This new year will bring with it achievements and disappointments, happiness and tears of grief. We dare not enter this era of time without God's being a part of our lives. "Come now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will

The Birth Of Christ: What We Know And Do Not Know

(No. 4)

Some very clear observations are in order in this our fourth and final article touching the Lord's birth. In the first place we should rejoice over his birth every day of the year—not just upon one man-made day of the year—December 25th.

There are 364 days in each year besides December 25. In a leap year, such as 1980 will be, there are 365 days other than December 25. Why manifest gratitude for his coming just upon one day and ignore the remainder of the days of each year in which we should be profoundly grateful for his birth? There are eleven other months in each year besides December. Why just pick out this month to honor his birth within a man-devised framework and ignore the feelings of gratitude the other months of the year such as from January to November? Each month of the year has a 25th day. Why center importance upon just one of these 25th days in the year and ignore the importance of his birth the other 25th days of each of the other eleven months? Reader friends, I thank God for the birth of his only begotten Son every day of the year. I thank God for the sending of his Son to become the precious Babe of Bethlehem every month of the year. I am just as grateful for the birth of Christ on the 25th day of March or the 25th day of September as I am on the 25th day of December. If you are not the same in sentiment, something is wrong, woefully wrong with your daily brand of gratitude for one of the great and grand events of the ceaseless centuries — namely, the day our Saviour was born into this sin cursed world.

In the second place we should realize that the burden of the New Testament story or noble narrative about Jesus Christ is not just about his birth. There are some things that his birth did not accomplish. His birth did not atone for the sins of humanity. His birth did not bring the church of his divine affections into existence. His birth did not inaugurate the Great Commission. At his birth the Lord had not given any of his precious parables or his priceless teachings. At his birth not any of his miracles of the personal ministry period stood accomplished. At the birth of God's Son not a one of the three cardinal aspects of the gospel—his death, burial and resurrection—stood accomplished. At his birth not a single one of his apostles had been chosen. At his birth not one drop of his precious blood had been shed for the sins of a ruined and wrecked race of helpless, hapless and hopeless men and women, boys and girls. The burden of apostolic preaching was not on the birth of Christ but upon his manner of life, his teaching, his miracles, his mission to seek and save the lost and especially his death on Calvary's brutal brow, his burial in a borrowed tomb, his triumphant resurrection from the dead, his ascension, his establishment of the church and what he has done since his return to the Palace of the Universe through his disciples on earth. In Acts 2 Peter's message was not centered upon the birth of Christ, though I know he was grateful for the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem. The burden of his stirring sermon on that occasion was the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Such emphasis continued throughout the apostolic period as we learn from the book of Acts and the New Testament epistles of Paul, Peter, James, John and Jude. It is of significance that Paul did not say in I Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and his



ROBERT R. TAYLOR, Jr.

birth in Bethlehem on December 25th." He did say, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." It is of striking significance that Paul did not say something like this in I Corinthians 15:1-4, "Now brethren, I made known unto you the birth of Christ and how that he was visited by the Judaeen shepherds and the Wise men from the East. If you keep in mind his birth and celebrate it at least one day per year then all will be well with you and your soul. You remember, brethren, how that when I was with you I stressed his birth again and again. Do not be ignorant brethren that it is means of his birth in Bethlehem that your sins have been forgiven." Paul did not say that did he? But he did write these words of weight and wisdom, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. . ."

In the third place we should rejoice with boundless enthusiasm in ALL that he did—not just in his birth. We should find joy and profit in ALL his teachings which were ALL done many years subsequent to his birth in Bethlehem. We should rejoice in the perfection of his life and the excellence of his example. We should rejoice in the sacrifice that was made at Golgotha and in the love that was exhibited upon this occasion. We have special cause for rejoicing over the fact that his death was not a permanent one, that the grave was unable to retain him. We should rejoice with joy unspeakable that he was raised from the dead. By his resurrection we are justified. Paul said in Romans 4:25, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." We should rejoice in the church he established and the Cause he planted upon this earth. We should rejoice that we can preach his gospel and point people to the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. We should rejoice that we can make preparation to live with him and his Holy Father on high throughout a never ending eternity. But alas, the only Christ that the masses of religious people desire

is the Christ of the cradle. They just want the Babe of Bethlehem; not the Suffering Servant and the Demanding Deity of their lives. They do not want a Living Lord as ruler of their lives. They do not want the Christ of the church. They do not want the Christ of the cross. A baby in Bethlehem is less demanding than is the Christ on Calvary. They do not want the Christ of the second coming and of the final judgment. The Christ of the cradle does not make the demands of their lives that the Christ of the second coming. That is why they are content with the Christ of the cradle and the Christ of the cradle only. **THAT IS ALL THEY WANT OF HIM AND ALL THEY INTEND TO HAVE OF HIM!!** They know nothing about THE COMPREHENSIVE CHRIST.

Is it not exceedingly strange that the religious world will pay such homage to him on a day he never authorized to be celebrated in any fashion and will totally ignore all he said do in celebrating and honoring him on the Lord's Day each week? Dear readers, do you understand why this should be the case? I confess to you that I cannot fathom it; I cannot understand it at all!

This four-part study is brought to its conclusion with some strong logical conclusions. (1) In John 16:13 Jesus promised the apostles that when the Holy Spirit came he would guide them into all truth. But he did not guide them into any set of directions for determining and honoring the birthday of Jesus. Therefore, the determining of the day and the honoring of Christ on that supposed day of his birth are neither part nor parcel of the truth. (2) In II Timothy 3:17 Paul affirmed that the Sacred Scriptures were all-sufficient to equip fully the man of God unto all good works. But the Sacred Scriptures do not equip the man of God toward determining the day of his birth nor in the honoring of him on that supposed day. Therefore, this is no part of all good works. (3) In II Peter 1:3 we are informed that we have been given all things pertaining to life and godliness. But we have not been given any information for determining the day of Christ's birth nor in the honoring of him on that supposed day. Therefore, this is no part of life and godliness. Beloved, if the premises are valid and true, and I believe they are without any sort of doubt or equivocation, then the conclusions follow with a fundamental force that is irresistible! As Brother Hardeman used to teach us in Bible classes at F-HC, "That is not nearly it; that is it!" To borrow another one of his fond expressions, "That is un-get-overable!" — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063

The Chain Of Divine Authority

Continued from page 1

that God works miracles through them, is a false teacher. The purpose of miracles was to confirm the word of the apostles, and that word carries its own confirmation. It needs no further confirmation. Those who claim further revelation are, also, false teachers. How could the passages cited above be true if God's revelation in the Bible is not complete? How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in His excellent word! What more can He say, than to you He hath said to you who fled—George Keith

The Bible answer is: Through God's inspired word and only through that word. If you are a member of the church you can read about in the

Bible, you have divine authority for so being. If you obeyed the plan of salvation authorized in the Bible, you have divine authority for what you did to become a Christian. If you worship according to the system of worship authorized in the New Testament, you have divine authority for them. If you are a member of a church whose only organization is that of elders, deacons, evangelists, and members in the local church, you are such by divine authority. Dear reader, examine your religion in the light of this article and see if it is divinely authorized. Jesus said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be roote up" (Matt. 15:13).—1613, 19th Ave., S.W., Decatur, Ala. 35601

Best Wishes For A New Decade

Continued from page 2

inthians 10:13). Christ has promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). The Bible is the power of God to save all obedient believers (Romans 1:16), and is sharper than a two edged sword (Hebrews 4:12). It is true from the beginning (Psalms 119:160), and will remain even when heaven and earth have passed away (Matthew 24:25). Such being the case, how can one preach, and think the mere preaching of the word of God is not good enough?

The church can have a bright future *if we maintain the right attitude toward our brethren*. None of them are perfect, and neither are we. All of us have made mistakes, and will continue to do so. Perhaps no two of us are in complete agreement on every single thing. But there is room in the church for differences. Certainly we should not tolerate sin and rebellion. We should not countenance what God will not countenance. But we must recognize and respect differences of opinions between those who are

faithful to God. A failure to do so will splinter the church into a thousand factions, and bring about her complete destruction.

It is our prayer that somehow this old world will come to her senses in this new decade, that decency, and morality will once again be respected, that the Bible will be allowed to rule the thinking of the masses, and the church may grow as it never has before. To these ends may we all labor!

“Happy New Year”

Continued from page 2

go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain. Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that” (James 4:13-17).

In view of eternity, a “YEAR” is a very short span of time. God will give us the year 1980 if it is according to his purpose and will. Man has nothing to do with the allotting of time. In a year there are: 12 months, 52

weeks, 365 days, 8,760 hours, 525,600 minutes and 31,536,000 seconds. Generally speaking, people will use this time in this manner: 2,900 hours in sleeping, 1,095 in leisure time, 2,340 in working, 1,095 in eating and perhaps 208 hours in worship. This will leave some 1,102 free time. Paul instructs Christians: “Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:15, 16).

This year before us is unknown territory. We have

not passed this way before (Joshua 3:4). We need to look unto God for divine guidance. One needs to, as a believer, repent of his sins and be baptized for the remission of his sins, thus, becoming a child of God and submitting to his word for direction in this life (Acts 2:36-38, 47; Galatians 3:26, 27; Psalms 119:105). — 809 Perry Store Rd. Opp., Alabama 36467

So You Want To Witness?

The Greek word in the New Testament for “witness” is “MARTYRIA,” and it signifies one who saw and therefore can testify to truth. Later the word came to mean one who bears witness at the expense of his life. Jesus told the apostles that they would “be witnesses” on his behalf “unto the uttermost parts of the earth” (Acts 1:8). This they did and paid with their lives!



CHARLES COOK

Today the “Witness for Christ” fad has swept the religious world. But can we today witness in the sense the apostles did? Instead of preaching the Gospel from the Word of God, many go out relating their personal feelings and experiences as a method of converting the lost. I clipped this news item from Christianity Today Magazine: “More than 6,000 young Christians hit the beaches and streets in personal witness, and thousands more provided backup in concerts, festivals, and other public meetings. Recorded decisions for Christ exceeded 3,000...There were large witness marches in Honolulu, Seattle, and Santa Barbara...” The article went on to report how religious youth leaders like Pat Boone, Bill Bright and others have organized mass efforts to promote “personal witnessing” as a means of bringing people to Christ.

Paul wrote that the Gospel, the Word, the Good News about Christ, is “the power of God unto salvation” (Romans 1:16, I Corinthians 15:1-4). This “personal witnessing” craze has forsaken the simple Gospel story and places Christianity on the shaky foundation of emotionalism. Here faith is based on how one feels inside and not on the evidence of God’s Word (Romans 10:17). What in modern times has

caused this kind of reasoning?

Existential thinking has penetrated every area of our culture, including religion. This form of thinking teaches that existence is absurd and meaningless. Its founder, Sarte, concluded that the only way to give life meaning was to create meaning within ourselves. Because life is absurd, Sarte believed we ought to be equally absurd in our search for meaning. The more absurdity we indulge in, the more authenticated life becomes. This produced subjective rather than objective reasoning. The entire Western culture turned from external evidence to internal feelings to arrive at truth and meaning. Our age now uses this approach to life almost exclusively. On every hand we hear, “What ever turns you on,” or “Do it if it’s right for you, if it feels good,” and “Just do your own thing.”

I am suggesting that all of this emphasis on personal witnessing is founded on the existential philosophy rather than the Scriptures. Confused by life, people today are easily convinced that the “good feeling” they experience is evidence that they have arrived at the truth. This is simply arriving at what one perceives to be truth through one’s emotions. Our youth are taught to do this in everything from politics to choosing a mate. What matters is not the politician’s platform or political record, but rather what kind of feeling one has toward him. Does he have charisma? Young people are being taught to think this way in every field; so naturally, when searching for God’s Will they turn inside themselves. Jeremiah said, “It is not in man...” (Jeremiah 10:23). But the existentialist says, “Keep looking inside yourself; it’s there.”

The result of all this is an experience-centered Christianity that continues to grow in popularity. In droves they go out sharing their experiences as they “witness for Christ.” This clearly contradicts the Great Commission which commands us to “go preach THE GOSPEL to every nation” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

We cannot witness for Christ today in the technical sense, because we are 2,000 years removed from his time on earth. The apostles were real eyewitnesses and we must build on their foundation. We simply are

not eyewitnesses! We have received their testimony. We can and must preach the same Gospel revealed through those who were eyewitnesses and whose eyewitness account we have in the New Testament. Being a witness for Christ is not the power of God to save, but rather the power is in the Gospel revealed through those who were eyewitnesses. No man can be saved by hearing my testimony, but through belief of the Gospel “whosoever will” can partake of the water of life freely (Revelation 22:17).

Webster says a witness is “one who from actual presence knows of the occurrence of some fact or event.” The apostles were the witnesses of Christ’s deeds and teachings, making us benefactors. They saw him in his resurrected glory and guided by the Holy Spirit, they revealed his Word which is God’s way of saving believers (Acts 1:22; John 14:26; 16:13; Romans 1:16).

On the one hand we never want to destroy enthusiasm in the church, which can be easily done. When a person really gets fired up for the Lord the first thing he wants to do is tell everyone. That’s as it should be! If you find a brother on fire and throw cold water on his zeal, then all I can say is, may the Lord have mercy on you. Zeal is one of the great shortages in the Church today!

On the other hand, we would pray that all Christians who do get fired up (and may their number be many) understand that the power is in the message and not in the messenger. — P.O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766

LOVE is the only strength which makes things one without destroying them.

