



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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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Christians In Denominations?

It is alleged that "there are sincere, knowledgeable, devout Christians scattered among all the various denominations." I invite your careful examination of this idea.

In the investigation of every religious theme, we must let God's word be our final appeal. "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). The word of God is our only authority in all religious matters, for it furnishes us completely to every good work (II Timothy 3:14-17). Therefore let each of us conscientiously try to put aside all pre-conceived conclusions, and all prejudiced views, and objectively examine all the facts we can ascertain which have direct bearing on this teaching.

Sincerity Granted

"Sincere" is defined as meaning "Honest; free from hypocrisy or dissimulation." I know no one who questions the honesty of the multitudes in the various denominations. None accuse them as a whole of hypocrisy or dissimulation. It is readily acknowledged that there are multitudes of sincere people in all the denominations, both Catholic and Protestant. And there are also many who possess the same trait [sincerity] who are not members of any religious body. If the fact that many honest people are in various denominations proves they are saved, then the fact that many other honest people are outside any and all the denominations would prove they also are saved. If not, why not? It should be remembered that Jesus Christ is declared to be the "Savior of the body" (Ephesians 5:23). And the "body" is "the church" (Colossians 1:18).

However, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and the conversion of Cornelius, clearly demonstrate that sincerity alone will not save. Indeed, why did the three thousand on Pentecost change religions? Prior to that day they were -- so far as I can ascertain -- just as honest and sincere, just as free from hypocrisy, as

they were on Pentecost day, and/or afterward.

No hypocrite can be saved in his hypocrisy, or while remaining a hypocrite! But the mere fact that one is sincere, or "honest; free from hypocrisy or dissimulation," does not prove that such a one is saved. Paul affirmed that he had "lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (Acts 23:1). He thereby claimed that he was sincere, even when persecuting Christians (Acts 26:9-11). Yet he acknowledged that he was the "chief" of sinners (I Timothy 1:15). This clearly demonstrates that being honest and sincere does not guarantee one's salvation.

Piety Granted

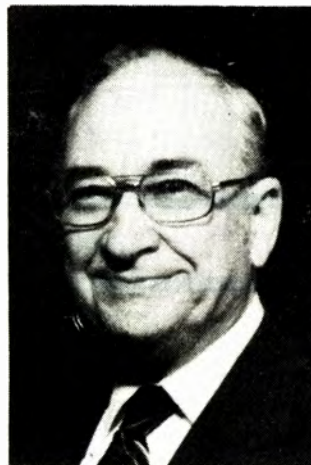
The word "devout" conveys the idea of "showing fervor and reverence in religious observance." This word [devout] "stresses a mental attitude that leads to frequent, though not necessarily outwardly evident, prayer or worship." Without hesitation it is readily acknowledged that the masses in the various denominations are devoutly religious.

But so were the people on Pentecost before they believed in Jesus Christ! They are described as being "devout men, out of every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5). Their religious "fervor" and "reverence" had brought them from fifteen nations to Jerusalem to worship God. Surely their devoutness is unquestioned and unquestionable! Yet they -- these "devout" people! -- needed "remission of sins," and were urged to "save yourselves . . ." (Acts 2:38, 40). This forces us to the conclusion that simply being "devout" will not save. The fact that one is "devout" does not guarantee that one is saved.

Must Know The Truth

Our Lord Jesus Christ himself said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). After his resurrection from the dead, he said: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19), or: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature . . ." (Mark 16:15). Paul said that the "gospel of Christ" is "the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16), but that a perverted gospel brings the curse of heaven, not salvation (Galatians 1:6-10). One who brings any "other gospel" than that preached by the apostles is guilty of "evil deeds" (II John 9-11).

One cannot be taught wrong, and be baptized right, nor worship right. Therefore he must be taught the truth. One must know and obey the truth, to be saved.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

**PLEASE ATTEND WORSHIP
SERVICE EVERY LORD'S
DAY!**

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Unity - Do We Want It?

BRIAN J. GALLOWAY

Unity is a word which is talked a great deal about in religious circles today. We hear about the ecumenical movement, we hear about interdenominational 'churches,' we hear of mergers of denominations. Do we really want unity? If so, how should we go about obtaining unity?

Unity is something we should desire for the religious world. Jesus did. Listen to Jesus: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17:20-21). Jesus wanted his people to be unified, and the purpose of unity was so that the world may believe in him. In our world today, with 500 to 3,000 denominations (or branches of denominations), this division often causes people to be so confused that they throw up their hands and say: "With this much division, there can't be a Christ!"

Paul also desired unity for the church. Even though denominations as we know them today did not exist when the New Testament was written, there were divisions in some of the congregations. It was largely because Paul heard the church at Corinth was becoming divided that he wrote what we know as I Corinthians. He wrote: "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10). Unity is to be desired!

But, at what cost are we to desire unity? Many say they want unity, but they want it much like unions settle a strike; you give a little here and I'll give a little there. Is religious unity to be desired in and of itself? In the letter to the church in Thyatira, one sees that church was "unified" in suffering the woman Jezebel to teach and seduce Christ's servants (Revelation 2:18-19). Was that unity acceptable? The church at Laodicea was unified in being lukewarm (Revelation 3:14-22). Was that unity acceptable? If a church is dead, producing no fruit for God, being indifferent to the great commission, and they are unified in

spiritual sleep, is that acceptable because they are unified?

There are many who would like to unite with those who teach doctrines contrary to the Bible. They want to accept their *similar* teachings and ignore their doctrine that is different (which is opposed to Bible truth) for the sake of unity. Recently a meeting was held in Missouri in the name of unity. One suggestion to help unify the churches of Christ with that other religion, was to let the preachers of this other religion come into our Bible classes and teach the history of 'their church' and then EASE them into our pulpits. Hopefully, it was further suggested, our members can then see that many of our beliefs are "similar" and we can be unified!

What about their beliefs that are *not* similar? Do we ignore or compromise them? We have an obligation to preach THE WORD (II Timothy 2:4). We cannot change any part of the teaching of the Bible, not even for the sake of unity (Galatians 1:6-9; Revelation 22:18-19).

The only way unity can be obtained, and the only way unity will work, is to be unified through the Bible; to let the Bible be our only guide and our only creed-book. In this way we can have unity, because man will not be making the rules; God will. Only in this way can we be unified in the way Christ prayed for.

P.O. Box 2404, Tupelo, MS 38803-2404.

The Sin Of Division

GARRY STANTON

In the U.S. today there are over 300 separate religious groups who claim to follow Christ. The doctrines of these groups differ as much as the day differs from the night. Yet, the apostle Paul wrote in I Corinthians 1:10, that all who follow Christ should preach and teach the same doctrine: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you . . ." All the various bodies claiming allegiance to Christ today *do not* speak the "same thing" and they are divisive by their very nature. Many claim to be "denominational" which is derived from the word, "denominator," which means "divider" or "division." To be denominational is to be divided; to be divided is to do that which Paul says should not be done.

The church is the body of Christ: ". . . and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body . . ." (Ephesians 1:22, 23). Also the Colossian epistle states that Christ "is the head of the body, the church" (Colossians 1:18). Christ is the head, and his body is the church. But denomination-ism says, by implication, that Christ is the head and the various denominational bodies are his bodies; and therefore Christ has *many bodies* (churches) -- but only *one head*. Such does an injustice to the Lord and Savior of the world, making him to be some sort of

"side-show freak."

What causes so many divisions? God is not the cause, "for God is not the author of confusion" (I Corinthians 14:33). The cause of the problem is no different today than it was during the first century: the root of the problem is when men follow other men, and not Christ. Notice the statement Paul directed to the problem of division at Corinth: "For it hath been declared unto me of you . . . that there are contentions among you. 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" (I Corinthians 1:11-12). They were following men, and were being called after men; thus division resulted.

Paul put a question to the Corinthians: "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (I Corinthians 1:13). The answer to all these is a resounding, NO! They were not to follow men nor to wear men's names -- and *neither should we*. My dear friends, will you not consider the importance of this matter? Let us look to God's word for the truth which can set us free. The only thing which suffers from honest and sincere Bible study is error; therefore, let us "study to show ourselves approved unto God."

807 Welton, Pratt, KS 67124.



Words Of

(USPS 691-760)

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

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, JANUARY 11, 1985

NUMBER 2

"Who Is A Wise Man?"

NO. 1

"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you?" (James 3:13).



W. DOUGLASS HARRIS

All right-thinking people have an innate desire for wisdom. Man's interest in wisdom dates as far back as man's origin. Eve was promised such by Satan if she would obey him (Genesis 3:4-6). A distinction is made in the Scriptures between true, and false, "wisdom" and we need to learn the difference. This distinction is clearly made in the context of our text. But how will true wisdom evidence itself? How can we know who is a "wise man? Webster says wisdom is "the ability to judge soundly and deal sagaciously with facts, especially as they relate to life and conduct."

Everyone who has wisdom is precisely described and identified in the Scriptures. According to the Scriptures, who is a wise man? How does one show wisdom?

I. By "His Good Life." "Who is wise and understanding among you? let him show by his good life his works in meekness and wisdom" (James 3:13). Wisdom does not show itself so much in precept, as in life. In the quiet, even flow of one's daily life is it manifested. James said in answer to this question, "Let him show by his good life his works with meekness of wisdom." Someone has said, "It is wise to be good; it is foolish to be evil."

We learn from this passage also that true wisdom is always accompanied by meekness. Some men of learning who are noisy and overbearing may pass as great scholars; but they are not "wise," because they are lacking in meekness. "Knowledge may be proud and conceited that she has learned so much; but wisdom is always meek and humble that she knows no more" (Leroy Brownlow). Inspiration says, "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 this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness" (I Corinthians 3:18, 19).

II. *One Who Harkens to Counsel Is Wise.* "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise" (Proverbs 12:15). A foolish person will not listen; but a wise one will. Foolish people are completely devoid of reason. They have to learn the hard way, because they are unwilling for anyone to tell them anything.

There is safety, also, in consulting a multitude of counsellors. "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in THE MULTITUDE of counsellors there is safety" (Proverbs 11:14). If there is "safety" in such, it is also *wise*. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruc-

tion" (Proverbs 1:7). God says, "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength" (Proverbs 8:14). "Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words" (Proverbs 23:9). Many people make unwise decisions, because they either would not listen to counsel, or they did not seek enough counseling.

How wise are you in hearkening unto the counsel of the wise? "Wisdom is the principle thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding" (Proverbs 4:7). Moses wrote: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom" (Psalms 90:12).—1614 19th Ave., S. W., Decatur, Al 35601.

Laziness Is Sin

MRS. OLA EDGEWORTH

Proverbs 6:6 says, "Go to the ant thou sluggard; Consider her ways, and be wise." Have you ever seen an ant that was still long at the time? An ant "goes in a run" most of the time, putting up food for the winter. I once told my class that if they ever see an ant still, he was probably thinking what to do next!

I hate to say this, but we have reared a generation of lazy people (as a whole). So many people will not work at all these days; and some work just enough for them to get by for only a day or two at the time. They never think there might come a "rainy day" in their life when they will not be able to work, or when they might have a lot of doctor- and hospital-bills. I heard a man say that he never worried about paying his bills: he let the *other man* worry about that! God says, "Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8). The trouble with so many today is that they expect hand-outs. They want all they can get from the other fellow, and never give anything in return. Ephesians 4:28 says we are to work to have to give to the ones in need. But II Thessalonians 3:10 tells us that "if any will not work, neither should he

eat." So we are not to help those who will not work. This will only make more lazy people.

It is no disgrace to be poor; but it is a disgrace to be lazy. I don't mind -- in fact, I enjoy it!! -- helping people who help themselves; but I resent appeals for help from people who need help because of their laziness. And today, many lazy people will rob, kill, cheat, or do "anything" before they will work for a living. Some who are old as well as the young will do this; but it all goes back to their rearing. Parents are to blame in most cases.

We should rear our children to work. Work isn't going to hurt them; it will help them. The Jews used to say, If you do not teach your son a trade, you teach him to steal. Mothers need to teach their daughters to cook, sew, clean house, make quilts, and other things. Keeping your children busy will help keep them off the streets, and from doing things they ought not. It will also keep them from being lazy and spending eternity in hell. Giving children everything they ask for has made many lazy people. When I grew

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**Words Of
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— Acts 26:25

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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Knowledgeable...Christians In Denominations

It is being alleged that "there are sincere, knowledgeable, devout Christians scattered among all the various denominations."

Last week we considered the adjectives "sincere," and "devout." At that time we noted that our inquiry does not in the least question their piety nor their sincerity. Neither their devoutness nor their honesty is called in question. We long have assumed that the masses who are members of denominations are honest and sincere.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Sincerity Not Enough

It is readily acknowledged that multitudes of "sincere" people are in the various denominations (both Catholic and Protestant). It is also conceded that there are other multitudes—just as "sincere"—who are *not* members of any denomination. If the fact that many "honest" people are in the various denominations proves *they* are saved, then the fact that many other "honest" people are outside any and all the denominations proves (?) that *they* also are saved. If not, why not?

"Knowledgeable"

Let us now focus attention on the word "knowledgeable." The dictionary says that "knowledgeable" is a "colloquialism," which means it is "acceptable and correct in ordinary conversation, friendly letters, or informal speeches, but unsuited to formal speech or writing; hence, informal."

"Knowledgeable" is defined as "having or showing knowledge or shrewdness." All will readily concede that, generally, those in the denominations do indeed have some "knowledge," and that some of them are very exceptionally informed. Some in the denominations are doubtless more familiar with the Bible than some in the Lord's church. However, their faulty concept of Biblical authority and all-sufficiency, and their failure to "rightly divide" (II Timothy 2:15) the word, seem to be major sources of problems.

Must Know The Truth

Unknown truth will not make man free from sin, for Jesus said: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). He directed the apostles to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Because of his own sins, each accountable man is lost (Isaiah 59:2). The gospel is God's power to save mankind (Romans 1:16), and without that gospel (truth), man remains "lost" (II Corinthians 4:3). Without having the gospel preached unto him, man cannot be saved (I Thessalonians 2:16).

No man can be taught **WRONG**, and be baptized **RIGHT!** This is so self-evident and clear that it should be axiomatic. It is also clearly demonstrated in the conversion of some of the 'charter' members at Ephesus. They had known only the baptism of John, which was not "in the name of" Christ (Acts 19:1-7). Paul learned that John's baptism was all they knew: "Then said Paul,"—observe, please, the emphasis upon *teaching!*—"Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism on him which should come

after him, that is, on Christ Jesus" (verse 4). Notice that the apostle **TAUGHT** them, "*saying . . .*" this. Luke reiterates this fact: "When they *heard* this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (verse 5). It is certain that they had to be properly taught before they could properly obey God. Therefore, I repeat: No man can be **TAUGHT WRONG**, and be **BAPTIZED RIGHT!**

Only One Purpose For Baptism

Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). The purpose for which one should believe and be baptized is: **TO BE SAVED**. This is the **ONLY** purpose for baptism in the New Testament, whether it were administered by John the Baptist, or by the apostles under the Limited Commission, or by Christ's disciples under the Great Commission. However, there is no set "formula" or phraseology in which this reason for being baptized must be stated. In fact, it is variously expressed in the New Testament.

This sole purpose for being baptized may be stated in the words of Jesus: "He that believeth and is baptized

This sole purpose for being baptized may be stated in the words of Jesus: "He that believeth and is baptized *shall be saved*" (Mark 16:16); or, "baptizing them *into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*" (Matthew 28:19, A.S.V.). Peter stated it: "Repent and be baptized every one of you **IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST . . .**"—which should clearly indicate the purpose for being baptized: for "in the name of" means "by the authority of," and the only reason Jesus authorized one to be baptized is, to "be saved." But the apostle Peter added: ". . . *for the remission of sins*," (Acts 2:38). Allow the same inspired apostle later to tell what the phrase "for the remission of sins" means: "baptism doth also now save us" (I Peter 3:21). In the words of Ananias to Saul (who already was a penitent believer), precisely this same purpose of baptism is set forth: "Arise and be baptized, and *wash away thy sins*," (Acts 22:16).

The apostle Paul variously expressed this selfsame, one-and-only Bible reason for being baptized, saying he and the Romans were "baptized *into Jesus Christ*"—but this ["in Christ] is where salvation is (Acts 4:11-12). Paul also said baptism put him and the Romans "*into his death*. But Christ's blood was shed in his death (John 19:31-34). Baptism, therefore, put them into Christ's death, at which point of their obedience the blood was contacted, and saved them. The same apostle wrote the Corinthians that baptism put both him and them "into one body" (I Corinthians 12:13), of which Christ is the savior (Ephesians 5:25). To the Galatians Paul wrote that they were "baptized *into Jesus Christ*," where they became (by faith) the children of God, and at which time they "*put on Christ*" (Galatians 3:27). The apostle Paul also said that God has "saved us . . . by the washing of regeneration . . ." (Titus 3:5). The "washing" connected with the new birth (for that is what "regeneration" means) is water baptism! This is in perfect accord with what Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

These are not "DIFFERENT purposes" for being baptized, for there is only the **ONE** purpose, although

Laziness Is Sin

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up, we had to work for what we got; and I'm thankful for it. I consequently enjoy working—and so will others when they are raised to work.

So, Parents, please don't hand your children everything "on a silver platter," so to speak; but teach them to work, and they will appreciate it when they are grown. When parents don't teach their children to work, when they grow up they will think society owes them a living. This will cause them to take what they want any way they can. This is the reason many steal, kill, and cheat. But, they won't have to do these things to spend eternity in hell. The wicked servant in Matthew 25:26 was not accused of doing any of these things: he was only called "wicked and slothful."

Do you want to spend eternity in the Devil's Hell just because you are lazy? Do you want your children to? Proverbs 18:9 says, "He also that is slothful in his work is a brother to him that is a great waster." Hebrews 6:12 says, "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

It is not a sin to be poor,
It is not a sin to be crazy.
But the Bible says,
It is a sin to be lazy.
—Rt. 2, Detroit. AL 35552.

He Came To Himself-- And Went Home!!!

DEAN FUGETT

It goes without challenge that there are many members of the Lord's family who have left the fellowship of the church, gone off into the world, and have thereby sacrificed their inheritance. Some surely have not stopped to think what this means. Paul speaks of God's children as being "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). Peter reminds us of the "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (I Peter 1:4). If we forsake our relation, we are described as those who "draw back **UNTO PERDITION**" (Hebrews 10:39).

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Moral Evil: To Fight It Or Not

Christians are locked in a deadly war with Satan for the souls and minds of men (II Corinthians 10:3-5). This is not a carnal war with guns and planes. It is a war of ideologies: truth against error, the kingdom of God against the power of darkness. Such war was fought by early Christians. They won over Satan and his cohorts "because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony: and they loved not their life even unto death" (Revelation 12:7-11). Today, God's people will likewise win their battle with evil and error with those same three ingredients.



JOHN WADDEY

The war today is against Biblical morality, the sacredness of human life, the Christian concept of marriage, parenthood and the home, and the gospel view of church policy and women. Three choices only are before us. 1. We may withdraw from the world and build a fence about us, hoping that Satan's warriors will not penetrate our world. Such, of course, is foolish thinking. 2. We could simply surrender as have the Episcopalians, Methodists and others. Such is unthinkable. 3. We can stand up and fight for God's standards and against these destructive forces. This is God's directive for us (I Timothy 6:12).

As one who has entered the fray against some of the evils (abortion, pornography, homosexuality, ERA, booze), I urge my brethren to get involved and help turn the tide for righteousness. Inform yourself, use your pen to write letters and articles refuting evil and defending Biblical standards. Work, give, and lead the forces of decency.

If you cannot help us because of reasons known to yourself and God, please do not hinder the battle by opposing our efforts. Surely many will have perfectly good reasons for not volunteering to fight moral evil. Some, however, might be jealous of the public attention, (i.e., TV and news coverage) a brother might get by publicly leading the community against iniquity. Others may feel embarrassed for not doing their part and they must attempt to rationalize and justify their conduct to maintain respect. Such attitudes lead these brethren to "bad-mouth" those brethren who sacrifice their time and energies to save our nation from a moral judgment. Then there are a few folks who obviously just do not understand that resisting the devil is an important and legitimate aspect of being a Christian (James 4:7).

On the other hand, those who have taken up the sword for the Lord's cause must never be judgmental of those who do not do so. We must not be guilty of judging our brothers (Matthew 7:1). 1. Not all men are fitted for public controversy. 2. A brother may be swamped with other duties. A man can only do so much. 3. It is possible for a fellow preacher to be totally unaware of the challenges before us today. The minister's study can have one out of touch with the real world. 4. He may be faced with serious congregational pressures that make it impossible for him to take a public stand against sin and keep his job. The brother with one of these reasons will surely be able to explain it to the Lord.

We are urging individual Christians to help us fight these corrupting influences of our society. Of course, the universal church of Christ cannot issue an official policy statement on anything, for no one man or group of men is empowered to so speak. Certainly one congregation cannot speak for our whole brotherhood. The church (as such) cannot elect a good

official; but individual Christians can. We are citizens of two kingdoms and have duties to both (Mark 12:17). It is our duty to pray for our rulers "that we might live a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity" (I Timothy 2:1-2). We must obey the laws and pay our taxes (Romans 13:5-7). And I believe we should actively work for the moral and spiritual welfare of our community (Galatians 6:10). While the church as a spiritual body may not directly engage in this public fight against immorality, she can encourage her members to do so in their daily lives.

If one can join the PTA, Lions Club or sponsor a little league team and thus work for the good of the community, could he not also join the *Right to Life* movement and save babies from death by abortion?

Someone might object that membership in such a non-church organization puts the Christian in harness

with members of other religious groups. But would we not join hands with our Catholic and Baptist neighbors to kill rattlesnakes that threatened our children's safety? Would such mean compromise? A faithful brother can participate in fighting the snakes or fighting the pornographers and not necessarily compromise his faith. On the other hand one might do NOTHING but study and preach and yet compromise the Lord's cause by refusing to "reprove the unfruitful works of darkness" (Ephesians 5:11).

Brethren, the devil has cast the gauntlet at our feet. The Lord of heaven is riding forth on his white charger to victory. The armies of heaven are following him to the great battle (Revelation 19:11-16). Are you marching with him? or watching from the grandstand?

6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37921.

"I Don't Do No Broken Bones"

We live in an age of specialists; and their presence has complicated life. Who has not heard of the maid who proudly proclaims, "I don't do windows." No longer can you go to "the doctor;" you must find the one "doctor" who treats exactly what ails you. There are *doctors* who treat only feet, those who work only on the head, those who work on the nerves, and a doctor for almost each part of the body! Believe it or not such specialization has now entered the realm of "faith healers." Lewis Grizzard, a syndicated columnist in the local paper, recently related his experience at one of the "healing" meetings he attended some time ago.

It seems that one of the faith healers ("Brother"



DAN JENKINS

Roy Dodd Hembree) had come to his hometown and a schoolteacher, Miss Inez Pickett, came to him with a kidney disorder. Following his prayer she began to jump around on the platform rejoicing over her "cure." She became so excited that she fell off the platform and broke her leg. When someone suggested that an ambulance be called, another remarked, "No need for that, just get "Brother Roy Dodd" to heal her." When they turned to him his reply was, "I don't do no broken bones, just vital organs!" What a golden opportunity he missed! One broken bone mended in the sight of his audience would be worth *thousands* of unseen cures of kidney ailments!

What a contrast between modern "faith healers" and those of the first century. ". . . all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on *every one* of them, and healed them" (Luke 4:40). Why can men not see such differences? Will they never learn the difference between the counterfeit and the genuine?

—125 Dory Road South, West Palm Beach, FL 33408.

What Time Is It?

Time is the most precious commodity in the world. Wasting time is the most extravagant and costly of all expenses. "Time is the most important thing in the world" (*Edison*). "Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for time is the stuff of which life is made" (*Franklin*). "Time is the best of all possessions" (*Socrates*). Jesus' appraisal of time: "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). Our eternal destiny depends on the way we use our *time*. Since it does, we need to determine WHAT TIME IS IT?

I. *TIME FOR MANY TO AWAKE FROM SIN* (Romans 13:11-14). Paul employs in this passage three acts naturally followed in awakening from sleep. First, *the act of awakening* (verse 11). The



W. DOUGLASS HARRIS

time to awaken from sin is NOW! The enemy of the soul does not sleep (I Peter 5:8). Second, *the act of dressing* (verse 12). This specifies what we are to put off and put on. We are dressing for eternity! Third, *the act of walking* (verse 13). We are to walk honestly, as children of light; not in rioting, drunkenness, and lasciviousness. If we squander our time in sin, the harvest will be costly.

II. *TIME TO GO TO WORK IN GOD'S VINEYARD* (Matthew 21:28). By the sin of Adam man was cast out of God's vineyard. In Christ we are brought back into that vineyard (Isaiah 61:3; Galatians 3:27). We must work in the Lord's vineyard to receive his reward (Matthew 20:1-11). Time to work? NOW! "*Go work TODAY in my vineyard.*" "Procrastination is the thief of time!" No one can practice procrastination all his life and claim to be an "eleventh-hour" laborer. That worker agreed to go into the vineyard and work at the first opportunity we had, not after refusing multiplied opportunities. We need to be buying up the opportunities (Ephesians 5:15 *ASV Footnote*).

III. *IT IS HARVEST TIME* (Luke 10:2). If the harvest was plenteous in the time of our Lord, is it any

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"My Kingdom Is Not Of This World"

(NO. IV)

Christ's kingdom is a militant kingdom. The kingdom must be interested in spreading to include all people. Christ wants all men to be his willing subjects. Every Christian must wage the spiritual warfare.

The weapons of the Christian's warfare are not carnal. Paul stated it in the following words: "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;)

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 10:3-5). Another statement from Paul is: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). It is a war against the devil to bring the individual to obey Christ. We battle for the mind.

For this continual fight, we must "put on the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:11). Our struggle is both defensive and offensive. We must be a "contentious" people. There is no room for *personal* contention; we must not seek to impose our personal desires, whims, and fancies. Jude tells us what our "contention" must be: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). To the Philippians Paul informed ". . . I am set for the defence of the gospel" (Philippians 1:17).

The Christian must carry on an offensive campaign. Jesus gave the marching orders: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16). The kingdom of Christ has a great responsibility to perform.

In order to fulfill the command of Christ one must

He Came To Himself-- And Went Home!!!

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In Luke 15, in the context of God's concern for the lost, we are told of one who left his father's house. His condition is then described as "feeding swine," and of such hunger as he would have eaten the "husks." The father's comment was that he was "lost . . . dead." But HE --this wandering son-- "came to himself . . . arose, and came to his father."

Many times we talk to wayward members who have "come to" themselves, and who admit that they are lost, and that they need to return. They come to themselves; but they do not return to the Father! This sad estate means that they remain "lost . . . dead," and will be disinherited.

Please, disobedient child of God, come all the way back to the Father! Come home! We love you. God loves you. And home fellowship awaits -- with all its rejoicing.

— Rt. 2, Harrison, AR 72601.



W. EDWIN KEARLEY

prepare himself. Paul wrote, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil . . . Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God: . . . and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Ephesians 6:10-18).

Every activity of life should serve a spiritual end. Paul taught, "And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus . . ." (Colossians 3:17). A selfish life serves no one, not even the selfish individual. Though selfishness is *intended* to serve the selfish individual, in the long run, selfishness is the means of his ruin.

The wise man Solomon stated, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). — 501 Pine Street, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

What Time Is It?

Continued from page 3

less now? The Macedonian call is coming from almost every nation in the world today. As the laborers were few then, they are few now! We need to pray more fervently than ever that the Lord will send laborers into his harvest. "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).

There will be a time when it will be too late to seek the Lord (Luke 13:25-28). And everyone who is unprepared for the Lord's second coming will be like the

five foolish virgins, left on the outside (Matthew 25:1-11). There are manifold warnings in the scriptures about the brevity of time (cf. Job 7:6; 14:1,2). WHERE WILL YOU BE WHEN TIME IS NO MORE??

"So teach us to number our days,

That we may get us a heart of wisdom" (Psalms 90:12, A.S.V.). — 1613 19th Ave. S.W., Decatur, AL 35601.

Knowledgeable...Christians In Denominations

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

it is expressed in different words. This is necessarily true, for there is only "one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5). When one is motivated to be baptized "to obey God," it must be *for this purpose* --for this is what God requires. No other 'baptism' fills the requirements of the gospel. Therefore no baptism is *obeying* God unless it is "for the remission of sins," or to "be

saved."

One who has been taught that he already has been saved, before and without water baptism, and then is "baptized" (?) because he is (?) saved, has not been scripturally baptized. He is not in fellowship with Christ, nor with any who are in fellowship with Christ (I John 1:7-10).

One Hundred Billion Birds

Do you realize there are 100 billion birds in our world. This figure almost staggered me when I read it the other day. Our world has only slightly more than four billion people. The birds easily out-number us.

The life span of a bird is short, at best. For example, only a small percentage of quail survive each year. Most birds are fragile. They have little protection and many enemies. Whether it is a cat, disease, or a small boy with an air rifle, the lives of birds are quickly taken from them.

Why this interest in the lives of birds? Jesus made two references to them. In his great sermon on the mount, he called the listener's attention to the birds of the heavens (Matthew 6:26). He said, "Your heavenly Father feedeth them . . ." How much do a hundred billion birds eat? No bird plants a crop, or has a barn. Yet the food is there. Jesus asked them "Are you not of more value than they?" (R.S.V.). Why should the Christian fret about food, when God

provides food to some of the least valuable of his creation?

Jesus called attention to God's knowledge of man by stating that God knows when a bird falls to earth (Matthew 10:29; Luke 12:6). No sparrow dies without God's knowing it. Jesus again draws an analogy by saying: "Fear not, you are worth more than many sparrows" (Luke 12:7). I may hide something in my life from everyone else, yet I cannot hide it from God. This should be an incentive to integrity.

On the other hand, I can know I am never forgotten. God knows me, knowing me better than anyone else, even myself. As his child, I have his promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

One hundred billion birds in our world. God feeds, cares for, and knows them all.

But he cares more for us!

— 425 NW 27th Avenue, Miami, Florida 33125.



ANCIL JENKINS

PLEASE ATTEND WORSHIP

SERVICES EACH LORD'S DAY!



W

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 22

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18, 1985

NUMBER 3

'My Kingdom Is Not Of This World'

(NO. V)

A failure to recognize the nature of the kingdom of Christ has caused much misunderstanding and division among those who claim to follow Christ. An adherence to the New Testament pattern would bring about unity and increase the influence of Christianity.

Historically, the "kingdom" (or church) has been down-graded as merely a 'non-essential' institution. While speaking to the elders of the church of Ephesus at Melitus, Paul said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). It would seem that anything which cost the blood of the Son of God would be very important.

Christ is the head of his kingdom. In speaking of God the Father's action toward Christ, Paul said, "And hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Ephesian 1:22). Jesus had declared prior to his ascension, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). He has promised to be with us "even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20).

How is the kingdom designated in the New Testament? It is called the "Body of Christ" (Ephesian 1:23). It is referred to as the "house of God" (I Timothy 3:15). What does Paul mean when he calls the kingdom of Christ the "house of God?" Let us see how the word is used in Hebrew 11:7: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his HOUSE; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of righteousness which is by faith." Noah's "house" was his wife, their three sons, and their wives. Therefore his "house" was his family. Likewise the "house" of God (I Timothy 3:15) is the family of God! Therefore the kingdom or church is the family of God.

The kingdom is also designated as the "bride of



W. EDWIN KEARLEY

Christ." In answer to those who questioned the Baptist about his role in bearing witness concerning Jesus, he said, "Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase but I must decrease" (John 3:28-29). Paul uses Christ and his relationship with the church to teach Christian relationship between husband and wife. Paul taught, "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesian 5:25). This confirms the church as the bride of Christ. The fidelity of the church to Christ should be as the fidelity of a wife should be to her husband.

Another figure used to describe the kingdom is the word "leaven." "Another parable spake he unto them: the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of

meal, till the whole was leavened" (Matthew 13:33). As yeast in dough makes it increase in size, so Christians must use their influence to cause the kingdom of Christ to grow. Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel (bowl), but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).

Some day Christ will deliver his kingdom to God, the Father. Paul said, "Then cometh the end, when he (Christ) shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (I Corinthians 15:24-25).

—501 Pine Street, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Sterl A. Watson, Sr. 1904-1984

J. C. DAVIDSON

Sterl A. Watson, Sr., was born in Ozark, MO., February 15, 1904. He departed this life November 26, 1984. Since 1972 he had been confined to his home because of ill health. He is survived by his wife, Pauline Watson; two daughters, Dr. Sterling Brown, of St. Louis, Mo., and Dr. Earline Pinckley, of Huntsville, Ala.; and two sons: Judge S. A. Watson, Jr., of Huntsville, Ala., and James A. Watson, of Tampa, Fla.; three brothers: Clyde, Paul, and Virgil; two sisters: Mrs. Maggie Moody, and Mrs. Daisy Rice; eight grandchildren, and one great-grandson.

Brother Watson was a gospel preacher who preached the truth in love but without fear or favor. Standing for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, he successfully opposed (both privately, and in public debates) all forms of error.


Beginning his preaching in 1929, he continued to serve as local evangelist for churches in Missouri,

Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and California. For about fifteen years he served the West End church in St. Louis, Missouri. In addition to local work, he was used extensively in gospel meetings.

As brother G. K. Wallace wrote: " 'And there were giants in the earth in those days.' The Bible uses the word 'giant' to describe men of 'great renown' and of 'great stature.' In the early part of this century there were gospel preachers who were truly 'giants.' Sterl A. Watson was one of them."

—Memorial Parkway Church of Christ, Huntsville, Al.

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(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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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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The Great Salvation

Neglect is the universal sin of mankind. Each of us would probably admit that we sometimes neglect those who depend upon us, or our responsibilities in other areas. Bad as these areas of neglect may be, there is one that is worse: that is neglect of the *great salvation* which God is offering to all men and women today. That such is clearly possible is declared in Hebrews 2:3.

Europe, Great Britain, Canada, and the U.S.A.

are without doubt the most "irreligious" people in the world today. Africa and Asia, Latin America and the island nations reflect a tremendous interest in Christianity as never before. Even the masses in Eastern Europe and Russia are experiencing a great revival of commitment to God.

Each should ask himself if he has fallen into that posture? How can one tell if he is neglecting the great salvation? Some symptoms are:

A. Loss of interest in reading God's word (Acts 17:11; I Peter 2:2).

B. Lack of interest in prayer, and in other time spent alone in meditation with God (Philippians 4:6-7).

C. Loss of interest in, and lack of participation in the public worship of God in the church assembly (Hebrews 10:24-25).

D. Negligence in living up to those Christian principles one knows to be right and good (James 4:17).

E. A practice of avoiding those Christian friends who make you feel uncomfortable by their dedication and loyalty to Christ (I Corinthians 15:33; I John 1:7).

Hebrews speaks of our neglecting our "great



JOHN WADDEY

Continued on page 3

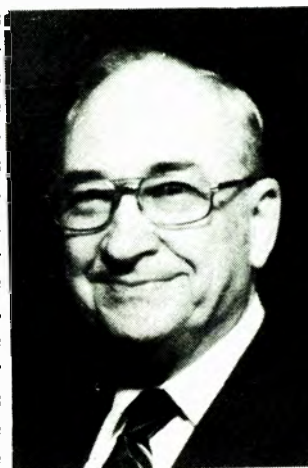


The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Some Debate Propositions On The Purpose Of Baptism

The denominations—practically all of them—teach that alien sinners are saved by faith, before and without water baptism. Numerous denominational preachers have affirmed this in debate with our brethren. Not all of them agree at precisely what point one is saved: but they are certain (?) that it is prior to water baptism! Let us look back at some of the propositions that have been debated through the years.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

In 1843, Alexander Campbell affirmed: "Christian baptism is for the remission of past sins," and N. L. Rice (Presbyterian) denied it.

In 1882, in Australia, J. J. Haley affirmed: "Baptism by the authority of Jesus Christ is for the remission of sins." Methodist B. Butchers denied it.

In 1888 another Methodist, J. H. Nichols (--no kin to our family, I suppose!!! -FHN) --affirmed: "A sinner is justified from past sins by faith only." James A. Harding denied. And Harding affirmed: "Christian baptism is in order to the remission of sins," which proposition was denied by Nichols.

Baptist preacher J. B. Moody affirmed in 1889: "Remission of sins with like blessings of salvation is received before baptism," and James A. Harding denied it. Harding affirmed: "Baptism to the penitent believer is for (in order to) the pardon of his past sins," which Moody denied.

In 1914 L. S. Ballard (Baptist) affirmed: "The Scriptures teach that faith in Christ procures salvation without further acts of obedience." E. M. Borden denied this, then affirmed: "The Scriptures teach that water baptism is for (in order to) remission of past sins," which Ballard denied.

N. B. Hardeman (1938) affirmed: "The Bible teaches that baptism, as taught in the commission of our Lord, is for, in order to, the remission of sins, to the penitent believer," with Ben M. Bogard (Baptist) in the negative.

In the Nichols-Weaver Debate (1943), C. J. Weaver (Church of God) affirmed that "The Scriptures teach that alien sinners are saved from their past sins upon the conditions of repentance, confession of sins, and faith, before and without water baptism." Gus Nichols denied this, and affirmed: "The Scriptures teach that water baptism to a penitent believer of the gospel is unto the remission of alien sins, or is a condition of salvation from past sins." C. J. Weaver argued the negative of this proposition.

Roy E. Cogdill affirmed (1946): "The Scriptures teach that water baptism to the penitent believer is for (in order to) the remission of sins," and D. N. Jackson (Baptist) denied this. Then Jackson affirmed and Cogdill denied this proposition: "The Scriptures teach that the sinner is saved by grace through faith before water baptism."

"The Bible teaches that the alien sinner is saved

before and without water baptism," was affirmed by A. U. Nunnery (Baptist). In the negative was Guy N. Woods (1946). Then Woods affirmed: "The Bible teaches that water baptism is essential to the salvation of the alien sinner," which Nunnery denied.

A. J. Kirkland affirmed, and Roy E. Cogdill denied (1948) this proposition: "The Scriptures teach that the alien sinner is saved from past sins by grace through faith before and without water baptism."

In 1950 J. W. Kesner (Baptist) affirmed: "The Scriptures teach that the sinner is saved by grace through faith without works and before water baptism," with Ward Hogland in the negative. Hogland affirmed: "The scriptures teach that the alien sinner must be baptized in water for his sins to be obliterated or forgiven," which Kesner denied.

L. S. Ballard (Baptist) affirmed (1952): "The Scriptures teach that faith in Christ procures salvation without further acts of obedience." Negative: Thomas B. Warren. Then Warren affirmed, and Ballard denied: "The Scriptures teach that water baptism is for (in order to) the remission of past sins."

V. E. Howard affirmed (1952), and Julian Pope (Baptist) denied: "The Scriptures teach that baptism to the penitent believer is essential to his salvation from past and alien sins." Pope affirmed: "The Scriptures teach that salvation comes at the point of faith without any further acts of obedience," and Howard denied it.

The Kelly-Garner Debate (1953) was on these propositions: (1) "The Bible teaches that water baptism is essential to salvation for the alien sinner." Affirmative: Marvine Kelley; Negative: Dr. Albert Garner (Baptist). (2) "The alien sinner is saved at the point of faith alone before and without water baptism." Affirmative: Dr. Albert Garner; Negative: Marvine Kelley.

In 1955 W. E. Sherrill (Baptist) affirmed, and A. C. Grider denied: "The Scriptures teach that salvation is by grace through faith, independent of baptism."

Albert Batts (Church of God) argued the negative of the proposition: "The scriptures teach that water baptism of a penitent believer is the last condition for remission of past or alien sins," while Harold Sain affirmed it (1965).

About 1980 Jack Langford affirmed: "Resolved: The alien sinner is saved by 'faith only' apart from water baptism or works of any kind," while Jerry Moffitt denied it.

Dear Reader, this is what the denominations have taught, and still teach, regarding baptism. They deny that it is associated in any way with the forgiveness of past (or alien) sins. Therefore they do not baptize anyone "for the remission of sins" as required in Acts 2:38. They do not baptize anyone so that he "shall be saved" as Jesus promised (Mark 16:16). Instead, they teach that believers are saved before and without baptism, then baptize one who (they think) is already saved. This is not New Testament baptism.

One cannot be taught false doctrine like this, and

Continued on page 3

“Who Is A Wise Man?”

(NO. II)

“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you” (James 3:13).

III. *One Who Fears and Departs from Evil* (Proverbs 14:16). “Fear” in this sense means to be afraid and cautious. A wise man knows what evil has done and will do. Knowing the deceitfulness of sin, he shuns it (Hebrews 3:13; I Thessalonians 5:22). Sin promises one thing, but substitutes something else. “A prudent man seeth the evil, and hideth himself” (Proverbs 22:3). Joseph did exactly this when Potiphar’s wife attempted to entice him into sin (Genesis 39:7-12). “Fear the Lord and turn away from evil,” is the admonition of the wise man (Proverbs 3:7). In the light of all of this, it is foolish to say, “I will try anything once.” Job said, “To depart from evil is understanding” (Job 28:28). “It is an abomination to fools to depart from evil” (Proverbs 13:19). Surely it is wise to *depart from evil*, as well as *fear it!*

IV. *One Who Respects Parents Is Wise*. Children are commanded to honor their parents (Ephesians 6:2; Colossians 3:20). God-fearing parents know much by experience that their children do not know. Because of age, experience, and knowledge, God-fearing parents are entitled to this respect. “A wise son heareth his father’s instruction” (Proverbs 13:1). “A fool despiseth his father’s correction” (Proverbs 15:5). The scribes and Pharisees had a way of “avoiding” this responsibility; but Jesus condemned them for it (Matthew 15:4-6).

Many aged parents are dying with broken hearts because their children are not honoring them in their old age. The late T. B. Larimore, as a spokesman for aged parents wrote the following:

New Branch Of “School Of Biblical Studies”

A branch of the Harding School of Biblical Studies is scheduled to begin in January in the Bahamas for the training of Bahaman Christians for leadership in the islands.

The agreement to establish the branch was made between Harding President Clifton L. Ganus and missionaries in the capital city of Nassau, fulfilling the desires of the missionaries to provide a program for the approximately 400 members of churches of Christ there.

L. V. Pfeifer, associate professor of Bible, will go to Nassau to lead the school, along with missionaries Bill Miller, Andrew Major and David Caskey.

Harding began a Christian Communications Program on the Searcy campus in 1974 and 163 have graduated from the Program, which was changed in name to School of Biblical Studies this fall. Currently 54 are enrolled on the Searcy campus.

When the Bahamas program is successfully established, plans will be made for similar programs to be established in other third-world countries.



W. DOUGLASS HARRIS

*Take my withered hands in yours;
Hold them close and strong;
Cheer me with a fond caress;
‘Twill not be long;*

*Youth immortal soon will crown
With its wreath my brow.
As I’ve loved and petted you,
Love and pet me now.*

V. *One Who Refrains His Lips Is Wise* (Proverbs 10:19). “For he that would love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile” (I Peter 3:10). Why is it wise to refrain one’s lips? Because “in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin” (Proverbs 10:19). Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from trouble” (Proverbs 21:23). There are so many sins of the tongue -- among them are lying,

cursing, railing, filthy speaking, deceit, flattery, hasty words, and gossip. This makes it that much more important that we pray: “Set a watch, Oh Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips” (Psalms 141:3). May each of us make the following vow: “I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue” (Psalms 39:1).

*A careless word may kindle strife.
A cruel word may wreck a life.
A brutal word may smite and kill.
A gracious word may smooth the way.
A joyous word may light the day.
A timely word may lessen stress.
A loving word may heal and bless.*

... WALTER

(To Be Continued)

—1613 19th Ave. S.W., Decatur, AL 35601.

Voice Of Freedom Breakfast Set For February 6, 1985

For about fifteen consecutive years it has been my privilege to arrange for and oversee a VOICE OF FREEDOM Breakfast at the annual February Lectureship conducted by Freed-Hardean College in Henderson, Tennessee. The breakfast for the 1985 Lectures will be Wednesday morning, February 6, at 6:30 a.m. Brother Earl West, a long time board member of the VOICE OF FREEDOM, will be our featured speaker. The breakfast will be held in Gano Dining Hall in one of the front private dining areas. Please consider this as your special invitation to attend. VOICE OF FREEDOM needs your help and this is a concrete way to be that working friend and laboring patron the paper needs.

VOICE OF FREEDOM is doing a work that no



ROBERT R. TAYLOR, Jr.

other paper in the church or out of the church is doing. It has been a pioneering paper, a literary voice crying in the wilderness filled by the totalitarian philosophies of Roman Catholicism and Godless Communism. Not only has the paper been interested in teaching against these errors but also has presented a balance with the needed positives of the gospel of Christ. The paper has not been just AGAINST something; it has also been FOR the right and true. But more and more ears and hearts need to be opened to its timely messages. Bold efforts to improve greatly the paper and its offerings are on the front burner for 1985.

For many years WORDS OF TRUTH has been graciously kind in allowing me to run a short article about this annual breakfast. Brethren Gus Nichols, Bobby Duncan, and Flavil Nichols, the three editors of the paper, have been most kind in this regard. Though a very busy man brother Flavil Nichols has attended nearly all these breakfasts across the years and has spoken at them also. These breakfasts about VOICE OF FREEDOM have had no better friend or supporter than brother Flavil.

—P.O. Box 464 Ripley, TN 38063.

The Great Salvation

Continued from page 2

salvation.” What is there about Christianity that makes it so “great?”

- Its origin — with God in heaven (John 14:10-11).
- Its earthly founder — Jesus (Matthew 1:18; I Corinthians 3:11).
- The price paid for it — the blood of Christ (Romans 5:6-9).
- Its universality (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 10:34-35).
- Its age-lasting nature (Matthew 28:19-20).
- Its redeeming power to save the most degraded

(Hebrews 7:25; I Timothy 1:15).

Each reader is challenged today to claim (or, if you have been negligent, to reclaim) that “great salvation” which the God of heaven has made available to all. A commitment to Christ, to obey his commands and live a disciple’s life, will never be regretted. If you will be faithful unto death, you will receive a crown of life (Revelation 2:10).

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37921-9599.

Some Debate Propositions On The Purpose Of Baptism

Continued from page 2

in response to it obey the gospel of Christ. Those who have received any unscriptural ‘baptism’ should obey the gospel of Christ: --they have not done so as yet. They may have thought they were being baptized ‘to obey God;’ but unless it were “for the remission

of sins” (or some such expression) it was not obeying God.

One cannot be taught wrong, and be baptized right!

Misappropriating God's Love

God's love for man cannot be measured in terms which would be fully discernable and wholly understandable by man. Simply stated: God's love for us is beyond our comprehension. The most graphic illustration we have to give us some appreciation of God's love is the tragic scene at Calvary.

There on that horrible day his love for the world was dramatized in the most unforgettable fashion by heaping upon

his precious Son the sins of all mankind, and allowing him to die a cruel and shameful death in order to purchase redemption for all who will hear, receive, and obey the gospel of Jesus Christ. How can anyone who is aware of his own sinful nature not have an ecstatic appreciation for a God who would go to such extremes in order to remove the guilt and stain of sin?

stain of sin? We can all be humbly thankful for that which we cannot fully understand.

However; we must recognize that some would "overestimate" and misappropriate God's love in that they would rely SOLELY upon it to the exclusion of FAITH and OBEDIENCE for their salvation. For many "believers" (so called), John 3:16 is all of the scripture they know, and all they feel that they need. They are misappropriating God's love in placing the entire burden of their salvation upon it with disregard for any conditions or requirements on their part.

Never, in all of man's history have God's blessings and promises, both temporal and spiritual, been without conditions on man's part. Even in the beautiful paradise of Eden God placed conditions upon Adam and Eve with sure and certain punishment in store if they failed to meet those conditions (Genesis 3). One lesson sorely needed by all believers is that God's love for man has never overruled his requirements of man. God does not oppose himself, nor does he allow man to frustrate his grace.

God's love for us demands a responding love for him from us. God's love for us was manifested in the death of his own beloved Son (I John 4:9,10). Our love for God is manifested in the keeping of his commandments (I John 5:2,3).

We love our fathers and mothers, our sisters and brothers. This is right and it is good. We love our wives and children; and so it ought to be for this is well pleasing to God. But the love between us and our God should be the greatest love affair in our lives. When we love God as he loves us, our lives, our families, our fortunes, yea everything we have in this life will be sanctified in our hearts to his service and his glory.

When we love him as he loves us we will delight in his law and meditate upon it day and night (Psalms 1:2). When we love him as he loves us we will DELIGHT in his commandments, we will LOVE his commandments, and we will DO his commandments (Psalms 119:47, 127, 166). Having done all of this we will then humbly and thankfully accept salvation by his grace, not earned by our own merits, but from the heart of a loving God who cannot be made debtor to man (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Let us correctly and properly appropriate the love of God in our lives by hearing his word, believing his word, and obeying the gospel of Christ for salvation (Mark 16:15,16), -- AND, by faithfully keeping his commandments unto the end of our days (Revelation 2:10). "Wherefore, brethren, give the more



ROY FULLER

diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble: for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance

into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 1:10,11). AMEN.

— Rt. 4 Box 479, Elba, AL 36323.

Come Visit Us

DOWELL FLATT

One who works twenty-five gospel meetings each year has the wonderful opportunity to visit in a number of homes. Our great brotherhood still has tremendous respect and appreciation for evangelists.

During these visits in the homes, one receives a number of requests. An often-heard favor is, "Preacher, we really want you to encourage our children to attend Freed-Hardeman College." When one has dedicated his life to Christian education, he finds this an easy, happy request to honor.

However, such encouragement can be a fruitless task. Though the parents may be graduates of a Christian college, they may have a son or daughter finishing high school who has never set foot on such a campus. That same child may have followed his state university football team for years. He likely has traveled at least a few thousand miles over those years to attend their games. Yet, he may have never traveled as much as one hundred miles to visit the campus of a Christian college. Why should it come as a surprise when the child attends a school with which he is familiar?

Parents, come with your children to visit us during lectureship week, fall or spring weekend, during the

family vacation, or just on a regular school day. Allow your children to see an atmosphere dedicated to teaching both "how to live and how to make a living." Their seeing the school makes the encouragement to attend much more effective.

With all of their faults, the Christian colleges are still a great supplement to the home. They prepare students for both the here and the hereafter. (Luke 2:52)

As Cousin Lester Flatt was fond of saying, "You all come." Your child could decide during such a visit that he will return to that campus to receive a quality education in a Christian environment. He may choose on that campus his mate who will help him raise your own precious grandchildren. Such a choice should be an eternal blessing to your family, his family, God's family, and the world.

—Chairman F-HC Bible Department, Henderson, TN 38340

(Editor's note: We trust many parents will accept this invitation and be encouraged to visit, not just Freed-Hardeman, but other Christian college campuses. Freed-Hardeman's annual Lectureship is the first full week in February.)

Youth Forum April 5-6

"How Shall We Then Live" has been chosen as the theme of the 1985 Harding University Youth Forum set for April 5-6 with Jim McGuiggan, an Irish evangelist, as speaker.

Teen-agers will be on the campus for a full program that will include four addresses by McGuiggan on "Broken Hedges and Snakes That Bite," "To Make Friends," "Is It Right?" and "Obeying The Unenforceable."

The University's annual Spring Sing extravaganza will be presented by Harding students Thursday through Saturday nights and Saturday afternoon.

Also in the day's events will be musical pro-

ductions by the "Time of Day" singing group, slide presentations and tours, devotionals and academic information.

McGuiggan, born in Belfast, North Ireland, attended Sunset School of Preaching in Lubbock, Texas and later taught at the school nine years. He returned to Ireland in 1982 and began a congregation in Hollywood, where he and his wife now live. He has written 12 books, including six commentaries.

Further information concerning the Youth Forum will be announced, or may be obtained from the Admissions Office, Box 762, Harding University, Searcy, AR 72143.

Another Great Admission

By Dr. Carl Sagan

MARTEL PACE

The famous astronomer, Dr. Carl Sagan, gave us several interesting thoughts in his recent article in *Parade* (Dec. 2, 1984). He actually wrote this:

All life on earth is the same life. There are superficial differences which, understandably, seem important to us. But down deep at the heart of life, we are, all of us -- redwoods and nematodes, viruses and eagles, slime molds and humans -- almost identical. We are all expressions of the interaction of proteins and nucleic acids.

How does this help the evolutionist? I can't see that it does. Similarity of life in the realm of animals might possibly indicate an evolution from lower forms, but how can the identity of "all life" help one believe in

evolution unless Dr. Sagan now wants to argue that animal life sprang from plants? Will he do this?

Christian Education

Emphasis March 2

6th Ave. Church invites all young people and their parents to Jasper for day-long activities Saturday, March 2. A fuller program will be later.



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 22

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25, 1985

NUMBER 3

Jehoiakim, The King Who Hated God's Work

A nation is blest or cursed, depending upon the quality of her leadership. The kingdom of Judah had the misfortune of having a number of kings who were unworthy of their high office. Jehoiakim was such a king. "He did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah his God . . . now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did . . . behold they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah . . ." (II Chronicles 36:5-8).



JOHN WADDEY

About The Man

At birth, he was named Eliakim which meant "raised up by God." When placed on the throne of Judah by the Egyptian Pharaoh-Necho, his name was changed to Jehoiakim (II Kings 23:34). The home he was born into was a good one. His father was the righteous and Godly king, Josiah. His mother was Zebidah, daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah (II Kings 23:36). The blood of the noble king David flowed in his veins. As a child he was privileged to grow up in the midst of a great spiritual revival led by his father. In Josiah's house, he would have been exposed to great men of God such as Jeremiah and Zephaniah. He would have observed how important the Scriptures, the temple, and the worship of God were to his saintly father. His times were the turbulent years 633-598 B.C.

His Reign As King

Jehoiakim received his throne when his father Josiah met an untimely death at the hands of the Egyptians (II Kings 23:29-30). The natural heir who succeeded to the throne was his brother Jehoahaz. After a short reign of three months, Pharaoh-Necho removed him and installed Jehoiakim. Jehoahaz spent the rest of his years as a captive in Egypt (II Kings 23:31-34).

Jehoiakim was twenty-five years of age at his ascension, the eighteenth ruler of David's dynasty. He ruled from 609 to 598 B.C. a total of eleven years. His first eight years were spent as vassal to Egypt, his last three to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (II Kings

23:35-24:1).

Jehoiakim "did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah . . ." He rebelled against his Babylonian overlords (II Kings 24:1-2). As punishment for his and the nation's sin, God sent repeated assaults of heathen armies against his kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar and his troops took the city, bound Jehoiakim in fetters to lead him away to Babylon (II Chronicles 36:6). Evidently he died before the departure and was left unburied as prophesied by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 22:18-19). There would be no lamentation for so wicked a man. His burial would be like that of an ass; drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem. His carcass would be left to the heat of day and frost of night (Jeremiah 36:30). His son Jehoiachin was removed after three short months as king, and the crown was bestowed on Jehoiakim's brother, Zedekiah (II Kings 24:15-17).

His Life and Administration

Being under tribute to foreign kings, Jehoiakim passed the burden to his subjects by laying heavy taxes on them (II Kings 23:35). In addition to this hardship he engaged in great building projects using forced labor to accomplish his goals (Jeremiah 22:13-15). The divine record leads us to conclude that he was one of the most worthless princes ever to sit on David's throne. He did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah. He filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. Human life was not held sacred by him. He was covetous, oppressive and violent (Jeremiah 22:17). When the prophet Uriah dared to openly speak against his administration "the king sought to put him to death" (Jeremiah 26:20-23). When Jeremiah's writings were presented to him, he burned them with contempt (Jeremiah 36:1-26). Greenbough paints the following sketch of this wretched ruler:

He was a poor, weak-brained, berattled simpleton, whom his flatterers and countesses had persuaded to regard himself as a Solomon. A man steeped in vice, a coward and a braggart, with a vast stock of obstinacy and bravado, and a huge opinion of himself, but without a speck of real courage and manliness.

Lessons to Remember

An old proverb says "a child and a fool should never be given a knife, for each will use it either in whittling on things he should not or else he will injure himself." A fool such as Jehoiakim should never have

occupied a throne.

God hates hands that shed innocent blood (Proverbs 6:16-17). Jehoiakim's crimes of violence against his fellow men did not go unpunished, nor will those of present day murderers, war-mongers and abortionists.

In this king's life we see the truth of Paul's saying: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). The same principle of judgment still prevails in the world. Sinners beware!

History teaches us that woe comes to the man who fights against God's preachers, God's word, or God's kingdom. God's word is like fire that devours and like a hammer to smash its opponents (Jeremiah 23:29). Those who do harm to God's preachers must answer to their Master (II Kings 1:9-12). God warns us "Touch not mine anointed ones, and do my prophets no harm" (I Chronicles 16:22). God's kingdom will break in pieces and consume all its enemies (Daniel

Continued on page 3

F.H.C. Lectures

"Just a Christian" will be the theme for this year's Freed-Hardeman College Bible Lectureship to be held February 4-8. The program promises to be more than "just a lectureship," the 49th year of this heralded series.

Dr. Earl West will be honored at Monday night's appreciation dinner. West is a writer whose published works include three volumes of the SEARCH FOR THE ANCIENT ORDER, LIFE AND TIMES OF DAVID LIPSCOMB, and ELDER BEN FRANKLIN: THE EYE OF THE STORM. Volume Four of the SEARCH FOR THE ANCIENT ORDER is in preparation.

Alan Highers, a 1958 graduate of Freed-Hardeman, will be conducting the popular Open Forum each day at 3:30 p.m. Highers is a Tennessee State Court of (civil) Appeals Judge.

On Tuesday and Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. three practicing lawyers will discuss the current issue, "Withdrawal of Fellowship: Legal Implications." Attorneys Larry McKenzie and Willard Smith practice law as partners in Henderson; Smith is the college attorney. W. Harold Bighar, a Nashville attorney, is involved with three cases brought against

Continued on page 4



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— Acts 26:25

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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Scholarship To Honor Flatts

A scholarship has been established at Freed-Hardeman College in honor of Benton and the late Cleo Way Flatt. The scholarship will be given annually to a Bible major planning to preach in the mission field.

Dr. Dowell Flatt, Chairman of the Department of Bible at F-HC and son of Benton and Cleo Flatt, announced the scholarship on behalf of all the family following the death of his mother December 18. Mrs. Flatt is survived by her husband and eight children: sons Leamon, Bill, Don, Dowell and Kenneth; and daughters Rose Fox, Linda Anderson and Wanda Crabtree. Other surviving family members include a brother, three sisters, twenty-one grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. Mrs. Flatt, daughter of Hiram and Ollie Fox Way, was a native of Jackson County, Tennessee.

The Flatt family has been closely associated with Freed-Hardeman College and very involved in the work of the church. Four children of Benton and Cleo Flatt (Leamon, Don, Dowell, and Linda) are graduates of F-HC and daughter Wanda also attended the college. Two daughters-in-law, Carolyn Stephens (Mrs. Don) Flatt, and Della Maltby (Mrs. Dowell) Flatt are also F-HC graduates.

Benton Flatt has served as an elder of the Union Hill church and has four sons who are ministers in the church at various locations: Leamon in Murfreesboro, Tennessee; Bill, Memphis, Tennessee; Don, Morehead, Kentucky; and Dowell, Henderson, Tennessee. One son-in-law, Jimmy Anderson, is a preacher in Putnam County, Tennessee, and another, Leonard Fox, is an elder in Rome, Georgia.

Friends of the family are invited to contribute to the scholarship fund.

PLEASE ATTEND WORSHIP
SERVICES EACH LORD'S DAY!



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

The Church Of Christ --No. 1

Jesus promised, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). He did exactly what he promised, because we read of his adding people to it (Acts 2:47). Moreover Christ is "head" of his church, its only head (Colossians 1:18). The first congregation of it was in Jerusalem, where the foundation for it was laid (Isaiah 28:16), and where the great commission began to be executed (Luke 24:46-49). As the same gospel ("the apostles' doctrine") was preached, believed, and obeyed, in other cities --yea, even on other continents-- the same church was planted.

Only One Church (In Kind)

There were numerous congregations, but all were one in kind --all were taught to be alike. This was true because, wherever the inspired apostles went, they all, being inspired, taught the same faith, doctrine, and practice. The apostle Paul said Timothy "shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church" (I Corinthians 4:17). So the apostles preached the same thing every where. The same apostle also pleaded as follows: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10). Another apostle warned: "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" (II John 9-10). Everywhere, and by every preacher or teacher, the same doctrine, faith, and practice were bound on all alike. The result was that all congregations which followed their inspired teaching were exactly alike in faith, doctrine, and practice. Paul therefore speaks of "the churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16).

Sin To Cause Division

Each local congregation was identical with all the others. Whenever any difference arose, or any departure from the divine pattern was discovered, the inspired apostles corrected the difference by setting forth the truth of the gospel. Those who taught contrary to the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42) were charged with the awful sin of bringing about the consequent division (Romans 16:17-18).

Jesus promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit should "teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). He further assured them that "the Spirit of truth . . . 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 show you things to come" (John 16:13). On another occasion he told them: "It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matthew 10:19-20). This is why Jesus assured them: "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).

Apostles Infallible In Doctrine

The apostles were inspired so far as their TEACHING is concerned. No one, I suppose, thinks their LIVES were inspired. They had to make themselves live up to the truth revealed by and through them. --And at times they rather imperfectly measured up to it. But their preaching was infallible, for under the Spirit's guidance they were not capable of making any mistakes in doctrine. Consequently, the word which they preached is described as "inerrant," which means that it contains no errors. Webster says that "to speak of an authority as INFALLIBLE is to emphasize the unfailing truth or certainty of its knowledge, judgments, doctrine, and the like; to assert that an authority is INERRANT is to claim for it absolute freedom from error in matters of fact." The Bible is both INFALLIBLE and INERRANT, for "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Timothy 3:16). This is why we must "learn not to go beyond the things which are written" (I Corinthians 4:6, A.S.V.).

Seed Reproduces "After His Kind"

Jesus said the word of God is the "seed" of the kingdom or church (Luke 8:11). At creation, God gave an infallible law that every seed shall bring forth "after his kind" (Genesis 1:11-12, 24). In keeping with this law, those who took the gospel, the "seed," from Jerusalem (the first congregation) to other cities, were not starting "Denominations." Instead, they were simply reproducing the church as it was built by Christ at Jerusalem. Similarly, those who now start congregations by preaching exactly what the apostles preached, without addition, subtraction, or crook, are starting congregations exactly like the church described in the Bible. They are merely reproducing the "church of Christ," as it was taught to be under the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42). I repeat therefore: They are not starting "Denominations."

Sin To Change The Church

No church has any Bible right to exist if it does not possess the identifying marks, or characteristics, of the church described in the New Testament. No one is permitted to change or alter the church from what it was when it was fresh from the hand of its builder, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18). To say that Jesus did not KNOW what the church should be like, how it should be organized, how it should worship, what it should preach, how people should get into it, (and so on), is to impeach the omniscience of our Lord. To say that he knew all this, but was NOT ABLE to establish it like it should be, is to impeach his omnipotence. [OMNISCIENT — having universal knowledge; infinitely wise. OMNIPOTENT - unlimited in power, ability, or authority; almighty. (Webster)].

Same Church Now

Although we live twenty centuries after the apostles, we can be as certain that we today have the same church, of which they were members, as if we were only a few years removed from the apostolic era. A local church or congregation produced NOW by hearing the "apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42), and by thus following only the word of God, is the truth church --even if there had not been another one like it for two thousand years! The church of Christ, of which I am a member, has no creed but the Bible, and is identical with the church described in the New Testament. Without hesitation or apology, I therefore state that it is the New Testament church, over which Christ rules as head, to which the Lord adds all the saved, and in which the Holy Spirit dwells. Most gladly do I urge you, Kind Reader, to investigate the church of Christ.

A Spur To Move You? Or, A Spear To Kill You?

When the sun shines upon wet clay, it causes it to harden: When it shines upon wax, it causes it to melt. The action of the sun remains the same; it is the composition of the material acted upon that makes the difference.

Some discourage serious Bible study by claiming that it can never be understood. They tell us that no matter how much we search we cannot find truth. What a hopeless feeling this doctrine must cause within its adherents! To be lost, with no hope of learning the way home, would make every action of life meaningless and without purpose. Please do not for a moment accept this false doctrine! It is an incorrect conclusion, drawn too soon by those who have given up. Frustration is something that all men and women must deal with: no one escapes. The effect of frustration, however, depends upon the individual. Frustration can spur us on to learn and accomplish more than we otherwise could. Or, it can defeat us where we stand. The choice is ours.

We sometimes have difficulty immediately understanding the meaning of a given passage of scripture. This should surprise no one. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:16). It is also the



TIM NICHOLS

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Jehoiakim, The King Who Hated God's Work

Continued from page 1

Jehoiakim was not the last man who sought to destroy God's word. Antiochus Epiphanes, King of Syria (175-163 B.C.) ordered that "every copy of the law (of God) was to be surrendered to the authorities and be destroyed . . ." (Alfred Edershiem, *History of the Jewish Nation*, p. 11.)

In 303 A.D. the Roman Emperor, Diocletian, ordered all copies of the sacred writings destroyed. (Neander's *History of the Christian Religion*, Vol. I, p. 48). Pope Innocent, in 1199 A.D., ordered French Bibles burned at Metz and torbade the people to have more. The Council of Tarragona in Spain under Pope Gregory IX (1234 A.D.) ordered all people to surrender their Bibles for burning. William Tyndale was martyred for his work in translating the Scriptures. A thousand Bibles were burned at St. Paul's crossing in London by order of Bishop Tenstal (See George DeHoff *Why I Believe the Bible*, p. 115-116). Thomas Paine, the American infidel, in his *Age of Reason*, predicted that "Fifty years hence, the Bible will be obsolete and forgotten." Theological liberals claim to be wise enough to weigh the Scriptures and cast out those parts they do not approve of. Communism in Russian, Europe and China has waged a fierce but loosing battle against the Word of God.

Mark it down: Men do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them! Jesus left us this solemn promise: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

Poor Jehoiakim: the Scripture he hated is known and honored in the hearts of millions; but his wretched name is all but forgotten. He fought against God's word -- and lost!

— 6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931.

case that within the Bible "are some things hard to be understood" (II Peter 3:16). Even what is difficult to understand *can* be understood. Yet many will give up after a casual reading, and will declare the effort to be futile. What could have been an obstacle to overcome becomes an unchallenged enemy who wins without a battle. Although one will not pillow his head at night with every question answered and every difficulty overcome, he can go to sleep with the satisfaction of knowing that he has learned some of the Word of God. He can anticipate discovering more when the battle is resumed and the inspired Book is opened again. Truth is knowable and worth the search. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Those who love God and would be pleasing to him are those who continue to increase their knowledge of the things of Christ. They study their Bibles. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever" (II Peter 3:18). Timothy was instructed to "give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (I Timothy 4:13). There are great things awaiting those who will continue the struggle. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are

sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

The light of God's word is shining (Psalm 119:130). The purpose of the word is to save "every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16). It does not save all who *hear*, because some choose to disbelieve (Mark 16:16). Some begin to believe and obey, but then turn away when difficulty is encountered (Luke 8:6,7). "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). What effect will the sunlight of God's Word have upon you?

Those who permit the challenge to defeat them, sometimes resent those who continue to wrestle, and who refuse to declare the Bible to be a nebulous mist of meaningless mystery. Many, in frustration, paint everything gray, and grant themselves and all others the freedom to believe, teach, and practice virtually whatever they choose. Others simply leave religious things behind, and refuse to think about them. It is an easy thing to take the path of least resistance for the time being (although it offers no rewards). It requires effort to learn and grow. Which do you admire? Which will you do?

—Route 1, Box 211, Burlington, West Virginia 26710.

Abortion And Christian Involvement

Should Christians be involved in the struggle to end the destructive evil of abortion? My answer is, "Yes" and the reasons are numerous why this is so.

Because, first, every abortion destroys a human life; we are obligated to try to save those innocent lives. God charges us to "deliver them that are carried away unto death, and those that are ready to be slain see that thou hold back" (Proverbs 24:11, American Standard Version).

We should oppose abortion, second, because God hates "hands that shed innocent blood" (Proverbs 6:16-17). No life is more "innocent" than that of the unborn child. Abortion's one purpose is to destroy that unwanted child while yet in the womb. Christians should oppose that which God hates.

Third, since we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16), we must do our job of influencing that world and leading it against moral evils such as abortion.

Fourth, Christians are to "reprove" the "unfruitful works of darkness" (Ephesians 5:11-12). We must serve as a moral conscience to our culture, reminding them of the wrongs they do (Philippians 2:15). We must "cry aloud and spare not" to tell the people of their sins (Isaiah 58:1).

Fifth, for us *not* to oppose this and other kindred evils is to abandon our society to malevolent influences that reject all Christian values. God has granted us a marvelous governmental system that allows us to choose our leaders and thus to shape and influence our laws. If we Christians remain uninvolved, we leave this right to those whose god is power, and whose creed is secular humanism. God expects us to be "good stewards" of his gifts of liberty and freedom (I Peter 4:10).

We must fight to stop this slaughter of innocent



JOHN WADDEY

life, sixth, because God will be forced to judge and punish any nation that is guilty of such mass 'blood-letting.' Of the ancient Canaanites who shed much blood, God said that they had filled the cup of iniquity and the land would vomit them out (Genesis 15:16; Leviticus 18:24-25). To allow this injustice to go unchallenged is to write the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah upon ourselves (Genesis 18:19-28). Do we really think that a just God will exempt us? As someone recently noted, rather than sing *God Bless America*, we should ask, "Can God bless America?"

Seventh, we should be in the forefront of this conflict for conscience sake. If we know to do good and do it not, it is sin (James 4:17). Would it not be "good" if we could stop this slaughter? Then what should we do? How can we relax in leisure when our future brothers are being exterminated by greedy, ruthless hands? May the nagging voice of a guilty conscience drive us to involvement.

Eighth, for the sake of our children and generations yet unborn we should take up the pro-life banner. God visits "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation" (Exodus 20:5). Think how the children of Germany and Japan suffered for the sins of their fathers who launched World War II. President Lincoln interpreted our awful "Civil War" as retribution for the sins of our fathers on the African slaves that worked their fields. What a dreary future is being charted for coming generations! We can change that to a day of liberty, hope, and blessing by removing this grievous cancer from our social body.

If we who love God and honor his will, and who respect our fellowman as made in God's image, do not work to solve this problem, *who will do it for us?* The duty falls to us — will we meet it? or will we fail?

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931

3rd commandment - 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.

On Time And Eternity

We live in time; we live in eternity. We are denizens of the moment; we are inhabitants of aeons. Years upon years are needed to grow the towering oak; an acorn is planted in but an instant. What we do today will be forgotten tomorrow; what we fail to do now will affect generations yet unborn and determine the course of history. No moment is unique since, ultimately, infinite moments precede it and eternity follows; every moment is precious -- it could be our very last.



PHILLIP GRAY

Tomorrow's worship service is but another in a long succession of assemblies coming down from the first century. Will it not be just an ordinary assembly like any other? Or will it be that one, unique service, caught up in just the right juxtaposition of circumstances, at the right moment, that will happen to influence a certain -- perhaps unbeknown to me -- soul to get right with God only IF I should be there, but who otherwise may never obey?

No man lives unto himself (Romans 14:7). Each has a special influence on some other that alone may make the difference between his abiding forever with God, or with Satan. "Ye are the light of the world," Jesus said. "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid," he continued (Matthew 5:14). The application? "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Whether or not desired or fully understood, it is my inevitable role to be an example! "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 Timothy 4:12). This role of example embraces the whole of my life: "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works," admonished Paul (Titus 2:7). "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" (I Peter 2:12). The relevancy this principle has for my role of personal-evangelist-by-example can readily be seen.

True, when I am absent from a particular assembly it is not generally my intention to do the church harm. In fact, I may consider myself a "faithful" member; and relative to others, this might be an appropriate adjective. Yet the fact does not change: My influence over others is such that there may be in the history of my life and in the ordering of events, one worship assembly, and one assembly *only*, which could be the exclusive opportunity which he or she who watches *me* needs to be persuaded by my example to turn to God. That is a fearful thought indeed! But how can I deny it?

What am I going to do in view of it? This realization is one of the reasons it is frequently insisted in these pages, in personal conversation, and from the pulpit, that each member should strive sincerely to be present for every service, if at all possible. If I have deliberately avoided going to worship when it is within the power of my hand to do so, how can it be said that I have not "forsaken" the assembly? or, have not left in the lurch my brethren in their valiant struggle to oppose the hordes of Satan? Read Hebrews 10:25.

It is hard to have a penetrating understanding of the psyche of the Christian who carelessly or

purposely neglects the sacred privilege of assembling with saints in worship. For, the true child of God is "zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14), and "ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1). Congregating with Christians for worship, study, evangelization and fellowship should most certainly qualify as a "good work." Thus, sincere saints are zealous of attending the services, ready to every assembly, realizing that "to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). But in happy contrast with the negligent member, men may see my good work of

faithful attendance and glorify my Father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:16).

I simply have no way of calculating the multiplication of untold good that may accrue from any given time set aside for spending with God. Tomorrow's is just an ordinary worship service: tomorrow's is the eternal fork in the road for some precious soul who is waiting for me to lead the way. Which fork will he, by my influence, choose on that, his day of destiny, tomorrow?

—P.O. Box 606, Flomaton, AL 36441.

The Power Of A Praying Parent

In the early 1950's, a Bible teacher of mine at David Lipscomb College in Nashville, Tennessee, related this touching, heart-warming, and very sobering story in a class one day. The story involved a young man who was in service and was far from home. One day some of his army companions asked him to accompany them into town that night. They were going to paint the town red. A night of sinful revelry was in infamous



ROBERT R. TAYLOR, Jr.

making for all participants. They made it sound like fun and excitement were in store for all who accompanied them. The first impulse of the young man was that of fleshly temptation; he said he would accompany them. A short time later that day a thought hit him like a thunderbolt. The day was Wednesday and "Tonight," thought he, "my dear mother will be at her regular place in Mid-Week Bible Study at Charlotte Avenue in Nashville, Tennessee. "When prayers are prayed, "he continued to think, "she will be remembering her son in service-- far from home." Memories of a praying mother each Wednesday night and confidence that tonight will be no exception set this young man's mind toward serious thought. He decided he could not and would not spend a night in sin while his godly mother thousands of miles away prayed for his moral, spiritual, and physical safety. He told the boys he would not be

going after all.

Some observations are surely in order. What if this boy's mother never prayed as he grew to maturity? (It is not likely that the one who wrote the words of the song, "If I could hear my mother pray again," was the child of a prayerless, Godless, Christless mother.) What if she had never been a Christian? What if she preferred television, radio, social visits, helping the children with school homework, etc., on Wednesday night rather than being with saints at Bible Study and in prayer? The memory of a Christless mother could never have wielded such a decisive effect upon a son thousands of miles removed from home. Memories of a prayerless mother would have been worse than worthless in keeping this young man away from a night of sinful indulgence. In all probability the boys who did go had mothers who would not be at Bible Study praying for them that evening. Because this mother believed in Mid-Week Bible Study, and prayed for her son while there, this kept a young man from spending a night in sin he surely would regret later.

Parental readers, what if YOUR son had faced this decision on a Wednesday? Could his mind have reflected a prayerful mother or father at Bible Study on Wednesday night? There is no way to evaluate the full impact of praying parents for their impressionable, pliable children. Does not James 5:16 include the prayers parents pray for their children also? The passage reads, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." It surely did avail much with the mother and son portrayed in this true story.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

F.H.C. Lectures

Continued from Page 1

congregations of the church of Christ.

Dr. Bert Thompson, Montgomery, Alabama, author and lecturer, will be featured Monday through Thursday at 2:30 p.m., speaking on "Unity Movements: Old and New." Thompson is the author of several books and of a series of tapes on Christian evidences.

Daily classes include a ladies' class and classes for Bible teachers. Mission Forum is scheduled for 2:30 p.m. each day. Each night a half-hour singing session will be held in Loyd Auditorium prior to the 7:30 lecture. Speakers for the evening sessions include Billy Ringold, Earl West, Guy N. Woods, and Jimmy Mankin.

Another highlight of the lectureship will be the keynote address at 12:50 each day. Speakers include Alvin H. Price, Flavil H. Nichols, Joe McKissick, and Cecil May.

Thursday night's 7:30 session, Youth and Parents

night, will feature Mankin, who succeeded Dr. Ira North as minister of the Madison Church of Christ in Madison, Tennessee. The Madison congregation is the largest congregation of the church of Christ in the world.

Christian Education

Emphasis March 2

6th Ave. Church invites all young people and their parents to Jasper for day-long activities Saturday, March 2. A fuller program will be presented later.



Words Of



(USPS 691-760)

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

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1985

NUMBER 5

"Who Is A Wise Man?"

NO. III

"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you" (James 3:13)

This is a final installment in this series. In answer to this question, we have let the Bible speak, adding very little personal comment. We have not by any means exhausted what the Bible teaches in answer to the above question. Have you been wise enough to read all of them??? Study carefully the following as a further answer.



W. DOUGLASS HARRIS

VI. ONE WHO HEARS AND OBEYS THE LORD IS WISE (Matthew 7:24-27). "He that is of God heareth God's word" (John 8:47). "Hearing" in this sense means to yield a willing assent of the mind to the word of God, with a firm purpose to obey it. Such is man's whole duty in life. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the WHOLE DUTY of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). Many of our problems are symptoms of a misconception of the primary purpose of life. It is not to "eat, drink, and be merry," as many may think; but to glorify God by conforming to his will (I Corinthians 10:31).

Hearing alone is not sufficient: "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22). The gospel of Christ blesses those only who hear and OBEY it (Hebrews 5:8,9).

VII. A WISE MAN IS ONE WHO WINS SOULS. "He that winneth souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30). This is exceedingly wise because of the value Jesus placed on just one soul (Matthew 16:26). Man's soul is the only part of him that will survive the grave (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Everything else perishes (I Timothy 6:7). HOW MANY SOULS HAVE YOU WON TO CHRIST? We sing: "Must I go and empty-handed? Must I meet my Savior so? Not one soul with which to greet Him: Must I empty-handed go?" This forcefully explains why Jesus commanded us to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). Can we go before God in judgment with our hands unstained with the blood of others, not having saved a

single soul??? (Ezekiel 33:8,9).

VII. A PREPARED MAN IS A WISE MAN. "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12). It is folly of the worst sort not to be prepared for eternity. According to Jesus, a wise man anticipates the storm and builds upon the rock (Matthew 7:24-27). He also anticipates the coming of the Bridegroom, and prepares adequately to meet him (Matthew 25:1-13). His philosophy is that of the ant, rather than the grasshopper (Proverbs 30:25; 6:6). One who is wise makes preparation NOW, rather than waiting until "tomorrow" which may never come.

The clock of life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop--
At late, or early, hour.

Now is the only time you own!
Live, love, toil with a will;
Place not faith in "tomorrow," for
The clock may then be still.

--Anonymous

ARE YOU WISER BY HAVING READ THESE ARTICLES??? — 1613 19th Ave. S.W., Decatur, AL 35601.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT:

Sixth Avenue Secures John P. Gray

The Eldership of the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ announces that John P. Gray has agreed to move to Jasper, Alabama, and work with them as a minister. For three full years he has preached in Campbellsville, Kentucky, where he has been involved with both radio and cable-TV programs. He also writes an article for the weekly newspaper. His work with the youth of the church and the community has been especially rewarding, and they often compromise one-fourth of the attendance.



JOHN P. GRAY

John was born in Washington, D.C., where his father, William Gray, worked for the Federal Government. Until he was sixteen, John lived in that area, then moved with his parents to Florence, Alabama, where his father is a Deacon, and is actively involved in the bus ministry of the Salem church.

From the University of North Alabama, John graduated, receiving a B.S. degree with honors, majoring in Business Management, with minors in

Economics and Business Administration.

In less than two calendar years he completed requirements for graduation from International Bible College, where he received with highest honors a B.A. degree. Currently one day per week he is pursuing graduate work at David Lipscomb College, Nashville, Tennessee, leading to the Master of Arts degree in Bible.

While at Florence, he was active in the campus evangelism programs of the Christian Student Fellowship, under the direction of the Sherrod Avenue Eldership. In this he gained experience in canvassing neighborhoods, in home Bible studies, and participated in evangelistic campaigns in five states. He also preached by appointment at congregations within driving distance of Florence, visiting perhaps forty churches. He worked in the bus ministry, and taught classes for young people. For four years he has served as a counselor at Maywood Christian Camp, Hamilton, Alabama. Some of his former students are either part-time or full-time ministers.

Brother Gray's resignation in Kentucky is effective February 16th, and he will begin work at Sixth Avenue the following day. Our other minister, Flavil H. Nichols, states that he joins with the Eldership and the entire congregation in eager anticipation of brother Gray's arrival and work with us.



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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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Al. 35501

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Emotionalism And Bible Camps

Webster defines *emotion* as a "strong, generalized feeling; physical excitement; any specific feeling; any of various complex reactions with both psychical and physical manifestations, as love, hate, fear, anger." I have been going to Bible camps for only some ten years, but have seen much of what Webster describes as "physical excitement." All the Bible can and should be preached anywhere one is; but the manner in which one may do it should depend upon his audience.



GEORGE REED

What about preaching on "Hell" at a Bible camp? One should choose wisely the illustrations he uses. There probably have been far too many death-bed stories. Telling young children they are going to burn for an eternity unless they repent is not wise. Children prior to accountability need to know they are in a safe state with God (Matthew 18:1-3). At night, in the teenage devotions, the emotions often really run high. I have noticed two interesting points about these devotions: (1) When any emotional story is used, the tears really flow and the tender teenagers come forward. (2) On another night when the speaker was giving book, chapter, and verse for his message, there may be no responses. Granted, perhaps there was no need for a response. But what are the odds of needing responses only when emotions are preached, and not when the speaker gives book, chapter, and verse?

The power of conviction lies in God's word. True emotions must be based on what the Bible says. Anyone who thinks he can get more acceptable conviction from a human story than from the word of God, should think again! Jeremiah in telling of God's word

Continued on page 4



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

The Church of Christ

(No. II)

So much is said and written today about HUMAN churches, that many do not know, or have forgotten, that CHRIST has a church. But he promised, "I will build MY CHURCH" (Matthew 16:18). That he fulfilled this promise is beyond question, for on the first Pentecost Day after his resurrection from the dead we read that "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). If it were not his church, he had no right to add to it, any more than one has a right to "add to" a house which is not his.

The church which Jesus built is as fully described in the New Testament as any human church is described in its own (human) creed. To identify Christ's church, we must know its identifying characteristics.

If your automobile were stolen, the law-enforcement agencies could identify it by its characteristics or description on your invoice or bill of sale. They would not insist that you accept just any car as the one that disappeared, nor tell you that "a car is a car -- and one car is just as good as another!"

Neither should you 'swallow hook, line, and sinker,' the flippant attitude which is so popular: "A church is a church! One church is just as good as another!" We should be vitally interested in identifying the church which is portrayed on the pages of your Bible.

Please consider with me at this time some of the identifying characteristics of the church which Jesus called "my church."

Built By Christ

That Jesus Christ would build the church was foretold by Old Testament prophets, for we read: "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zechariah 6:12, 13). Since "the temple of the Lord" is "the church" (I Corinthians 1:1-2; 3:16), this is a clear prophecy that Christ would build the church.

What Christ called "my church" (in Matthew 16:18), he called "the kingdom of heaven" (in the very next verse). But another Old Testament prophet foretold that "the God of heaven" --not some man-- "shall set up a kingdom" (Daniel 2:44). Here is another prophecy that the Lord should build the church.

We learn, too, that the "church of the living God" is called "the house of God" (I Timothy 3:15); and another prophet stated: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Psalms 127:1). Therefore this also is an evident prophecy that

Christ should build the church.

It was in keeping with these scriptures that Jesus himself announced: "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). Fallible, uninspired MEN built (or started) all the denominational churches, not one of which can be found in the Bible. But Jesus Christ build his church, which is plainly described in the New Testament.

This --the fact that Jesus Christ built it-- is one of the identifying characteristics of the ONE, and ONLY, New Testament church.

Built Only One

No Bible believer will deny that Christ built a "church." But how many churches did he build? Turn with me to the Bible for the answer.

Jesus promised, in Matthew 16:18: "I will build my church" (singular) --not "churches" (plural). The apostle Paul wrote: "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). Not only the singular noun "church," but also the singular pronoun "it" proclaims that Christ loved and died for only ONE church. "He is the head of the body, the church" (Ephesians 1:22-23) --which indicates that there is only one church; for Christ is not like a side-show 'freak' --he is not the head of a multiplicity of bodies, or 'churches.' Hear the inspired apostle Paul again: "There is one body," (Ephesians 4:4), which we have just seen is the church; and, there is "but one body" (I Corinthians 12:20). Therefore there is ONE, and but ONE religious BODY (or, CHURCH), in the New Testament: and Jesus Christ built it.

Where Established?

In what part of the world did the Lord's church begin? In what city was it established? Again we turn to the Bible for the answer.

One of God's Old Testament spokesmen foretold that the Lord's "house," (which is the church, I Timothy 3:15), would be built in Jerusalem. Hear his prophecy: "Therefore thus saith the Lord: I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem" (Zechariah 1:16).

One of the hills upon which the city of Jerusalem stands is Mount Zion. Sometimes this hill ("Zion") is named when the city itself is meant. This is the case in the prophecy of Isaiah: "And it shall come to pass in the last day, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go, and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:2-3).

The same prophet predicted that the "foundation" should be laid in Jerusalem: "Thus saith the Lord God, 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" (Isaiah 28:16). It would be foolish to lay the "foundation" in Jerusalem, and then build the

Continued on page 3

Jehu, The Executioner

The history of Israel's kings is a mixed story. Few of them were righteous men who honored Jehovah. Yet in Daniel the prophet, we are told that "the most high ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the lowest of men" (Daniel 4:17 A.S.V.). One of those base men that God raised up to accomplish his will was Jehu, king of Northern Israel. His record is set forth in II Kings 9-10. Jehu's example is not for us to follow; rather it is for us to avoid. He was surely the most unlovely of all Israel's "heros." He totally lacked the virtues of patience, pity, mercy, and kindness.



JOHN WADDEY

About the Man
The name "Jehu" meant "Jehovah is he." His father was Jehoshaphat, and his grandfather was Nimshi (II Kings 9:14). He first served as a captain in the army of Ahab, king of Israel; and later in the army of his son, Joram (9:4-6). His driving habits had gained Jehu a reputation among the troops. He drove his chariot "furiously" (9:20).

His Anointing
In the year 845 Elisha the prophet sent a messenger to the prospective leader. His instructions were "take the vial of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith Jehovah, I have anointed thee king over Israel . . ." (II Kings 9:1-3). This was his second anointing. Elijah had done the same, some 15 years earlier (I Kings 19:15-16). Thus when the second message came from God, Jehu was ready to accept the challenge and go into action. His divinely-appointed mission was to avenge the blood of martyred saints on the house of Ahab and Jezebel. "Thus saith Jehovah . . . I have anointed thee king over the people of Jehovah . . . and thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge . . . the blood of all the servants of Jehovah at the hand of Jezebel" (II Kings 9:6-7).

His Bloody Revolution
Jehu's fellow-officers immediately joined his cause. They welcomed his appointment with a celebration (II Kings 9:13). The first to fall victim to his wrath was Joram, son of Ahab. He was smitten at the site of Naboth's vineyard which his evil parents had cruelly and unjustly taken years before. Being pierced with an arrow, Joram was denied a proper burial: his body was cast out in Naboth's land as a memorial to God's justice (verses 22-26). When Ahaziah, king of Judah saw this, he immediately fled. "And Jehu followed after him, and said, smite him also in the chariot: and they smote him at the ascent of Gur. . ." (verses 27-28). Ahaziah, though king of Judah, was a grandson to Ahab by his daughter Athaliah.

Next to fall in the bloody coup was Jezebel the evil queen-mother (II Kings 9:30-37). The aged matron sought to use her faded charms to save her life. But Jehu, unmoved, ordered her servants to cast her down from the upper window. Ruthlessly he drove his horses over her broken body. Worse yet, her corpse was left for the street-dogs to devour. This fate Elijah had predicted 15 years before: "And of Jezebel also spake Jehovah, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the rampart of Jezreel" (I Kings 21:23).

Ahab's dynasty of 70 sons were then summarily executed by beheading. Their severed heads being delivered to him in baskets, the bloody reformer ordered: "Lay ye them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until the morning" (II Kings 10:1-10). This struck terror in the heart of every sympathizer of the

old regime, as well as eliminated any possibility of a move to restore the old dynasty.

Additionally, "Jehu smote all that remained of the house of Ahab. . . and all his great men, and his familiar friends, and his priests, until he left him none remaining" (II Kings 10:11). The brethren of Ahaziah had the misfortune to encounter the vengeful king, and forty two of them also perished (verses 12-14). Such barbarity shocks our civilized mind; but it was a common practice in the world of Eastern tyrants. Even now we see blood "purges" when communism gains power, or in third-world revolutions.

The bloody assize of Jehu was not yet completed. Next he conspired to wipe out the Baal worshipers of the land. Calling for a great assembly to worship Baal, he pretended to worship that pagan god. At the appointed moment his troops swept down on the idolators and smote them one and all with the edge of the sword. The troops proceeded to destroy the sacred images and broke down the Baal temple (II Kings 10:18-27). "And Jehovah said unto Jehu, because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, thy sons of the fourth generations shall sit on the throne of Israel" (verse 30). God, the Creator of man, the wholly righteous Judge, and the Giver of thrones and power had the right to exact such capital punishment on people who were void of all good and without excuse.

His Reign
"Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria . . . twenty and eight years" (II Kings 10:36).

Four generations of his heirs succeeded him in power (verse 30). More than any other person, he was successful in stamping out the corrupting Baal worship of the people (verse 28). Because he "took no heed to walk in the law of Jehovah," the Lord allowed Hazael, king of Syria to take much of his kingdom (verses 32-33).

Jehu was a cautious, crafty man. He pursued his course with hasty, unrelenting energy showing neither fear nor pity. He ruled with great energy, boldness and enterprize, shrinking from no difficulty. The only surviving portrait of a Hebrew king is that of Jehu bowing, face to the ground before the great king of Assyria.

His Failures
The bloody revolutionary failed to complete his purge of idolatry from his kingdom. He left "the golden calves that were in Bethel, and in . . . Dan" (II Kings 10:29). He then fell into the very idolatry first introduced by Jereboam, son of Nebat. It was ironic that he took up the very evil he had fought so furiously in an earlier time. Evidently he had learned nothing from their sin and judgment. "He took no heed to

walk in the law of Jehovah" (verse 31). Destructive work on others was easily done; but to humble his own will before Jehovah was too hard for him. Even his zeal for God was faulty; it was mingled with boastfulness, mixed with treachry, cruelty and deceit (II Kings 10:16-19). He was excessive in purging the family and associates of Ahab. Hosea, the prophet later announced God's plan to "avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu" (Hosea 1:4). Like a wild beast, he wallowed in a river of blood. He enjoyed his bloody, violent work. Jehu destroyed much but built up nothing. He had no personal love for God. His zeal was more for his own cause. His evil far outweighed his good!

Lessons To Remember
God chooses men to do his tasks, men who are suited for his specific purpose (Isaiah 10:5-12). Jehu was needed to purge Israel of the evil influence of Ahab and Jezebel, and the plague of Baalism they had introduced. When called, he responded with destructive thoroughness.

"Jehu stands in history as a warning rather than as an example" (Joseph Parker). We Christians could never imitate Jehu's violent persecutions of false religion. We are required to pray even for our persecutors (Matthew 5:43-44).

Jehu destroyed Baalism with the sword, but it sprang up again in a later generation. Our weapons against sin and error are spiritual, not carnal (II Corinthians 10:3-5). We fight these evils with the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17).

Any reformation will fail if it does not thoroughly root out the evil toward which it is directed. The hand that struck down Baal, spared the golden calves at Dan and Bethel. It was here that Jehu failed.

Jehu surrendered his sword to Jehovah, but not his soul. To him religion seems to have been just a political instrument to advance his personal cause.

In him we learn that the thirst for blood, once aroused, is not readily slacked.

This king is an example of reckless zeal — out of control. He was a "zealot" in the worst meaning of the term. Many in the Lord's church are like Jehu they plunge into matters of grave importance with unbridled zeal, and do more harm than good.

We should learn from Jehu to beware the preaching brother who enjoys smiting heretics and non-conformists in the church: Usually the slaughterer knows no end.

Even Jehu's sordid career was recorded for our example that we might avoid his excesses (I Corinthians 10:6).

— 6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37921-9599.

The Church Of Christ

Continued from page 2

"house" (or church) somewhere else! Hence, this is a prophecy that the church ("house of God") would be built in Jerusalem.

This is why the "word of the Lord," or, New Covenant, was to "go forth from Jerusalem," or from Zion (Isaiah 2:2-3). The laying of the "foundation" refers to the Great Commission beginning to be executed, which Jesus specified as "beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47) and which did begin in

Jerusalem on Pentecost Day (Acts 2) in fulfillment of Jesus' promise.

Since the foundation was laid in Jerusalem that must necessarily be where the house is built. Therefore, Christ built his church in Jerusalem. It must be self-evident, then, that any church which originated in any other city -- not in Jerusalem-- is not, and cannot be, the church of Christ.

(More to follow).

2nd commandment - Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

Thou shalt nor bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous

God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.

And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Emotionalism And Bible Camps

Continued from page 2

said: "Is not my word like fire? saith Jehovah; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29). "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword . . ." (Hebrews 4:12). The word of God is God's power to save (Romans 1:16). If obeyed, it makes us free from our sins (John 8:32; 17:17; James 1:18; I Peter 1:22). David, the "Sweet Singer of Israel," describes the word of the Lord most beautifully in Psalms 119. He says the word cleanses (verse 9), quickens (verse 25), strengthens (verse 28), establishes (verse 38), defends (verse 42), comforts (verse 50), instructs (verses 98, 99), enlightens (verse 105), assures (verse 114), upholds (verse 116), brings peace (verse 165), and delivers (verse 170).

Before we rush "children" (or adults, either) to the

baptistry, there are some New Testament points they should know:

1. Does the candidate understand the purpose of baptism? (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Galatians 3:27).
2. Does the candidate understand that no relative can stand ahead of Christ? (Matthew 10:34-39; Luke 14:26). Ask young audiences: If your parents forbid you to go to church, would you go anyway? The person to be baptized should be able, if need be, to leave father and mother. Christ must come first, no matter what! (Matthew 6:33; Colossians 1:18). If the prospect is not ready to do this, he is not ready to be baptized.
3. Is this person who is wanting baptism ready to lay down his life for Christ? (Revelation 2:10)
4. Does this person understand true repentance?

Many whom I see baptized at camp bring about no change toward God or their fellow man. Some seem to have acted on just the spur of the moment.

5. How much of the Lord's church does the prospect understand? has he been taught of the one church? are his parents members of a denomination? will he go to church with them? does he understand he must attend the church Christ established?

Brethren, let us allow the word of God to do its work in converting people (John 16:8). Illustrations do have their place; but let us make sure they are illustrating what the word of God teaches. Camp Directors, be sure to use a strong Bible curriculum at your camp; and make sure the word of God is preached in its fullness.

—17691 Pesante Rd., Salinas, CA 93907.

"Like Death He Has Never Enough"

CHARLES CRUMP

In the days of Habakkuk before the actual victory of Babylon (605 B.C.), Habakkuk was witnessing much hurt and injustice of God's people. He used an expression that describes the selfish, insatiable nature of the Chaldeans: ". . . like death, he has never enough . . ." (Habakkuk 2:5, RSV). This could easily describe our society today. Although this is referring to the wickedness of the Chaldeans, one can also see how great it would be if all Christians could develop an insatiable desire like death in saving the lost.

The very nature of the great commission to teach every creature in all the world (Matthew 28:18-20), will not let a child of God be satisfied with converting only one soul if he can reach two, nor a thousand-and-one if he can get a thousand-and-two. When one is taught and converted to Christ, an insatiable desire to seek for another should grow in his soul; ". . . like death he has never enough . . ."

(Habakkuk 2:5).

When Habakkuk uttered these words he knew from his experience that the greed of evil people can never be satisfied, just as the grave can never be filled. The nature of death is such that there is no end to it; there is no fulfilling its quest until the end of the world (I Corinthians 15:24-26). Only when Christians develop this craving nature, like death, to save the lost, will there be great and tremendous growth in the church of our Lord.

I am now living where there is much hunting and fishing. The hunter keeps going until he bags his game. Some who hunt and get their game are thereby only stimulated and excited to get another; they seem not to get enough. The disciple of Christ is told to be a fisher of men (Matthew 4:19). When one soul is converted, it should stimulate and excite us to get another ". . . like death he has never enough . . ."

Also, just as there is an abundance of game in one

location yet very little in others, so it is with souls: There are better places than others for "fishers of men" to work. But to fulfill the great commission we must go to all areas. Jesus said, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16). Since we have no way of knowing who will accept the truth, we must go to every creature, giving them a chance to accept, or to reject, Christ. This means we go to the barren lands as well as the land of plenty.

The Christian who develops the insatiable desire as death, will never quit hunting nor seeking lost souls until the greedy grave has added him to its number. "Like death, he has never enough . . ." (Habakkuk 2:5).

—P.O. Box 147, Grove Hill, Alabama 36451.

Biblical Mathematics

RICKY PHILLIPS

There are four basic areas of mathematics: addition, multiplication, subtraction and division. Every day we use one or more of these branches of math. Failure to properly learn these functions can lead to problems and disadvantages in the marketplace and on the job. By finding these same four terms discussed in the Bible, we can learn spiritual lessons; and a failure to learn these lessons can lead to eternal consequences.

First we may see a Biblical example of *addition*. We read (Acts 2) about the establishment of the church that Christ came to build. After Peter's great sermon, his audience was convicted that they had wrongly killed, through ignorance, the Son of God (Acts 2:36). Upon this conviction, they asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter's answer is: "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" (verse 38). At this point, many would say that they had "joined the church." However, such is an inaccurate and unbiblical statement. Look at the divine record: "Praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (verse 47). We do not "join" the church, as one may join a civic organization; but rather, after we do what God commands, HE takes the action and *adds* us to the number of the saved. Thus we have a case of Biblical addition.

Secondly, there is in the Bible a threat of spiritual subtraction. In Revelation 22:19 a great warning is given: "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 written in this book." We must treat the Word of God with respect, for it thoroughly furnishes us to every good work (II Timothy 3:16,17), and makes us approved unto God (II Timothy 2:15). Failure to use the Bible properly, by adding to or taking from it, will result in punishment. Adding to it will bring plagues and ills upon us (Revelation 22:18), and taking from it will result in our name being taken out of the Book of Life, as we noted above. We will be judged out of the Book of Life (Revelation 20:12), and Revelation 20:15 tells us: "And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." How important it is to handle God's Word correctly! Failure to do so will result in spiritual and eternal subtraction from the presence of God.

The Bible also speaks of multiplication. After the Church was established in Acts 2, immediate growth began to take place. To merely say that there were additions does not show the rate of growth. Note: "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied . . . And the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly" (Acts 6:1,7). This growth was so phenomenal that it is said they "multiplied." This growth was so intense and widespread that the Gospel was preached to every creature under heaven (Colossians 1:23). This occurred as a fulfillment of Jesus' commands recorded in Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15,16. The same command applies to his Church now and we should be working for this same

spiritual multiplication.

Finally, there is division spoken of in the Bible. God hates those who sow discord among the brethren (Proverbs 6:19), and loves for brethren to dwell together in unity (Psalm 133:1). Christ loves for his followers to be unified, and he prayed to God that he would help them to be so (John 17:20,21). The church in Corinth in the first century was having a problem with division, and Paul admonished them: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10). To show the importance of having no division, in Romans 16:17 Paul said to mark and avoid those who would cause division. Every possible effort should be made by the church of the Lord to avoid religious division, and when it occurs, to take steps necessary to restore the unity that God demands.

If we remember the principles of "Biblical Mathematics," seeking to add to and multiply the number of God's people, and avoiding the subtraction of our names from the Book of Life, and avoiding religious division, the sum total will be eternal life for us and those we lead to Christ; and, growth of the Church.

—2166 Hurricane Creek Rd. Gurley, Al. 35748 (Until March 15th)

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Words Of

(USPS 691-760)

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

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

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NUMBER 6

Perfecting Holiness

In view of the many wonderful promises we have received, Paul urges, "Let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord" (II Corinthians 7:1). Without holiness no man will see God in eternity (Hebrews 12:14). To be *holy* means to be set apart or sanctified for God's use. It suggests purity and freedom from sin. Our life of holiness begins at



JOHN WADDEY

conversion when we are washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus (I Corinthians 6:11). To grow into God's likeness is our goal (I Peter 1:15). Holiness of heart and life cannot be attained instantly; rather it is reached by years of diligent, patient effort (II Peter 3:18).

We must begin with *Holiness in Mind and Heart*. When sin is cast out, righteous thoughts and ambitions must take its place. Otherwise different bad things will simply fill the void (Matthew 12:43-45). We call this the "law of displacement;" good things within, keep the evil things without. Solomon warns, "keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). Jesus observed that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34). With this in mind Jesus said "everyone that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in *his heart*" (Matthew 5:28). "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:9). The formula for a pure heart is given in Philippians 4:8: "Whatsoever things are true, . . . honorable, . . . just, . . . pure, . . . lovely, and . . . of good report; if there be any virtue, . . . any praise, think on these things."

We must be *Holy in our speech*. "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying . . . that it may give grace to them that hear" (Ephesians 4:29). "Putting away falsehood,

speak ye truth each one with his neighbor . . ." (Ephesians 4:25). The cursing, swearing and hateful talk of the world should find no place in the mouths of saints. Rather "let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one" (Colossians 4:6). On every Christian's lips should be this daily prayer: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Jehovah . . ." (Psalms 19:14).

Christians must be *Holy in Their Dress*. Paul instructs ladies to "adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety . . . (which becometh women professing godliness)" (I Timothy 2:9-10). *Modest* means much more than just to cover the erogenous parts of the body. It is the opposite of lavish, gaudy clothes, hair styles, and jewelry that attract worldly attention to the wearer. She must dress in a way that reflects her femininity; not in masculine styles. Moses warned, "a woman shall not wear that which pertaineth to a man . . . for whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto Jehovah . . ." (Deuteronomy 22:5). He speaks here of those who were not content with their God-given sexual states; i.e. transvestites. A Christian's emphasis in dress must be as "the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit . . ." (I Peter 3:4). In our worldly, affluent age when a powerful advertising industry barrages us daily, and peer pressure seeks to force conformity, God's people must manfully resist their efforts to mold us by their patterns of dress. The point is equally applicable to men as to women.

God expects us to be *Holy in Our Recreation*. Paul writes "whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Corinthians 10:31). This verse surely covers our recreational choices. It is right to exercise the body, but not to the neglect of the spirit (I Timothy 4:7-8).

Recreation must not supplant the worship of God and the study of his word with the church. It is never right to sin in the name of resting a tired mind or body. We cannot allow recreational needs to encroach upon God's part of our material wealth. Saints should always be on guard lest worldly friends turn their

hearts away from God (I Corinthians 15:33).

Christians want to be *Holy in Their Habits*. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit which is in us; we are thus expected to glorify God in our bodies (I Corinthians 6:19-20). All that we do must be to God's glory (I Corinthians 10:31). We should carefully watch over our eating habits, for gluttony is to be avoided (Proverbs 23:21). Tobacco, alcoholic beverages, and illicit drugs fail in this respect. In this connection it is appropriate to mention habits of promptness, diligence, courtesy, cleanliness, and a multitude of daily deeds. The way we behave ourselves will either cause men to glorify the Father, or to reject him (Matthew 5:16).

We must be *Holy in Moral Conduct*. "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men" (homosexuals), "nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (I Corinthians 6:9-10). We are expected to keep ourselves "pure" (I Timothy 5:22). We must abstain from ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:12).

There must be *Holiness in Faith*. Christ has revealed God's will for us in the New Covenant. It will be our standard of judgment (John 12:48). If we "hold the pattern of sound words" which are delivered by the apostles we shall be blest (II Timothy 1:13). If we abide not in the teaching of Christ, we forfeit God's approval and blessing (II John 9). It really matters that we correctly understand and subscribe to the true doctrine of Christ!

We must be *Holy in Our Worship*. Worship must be "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). It must be sincere and approved by God. "Will-worship" that we originate, or that pleases us, is rejected for that system ordained in heaven (Colossians 2:23). We "walk by faith" in worship and in spiritual matters (II Corinthians 5:7). Since *faith* comes by hearing the word of Christ (Romans 10:17), we worship as the New Testament instructs. We use God's divine word to measure the temple (church), the altar (worship), and the worshipers (Revelation 11:1).

We need *Holiness in Christian Service*. God expects us to "do good" and to "be rich in good

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Words Of Truth

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Noah: The Heir Of Righteous

"By faith Noah . . . moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Hebrews 11:7). Surely no study of Bible personalities would be complete without consideration of Noah who was chosen of God to preserve life upon the earth. He was the first ship-builder of human history.



JOHN WADDEY

His Times

Noah was the tenth generation from Adam (Genesis 5). There was likely an immense population of men on the earth by that time. If each couple bore only ten children there could have been two million souls in ten generations. Had they born 20 children each it might have numbered two billion. Remember their long lives of nine hundred or more years. Also they would likely have enjoyed greater strength and health in those early days. (Whitcomb and Morris have an excellent discussion of this matter in *The Genesis Flood*, pp. 25-27).

Noah's was an age of moral and spiritual decadence: "The earth was corrupt before God and filled with violence" (Genesis 6:11). "Every imagination of the thoughts of (man's) heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). The children of God had intermarried with the sinners of the world and lost their identity (Genesis 6:2). Only Noah and his family maintained the faith of Jehovah in that wicked generation. And Jehovah said unto Noah . . . thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation" (Genesis 7:1).

God's Decree

Because the earth was filled with violence, God

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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

The Church of Christ

NO. III

Suppose a police report describes a stolen automobile as a 1983, 6-cylinder, white, 4-door, Chevrolet Impala, with automatic transmission, built by General Motors, with Vehicle No. XYZ 987-456-321. By verifying these "marks," the officers can ascertain if that exact same car is located.

By the same principles we can accurately "identify" the church of the Bible. We have previously seen that it was built by Christ, and that it began in Jerusalem. But now let us consider *when* it began, as another identifying mark of the church. Just as a car made before 1983, or after 1983 could not be the stolen vehicle in the above illustration, so any church that began before, or one which began after, the one in the Bible, cannot be the Bible church.

Church Began On Pentecost Day, Acts 2

We shall see clearly that the Lord's church was established on the first Pentecost day after the resurrection of Christ.

1. *Future In Old Testament.* Despite the opinion of some, the Lord's church was not built in Old Testament times, for all Old Testament references to it point to the future. Since the CHURCH is called "the house of God" (I Timothy 3:15), we know the "church" was not in existence when Isaiah wrote that the "mountain of the Lord's house shall be established" in the "last days" (Isaiah 2:3). The expression, "last days," does not refer to the end of time on earth, for the writer of Hebrews 1:1-2 referred to the first century A.D. as being "in these last days." From Acts 2:16-17 it is clear that Pentecost also was in "the last days." The "church" (which is also call the "kingdom" (Matthew 16:18-19) had not already come when Daniel said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom" (Daniel 2:44). The Old Testament closes with the promise that God would send "Elijah" before that day would come (Malachi 4:5-6). Jesus identified this "Elijah" as John the Baptist (Matthew 17:10-13).

2. *Future in days of John.* Old Testament prophets pointed to one ("Elijah") who would "prepare the way of the Lord" (Isaiah 40), which is the work John the immerser was introduced to do (Luke 1:16-17; Mark 1:1-4; Matthew 3:1-3). This "Elijah" (John) appeared upon the scene, preaching: "The kingdom of heaven is AT HAND" (Matthew 3:1-2). Thus, as the New Testament opens, the "kingdom" of Old Testament prophecy (which is the "church" Jesus promised to build, Matthew 16:18-19) was no longer in the far distant future, but was so near it was described as "at hand." When Jesus himself began to preach, upon John's imprisonment, the church (or "kingdom") was still only "at hand" (Matthew 4:17). It was yet "at hand" when he sent out the twelve under the 'Limited Commission' (Matthew 10:4-7). Later when Jesus sent out the other seventy



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

disciples, they were told to preach that the kingdom is "come nigh unto you" (Luke 10:9-11).

3. *After the days of John.* The New Testament church was not established in the lifetime of John the Baptist, for his death and burial are recorded in Matthew 14 --whereas Jesus promised: "I WILL BUILD my church" two chapters later (Matthew 16:18)! At the time Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount the church was not established, for therein Jesus taught his disciples to pray: "Thy kingdom come . . ." (Matthew 6:9-11).

4. *After the Transfiguration, still future.* During the week before his transfiguration, Jesus declared: "There be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1). This shows it had not then been established, but it would come in the lifetime of some of them. (Of course, if Premillennialism is true, and the kingdom has not yet come, some of those who heard Jesus that day must still be living: Where are they? They would be nearly 2,000 years old!!! Of course, they are all dead --which proves the future-kingdom idea is false!) It was THEN future, but it came in their lifetime.

5. *Future near the cross.* Shortly before he was crucified, Jesus promised the kingdom would come to those then living, saying: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

6. *Future at the cross.* The night before he died, Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, telling the apostles he would not any more eat of it "until the kingdom of God shall come" (Luke 22:18). This is practically the end of his personal ministry, and the "kingdom" (or church) had not yet been established. He said that same night: "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me" (Luke 22:29-30). At that time, the Kingdom was only an "appointment," and had not yet come. Even while Jesus was dying --while he was on the cross! --one of the thieves said to him: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). So Christ at that point had not then come into his kingdom. That same day, after Jesus died, it is said that Joseph of Arimathea "also himself waited for the kingdom of God" (Mark 15:43). So the church had not been established at the death of Jesus Christ.

7. *Future at the ascension.* Before his ascension the apostles inquired, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). They were told, "It is not for you to know the time" (verse 7), but this reveals that it was not then established. In the parable of the pounds (Luke 19:12-27) Jesus said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." In other words, Jesus would have to ascend to heaven (the far country) where he would receive his kingdom before returning. This is in perfect harmony with the prophecy of Daniel, who foretold the ascension of Jesus to God the Father (the "Ancient of days"), where he received the kingdom (Daniel 7:13-14). Therefore the "kingdom" (or church) was not established prior to the ascension of Christ.

8. *Came on Pentecost.* Jesus told his disciples that

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We Are Merely Teachers

Although it was to those chosen to be apostles that Jesus said, "go . . . teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19), we all know that all Christians have that same responsibility to teach. Elders must be "apt to teach" (II Timothy 3:2), the evangelists Timothy and Titus were told to teach (I Timothy 4:11; Titus 2:15), older women were told to teach the younger women (Titus 2:4), and all who are faithful are responsible for teaching others also (II Timothy 2:2). Hebrews 5:12 suggests that after a reasonable time all Christians should be teachers. Many in the church today need to awaken to their responsibility to teach their children, their companions, their friends, and all the lost as they have opportunity. We grow in this ability as we mature in Christian living and as we increase in Bible knowledge.

The New Testament lists some functions of the apostles which are not given to all Christians. These pertained to their particular work of receiving and imparting, through inspiration, God's New Testament revelation. Denominations often claim these functions for themselves as they claim direct guidance of the Holy Spirit. Due to hearing and reading denominational teaching, some among us often borrow their terminology, and use it to describe our responsibility to teach. They correctly observe that these terms are to be found in the Bible; but they fail to notice that they were used, exclusively, to describe the work of the apostles as they were miraculously guided by the Spirit. Three of these expressions are "witness," "ambassador," and "this treasure in earthen vessels."

WE ARE TO "TEACH,"

NOT "WITNESS" OR "TESTIFY"

Properly, the word "witness" suggests seeing, or having personal, firsthand knowledge of a thing. One who "testifies," or "bears witness," does so out of what he has personally seen and heard. None of us has seen or heard Jesus; so we cannot be his "witnesses." To speak of "witnessing for Jesus" is to speak of that which none of us can do! We can, and should, *teach* that which we have learned; but we cannot *witness* or *testify* since we are not eyewitnesses. Some have responded with the idea that we can "testify" or "bear witness" to others of what we have done, of what Jesus has done for us, or as to what Jesus means to us. To do so, though, would be wholly subjective. We are not to convert people on



JOE E. GALLOWAY

the basis of what we have experienced, but on the evidence of what the Bible teaches. If our own subjective claims and experiences can be used to convert others, by what rationale can we exclude the more extreme subjective claims and experiences of those who "testify" in the various denominations? We need to heed Paul's statement: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord" (II Corinthians 4:5).

The apostles saw Jesus with their eyes and heard him with their ears (I John 1:1); so they were his witnesses as they, with the miraculous guidance of the Spirit, spoke and wrote his New Testament message. Jesus told them, "Ye are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24:48, emphasis to all scriptures added by J.E.G.). He said that after the Holy Spirit came upon them "ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). After his ascension, as one was being sought to take Judas' place in the apostleship, they looked for one who had been with him throughout his ministry and "a witness with us of his resurrection" (Acts 1:21,22). As they began preaching the gospel the apostles were often referred to as "witnesses:" "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:32; 3:15); "we are witnesses of these things" (Acts 5:32); "we are witnesses of all things which he did" (Acts 10:39). They pointed out that "not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us" had God shown Christ openly following his resurrection (Acts 10:40, 41). Christ appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus "to make thee a minister and a witness" (Acts 26:16; 22:14,15). In Acts 23:11 the Lord stood by Paul and said, "as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."

These, along with other such scriptures, make it evident that the apostles were Christ's witnesses. God bore "them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will" (Hebrews 2:4). It is our responsibility to give heed to what these witnesses taught (Hebrews 2:1). We are to learn their teaching, obey it, live by it, and *teach* it to others. We, ourselves, are not his "witnesses!"

WE ARE TO BE "TEACHERS,"

NOT "AMBASSADORS"

An "ambassador" is one who officially represents another government. He is given authority on various, specified matters to act in behalf of the government which he represents and serves. Although my family and I lived and worked for a period of time in the country of Finland, we were not "ambassadors" to that nation. Some may, indeed, have judged what Americans are like by observing us; but this did not make us "ambassadors" of the U.S.A. Had we attempted to deal with the Finnish

government in matters of state, they would have properly rejected us. We were not "ambassadors," and could not have produced any credentials to cause ourselves to be so accepted.

The apostles were "ambassadors" of heaven. Paul wrote, "we are ambassadors for Christ" (II Corinthians 5:19), and also said, "I am an ambassador in bonds" (Ephesians 6:20). They spoke and wrote God's will for men on earth with authority. As Paul expressed it, "the things that I write unto you are the commandments of God" (I Corinthians 14:37). Should their authority as Christ's ambassadors be questioned, they could produce their credentials by the miracles that confirmed what they spoke (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3,4). When some questioned Paul's authority he wrote, "truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds" (II Corinthians 12:12). As ambassadors, the apostles acted "in Christ's stead" (II Corinthians 5:20). The New Testament reserves the term "ambassador" exclusively for the apostles.

Some among us are heard to say that all Christians are ambassadors of Christ. They may mean that people judge what it means to be a Christian by what they see us do -- that we are examples, and have influence. We do have influence, and should do our best to live exemplary lives before the world. We are to let our lights shine, attractively and brightly (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:15; Titus 2:10). But our need to be good examples to the world does not make us "ambassadors," any more than our being an example of what an American is like makes us an "ambassador" to other nations. We should teach the gospel and live it to the best of our abilities before the world; but only the apostles were "ambassadors" of God.

WHO HAS "THIS TREASURE
IN EARTHEN VESSELS"?

The apostle Paul wrote, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (II Corinthians 4:7). That this is speaking of God's New Testament being revealed through the apostles can be seen by considering carefully the preceding verse. Paul wrote, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Corinthians 4:6). The expression "God . . . hath shined in our hearts" depicts the direct process by which his New Testament light was made known by the guidance of his Spirit. Peter also described this process as "a light that shineth in a dark place" as he emphasized that they "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:19-21).

It is true that our earthly bodies are "earthen vessels;" but we do not have God's "treasure" in them, as did the apostles. We have God's message today in an inspired book, the Bible; we do not receive it directly from heaven and have "this treasure in earthen vessels" as did the apostles.

Let us recognize that we are merely *teachers* of God's revealed word. Then let us do our best to learn God's word well, live by it daily, and teach it faithfully as we have opportunity.

—204 Creek Trail, Columbia, TN 38401.

Church Of Christ

Continued from page 2

in the lifetime of "some" of them, the church (or "kingdom") was to "come with power" (Mark 9:1), and that the "power" would come with the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:8). He directed them to "tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:46-49). On Pentecost day after his resurrection the Holy Ghost came upon the apostles, "and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:1-4). The "power" came with the Holy Ghost, and the "kingdom" (or church) came with power -- just as Jesus had promised them.

No Longer Future

The apostles, guided by the Holy Spirit, preached on that day -- Pentecost -- for the first time the fullness of the gospel, offering remission of sins "in the name

of Christ." For the first time they used "the keys of the kingdom" and those who obeyed Christ were added by the Lord to his church (Acts 2:22-47).

No longer do we read that the kingdom was "at hand," or was "nigh," or would come in their life-time, or would soon come with power. Since Pentecost day in Acts 2, the church has existed, and all who are saved have been added to it by the Lord. All who are now delivered from the power of darkness have been translated into Christ's kingdom (Colossians 1:13).

Any church that was established either before, or since, the second chapter of Acts is not, and cannot be, the Bible church.

(More to follow).

Christian Education Emphasis March 2

6th Ave. Church invites all young people and their parents to Jasper for day-long activities Saturday, March 2. A fuller program will be presented later.

Noah: The Heir Of Righteous

Continued from page 2

said "I will destroy them with the earth" (Genesis 6:13). "And I, behold I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh . . . everything that is in the earth shall die" (Genesis 6:17).

To preserve Noah and his family and a remnant of animal life, God charged him: "Make thee an ark of gopher wood" (Genesis 6:14). God always provides for the safety and salvation of his righteous remnant. The building plan for the ark was divinely given in minute detail. It was to be constructed of gopher wood and sealed with pitch; the length of the ark was to be "three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A light (window) shalt thou make to the ark . . . and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories thou shalt make it" (Genesis 6:14-16). God's instructions for salvation are always plainly given. The ancient cubit was approximately eighteen inches; but let us assume it was only 17.5 inches. The size of the ark was some 437.5 feet long x 72.92 feet wide x 43.75 feet high. Its carrying capacity would have been some 1,396,000 cubic feet, with the capacity of 522 railroad cattle cars. It could easily have accommodated pairs of all life unable to survive the flood, with adequate space for food.

About the Man

Noah was a man of great faith (Hebrews 11:7). Since God says "faith apart from works is barren" (James 2:20), Noah's faith must have been matched with obedient service. "Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations" (Genesis 6:9). He was not sinless, but he was a mature and complete spiritual man. "Noah walked with God" (verse 9). To walk with God suggests that his daily life was spent following God's leadership in word, thought and deed. He was obedient to God's every wish. "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (Genesis 6:22). He was not like many moderns who pick and choose the commands they would obey.

We are impressed by Noah's *toil* in undertaking such a huge building project with the limited tools, resources and help available to him. It was 120 years from the first instruction to the flood itself.

Consider the *trial of Noah's faith*. He believed that which seemed unbelievable to his fellow man. No flood of such magnitude had been seen before. It is thought by some that there had likely been no floods at all prior to this catastrophe. Think of the *reproaches* he endured from his skeptical and unbelieving neighbors. If you question that such would have been a problem, then build you an ark like Noah's and see how the world will respond. A pleasure-mad world seldom takes the "prophet of doom" seriously. Think of his *perseverance*. For a hundred and twenty years he labored amidst the jeers and contempt of his neighbors, never giving up. He believed that what God said, would happen.

Noah was "a preacher of righteousness" (II Peter

Perfecting Holiness

Continued From Page 1

works," "ready to distribute, willing to communicate." In so doing we "lay up in store . . . a good foundation against the time to come . . ." (I Timothy 6:17-18). Christians by their very nature should be "zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14), and "maintain good works" (Titus 3:14). Faithful disciples understand that faith apart from works is dead (James 2:26).

May every soul who claims Christ as Lord cleanse himself of "all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Corinthians 7:1).

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

2:5). The spiritual giant he was, doubtless he was a great spokesman for God. But so hard were the hearts of his hearers that he was totally rejected. "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they knew not until the flood came and took them all away . . ." (Matthew 24:38-39). He did however, save his family. "Noah went in and his sons, and his wife, and his son's wives with him, into the ark . . ." (Genesis 7:7). He did not fail. No man is a failure who can see all his family saved. Sadly many spiritual leaders have not done as well in modern times.

Noah was not sinless! Following the flood "he drank of the wine, and was drunken" (Genesis 9:20). Resulting from his intoxication was the awful sin of his son Ham and grandson Canaan. He heard uttered painful words: "cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be . . ." (Genesis 9:25). Tragically, part of which he had saved from the flood, he lost because of his indiscretion.

The Divine Judgment of the Flood

God brought the "flood upon the world of the ungodly" (II Peter 2:5). "So he destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both men and cattle, creeping things and birds of the air . . . and the water prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days" (Genesis 7:23-24). It was appalling in form, and universal in scope. It was both destructive and purifying in purpose. It was supernatural in origin

and inevitable in coming. It was woefully sad and inescapable in its nature.

Lessons to Remember

God is grieved at man's self-destruction by sin. We see the Lord's tireless diligence to save man. God deals with men one by one, even as he did with Noah. We are touched by the caring concern God manifests towards his faithful children.

We are reminded of the indispensable necessity of obedience to God for man's salvation. Could Noah have been saved had he not built the ark as God instructed? With God's help the most monumental tasks can be accomplished.

The great judgment of the flood reminds us of the wrath of God against sin. We also see the vulnerability of the material creation before this divine wrath. That universal judgment foreshadows the destructive judgment of the last day.

Some sage once observed that the stench inside the ark would have been unbearable except for the situation without. If there are times where unpleasant situations arise within the Lord's church, remember what judgments await those *outside* the Lord's family.

May we have faith like Noah had, so we too may be heirs of righteousness.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

The Dangerous Game Of "Let's Pretend"

Did you, as a child, ever play church? Many of us did. With porch steps as pews, a box or a stick of fire wood as a pulpit, many a simulated service has been conducted. Often, adults observed these procedures, unseen, and were usually impressed with the fervency that characterized the participants.

That fervency surpassed much of the zeal seen in the actions of grown-ups whose efforts are supposed to be for real. Paul said, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (I Corinthians 13:10).

We are expected to be "in dead earnest" about our relationship to the Lord and about our activities as his disciples. He will not tolerate our pretending.

Someone has written the following lines to emphasize the pretense that often accompanies seemingly honest statements.

"They say" usually means "I heard it from at least one source but everyone must believe it."

"I've heard some criticism" usually means "I'm against it personally but lack the courage to say so."

"The whole church is upset" means "Two or three loud mouths have turned loose their venom."

"It might bring criticism" means "I know it should be done but it just takes too much effort for me to do it."

"Preacher, I'll be there if I'm not providentially



EDSEL BURLESON

hindered" nearly always means "If I'm not there you can blame God."

"I won't promise, but I'll do my best" means "Don't expect too much from me."

"I'll come every time I can" usually means "If I don't find something better to do, I'll be there."

"I know I ought to be more regular" means "I'm not about to give up Sunday work or my pleasure to come to church."

Make it real! It is so very dangerous to play the game of "Let's Pretend."

—West End Church of Christ 420 - 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

1st commandment - Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

4th commandment - Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

Why Israel Was To Rest The Seventh Day!

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Exodus 20:8-11



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble
the Words of Truth and science"

— Acts 26:25

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NUMBER 7

Religious Sinners

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:26-27).

In the foregoing verses there are two religions: "Vain religion" and "Pure and undefiled religion." One of these religions is wrong and the other is right. The New Testament also mentions "the Jews' religion," and "our religion I lived a Pharisee" (Galatians 1:13-14; Acts 26:5).

Thus, an observant reader will note that not all religions are alike good. It should be understood that Christianity is a religion; but not all religion is Christianity. For instance, Buddhism, Islamism, Hinduism, and Shintoism are all religions; but they bear no relationship to Christianity. Thus, a discerning mind should be able to see that one can be scrupulously and conscientiously *religious*, but, at the same time, be scrupulously and conscientiously *wrong*! Paul, seeking to serve God under the Jews' religion after it was out of date, was wrong. He changed religions! It is not sinful to give up a false religion for a true religion! We suggest that you read I Timothy 1:12-14, Philippians 3:4-11, and Acts 23:1.

(1) *The Pharisees and Sadducees were religious sinners.* They set aside the Law of Moses and kept their own traditions. These religious groups were condemned as hypocrites (Matthew 23:1-15). These people pretended to be loyal to the law of Moses; but they set their own rules of service and conduct. In fact, these religious leaders spent their time trying to entrap Jesus the Son of God (Matthew 22:15-22). Obedience to the doctrines and commandments of men makes religious sinners!

(2) *Those who worship God Almighty according to their own way and will are religious sinners.* Cain (Genesis 4:1-8) worshiped God according to his own will; but Abel's offering was in accordance with the



W. A. HOLLEY

will of God. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain . . . God bearing witness in respect of his gifts . . ." (Hebrews 11:4). Thus, because Abel was a man of faith, he came before God in the right spirit and presented worship that pleased him. God had told both Cain and Abel what to do. How do we know? He worshiped "by faith," and "faith" comes only "by hearing the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

The New Testament reveals how one must worship God today. Jesus Christ requires that this worship must be "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Those who follow the doctrines and commandments of men in their worship are religious sinners (Mark 7:6-13).

(3) *All who have not obeyed the gospel of Christ, but who try to worship God any how, are religious sinners.* It matters not how honest and sincere one may be. According to Acts 8:26-39, the Ethiopian Eunuch who "had come to Jerusalem for to worship," later learned from Philip the evangelist that the Old Testament had been superceded by the New Testament, and that one must yield to the will of Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:21-23).

There is a special relationship involved here. Are you "in Christ?" or "out of Christ?" If one is "in Christ," one is a Christian, a child of God; if one is "out of Christ," one is a sinner, a child of the devil (Ephesians 1:3; Romans 6:3-4; John 8:44; I John 3:10). Children of the devil cannot worship God acceptably!! (Romans 10:1-4). It is possible for one to worship God ignorantly (Acts 17:22-23); but ignorant worship is unacceptable to the Almighty! There is a scriptural way to worship God and that way must be followed (John 4:23-24). If the foregoing conclusion is wrong, then there is no standard of worship!!

(4) *It is possible to have religious sinners within the church.* This may seem strange; but it is true. For example, Ananias and Sapphira were members of the Lord's church; but, because "lying" unto God with regard to their contribution, they were struck dead! Hence, these two were religious sinners -- they wanted to go part of the way, but not all the way with God (Acts 5:1-11).

In Acts 8:9-23 we have the record of a man whose name was Simon, a sorcerer, who heard the gospel preached by Philip, believed it and obeyed it, but who later sinned, because he wanted to purchase the apostolic gift with money. Thus, although this man became a child of God, a Christian, he became a back-

slider, a religious sinner. To correct his mistake, he was told to repent and pray that his sin might be forgiven (Acts 8:20-24).

Other religious sinners within the Lord's church were those Corinthian brethren who turned away from Christ and began to follow men -- preachers. Preachers -- as wonderful as they may be -- are not our Saviour! One should follow a preacher only as he follows Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 11:1). To follow Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas (as honorable as they were) is to be carnal -- is to be "controlled by animal appetites, governed by human nature, instead of by the Spirit of God" (W. E. Vine; *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*).

Parties built around preachers are sinful in the sight of God (I Corinthians 1:10-13; 3:1-9), because jealousy, strife, and divisions follow in their wake. Those who follow such a course are religious sinners!! To Christ alone be true!

The church at Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7) had among its membership some religious sinners. After commending their good points, the Master says: "But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come to thee, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Revelation 2:4-5). Hence, those who had "left their first love" had become religious sinners.

The Laodicean church (Revelation 3:14-19) was a church filled with religious sinners. "I know thy works," said Jesus, "that thou art neither hot nor cold: I would thou wert cold or hot. So because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth . . ." Here is bankrupt church!

Listen to the Master: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art the wretched one and miserable and poor and blind and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold refined by fire, that thou mayest become rich; and white garments, that thou mayest clothe thyself, and that the shame of thy nakedness be not made manifest; and eyesalve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see" (Revelation 3:17-18, A.S.V.).

Dear Reader, have you obeyed the commands of the Lord? Or, can it be truthfully said that you are more than a religious sinner?

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.



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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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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Sister Roland Died Nov. 23

Mrs. Grace Paysinger Roland, the wife of Dr. C. P. Roland, passed away November 23, 1984. Freed-Hardeman College President E. Claude Gardner, Max Patterson, minister of the Henderson Church of Christ, and John M. Hall, an elder of the Henderson church, conducted the funeral service Sunday, November 25, at the Henderson Church of Christ.

In addition to her husband she is survived by her four sons and one daughter, and also by 19 grandchildren, 31 great-grandchildren, and two sisters.

Born in McNairy County, Tennessee, August 17, 1896, to the late Burton W. and Josie Paysinger, she was married to C. P. Roland in 1916. For a number of years, sister Roland served as a secretary for her husband at Freed-Hardeman College. She was also a co-worker with brother Roland, who as curator organized the college's Historical Room.

In 1981, sister Roland published WALKING DOWN MEMORY'S LANE, a personal history of the Roland family and Freed-Hardeman College. The couple rendered faithful and dedicated service to the college beginning in 1921 and continuing for more than 60 years.

Sister Roland enjoyed a fulfilled life. She attained a sense of fulfillment because of the influence she had with her children in a Christian home and for the support of her husband as an elder, preacher, and Christian educator and for her faithful support of Christian education at Freed-Hardeman College.

She was baptized near Pocahontas, Tennessee, and served in the Lord's church for more than three-quarters of a century.

Brother C. P. Roland is, at this time, residing with one of his sons, Dr. H. C. Roland, 9608 Biarwood Blvd., Knoxville, TN 37919. He is now 91 years of age. Please pray for him and write him a letter of encouragement.

—Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tennessee 38340.



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

The Church of Christ

NO. IV

Jesus Christ promised "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). Did he build all the different churches now in existence? This question must be answered in the negative, because his promise was to build only one-- "my CHURCH" --not "churches." He further explained, "... and the gates of hell shall not prevail against IT" -- not "them" (Matthew 16:18). If not, which church did he build? can we recognize that church among so many churches in the world today? how can we identify the church he did build?



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Loved Only One

The Holy Spirit revealed that "Christ also loved the church" -- not churchES-- "and gave himself for IT" (Ephesians 5:25) --not "THEM." We also read that "He is the head of the body, the church" (Ephesians 1:22-23), and that "there is ONE BODY" (Ephesians 4:4), and "but one body" (I Corinthians 12:20). This makes it crystal clear that in the New Testament there is only one religious body or church.

Numerous Congregations, All Alike

Just as a stolen car can be identified by its individual marks or characteristics, so can the Bible church be identified by its description in the New Testament. It began in Jerusalem (as we saw last week); but all the other congregations established by the apostles and other early Christians were identical with that Jerusalem congregation. Each of them was the church of Christ in its locality. Each of them was as much the "church of Christ" as was the original congregation established in Jerusalem on Pentecost Day (Acts 2) -- for Paul wrote: "The churches of Christ salute you" (Romans 16:16).

Those first-century congregations were all alike for one reason: All the apostles and other inspired evangelists preached the same doctrine -- everywhere they preached at all. The result of their unity in doctrine was that all local churches which followed their teaching were exactly alike in faith and practice. Each local church was identical to, and was identified with, all other congregations. When any difference was discovered, the inspired apostles recognized that it arose from a departure from the divine pattern -- and they immediately corrected that departure, and charged those who taught contrary to the "apostles' doctrine" with the resulting division (Romans 16:17-18).

Not Founding Denominations

Jesus said, "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). Those who took that "seed" of the kingdom --the gospel of Christ-- from Jerusalem (where the first congregation was planted) to other places, and planted it, thereby produced "churches of Christ." They were not founding denominations.

This is just as true in the twentieth century as it was in the first century: Those who preach exactly what --and only what-- the apostles and other inspired men

preached in the first century, always now (as then) start congregations exactly like the original congregation in Jerusalem. They are only reproducing the "church of Christ" exactly as it was under the inspired apostles in the New Testament.

No one on earth has any divine authority to change the church from what it was as Christ built it in the New Testament. Any church which differs from the one described in the New Testament is not the church built by Christ. It is self-evident that no church can be IDENTIFIED WITH, and at the same time DIFFER FROM, the church of the New Testament! Christ is not the founder of any church which differs from the one described in the New Testament. Not the true gospel "seed" (Luke 8:11), but only false doctrine, can account for any difference between the "churches of Christ" and man-made denominations (Romans 16:17-18). "Rotten" seed (false doctrines) cannot possibly produce the church of Christ! Neither can the ancient Jerusalem gospel, which is "sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1), produce a single one of the modern human denominations! -- One is just as inconceivable as the other!

No "Chain Of Succession"

It is impossible to trace a succession of local congregations from the twentieth century all the way back to the first century. The Holy Spirit foretold that "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Timothy 4:3-4). He also warned, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [the second coming of Christ] shall not come, except there come a falling away first . . ." (II Thessalonians 2:3). Hence, IF one in the twentieth century could 'shake a chain and hear it rattle in Jerusalem in A.D. 33,' it would be traceable only through some apostate congregations! By the Spirit, the apostle Paul told the elders from Ephesus: "For I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30). The same apostle wrote to a young preacher: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats . . ." (I Timothy 4:1-3). History confirms the fact that this time did come, and there was a general apostasy, or falling away. But we do not prove the church of Christ today is exactly the same as it was in the New Testament by a chain of succession. Instead, we know it is identical with the church in the Bible if, and only if, the same "seed" --the word of God-- is heard and followed.

Illustration: Banana Squash

An elder in south Alabama gave me some seed for banana squash (sometimes called 'German Potato'). In order to raise banana squash in Jasper, I did not have to stretch one branch of his vine toward north Alabama and at the end of that plant some seed; then at the end of the new vine, plant some more seed; and at the end of that, some more seed, and so on,

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Every Generation Must be Taught

"And Joshua the son of Nun . . . died, . . . and also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, . . ." (Judges 2:10,12). Whatever we may find good and great about the grand patriarch it seems evident that Joshua and his generation failed to indoctrinate a "new generation." Almost immediately upon their death the record reveals



R. W. GRAY

that another generation arose without a knowledge of Jehovah and his relationship to his people.

Some who read these lines will recall how the venerable Gus Nichols preached with great enthusiasm on fundamentals of the faith. He never seemed to tire of the old, old message of Jesus and his love. He kept the message fresh and challenging even to those who had heard it again and again. Those who live in Walker County, Alabama, and surrounding environs remember that brother Nichols' radio preaching centered around issues that troubled the churches of his day, and that he stressed over and over again the need to "rightly divide the Word."

Does it not grieve us all that many of the great lessons taught from men so pious as our brother Nichols and others, are seemingly forgotten so soon? Many of the difficulties facing us now stem from a basic misunderstanding of fundamental Biblical principles, and especially the area of respect for silence of the Scriptures. We need to be reminded again that there is a difference in *specific* and *generic* authority. This is basic in all languages and in regard to any word, whether spoken or written. Such teaching is not "the party line" as some have flippantly alleged; but is in harmony with the revealed will of God for religious life.

We desperately need to respond with something stronger than a lump in the throat when men scoff at

The Church Of Christ

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until the vine can be traced all the way (inch by inch, and mile by mile) from Roanoake to Jasper. Oh, no! The way I can know that I have *banana squash* is to know that I plant *banana squash seed*! When I plant that seed, it will produce only *banana squash* --even if there is not another *banana squash* vine within a thousand miles! Just so it is in religion: We have the pure, unadulterated "seed" for the church in the Bible, for Jesus said, "The 'seed is the word of God'" (Luke 8:11). Any local church (congregation) produced by hearing and following the word of God --without addition, subtraction, or crook-- will be, and is, the true church --even if there were not another one like it in history for a thousand years!

The only question to ask concerning a congregation is: Does it have the identifying marks of the church described in the New Testament? If not, only sin and false doctrine can account for the difference between it and the church in the Bible when it was fresh from the hand of its builder, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18). Christ is not the founder of any church which differs from the one described in the Bible. For a church now (1985) to be the church of Christ -- the church which Christ built-- it must be identical with the New Testament church, in name, origin, doctrine, and practice.

(More to follow).

the scholarship of the past. Their lack of understanding must be exposed, both for their benefit and for the good of the cause both now and in future generations. Truth is not relative. It remains the same for every generation. The Bible still teaches that God's Son will "take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thessalonians 1:8). And it is still the case that one may know what constitutes obedience to the gospel. One is not judgmental in any unacceptable sense who insists, as did a generation before us, that there is "one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one

faith, one baptism, and one God" (Ephesians 4:4-6).

It is the spirit of our age to expect the unexpected, to explore the unexplored, and to question things heretofore unquestionable. While we do not discourage the spirit of investigation in the least, we must avoid jumping on the bandwagon of seeking change for the sake of change. Principles are not untrue because our fathers taught them. But as the faithful among them attempted to impress upon our hearts, God's word is true, and every man must be found a liar who opposes it (John 17:17; Romans 3:4).

—Rt. 3 Box 306, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

Civil Government

God sets men in office (Daniel 2:21; 4:17). He can use evil men to accomplish his purposes (Jeremiah 25:9; Isaiah 45:1). There is a big distinction between the Christian and the sinner, just as there is a big distinction between heaven and hell. There is a distinction between the Christian and the civil government in Romans 13:4. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). If Jesus' kingdom is not of this world, and we are not of this world (Philippians 3:20), and we are to have nothing to do with this world (I John 2:15-17), then I see no reason why we should be involved with the civil government in the realm of taking vengeance. The Christian is to pray, pay, and obey (Romans 13:1-7; I Timothy 2:1,2; I Peter 2:13,14).



GEORGE REED

It is clear from Romans 12:17-13:7 God has made a distinction between the Christian and the powers that be. Let us note a few:

1. God has forbidden the Christian to take vengeance.
2. The Christian is to love his enemies and return good for evil.
3. God will take vengeance on his own.
4. The civil powers are his ministers to take vengeance.
5. God uses civil powers for the good of his people.
6. There is a distinction between "he" and "thee."

God rules in the midst of nations with the rod of iron (Psalms 2:9), and in the church with the sceptre of unrighteousness (Hebrews 1:8). There is a big distinction. Such is the case with nations gone by -- God used them. Let us note the following:

1. God ordains wicked men who intend to do evil and uses them for good (Romans 9:17; Jeremiah 25:9; Isaiah 10:5-7). God raised up Babylon (Habakkuk 1:5, 6). God's purpose in doing so was to (1) destroy Assyria, (2) correct God's people (Habakkuk 1:12), (3) to judge Tyre (Ezekiel 26:7), and (4) to judge Ammon (Ezekiel 21:28). Then Babylon was destroyed (Habakkuk 1:11; Isaiah 13:17-22). God used Cyrus, his "anointed" (Isaiah 45:1), his "shepherd" (Isaiah 44:28) to accomplish this.
2. God uses nations to punish other nations.
3. God does use people of whom he does not approve to accomplish his will.
4. God does punish wicked nations when their iniquity is full (Genesis 15:16).

What about the argument, "We must obey the laws of the land." Even those who cite this argument admit one does not obey a law that contradicts God's laws (Acts 5:29). If one subscribes to the argument

that he must obey the "powers that be" no matter what, then he must go all the way in whatever country he lives. Jerry Dyer points out the Nazis defense at the Nuremberg Trials:

1. Our society had the need and the desire. They felt the need because they felt that the Jews were their enemies and may some day turn on them. Therefore this fear caused them to desire to exterminate them.

2. The next step was to enact laws which would be in accord with those needs and desires.

3. Their next argument was: "Our society demanded that we adhere to the laws."

4. In fact, they said that it would have been immoral for us not to "obey the laws of our country."

5. Then their final argument was: "You now by the laws of your land condemn us for obeying the laws of our land" (*Living Soberly, Righteously, and Godly: "Carnal Warfare,"* pp. 63-64).

Have we really accepted our full duties as Christians? Do we not try to be too much of this world? We ought to really believe in the sovereignty of God. Brother Dyer also points this out:

1. The Jews rejected Jesus as Messiah, as king, because they wanted an earthly Messiah to break the galling yoke of Romanism.

2. The premillennialist accepts his spiritual Messiahship but rejects his spiritual kingship.

3. The person who partakes in carnal warfare accepts the spiritual nature of Christ and his kingdom but rejects the spiritual nature of the activities of those who are subjects of the kingdom (Ibid., p. 67).

Jesus surely implied his servants would not and could fight in John 18:36, if they would be members of that heavenly kingdom. Looking at all the evidence God has given us, how can the Christian advocate going to war?

—17691 Pesante Rd., Salinas, CA 93907.

Try To Be The Best Horse In The Stable

EDSEL BURLESON

One day when about to take a ride on a horse, Henry Ward Beecher glanced down at the animal and remarked to it's owner, "That is a fine looking animal; is he as good as he looks?"

The man replied, "Mr. Beecher, that is the best horse in the stable. He will work any place you put him, and can do anything that any other horse can."

The preacher, gazed admiringly at the horse and said, "I sure do wish he was a member of the church."

Isn't it sad that so many church members *just*

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Try To Be The Best Horse In The Stable

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belong? With many there is never a "place" that suits them. They continually insist that someone else be given a particular task assigned them. The Apostle Paul said, "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (I Corinthians 3:9).

So much of the New Testament emphasizes involvement, devotion, and dedication. When Jesus presented the judgment scene in Matthew 25, he said the condemnation was pronounced upon those on the left for having left good things undone (Verses 41-43). Paul exhorted: "Therefore, my beloved brethren,

be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

Once there was an elderly man who was stone deaf. Every Sunday morning and night, he was seen going off to worship. One Sunday morning a neighbor stopped him and asked why he always went to worship when he could not hear a thing that was said. He replied, "I want all my neighbors to know whose side I am on."

Too many of us can be counted on only "providing"

-- *providing* there are not a number of other things we had rather be doing! Or, *providing* we have not already made other plans. Once a woman was asked by another, "Is your husband a good provider?" "He sure is," came the reply. "He's going to get some new furniture *providin'* he gets the money. He's going to get the money *providin'* he get's work. He's going to get work *providin'* the job suits him. I never saw such a *providin'* man in all my days."

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord . . ." (Colossians 3:23).

—West End Church of Christ, 420 - 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

"Christ In Prophecy"

should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed,

and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth . . . he was cut off out of the land of the living . . ." (Isaiah 53:2-8).

Philip said the life and crucifixion of Jesus was the fulfillment of this prophecy (Acts 8:26-39). Paul said, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Corinthians 5:21).

—103 Elena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Paul tells us all spiritual blessings are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). How long ago did God plan the blessings in Christ? The next verse gives us the answer: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Ephesians 1:4). Nothing is said here about individual election; but salvation was planned in Christ before the foundation of the world.



W. EDWIN KEARLEY

The first faint prophecy of Jesus is found in God's curse upon the serpent. He said, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; *it shall bruise thy head*, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). The "seed" of the woman is Christ. The "seed" of the serpent or devil are those who are influenced by him. When Jesus was crucified his heel was bruised. This is so because he arose from the dead conquering death and hades (the unseen world). The resurrection of Jesus was a great wound to the influence of the devil. It gave all mankind the freedom to overcome death and live forever.

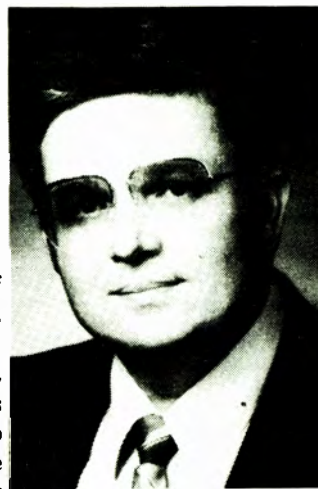
The faithful Abraham was given a promise from God to establish a great nation of his posterity. Another promise was even greater: "And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3). Paul tells of the fulfillment of this Old Testament prophecy: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16).

The Savior of the world was prophesied to come into the world as a child. God through Isaiah said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Isaiah 9:6). When the angel appeared to Joseph, to tell him not to put Mary away, he said "For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost . . . 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 Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matthew 1:18-23). This is evidently the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14, though the Isaiah context is hard to understand. There is much discussion about the Hebrew word "alma." In all other passages where the word is used by Biblical writers there is no doubt it is used to refer to virgins.

Isaiah described the physical form of Jesus and his affliction by men: "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we

There is a movement among our own brethren which is gaining a following. This new idea advocates that we preach Christ and leave doctrine alone. Those who hold this idea say we should preach the love, deity, goodness, and mercy of Christ and forget about troublesome doctrine. They seem to say, at least by implication, that it is doctrine which causes so many divisions in the religious world. Is this concept biblical? should we avoid all controversies relative to doctrine? In order to answer this question we need to know the meaning of "doctrine." *The American College Dictionary* defines it as "a particular principle taught or advocated; that which is taught; teachings collectively." The Greek word which is translated doctrine is "*didache*;" it is a form of "to teach," and means "that which is taught" (Vines, p. 333). Doctrine, therefore, is that system of principles which one advocates and teaches to others.

Now that we know the meaning of doctrine, we must understand that in the religious sense there are two sources of doctrine: God, and *man*. Jesus said, "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men" (Mark 7:7,8). Jesus, in this passage, defines *both doctrines*: the doctrines of man are the traditions of *man*; the doctrine of God are his commandments for *man*. The teaching (doctrine) of Christ is the same as God's doctrine: "Jesus answered them, and said, 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent



GARRY STANTON

me" (John 7:16). The doctrine of Christ is "good news;" it is the truth which can set us free; it is God's power unto salvation. But, the doctrines of man are not "good news," and they cannot set us free. It is these doctrines of man that lead to division (I Corinthians 1:11-13).

It is obvious from the preceding that the doctrines of man are not to be sources of controversies. We must resist the temptation to ride our favorite *personal* "hobby horse." If it does not originate with God, it is of little or no importance. But, the doctrine of Christ is an entirely different matter. We can not ignore the doctrine (commandment) of our God. Remember the words of Jesus in John 14:15, "If you love me, keep my commandments." In the second epistle of John we read, "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).

How can we "forget" doctrine, and not teach it, yet still keep Christ's commands? We cannot! How can we abide in Christ's doctrine and, at the same time, leave doctrine alone? It is impossible! Have we done the lost any favor when we teach them about the love, deity, goodness, and mercy of Christ -- and do not teach them doctrine so they can avoid transgressing the doctrine of Christ? As Peter says, they are worse off than they were before (II Peter 2:20-22).

This "Jesus - Yes; - Doctrine - No" concept is a false way that leads to destruction. It is even a doctrine in itself, a doctrine not of God but of man. Unity of believers is possible, not by "forgetting" or "ignoring" doctrinal differences, not by compromising the truth, but by getting back to the source book of unity - God's Holy Word. Let us all "speak where the Bible speaks" and "be silent where the Bible is silent" so that we can "all speak the same thing."

—807 Welton, Pratt, Kansas 67124.

"Jesus - Yes: Doctrine No"



Words Of th

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

— Acts 26:25

The Mission Of Christ

"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, *Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice*" (John 18:37).

In Jacob's parting words to his sons, he said to Judah, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come" (Genesis 49:10). The "scepter" is the staff of authority. "Shiloh" is a descriptive term of the Messiah, the Prince of Peace. The leadership of Judah over the other tribes would not be relinquished until Christ came.

Isaiah prophesied concerning the government of the Christ, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder . . . of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from hence forth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:6-7). The angel said the things mentioned in Isaiah's prophecy would happen to Jesus (Luke 1:31-33).

Daniel prophesied God would set up a king in the days of the Roman kings. "And in the days of these kings" —the fourth world power, from Babylon— "shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms; and it shall stand forever" (Daniel 2:44). In verse 45, Christ is "the stone" which "was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and gold." These foregoing elements represented the kingdoms of the world before the coming of Christ.

Jesus said to Peter, . . . "Upon this rock I will build



W. EDWIN KEARLEY

my church . . . and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven . . ." (Matthew 16:18-19). Therefore the kingdom Jesus said he would build is the church.

In (Mark 9:1 Jesus said, ". . . Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." That power would come when the Holy Spirit came (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit came on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the tomb (Acts 2:1-4). On that occasion Jesus Christ was elevated to the throne at the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:32-36).

Of the elevation of Christ, Paul said, "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, for above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Ephesians 1:20-22).

The believer in Christ can have the assurance when Christ comes again, the kingdom will be delivered to the Father. Paul said, "Then cometh the end, when he (Christ) shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father: when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy is death" (I Corinthians 15:24-26).

Paul, in reference to Christ, said, ". . . who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords" (I Timothy 6:15). Jesus declared, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18).

He gave the apostles authority to bind and loose what he had bound and loosed in heaven. To the apostles he said, "Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" (Matthew 16:19). John records, ". . . he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained" (John 20:22-23). God is the only one who can forgive. The apostles were to act as the Holy Spirit directed.

The apostles and all Christians until the end of the

world were (and are) to preach the saving gospel to the world. Jesus commanded, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in 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 alway, even unto the end of the world, Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20).

Without the power in the shed blood of Jesus, the preaching and baptism would be of none-effect. Through the blood of Christ people are saved. Paul speaks of the central facts of the gospel, "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 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 (I Corinthians 15:1-4). Jesus himself said as he instituted his supper, "For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28). The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus are the cardinal facts of the gospel which must be believed.

Jesus said, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). Our faith must include faith in the power of the blood of Jesus to cleanse our sins. Paul said, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

Our faith must be strong enough to change the direction of our lives. The Lord gives us ample time to repent. Peter stated, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

Faith must be expressed in confession of our faith in Christ. Paul taught, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead,



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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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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The Mission Of Christ

Continued from page 1

thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9).

Baptism is the final act which puts one into Christ. Paul asks: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Romans 6:3-5).

The Mission of Christ is not complete until we are faithful unto death (Revelation 2:10).

—103 Elena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Old-Isms Die Hard

Some wise sage once observed that erroneous religious views are very hard to destroy. They keep recurring like weeds in spring time. We see this phenomenal demonstrated in the cyclical appearance of premillennialism, the claim of charismatic gifts and direct illumination and guidance by the Holy Spirit. Like the seven-headed Hydra, these false systems keep replenishing themselves.

One such faulty view currently being resurrected is that called the *social gospel*. With the birth of the 20th century the liberal Protestant churches turned away from the proclamation of the gospel of Christ to what was characterized as the social gospel. Having lost their faith in



JOHN WADDEY

Continued on page 4



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Christ's Church Is Autonomous

The church Christ built is *one* in kind, while it is comprised of *many* congregations. Under Christ, its only head (Ephesians 1:22-23), each congregation is "independent in government; self-governing; also, without outside control." This is Webster's definition of "Autonomous." In the New Testament, the only organization through which Christians worked was the local congregation. No organization tied any one congregation to any other congregation. There was no conference, synod, or association of congregations in any organic structure.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Except the "church universal," saints in the first century had membership in nothing larger than a local "church." Anything smaller than the whole family of God, yet larger than a local congregation, is not the "church" in anybody's Bible! In its universal sense, the church has no earthly organization, for it has no earthly "head." Christ is its only "head;" therefore its only "headquarters" is in heaven. On the congregational level, the "church" in the Bible is, under Christ, ruled by "elders" [who are called also "bishops" (or overseers), and "pastors" (or shepherds)]; and it is served by "deacons." Each elder himself is subject to the eldership, just as each deacon, preacher, teacher, and each other member, is subject to the eldership.

The church described in the New Testament has a plurality of "elders in every church" (Acts 14:23) or congregation. Three Greek words should be noted in this connection: PRESBUTEROS, EPISCOPOS, and POIMAIN. All three of these words are applied to the same men in the Lord's church. The "elders" [PRESBUTEROS] from Ephesus (Acts 20:17) were called "overseers" [EPISCOPOS] in verse 28 in the King James Version (the American Standard says "bishops"); and the task assigned these men is to "tend" (A.S.V.) or "feed" [POIMAIN] the flock --or, be a "pastor" or a "shepherd" of the flock of God. From this it is certain that in the New Testament all three of these terms (elders, pastors, and bishops) are simply different names applied to the same men. The apostle Peter also applied all three of these terms to the same men. He wrote: "The ELDERS [PRESBUTEROS] which are among you I exhort . . . : FEED . . ." [POIMAIN: be a "pastor" or a "shepherd" to]; "FEED the flock of God which is among you, taking the OVERSIGHT [EPISCOPOS] thereof . . ." (I Peter 5:1-2). Again it is clear that in the first century the same men were called "elders," "bishops," and "pastors."

"Bishops and deacons" (Philippians 1:1) are the only 'officers' in New Testament congregations. Every congregation is to have a plurality of each, whose qualifications are set forth in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. No bishop (or elder) has any 'authority' in any congregation except the one in which he has been

selected and appointed. Preachers and all other Christians, too, should note that the *selection* is one process, and the *appointment* is another procedure. The Jerusalem CHURCH was told to select the men: "look ye out among you seven men . . .;" but the appointment was by an apostle or a preacher (Acts 6:1-6; note also Titus 1:5).

My father (the late Gus Nichols) grew up at the turn of the century, when there was no 'stock law' which required cattle to be kept in fenced pastures. Instead, farm animals had "free range," and farmers had to fence their crops. For identification purposes each farmer had his own "ear-mark" for his animals --so named because they split or cut their EARS. My grandfather used the following ear-marks: "A split in the right ear, and an under-hack in the left." In 1949 Dad wrote: "If one of our hogs, or yearlings, was found among those of some neighbor which very much resembled ours in color, size, or in general appearance, we did not claim the animal unless it had our 'EARMARKS.' If it had a 'SPLIT IN THE LEFT' instead of in the right ear, we knew . . . it was not ours." On exactly the same principles, any church which does not have in every [organized] congregation "elders" who are also called "pastors" and "bishops," is not the Bible church. And if it does not have "deacons" to serve under the eldership, it is lacking also in that "earmark" of the Lord's church.

I quote again from my father's 1949 sermon, which he entitled:

"EARMARKS" OF THE CHURCH

"The church of the New Testament has its earmarks, if you please, by which it can be identified among all other institutions in the world. A football team is not the church of the Lord -- it does not have the right earmarks. And none of the fraternal orders, or lodges, is the church mentioned in the Bible. They may read the Bible and pray, and otherwise be religious; but they do not have the earmarks of the church of the Bible. Neither separately, nor collectively are they the church of our Lord. They are so different from the church of the New Testament that one may belong to them and not be a member of the church at all; and one may be a member of the church and never hear of them.

"THE DENOMINATIONS

"The same is true of the modern denominational churches around us. Neither of them has the earmarks of the church portrayed in the New Testament. Some of them very much resemble it in some few points; but they do not have the EARMARKS. They are sadly lacking in many points of identity. The fact that denominational churches differ from each other in faith, name, doctrine, and practice, proves that they are not all identical with the New Testament church: for it was fundamentally and essentially "one body;" whereas the denominations are divided and are many bodies." (*Sermons by Gus Nichols and Others*, page 8).

Churches of Christ today are IDENTICAL with the church in the New Testament -- in organization, as well as in name, doctrine, and worship. Congregations are now (as in the first century) independent, and autonomous, having "bishops and deacons" in each congregation that is organized.

(More to follow).

Sin In The Face Of God

The author of Hebrews recognizes that there is "pleasure" in sin for a season (Hebrews 11:25). Humanity, having lost sight of sin's "seasonal" nature, has jumped into the middle of the slime-pits of iniquity. Our world today is fast becoming as the days of Noah: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). Man is bold in his sin. He commits unrighteousness without any sense of shame. Individuals continue in their wicked ways with no fear in their hearts at all. Many of this character have, in time past, been washed in the Lamb's blood. Some such sinners even be those who worship God regularly, and who take a lead in works of the church.



VICTOR M. ESKEW

All sinners should study seriously Genesis three. For it is here that we find sin in the face of God. Genesis 3:6 is one of the saddest verses of the entire Bible: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit there of, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." Man and woman, the supreme of God's creation, transgressed the law Jehovah had laid upon them in Genesis 2:16,17. Not long after the dreadful act, they and their sin stood face to face with God Almighty.

Genesis 3:8 begins the horrifying scene: "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden." When sin is first confronted with God, it *tries to hide* itself. Is this not a switch from when sin thought it was alone? Before God's presence was made known fully, sin was outright and bold. Eve gave to her husband, and he did eat. There was no attempt to hide at that point. But when the voice of God drew nigh, sin ran for cover. Thus it will be in the last day: Those who are proud of their sins, those who boast of their evil-doings, those who forthrightly transgress the law of God, will (when face to face with God) run for cover. "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:15-17).

The account continues in Genesis 6:9,10: "And the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and hid myself." From these verses we see that sin is *afraid* in God's presence. There are those today who openly practice adultery. Cursing and swearing have almost become acceptable language for most of society. Lewd and lascivious material is commonplace for television, theater, books, magazines, newspapers and any other place imaginable. Even some of the church live as devils throughout the week with no sense of shame. But when all those individuals come face to face with the Lord, shame will fill their souls. At that time their sin will be exposed by him who hates all sin, and fear will engulf the heart of the sinner. He will wish he had never been born.

And it would have been better for that poor soul not to have entered the world. For, thirdly, we learn from Genesis 3 that sin, as it faces God, *will be punished*.

Genesis 3:14-24 discusses in detail the consequences which man had to face for having transgressed the will of God. Inevitable punishment will also be the lot of all who are sinners in this age. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." But the new Jerusalem is described as a place of Holiness" . . . And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or

maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:8,27).

If only sinful men would see how they will react when they come into contact with the Almighty, they would change while they still have opportunity. They will be engulfed in an eternity of torment. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS 38843.

Some Tragedies In Religion

Do you think that religion can involve tragedy? Or, would you object, saying that all religion, regardless of flavor or brand, is good, and is therefore to be praised? The truth is: The wrong kind of religion is a tragedy indeed! There is a true religion, and there are many false religions. All false religions lead unsuspecting souls to eternal calamity and disaster and terrible misfortune.



W. A. HOLLEY

Why are the foregoing statements true? Because God Almighty accepts his religion -- the one true religion as revealed in the Holy Bible. In the Bible one can read of the *Jews' religion*, the *Pharisees religion*, *pure and undefiled*, and *vain religion*; but of these, only one religion is acceptable to our Lord God (Galatians 1:13-14; Acts 26:5; James 1:26-27).

We shall consider several points, based upon the Scriptures, which demonstrate the truthfulness of our contention:

(1) *Ignorance is a great tragedy in all worthy endeavours, but especially so in matters of eternal truth (Hosea 4:6).* Ignorance of sin does not excuse any one (Leviticus 5:17). Poison is still poison although one may think it is cake-coloring! One must know the truth to be saved (John 8:30-32). To overcome ignorance, read and study the holy scriptures every day (II Timothy 2:15; Acts 17:11).

(2) *False teaching is another great tragedy of our age.* Conflicting voices are continually crying for attention. There is but one true gospel; and if all preachers preached the truth of God there would be no human creeds, no denominational churches, no incompatible plans of salvation. If one will not believe the truth of God, he will believe a lie (II Thessalonians 2:10-12), and be damned. All preachers should be tried by the Scriptures (I John 4:1-2; Acts 17:11). The doctrines and commandments of men are sinful in the sight of God (Matthew 15:9).

(3) *Oftentimes good intentions end in tragedy.* Why? Because good intentions never carried to fruition never accomplish any thing. One who is always "going to" build a bridge never does any thing! Thousands have been lost even though they "intended" to obey the Lord God -- the Almighty -- some day -- but never did! Good intentions are essential, but such cannot take the place of obedience (Matthew 7:21-23; Hebrews 5:8-9). If you intend to obey Jesus Christ, do it today; death may come unexpectedly, and find you unprepared.

(4) *Joining some denominational church can be a tragedy of the first magnitude.* Why is this statement true? Well, such an act tends to lull one to sleep, thus giving one a false sense of security. How often have

we heard honest souls say that they are satisfied with their church and their religion? All of which may be true; but it is God, not ourselves, nor other men, who must be satisfied! Is God satisfied with what you have done, religiously?? Ah, that's the real question!! *Death-bed repentance* is not taught in the word of God (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:36-38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4). And, furthermore, no person ever joined the church in New Testament times (Acts 2:41, 47).

(5) *In some cases high academic achievement ends in terrible tragedy.* Certainly, I am not opposed to high academic achievement; but when preachers or elders or other church leaders become so enthralled with human learning that they think they have surpassed the wisdom of the apostles, they *and all their followers are headed for a mighty fall!* The word of God will stand when the world is on fire (Matthew 24:35; John 12:48). God warns against worldly wisdom (I Corinthians 1:21-31; 3:18-23). It is well for the dog to wag its tail, but when the tail begins to wag the dog, something is radically wrong. How many young people have gone to the great universities with their hearts full of faith and confidence in God, but who, after years of brainwashing there, have returned home with their faith shattered, non-existent??

(6) *Popularity, as desired as it is by all, can lead to terrible tragedy.* It is normal for one to want to be popular, but surely not at just any cost or price! Should a girl sacrifice her virginity for the sake of popularity? In the field of religion, the most popular preacher, or the most popular church, or the most popular doctrine, etc., are the poorest guides to be found. Why not go to the Holy Bible and learn the true and right way of the Lord? Truth found there may not be popular with the masses, but it will be true and right! Many Jews of Jesus' day would not confess Him because they were afraid they would lose their position with others (John 12:42-43). Demas gave up truth and righteousness that he might go back into the world, which was far more popular (II Timothy 4:10).

(7) *Partial preparation is another great tragedy for thousands upon thousands of people.* Many are willing to obey part of God's commands, but not all of them. For example, the five foolish virgins made *some* preparation -- but not enough (Matthew 25:1-13). King Saul, of Old Testament fame, kept that portion of the Lord's commandments that pleased him, but he was not ready to go all the way with the Lord (I Samuel 15:1,3, 6-9, 13, 15-23). The truth is: Partial "obedience" equals "disobedience" (Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 6:46)! Are you, dear Reader, among those who are ready to believe, but refuse to be baptized (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-38; 22:16)? In the New Testament those who reject obedience to the commandments of the Lord are doomed!

(8) *The sin of procrastination is another great tragedy indeed.* Many people *plan* to obey the Lord *some day!* To procrastinate is to put off intentionally

Old - Isms Die Hard

Continued from page 2

the Bible as the inspired revelation of God, they began preaching another "gospel" that was devoted to the social and economic injustices of the day. Not being convinced that men were lost and doomed because of sin, they ceased to preach a message of redemption from transgressions. They concentrated their energies on the material needs of the race. Feeling that Hindus and Buddhists were safe before God, they sent missionaries to dig wells, provide job training and work for social reform.

Eighty years of history has demonstrated the utter failure of the social gospel approach to religion. Jesus said it plainly in his rebuff to Satan: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). As much as men need and want their physical needs met, there is in the heart of every man a hunger and thirst for communion with God. God "hath set eternity in their heart" (Ecclesiastes 3:11). With every creature comfort, men are still sinners. Their conscience has no peace; they live in fear of death and judgment (Hebrews 2:14-15).

The social gospel failed because it was a different gospel than that preached by the apostles (Galatians 1:6-8). Those churches which gave up the evangelical gospel of Jesus for that new system have suffered devastating results. Like a slow poison it has killed their mission outreach on foreign soil and dried up the spiritual life of their churches here at home. If the Moslems, Hindus and Buddhists are all right before God, why risk life and health to dig wells and build schools? Let the government, or the United Nations, do the job. At home, members begin to ask if God is so indifferent towards man's spiritual faith and moral conduct, why bother with going to church and active involvement? Their numbers have drastically diminished. Fewer and fewer young men present themselves for ministerial service. The system is wrong and it does not work. It has finally been recognized as a culprit of evil by those sectarians who have tried it.

Now the Social Gospel weed has sprung up in our midst. Admittedly it is yet small and scattered, but the evidence is there of its presence. One congregation announced recently that they had decided to become a "servant church." So they knocked on every door and asked their neighbors, "How can we help you?" We've washed windows, moved grass, and repaired roofs. We've provided transportation, food and clothing; we are really reaching the people, they report.

Not one of these things is wrong in itself; all are commendable acts of service. But you could wash every window and mow every yard in town, feed and clothe every soul -- and yet every one of them be lost in eternity unless the gospel is preached and they obey it. The Social Gospel tends to become a substitute for the message of salvation through faith in Jesus (Mark 16:15-16). Much of our contemporary preaching has lost its Biblical content -- only a verse or two may be cited. Seldom are references given. Other sources of authority (?) are heavily relied upon. I recently read of a missionary who was raising funds to set up a factory in a poor nation to teach folk how to be self-sufficient. While the deed is noble, is that the mission of the church?

Far too many preachers have ceased to set forth in their sermons the terms of salvation. Lessons end with a vague call to respond "if you have needs." Invitation songs are still sung as a matter of tradition, but it seems that no one is expected to respond.

Gospel meetings designed to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10) are being discontinued by numerous congregations. In their place are films or lessons on family, child rearing, and other personal needs. Surely we need to have instruction in these vital areas. But good marital relationships, successful parenting, and feeling good about oneself are *not* the

gospel of salvation.

The result of these trends is that fewer and fewer souls are being saved. Churches grow (?) by absorbing members from sister congregations. Many members have no strong doctrinal convictions. Some are found drifting into denominational churches with no sense of guilt in so doing. Others staying with us have a "tolerant" spirit toward error that leaves them vulnerable to false teachers.

Could it be that many brethren have lost confidence in the power of the gospel. Are they saying that teaching the word of God to lost sinners just won't get the job done these days? Do their actions indicate that they are searching for a better way to spread the kingdom than through God's appointed way? "Go . . . preach the gospel to the whole creation . . ." (Mark 16:15-16) has worked for 1950 years!

I appeal to fellow preachers to get back to the basics of studying and proclaiming the Master's message. Let your preaching be filled with the wisdom of God rather than of man. Make Scripture your authority -- show the audience where they can read it in their

Did Adam And Eve Have Children In The Garden?

Some argue that Adam and Eve had children in the garden of Eden. They reason from Genesis 1:28: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth . . ." that they either did "multiply," or they were disobedient to the commandment. From Genesis 3:16: "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children," some claim that

"God doesn't explain the birth process to Eve; he just indicates it will be changed. Unless Eve had been involved in childbirth before, the statement has little meaning." A third reason for this view relates to Cain's building a city (Genesis 4:17). One writes: "You don't build a city with you, your wife, and your son. The obvious implication is that there was a multiplicity of people around, many of whom had been born in the Garden."

Let us notice several reasons why these arguments cannot be right:

1. Only Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden. "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Genesis 3:24). If there were more people in the garden at the time Adam and Eve were driven out, why does not the Bible tell us, or at least allude to them?

2. In the Bible only Adam and Eve knew they were naked. Notice what the Bible says happened after Adam partook of the fruit: "And the eyes of them *both* were opened, and they knew that they were naked . . ." (Genesis 3:7). If there were a whole multitude of people in the garden, why did not God say, "And the eyes of all the people were opened?"

3. Why did not God make coats of skin for more than Adam and Eve if they were not the only ones in the garden? Genesis 3:21 states: "And Jehovah God made for *Adam* and for *his wife* coats of skins, and clothed *them*." Did he let the rest of the people go

Bibles. Present lessons on home and family and practical lessons for living; but do not fail to proclaim Christ as Lord, and the gospel plan of salvation. Teach your brethren to "do good towards all men" (Galatians 6:10), but be sure to indoctrinate them in the sound doctrine regarding faith, worship and service (Titus 2:1).

Remember what it is that makes up the church of Christ. It is not just that we are nice, that we help the poor, that we have good families, that we believe in God and in Jesus. Other religious bodies do all of these as well as we. That which distinguishes the true church from the counterfeit is all the above, plus a *Scriptural faith, message and worship!*

May we never fail in our duty as spiritual leaders, to lead God's people in the path of righteousness. The "Social Gospel" has been tried and found wanting. Please don't revive this faulty system and harm the Lord's body in so doing.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.



GEORGE REED

naked?

4. Genesis 4:1 says the man knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain. If Adam knew his wife before this time, why doesn't the Bible say so? Cain had to be their first child. Eve said, "I have gotten a man with the help of Jehovah." The tone of this passage suggests that Eve was surprised, and full of joy. If this were not her first child, Eve didn't know anything about it. Eve before her fall did not know pain at all. Remember, the garden was a type of heaven on earth. The Lord was simply telling Eve she is now going to have pain in childbirth.

5. To say Cain was born inside the garden is to completely misread the Bible. Cain was born outside the garden (Genesis 4:1). He dwelt in the land of Nod (verse 16). Cain was a wanderer, and was dwelling on the east of Eden (verse 16). Who believes that Cain built a city in the garden? Isn't this astounding?

From the genealogies, one can truly see that Adam and Eve's first child was Cain, and he was begotten outside the garden. Let us just take the Bible for what it says, and not for what we would like for it to say!

—17691 Pesante Rd., Salinas, CA 93907.

Some Tragedies

In Religion

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and habitually something that should be done. To illustrate, Felix (Acts 24:24-25) waited for a "convenient season," rather obeying the Lord promptly. King Agrippa (Acts 26:28) was "almost" but not "altogether" persuaded to become a Christian. According to the Scripture "now" is the time; tomorrow may be too late (II Corinthians 6:2). Jesus said, "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.



Words 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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Little Men And Little Women

My mother read to me as a child the children's classics *Little Men* and *Little Women* by Louisa Mae Alcott. In my life in Christ, I have seen a different kind of "little" people. Their example is not commendable; we study them only to avoid their unchristian attitudes and actions.

"Little" people have a narrow, constricted view of the Lord's kingdom. Christ's church is intended to be world-wide and multi-racial, embracing every social and economic strata of men. "Every creature" is invited in Mark 16:15-16. All can now be children of God by faith and baptism (Galatians 3:26-28). Brethren with "small" souls show respect of persons within their congregation. They are satisfied to spend all their energies in the home congregation, or province, with no interest or sense of duty to the Lord's cause in distant places.

"Little" Christians think only of themselves. Christ calls us to deny ourselves (Matthew 22:39). Paul urges each to count others better than himself "not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others" (Philippians 2:3-4). The selfishness of "little" people taints every relationship whether private or in the Lord's body.

"Little" folks major in minor things and minor in major things. This was a typical flaw of the Pharisees. They tithed "mint and anise and cummin" but "left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith . . ." (Matthew 23:23). There are congregations that consume great amounts of time and energy on physical facilities and related matters, but show little interest in truly spiritual matters. Some will come down hard on "minor" infractions while turning the head on "major" matters. Such men will crack down on chewing gum in service, but say nothing of the use of strong drink. They are hard on boys with shaggy hair but mute on racial prejudice. They may be hard on people's



JOHN WADDEY

driving habits, but are blind to the way they treat their families. They are hard on ladies' pant-suits, but mute on mini-skirts.

"Little" people look for the negative rather than the positive in people and good works. Ninety-nine good points are ignored if one flaw is found. A sufficient search will reveal some short-comings in any man, project, or cause. "Little" folks smugly excuse themselves from involvement with any.

"Little" men and women look for excuses not to help rather than for reasons to help others. Doing good is fundamental to Christianity (Galatians 6:10). The people with "small" souls are like the Levite and the priest who walked by their wounded brother on Jericho's road (Luke 10:29-34). A true follower of Jesus will be looking for reasons to help folk, mission causes, and every good work. Christ died for us "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

"Little" people are rarely happy with their home congregation, their elders, or preacher, or any good work, unless a personal friend of theirs is involved. Nothing or no one seems to please them. They are chasing an illusory "ideal" congregation, eldership, or preacher. Often this type of brother flits from one congregation to another in search of the *perfect* environment; which of course he never finds. They can never be counted on to stay for the long haul and to carry the burden in the heat of the day. Like the disciples in Sardis, none of their works are brought to completion (Revelation 3:2).

"Little" folk would rather sink the ship than salvage it. Any person, congregation, or good work will occasionally develop problems. "Little" souled people do not wish to spend the time and energy to salvage them. They find it much easier to bomb them into oblivion and find another project to support. This was not Paul's attitude, however. He worked diligently to salvage the sullied church in Corinth. He used his position and his pen "for building up, and not for casting down" (II Corinthians 13:10). Jesus salvaged the fallen Peter (Luke 22:31-32). "Small" Christians tend to grind the erring brother into the mire; the spiritual man restores him (Galatians 6:1-2).


Brethren with "dwarfed" souls are prone to judge

others by a different rule than they judge themselves. Paul had to deal with such men who were "measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves with themselves" (II Corinthians 10:12). Such folk will show no mercy or patience with another's failures, but can always bring forth an excuse for theirs. They generally expect more of preachers and elders and their families than they expect of themselves. These are the mote hunters which Jesus soundly condemned. They need to remove the mote from their own eye before concentrating on their brethren's problems (Matthew 7:1-5).

Brethren with "little" souls frequently are reckless with the church and with their fellow-Christians. They destroy in days what took others years to build. They are little concerned about babes in Christ, and weak brethren who may become discouraged and turn away from strife and turmoil. They discuss internal "brotherhood" problems publicly, or with non-members, with no concern for how it will hurt the church or drive prospects away. Paul warns that when we wound the conscience of a weak brother we "sin against Christ" (I Corinthians 8:12). The great apostle was willing to "bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ" (I Corinthians 9:12). How often have mindless preachers aired our internal problems on radio broadcasts and in public newspapers! When a babe in Christ makes a mistake, these thoughtless souls will ruthlessly take them to task. Paul on the other hand, was "gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children" (I Thessalonians 2:7).

"Little" Christians do not long remain in our midst. Very often this type of soul is recruited into some radical "anti" congregation. There a cluster of embittered souls, cast off from the mainstream of fellowship with little to do, will soon turn to biting and devouring one another (Galatians 5:14-15). Some of them will gravitate in the opposite direction to worldly liberal churches which are far worse than any they criticized in the past. They make "shipwreck concerning the faith" (I Timothy 1:19). Others of them will end up in denominational churches or cults which they once condemned. One such brother quit the church because the preacher did not use his

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Words Of Truth

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— Acts 26:25

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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

The Church Must Wear Scriptural Names

Doubtless you have heard many people say, "There's nothing in a name!" or, "It doesn't matter what name you wear in religion!" or, "One name is just as good as another!" Perhaps you have even heard Shakespeare quoted to prove (?) it, for he made one of his characters to say,

"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

However, to call a rose a "petunia" is to misrepresent the rose! Simply calling it a "petunia" does not make it one! Rather, one displays his own ignorance, or else shows disregard for facts, if he calls a rose a "petunia!"

Whether one uses --or knows!-- the correct names for flowers, will be of little or no importance in the Judgment. But whether he uses scriptural names in religion will be of eternal consequences. God said, "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). This makes it clear that in religion we should, yea, we **MUST**, use *Bible names*!

To Timothy, a young evangelist, the apostle Paul wrote: "Hold fast the form of **SOUND WORDS**" (II Timothy 1:13). To another young preacher he wrote: "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). The apostle Peter wrote: "If any man speak, let him speak as the **ORACLES OF GOD**" (I Peter 4:11). He explained: "If ye be reproached for the **NAME OF CHRIST**, happy are ye" (verse 14). James inquired, "Do not they blaspheme that **WORTHY NAME** by which ye are called?" (James 2:7). And to the saints at Ephesus the Holy Spirit said that the whole family --in heaven, and on earth-- is **NAMED** "of the Lord" (Ephesians 3:14).

There must be some connection between these verses, and the truth declared by the apostle Peter: "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). Hence, salvation is in the "name" of Christ --and in none other! Therefore we should wear the name of Christ, and none other! The same apostle wrote: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye" (I Peter 4:14).

Jesus Christ announced: "*I will build my church*" (Matthew 16:18). Not only is Christ the builder of it: he also paid for it. The apostle Paul states clearly that Christ "purchased" the church "with his own blood" (Acts 20:28), and that he is the "head" of the church (Ephesians 5:25). Even if we were left up to human reasoning, is it not reasonable to expect the church to wear Christ's name? However, we are not left to our own judgment in this matter: Christ himself called it "my church" (Matthew 16:18), and the apostle Paul was guided by the Holy Spirit to refer to congregations of it as "churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16).

Just as surely as the plural of any noun embraces and includes the singular, just that certain is it that each congregation is the "church of Christ." There is no possible way there can be the plural ("churches of Christ") unless one --individually-- is the "church of Christ" (singular).

As congregations, we can wear the name of Christ as did "churches of Christ" in the first century (Romans 16:16). As individual children of God, we can wear the name of Christ by being called simply "Christians." First century saints "were called Christians" (Acts 11:26). Not one place in anybody's Bible says the congregation was called the "Christian church!" Neither did any inspired man ever refer to any congregation as the "Baptist Church," the "Methodist Church," the "Catholic Church," nor by any other such name. If human churches (such as these) were scriptural in every other way --which is not true-- they still would be unbiblical in name!

--Need I apologize for calling these churches by name? In the first century it was not "unchristian" to mention the names of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and other sects of the Jews: of this we are sure, because Paul and other inspired men did so (Acts 23:6) -- and Luke by inspiration recorded it! Furthermore, Luke not only called those "human churches" by name, but he also proceeded to tell some of the differences between what the Pharisees believed versus what the Sadducees taught! This is a far cry from what some half-converted folk today desire! Luke did not suggest a 'rap session' with their leaders, nor propose that they agree to compromise on all points of disagreement. Without apology he recorded Paul's bold stand for the truth (endorsed in this case by the Pharisees), and against the Sadducees' errors!

Jesus himself so exposed the errors of the chief priests and Pharisees that they wanted to kill him (Matthew 21:45-46). And the Holy Spirit guided the apostle Matthew to record it! Matthew also reported our Lord's debates with the Herodians. Yes! he even called them by name! He also let the "cat out of the bag" that the Pharisees put them up to trying to entrap Jesus (Matthew 22:15-22). And would you believe it? Matthew then called the name of another 'human church' that was quite popular, and told what they (the Sadducees) believed --and then he wrote how Jesus demolished their false doctrine with the truth (Matthew 22:23-33). The same apostle continued to call the names of those two 'human churches' of that early era! He wrote: "But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. And one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him . . ." (Matthew 22:35), and then he recorded the debate Jesus resumed with that 'denomination' of the Jews.

It is also a matter of record that the apostle Paul boldly brought out into the open the false doctrines of heathenism on Mars Hill. The idols of Athens were false gods: there is only one true God, and Paul clearly proved this (Acts 17). Without apology he and

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favorite translation. How ironical! They have burned all their bridges and alienated all their friends. They have painted themselves into a corner and thus have no place left to go where they are welcomed or where pride will let them go. Tragic, tragic, tragic!

Paul pleads with each of us "Brethren, be not children in mind: yet in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men" (I Corinthians 14:20). May it be our daily prayer that God will help us "grow up" in all things, that we might behave as full-grown sons and daughters of the King, living lives worthy of our calling (Ephesians 4:1).

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

"The Birth Of Jesus"

The angel in his appearance to Joseph said of Mary, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Jesus said of his mission, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Jesus came to earth to be our Savior.

The angel Gabriel also appeared to Mary. He said to her, "Hail, thou that are highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women . . . Fear not Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus . . . Then said Mary unto the angel, How shalt this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel



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The Language Of Ashdod

"In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people" (Nehemiah 13:23). These words illustrate a wonderful principle.



W. A. HOLLEY

What is this principle? It is, when we have reference to Bible truth, we should call Bible things

by Bible names, and do Bible things in Bible ways. To follow this simple suggestion would eliminate much of the confusion now found in today's religious world.

This is exactly what the Lord requires. Peter (I Peter 4:11) said, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." God's word is so holy and sacred, it is a sin to add to, or to subtract from, or to substitute for God's word (Jude 3; Revelation 22:18-19; I Timothy 6:3). There is a "form of sound words" mentioned in the Bible (II Timothy 1:13). Thus, God says things like they should be said. Men should not corrupt the language of God's holy word!

For the benefit of our readers, we shall note a series of glaring errors which indicate examples of Ashdodic language:

(1) *Calling the preacher "Reverend."* Isn't it strange that one never reads of "Reverend Peter," or "Reverend Paul," or "Reverend John?" In Psalms 111:9, "holy and reverend is his name," refers to God Almighty -- not to mortal men. Today's preachers should be ashamed to be addressed as "Reverend."

(2) *It is a sin to address a priest as "Father."* "On what grounds?" one may ask. Jesus gave this command, "... Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven" (Matthew 23:9, A.S.V.). One never reads of "Father Paul" or "Father Peter" or "Father John." The truth is, the Bible knows nothing of the "Clergy" and the "Laity." In the Bible all Christians are priests (Revelation 1:6; I Peter 2:5,9).

(3) Those who call their preacher "Our Pastor," are using the language of Ashdod. The word *pastor* as used in Ephesians 4:11-16 refers to elders, or bishops, or overseers . . . men -- not just one man -- who exercised the oversight over the local church (Acts 20:17, 28; I Peter 5:1-4). No elder or bishop, in apostolic times, exercised authority over two or more local churches. The Holy Bible says nothing concerning the Pope!! Nor, does the Bible mention the Roman Catholic Church.

(4) *All too often do we hear men and women talking of*

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other Christians refuted the claims of Judaism and paganism, and made Christ and Christianity stand out in bold contrast to all other religions. It is not unchristian to do so today!

No church today is the Bible church unless it wears Bible names. To be the New Testament church, it is necessary for a church to be identical with the church described in the New Testament. *Similarity* is not sufficient; there must be *identity*-- in name, as well as in origin, doctrine, and in organization.

(More to follow).

"our church," or "my church." In the same vein, we have those who keep talking about "joining the church of one's choice," and "that one church is just as good as another." Another wild and unscriptural idea is: "The church is a non-essential . . . one can as easily go to heaven out of the church as one can in it." The language of Ashdod -- pure and simple! We suggest that Matthew 16:18-19; Acts 2:36-38, 47; Colossians 1:13-14, 18, 24, be read. Do you believe the Bible?

(5) *Other expressions of Ashdodic language are:* "One should first get saved and then join the church of one's choice." Again, "One must be regenerated and born again," and "Once in grace, always in grace." More: "Just take Jesus as your personal Saviour." "Just say to the Lord, 'I am a sinner, save me now,' and the Lord will save you." Friend, all of these statements may seem true to you, but they are all false!!

One cannot "get saved." One must hear and obey the gospel of Christ (I Peter 4:17; II Thessalonians 1:7-9). It is then that one has been "born again" (John 3:3-5; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:36-38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; I Peter 3:21). It is possible for a child of God to fall from grace (Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 6:4-6; II Peter 2:20-22; Luke 8:13). All who obey the truth are added to (they do not join) the church (Acts 2:47). The notion that God will not permit a child of God to die in sin . . . that God will chasten the child of God, and always bring him back, is false!! (John 8:21-24). To illustrate, 23,000 sinners died in one day, according to I Corinthians 10:8.

(6) *Another example of Ashdodic language is:* Jesus will set up a literal kingdom in the literal city of Jerusalem, sit on David's literal throne, and reign on earth for a literal 1,000 years. Revelation 20:1-6 is

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" (Luke 1:26-35). This was the highest honor ever afforded to a woman. Jesus was to be both human and divine.

The prophet Micah had prophesied Jesus would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). Evidently the providence of God intervened in the fulfillment of Micah's prophecy. Caesar Augustus decreed a tax, "And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city" (Luke 2:3). Therefore, it was necessary for Mary and Joseph to go from Galilee to Judaea to be taxed. Their home town was Bethlehem.

When they arrived in Bethlehem, the inns were full. The stable was to be their hotel room. That night "she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger" (verse 7). The manger was the container from which the animals ate their feed.

That night "... the angel said unto them," (the shepherds in the field): "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 Savior, which is Christ the Lord . . . 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" (Luke 2:10-14).

The shepherds got together and went to Bethlehem. They wanted to see what had occurred. When they found Mary and the child, the shepherds told what they had seen and heard.

As soon as the necessary time had elapsed, Jesus was brought to the temple in Jerusalem to present

often cited as proof of the foregoing assertion; but neither these verses (nor any others) say anything about a rapture! The second coming of Christ, a reign of Christ on earth, a bodily resurrection of the saints, the conversion of National Israel, a literal throne in Jerusalem, or a thousand years of earthly peace, are not mentioned in Revelation 20!

Jesus taught that his kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). Christians do not fight against flesh and blood but against spiritual wickedness (Ephesians 6:10-12; II Corinthians 10:3-6). The kingdom of Christ was established on Pentecost, and has been in existence ever since (Acts 2:1-4, 36-38, 47; Colossians 1:13-14; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 1:9). Peace is in Jesus Christ, in his kingdom or church (John 16:33; Isaiah 2:1-4); and one can share that peace when one is, by faith, baptized into Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1-2; 6:3-4). Dear sinner Friend, enter the kingdom today!

(7) *Those who contend that there are three modes of baptism are speaking the language of Ashdod.* The word *baptize* means to dip, bury, submerge, immerse. If one reads Romans 6:3-4 and Colossians 2:12, one will readily conclude that baptism cannot be the act of sprinkling or pouring. The element is water, but no man can baptize another in the Holy Spirit (John 1:33; cf. Matthew 28:18-20). New Testament baptism is for believers only -- not for infants, nor other children who have not reached the age of accountability (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16).

The practice of *sprinkling* (for baptism, immersion) began about 250 years after the establishment of the apostolic church on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection. Hence, the apostles never, never, never practiced sprinkling or pouring. In the New Testament there is no infant baptism.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

"The Birth Of Jesus"

Continued from page 2

him to the Lord. This was a necessary requirement. "As it is written in the law of the Lord, every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord" (Luke 2:23). The "law" was the law given by Moses (Numbers 3:13).

The Holy Spirit had revealed to the aged Simeon that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. "The parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law. Then he took him up in his arms and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke 2:25-32). He was to be the Savior of both Jew and Gentile.

—103 Elena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

While In A Foreign Country

VICTOR M. ESKEW

The seventy-year captivity of the children of Israel had been prophesied by many prophets of God. In Daniel 1:1,2 we read of one of the phases of this fulfillment. Taken in the siege of Nebuchadnezzar were four youths of Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (Daniel 1:6). While in Babylon their names were changed to Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, respectively (Daniel 1:7). These four young men should be studied diligently by all. Many characteristics exhibited in the lives of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego should

Continued on page 4

Apologetics Press, Inc. Breaks Ground

Montgomery, Alabama: On November 12, 1984, Apologetics Press, Inc., a non-profit, tax-exempt work dedicated to the defense of historical New Testament Christianity, broke ground for its new building. In May the Board of Directors announced plans for the new facility, on property made available through the courtesy of the elders of the Landmark Church of Christ in Montgomery, Alabama.

The Board of Directors is composed of: Dr. Bert Thompson, former professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A & M University and currently Professor of Bible and Science at the Alabama Christian School of Religion in Montgomery, Alabama; Wayne Jackson, evangelist for the East Main Church of Christ in Stockton, California; and; Dr. J. R. Clark, whose medical practice in obstetrics and gynecology is in Waxahachie, Texas. Wayne Jackson and Bert Thompson serve as co-editors of *Reason & Revelation*, a monthly journal on Christian evidences published by Apologetics Press, Inc. In addition to the journal, Apologetics Press publishes cassette tapes, books, tracts, study courses and other similar materials in the fields of apologetics and evidences.

The new building will be a two-story, 10,000 plus square foot structure to include administrative offices, reception area, computer/word processing room, typesetting room, mail room, warehouse area, etc. Don Torode and Allen Gunn, members of the



Groundbreaking was held on November 12, 1984. Participating in the ceremony were (left to right): Dr. Bert Thompson, representing Apologetics Press; Allen Gunn and Don Torode, project engineer and project designer, respec-

tively; J. J. Powell, contractor, and; the elders of the Landmark Church of Christ in Montgomery who provided the land: Bob Echols, Leo Davis, Bill Page and Jim Smith.

Landmark congregation, have served without charge as designer and engineer, respectively, on the project. J. J. Powell, an elder at the Dalraida Church of Christ in Montgomery, is serving as contractor of the project, at no general contractor's fee as a donation to the work. Cost for the new structure is now estimated at \$225,000, of which \$175,000 has

already been raised. Projected completion date is July 31, 1985. Apologetics Press, Inc., is currently seeking interested individuals who may contribute to the building fund. Inquiries and contributions should be directed to: Apologetics Press, Inc., 230 Landmark Drive, Montgomery, Alabama 36117-2752. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Don't Put Off Preaching On Procrastination

For several weeks, I have been intending to write an article on "Procrastination" but have just kept putting it off. Isn't it sad that so many important things are regularly postponed?

Some of the greatest lessons by the Master emphasized the importance of doing while one has the opportunity. The five foolish virgins (Matthew 25:1-12), the excuse makers (Luke 14:16-24), and the foolish farmer (Luke 12:16-21), are all saying, "Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today."

On February 14, 1876, Alexander Graham Bell filed an application with the Patent Office for a patent to the telephone. On the same day, there came to the Office a caveat from Professor Elisha Gray of Chicago, which gave notice that he was at work on a similar instrument. A caveat being defined as "an instrument giving public notice that the applicant is at work on an invention which he has not yet perfected, and is fully as protective, under the law, as an application for a patent."

Bell's application was filed first upon the books and, therefore, had the preference. If Gray's caveat had been sent to Washington just 24 hours earlier, he would, no doubt, be known as inventor of the telephone, and would have made a very large fortune.

Too often, we admit the importance of a lesson only when it is too late to act upon it. Perhaps, you have heard the story of the man condemned to be hanged? He had been led to the scaffold and just before the black cap was to be placed over his head, the officer said, "Do you have anything to say?" To which he



EDSEL BURLESON

replied, "Yes, sir, I do. This is really going to teach me a lesson."

That story reminds me of a service station attendant who was swarmed with last-minute customers on a holiday weekend. He shook his head in disgust as he said to a preacher next in line, "It's funny to me that people always wait until the last minute to prepare for a trip they knew they were going to take." "I know," said the preacher, "I have the same trouble in my business."

also be exemplified in the lives of high-school and college youths today. There are also many lessons contained in the account of these Israeli youths' lives which are applicable today. One of these lessons is how one should act in a foreign country.

As one already might have guessed, the record of these young men is found in the book of Daniel. The opening chapter finds the youths transported from their home in Jerusalem to the heathen land of Babylon, about a thousand miles away. While in this land they were tempted to do many things contrary to that which the Lord had commanded them. These four were chosen to be among those to be trained in the learning of the Chaldeans (Daniel 1:4). Those chosen were also to eat of the king's meat and wine (Daniel 1:5). For them to eat the king's meat would constitute sin. They were faced with a decision: they could obey God, or they could disobey him. Disobedience would have been simple; and "no one" (?) would have known -- for they were miles from home! "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not

Many a gospel preacher has the experience of being called to the bedside of a dying one who had full understanding of the truth and many God-given opportunities to do the Lord's will. Often, such a one will sob uncontrollably, as one cries, "Why did I wait?" That great decision, perpetually postponed, had become a dagger in the heart. TODAY! (II Corinthians 6:2).

West End Church of Christ, 420 - 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35226.

While In A Foreign Country

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defile himself" (Daniel 1:8). The youths chose to obey God, and they rose to tremendous heights in the heathen nation (Daniel 1:17-21).

This account applies very much to youth today, and especially to those who are away from home (e.g., those in college). When one is away from parents and those who know them well, the temptation to do evil is tremendous. Ask many of those who are on a college campus if the temptations to smoke, drink, dance, and have sexual relationships are not greater now than when they lived at home? Thus, today's young people face a time of decision, as did the youths of Judah. They can either choose to obey God, or else give up their values, yield to Satan -- and sin. The four youths of Israel obeyed and were blessed. This will be the same for youth in society today.

Which will you chose? Will you be the Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego of the twentieth century? Or, will you rather choose to yield to the temptations of Satan because no one knows you in your "heathen" surroundings? How will you act while in a foreign country? "For our citizenship is in heaven . . ." (Philippians 3:20, A.S.V.).

—P.O. Box 251 Fulton, MS 38843.



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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Apologizing For The Preacher?

The preacher of the gospel is not surprised that his lessons meet with varying responses. While he would like to think that every sermon will be considered as a specimen of excellent preaching, the preacher knows full well that his sermon will be differently received by different people. One of Paul's most beautiful sermons was met with variable responses. Upon completion of his great Mars Hill sermon, some mocked; others said they would like to hear more later; while there were others who believed (Acts 17:32-34). Yes, we know that those who are unconverted can be unpredictable in their reception of sermons from the Bible. But what about the church member who responds to the sermon by *apologizing to guests for the lesson presented*? That is a tragedy!



JERRI MANASCO

It is a sad thing when a preacher has spent much time preparing for a sermon only to have some church member feel embarrassed because "there were visitors" present who were "probably offended" by the sermon and "may not be back." The Lord's immediate disciples seemed to have possessed that mentality! After one of his clear denunciations of Pharisaic hypocrisy, Jesus was approached by his disciples who asked, "Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?" (Matthew 15:12). Jesus promptly responded (to his disciples, embarrassment) by pointing out that these Pharisees were of a plant that his Father had not planted and would accordingly be "rooted up" (verses 13-14). Did his disciples actually expect him to apologize for the truth? It is certain that Jesus had no need to apologize for his *attitude*, for no teacher could speak with the degree of loving rebuke that characterized Jesus. Why apologize for that which was true, when the souls of men were

being lost?

Why apologize for the truth of the gospel? "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16). Obviously there was an element in the Galatian churches who counted him their enemy simply because he was so concerned about their right relationship with God. This apostle had fervently condemned the acceptance of any gospel beyond what he had delivered to them by inspiration (Galatians 1:6-9). He saw no need to apologize for a firm defense of the truth (Galatians 2:5). Why apologize for that which has the power to save the soul (Romans 1:16; James 1:21)?

Elijah apparently saw no need to offer apologies to Ahab for the message that could have delivered that evil king from divine wrath. When asked by Ahab, "Art thou he who troubleth Israel?" Elijah replied that it was Ahab himself who was responsible for Israel's woes (I Kings 18:17-18). Later this same king asked this same prophet: "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" (I Kings 21:20). Again, rather than "dialogue" with Ahab to try to settle their differences, that rugged prophet returned answer: "I have found thee: BECAUSE THOU HAST SOLD THYSELF TO WORK EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD . . ." (verse 20). No apology here!

Notwithstanding all that I have said above, there will yet be those who occupy pews in our services who feel compelled to offer apologies to the visitors on

behalf of the preacher's sermon. "Oh, he didn't mean to be so strong against divorce." "Our preacher isn't really THAT much against social drinking." "Brother _____ didn't really mean your case when he talked about being baptized." How shameful for such things to be!

What are some of the consequences of apologizing for the preacher's lessons? Notice just a few:

1. Such apologies will cause people to have little or no respect for the preacher who could have helped them in their search for salvation. If the church members fail to take him seriously, why should the outsider take him seriously?

2. Such apology definitely tells the visitor that the church member is not really convinced of the truthfulness of the gospel. There will be an addition to the already growing trend away from Biblical respect.

3. Apologies by the membership will not encourage the sinner to mend his or her ways. Why repent? or why have any inclination to reform in any way if the preacher's appeal is not that important?

4. The "apologist" will lessen his or her own spiritual perception. The *children* of such members will become aware that the preacher's lessons are merely amusing anecdotes to fill the family's time on Sundays. The children will become steeped in worldly thinking and be lost to the church forever. What a loss that will be!

—Rt. 2 Box 513, Haleyville, AL 35665.

The Challenge

J. TERRY WHEELER

America has long been a religious land, and the Bible has held primary attention among us for hundreds of years. But it is one thing to give a "respectful nod" to the Scriptures, and quite another to be diligent in the obedience it commands (II Thessalonians 2:15). This country (of which I am very proud in many ways) never being short on religion, nevertheless takes a general attitude that there is no such thing as being religiously right. The attitude evidences a fatal flaw (Amos 5:21-24).

Why has America reached its low point of moral

behavior? Speculation may go on for years; but the religious community of America must shoulder her share of the guilt. Who is buying, for instance, the pornography that crowds our stands, stores, and studios? Is it the few who dominate the control of airwaves, newspapers, and corporate boardrooms? Do so few generate so many millions of dollars, as if their products were only for themselves? Is such filth published only for the Editors' own eyes? Who believes it?

No, the American *people* buy the porn! How can

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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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The Challenge

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this be? Could it have something to do with the steady diet that has emanated from the microphones of the various pulpits around the country, pulpits that have taught either directly or indirectly that religion is a "practical expedient?" Doctrines that are suited to convenience, or to the power of the elite, are not doctrines that change lives for the better. Weigh what you have heard spoken for God against such a backdrop. God favors no special class (Acts 10:34), and a true cross is never *convenient* --not by any stretch of the imagination (Luke 9:23).

America has sold its soul! The religions of the times have encouraged just such a sellout. After all, what is the concrete motivation for this assault on the nation's morals? This writer is convinced it is no more nor less than the root of all kinds of evil, the love of money (I Timothy 6:10). Let us turn to many pulpits and religious groups: What is the outstanding motivation? If the most frequently mentioned topic is any indication, the motive for porno dealer and pulpiteer is the same. As Jesus so pointedly declared, "You brood of vipers! how can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34, R.S.V.) The call to give more money to the "work" never ceases!

A steady diet of this sort spells doom for any nation of people; and we in the U.S.A. are no different. Consider Israel of old: "A wonderful and horrible thing is come to pass in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will you do in the end thereof?" (Jeremiah 5:30, 31).

A challenge is now laid at the feet of the religious community. It is a challenge with a time-limit. We can now choose to be consistent in our profession of Christianity, do away with man-made religions and traditions (for we cannot be consistent otherwise (Mark 7:6-13), give up the "godliness-for-gain" emphasis, and turn simply and totally back to the One whom we have claimed all along is Lord; or, we can lose everything!

It is plain: neither the Lord nor the people will tolerate the hypocrisy much longer (Ezekiel 13:8-16). We can quickly lose our freedom. We most assuredly will lose our souls.

—P.O. Box 728, Duncan, SC 29334.



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Church Identified By Its Worship

We have seen that WHEN and WHERE the Lord's church BEGAN are two of the 'earmarks' which identify it. It can also be identified by its autonomous government and organization. Furthermore, no church can consistently claim to be the Lord's church unless it wears Bible names both for itself and for its individual members.

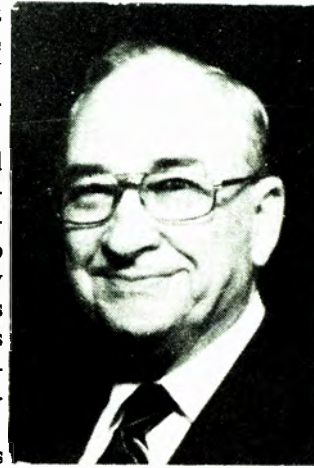
In order to be Christ's church, the church now must be identical with the New Testament church in WORSHIP also. Jesus himself gave prominence to the subject of worship, saying: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10). He also said: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). From these two passages we learn three things about worship: (1) It must be directed to God alone. (2) It must be "in spirit" --that is, it must come from the worshiper's heart, or spirit; it must be sincere. And (3) it must be "in truth," which means that it includes only those items specified in the word of God, for Jesus said unto the Father: "Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Our worship includes all that is authorized in the truth, and excludes from it everything which the "truth" does not authorize. There is no other way for it to be "in truth."

Five Items Authorized

In the New Testament, church worship consisted of five "items:" (1) Singing. (2) Praying. (3) Teaching or preaching (or, studying) God's word. (4) Giving. (5) Communion. In reverse order let us examine each of these.

(1) *Communion*. The first century Christians "came together" "upon the first day of the week" to "break bread" (Acts 20:7). The apostle Paul wrote: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (I Corinthians 10:16). Thus when they "came together to break bread," this means they had the Lord's supper. Under the figure of speech called "synecdoche," a part (break bread) is named for the whole. When "breaking bread" is mentioned in connection with other items of worship (as in Acts 2:42), or in connection with the assembly (e.g., Acts 20:7), it refers to the Lord's supper. The Lord's supper is the only thing for which the saints in the first century would "come together to eat" (I Corinthians 11:33). And they assembled each week for this purpose. Paul was only a stranger at Troas, and arrived there on Monday; yet he knew they would assemble on the FIRST DAY of the WEEK for worship --and assembled with them "to break bread" (Acts 20:6-7).

No church is identical with the one described in the Bible unless it has the Lord's Supper every week. Monthly, quarterly, or annual communion are not even mentioned in the Bible! And in the communion



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

each worshiper takes both the bread and the cup (I Corinthians 10:16; 11:26-27). It should also be understood clearly that it would be sinful to add butter and jelly to the bread, even though God has not specifically prohibited it. It is false that everything that is not forbidden is permissible. In worship, nothing is right without divine authority to do it!

(2) *Giving* is required of "every one of you" upon "the first day of the week" (I Corinthians 16:1-2). Each is taught to give "according to his ability" (Acts 11:29-30), to do so cheerfully (II Corinthians 9:7), and "with liberality" (Romans 12:8, A.S.V.). The apostolic "order" (I Corinthians 16:1-2) for the Lord's day collection may imply that if the funds were not collected prior to his arrival, a special contribution would be necessary "when I come." This does not, however, authorize a collection at practically every service of the church. It orders Christians to give "upon the first day of EVERY week" --for Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon so translates the Greek. Weekly giving according as God has prospered each one is essential for the church to be identical with the one in the New Testament.

(3) *Preaching* or teaching God's word characterized the worship of the church on the first day of every week. From Pentecost on "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine . . ." (Acts 2:42). No church can be exactly like the one in the Bible unless its Lord's Day worship includes reading or otherwise studying the Bible. (More may be said later regarding the doctrines preached in denominational pulpits). Churches of Christ strive to "preach the WORD" (II Timothy 4:2) --without addition, subtraction, or crook! We are not merely "similar to," but are IDENTICAL WITH, the Bible church.

(4) *Praying*, now, characterizes our worship, just as it was part of the worship of the church Jesus built, which is described in the New Testament. This is not the time for a lengthy study of prayer, but we should note these five elements of acceptable prayer: (1) All our prayers should be addressed to God the Father (Matthew 6:9; Colossians 3:17). (2) We must pray through, or "in the name of" Jesus Christ (Colossians 3:17; John 16:23-24). (3) We must pray "in faith," or "believing" (James 1:6; Matthew 21:22). (4) We must pray "according to his will" (I John 5:14). And (5) we must pray in an obedient, submissive spirit (Matthew 26:39, 42; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42). We are identical with the New Testament church: therefore today we pray in worship exactly like they were taught to do in the first century.

(5) *Singing*. In worship the church in the first century sang "psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs" (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19). No New Testament congregation played instruments of music in addition to the singing. Therefore any church today which has mechanical instruments of music in its worship is not the Bible church. Churches of Christ today, as those in the first century, have a *cappella* singing in our worship. We are not just "similar to," but are exactly IDENTICAL WITH, the New Testament church -- in worship, as well as in date and place of origin, in autonomy and organization or government, and in names. No human denomination so measures up to the Bible church.

(More to follow).

Dr. Crichton's Bible Study Program

Dr. Crichton offers in his newspaper column some statements which are right and true. He quotes Gregory the Great as saying, "The Gospel of John is like a river, smooth and deep, a river of such a character that a lamb can wade in it and yet an elephant can swim in it." With the foregoing quotation we agree. Both elementary students and Doctors of Philosophy can read the Holy Bible with great profit (Isaiah 34:16-17; I Timothy 4:13).



W. A. HOLLEY

The good Doctor makes another statement that is true. He says, "... To learn the Bible we will have to pay the price. A believer can only gain a mature and profound knowledge of God's word by hard work, disciplined study, and sacrifice of some pleasures..." Dr. Crichton continues, "God has laid down in the Bible some basic requirements for learning and understanding the Bible. There are at least five," wrote Dr. Crichton. We shall consider these "requirements for Bible study" as set forth by the good Doctor. He is right in some of his requirements but terribly wrong in others, as we shall see.

(1) "The first was laid down by Jesus Christ: 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God'" (John 3:3). Well, now, was Nicodemus a saint, or a sinner, when Jesus told him that he must be born again to see the kingdom of God? Dr. Crichton, on this point, says: "Until a man is born again by the Spirit of God, he cannot understand Biblical truth. God's work makes sense, Jesus said, only to a person who has been born again." Then, according to Dr. Crichton, Nicodemus was already "born again" before Jesus told him to be "born again." Do such statements make sense? If one cannot understand the Bible before he is "born again by the Spirit of God," whose fault is it when one never receives this miraculous operation?? According to Dr. Crichton one who is a sinner cannot understand the word of God. Why, then, should the gospel be preached to sinners? (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Romans 1:16). Dr. Crichton thinks God, from the foundation of the world, elected some to be saved and some to be lost, and that nothing can be done to change the situation of either class. Were this true, preaching the gospel would be futile!

(2) Dr. Crichton's second requirement for learning and understanding the Bible is: "The personal teaching of the Holy Spirit." Dr. Crichton quotes I Corinthians 2:14 as proof of his contention; but the verse cited falls far short of support for him. The Bible no where teaches that man in his unregenerate state is incapable of understanding God's word without special illumination of the Holy Spirit. The verse cited was addressed to Christians (Acts 18:8; I Corinthians 1:1-2).

The context of I Corinthians 2:9-16 shows that the "natural man" stands opposite the "spiritual" man. The "natural man" is the uninspired man. The "spiritual" man is the inspired man whom God used to reveal and confirm his word (Acts 1:16; 2:1-4; II Timothy 3:15-17; II Peter 1:20-21; Mark 16:19-20; Hebrews 2:1-4).

Is not God *just*? If God never sends the Spirit to convert the sinner, whose fault would it be? Would God condemn a sinner for God's own failure? If God converts sinners miraculously, would they not all belong to the same church? Is God a bundle of con-

traditions? Why does God convert some to the Baptist church, some to the Methodist church, some to the Catholic church, and leave some never converted?? Let all sinners hear, believe and obey the gospel (Romans 1:16; Mark 16:15-16; Hebrews 5:8-9).

(3) "The third requirement was also laid down by Jesus Christ: 'If any man wants to do his will, he shall know the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.'" Yes, if one wants to know and understand God's word, one must be honest and sincere, work and study, seeking teachers who can impart knowledge to the unlearned. But since the first century A.D. a miraculous impartation of divine truth never occurs! Is God a repeater of persons, giving light to some but not to others (Acts 10:34-35)? Jesus teaches that one can know the truth (John 8:30-32); but one must study in order to know truth (II Timothy 2:15). Truly, if one wants to learn mathematics, history, and science, one cannot expect to find an easy way to pour such knowledge into one's head; rather, hard work and determination are required. Even so it is with gaining a working knowledge of the word of God.

(4) Dr. Crichton quotes I Peter 2:1-2, which says, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." Certainly, we believe all that this passage teaches; but the responsibility for Christian growth is upon the individual-- not upon

God! It is the individual who must "desire the sincere milk of the word." What if the individual does not want to grow in Biblical knowledge? will God force knowledge upon him anyway? For shame!

The verses quoted in the foregoing paragraph were addressed to people who were already Christians (I Peter 1:1-3; 3:21). Of course, Christians must lay aside their sins, and feast continually upon God's word; but where does the Bible teach that God through his Spirit directly -- separate and apart from the word of God-- imparts any knowledge or understanding to either saint or sinner? Book, chapter, and verse, please!

(5) "The fifth requirement for learning and knowing the Bible is given us in I Peter 1:13: 'Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind. . .'" This verse is addressed to Christians. They are to "gird up the loins of your mind" --not that God will do it for them!

Is it possible for one to understand the Bible? Yes, of course. Ephesians 3:4 says, "... Whereby when ye read, ye may understand. . ." Ephesians 5:17 says, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding that the will of the Lord is." Does God require the impossible? Do not allow Calvinism to blind you. The honest reader can learn that God requires faith, repentance, confession, and baptism in order to be saved from sin (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:36-38; Romans 6:3-4).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

A Great Winner

I watched with millions of other Americans as the United States' teams won one Olympic Gold Medal after another in Los Angeles. It was a thrilling event to behold our teams defeating the best athletes in the world. The most thrilling sight was our teams excelling against stronger and more experienced men and women. Pride for my country swelled within me as crowds triumphantly waved the flag and chanted, "U.S.A." It was truly an exciting time for our country. Had our teams lost, the patriotism would not have been generated. Our country loves a winner. We seem to "idolize" those whom we believe to be winners; we want to be like them and near them. Regardless of the crown to be won, victory is important to us.

Focus your attention on one of the great winners we read of in the holy scriptures. God had delivered his people out of the land of bondage and guided them to the doors of the land that flowed with milk and honey. Twelve men were appointed at God's instruction to "search" the land (Numbers 13:2). Surely God knew they would find the giants in the land; but had he not already promised them the land? Didn't he want them to see the great victory he had secured for them?

Ten of the twelve spies saw the giants there as obstacles. Two of them saw the prosperous land with no formidable obstacles -- because God was on their side. They knew the giants were there, but they also realized that God plus one is a majority!

Caleb was one of these men. He realized the victory was theirs. He was a true winner.

As we set examples before our children, we need to realize what makes a man a winner and *truly*



DALE JENKINS

successful. Caleb was a winner, but what did he win? First, Caleb won the land of promise. This was the same land that had been promised to his forefathers; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Genesis 12:7; 26:2-3; Exodus 6:3-4). Caleb also won a specific place in the land of promise (Joshua 14:13-14). He received this land because "... he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel." He was not willing to live on the plane with average men; he rose above the crowd. Next, we see that Caleb gained a land that many failed to gain (I Corinthians 10:8-10). Had he followed the crowd, he would have died in the wilderness like the crowd. Caleb trusted God, obeyed God, endured, and finally crossed over to the land of promise. Ultimately, Caleb's winning attitude gained a place in God's book of heroes.

As important as it is for us to be liked, accepted, it is more important to be pleasing to God. Who remembers the ten spies? Who cares to know the names of those losers so they may fashion their lives after them? Yet at the time of their report they were the ones in the limelight. The *crowd* listened to them! They were much more popular than the two who wanted to face the giants.

Why was Caleb such a winner? If we can answer this, maybe we can find the secret to success, and follow him. Be cheerful, be obedient, be optimistic and be a winner. Why did Caleb win? It was not mere chance or by accident. The scriptures tell us it was because "he hath another spirit" (Numbers 14:24). He was different.

If we will rise above the crowd and be different surely we shall obtain the land of promise that God has promised us. God will bless us. . . and after all, isn't that all that really matters?

—Rt. 1 Box 10, Eva, AL 35621.

train up a child in
the way he should go:
and when he is old, he
will not depart from it.
Proverbs 22:6

What About Euphemisms?

The Bible definitively teaches us that we are not to take the name of the Lord in vain. The third commandment in the Decalogue says, "Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." It always has been and it always will be a sin to take the name of the Lord God in vain (Exodus 20:7). The apostle Paul said, "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear" (Ephesians 4:29). Truly the man that does not bridle his tongue has a vain religion (James 1:26). The word vain means to use a word in flippant fashion; empty; to degrade; useless.

A euphemism is the use of a word or phrase that is



GEORGE REED

less expressive or direct, and is considered less distasteful, less offensive than another. It is sometimes using a good word for one that is bad. The expression "Son-of-a-gun" is an interjection, a word thrown in without any grammatical connection. Such is the case when men "cuss." The phrase itself does not make sense; but yet it is assumed we know what is meant.

There is nothing wrong, per se, with "God forbid," "heaven," "hell," "God," "Jesus," the "Holy Spirit," and any other word that is holy, if it is used the right way. But it is transgressing the law of God to use them as slang.

All need to know and study the following euphemisms: "Gee Whiz:" "Gee" is an interjection, the first syllable of the name Jesus; "Whiz" is a corker, or a clever person. The words "Gee Whiz" are an oath in which *Jesus*, and something extraordinary or unusual are joined.

"Gosh:" The dictionary says this is an exclamation of surprise; a euphemism for God. One dictionary says: "a softened form of *God*, used as a mild oath."

"Gad" is a mild oath or expression of surprise, disgust; a euphemism for God. It is the

same with "egad."

"Golly:" The meaning of golly is same as above. "Good gracious!" "Good Grief!" "My Goodness!" Webster says all of these, plus "Goodness sake!" "Goodness knows!" "Thank goodness!" all are interjections, and are used as euphemisms for "*God*."

"Heavens!" "Good Heavens!" "For Heaven's Sake!" These are all interjections for "*God*." Guy N. Woods says these statements are of "exclamatory character, in which the heavens are called to witness to the truth of the statement made, or to support the affirmation."

Other euphemisms that are commonly used are "darn" and "dickens." "Darn" means *damn*; and "dickens" is a euphemism for *Devil*. These are all words that we should not carelessly use.

God demands our speech be pure (Ephesians 4:25), seasoned (Colossians 4:6), and sound (Titus 2:8). Let us all remember that God "will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Exodus 20:7).

—17691 Pesante Rd., Salinas, CA 93907.

Preaching With Enthusiasm

In the public preaching of every minister of the gospel there is absolutely no substitute for the attribute of *enthusiasm*. A gospel preacher may possess every feasible quality necessary to preaching, but if he is deficient in *enthusiasm* his proclamation of the Word will undoubtedly lose some of its effectiveness.

That *enthusiasm* is necessary to the moving of an audience is emphasized in Batsell Barrett Baxter's book *The Heart of the Yale Lectures*. In this book brother Baxter has sifted through the Lyman Beecher Lectures on preaching to discover what they had to say about certain aspects of preaching -- particularly the preacher himself and the qualities he should possess, the sermon as regards style and delivery, and the right approach to the technique of preaching. *Enthusiasm* is stressed throughout the book with special emphasis on the subject in a special section.

Several prominent speakers in the lecture series gave specific attention to enthusiasm. Charles Reynolds Brown stated: "If any man would preach, he must have that spiritual susceptibility which at the very sight of a waiting congregation, causes him to kindle and burn like a steel wire ignited in pure oxygen." Charles Silvester Horne put it this way: "But the one supreme qualification for the ministry is a soul of flame." George Wharton Pepper considered enthusiasm an important element, for he said, "If the preacher is blessed with enthusiasm, it quickly communicates itself to the people in the pews. Vigor and virility are sure passports to close attention."

Putting enthusiasm into the sermon is like sending measles into a school room -- it's catching! Enthusiasm is warm, appealing and contagious. Ronald L. Willingham stated in *How To Speak So People Will Listen*: "Enthusiasm always gets its point across and finds listeners."



JIMMY EDWARDS

"There are three things to aim at in public speaking," said Alexander Gregg. "First to get into your subject, then to get your subject into yourself, and lastly, to get your subject into your hearers." All three of these ideas can be accomplished by being enthusiastic!

Henry Ward Beecher, in one of the earliest Lyman Beecher lectures, made clear the power of enthusiasm on an audience:

In almost all communities enthusiasm stands before everything else in moving popular assemblies. A preacher who is enthusiastic in everything he does, in all that he believes, and in all the movements of his ministry, will generally carry the people with him. He may do this without enthusiasm, but it will be much more laborious. If you have the power of speech and the skill of presenting the truth, and are enthusiastic, the people will become enthusiastic. People will take your views, because your enthusiasm has inoculated them.

The gospel preacher must be serious about enthusiasm. Why should he expect members of the congregation for which he preaches to be full of zeal and excitement if he himself lacks these traits?

William M. Taylor asked, "If we be ourselves uninterested, how can we expect to interest others? If we be ourselves insincere, how can we hope to bring others to the faith? If we be ourselves cold, passionless, and dull, how can we expect to rouse others to enthusiasm?"

The great preachers are usually successful because of their enthusiasm. Many in the Old Testament, Noah, Moses, Joshua, Nehemiah, and especially the prophets, were effective men because they had a great excitement and passion. The success of several New Testament preachers, including Jesus, Peter, and Paul, was a result of their eagerness, ardor and zeal. The brotherhood has recently lost two great preachers who had successful ministries because of their enthusiasm -- Batsell Barrett Baxter and Ira North. The church continues to be blessed today by gospel preachers who are characterized by this same enthusiasm.

Character, sincerity, courage, imagination and knowledge-- these are all important qualities. Every preacher of the gospel should strive to possess them. Too, he must not overlook enthusiasm. Enthusiasm will give the preacher a glow, a warmth and a freshness. Enthusiasm will help a preacher deliver his most compelling messages!

—512 Gardendale Drive, Montgomery, AL 36110.

"Washed In His Blood?"

DOUGLASS SIMS

Have you ever stopped to consider that every person in the final judgment will either be justified by the blood of Jesus, or condemned by it? It matters not how hideous our sins, nor the number of them; the blood of Jesus is all that matters to anyone. The wicked hands that nailed him to the cross provided the means of their own salvation.

In Matthew's account of the crucifixion, they said, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:25). Surely his blood was on their hands! But no less is it on ours if we are not obedient to his will today. It was sin that nailed Jesus to the cross, including *our* sin. Since "all have sinned" (Romans 3:23), and "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), and since Jesus died to pay for our sins, we are the reason

he was crucified. His blood is upon us! Every person who has sinned will stand in judgment guilty of the blood of Jesus, *except* those who have been "washed in that blood" (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14).

Thus we see the paradox: Everyone in judgment who is still in sin will be *condemned* by the blood of God's Son. Those who have appropriated the blood of Jesus by obeying God will be *justified* by that same blood. The simple question is, "Will you stand in judgment *washed in his blood?* or, with his blood on your hands?—330 East Ave., Cedartown, GA 30125.

Editor's note: His blood was shed in his Death (John 19:31-34); and man must be "baptized INTO his death" (Romans 6:3-4).



(USPS 691-760)

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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Two Edges And A Handle

In Ephesians 6:17 Paul writes, "And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." Here Paul compares the word of God to a sword. A very similar comparison is found in Hebrews 4:12. We can define a sword as a weapon of iron or bronze with two edges and a handle. What then, to a Christian, may the two edges and the handle represent on God's spiritual sword? I have concluded that one of the edges may be knowledge.



Rolland A. Rutkowski
Knowledge is the "sum total" of all that one knows; and the spiritual edge of knowledge is the sum total of all that he knows of God and his word. Peter lists several things that we are to add to our faith, one of which is knowledge (II Peter 1:5-7). Faith alone is not enough; we should know why we believe. Knowledge is so important to the Christian life that Paul instructs young Timothy "to study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). The more we study, the more knowledge we will have about God's wonderful word. But all knowledge must be based on truth. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). The truth shall make you free -- free from sin, false teachers, and false doctrines. We as God's children should know God's word so well that it becomes a part of our everyday life. Colossians 3:16 states in part, "Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you in all wisdom." Again we read, "But grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18). One of the main responsibilities of the Christian is to lead others to Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). If we do not know the

truth found in God's word, how can we lead others to that truth?

If knowledge is represented by one edge of God's spiritual sword, then it stands to reason that *wisdom* may be signified by other edge of the sword. Wisdom may be defined as the proper or correct use of knowledge. Spiritual wisdom comes from God, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally" (James 1:5). If we make a sincere effort to study and learn God's word, God will give us the wisdom we need to use his word correctly. Knowledge and wisdom go hand in hand! "And from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation which is in Christ Jesus" (II Timothy 3:15). This same idea is taught in Colossians 1:9 where Paul tells the church at Colosse that he prayed and desired that they might be filled with the *knowledge* of his will in all *wisdom* and *spiritual understanding*. Wisdom and proper use of God's word will save souls. The gospel of Christ is God's *power* to save (Romans 1:16).

We as Christians need to have wisdom to correctly use that power of God which is the gospel to save the souls of those we love. We can know the gospel from Matthew through Revelation, but what good is it if we do not have the wisdom to use that knowledge? "Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel? or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?" (Mark 4:21).

So now we have considered the edges of God's spiritual sword; to what may the handle of this sword be compared? There could be several good possibilities such as bold-

ness, zeal, steadfastness. But I believe the handle to God's spiritual sword best represents prayer. Why prayer? Because of the great power prayer gives us today. During the first century the early church had various gifts of the Holy Spirit; but today we have the power of prayer. Jesus, himself, tells us on several occasions just how powerful a Christian's prayer is:

"All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22).

"Therefore, I say unto you what things so ever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24).

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13).

Jesus also taught that men ought to always pray (Luke 18:1). Paul taught us to (I Thesalonians 5:17) "pray without ceasing."

A meaningful and active prayer life is absolutely essential for Christian growth. There is no problem that faces the church, nor the individual Christian, today which can not be solved properly if prayer is a part of the solution.

If we have a meaningful, active, prayer life with God through Christ, we will have the desire to know God's word and how to wisely use his word. Therefore, let us pick up the "handle" of prayer, and firmly wield the edge of knowledge and the edge of wisdom so we can be fit for the service of Christ in his church.

—1731 54th Court East Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

A Question Answered

Question: In the light of I Corinthians 11:22, is it right to eat in the church house?

Answer: This passage says: "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say unto you? shall

I praise you in this? I praise you not." If (?) this verse forbids eating in the meeting-house, it also forbids getting a drink of water

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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 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS . . . Editor
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A Question Answered

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in the meeting-house.

But I do not believe the "meeting-house" is the "church." In this chapter the word "church" refers to the ASSEMBLY for worship. The Corinthians had turned the Lord's Supper into a common meal, and Paul put a stop to that. I have never heard of another case where this was done -- from that day to this! None now ever "eat" in the "church" -- the worship.

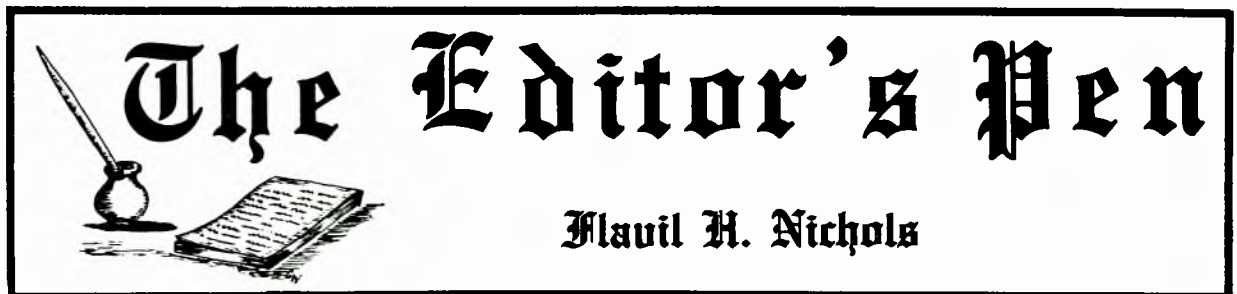
In verse 34 the apostle said, "If any man hunger, let him eat AT HOME." Paul used the expression "at home" not meaning one's own residence, but meaning apart from the worship, or, not in the service. To insist that the words should be literally interpreted, would mean that one cannot go to a restaurant, nor to a picnic at the park, nor to his mother's house -- each would have to go to his OWN home!

The same expression ("at home") is used in I Corinthians 14:35 to tell the women to ask their husbands "at home." Here also the term means: apart from the worship; not in the service. No one thinks it is wrong for a woman to ask her husband after the dismissal, even in the meeting-house! Certainly none insist that she must wait till they get inside their own residence.

"At home" means the same thing with reference to the eating: we must not eat (a common meal --nor get a drink of water!) --in the worship --a thing which I have not heard of since Paul wrote this!

The Bible regulates what is to be done IN WORSHIP. But since the New Testament does not even mention a "church house," it certainly does not regulate what is to be put into one. Practically all agree that the building where we worship may contain a coat room, a baptizing room, dressing rooms, rest rooms, a preacher's study room, a typing or printing room, storage area for the communion supplies, class rooms, a furnace room, a closet for janitorial supplies, storage rooms for teaching supplies and equipment, a conference room for various meetings of elders, deacons, teachers, et al, --yet some object if there is also a room for eating a meal with other Christians and friends! Shall we remove the drinking fountain also?

--The Editor.



Flavil H. Nichols

Can Identify The Church By Its Terms Of Entrance

All who are members of the Lord's church were added to it by the Lord, for we read: "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Note from this verse that no one "joined" the church: the Lord "added" people to it. Notice also that the very day one became "such as should be saved," the Lord added him to the church; therefore all who are saved are members of the church. This should underscore how important church membership really is. If one is not a member of the church, it is because he has not become "such as should be saved!"

We have previously seen that the *church* and the *kingdom* are the same institution. Considered from the viewpoint of its separation from the world, it is the "called out" --which is what the Greek word EKKLESSIA ("church") means; but viewed from the consideration of how this body of people is governed, it is a "kingdom," with Christ as our king. All who have been "delivered out of the power of darkness" --which is the same thing as saying: "all who have been saved" --have been "translated into the kingdom" of Christ (Colossians 1:13-14), which is his church. If one is not in the "kingdom" [or church], it is because he is still in the "power of darkness," or is still lost.

All members of the Lord's church became members upon the SAME TERMS. Each one simply (1) believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, (2) repented of past sins, (3) confessed his faith in Christ, and (4) was baptized in Christ's name, for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47). These are the only ones whom "the Lord added to the church."

Whom The Lord Does Not Add

Christ adds no *unbelievers* to his church. One must believe to be saved, for Jesus said, "He that BELIEVETH and is baptized shall be saved. But he that BELIEVETH NOT shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). And Jesus adds to his church only those who "should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Therefore he adds no unbelievers -- only believers -- to his church.

Jesus does not add to his church any who are *impenitent*. He himself said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). In order to escape "perishing," or to receive from Christ the remission of their sins, the people on Pentecost were directed to "REPENT and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins . . ." (Acts 2:38). Since one cannot be saved without repentance, and since Jesus adds to the church only "such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47), he does not add to his

church any who are impenitent.

Christ adds no "timid" or "cowardly" *believers* to his church. The apostle Paul wrote: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, . . . thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9-10). Jesus adds to the church only such as "should be saved;" but one cannot be saved without confessing Christ. Hence Jesus does not add to the church any one who is ashamed to confess him, as were some in John 12:42-43.

Our Lord adds to his church no *unbaptized* person. Jesus said, "He that believeth AND IS BAPTIZED shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). But he adds to his church only those who should be saved. Therefore he adds no un-baptized person to his church. This is seen again from Jesus' declaration to Nicodemus: "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" (John 3:5).

This is the very reason the apostle Paul could write: "For by one spirit" [meaning, By the instruction or direction of the one Holy Spirit; compare verse 3] "are we all baptized into one body" (I Corinthians 12:13). The body of Christ is the church (Ephesians 1:22-23). But only those baptized are in the body, which is his church.

All The Saved In The Lord's Church

All who are reconciled unto God are in the Lord's church, for he died so that he "might reconcile both" [Jews and Gentiles] "unto God in one body, by the cross" (Ephesians 2:14-16). But that "body" in which this "reconciliation" takes place is the "church" (Ephesians 1:22-23). Therefore the Lord does not add to his church any who have not been reconciled to God. Neither is anyone reconciled to God outside the church.

Christ is the "savior of the BODY" (Ephesians 5:23). He is not the "savior" of those outside the body -- and no other one can save them!

Since the Lord adds to the church daily "such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47), if one outside the church is saved, he must have been saved (?) when he should NOT have been!!!

Same Church Now, Same Terms Now

Since neither man nor angel (Galatians 1:6-10) has any authority to change the gospel of Christ, nor to preach any other gospel than that preached by the apostles, we have the same church now which they had back then. And this church now can be identified in the world because it has the same terms of entrance as the terms set forth by Jesus Christ through his apostles in the first century.

Any church now which requires *less* than this, or *more* than this, for people to be members of it, cannot be the Lord's church. Christ has never changed the terms of membership. He still adds to his church "such as should be saved." He adds none others to it. And he adds to it *all* who "should be

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“Neither Give Place To The Devil”

One should never allow Satan to take control of one's life. Satan has a carefully - thought-out plan or program for your life. "The Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8). But you can "resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

"The wiles of the Devil," refer to his cunning, crafty, deceitful ways (Ephesians 6:11). If we are not careful, we will fall into "the condemnation" that the Devil himself fell into (I Timothy 3:6). In Revelation 12:9 the Devil is called. . . "The old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. . ."

No one is exempt from Satan's onslaughts, not even the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 4:1-11). If Satan would attack the spotless Son of God, you can be certain that he will attack you. The Devil is a thief (Luke 8:12), a liar and a murderer (John 8:44).

What are some of the factors that allow Satan to gain victory over the unsuspecting? We shall note:

(1) *Those who adopt wrong and sinful attitudes give Satan all the advantage.* Someone has said, "Attitudes determine altitudes." In a sinful heart resides evil thoughts, murder, adultery, theft, false witness, and blasphemy (see Matthew 15:19-20). One is as he thinks in his heart (Proverbs 23:7). The wise man stated, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). A disgruntled, sour, pessimistic, super-critical heart can accomplish very little good. "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34).

(2) *One who permits his/her temper to become violent and explosive allows Satan to live in the heart.* Can one control his temper? Of course he can! It is just a matter of *wanting* to control it! Listen to Paul: "Be ye angry, and sin not; Let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the Devil" (Ephesians 4:26-27). Any angry mind is the Devil's workshop! Never give the Devil a place to reside in your heart! Do you fret, frown, and become frustrated at the least little incident? If yes, then it is time to take corrective measures. Get hold of yourself before your temper brings great harm to those whom you love most. It is said: "Anger is an acid that will do more damage to the vessel in which it is stored, than to anything on which it is poured."

Can Identify The Church By Its Terms Of Entrance

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saved." Therefore the church of Christ consists of that body of baptized penitent believers, over which Christ himself rules as head, and in which the Holy Spirit dwells. Outside of it no accountable man or woman is promised salvation. It is *identical* today with the church in the New Testament!
(More to follow).



W. A. HOLLEY

"When one gives someone a piece of his mind, he loses a piece of his mind." "One cannot weather the storm by storming at the weather." "One cannot get things across by getting cross." Dear Reader, please take time right now to read these passage: Ecclesiastes 7:9; Proverbs 16:32; 25:28; Luke 21:9).

(3) *The misuse of the tongue gives the Devil the position of power in one's life.* The tongue is good or bad depending upon how it is used. "In the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise" (Proverbs 10:19) Again: "Whoso keepeth his mouth and tongue keepeth his soul from trouble" (Proverbs 21:23). Jesus Christ taught that we must account to God for each idle word we speak, and that we shall be justified or condemned by our speech (Matthew 12:36-37).

Listen to James: "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3:5-6). Yes, the tongue "is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison."

Gossip, slander, lying, profanity, and sharp cutting words should never be spoken. "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (Psalms 141:3). "I will lay my hand upon my mouth" (Job 40:4). There is "a time to speak and a time to be silent" (Ecclesiastes 3:7). "I will take heed to my ways," wrote the Psalmist, "that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me" (Psalms 39:1). "I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress" (Psalms 17:3). And one more time: "Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin" (Ecclesiastes 5:6).

Medical doctors know that the tongue gives some indication of the condition or state of

physical health; even so does the tongue reveal much about one's spiritual health (I Corinthians 11:30). James cautioned that one's religion is vain unless he is able to bridle his tongue (James 1:26). Oftentimes, one can be more highly regarded by simply remaining silent (Proverbs 17:28). Wise men try to salt their speech with wisdom (Colossians 4:6).

(4) *Those who love the world give the Devil a great advantage in their lives.* (I John 2:15-17). Jesus teaches that the child of God must put the kingdom first in his life (Matthew 6:33). The Christ takes second place to none! The Rich Farmer thought more of his earthly possessions than of heavenly wealth (Luke 12:13-21). Those who gain the world but lose their souls will have lost everything (Matthew 16:26).

Drinking, gambling, cursing and swearing, fussing and fighting, living in adultery and fornication, strife and division, are some of the worldly acts that serve Satan's cause well.

(5) *Those who procrastinate always give Satan the upper hand.* "Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Proverbs 27:1). The longer one remains in sin, the more difficult it is to break its shackles. We shall offer an example of what sin does in the lives of people: Felix and Drusilla. These two were living in adultery when they heard Paul deliver a powerful gospel sermon. Paul's sermon outline was: "Righteousness, self-control, and the Judgment to come" (Acts 24:25). But Felix demurred, saying, "Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me." That "convenient season" never came as far as we know. Do not delay; obey today! Tomorrow may never come!— P. O. Box 274, Parrish, Al. 35580.

It is Easier To Bark Than Pull

It is so much easier to criticize and complain than it is to put our shoulders to the wheel and push. We usually assume that the complaining is done by those who have not been in the church very long; but, too often, the greater problem comes from those who have been around a long time.

I am reminded of the farmer who had a dog that would chase rabbits, tree squirrels, and bring up the milk cows. But in his later years he got where all he would do was chase cars. Then he got so cantankerous that all he would do was lie down in the road and dare the cars to run over him. Naturally, people would stop, blow the horn, and plead with the dog to move. The old dog didn't move unless pleaded with — until one day a man came through, determined that the dog was not going to stop him this time. He sounded the warning, blowing the horn, and went roaring through. The dog barely escaped with his life. When the



EDSEL BURLESON

old dog found out that he could not stop the progress of a car, he got out of the way without any hesitation.

There has to be care taken continually to avoid any activity that would violate scriptural instruction. At the same time, care be taken not to confuse the petty preferences and opinions of someone with that which is authorized by the Lord. When one's complaints are triggered by his selfishness, continual hindrance will be experienced by the church.

One great tragedy characteristic of the complainer: he, usually, is not productive of any good work. In fact, he often complains just to get out of work.

A lad was given the chore of mowing the lawn. He was using an old push mower and decided it would lighten his load considerably if he would tie his big dog to the mower and have him pull as he pushed. Soon, a passer-by strolled along. The dog stopped and began to bark. The boy said, "Don't mind the dog, Mister, he's just barking to keep from pulling."

Jesus warned us: "First cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matthew 7:5).

If it is painful to criticize, most likely the criticism will be constructive. But, if you take pleasure in it, that's the time to hold your tongue.— West End Church of Christ, 420-7th St. S. W., Birmingham, Al. 35211.

A Question Answered

Question: How long has the church been called the CHURCH OF CHRIST?
Answer: Well, it was called that almost two thousand years ago, in Romans 16:16! And Jesus Christ called it "my church" (Matthew 16:18). However, when I was a boy the name on many of our meeting-places said: "Christian Church." Back

then many were coming out of denominationalism, and were discovering truth that had not been taught very widely. As they learned that the name "Christian" is (in the Bible) always applied to the individual, never to the congregation, they ceased to use that term as a name for the church (in its collective sense). No-

where in the Bible do we read of the "Christian church." Instead we read: "The DISCIPLES" -individuals- "were called Christians . . ." (Acts 11:26). Congregations were called "churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16).
 -The Editor.



E.L. Whitaker Ira Y. Rice, Jr. Noel Meredith James Bobbitt Paul Cates Richard Curry Irene Taylor Bobby Gayton Bud Bayless Thomas Warren Nicholas Deiger
 Bobby Wood Buster Dobbs Paul Sain Ed White Terry Joe Kee Clifford Lyons Leon C. Jones J. Westmoreland Pat McGee Earnest Underwood Dub McClish

NINETEENTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

MARCH 31-APRIL 4, 1985

Memphis School of Preaching

4400 Knight Arnold Road

Memphis, TN 38118

THEME: "Challenges Of First Century Christianity"

Acts 9, 12-28



Bobby Duncan



Sidney White



James Dearman



William Cline



Wayne Coats



Clifford Rumley



Dan Goddard

Sunday, March 31, 1985
 9:30-10:20 a.m. Nicholas Deiger "A Good Conscience"
 10:30-11:30 a.m. E.L. Whitaker "The Conversion of Saul the Persecutor (Acts 9, 22, 26)"
 6:00-7:00 p.m. Thomas Warren "One Can Know Absolutely that God Exists (Acts 17:24)"
 Monday, April 1, 1985
 9:00-9:50 a.m. Roy J. Hearn "Peter in Lydda and Joppa; Tabitha Raised; Question of Seal-Sleeping (Acts 9:31-43)"
 10:00-10:30 a.m. Thomas Warren "Crucial Questions--and Bible Answers--on Current Issues"
 10:30-10:50 a.m. Bobby Gayton "Current Issues: What About Councils, Summits, Missionary Societies? (Acts 15)"
 10:00-10:50 a.m. Mrs. Irene Taylor "Principles for Christian Womanhood as Seen in the Book of Acts (Ladies Class)"
 11:00-11:50 a.m. Bud Bayless "The Church in Jerusalem Again Persecuted; Herald Eaten of Worms; Give God the Glory (Acts 12:1-24)"
 11:00-11:50 a.m. Classes
 Richard Curry: Class 1-Elders "An Elder Speaks to Elders: Meeting Challenges of Current Issues"
 Paul Cates: Class 2-Meeting Personal Needs "Pre-Marital Counseling"
 James Bobbitt: Class 3-Preachers and Preaching "The Preacher and His Finances"
 Paul Sain: Class 4-The Bible School "Meeting the Challenges and Needs of Early Childhood"
 INTERMISSION FOR LUNCH
 11:50-1:00 p.m. Noel Meredith "Acts on the Way--Does the Bible Command Christians to Fast? (Acts 13:3)"
 1:00-2:00 p.m. Ira Rice "Paul's First Missionary Journey--Asia Minor Hears the Gospel (Acts 12:25-14:28)"
 2:30-3:00 p.m. Gary Shaver "Controversy Regarding Circumcision--To Which Law Are All People Amenable Today? (Acts 15:1-35)"
 4:10-4:40 p.m. Dan Goddard "Why I Left the Conservative (?) Christian Church"
 CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
 Garland Elkins "The Power of the Word Versus The Impotent Creeds of Men"

Tuesday, April 2, 1985
 9:00-9:50 a.m. Donald F. Rhodes "Paul's Second Journey - Strengthening the Church (Acts 15:36 - 16:5)"
 10:00-10:30 a.m. Thomas Warren "Crucial Questions--and Bible Answers--on Current Issues"
 10:30-10:50 a.m. Roger Jackson "Current Issues: Is Profitable Preaching Negative, Positive, or Balanced? (Acts 20:20)"
 10:00-10:50 a.m. Mrs. Irene Taylor "Principles of Christian Womanhood as Seen in the Book of Acts (Ladies Class)"
 11:00-11:50 a.m. Clifford Rumley "The Conversion of Lydia-- Does the Lord Open Hearts Directly or Through the Word? (Acts 16:6-15)"
 11:00-11:50 a.m. Classes
 E.L. Whitaker: Class 1 - Elders "Meeting the Challenge of the Family Concept/People Center Leadership"
 Paul Cates: Class 2 - Meeting Personal Needs "Helping the Alcoholic"
 Keith Mosher: Class 3 - Preachers and Preaching "How to Reach the Delinquent Child of God"
 Bobby Wood: Class 4 - The Bible School "Meeting the Challenges and Needs of Adolescents"
 INTERMISSION FOR LUNCH
 11:50-1:30 p.m. Ken Butterworth "Acts on the Way-- Demonology and Astrology"
 1:00-2:00 p.m. Wayne Coats "The Conversion of the Jailor--Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and Thou Shall Be Saved; Defined (Acts 16:16-40)"
 2:30-3:00 p.m. H.A. (Buster) Dobbs "The Gospel Goes to Thessalonica and Berea-- A Preacher Can Reason Out of the Scriptures While Demonstrating the Spirit of Love (Acts 17:1-15; Eph. 4:15)"



Garland Elkins

4:30-4:30 p.m. Dan Goddard "Is the Conservative Christian Church Really Conservative?"
 4:30-7:00 p.m. INTERMISSION FOR DINNER (Annual Alumni Dinner)
 7:00-7:30 p.m. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
 Andrew Connally "Persecutors of the Faith" (Acts 13:10)"
 Wednesday, April 3, 1985
 9:00-9:50 a.m. William S. Cline "Paul in Athens-- Truth Versus Human Philosophy (Acts 17:16-34)"
 10:00-10:30 a.m. Thomas Warren "Crucial Questions--and Bible Answers--on Current Issues"
 10:30-10:50 a.m. Leon Cole "Current Issues: The Major Emphasis--Should It Be On Unity or on Adherence to Scripture?"
 10:00-10:50 a.m. Mrs. Irene Taylor "Principles for Christian Womanhood as Seen in the Book of Acts (Ladies Class)"
 11:00-11:50 a.m. Olu Shabazz "The Gospel Goes to Corinth. Paul before Gallio, His View and Return to Antioch--Christ Sent Me Not to Baptize (Acts 18:1-22; 1 Cor. 1:17)"
 Classes
 Jim Dearman: Class 1 - Elders "Building the Local Church, or From Glory unto Glory"
 Wayne Coats: Class 2 - Meeting Personal Needs "On Death and Dying"
 Charlie Boddy: Class 3 - Preachers and Preaching "Building Spirituality in the Local Church"
 Paul Sain: Class 4 - The Bible School "Meeting the Challenges and Needs of Teenagers and College Age"
 11:50-1:30 p.m. INTERMISSION FOR LUNCH
 1:00-2:00 p.m. Sidney White "Acts on the Way--Question of Waiting for a Convivial Season (Acts 23:34 - 24:27)"
 2:30-3:00 p.m. Rex A. Turner, Jr. "Paul Mobbled, Rescued--Speaks from Caxile of Antiochia. Before the Sanhedrin. Sent to Caesarea--Races Crisis (Acts 21:27-33)"
 3:30-4:00 p.m. John Priola "Gods that Are No Gods (Acts 19:21-41)"
 4:10-4:40 p.m. Dub McClish "Is Fellowshiping the 'Conservative Christian Church' (Sec.) Scriptural?"
 7:00-7:30 p.m. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
 Bobby Duncan "Judging Yourself Unworthy of Everlasting Life (Acts 13:46)"

Thursday, April 4, 1985
 9:00-9:50 a.m. Ernest Underwood "The Breaking of Bread--What, How, When, Where, Why? (Acts 20:1-16)"
 10:00-10:30 a.m. Thomas Warren "Crucial Questions--and Bible Answers--on Current Issues"
 10:30-10:50 a.m. Bobby Duncan "Problem Passage: Paul and the Jewish 'No--Did Paul Sin? (Acts 21:17-26)"
 10:00-10:50 a.m. Mrs. Irene Taylor "Principles for Christian Womanhood as Seen in the Book of Acts (Ladies Class)"
 11:00-11:50 a.m. Pat McGee "Wherefore Watch Ye (Acts 20:17-38); 'What Do Ye Weep and Breaking My Heart? (Acts 21:1-16)"
 Classes
 Curtis A. Cates: Class 1 - Elders "The Dynamic of Decision-Making"
 John Renshaw: Class 2 - Meeting Personal Needs "Coping With the Death of a Child, a Parent, a Spouse"
 Jerry Westmoreland: Class 3 - Preachers and Preaching "Building an Effective Visitation Program in the Local Church"
 Leon Jones: Class 4 - The Bible School "Meeting the Challenges and Needs of Younger, Middle-Aged, and Older Adults"
 11:50-1:30 p.m. INTERMISSION FOR LUNCH
 1:00-2:00 p.m. Clifford Lyons "Acts on the Way--Urgency of Being Altogether Persuaded Versus the Folly of Being Almost Persuaded (Acts 25:1-26:32)"
 2:30-3:00 p.m. Max R. Miller "Paul's Third Journey, Apollon in Ephesus and Arhata, Paul in Ephesus. All Asia Hears the Word-- Role of the Schools of Preaching (Acts 18:23-19:20)"
 3:30-4:00 p.m. Terry Joe Kee "Paul's Voyage to Rome, Shipwreck, Melina, Arrival in Rome, Prison (Acts 27:1-28:31)"
 4:10-4:40 p.m. Ed White "Church of Christ Is Not a Sectarian Designation"
 7:00-7:30 p.m. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
 7:30-8:30 p.m. Robert Taylor "For Souls to be Saved the Saving Message Must be Preached"



Rex A. Turner, Jr.



Charlie Boddy



Olu Shabazz



Andrew Connally



Ken Butterworth



Donald F. Rhodes



Dan Goddard Gary Shaver Roger Jackson Curtis A. Cates Max R. Miller R.J. Hearn Keith A. Mosher R.R. Taylor, Jr. Leon C. Cole J.H. Renshaw John G. Priola



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Words Of h

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

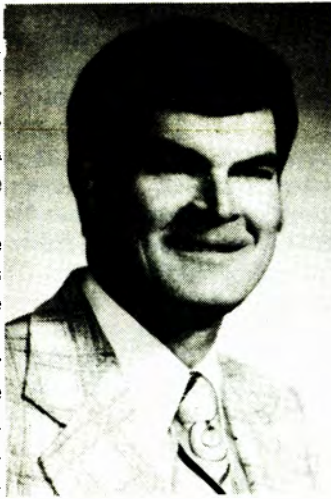
FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 1985

NUMBER

The State Of The Righteous Dead

I. INTRODUCTION

For several years I had heard that brother Gus Nichols believed the Christian goes to heaven at the death of the body. I never knew the reasoning behind this belief although I have been interested. I have respected brother Nichols and appreciate the great work he did through the years in upholding truth and defending the gospel. I have several books and debates by brother Nichols and cherish each one. If brother Nichols held a position, it would be worth my time to investigate and study it.



RAY HAWK

Recently, through a friend, I gained access to a sermon by F. G. Allen entitled, "The State of the Righteous Dead." Brother Allen gives several arguments showing why the righteous go directly to heaven at death. I would like to share with the readers of *The Words of Truth* brother Allen's sermon.

All admit the existence of hades with its two abodes, Tartarus (torments) and "Abraham's bosom," or paradise (Luke 16:19-31; II Peter 2:4); we know such a place was in existence before the death of Jesus. When Jesus died, his soul went to hades (Acts 2:27). [The *King James Version* renders "hades" as "hell" which leaves the wrong impression in people's minds; the ASV accurately translates the Greek word.] Jesus' body was in the grave of Joseph of Arimathaea (Matthew 27:57-60), but his spirit was in paradise which (admittedly) was in *hades* (Luke 23:43). David and Peter showed Jesus' spirit would not remain in *hades*, nor would his body see corruption (Acts 2:27, 31). Therefore, *hades* continued to receive the

righteous until Jesus' ascension.

II. Brother Allen's Sermon

Brother Allen produces several points to show that after Jesus ascended into heaven, paradise went (or, was transferred) from the hadean realm to heaven.

1. When Stephen was stoned, he cried out to Jesus, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). Since Jesus is now at the right hand of the Father in heaven, Stephen expected to go there, rather than to hades.

2. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he said,

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens . . . Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are *absent from the Lord* . . . We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and *to be present with the Lord*" (II Corinthians 5:1, 6, 8, all emphasis mine, RH).

Notice, by inspiration, Paul said when one is absent from the body, he is present with the Lord.

3. In II Corinthians 12:2-4 Paul spoke of a man who went to the third heaven or paradise. Allen quotes Macknight as stating, "In the language of the Jews, the *third heaven* is the seat of God, and of the holy angels, into which Christ ascended after his resurrection." Paul (the man) went to paradise which at that time was in heaven, not in hades.

Brother Allen gives several arguments concerning his view that paradise passed from hades to heaven.

A. *Previous to the glorification of Christ there was no absolute remission of sins.*

According to Hebrews 10:1-4 the blood of bulls and goats could not *take away* the sins of those who lived under the first covenant. Verse 11 says, "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the

same sacrifices, which can never take away sins." Under the Old Testament, one's sins were remembered each year. Hebrews 8:12; 10:17 tells us that under the New Testament, our sins are remembered no more once they are forgiven. Those who lived under the old covenant did not have their sins remitted in actuality until Christ died upon the cross. The Hebrew writer tells us, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, *received not the promise*: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made *perfect*" (Hebrews 11:39,40). When Jesus died upon the cross, Hebrews 9:15 informs us, "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, *for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament*, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Paul speaks of the same thing in Romans 3:25, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for *the remission of sins that are past*." Brother Allen concludes,

"Without this perfection by absolute remission, they could not go to heaven. No imperfection or unremitted sin can stand accepted in the presence of God. Hence an intermediate state of repose for the souls of the righteous till that perfection could be obtained was a necessity. They could not go into the immediate presence of God till made perfect. They could not be made perfect till the atonement was made. Hence their abode in paradise in hades was a necessity till Christ removed their disabilities and dedicated heaven by the blood of atonement."

B. *The High Priesthood of Christ.*

Brother Allen points out that Jesus is our "forerunner" who entered heaven before us. As the high priest entered the holy of holies, so Jesus as our High Priest entered heaven. With his own blood he provided the way for

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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—Acts 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS . . . Editor
1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501

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Faith

NO. 1

There are many kinds of "faith" in the world. A child has faith in his father and mother: he believes they can accomplish anything. There is "faith" one has in his fellow man: This faith is established by past acts of the person in whom we have such faith.

There is blind "faith". This is illustrated by the worshipers of Baal. The prophet Elijah challenged the worshipers of Baal to pray to their God. "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said,

"Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood and put no fire under: and call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. . . and they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. . . Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awakened. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lances till the blood gushed out upon them" (I Kings 18:23-28). There was no answer. This was "blind faith."

Elijah poured water in a trench around his altar "and poured water round about the altar: and he filled the trench with water" (I Kings



W. Edwin Kearley



Terms Of Pardon Remain Unchanged

By FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

No church can consistently claim to be the New Testament church unless it teaches sinners today to do exactly what sinners were taught in the New Testament to do in order to be saved by the grace of God.

That salvation is "by grace" on the divine side is beyond question (Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9). It was by grace that God sent Christ into the world, and by grace that he died for our sins (II Corinthians 8:9). The gospel by which we are saved (I Corinthians 15:2) is called "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).

It is also indisputable that, on the human side, salvation is "by faith" (Ephesians 2:8-9). But the fact that one is saved "by faith" does not tell us *at what point* faith saves. Inspiration reveals that, while salvation is "by faith," it is "not by faith ONLY" (James 2:24). We read that "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days" (Hebrews 11:30). Their obedience over a period of seven days did not alter nor nullify the fact that the walls fell "by faith." Yet they did *not* fall by "faith ONLY." Similarly, man is saved "by faith," but "not by faith only." Therefore any church which teaches salvation is by faith ALONE is not the New Testament church.

Our Lord "first" (Hebrews 2:3) announced the gospel terms of pardon when he gave the apostles the Great Commission. Hear him: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16). Jesus said that in order to be saved "by faith," one must have enough faith to be baptized. According to Jesus, one does not have sufficient faith to be baptized, does not have enough faith to be saved "by faith." Hence, any church which teaches one can be saved without faith and baptism, cannot be identical with the church Jesus built.

Jesus also directed that "REPENTANCE and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47). Since Jesus specified that Jerusalem should be the starting point, let us go to Jerusalem and see how they preached "repentance and remission of sins." Bear in mind, please, that they were Spirit-guided on that day; so they certainly preached it right! Listen to Peter: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . ." (Acts 2:38). The apostle surely made no mistake, for he spoke "as the Spirit gave" him utterance (Acts 2:4). Since repentance is "for the remission of sins," before one obtains "remission of sins" he must REPENT. The Greek word translated "repent" means "a change of mind for the better, with abhorrence of one's past sins, heartily to amend." Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Any church which does not teach sinners to repent "for the remission of sins" cannot be Christ's church.

But did you not observe that Peter (by inspiration) joined repentance and baptism,

stating that *both* are "for the remission of sins?" Read it again: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . ." (Acts 2:38).

Notice that in Jerusalem -- which Jesus designated as the beginning point-- Peter preached that *after* repentance and *before* remission of sins, one must be baptized. Since the curse of God rests on any man who preaches a different gospel (Galatians 1:6-9), any church which teaches that one is saved before and without baptism, perverts the gospel plan of salvation, and therefore cannot be identical with the church of the Bible.

Bible baptism is immersion, for the apostle Paul wrote: "We are buried with him by baptism . . ." (Romans 6:3-5). No church which practices sprinkling, or pouring, in the name of 'baptism,' is the church described in the New Testament.

Bible baptism is for believers, for Jesus said: "He that BELIEVETH and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Also we read of one who inquired, "What doth hinder me to be baptized," and he was instructed: "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest" (Acts 8:36-37). Since infants do not have the capacity to believe, it must follow that any church which practices so-called "infant baptism" cannot be the New Testament church.

The purpose of Bible baptism is to "be saved" (Mark 16:16). This may be variously expressed, as it is in other New Testament passages. Note these variations: (1). "For the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). (2). To "wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16). (3). "Baptized into Jesus Christ" (Romans 6:3) where salvation is (Acts 4:12). (4). "Baptized into his death" (Romans 6:3-4) where his blood was shed (John 19:31-34). (5). "Baptized into one body" (I Corinthians 12:13) of which Christ is the Savior (Ephesians 5:23). (6). "Baptized into Jesus Christ" where we are "children of God by faith" and where we "put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27). (7). "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration . . ." (Titus 3:5). This "washing" by which God saves us is water baptism (Acts 22:16). (8). Christ's blood is called the "blood of sprinkling" (Hebrews 12:24) because in conversion our "hearts" (Hebrews 10:22) are figuratively "sprinkled" with "the blood of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 1:2); but notice that when we have "our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," our "bodies" are "washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:22). Thus baptism and salvation are inseparably connected. (9). The apostle Peter stated it clearly: "Baptism doth also now save us" (I Peter 3:21). Note: These are not *different* purposes for baptism; they are merely various ways of expressing the single reason for being baptized -- TO BE SAVED!!! It should be clear as day, therefore, that no church which teaches sinners are saved before and without water baptism can possibly be the Lord's church!

(More to follow)

Continued on page 3

God's Providence

Knowledge of and faith in divine Providence is one of the greatest deficiencies in our brotherhood. Many of our people have in their thinking so limited God's power that they border on Deism . . . and do not even recognize the fact! Yet we cannot even think of prayer without thinking of providence, for it is God's way of answering prayers.



Without providence, prayer is wasted breath. Too long we have discounted God's power and influence in our lives. We speak of "fate," "luck," "coincidence," and "accidents" when we should believe that God has provided. Rather than proudly tell what *we* have done, we should humbly say what *God* did through us (Acts 15:4).

What is divine providence? "Divine providence, therefore, has reference to the preservation, care and government which God exercises over all things that he has created" (W. F. Tillet: *Providence, Prayer and Power*, Cokesbury, Nashville, 1926, page 6).

The Bible pictures two phases of providence, one general, the other special. "The widespread care and supervision which God exercises over his created universe is commonly designated as his general providence, which embraces all created things, and concerns equally and alike, among moral creatures, the evil and the good; in addition to which general providence, there is a more special and particular providence which the Heavenly Father exercises over and in behalf of those whose willing wills are in accord with the Divine Will" (ibid, page 7-8).

To accomplish his will on earth, God has used three methods: 1. Natural Laws; 2. Miracles; 3. Divine Providence. Providence employs no miracles. It is distinct from the normal course of nature, yet it is always in accord with these natural laws. It is God working in a special, non-miraculous way.

Agents of providence: In exercising his providential care of the world, God makes use of agents to accomplish his will. He uses the physical elements. Psalms 148:8, says: "Fire, hail; snow and vapours; stormy winds fulfilling his word." Amos 4:7 says: "And I also have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest; and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not rain upon another city . . . yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah."

That which appears to be an *accident* might well be providence. (An accident is: "That which takes place without one's foresight or expectation, especially one of an unfortunate character.") Exodus 21:12-13: "He that smiteth a man, so that he dieth, shall surely be put to death. And if a man lie not in wait, but *God deliver him* into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee." In Deuteronomy 19:4-5 we find just such a situation described where a man is accidentally killed when the head flies from a woodsman's ax and strikes him.

God uses *men* in his providence. He said of Cyrus, "He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasures" (Isaiah 44:28). David writes of "The wicked which are thy sword" (Psalms

17:13).

Angels are agents of God: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14).

The *Holy Spirit* acts providentially. He comforts (John 15:26). He strengthens, (Ephesians 3:16). He leads (Romans 8:14). He helps our infirmities, intercedes for us, and works all things together for our good (Romans 8:26-28).

Some Avenues of Divine Providence: We see God's providence in *supplying his children's needs*. Paul affirmed, "My God shall supply every need of yours" (Philippians 4:19). Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you . . . If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matthew 7:7-11). In temporal matters God provides the means, capacities, and opportunities; we must make use of them! All these blessings are conditioned upon faithful obedience and humble prayer.

His providence is seen in *protecting his children*. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears are open unto their cry . . . the righteous cry . . . and the Lord delivereth them out of their trouble" (Psalms 34:15-17). David observed, "For they intend evil against thee: they conceive a devise which they are not able to perform" (Psalms 21:11). God steps in to provide when our efforts are exhausted or blocked. He will not do for us what we can do for ourselves.

God's providence is seen in *chastening his children* for their correction and growth in righteousness. "My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art reproved of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth . . ." (Hebrews 12:5-10).

God exercises providence in *governing nations*. One prophet declared that God "removeth kings and setteth up kings." Again he told proud Nebuchadnezzar "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Daniel 4:17, 25).

Through providence, God *punishes wicked people* (Isaiah 10:12). "I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria." On another occasion "Jehovah had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel to the intent that Jehovah might bring evil upon Absalom (II Samuel 17:14). Often God turns the tables on the wicked. "The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made; in the net which they hid is their own foot taken!" (Psalms 7:15).

In his providence, God uses good people like, Joseph and Esther; but he also uses the wicked. "The wicked are thy sword" (Psalms 17:3).

Providence and Free Will. It is objected, "If God uses men to do his will, then man has no freedom of will." God has constituted men with power to choose, and to do good or evil, and thus determine their own reward. God compels no one to do right or wrong. He does not interpose in our actions until they affect others; then he becomes concerned to hinder, permit, or even to order them as may best serve the wise ends of his government.

Not every thing that is done is God's will. Sin and evil committed are expressly forbidden. But he does not allow these sins to destroy his ultimate will or purpose.

We must always distinguish between the evils

men *suffer* versus the evils men *do*. The former, God may order: the latter he allows, then uses. God never suggests wicked designs to men. But when they have formed a wicked plan, he often deters, reroutes or uses for his own ends their wicked deed. A good example of this is seen in Joseph's enslavement by his ten brothers. Joseph was convinced, "It was not you that sent me hither, but God" (Genesis 45:8). The brothers had knowingly done wrong and were responsible; but God had accomplished his own ends through their wickedness.

God directs where, when, and in what proportion men, nations and the elements shall bless, or punish. The greatest glory of providence is when he turns evil around, and through it brings good to his people. The greatest example of this was in the murder of Jesus, which God overruled to the salvation of the world.

When we willfully and deliberately violate nature's laws (God's natural laws), we need not expect him to intervene and save us.

God keeps all things in his hands, not because he has absolutely predetermined the fates of men, but that he may govern the world wisely and justly, and reward and punish men as they deserve . . . thus accomplishing his Divine will.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

Faith

Continued from page 2

18:35). Elijah prayed to Jehovah. "Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and licked up the water that was in the trench" (I Kings 18:38). The people expressed their faith in the God of Elijah.

Every day we see the evidence of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork" (Psalms 19:1).

The writer of Hebrews declared, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" Hebrew 11:1). "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Hebrew 11:3).

The reality of God is around us every day. Does God communicate with man? If so, how does he communicate? God spoke directly to Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. He spoke through the prophets to other men. Balaam's donkey spoke to him (Numbers 22:28). The Hebrew writer wrote: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. . . ." (Hebrew 1:1-2). David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue" (II Samuel 23:2). Jesus said concerning the Comforter he would send: "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 show you things to come" (John 16:13). Paul taught, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reprove, for correction, for introduction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:16-17).

(To be continued).

—103 Elena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

What Is A Preacher?

If they were asked what a preacher is, many would say he is one who preaches. Some would say he is one who has gone to college, is a college graduate or a graduate of a preaching school, and has preached for three or four years. But is this really a preacher? If we go back to the original language we find *Evangelist*: "a bringer of good tidings, an evangelist." This name is given in the New Testament to those heralds of salvation through Christ who are not apostles (Acts 21:8; Ephesians 4:11), according to Thayer. Then there is *Kerux*: "a herald; is used of the preacher of the gospel" (I Timothy 2:7; II Timothy 1:11), according to W. E. Vine.



TIMOTHY RICHBURG

(I Timothy 4:12). We must practice what we preach.

C. Take heed to himself (I Timothy 4:16). The preacher actually is to work first on himself for his own betterment.

D. Take heed to his teaching (I Timothy 4:16). He is to know what he is teaching, and make sure that it is the word of God.

E. Be pure (I Timothy 5:22). He should keep himself pure from defilement, and not be contaminated, according to W. E. Vine.

F. Be steadfast in the faith (I Timothy and Titus), or be firm in the foundation of God (W. E. Vine).

A good book which I think helps us look at what a preacher should be is "*Arkansas Angels*" by Boyd E. Morgan. Brother Morgan talks about preachers who were busy doing

the work of a preacher. Many of these men were poor, and had little education; but they were men who were proclaiming the gospel of Christ. Brother John L. Fry was one such preacher, who labored very hard that others could hear the word of God. "He would laugh and say he made money lawing, and 'blowed' it preaching!"

As those who preach we need to look back at what we are. We are bringers of good tidings, or heralds. Have we failed to do the work of a preacher? Have we paid too much attention to what men think is important? "A word to the wise is sufficient."

Let us go back to being humble preachers of the gospel as Paul was (II Corinthians 12:11).

—Rt. 1 Box 75-B, Selma, AL 36701.

The State Of The Righteous Dead

Continued from page 1

There is a five-fold work of a preacher:

1. Evangelize -- preach (II Timothy 4:2,5), bring glad tidings to the lost and preach the word to the world.

2. Edify the local church (Ephesians 4:11-16); cooperate with pastors and teachers; the evangelist teaches and preaches to raise the level of the congregation's spiritual maturity.

3. Appoint elders (Titus 1:5). Through his preaching, teaching and praying he helps bring men to qualified maturity to serve as elders.

4. Defend the faith (I Timothy 1:3; Titus 1:10-13). That is, he must be a diligent and constant student of the word of God, able to offset cunning imposters.

5. Train preachers and teachers (II Timothy 2:2). One may do like Paul did unto Timothy; or participate in a more elaborate attempt, training scores at a time under the direction of a local eldership. Whether this method or that, the task must be done.

There are some preachers and members, people in general, who do not know what a preacher is, nor know anything of his work. Some think all one needs to do is go to college -- and then he is a preacher. I am not against education; but some preachers have gone to extremes. A few preachers I have known personally have obtained the Bachelor, Master and Doctor degrees, yet had no real purpose in mind; some have gone with denominational preachers; some have large libraries. They may be tempted to glory in these things.

There are many sincere preachers. But there are some who are not doing the work of the preacher. They are going so much to school, or doing their hobby; and they have no time to prepare their lessons, or do any of the other work of the preacher. Many are like the Pharisees: they seem to glory in things men think are important. "But Jehovah said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him; for Jehovah seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart" (I Samuel 16:7; read verses 6-13). Of some, Jesus said, "Ye are they that justify yourselves in the sight of men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15).

It is time for those who preach to look at the needed qualifications. A preacher should:

A. Be diligent, not lazy (I Timothy 4:15; II Timothy 2:15). There is much to be done, and we must be busy doing it.

B. Be an example to them that believe

us to enter. Since others could not enter heaven, there had to be a place where righteous Abraham and others could repose until Christ made it possible for them to enter heaven.

Brother Allen continues by showing that Jesus took away the veil of the temple at his death (Mark 15:37, 38). The Hebrew writer speaks of this event saying, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Hebrews 10:19, 20). Brother Allen states, "Hence the intermediate state in paradise, a department of hades, was a necessity till the rent veil of the temple, as a type, found its fulfillment in the offering of the blood of Jesus. . . The necessity for the intermediate state, therefore, no longer remained."

C. He "Destroyed" The Devil.

Brother Allen believed Jesus "destroyed" the devil in that he broke his power or vanquished him. When Jesus went to hades, says brother Allen, Satan held the keys and had Jesus as a prisoner within its gates. If he could have held him there, mankind would not have redemption. When Jesus came forth from the grave, he took the keys from Satan (Revelation 1:18). "Hence in his own death the Son of God destroyed the power of Satan over the dominion of death."

D. He Delivered Them Who, Through Fear of Death, Were During Their Life-Time Subject to Bondage.

Brother Allen believed that those from Adam to Jesus were subject to bondage due to their fear of death. When Jesus finished his work of redemption, these saints were delivered from hades into heaven. He continues by showing from Revelation 20 that "the whole tenantry of hades go into the lake of fire." This indicates that the righteous are no longer there, nor have they been since Jesus entered into heaven. He also points out that "every passage of the word of God relied upon to prove that there now exists an intermediate state of the righteous dead, so far as we have seen, belongs to a former dispensation."

III. Objections Considered

1. Ten days after the ascension of Christ, Peter said, "For David ascended not into the heavens." From this it has been argued that David was not in heaven at that time; and if he were not, of course others were not. And this was after the glorification of Christ.

Brother Allen points out that David has not ascended to heaven *in the same fashion* as Jesus. His *body* was still with them; Jesus' body was not. Christ's did not see corruption; David's did. So, in this sense, as indicated in the context of the passage. David had not so ascended into heaven.

2. Another objection is that it obviates the necessity for the final judgment.

If this is so, paradise and torment would do the same as far as the final judgment is concerned. The rich man went to torment or tartarus without a final judgment. Lazarus went to Abraham's bosom without a final judgment. Would Lazarus have to wait until the final judgment to know whether he was saved or not? Would the rich man have to wait until the final judgment to know whether he was lost or not? That question is settled at death.

3. It is also objected that the theory I have advocated obviates the necessity for the resurrection of the body.

Brother Allen believed the earth, after being "regenerated by fire and adapted to our wants, is to be the future home of the saints." Lipscomb also held this view. He pointed out that one could go to heaven without his body, because Paul went to the third heaven, with or without his body, and II Corinthians 5 so teaches. After the judgment, saints will occupy their incorruptible bodies and dwell upon a "new earth."

IV. Conclusion

I am sure there are other objections some may have to brother Allen's sermon. However, he does make some points that brother Gus Nichols found valid. It is interesting that when one is raised from baptism, he is made to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6). The expression "heavenly places" is rendered as "heaven" in Philippians 2:10. Therefore, one who is in Christ is sitting with him *in heaven*. When we are released from this body at death, we are "absent from the body" but "present with the Lord" (II Corinthians 5:8). As long as we are present in this body, we cannot enjoy the fulness of sitting with him in heaven. Therefore Paul refers to it as "whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord" (II Corinthians 5:6).

—39 Webb Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.



(USPS 691-760)

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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Faith

(NO. 2)

In the New Testament, *faith* is spoken of in two senses: (1) The revelation of God through inspired writers is called "the faith." Jude wrote, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the *faith* which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). All of the inspired men received a united message, "the faith." The skeptics have sought to array one inspired writer against another. This cannot be successfully done. One author may give information another author did not; but this is not a contradiction, but is rather supplementation.



W. EDWIN KEARLEY

duces faith, but the skeptics call the preaching of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ "foolishness."

Paul said, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power and wisdom of God" (I Corinthians 1:23-24). The Jews believed in God; but they were blinded by their tradition. This kept them from believing in Christ. The Gentiles were worshippers of heathen gods. They had many different gods; each god was for a different function. Therefore, they looked upon the God whom Paul preached as foolishness. Men have not changed today.

"Faith" comes from teaching. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45).

The drawing power of Jesus comes through hearing the truth of God taught. When man learns, he may come to Christ.

Paul speaks of the origin of faith when he says, "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 believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:13-14). The calling here is not a vocal cry but obedience to God. Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). Paul was told by Ananias, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). When man obeys, he is calling on the Lord. His "faith" is in action!

(To be continued)

—103 Elena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

15 Million Of The Unborn Slaughtered

BILL JACKSON

In marking the anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision on abortion, "*The Review of the News*" (Feb. 13, 1985) states that more than 15 million children have been slaughtered! And these, under the rules laid down by the Court, for "compelling personal circumstances" — meaning, very often, that the parents-to-be didn't want to be bothered!

A picture of this horror is given to us when one notices that the combat-related deaths in the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War came to 1.16 million people! That is fewer than the number of "convenience" killings by abortion taking place in our own land EACH YEAR!

"Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). God cannot bless a nation with such a low view of life that children are killed at will, and at the

same time the nation has strong forces advocating sparing the lives of convicted murderers and rapists, and raising the cry to spare the eagle, the whale and the sea otter!

A very important documentary film has now been produced, entitled "The Silent Scream," actually photographing the abortion process, and showing the child shrinking away from the probing of the suction tube just before being ripped to pieces. Pro-abortionists are raising a howl over the film because it puts the falsehood to some of their ridiculous arguments such as: "The fetus is not living . . . the fetus feels no pain . . . this is not a child," etc.

God's condemnation still stands against "hands that shed innocent blood" (Proverbs 6:17).

—Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, TX 78748.



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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

—Acts 26:35

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What Do You See In People?

When you observe the thousands at an athletic event, or when you walk down a busy street, or when you watch the comings and goings in your neighborhood, what do you see? Just people? When you hear the population report of a great city, or hear the enrollment figures of a certain college, or have someone tell you that a family with nine children is moving in down the block, what comes to your mind? Just people?

We have become such a statistically-oriented people that it is hard for us to think of people in any other way than as "numbers." But every person you met on that street, every neighbor you saw leave his house, every person attending that ball game, and each member of the family that just moved in is a living soul. A soul that will spend eternity in heaven or hell.

Jesus said, "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matthew 25:32). Paul said, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).

Jesus never lost sight of the value of one soul. Some of his greatest lessons were to one person, (e.g., Nicodemus, and the woman of Samaria). He loved every sinner but hated their sins. He never regarded anyone as "just a number" or "in the way."

A little crippled boy, carrying a basket of

Continued on page 4

Christian Attitude Toward Money

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Corinthians 16:2).

"Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea" (Acts 11:29).

"But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. 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 Corinthians 9:6-7).

In these three Scripture references, we have three special words -- purpose, prosper, ability -- which should govern the amount Christians give to the Lord. There is such a thing as laying up treasure in heaven; but treasure stored away on earth soon rusts away (Matthew 6:19-21).

Perhaps the Bible subject that many church members appreciate least of all is *giving*. But, if we are true Christians, we will love and obey the command to give just as much as we love and obey any other Bible command. Verily, God thinks no more of baptism, or the Lord's supper, or singing, than he thinks of his command to give as we have been prospered! Would negligence in *giving* be just as grave a sin as negligence with regard to baptism? or the Lord's supper? We think so (James 2:10-11; 4:17; Luke 12:47-48).

It is said that a preacher, in a sermon to the church, exhorted the members, saying: "It takes money to make the church walk." The response was, "Let her walk." The preacher continued, "It takes money to make the church run." Again the reply came, "Let her run, brother." Then the preacher really warmed to his subject, and said, "Brethren, this church must fly, but it takes more money to make this church fly." But the dismal reply, like the deadening sound of broken glass falling to the ground, came -- "Let the church walk, brother, let her walk!" Brethren, does this little story represent *your* attitude toward giving??

Money possesses no character of its own; rather it derives its character from its owner. If the owner is of good character, he uses his money for good purposes; if his character is bad, he uses his money for bad causes. Money is therefore a blessing, or a curse -- depending on how it is used. Men of wealth can accomplish untold good for the Cause of Christ if they will but invest their money in worthy causes. Even the poor Christian can make their contributions count for the Lord (Deuteronomy 8:17-18).

Money is a test of one's faith. Jesus taught that men who trust in their wealth cannot enter heaven (Mark 10:23-27). One's use of his money shows whether one is loyal to God's will and way. In Matthew 22:15-22, Jesus said, "Show me the tribute money." He then taught men to render unto Caesar the things



W.A. HOLLEY

that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's. If a man gives all that he possesses to God, except his money, he is too selfish to go to heaven (Matthew 19:16-23).

Where money is contributed into the Lord's treasury, Jesus is an observer. He makes appraisals of the giver's generosity. Mark 12:41-44 presents a graphic picture of Jesus watching as rich folk cast into the treasury of their wealth; but, after a time, there came a poor woman who gave two mites -- all her living. According to Jesus' correct estimation, she gave far more than the wealthy had given! We would hardly make such an estimate, but Jesus knows our circumstances, and he knows if we truly give as he has commanded.

Christians need to appreciate the fact that money is needed to aid in the proclamation of the glorious gospel throughout the world. Radio, television, the printed page, the evangelists, all must be supported with money. Nothing is free; somebody pays! God has wonderfully complimented man in that he gave man the privilege of sharing in supporting the greatest work ever envisioned for earth: A poor, suffering, dying Christian can contribute a few paltry dollars toward willingly winning hell-bound souls to Jesus Christ. Angels were never so honored!

"The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil . . ." (I Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19). But "filthy lucre," thank God, can be turned into a magic wand and used to reach countless millions with the truth of the gospel, God's power to save. All Christians are urged to give as they have been prospered. Try very hard to increase your Lord's day contributions; you will be wonderfully rewarded throughout all eternity for your generosity.

Use your money while you're living,
Do not hoard it to be proud;
You can never take it with you,
There's no pocket in a shroud.

Gold can help you go no farther
Than the graveyard where you lie;
And though you're rich while living,
You're a pauper when you die.

Use it then some lives to brighten
As through life they weary plod;
Place your bank account in heaven,
And grow rich toward your God.

--Anon

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.



Jesus
Gave
His
All

“It Doesn’t Get Any Better Than This!”

The caption which serves as the title of this article is a well known “catch phrase” for a popular beer commercial. You know the scene: after a day of fun and frolic, perhaps on the lake, or another favorite spot, the gang settles in to a feast topped off by a few friendly beers, and the announcer reminds us that, “It just doesn’t get any better than this.”



ROGER JACKSON

When I first saw the commercial I immediately took exception to its message. But then it occurred to me that the announcer was exactly right with regard to beer drinking! -- From here on it is all down hill. We might suggest to the liquor industry that they film some successive scenes which are often associated with the consumption of alcoholic beverages, and truly demonstrate that, in fact, it really does not get any better than this.

In scene two they might show the delirious devotees staggering about, unable to control their own bodies. If their speech can be understood at all, the censor will have his hands full sorting out that which is fit for human consumption. Those who speak so often about social drinking must surely be among the few who have not tried to carry on an intelligent conversation with a drunk. Alcohol drinking is not “social,” it is anti-social; and one who has to have a drink to be *social* is not a “social drinker,” but a *problem drinker*. Solomon described the scene rather well, and his words could constitute the script: “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine.” (Proverbs 23:29,30). As a matter of fact, if the camera-man will stay just a little longer he might film a real “action scene!” You see, alcohol has a way of making “machon men” out of those who get their “courage” from a bottle; and it often leads to a big brawl even among friends like those cordial, laughing imbibers who have found the best (?) thing life has to offer. And the faces of those lovely, young ladies will soon wrinkle and frown from the devastating effects of alcohol.

Our commercial will get no better in scene three. Now comes the sickness. Solomon continued, “At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.” (Proverbs 23:32-34). The commercial opens with a scene filled with beautiful people, dignified business men, and lovely landscapes: now the alcohol brings the proud gentlemen to their knees, perhaps grasping the base of a toilet stool and heaving with all their might. Not a very pretty sight, is it? And you say, “It just doesn’t get any better than this?” There is your sophisticated “social drinker.” He is not very social now, is he? Perhaps we could close our commercial just here and have a good point. I could wish, if it were not vain, that such were possible.

Perhaps scene four should be tinted a little

red. You see, that is the color of the blood of innocent people that is yet to be shed. Innocent people, in our shining examples of where the “top” is, make their way home in their automobiles. More than half of all traffic deaths in our country each year involve drunk drivers. It is a shame that a social or civic-minded movement (MADD) does more to oppose drinking and driving than the Lord’s church. *You* might be the one our fun-loving friends meet on the way home -- head on! Or, perhaps your son, or daughter! Those who drink often counter that it is nobody’s business but their own. Well, it is *my* business when it is my windshield you are coming through! Christians, make no mistake about it: drinking alcoholic beverages is a sin (Galatians 5:19-21).

For those who survive, there might be a scene five. The next morning must come, and with it, the hangover: the throbbing head, weak stomach, and generally that “wish I were dead” feeling. No amount of pleading to the Lord will help, and to promise him you will never drink again *IF* he will just let you survive this time, is an abomination. Solomon is not through with you yet: “They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again” (Proverbs 23:35). You know you can’t stop. It is eminently true that those who boast that they can “take it or leave it” usually end up taking it. It does not take a *man* to drink; it takes a *man* to *quit*. Alcohol is a product of the gutter and the companion of

paupers. Its container can be held as masterfully by the ruined as the rich. Character never comes in a bottle.

It is sad, indeed, to imagine a man’s life-quality as being so poor that the *peak* of it is a beer at sundown! Life is made up of so much more; but those things of real value are objects of alcohol’s destruction. What about a family? the joy of success in life? good health? self-esteem? sober friends? and the Christian hope (I Corinthians 15:19-21)? Christians are partakers of the Divine Nature (II Peter 1:4). If drinking is this much a part of your life, take a good look at that commercial next time. It really does *not* “get any better than this!” But, if you want to lay hold on something more important than a beer bottle “lay hold on eternal life” (I Timothy 6:12). You are going to have to turn loose of the bottle, completely, in order to grasp that life.

I cannot tell you that being a Christian will solve your problems. I can tell you that if you will put it down, or never start it, these things are certain: (1) You will never have the additional problems that alcohol brings. (2) You can face your problems soberly, and thus have a better chance of solving them. (3) You can learn to live with those problems you cannot solve, instead of allowing them to destroy you through alcoholism. (4) You will not drive away your friends (sober ones) who can help.

Every gospel preacher loves those who drink alcoholic beverages: we hate what you are doing, and pray that you will stop -- right now.

—940 Old Wood Rd., Oxford, AL 36203.

The Gospel And You

To the Christian, the gospel of Christ is something special. The gospel of Christ contains (1) facts to be believed (I Corinthians 15:1-4), (2) commands to be obeyed (Mark 16:15-16; Hebrews 5:8-9), (3) promises to be enjoyed (Mark 16:16; Acts 3:38), and (4) threats to be feared (Mark 16:16; II Thessalonians 1:7-9). The gospel presupposes our most serious thoughts, words and deeds, and is to be shared with all other human beings everywhere.

We ask, What are you going to do with the gospel? Will you believe and obey the gospel? or, will you trample its marvelous message under your feet? After obeying the first steps of the gospel, will you sincerely try to exemplify its transforming power in your daily life? Do you have a burning desire to share this great and wondrous treasure (Romans 1:14-18) with the lost of your family and friends?

Long ago, in the days of Jeremiah the prophet, there were those who wanted the voice of God silenced; they were tired of hearing, and being reminded of, God’s holy word. Jeremiah, like all faithful teachers and preachers, sometimes became disheartened and discouraged, because of constant criticism, and thus felt (?) like quitting; but there was a driving force within him that made such a thing impossible.



W. A. HOLLEY

He wrote: “And if I say, I will not make mention of him, nor speak anymore in his name, then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with the forbearing, and I cannot contain” (Jeremiah 20:7-11). We suggest to all tired and weary soldiers of the cross to remember Jeremiah, and to keep on, keeping on!!

The apostle Paul speaks of being a debtor to all men (Romans 1:14-17). It is because of this debt that Paul spent his life in seeking to convert others to Christ. As Christians in the eighth decade of the twentieth century, we cannot hold the gospel to ourselves a hidden treasure; we must sound it abroad to every creature under heaven (Colossians 1:6, 23; Romans 10:18). Surely, with all our modern means of communication and transportation, we can do as well as our early brethren who had no such advantages! At home and abroad, we should use radio, television, the printed page, and personal presentation to reach the masses of lost people.

Do we believe the Holy Scriptures? What is the predicament of a person without Christ? Where the gospel has not gone, there is no remedy for sin. Let it be recognized that there are at least three sobering facts regarding sin: Sin is real; sin grows; and sin, if allowed to continue in one’s life, will surely bring destruction and eternal death (James 1:13-15; Romans 3:23; 6:23).

No person can reach his highest potential apart from the power and influence of the gospel (Romans 1:16). There are ways that

Continued on page 4

Singing In Worship

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16).



W. A. HOLLEY

Singing is a very important part of worship (I Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Hebrews 2:12; James 5:13). There are five items of worship commanded by the Lord. They are: Bible study, prayer, giving to the Lord as we have been prospered, the Lord's supper, and singing (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19). The first day of the week (not the Sabbath day) is the day of Christian worship (I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:14-17).

Do we have a deep appreciation of *singing* as worship to God? Do we oftentimes go through the mechanics of singing, but without the heart and its participation? Are we more interested in music than we are in pleasing God Almighty? Some have added a mechanical instrument to the worship in an effort to improve (?) the worship. Mortal men have no right to add to or to subtract from divinely prescribed worship (John 4:23-24; Revelation 22:18-19).

What are some of the accomplishments that can be achieved in singing as the Lord requires?

(1) *Singing is a means of expressing our praise to God Almighty.* We should give praise to God because he has done so much for us. Christians should be the happiest people of all (Matthew 5:1-12). A few minutes spent in singing God's praise will help us to forget our cares and anxieties, and thus turn away our minds from things that dampen our spirits. Singing is not wasted effort!

(2) *Singing is a door by which Christians can bring their gratitude and thanksgiving to the great throne of God.* To Christians, *singing* and *thanksgiving* are inseparable. We often sing: "Count your blessings, name them one by one." In song and in prayer, we can "praise God from whom all blessings flow." (Cf. Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 13:15). Dear Christian friends, do you put your heart and soul into each song you sing? Do so, and many burdens will take wings and fly away.

(3) *All Christians can petition God in spiritual songs.* We need forgiveness, so we sing: "Dear Lord and Father of mankind, Forgive our foolish ways." Because we recognize our need for grace and holiness, we sing: "More holiness give me, more striving within, more patience in suffering, more sorrow for sin." Do these and similar thoughts fill your mind as you sing at the worship hour?

(4) *The song-service, when properly done, can be a wonderful means of teaching not only Christians but non-Christians as well.* Here we suggest that I Corinthians 14:15, 23-26 and Colossians 3:16 be read most carefully. Thus sinners may be enlightened through song and persuaded to come to Jesus. Hence, all Christians should sing with the spirit and with the understanding because of the power of gospel singing to touch the lives of others. An auditorium filled, literally filled, with voices

singing the truth of God can and will influence thousands of people for good. Just one question: Do you, Christian friend, sit silent during the song-service, never singing the praises of God? What of the Judgment to come??

(5) *Singing is a way of teaching and admonishing one another as dear brethren.* Christians cannot outgrow the need for proper teaching and admonition. Each part of the worship should be directed toward the edification of the saints, and through meaningful singing from the heart, we shall all be made stronger and better able to live the Christian life (Colossians 3:16).

(6) *Singing helps to unite the church.* It is very difficult for brethren to sing together and, at the same time, engage in fussing and fighting with each other. Our Lord prayed for the unity of his followers (John 17:20-23). Families and Christians who pray and sing together are

far more likely to remain together through the most severe trials. Singing, as commanded by the Lord identifies Christians with the noblest cause this world has ever seen... the Cause of Christ... and impresses upon our hearts the fact that we are all of one heart and one soul. Do not sell the song-service short!!!

(7) *Singing affects us as individual Christians.* Thus singing serves as a stimulus that can produce a desired response or reaction toward the Lord Almighty. We cannot forget God as long as we sing to him. Spiritual singing is a source of comfort, courage, trust, consecration and hope. Even in affliction and sorrow we must remember that God "giveth songs in the night" (Job 35:10).

We suggest that you participate, fully and freely, in the song-service, and you will see how it truly blesses you. Will you try it?

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

What Do You See In People?

Continued from page 2

candy and fruit, hurried to the passenger gate of a railway station as fast as his crutches would permit. As passengers rushed through the gate, a fast-moving business executive accidentally hit the boy's basket, knocking its contents in every direction. He paused only long enough to severely scold the lad for being in his way. Another man, rushing through the depot, saw the boy's distress and immediately began picking up the scattered items. After returning all the contents to the basket, he put a dollar bill in the boy's hand. He smiled at his young friend, patted him on the

head, and said, "Better luck next time."

Then as he turned to leave, he was stopped by the question of the lad who said: "Hey, mister, are you Jesus?"

Turning he smiled again and said: "No, just one of his followers."

Jesus was never too busy to see the needs of those he met on the way. We never stand taller than when we stop to help another find the Master.

—West End Church of Christ, 420 - 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

The Gospel And You

Continued from page 3

seem right but end in death (Proverbs 14:12). The way of man (despite his educational achievements) is not in himself; man (apart from God's revealed truth) cannot direct his own steps (Jeremiah 10:23).

The motives and incentives of the gospel can lead sinful men to turn away from drunkenness and malice, adultery and murder, uncontrolled tongues and tempers, and thus help us to live good and decent lives (Galatians 6:7-9; Titus 2:11-12). Hence, the highest standard of living ever envisioned for humanity is set forth in the gospel of Christ. The Eastern religious (of India, China and Japan) cannot begin to be compared (for excellence) with the gospel of Christ (II Corinthians 4:1-7). This writer believes that all sensible people desire the kind of life pictured in the Holy Bible.

The gospel and you involves the greatest responsibilities. The salvation of your soul and the souls of others hangs in balance. "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" (Lamentations 1:12). The Great Judgment Day is coming! The call of death will be heard by all! We must all stand before God Almighty and account to God for our deeds (Hebrews 9:27; II Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:12).

We urge our readers to obey the gospel of Christ today. Tomorrow may be too late. Jesus died upon the Old Rugged Cross for you. How tragic it will be for you to go into eternity without God and without hope (Ephesians 2:11-16). Today, now, without delay, respond to the demands of Jesus Christ.

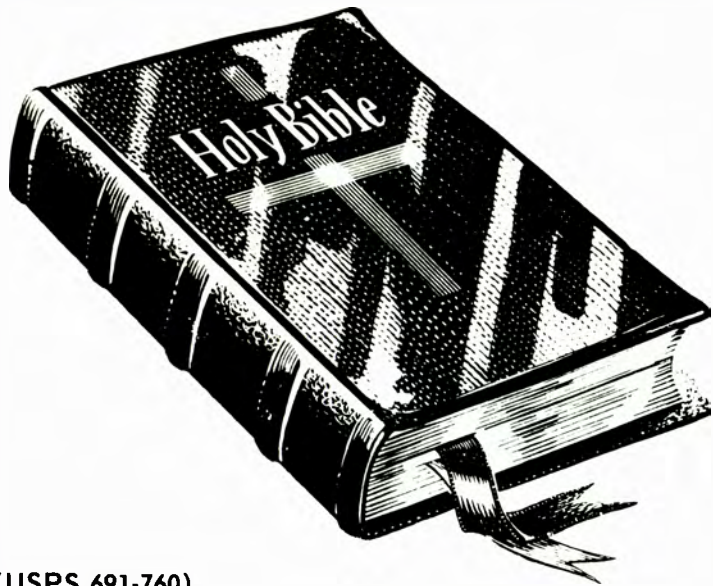
—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

The Lord looked
down from heaven
upon the children of
men, to see if there
were any that did un-
derstand, and seek

God.

Psalms 14:2

INVITE A FRIEND
TO CHURCH
SUNDAY!



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

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NUMBER 14

Brother Jack Parham, A Good And Faithful Man, Needs Our Help Now!

Shortly after the first of the year (1985) brother Jack Parham of Maury City, Tennessee, called me and discussed some deep health and financial problems he is currently experiencing. Up until the fall of 1984 he preached for a congregation in a neighboring county. A mutual decision between him and the elders of that congregation had been made earlier in 1984



Robert R. Taylor

that he would seek out another place to preach. He began to make contacts but found that his serious health problems were almost immediate drawbacks. He thought he had a new work lined up only to learn that this congregation had decided upon a younger man and where no health factors were involved. He has made many contacts about a place to preach but runs into basically the same road-blocks everywhere he goes, everywhere he turns.

My heart really goes out to him. A reversal in the health of any of us could mean the same for us. He has been without a salary since October of 1984. His phone conversation brought deep concern to my heart. He moved to me some of the things he had related. I told him some things he might do in the meantime, and that upon receipt of his letter in February I would compose an article and see if I may get it into some of our gospel publications. That is the purpose of this article. Many thanks to the kind editor who graciously allows it to appear in this issue.

Brother Parham is a good man, and is faithful to the Lord; he is meek, unassuming,

sound in the faith, and loves the Lord and his church with all his being. He and his wife have two children -- one college age, and one still in high school. Hence, his family responsibilities are now among the most expensive of any he and his good wife have known, and he is suddenly without any salary at all. His wife has had some serious health problems over the last few years -- four surgeries since 1976, with the most serious and most expensive one early in 1984. She is doing better now and is teaching school; but they are not able to meet their living expenses and meet payments on some rather large medical bills on her salary alone. Their medical bills for 1984 ran over \$30,000.00. Insurance covered a large percentage of that, but they were out a considerable amount also.

Brother Parham has suffered from arthritis of the spine since teen-age days. He is now 53 years old. All joints in his back and neck have fused. He suffers from frequent swelling of knees and ankles. He has had high blood pressure problems for about ten years. He has suffered some loss of vision temporarily with permanent damage to the muscles in one eye. His doctors, in recent hospitalizations, have diagnosed his health problems to be "ankylosing spondylitis, paroxysmal atrial tachycardia, diverticulitis, diabetes mellitus, vascular headaches, and pulmonary function problems." Some of these problems he is able to control with diet and medication.

He says their most pressing needs now are to pay off medical bills (\$7,500.00) and obtain permanent housing. Where they are now living is temporary. They are paying \$250.00 per month for rent with utilities running about \$150.00 per month.

One of his doctors has advised him to apply for Social Security Disability Benefits. This he has done but feels doubtful this will be approved. This decision is still pending. Even if approved, there will be a waiting period of six months before any benefits can be drawn.

If drawn at all, those benefits will be only 25 per cent of what he made while doing local work.

He writes, "As for my future, it is about as uncertain as life itself. I am 53 years old and I am not ready to quit working unless circumstances force me to. I have preached for more than 27 years, and had hoped to be able to preach for several more years. I have checked into a number of possibilities, and am yet hoping that I will be able to work out something that will be satisfactory."

A statement in his opening paragraph exhibits a remarkable and very humble attitude. He wrote, "The task of seeking financial assistance is one of the most difficult things I have ever done." I know Jack well and I know this statement comes from the depths of his heart.

Surely there are individuals and congregations that will be reached by this worthy plea for aid who will want to help brother Parham. His address is Jack Parham, P.O. Box 14, Maury City, Tennessee 38050 but he plans to move to Brownsville, Tennessee, in the near future. He lists three elders under whom he has worked who know him well. They are Lester Bates, P.O. Box 86, Maury City, Tennessee 38050, (901) 656-2450; Wayne Pruett, RFD, Leachville, Arkansas 72438, (501) 539-6763; and P. D. Jackson, Rt. 1, Box 278, Marvall, Arkansas 72366, (501) 829-2757.

My wife and I plan to help him. I hope many of you will do the same. He is eminently worthy of our help -- and of our help NOW.

Elders of the Leachville, Arkansas, congregation have agreed to receive funds. Please send to this address and earmark it for the Jack Parham Fund:

Leachville Church of Christ, C/O Joe Cashion, Treasurer P.O. Box 32 Leachville, Arkansas 72438.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063.



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—Acts 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS . . . Editor
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Faith

(No. 3)

The faith which causes one to believe in Jesus as God's Son, to repent of his sins, to confess his faith in Christ before men, and to be baptized for the forgiveness of his sins, must continue to grow. Peter said we must "add" to our faith. He said it in the following words, "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to your virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (II Peter 1:5-7). The characteristics listed above are called "the Christian Graces." As our faith grows, we will grow in these and other things.



W. EDWIN KEARLEY

Many stay on the edge of the water after they are baptized so far as their spiritual man is concerned. They may be called people of little faith. Jesus designated those overly concerned about food and clothing, "O ye of little faith" (Matthew 6:30). He had said, "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 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 6:28-30).

Jesus commended the Centurion for his "great faith." The Centurion came to Jesus asking him to heal his servant who was sick of palsy and grievously tormented. The Lord offered



Flavil H. Nichols

Who Did The Baptizing?

Christ and the apostles laid down no regulations or requirements about who should do the baptizing. On Pentecost day those unsaved believers inquired: "Men and brethren, what shall we do? 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" (Acts 2:37-38). Those who sprinkle instead of "baptize" [immerse] have claimed that it is impossible for twelve apostles to have immersed 3,000 in one day; but, of course, this is false. Get your pencil and figure it for yourself:



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

In 15 seconds one person can easily immerse another, stating to each 'candidate' something like this: "Upon confession of your faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and for the remission of your sins, I baptize you into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." However, *double* that time for this calculation: one person can baptize 2 per minute, or 120 per hour. Multiply that by the number of the apostles:

12 apostles x 120 baptized per hour equals 1,440 baptized per hour

1,400) 3,000 baptized (equals 2.0833 hours
--which is about 2 hours and five minutes!

It is entirely possible that the announcement was made to a large group at a time, rather than telling each individual 'candidate' for baptism, that each was being baptized for the remission of sins, by Christ's authority, into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. [God does not tell us what to *say*; but he does tell us what to *do*!] By stating this to a large group at one time, one person could easily immerse 10 others per minute. However, for the sake of being extra conservative, reduce that to 5 per minute, and it amounts to 300 per hour for each apostle -- or for all 12 it gives a combined total of 3,600 in ONE HOUR!!!

This calculation is based on the assumption that only the apostles did the baptizing, which the Scriptures do NOT say. Some of those baptized may have assisted immediately by immersing others. The entire 3,000 may have been baptized in much less than ONE HOUR!! No person now living can possibly ascertain how long it required.

Nor can I prove by the Bible that one who baptized others must (himself) have been immersed. Given a choice, I would prefer to have a Christian baptize penitent believers; but that is a personal preference, not based on any specific Bible text.

Peter, on Pentecost, did not say: "Repent, and be baptized BY A CHRISTIAN . . ." Nor did he say: "Repent, and be baptized BY A DULY ORDAINED MINISTER . . ." No Bible text teaches any such idea. If it did, and if one 'link' in the 'chain' back to the apostles were broken, then all subsequent baptisms traceable so that 'broken link' were not SCRIPTURAL baptisms. In which case no individual could possibly have been at least one, and perhaps more than one, insincere (or otherwise apostate) 'link' between us and the apostles of Christ.

When the Lord sent someone to assist Saul of Tarsus in becoming a Christian, the messenger is not described as a "preacher" nor a "duly ordained minister;" instead, he was simply "a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias" (Acts 9:10).

The validity of one's baptism does not, therefore, depend upon the one who administers it. HOWEVER, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ONE TO BE TAUGHT WRONG, AND BE BAPTIZED RIGHT! It should be apparent to all that one who has been taught that sins are remitted at the point of faith, that individual was not baptized "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). One who is taught that he prayed away his sins, was not baptized to "wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16). One who is taught that baptism has absolutely nothing to do with his salvation, was not baptized to "be saved" (Mark 16:16). One's personal FAITH is determined by the teaching he receives. If he is taught wrong, his beliefs will be wrong; and his baptism will be wrong.

Be Sure And Invite
A Friend To Church On Sunday!

A Message To Youth: Choosing The Best Way

Youth should be a time of remembering God (Ecclesiastes 11:9-10; 12:1). Pleasure within the guidelines of God's holy word can be beautiful and desirable. God's word, not debauchery, is the guide to true pleasure. Youth, like adults, must stand before God in judgment (Hebrews 9:27; Acts 17:30-31). Training, whether morally, physically, or spiritually, in the right



W. A. HOLLEY

way of the Lord, is an absolute essential (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-4). Parents who fail to properly train their children are headed toward much heartache and sorrow!!

Young people can be blessed indeed. They have advantages not available to older people. They possess the power to determine what qualities of life will be theirs to enjoy later on.

Young people should avoid acts which wreck and destroy their lives. For example: although sex out of wedlock is "adultery" for the boy, too, it is especially important that young girls should avoid sexual relationships until after marriage. Any unmarried pregnant girl, or a girl who is forced to be married, must -- for the rest of her life -- bear a tremendously heavy burden of guilt, shame, and embarrassment -- not only for herself, but for her parents as well. All young men who are now imprisoned because of alcohol, drugs, or other crimes, surely wish they had followed another course. For those who have violated the moral and spiritual laws of God, life could have been far better; but, alas, things could have been different (Galatians 6:7-8). We reap as we sow!!

It is not because of accident that young people end up in bad marriages, ruined lives, prison, and in mental or emotional institutions. Young people are responsible for their own choices!! God's way is the best way (I Peter 3:8-12).

We shall suggest seven rules which can help

young people make the most of their lives:

(1) *Allow God to have first place in your life* (Matthew 6:33). Make Jesus Christ the Lord of your whole life (Acts 2:36-38; I Peter 3:15). The religion of Jesus Christ is not for old people only! Many young people die in their youth -- from disease, wrecks, and the like. Permit God, not drugs, alcohol, nor licentious living, to direct your way (Galatians 5:19-21).

(2) *Young people, establish a special period for Bible study. Never, never fill your mind with garbage.* The word *pornography* comes from a Greek word that refers to "the writing of harlots." Such pictures are intended to cause sexual excitement. No person can be holy and fill his/her mind with such filth! Learn to spend a good part of your time in prayer and meditation (Psalms 1:1-6; I Timothy 4:12-16). Your life will be changed for the better!!

(3) *Learn to love, and to respect, and to obey your parents* (Ephesians 6:1-4). We have heard much about "child abuse;" but there is such a thing also as "parent abuse." Many boys and girls kill their parents by degrees; they ignore, disobey, and trample them under their feet. Boys and girls, as long as you live with your parents respect their wishes: Do as they ask you. When you are on your own you can then do as you may wish; but do not mistreat your parents; if you do, you may regret it throughout all eternity!

(4) *Young people, keep your virginity until you are married.* Sexual promiscuity causes untold problems, emotionally and spiritually. God (Genesis 2:21-24) established the rule of one man and one woman, who should *leave* their parents -- and all others, too -- and *cleave* to each other in the sacred bonds of matrimony: *Leave* father and mother and *cleave* to each other through joys and sorrows . . . no matter what!

Premarital sex is a sin. "Marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4). Matthew 19:3-9 should be read slowly, carefully, prayerfully. Here Jesus restores the original law of marriage. There is one, and only one, Scriptural reason for divorce and a second marriage; and that reason is *fornication*. "What therefore God hath joined

together," said Jesus, "let not man put asunder." It is a sin before God for men and women to have "throw-away" husbands and wives! For shame!!

(5) *You should remember that "little things" combine to make your life what it becomes.* "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). The books you read, the words you speak, the places you go, the friends you have, the pictures you see, the deeds you do -- all combine to determine what your life shall be. "Be not deceived: evil companionships corrupt good morals" (I Corinthians 15:33, ASV.). It is a sin to partake of other men's sins (I Timothy 5:22; Ephesians 5:11). Young people should learn to distinguish between good and evil (Hebrews 5:14; Isaiah 5:20). One cannot serve two masters (Matthew 6:24).

(6) *Always consider the consequences of your actions.* ". . . The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). ". . . The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Moses considered his future when he chose to follow the Lord (Hebrews 11:24-26). Young people can conduct themselves so as to avoid regret and remorse and a guilty conscience. There can be no doubt that countless thousands, after their lives have been wasted in the pursuit of sinful pleasures, wish they could live their lives over again; but such cannot be done! The bitterest tears cannot wash away our mistakes. Young people are capable of controlling their destiny. They can "die the death of the righteous" (Numbers 23:10), provided they follow the will and way of the Lord.

(7) *Young people, strive with all your hearts to make God Almighty and your parents proud of you.* Set your goals high. Strive for excellence. Resist peer pressure. Never, never allow others to turn you away from truth and righteousness.

Follow Jesus Christ and be a Christian (I Peter 2:21-25). Believe that Jesus is the Son of God, repent of all your sins, confess Jesus' name before men, and be baptized for the remission of all your past sins; and then live soberly, righteously, and godly unto the end of your life's journey -- and heaven will be your eternal home (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-38; Romans 6:3-4; Titus 2:11-12).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Faith

Continued from page 2

to come to his house and heal the servant, but the Centurion informed Jesus he knew about authority. He asked Jesus to "but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed . . ." "When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Matthew 8:5-10).

Abraham's faith resulted in his being called "the friend of God." He obeyed the Lord in sacrificing his son, Isaac, to all intents and purposes. James said, "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect" (James 2:22).

We today need to imitate the Centurion and Abraham. There is a great need for faith strong enough to prompt us to worship and serve the Lord. May we turn from the influence of apathy, immorality, and atheism which are around us. The church of the Lord is the family of God (I Timothy 3:15). The family must be close-knit, if it is to function as a family should. The church must have a close relationship to enable it to function as it

should.

How can we attain the needed growth in faith? Peter tells us the answer, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Peter 2:1-2). Christians must grow in graciousness or favor of God: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18). Not only must we grow in our practice but we must teach others (Hebrews 5:12).

The church at Rome had grown so much that others talked about their spiritual development. Paul said to them, "First, I thank God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world" (Romans 1:8).

May each one become a part of the family of God and imitate the faithful about who we read in the word of God.

—103 Elena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

"Lower Your Buckets!"

ARNOLD SEXTON

Many of us have a bad habit of looking for blessings from an outside source, rather than seeing the ones that are there for the taking. The following piece picked up from the *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations* makes this point:

An advertisement of the Tennessee Gas Transmission Company pictures four men, the lone survivors of a sea tragedy, afloat in an open lifeboat. They are attempting to catch a few rain drops in a piece of canvas. Tortured by thirst . . . yet,

Continued On Page 4

The Bible And Abortion

W. TERRY VARNER

On January 22 our nation celebrated (?) the 12th anniversary of legalizing abortion. As a consequence, it is estimated that between 15-18 million innocents have been aborted (murdered) since its legalization. The following is an interesting article:

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT (Or, "What About Abortion?")

A mother stepped into the doctor's office carrying a bright beautiful baby, only a year old. Seating herself near her family physician, she said, "Doctor, I want you to help me out of trouble. My baby is only one year old, and I have conceived again, and I do not want to have children so close together."

"What do you expect me to do?" asked the physician. "Oh, anything to get rid of it for me," she replied. After thinking seriously for a

moment, the doctor said, "I think I can suggest a better method of helping you out. If you object to having children so close together, the best way would be to kill the one in your lap and let the other one come on. It is easy to get the one in your lap, and it makes no difference to me which one I kill for you. Besides, it might be dangerous for you if I undertook to kill the younger one."

As the doctor finished speaking, he reached for a knife and continued by asking the mother to lay the baby out on her lap and turn her head the other way.

The woman almost fainted away as she jumped from her chair and uttered one word:

"MURDERER!"

A few words of explanation from the doctor soon convinced her that his offer to commit

murder was not worse than her request for the destruction of the unborn child. In either case it would be murder. The only difference would be the age of the victim.

--Samuel Voisard

Abortion is appalling! The Bible teaches the simple but plain fact that an unborn child is not a "potential human being," but is a *human being with potential*. The Bible clearly affirms that the fetus is a child, "THOU KNOWEST NOT . . . HOW THE BONES DO GROW IN THE WOMB OF HER THAT IS WITH CHILD" (Ecclesiastes 11:5). There is no other explanation of a fetus than this if all things reproduce "After their kind." Any conception which is produced by the union of ovum and sperm from human beings must be considered as human.

-102 Laramie Road, Marietta Ohio 45750.

I Timothy 4:16

versions, the oneness of the church, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and galaxies of other errors -- is due to the fact that men have ceased taking heed to the doctrine! And in doing this one can justify (?) *any practice*. Thus, in a day in which people are "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by sleight of men, and cunning craftiness" (Ephesians 4:14), it is imperative that the faithful "continue in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42).

But continuing in *doctrine* alone is not enough; one must also "take heed unto thyself." It is one thing to know the sound doctrine of the scriptures; it is another to put that into practice in our lives. Paul in writing to Corinth said: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (I Corinthians 9:27). How many can name people who preach

one thing, yet practice another? How many could list those whose message by mouth is sound, but whose message by life nullifies the oral words? Could it be that *I* am the hypocrite? Maybe it is *I* who "say, and do not," as the Pharisees of Jesus' day (Matthew 23:3). In taking heed to self, personal examination is needed. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own-selves . . ." (II Corinthians 13:5).

Notice that by taking heed to *self* and *doctrine* we can save both ourselves and them that hear us. On the other hand, if one does not take heed to the doctrine, he will condemn both self and others. Also by failing to live his message, one will condemn self and others. We can't leave either aspect undone. We must be as Jesus who "began both to *do* and *teach*" (Acts 1:1).

-P.O. Box 251, Fulton, Mississippi 38843.

"Church Discipline"

NICK HAMILTON

On the subject of church discipline, It isn't easy to do what God has commanded. But it is essential. OBEEDIENCE TO GOD DEMANDS THAT WE PRACTICE CHURCH DISCIPLINE -- exactly as the Bible describes it! On every level! With every person!

Do you have something against a brother.

You need to go to this one and get this matter settled. (Matthew 18:15-18). Don't try to excuse your lack of obedience to God by saying that it won't work: God makes no commands of us which are unworkable! You will stand in judgment condemned with the brother who sinned against you if you refuse to obey God on this matter!

Have you faulted another person? Have you been to the one against whom you have sinned and tried to apologize and make the matter right? You must do this to be pleasing to God (Matthew 5:23-24). No, it isn't easy. That is most likely why you have not done it. But your salvation is involved in this matter, too. Hence, I would exhort you to be faithful to God by obeying his commands and setting these matters straight.

Hopefully that is as far as it will have to go. God designed discipline as a saving matter, not as a command which will further keep men out of heaven.

Please be sensitive to this matter. Your attitude is so important. Be careful how you go. If the right heart on your part is seen, you may well "gain a brother."

-Pleasant Valley Church of Christ, 10900 Rodney Parkam Road, Little Rock, AR 72212.

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Within Paul's words to Timothy we find the "how" by which we accomplish our goal of Christianity. The goal is to save ourselves and others. The "how" is by "taking heed" both to self, and to the doctrine.



VICTOR M. ESKEW

One cannot over emphasize the importance of holding to the "doctrine of Christ" (II John 9-11). Without our being constantly aware of it and continuing in it, we could involve ourselves in the "doctrines of men" which make void the commands of God (Matthew 15:1-9), the "doctrines of devils" which make laws where God has not (I Timothy 4:1-4), and "divers and strange doctrines" which lead men astray (Hebrews 13:9). The reason men teach error about divorce and remarriage, the authority of the eldership, the limits of fellowship, the instrument of music in Christian worship, premillennialism, A.D. 70, cooperation of churches, orphan homes, the modern

"Lower Your Buckets!"

Continued From Page 3

where they drifted, the Amazon carries its fresh water many miles to sea. To drink, they had only to lower their buckets.

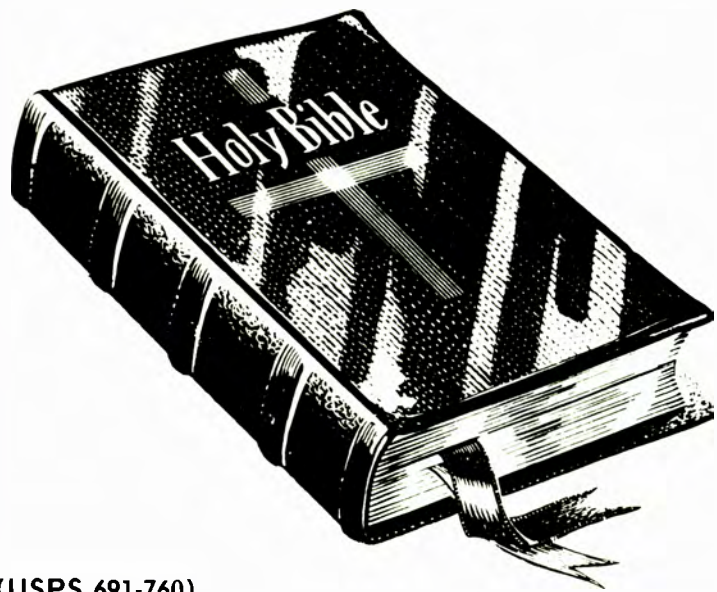
This makes one wonder how many times in life we are in a quest for droplets of blessing when we are sitting on top of buckets full of them. One's mind turns to those who have left the church in search of a few drops of "pleasure" when true enjoyment is in service to Christ (Matthew 5:1-12).

Then, there are those who are sitting on top of blessings and can see only problems. Among these are those who can never be satisfied with their local congregation. They are continually looking at things done which do not

fit their concept of how they should be done. Because they focus their attention on these droplets, they cannot enjoy "buckets" of blessing available through Christ, his church, and fellowship with the same. Therefore, they change congregations in search of droplets and never really discover the blessings at hand.

This is also true in our daily lives. How many of us are so busy searching for droplets that we cannot enjoy our family, friends, brethren and a hundred other things within our reach. It would help all of us if we would just learn to "lower our buckets."

-Mabelvale Church of Christ, P.O. Box 345, Mabelvale, AR 72103.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

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"I Didn't Know The Gun Was Loaded"

The above quotation is one that is often heard after some tragic shot has been fired, and someone lies dead or horribly wounded. It is then too late for the most sorrowful regrets. What has happened has happened. We may repent in sackcloth and ashes; but the shot has already been fired, and the damage has already been done.



W. A. Holley

Oftentimes we do not consider what the consequences of our *words* or *actions* may be. We can be so selfish and determined to have our way, regardless! When we begin to break away from God's established law, we seem never to think of how far it might lead us. When you start down the broad road, how far will you go??

For example, when one begins to smoke cigarettes, one may never think that he has started along the road that, in all probability, will lead to lung cancer and premature death. No, this person may want to be "big" and to be with the crowd. Peer pressure can be almost overwhelming; but it is sinful to "follow a multitude to do evil" (Exodus 23:2). It is a sin to defile the body which is the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:15-20). Chewing tobacco and snuff are both dangerous to one's health. After one's health has been wrecked, it is too late for one to say: "I didn't know what I was getting into, but now it is too late -- if I had only known!!!"

Again, petting on the part of boys and girls is a "gun that is loaded;" and such unholy practice brings much heartache, sorrow, and self-reproach. Such familiarity brings about a loss of self-respect that creates many

emotional problems in later life; often making a subsequent marriage almost certain to fail. In 1869, there were about 10,130 divorces in the United States. In 1969, there were some 626,000 divorces. According to the latest reports, there now are more than 1,000,000 divorces each year. When boys and girls lose respect for each other, and when sex becomes a toy, and when God's laws are treated with contemptuous scorn, we shall reap what we have sown (Galatians 6:7-9). Remember: When it is too late, it is too late!!

And so it goes with those boys and girls who think it is "smart" to drink alcoholic beverages, use drugs illegally or to addiction, and to practice homosexuality and lesbianism (Romans 1:26-32; Leviticus 18:22). You may think that Mother and Father will never know about such terrible practices -- and they may never know -- but you know, and God knows!! (Proverbs 15:3; Hebrews 4:13). And if you keep up these sinful practices, everyone will soon know! So few young people realize that once committed to following licentious ways, they will almost certainly end up on the junk pile of human wreckage!! How much better to count the cost, and choose to follow the right way of the Lord!

Many girls (and many of their mothers) do not know the "gun is loaded" when it comes to immodest dress. God wants men and women to be clothed. At the beginning, God put clothes on Adam and Eve. Today, thousands of people are trying to make nudity the accepted style. Television and various magazines are promoting nakedness.

Many girls are shown on television wearing

nothing but a string. Hardly anything is left to the imagination. Public fornication seems to have become the norm . . . the common. "In like 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" (I Timothy 2:9-10). "Shamefacedness is that modesty which is 'fast' or rooted in Character." Thus, the words *shame* and *modesty* are used regarding the demeanour of women in the church. Many women have become so case-hardened they cannot be embarrassed!

Law enforcement officers tell us that sex-crimes increase in direct proportion to exposure of female flesh. Young women and even older women seem not to understand that lack of clothing causes sex-fiends to attack them! (Matthew 5:27-28). Such women are playing with fire!! Under the U.S. Constitution, one may have a right to go out scantily clad; but the law of God permits no such thing.

Is it asking too much to request women to put on enough clothes to hide their nakedness? God does not think so! Today, with their bikinis and mini-skirts and short-shorts, women can *hardly* hide their nakedness while standing up; it is *impossible* when they sit down! Why invite trouble??

It is too late to say, "I didn't know the gun was loaded," after the crime has been committed! (Galatians 6:7-8).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

A Question Answered

Question: We all have faults, and we all need to be prayed for; but where is the command to confess one's sins before the church? Or, where is there an example of this?

Answer: You are totally correct in saying we all have faults and need each others' prayers. Yet James (5:16)

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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 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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Balance

Balance is an element vital to life. Considerable effort is given toward the maintenance of the balance of nature. Often today we are encouraged to eat a balanced diet. Who among us has not heard of the quest for a balanced budget? Balance is important in many areas. In preaching concerning the salvation of souls, balance is crucial.



John P. Gray

As nature out of balance can bring about great calamity, preaching about God's plan of salvation with little regard for balance can lead to manifold misconceptions.

Much of the religious error in our world today is a direct result of extremism resultant from unbalanced teaching. In preaching about God's plan of salvation, emphasis must be given to what God has done through Christ on the cross. This is where the apostles placed the emphasis in the first century. However, to emphasize the area of what *God* has done, to the point that *man's* response in obedience becomes optional concerning salvation, would be unbalanced. It would also be unbalanced to preach almost exclusively just the necessity of man's response, with its constituent elements, while making only token or passing reference to what God has done.

Some time ago, while visiting a high school Sunday school class, I conducted an experiment. Each student was given a sheet of paper and a pencil. The students were instructed to draw a line down the center of the paper. On one part of the paper they were to write as many verses of Scripture pertaining directly to the subject of baptism as they could recall. They were instructed to do the same type of activity concerning the subject of grace on the

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"Broken Homes And Handicapped Children"

V. E. Howard

(*Editor's Note:* In a recent meeting at Sixth Avenue, Brother V. E. Howard presented some of the following material. He consented for publication in *Words of Truth* to divide the chapter into three segments. This is quoted from his book, *Broken Homes and Handicapped Children*, 1972, by Central Printers & Publishers, W. Monroe, La. 71291.

The menace to the modern home has never been greater than it is today. We must open our eyes to the graphic danger-signals all around us, and seek God and his help while there is still hope. As Hosea, God's prophet of old, exhorted: "Break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek Jehovah" (Hosea 10:12).

(Foreward, *Broken Homes and Handicapped Children*, p. 8).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOME

Children and home are the foundations of society. God has charged the home with the exclusive responsibility of rearing children. Parenthood is a venture with our God in creating something that will live forever! Each child we bring into this world has an eternal, living soul. Parents must accept the duty of training their children in the way of the Lord. The Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Nothing else is comparable to the importance of the production and molding of human life.

There are certain basic things that parents owe their children. We owe them, first of all, the right to be born of honorable parents. The home alone can give honorable birth to children. Illegitimacy means sin, shame and suffering to everyone involved although, of course, the child is innocent. We owe our children the physical necessities of life. We owe them food, raiment, shelter, protection and care. But most of all, we owe our children respectable and responsible parenthood -- a mother, who loves and who cares, rather than a full-time babysitter; and a father who is respected as the head of the family.

The four-fold responsibility of parents toward their children is revealed in Luke 2:52, when the Bible tells us how Christ developed and matured: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

1. Jesus grew in wisdom. It is the responsibility of parents to educate their children -- to help them grow in wisdom. Public schools, private schools and Bible schools may assist the home, but these institutions are no substitutes for the home -- only supplements.

2. Jesus grew in stature. It is the responsibility of parents to physically care for their children in order that they might increase in stature, mature in body, as Jesus did.

3. Parents have the responsibility of proper mental and social development of their children. It was said of Christ that He increased in wisdom and favor with man. It is through the home that the child is gradually introduced to the world.

4. Most important of all, parents are to be responsible for their children's spiritual growth. Jesus increased in favor with God. This is the greatest liability of the home and asset of the child. Prayer, Bible study and worship should be a regular part of a child's

life. The faith that rocks the cradle is the faith that rules the life. There is no substitute for the spiritual environment and training in the home which relates to growing in "favor with God."

There are certain relationships which our children must be taught to respect. First, the child-parent relationship. This is a foundation relationship that our children receive for life. A failure in this relationship may mean a failure in life.

Secondly, there is the child-to-child relationship. Not only must children be taught to respect and obey their parents, they must also learn to play and work -- to live with other children. A selfish, undisciplined child may become a misfit, a total liability in society.

Thirdly, there is the child-to-God relationship. Children must be taught proper attitudes toward God, the Bible, Christ and his church. The basic philosophy of every home should be, God is first!

JUVENILE OR HOME DELINQUENCY?

Who is responsible for juvenile delinquency: the parents? or the children? Generally, delinquent parents and broken homes are most responsible for juvenile delinquents. I suggest the following qualifications for delinquent parents to produce juvenile delinquents.

1. Give the children money when they want it, to spend as they desire, to go where they want to, with whom they want to, and to come home when they are ready. Give them everything they want and they will grow up expecting something for nothing from everybody.

2. Don't ever punish the child -- you might "warp his personality."

3. Obey your children -- *don't* teach them to obey.

4. Cover up for your children; lie for them, defend them (even publicly) when they are wrong.

5. Prove to your children you really have no love for them -- no time for them; no sympathy and no understanding.

6. Impress upon your children the idea that Bible reading, prayer and worship of God are antiquated relics of the old and aged people who never learned better.

7. Impress upon your children that the principles of getting what you want in life is more important than honesty, integrity and service.

8. Make your "home" a boarding house -- a place to eat and sleep, but not all at the same time.

9. Do not arrange for all the family to eat at the same table at the same time. Have no home fellowship at meal time; and never pause to thank God for the bread you eat, because, after all, you earned it.

10. Make a home to be remembered as a divided home, where nagging, fighting, back-biting, separation and divorce brought tears and sorrows never to be forgotten.

May God help us to remember that the most important thing in life is not just to make a living, but to make a life *worth* living now and for eternity. And the foundation for such a life is the home. A question of great importance to every parent should be, what will I leave in my home for my children when I die? Will

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Balance

Continued from page 2

other half of the paper. The students were given about ten minutes to complete their papers. Fifteen students were in the class. The Scriptures mentioning baptism numbered seventeen as a total for the class. Yet, not one student listed even one Scripture where grace is mentioned! To me this indicated the possibility of an imbalance in the instruction previously given to this group. The focus had evidently been on what man must do rather than on what God has done.

Many people in the world today think that salvation is by faith only. Often those who believe this doctrine imagine that members of the Lord's church suppose that salvation is by baptism only. Salvation is not by faith only, and it is not by baptism only either. Faith and baptism are both essential for salvation (Hebrews 11:6; Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16). Those who hold the "faith only" position may think that to leave the "faith only" position, the *baptism only* position must be embraced. This is not true! The truth is between the two extremes.

Consider some thoughts with me concerning the salvation of man. The cross of Christ is essential for man's salvation. There is no salvation out of Christ (Acts 4:12). The cross was central to the preaching of Paul (I Corinthians 2:2; Galatians 6:14). Yet, just the fact that Jesus died on the cross for "all" (I Timothy 2:6), does not mean that all will be saved and that no one will be lost. Salvation is conditional on man's part also (Hebrews 5:9).

The gospel must be heard (Romans 10:13-17) by one before salvation of his soul can take place. Yet, salvation is not by hearing only. The gospel must be believed before one can be saved (Mark 16:16). However, salvation is not by faith only. Repentance is necessary for salvation (Acts 17:30-31). Yet, repentance alone does not save. The confession of Christ is necessary for salvation (Romans 10:9-10). Yet, this confession alone does not save. Baptism for (in order to) the remission of sins is essential for salvation (Acts 2:38). However, baptism alone does not save one. All of these are necessary for salvation. None of them alone saves. Also unless the Christian remains faithful he will lose his salvation.

Declaration of the "whole counsel of God" is important (Acts 20:27). When a person is baptized into Christ, Christians rejoice. Why does this rejoicing take place? We rejoice because one has complied with God's instructions concerning becoming a Christian. The rejoicing is due to the completeness of obedience to the teaching found in the Bible having to do with

becoming a Christian. The rejoicing is not because of the baptism alone.

To react to the faith only position by preaching more on baptism and less on what faith really is may serve only to polarize the positions further. Balance is needed. When was the last time you heard a sermon preached on the confession of Christ? Is it not as essential for salvation as baptism? If the plan of salvation is not preached in a balanced way people may get the idea that we believe one part of God's plan is all that is really important.

I make no claim to having achieved the perfect degree of *balance*; however, I am working at it. *Unbalanced* teaching certainly does not please God, and, indeed, it confuses men. This is no small matter. As *balance* is vital to physical life, it is also essential to proper spiritual life. Souls are at stake! Eternity hangs in the balance!

—1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I am happy to have brother Gray as my co-worker at the Sixth Avenue church, and look forward to future articles from him.

Armstrong-ism Refuted

(No. 1)

For many years Herbert W. and Garner Ted Armstrong have been on radio and television. Many of us can remember when they were a team and took time about with speaking duties. Then came the span of time when Garner Ted did more speaking than did his father. Some years back there was a parting of the ways between father and son due to alleged



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

charges of moral misconduct on Garner Ted's part. In recent years the program has featured just the preaching of Herbert W. Armstrong. He is already in his early nineties (born in 1892) and yet is still going strong. The year of 1892 was also the year of the BIRTH OF the late and lamented Gus Nichols, founding father and first editor of WORDS OF TRUTH; but what a vast difference between the Alabama son of righteousness and truth -- the noble Nichols -- and the son of religious perversion and error personified -- Herbert W. Armstrong! Some years back I remember hearing brother E. R. Harper (one of the greatest preachers ever to be heard on radio or to grace the pulpit) say at the Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship's "Open Forum" that the Armstrong father-and-son team could preach more error in thirty minutes than any other two men he knew! I concur in this and have heard them both

many, many times across the years, yea even across the decades.

ARMSTRONG AND HIS CHURCH

Mr. Armstrong teaches that *his* church, *The World-Wide Church of God*, is divine in origin. How can it be HIS and yet be of divine origin? The Old Testament speaks of God who would set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, but never says anything by way of prophetic prediction, not so much as a particle, about Armstrong's church (Daniel 2:44, 45). Isaiah 2:1-4 and Micah 4:1-3 speak of the Lord's house or kingdom being established. But they say a great big nothing about Armstrong and his World-wide Church of God. Zechariah (6:12, 13) speaks of the Messiah (the Branch) who would build the temple of the Lord; but the post-exilic prophet must have forgotten (?) to mention Armstrong and his church! In Matthew 16:18 Jesus spoke of building "my church," but said nothing of one by Armstrong which would not and could not exist until the twentieth century. Paul (in such crystal-clear passages as I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 1; and Colossians 1) makes mention of Christ's body which is the church. Paul is silent as a tomb about any church of divine origin which would belong to Herbert W. Armstrong. I do not deny that Hebert W. Armstrong has what he calls his church; I just deny that it has any divine derivation linked with it -- NONE at all!! Like the human plants (organizations) to which our Lord alluded in Matthew 15:13 the Armstrong church is not a divine plant; it is a human plant. Hence, "rooting-up time" for it will surely come. Marshall Keeble

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"Broken Homes & Handicapped Children"

Continued from page 2

I leave for them a good name? What a great and lasting heritage is that of a good and honorable name. What a blessing a home has been when sons and daughters are proud of the name of their parents; when they can truly say, unashamedly and with pride, "I am glad and honored to say that he is my father, that she is my mother!"

What a blessing it is to be reared in a Christian home. The memory of a Christian home, the memory of Bible reading and prayers of a godly father and Christian mother may be the guiding light for a son or daughter lost in

the darkness of the night of sin, or a beacon light that brightens the path that leads to God!

My friends, hear me! Are you listening? What do you suppose might have been the final destiny of the prodigal son, described in Luke, chapter 15, had it not been for the home he had to remember? The Bible says, "He remembered." Yes, he remembered his father; a father who loved him, loved him so much that he ran to meet him, fell on his neck and kissed him when he returned home.

Surely, this reception was no surprise to this son who remembered his father! Yes, he remembered all the blessings of the home he left. The memory of this home finally brought the son to repentance and back to the home of love, joy, peace, happiness, life and dignity! How great is the memory of a godly home! May I ask every parent of our great unseen audience of possibly millions, what kind of home are you providing for your children to remember?

(More to follow)

—P.O. Box 5010, Texarkana, TX 75501.

Armstrong-ism Refuted

Continued from page 3

used to say to denominational people, "You had better get out before rootin'-up time comes!" This is what we say to every devotee of Armstrong-ism.

ARMSTRONG AND NAMES

Armstrong-ism has not always been known under this exclusive title. In earlier years it was known as the Radio Church of God. Again, one would look in vain in Holy Writ for such an organization. Radio is a twentieth century phenomenon and obviously will not be found in a volume completed nineteen centuries ago. This movement also is known by its *Plain Truth* magazine, its radio and television programs of *World Tomorrow*, and by its educational arm -- Ambassador College out in California. The whole movement revolves around one name -- Armstrong. He founded it, has promoted it, has defended it, has popularized it, and has made it into an organization that brings in tens of millions of dollars annually. It is a rich and wealthy movement -- thanks to the uncounted thousands who send money to him regularly! Mr. Armstrong cannot say with Peter, "Silver and gold have I none" (Acts 3:6). The trade-mark of Armstrong-ism on radio and television is that practically ALL the Bible was written (?) with our day in mind. Both father and son have been fond of the concept, "You can read it in YOUR Bible!!" They have done some effective preaching and teaching on some of the wrongs of our day, viz., evolution. But this in no wise offsets the mammoth system of error and poisonous falsehood the movement inculcates.

ARMSTRONG ARROGANCY

Mr. Armstrong wants people, especially his followers, to recognize him as God's apostle and the direct representative to lead his true people in the remaining years before the end of the age. And if the end does not come soon, Mr. Armstrong will not be around as leader of his people till the end. At his age, his years on earth are limited, very limited. Mr. Armstrong cannot qualify as an "apostle." He has not seen Christ (I Corinthians 9:1,2). He has not been with Christ from the beginning of his personal ministry. The true apostles were and could bear inspired witness of what they had seen and heard (John 15:27; Acts 1:8). Mr. Armstrong cannot meet the specified demands set forth in Acts 1:21ff to be a successor to any of the apostles. In fact, there was only one successor and that was Matthias who took the place of Judas. Matthias had to have seen Jesus after the resurrection. Again, the nineteenth-century born Armstrong cannot qualify. Whose place did Armstrong take? No one's!! New Testament apostles had all essential credentials to prove they were genuine apostles. Mr. Armstrong has none. He has no more proof that God made him an apostle than Mormon apostles have -- and that is NONE!! He has no more proof that God has chosen him to be a special leader than does the Pope, or Graham, or Oral Roberts.

ARMSTRONG'S POOR TRACK RECORD

Mr. Armstrong surely is not an authority on how many more years this age has left. In the 1950's he predicted that the opportunity to preach would likely terminate in 1972. Thirteen years later (1985) he is still preaching. I heard him just this week. In 1967 he preached a number of things that would be fulfilled in the next five years. When 1972 came and they failed, he had to rewrite this and say they could be fulfilled in the next several years. And of course, they may not be fulfilled in the next several years either. His so-called

prophetic track record makes him much more likely to be wrong than right. Moses said when a prophet says something will come to pass, and it *fails*, he is to be rejected and treated as a false prophet (Deuteronomy 18:22). Mr. Armstrong fully qualifies for the role of the

false prophet. Neither he nor any other man knows when the end will be. Jesus made this crystal clear in Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

Sin And Its Consequences

(No. 1)

There is a tendency to minimize sin, especially our own. Sin is in the lives of us all. Paul stated, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 6:23). In the same chapter he quotes Psalms 10:7: "There is none righteous, no not one" (Romans 6:10). Sin is like filth: one becomes more accustomed the longer it is around.



W. Edwin Kearley

WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF SIN?

Paul tells us, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). Also he said, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Corinthians 15:22).

Why did God constitute man with the ability to sin? We might as well ask why God so constituted water as to be necessary to life but will also destroy life. Fire is necessary to warm our bodies and cook our food; but if misused it will extinguish life. The only thing we know is: God in his wisdom created man with a power of choice. He must choose to obey God, or to disobey God.

ONLY GOD CAN ESTIMATE THE ENORMITY OF SIN

We are limited to the span of time we have lived; God has always been. We are limited to our finite knowledge and wisdom; God has all wisdom and all knowledge.

WHAT IS SIN?

All unrighteousness is sin" (I John 5:17). Sin is also the violation or transgression of the law. John said, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the

transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). It is a sin for one to violate his conscience. Paul taught . . . "for whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23). Doing nothing, or neglect, is sin, too. James said, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

SIN IS TERRIBLE

We can get a glimpse of *the awfulness of sin*. The terribleness of sin is seen in its consequences. May we observe some examples.

Sin drove Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. God had placed them in a paradise. They were to keep and dress the garden. There was one prohibition. God said, ". . . of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 3:16-17). The devil in the form of a serpent came and tempted Eve to eat, and she gave the fruit to Adam and he ate. They hid from God. God found them hiding (?) themselves from him. They had sewed fig-leaves together to hide their nakedness. God put coats of skin upon them and banished them from the Garden of Eden. Because of sin they could not eat of the tree of life. They were to die!

The destruction of the world came because of sin. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth . . ." (Genesis 6:5-7).

God sent a flood that covered the earth and destroyed man, beast, creeping things and the fowls of the air. Only Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives were spared from punishment because of sin.

(More to follow)

—103 Elena Ct., Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

A Question Answered

Brother Nichols, Is it wrong to call a building "the church of Christ?"

Answer: The PEOPLE are, or comprise, the "church" of the Bible. Paul persecuted the *church* when he arrested MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH (Galatians 1:13). However, I do not believe it is wrong to put on the building the name of the group which worships therein. Serious reflection will (I think) enable all to see this is true. If you come by my house, and see on a mailbox my name, you know that mailbox is not I, nor is it a person at all. Neither is it

necessary for my sign to say: "Flavil H. Nichols Gets His Mail In This Box!"

Likewise, it is not necessary for a sign at the meeting-house to say: "Church of Christ Meets Here." My name is printed on my stationery: yet no one imagines that a sheet of paper is "Flavil H. Nichols." My name is on the ball-point pen which I use, yet that pen is not a person. In each case the mailbox, the paper, or the pen, is for the use of the individual named on it. The same thing applies to the church-house: it is for the use of the "church" (people) of Christ.

—The Editor.



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Words Of

TO



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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 1985

NUMBER 16

In Memoriam Of Cladius Quinton Alexander

By LEVI SIDES

The year was 1920. Woodrow Wilson was President of the United States. Thomas Erby Kilby was governor of the State of Alabama. George VI was King of England. Newspapers were filled with reports of the refusal of the U.S. Senate to ratify the League of Nations' Covenant on March 19; of the beginning of the first regular licensed radio broadcasting on August 20; and, of a bomb explosion on the Wall Street in New York, killing thirty and injuring one hundred, on September 16. But, one of the more memorable and unrecorded events of this year occurred near Berry, Alabama on Sunday morning, July 11. A baby was born to Lula and Otto Alexander. They named him Cladius Quinton which family and friends would shorten to just "C.Q."



C. Q. Alexander

C. Q. was a brilliant young man. He finished high school at Berry, as Salutatorian of his class, in a day when it was a struggle to finish high school much less finish at the top of the class. A classmate said of him: "He was smart enough to have been a chemist or engineer but fame and fortune were not as important to him as touching the lives of his fellow beings." He worked willingly with his hands and studied diligently to be a minister of the "glorious gospel of Christ" (II Corinthians 4:4).

C. Q. was a good man. Like Barnabas, his life was not lacking in any goodness (Acts

11:24). It was good in its aim, purpose, and accomplishments.

C. Q. was a Christian like Paul (Acts 26:29). He was a Christian in name, in fact, on location, in persecution and suffering, in zeal, and to the end (II Timothy 4:7-8).

C. Q. was a lover of the church. He preached and lived Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." The church was No. 1 in all his priority lists. Since his baptism on Sunday, February 18, 1951, brother C. Q. missed only two worship services — one when he had the influenza, and the other time was the day of his death.

C. Q. was a family man. He loved Louise McDonald Alexander (whom he married on December 13, 1941) "as Christ also loved the church" (Ephesians 5:25). His love for his children, Anita and Larry, was clearly seen. He had the love and respect of his children's spouses. One of the highlights of any day for Angie Nix, or Leah and Brian Alexander was to visit with their granddad. Audley, Albert, Cornelius and Gladys Ronning knew of their brother's love and spiritual concern.

C. Q. was a gospel preacher. He seemed to have a knack for being at the right place at the right time saying the right words. He spoke words of encouragement to the young, as well as helped the elderly to feel they still had dignity and worth. He visited the sick and sat with families when their loved ones "went down into the valley of the shadow of death" (Psalms 23:4). He missed family gatherings, meals, and vacations to be with people in need. He never had the "day-off" because he was only a telephone call away. He loved people -- Christians and non-Christians -- and they loved him. In the pulpit, in the classroom, in the streets, in homes, in hospitals, brother C. Q. was a preacher who served the Lord

and people.

He believed in the verbal inspiration of the scriptures, believed them to be powerful, and believed them to be all that modern man needs (II Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12). Thus, his sermons were filled with scripture quotations and illustrations. He was constantly seeking and making visual aids to improve his proclamation of the gospel. He was continually studying the Bible because his hunger and thirst for it was great (Matthew 5:6).

C. Q. was a humble man (Matthew 18:4). He was not proud or haughty, never arrogant or assertive, and never envious of others. He reflected an attitude of submission. Meekness, modesty, and lowliness were his characteristics. He lacked all the signs of pride.

C. Q. was a builder of congregations. Of Abraham's devotion, an old Bible Commentator wrote, "You could tell the direction of his journey by the smoke of his altars." You could tell the success of Brother Alexander by observing the churches he served. From Old Shiloh (Midway), 1954-55; to Macedonia, 1956-70; to White's Chapel, 1970-1975; to Reform 1975-1976; to Cleveland, 1976-1981; to Crossroads, 1981-1984 - success can be seen. These congregations continue to grow, which is an enduring monument to Brother Alexander.

C. Q. was a developer of church leaders (Titus 1:5). From his great teacher, Gus Nichols, he had learned "As a stream can rise no higher than its fountain source, neither can a church rise any higher than its leadership." He knew the value of good church leadership; but he realized that was only half of the need of local congregations. He understood that a followship (i.e., people who go to an eldership to follow them, to help them in God's work) must also be developed.

C. Q. was a cheerful person. When this scribe

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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 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS . . . Editor
1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501

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Rising Costs Force Rate Increase

By Flavil Nichols

A letter dated April 12, 1985, from Mr. Horace Moore, Vice-President and Publisher of *The Northwest Alabamian* (which firm publishes *Words Of Truth*), states in part:

"It has become necessary to raise the WORDS OF TRUTH subscription rates. This is due to the recent postage increase and rising cost of labor and materials involved in publishing the WORDS OF TRUTH.

"The new rate will be (\$.20) per copy per issue, effective May 15, 1985. I feel this new rate is fair and just . . ."

The February postal rate increase was so great that Mr. Moore tells me the March postage alone for *Words Of Truth* was almost \$3,000. *The Northwest Alabamian* should not be expected to absorb this increased cost at the current subscription price. The paper has been kept in constant circulation with a minimum of margin above the cost of production and mailing.

Our last rate increase in subscription was March 19, 1982, when it went from 11¢ to 15¢ per copy. Increases in the cost of labor, paper, and other supplies, as well as the maintenance and updating of equipment, have not since then been allowed to push the rate upward. Some brotherhood journals (e.g., *The Gospel Advocate*), have switched from weekly to fortnight scheduling due to the increased cost of production and postage.

Words Of Truth shall continue to be published every Friday. Effective May 15, 1985, the rate will advance from the current 15¢ per copy, to 20¢ per copy. Even with this increase, our paper costs only \$10.40 per year. This is more than two dollars a year LESS than the cost of only one (1) first-class postage stamp per week!

I appeal to the elders of all congregations who send *Words Of Truth* to their membership.

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Children's Responsibility In The Home

V. E. Howard

Editor's Note: This is the second of three articles by Bro. V. E. Howard. We are indebted to him for permission to quote this material from his book, *Broken Homes And Handicapped Children* (1972): Central Printers and Publishers. He presented some of these lessons in a recent meeting at Sixth Avenue. --Flavil H. Nichols.

Children have a responsibility to their parents. It is the very first duty of children to obey their parents. Paul said, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1). To the Colossians he wrote: "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Colossians 3:20). In Romans 1:20 Paul classifies disobedient children with those who are fornicators, murderers, haters of God and without understanding. Disobedient children are in the category with those who are without natural affection. The child must ever yield to the superior judgment of the parents. This is God's way! The only exception is when parents contradict the word of God. According to the account of Luke, chapter 2, Jesus was subject to his earthly parents.

HONOR OF PARENTS

Not only must children obey their parents, they must also honor and respect them. "Honor thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:2,3). Some children may obey the wishes of their parents, but they puff up or "pout" about it, or make ugly remarks. Others refer to their parents as "the old man" or the "old woman," or call their parents by their first names. Some children "obey" their parents if it is their will to do. For example, a mother may ask a child to go across the street to the neighborhood grocery store and get a loaf of bread. But the child replies, "I don't want to." The mother insists, "I told you to go to the store, and get a loaf of bread." The child again replies, "I don't want to. Make John go." Then the parent really declares authoritatively, "Did you hear me? I mean go!" But the child, who has heard such exclamations before, calmly answers, "I will, if you let me get some candy!" The mother replies, "Okay, you may have the candy, but you do what I told you to do!" The child really *obeys!* He gets the candy -- and incidently, a loaf of bread! What a mistake for obedience. Could be a mistake for life! Such attitudes are in conflict with the spirit of honoring parents.

When children grow up without learning to obey, honor and respect their parents, they fail to develop respect for any authority. This means problems for them in the future. When they do not have a healthy, natural respect for their parents, then they will have no respect for their teachers at school, or the policeman on the corner. Juvenile Delinquency is often the result of a home without discipline and correction motivated by love -- *home delinquency.*

There were juvenile delinquents even back in the Old Testament days -- and they were dealt with severely! Stern penalties, even the death penalty, were handed out to them for such sins as smiting their parents, cursing their parents, or being uncontrollable and rebellious. Hear God's instructions to Israel concerning a rebellious son! Are you listening? "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious

son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not harken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city . . . And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear" (Deuteronomy 21:18-21). We would not advocate such punishment today; but we need to remember how God regarded such behavior in Old Testament times.

POWER OF EXAMPLE

Parents are responsible for training children and the training school is the home. Remember, the wise man of God said, "Train up a child . . ." (Proverbs 22:6). One of the best ways to train children is by setting the proper example before them. We should not expect our children to do as we say and expect them to do right unless *we* are doing what we are saying is right. Some times fathers punish their sons for smoking their fathers' cigarettes. Mothers may wash their daughters' mouths out with soap for repeating words that flowed from the fountain of their mother's mouth. Many parents punish their children for lying when the children learned their first lesson of falsehood and deceit from their parents. Children are soon impressed by double standards. Parents cannot say, "Don't do as I do -- but do as I say." It is folly for parents to try to teach children a way they do not live themselves. Even in some homes which are supposed to be Christian homes, the Christian influence of parents is very poor. For example, The parents who SEND their children to "Sunday school and church," but stay at home and read papers, watch TV, or go to the golf club, are poor examples. It is very difficult for one to convince someone else of something he doesn't do himself!

But we need to teach our children not only by our examples, but by precepts also. We need to teach our children obedience. The Lord, in speaking of Abraham, said, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment" (Genesis 18:19). In Ephesians 6:4 Paul commands parents, especially fathers, to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

NEED FOR DISCIPLINE

The rearing of children must also include proper discipline and correction. There is no doubt about the voice of Solomon: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Proverbs 13:24). "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shall deliver his soul from hell" (Proverbs 23:13, 14).

Discipline is not cruelty. Paul commands parents not to provoke their children to wrath. We should never punish while in extreme anger, nor to relieve our own feelings, but only in love and because of disobedience or misconduct. Punishment should never be inconsistent. When parents do not agree and cooperate in discipline, they often do nothing but harm the child. Discipline finds its real success, not in its severity, but in its certainty!

Children should be taught the meaning of

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Rising Costs Force Rate Increase

Continued from page 2

to continue your subscriptions. During the years since the current rate was set, doubtless your contributions have increased by more than enough to meet this rise. As you have wisely adjusted upward the salary of your preacher to keep pace with the cost of living increases, so you doubtless have expected this rate increase. Also you realize that the cost of other literature for your members is gradually climbing. It is inevitable that the rate for this journal must be increased. Perhaps you may wish to ask your members to start giving more each week to offset this rise in costs.

We also should like to increase our readership. Already this paper is mailed into many States, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. But some churches do not yet send it to their entire membership. We respectfully ask those Elderships to prayerfully consider this avenue of teaching for their congregations each week. Sample copies may be requested from *Words Of Truth*, P.O. Box 430, Haleyville, AL 35565.

We have plans for some biographical stories this summer about selected preachers of recent generations. [Readers are hereby invited to contribute historical or other interesting information regarding Bro. C. A. Wheeler, who converted my father (the late Gus Nichols) and started him to preaching.] Also, to mark the tenth anniversary of his death, this Editor plans in a fall issue to feature Gus Nichols; and a tract published by him will be reprinted in serial form. Elders, think of the advantages of having men like John Waddey, Robert R. Taylor, Jr., and W. A. Holley (to name a few of our regular contributors) on your staff, teaching your membership week after week via WORDS OF TRUTH! Without hesitation or apology I respectfully urge you to continue sending this journal to your entire list of members, and to selected friends whom you wish to convert.

A congregation may send to the publisher the list of its membership, and their mailing addresses (be sure to include Zip codes). Send to: Words Of Truth, P.O. Box 430, Haleyville, AL 35565. Each family will receive WORDS OF TRUTH for one month, and the bill will be sent to the treasurer.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND SUBSCRIPTIONS TO JASPER. That only delays their being in-

cluded in the mailing. All mailing, change of addresses, billing, and all other business, is taken care of at the Haleyville address.

We believe people will understand this rate hike is reasonable, and will continue to sub-

scribe wholeheartedly to WORDS OF TRUTH. Please command us fully if we can be of service to you, or to the great Cause which we mutually love.

In Memoriam Of Cladius Quinton Alexander

Continued from page 1

asked some what they remembered most about Brother Alexander, they replied: "His big friendly smile," "His clean jokes," "His friendly personality;" "His unique laugh." He knew "A merry heart doeth good like medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones" (Proverbs 17:22).

C. Q. was a supporter of young preachers and a lover of older preachers. He loved to

think of the scripture: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (Romans 10:15). Brother C. Q. taught that "preaching the gospel" is the greatest and most rewarding work in the world. He would encourage young men to preach and young women to marry preachers. He would provide

Armstrong-ism Refuted

(No. 2)

Perhaps the two strongest pillars of Armstrong-ism would be emphasis upon sabbath-day keeping for our day, and his version of Anglo-Israelism. The latter is our particular point of emphasis for this study.

Armstrong teaches that the people who make up Great Britain and America, in reality, constitute the lost ten tribes of Israel. Three implications growing out of this are: (1) the people of these two countries compose some sort of superior race, which smacks of Hitlerism and his German nationalistic propaganda during the 1930's and the early 1940's; (2) the throne of David is, in reality, the British throne and is currently held by Elisabeth; and (3) that Judah and Israel have remained



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

distinct through the centuries and still are distinct.

A BRIEF HISTORY

This doctrine is neither new nor peculiar to Hebert W. Armstrong. However, it is not nearly old enough to be Biblical in origin. Few present errors are. Richard Brothers (1757 1824) is the daddy of this far-fetched system of garbled theories, race superiority, and materialistic emphasis. He was a British naval officer. The system has had its "defenders" in the years since. J. H. Allen, around the turn of the century (1902) published a work called JUDAH'S SCEPTRE AND JOSEPH'S BIRTHRIGHT. Armstrong was just a lad of ten at that time. Armstrong would wait another sixty-five years before he would wade deeply into this theory of British Anglo-ism. Armstrong claims the key for understanding all these things was reserved for him, and all these matters had been sealed till the latter half of the twentieth century. It is very strange that Richard Brothers had the key many decades before Armstrong was a mere lad. There is strong and amazing similarity between Allen's book and usage of certain key scriptures and Armstrong's book, THE UNITED STATES AND BRITISH COMMONWEALTH IN PROPHECY, in 1967, and his usage of key scriptures. It would be amazingly amazing if this were nothing but a coincidence.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE MOVEMENT

What, in essence, is the theory? Armstrong says the Abrahamic promises were composed of race (Abraham to be made a great nation) and grace (the blessing to all earthly families by his seed). Race or birthright was never given to the Jews, but to Joseph's descendants. Grace or sceptre came through Judah or the Jews. Armstrong denies the term "Jew" ever applies to the house of Israel. With the division in Rehoboam's day Judah retained the sceptre; but the birthright went to Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Armstrong says David's throne must last forever. Jesus will occupy it when he comes. Zedekiah was the last king to occupy it and its location was changed. The secret of this changed location was to be revealed in the last times and of course to one Herbert W. Armstrong! Armstrong refers back to Judah's two sons, Pharez and Zarah. He says a breach

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Children's Responsibility In The Home

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responsibility. When we give them things to do, we should see that they do them well. We are destroying our children's future when we permit them to grow up without discovering the meaning of hard work. And, by teaching and example, we should instill in them the principle of Colossians 3:23: "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

There is a clearly discernible inclination on the part of children to argue with parents about their judgment and decisions. Do not permit it! It corrupts and confuses authority and rule. If the parent's directions are subject to debate and quibbling on the part of the child, then the parent does not have the authority he should have. This does not mean that the parent should be like a dictator, make a rule and stifle all comment, ramming it down the throat; but I do emphatically advise to state the rule clearly, kindly, and hear any reasonable comment upon it -- but do not permit arguing and disputing to continue over your authority! The child will wear you into

weariness and permissiveness, if you are not careful. Stand firmly and be the parent of authority, not the weakling who can be argued out of anything. To descend to the level of arguing destroys the reserve and distance that lies between authority and obedience, and parent and child.

Curtis E. Ramey, former Judge, Juvenile Court, Huntsville, Alabama, stated in an address given at the Walnut Street church of Christ in Texarkana, Texas:

"Do not give the child everything his little heart desires. You can destroy people by taking away their dignity, ability and desire to work for and possess their own things. Overdoting paternalism will kill and stifle individuality and make the recipient a mere puppet of the giver. Show children the glory and manliness of work. To give them toy trains, cars, spaceships and guns when they need love and companionship is to give them stones instead of bread. The concept of giving children complete freedom -- plus every material thing

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Armstrong-ism Refuted

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occurred between these two but was to be healed in the future. David, Zedekiah, and even Christ all belonged to the Pharez line. The break would be healed by a descendant of Zarah who would ascend the throne. When Zedekiah was rejected the throne of David was transferred from Judah to Israel. Armstrong says that Zedekiah's sons were killed but a daughter, Tea-Tephis, was taken by Jeremiah to Ireland. There she married King Herremon of Ireland. She was of Pharez; he was of Zarah. The break was healed. Armstrong naturally claims to be a descendant of this King Herremon. The throne was moved from Ireland to Scotland to England. Queen Elisabeth is now holding it down till Jesus comes. Armstrong claims that Jesus even sent his apostles on a trip to the British Isles during his personal ministry. Armstrong has Britain today as Ephraim and the U.S. as Manasseh. The throne of England is really David's throne

and this is what Jesus will occupy when he comes. "Far-fetched" is entirely too tame a term for this outlandish theory!

A REFUTATION

Armstrong-ism has no better basis to conclude that Britain and America are the ten lost tribes than the Mormons who have sought in vain to land the ten lost tribes here in America at an early date. After the captivity in Babylon the two nations of Judah and Israel were united again, and any of them in Cyrus' empire were free to return to the land of Palestine. Ezekiel 37 makes clear that Judah and Israel were to become one nation again. Other prophets teach the same truth.

People of the British race are descendants of Japheth, not Shem. They are descendants of the Celts, the Anglo-Saxons, and the Scandinavians. America is a melting-pot of many strains. The present ruling house in England is German in origin, not Israelitish.

There is not a shred of truth supporting Jeremiah's supposed trip to Ireland or that the apostles went to the British Isles on the Limited Commission in Matthew 10. They stayed in Palestine in that chapter! There is no proof about the throne of David being transferred to Israel! Certainly there is no proof of any connection therewith between that and Ireland, Scotland, and England. David's throne is not in London; it is in heaven. It is not occupied by a British Queen; it is occupied by a King -- the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He has been on that throne since the day of Pentecost as per the record in Acts 2. Armstrong-ism strikes out all three times while up to bat in seeking to bolster this far-fetched theory. It has nothing but fancy to undergird it and nothing but error to sustain it.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

Children's Responsibility In The Home

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they want, with little or no responsibility on their shoulders, seems to have produced a generation of irresponsible adults. It is a tragedy of the first order for a child to grow up thinking there is nothing more important than a new car, a new house or new clothes -- to put his whole values on things that you can touch and taste and feel. Young people will not learn to stand on their own two feet so long as others underwrite them. I'll never forget the pathetic sight of a stooped and aged mother coming to court to pay her 45-year-old son's drunkenness fine. You don't help people by mopping up after them and their wrongdoing. Let them pay the penalty for their wrong. It is God's and nature's way of warning against violating basic laws. Give your child the important intangibles, not the transient tangibles."

Judge Ramey declared, "The child ought to be exposed to fear and terror. Build the positive attribute of courage in the child. Courage is the keystone of character. It is in short supply in our time. Teach the child that fear is the unholy ghost and that he need fear only fear itself. Teach the child that he can conquer the world if he will not bow to fear. Courage comes from being reconciled with God, with self and with your fellowman. It comes from righteousness. The wise man said, 'The righteous are bold as lions, but the wicked flee when no man pursueth.' We need people with starch in their spines and with convictions for which they would ultimately die. A generation ago, so-called liberal progressives advised mothers to avoid whipping the child and inflict no physical punishment, saying that the child is emoting, developing his personality, and that corporal punishment might warp his growth and personality. In other words, they advocated the doctrine of permissiveness. Now, some are seen leading a band of "peacenik" demonstrators and draft card burners. They apparently have spawned off on us a generation of physical and moral cowards. Physical and moral courage are different qualities, but a man must have both if he would be great. Build the attributes of courage and manliness in your child. Do this by showing him the virtues of manhood and womanhood in your life. Teach your child to play the part of a man or woman, and not a

whiner and excuse maker:

It matters not how straight the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll;
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul!

Judge Ramey further declared, "Pray to God for wisdom that you may well discharge the awesome responsibility that is yours, because the future of your child, of your world and of yourself, may well turn on how you discharge this responsibility. Do not cripple a child with that awful distorted 'smother' love which unnaturally shields the child from life's bumps, grinds and disappointments. Do not think your little angel could not lie or do wrong. There is a great effort underway to destroy the very idea of individual responsibility. But you are responsible as a parent. Attempted avoidance of responsibility is behind the 'per-

missiveness' movement, the idea of 'non-involvement,' the doctrine that 'society made you a criminal,' and 'God is dead,' and all the rest of the crackpot ideas that shame your age. You do not love your child when you fail to correct. You love yourself. The wise man wrote, 'HE THAT SPARES THE ROD HATES THE CHILD, BUT HE THAT LOVES HIM, IS DILIGENT TO CHASTEN HIM BETIMES' (Proverbs 13:24).

Parents, do remember this! Your children are your responsibility and trust. And if parents are not going to take enough time and show enough interest, and assume enough responsibility, perhaps it would be the part of wisdom to admit this lack of concern and put them out for adoption to someone who would care enough to love and train them.

(Next: 22 Steps to the Electric Chair!)

— P. O. Box 5010, Texarkana, TX 75501.

In Memoriam Of Cladius Quinton Alexander

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transportation for young men to attend brother Gus Nichols' Training Classes, because he knew if the world is to be saved, it will be through the preaching of and obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ" (Romans 1:16).

C. Q. was a friend of little children. His attitude toward them was the same as that of Jesus. "Suffer little children and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14). He would conduct children's classes before the Sunday evening worship services to skill them in Biblical facts, people, and doctrine. He would urge parents to "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

C. Q. was a man who showed no partiality toward people. He was a friend of all. If he met a person of the world, he saw a person for whom Jesus Christ died; if he met a member of the church, he counted him as a brother immediately.

C. Q. is a member of a distinguished group of preachers who have gone home on Sunday -- the Lord's Day" (Revelation 1:10). This list

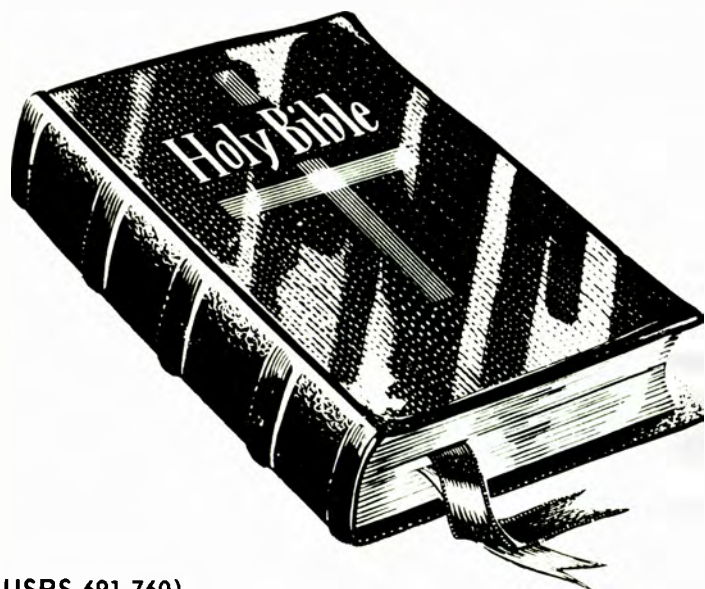
includes Alexander Campbell, H. Leo Boles, Gus Nichols, Ira North and many more. It was only fitting that he leave for Heaven on Sunday, his favorite day of the week, for it was on this day he experienced physical birth, spiritual birth, and, now on April 22, 1984, gone "to be with Christ, which is far better" (Philippians 1:23).

You will never see the name of C. Q. Alexander written in lights. You will probably never see a book written about his life and ministry. It is doubtful that his name will be written in the minds of every Christian today. But, one thing is for sure: the name of C. Q. Alexander is written in the "Book of Life" (Philippians 4:3; Revelation 21:27). That is all he worked for. Really, that is all that matters!

So we say,
Farewell, God speed,
Christian Soldier,
Goodbye, Old Friend,
See you in the morning.

—125 Mountainview Drive, Montgomery, AL 36109.

Words Of



(USPS 691-760)

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 1985

NUMBER 17

Sin And Its Consequences

(No. 2)

It is difficult for us to conceive the awfulness of sin. This is because it is not an easy thing for us to recognize ourselves as sinners.

The price of our atonement from sin shows the awfulness of sin. John revealed, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"



W. Edwin Kearley

(John 3:16). My sin and your sin were so awful, redemption cost the blood of the Son of God. Can you think of a greater cost?

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN TO US? We should be afraid of sin. How keen is your sense of evil? At the University of Southern California, mice were being prepared for a space flight. "The mice were laboratory bred; for generations they had lived in captivity. None of them had ever seen a cat. Yet, whenever a few drops of cat scent were placed in one of two passageways, the mice refused to travel through the one that suggested a cat's presence. Some unknown instinct told the mice that cats are their enemies." (Margaret J. Anderson, *Decision*, June, 1970, Pg. 14).

We cannot rely on instinct. We must use our knowledge of God's word and our awareness of our surroundings to protect us from evil. Paul taught, "... Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Romans 12:9). He commanded, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thessalonians 5:22).

Sin separates us from God. Isaiah stated a universal truth: "Behold, the Lord'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, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1-2).

Man is the offender.

Sin brings death or eternal separation from God. To the Romans Paul warned, "For the wages of sin is *death* . . ." (Romans 6:23). James tells of the grave responsibility of evangelism. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from *DEATH*, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20).

Mankind often bears physical consequences of sin. Jimmy Allen, in his book "*What Is Hell Like?*" tells about "Getting In and Out of Sin." "Have you ever seen a cow go into the water? She walks in very leisurely, a slow step at a time. She gets in about belly deep

and with tail swishing, she looks around. Finally, she gets a drink. Did you ever watch a frog get into the water? He hops along the bank, and the first you know, he's in -- head, ears, and all. We don't get into sin like a frog gets into the water; we get into sin like a cow gets into water. It's a gradual process."

Just as we get into sin gradually, we get out gradually. Of course, we got out from under its *guilt* immediately (Mark 16:16). However, as far as *practice* is concerned, that is something else. It is a struggle to put good habits in the place of bad habits.

When the body is destroyed by dissipation, it is impossible to make restoration.

(More to follow).

—103 Elena Ct., Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Hitch-Hiking

Doesn't Lead Toward Heaven

Edsel Burleson

In "Progress" there appeared this very interesting information about the church:


Total membership	1400
Non-resident membership	75
Balance to do the work	1325
Elderly--have done their share	25
Balance left to do the work	1300
Sick and shut-in	25
Balance left to do the work	1275
Members uncommitted	350
Balance left to do the work	925
Christmas and Easter members	300
Balance left to do the work	625
Too tired and overworked	300
Balance left to do the work	325
Alibiers	200
Balance left to do the work	125
Too busy somewhere else	123
Balance left to do the work	2
Just you and me -- and brother!	<i>you'd</i> better

get busy, for it's far too much for me!

It is a sad situation when the church has such a large part of its members just "going along for the ride." The greatest problem faced by the average congregation is recruiting workers. Who will teach a class? Who will work in the zone program? Who will encourage the down-trodden? Who will teach the unsaved? Who will? ? ? And on and on the questions go.

This is very much like the familiar fellow by the side of the road with his hand pointing the direction he wants to go. With his thumb he is saying, "You furnish the car, the gasoline, provide for repairs and upkeep, supply the insurance, and I'll ride with you. But if you have an accident I'll sue you for damages." This fellow is "hitch-hiking" and is just want-

Continued On Page 2



Words Of Truth
(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
—Acts 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501

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Hitch-Hiking Doesn't Lead Toward Heaven

Continued from page 1

ing to get somewhere at the other person's expense.

Too many church members have this same beggarly philosophy. They expect all the benefits and privileges that are promised by the Lord, without feeling the slightest responsibility on their part. But Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:21-24).

"Many people who depend on the church, cannot be depended on by the church."

—West End Church of Christ, 420 - 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Preaching

"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" (I Corinthians 1:21). Many have made the astute observation that preaching is a noble "profession" because our Lord was a preacher. This alone places it high above all other "professions," and it at once reminds us that it is designed to serve the



R. W. GRAY

Continued On Page 3

Broken Homes And Handicapped Children

V. E. Howard

[Editor's Note: At Sixth Avenue, Bro. V. E. Howard presented a fine lesson on the home, and consented for Words of Truth to carry it (in large part) to our readers. The following is the final section of a chapter from his book, Broken Homes and Handicapped Children (1972: Central Printers & Publishers). —Flavil H. Nichols]

22 STEPS TO THE ELECTRIC CHAIR

Every road is arrived at by steps and so is every destination, including the death house. This is a true story of life. A young man at age 20 sat in the death row at Tennessee State Prison with only 7 hours remaining before he took the last 22 steps to the death chair. At that time, at the 11th hour, the Governor of Tennessee commuted his sentence and spared his life. He went under 'Operation Crime Prevention' telling his story of how he was saved only 22 steps away. He said, 'I was brought up by Christian parents, and I had a good education. But you're not sent to prison for going to church or school. I'm in prison because I made the wrong decision.' Remember what we said about right values determine right thinking determines right decisions.

Here are 22 steps, I suggest, that just might set a child on the road to the electric chair. Please note them carefully:

1. Begin early and give the child everything he or she wants. Then he will believe the world owes him a living.
2. Start early in the child's life and do everything for him. Never permit him to do the things he is capable of doing for himself, so he will be experienced in throwing burdens on others.
3. Make him thoroughly dependent on you by waiting on him, until the habit is well-established.
4. Permit the child to do as he pleases. He will want to continue this in society.
5. Praise him lavishly in his presence. Show him how much smarter he is than other children.
6. Tell religious jokes in his presence and have a good laugh at the expense of the 'Holy Joes.' Tell him these religious people are all fanatics.
7. Lose your patience easily. Blow up and bluster and blast the air around your child. Unnerve him and prepare him for tension, headaches and ulcers.
8. Tell people that your child never does anything wrong.
9. Ride him all the time and tell him that he is clumsy and can't do anything right. Tell him things are too hard for him and that he should not attempt the things he wants to do. He will accommodate his life to your expectations.
10. Always find fault with him and never compliment him on the things he performs well. Nag him constantly.
11. Run down the government in his presence. Cynically let him hear you say that all politicians are rotten and corrupt and that young people are going to the dogs anyhow.
12. Interrogate him everytime he comes home from school or any place about how he did, and where he did it. This will cause him

to quit telling you anything and clam up. 13. Avoid using the word 'wrong.' It may develop in him a complex. This will prepare him to believe that when he is punished later on for stealing that society is 'against him' and that he is being 'persecuted.'

14. Tell everyone that nothing is too good for your child. Pamper and pet him, and make life easy for him so if he does not have everything he wants, when times get hard, then he will be mentally prepared to take it by force or fraud.

15. Give him more spending money than he needs and never make him earn his own. This way he might rob a bank later on to get money.

16. Make him a cynic by letting him get the impression that there is another 'real' story behind the first story. Poison his mind with suspicious tendencies.

17. Quarrel frequently in his presence and he will be prepared for a contentious life and perhaps a broken home later on in his married life.

18. Satisfy his every whim, caprice and craving for food, drink and everything that has to do with the sense of taste and touch.

19. Take his part against teachers, policemen and neighbors. They are do-gooders and 'prejudiced against your child.' Believe everything your boy says.

20. When he gets into real trouble, always defend yourself and say, 'I never could do anything with that boy.'

21. Try to pressure him into making top grades when he is naturally slow. This will help him to be nervous and unpredictable and eccentric.

22. Let him get the idea it's all right to fudge on his grades, to tell a 'white lie,' to sow a little 'wild oats' and to sneak into functions and activities without paying. Enjoy a hearty laugh with him over his little escapades by which he foxed someone with his budding criminal cunning and deceived someone else with his disarming dishonesty and crookedness.

These may not, but they also may, set your child on a path that leads straight to the cell block that is 22 steps away from a shameful death."

Ladies and gentlemen, God gave you your home, your children, your all! What are you giving to God and the world?

—1644 Hampton Plaza, Texarkana TX 75501

Subscription Goes To 20¢ Per Copy

Due to rising postal rates and the cost of materials and labor, it is necessary to increase the cost of this journal, effective May 15th, to 20¢ per copy. This still is cheaper than a first-class postage stamp per week.

By having Words Of Truth mailed to each family, the congregation supplies its membership with some of the finest Christian journalism. We shall strive constantly to improve the quality of the paper, making it worth every penny of the cost to churches.

—Flavil H. Nichols, Editor.

The Need For Bible Study

A common characteristic of most congregations is that many more people attend the worship service on Sunday morning than the number who attend the Sunday Bible classes. If one will note the charts on the walls or will read various bulletins, he will see this, time and again. We might expect a small gap to exist due to visitors who come only for the worship hour. But the extremes which exist in the church today should not be. The wide margin numerically exists because many local members of the church do not come to Bible study. For one reason (?) or another they feel they have no need for the study which takes place the hour before, or the hour following, worship.



Victor M. Eskew

Contrary, however, to what those who skip Bible classes tell us by their actions, there is a need for Bible study. Only in the hearing of God's word will faith be obtained. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Those who refuse to come to Bible class are missing a faith-building session. They immediately break one of Jude's commands to his readers: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith . . ." (verse 20).

Bible study is also needed in order to be pleasing to God. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). Those who sleep an extra hour on Sunday mornings, and attend only the worship service, thinking they are pleasing to God, are deceiving themselves. The one who studies is pleasing to God; the others are displeasing in his sight.

In addition to these two items, Bible study is needed in order to grow to maturity in Christ. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Peter 2:2). Those who remain in their warm beds, and let Bible study pass them by, violate these words of the apostle. There is no desire on their part for the word of God as they indulge in this "beauty" rest. These are they also who remain babes in Christ. Years after conversion they still have to be "petted" and handled with kid gloves, that is, if they have

not spiritually starved to death by then!

Are you one who wilfully neglects Bible study on Sunday mornings? If so, you need to consider these reasons, and begin attending this beneficial hour. Also, if you miss the Wednesday night classes, you need to consider this article carefully. The same truths apply to you as well. We urge all to add "the grace of

most noble of all purposes.

The church of God at Corinth was a product of preaching (I Corinthians 2:1-4; 4:15). That men may "call upon the name of the Lord" that they might be saved, God has designed preaching to bring them to faith and to invite them to call (Romans 10:13-14). Like the harbinger of good news from a mighty conflict, beautiful feet carry the glad tidings to men who are perishing in eternal night (Romans 10:15). Dying sinners must obey the gospel of Jesus Christ, or suffer the doom of everlasting punishment from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power (II Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Preaching was not designed to destroy, but to save (John 3:17). Whenever the evangelists carried the everlasting gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, the responsive hearer feared God, giving glory to him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters (Revelation 14:6-7). When Philip went down into Samaria "preaching things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:5, 12). His visit caused "great joy" in that city (Acts 8:8). When the Ethiopian eunuch heard and obeyed the message Philip brought him, the record says: "He went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:35-39).

Men should welcome, not repel; receive, not fear; bless, and not curse those who bring them the message of salvation (Acts 16:17). And the right response to those who so preach is far more likely to follow, if the messenger is fully aware of the great responsibility he bears in delivering a message of saving grace. Certain guidelines have been set out by him who bids us preach. Both the demeanor and the delivery of the preacher determines to a great degree the effectiveness of the message upon the hearer. A work so needed, so grand, and a message so powerful, demands that the bearer not bring it with grief but with joy. It demands that he find the most effective, most appealing, most potent manner possible as he plants that seed in the human heart.

The "man of God" must first and foremost learn to "handle aright the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15 A.S.V.). If he is unwilling to pay the price of diligent study, he will do both himself and the "profession" of preaching a favor to seek another work. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves; . . . that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil . . ." (II Timothy 2:24-26). God has decreed that at all times, and under every circumstance, we "speak the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15).

When the aged Paul knew his departure was at hand he charged his preacher friend to "Preach the word; be instant (or, "urgent")-

knowledge" to their life. With this and the other Christian graces we will be assured that "an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 1:5-11).

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS 38843.

Preaching

Continued From Page 2

A.S.V.) in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and shall turn away their ears from the truth . . ." (II Timothy 4:2-4). He was further admonished: "watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist;" and he should make "full proof" of his ministry (II Timothy 4:5).

A careful examination of these divine guidelines for preaching makes it abundantly clear that carelessness and thoughtlessness, fickle-mindedness and lightness, have no place in the thinking and planning of those who would preach the gospel of the Son of God's love. While it is a ministry of joy, it is no less a work of sobriety and fidelity.

One is impressed with the "balance" of the preaching to be done. Reproof, rebuke, and exhortation are all needed. This is especially true of those who propose to follow the Lord. We seemingly stand in constant need that someone teach us again what be the first principles of the oracles of God (Hebrews 5:12-14). This is why the apostle enjoined that "longsuffering" be learned by the man of God. If one who would "preach" becomes so "impatient" with the apparent unconcern of some hearers that he is no longer "gentle toward all," his effectiveness as a teacher is greatly impaired.

A serious problem with preaching over the past several decades has to do with the lack of balance, both in content and in style. There is a tendency to swing from one extreme to the other. And in our midst today are those of both schools. Some are seemingly bent upon self-destruction by an attitude of narrowness and bitterness; while others, feigning the desire to escape that extreme, swing to the opposite end of the pole, advocating the idea that all preaching must be "wholly positive." It is important that we avoid extremes -- as they are self-perpetuating. Extremes always beget extremes.

It is not easy, but it is possible, to be gentle, loving, and kind, while we reprove, rebuke, and exhort. It is easy to allow all preaching to fall into the category of rebuke and reproof. It is equally as dangerous to slip into the habit of "exhorting" only. God has not given us an impossible assignment. We can be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. Let each of us at least aspire to that goal. Let us take the work of preaching seriously, for it is God's message, not our's. May we seek his wisdom in delivering it.

—Rt. 3, Box 306, Bremen, Ga. 30110.



*Invite A Friend To Church With You
On Sunday!*

Are You A Pillar?

The Greek word "stulos" (translated "pillar") refers to a column that helps support the weight of a building. In some places in the Bible it is used metaphorically, and also figuratively; but in other instances it is used illustratively.

One should take notice of the fact that the word we are discussing is "pillar," not "pillow." There is a vast difference in their definition. Please check your dictionary for clear distinctions.

Paul mentions "James, Cephas, and John who seemed to be pillars" (Galatians 2:9). This means that these men were ready to bear responsibility for the success of the church. If you are a "pillar" in the Lord's church, how much weight do you bear? Or could it be said that you are a broken *pillar* that bears no weight at all?

In I Timothy 3:15-16 we read: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." What does this passage mean? It teaches that the local church of Christ has its special responsibility, in its collective capacity, to maintain the doctrine of Christ, in both teaching and practice. Dear Christian friend, are you helping to support the Lord's church to the fullest extent of your ability? Or, are you a broken "pillar" that bears no weight at all?

To the church at Philadelphia, one of the seven churches of Asia, Jesus wrote: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name" (Revelation 3:12).

Have you, Dear Reader, counted the times Jesus used the expression, "my God?" This expression denotes a very close relationship which Jesus sustained to his Father. Today, are you living so intimately with God that you can truthfully refer to him as "my God?" If not, why not? God will be "your God" if you will but permit him to be.

As a *pillar* in the house of the Lord, how much weight do you carry? Are you supporting the Lord's day Bible school? Can you be counted on to be present when the time comes for class? Or, will you be on the beach? or visiting Grandma? or at home sleeping -- too disinterested to make an effort to be where you belong? (Read carefully Hebrews 10:25).

As a *pillar* in the Lord's house, do you support the elders? Or, are you a "thorn in their sides?" Have you become a super-critic of the shepherds of God's flock? How much better it would be to lend them a helping hand! (Read and obey Hebrews 13:17).

As a *pillar* in the house of the Lord, do you help or hinder the preacher in his efforts to spread abroad the glorious gospel of Christ? Paul and Peter, James and John, *et al*, needed and deserved all the support faithful brethren gave them. Preachers today need moral support from all members of the church,



W. A. HOLLEY

whether men or women, young or old, rich or poor. When Moses' arms became heavy, Aaron and Hur held them up until victory could be won (Exodus 17:8-16). As a member of the church, do you represent the strength

of steel? or, the weakness of Jello?

You can be a *pillar* of steel with regard to things moral and spiritual. Which will it be?

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, Ala. 35580.

Repentance

The weakness and ignorance of man has brought sin into the world. Sin is a "transgression of the law" (I John 5:17). The consequence of sin is eternal death (Romans 6:23). But God's love for man caused him to send his only begotten Son to die on the cross of Calvary that the world should not perish (John 3:16). Salvation is a gift (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8). However the gift is conditional upon obedience. The writer of Hebrews stated, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:8-9).

Suppose an automobile dealer were to tell one: "If you will come to my place of business and take the key, put it into the ignition, and crank the motor -- you may own that automobile." If one met the conditions, the automobile would be his! The automobile would not have been earned; it would be a gift. Meeting the conditions of salvation does not merit salvation. Jesus said, "So likewise, 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).

One of the conditions of salvation is repentance. Jesus said, "I tell you, nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). To the people of Athens Paul said, "And the times of ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent"



W. Edwin Kearley

(Acts 17:30).

WHAT IS REPENTANCE? Peter said, "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out" (Acts 3:19 NIV). Jesus said, ". . . I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). *Repentance* is turning from the wrong practice to the right practice. *Repentance*, then, is a change of mind followed by a reformation of life. Paul said, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but sorrow of the world worketh death" (II Corinthians 7:10). One may be filled with remorse; but that is not repentance. One may repent of a wrong deed to his fellowman; but unless he regrets wronging *God*, he has not repented of his sins against God.

Judas made an effort to give back the thirty pieces of silver with which he betrayed his Lord, but he did not repent. Instead he went out and hanged himself. His body hung until it fell to the ground (Acts 1:18; Matthew 27:5). Jesus said of Judas, ". . . It had been good

for that man if he had never been born" (Matthew 26:24).

When the new Christian Simon wanted to buy the power from the apostles in order that he might impart the Holy Spirit to others, Peter rebuked him. "But Peter said unto him, thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:21-23). Simon asked Peter to pray for him.

MAY WE GROW IN FAITH WHICH LEADS TO REPENTANCE!

—103 Elena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

WORD of GOD

Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.

The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

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 Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.

The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

Psalms 29:1-4, 9-11

Fulfillment [New Testament] Jesus Said:

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

Fulfillment [New Testament]

That is might be fulfilled which was spoken by E-sa'ias the prophet, saying,

The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and sha-

dow of death light is sprung up.

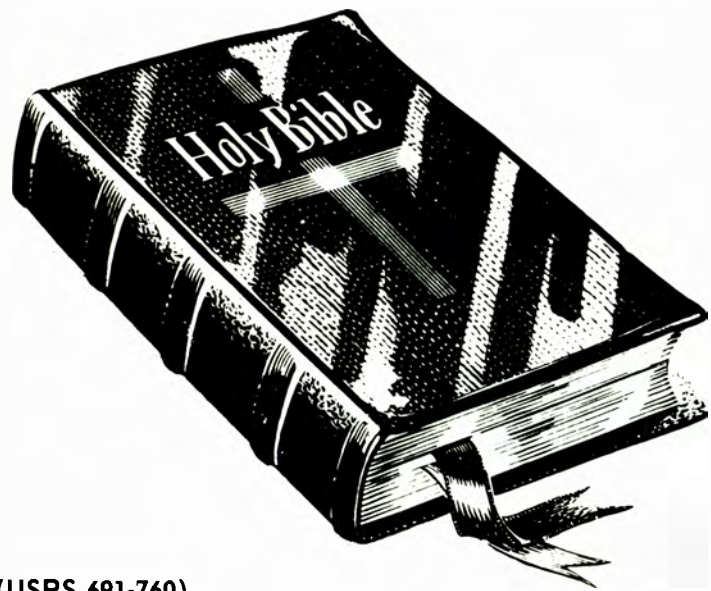
Matthew 4:14, 16

He Seeketh

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

John 4:23-24



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1985

NUMBER 18

Armstrong-ism Refuted

(No. 3)

Another pillar of Armstrongism is his current, constant emphasis upon Saturday, or sabbath-day keeping. He pays no attention at all to the fact that the very law that demanded sabbath-day keeping, the Mosaic system, was nailed to Calvary by God's Son more than nineteen centuries ago (Colossians 2:14-17). He utterly fails to pay proper attention to the first day of the week as the day of worship for Christians (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:1,2). But as part and parcel of his sabbath-day emphasis, he has changed both the crucifixion day and the resurrection day. He has the Lord crucified (?) on Wednesday and raised some time on Saturday afternoon. He insists that Christ was in the tomb for an exact seventy-two hours. But this will not square with the Bible, for he died in the afternoon, and was raised early the first day of the week. This is also a total failure to recognize the Jewish mode of time count. They were as indefinite as sometimes we are in counting time. We might say three days ago and not mean an exact seventy-two hours at all due to counting the portion of today as the third day, yesterday as the second day, and two actual days ago as the first day of the time count. The Jews meant after three days and on the third day as the same. See II Chronicles 10:5 and 12, Esther 4:16 and 5:1 for crystal clear usages of such.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

system contends for a Saturday afternoon resurrection, then this includes Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. That gets two full days and portions of two others. This adds up to four -- not three! Some contend for a Thursday crucifixion with a Sunday resurrection. I was conducting a Bible class several years ago and a lady adamantly advocated this view. This view has him in the tomb a part of Thursday, all of Friday, all of Saturday, and a part of Sunday. That gets four -- not three -- or four day-night periods. What say the Scriptures? Mark 15:42 says that the crucifixion was "the day before the sabbath." The sabbath was Saturday, the seventh day. The day before would be the sixth day of the week, or Friday. Luke 23:54 says "that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on." Haste was made to get the bodies of the three -- Christ and the two unnamed thieves -- off the crosses before the arrival of the sabbath (John 19:31). This haste cannot be explained with either a Wednesday or Thursday crucifixion but can with the Friday crucifixion. Without quibble or question the crucifixion was on Friday. Jesus was buried the day of his crucifixion and in the tomb a part of Friday, all of Saturday, and a part of Sunday. This meets the demands of three days and three nights as the Jewish mode of time counting demanded. They recognized any portion of a day as a day-night or night-day since their new day began at sun-down, not at midnight as with us.

WHAT DAY DID JESUS RISE FROM THE DEAD?

Again, what say the Scriptures? Mark 16:9 is crystal clear in settling the matter once and for all. He wrote, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene out of whom he had cast seven devils (demons -- ASV)." People of the Armstrong fallacy like to

claim that the comma is misplaced in Mark 16:9. They like to move the comma up by several words and make the passage read (or really misread), "Now when Jesus was risen, early the first day of the week he appeared first to Mary Magdalene out of whom he had cast seven devils." This way it leaves rather indefinite the exact time he arose, so that they can read into the text the Saturday afternoon resurrection! The forty-seven KJV translators put the comma in the correct place; so did the one-hundred-and-one ASV translators. Armstrong -- not these one hundred forty-eight -- made the glaring, grievous error in punctuation. Even a misplaced comma can be made to teach grievous error! Here is a case in point!!

Luke confirms this. Luke 24:1 states, "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them." Jesus made at least five appearances on the day of his resurrection as per the Biblical record: (1) Mary Magdalene; (2) certain women; (3) the two travelers going to Emmaus; (4) Simon Peter; and (5) ten of the apostles -- Thomas was absent for some undisclosed cause and Judas was now dead. It is crystal clear he made his appearance to the Emmaus travelers on the first day of the week -- not on Saturday. Saturday would have found them observing the sabbath day with its limitation of travel and not making a trip involving several miles. Remember they did not know that the sabbath day law had been nailed to Calvary the Friday before. Luke 24:13 adds further proof, for therein we read: "that same day," and this ties in with Luke 24:1 which establishes that day as the "first day" of the week. Of further interest is their statement to the stranger

WHEN DID JESUS DIE?
Armstrongism says Wednesday. Since this

Continued On Page 2



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
—Acts 26:35

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Armstrong-ism Refuted

Continued From Page 1

that joined them who was really the Risen Redeemer but they did not yet recognize his true identity. They say in Luke 24:21, "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done." To what did they allude by "mention of these things?" His crucifixion, as verse 20 clearly attests.

John 20:19 adds more proof that when the ten saw him it was still the same day but at evening. Relative to the Lord's stay in the tomb these expressions are used: In Matthew 27:63 it is "after three days." In Matthew 27:64 it is "until the third day." In Luke 24:21 it is "the third day." Yet Jesus taught in Matthew 12:40 that he would be "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." There are no contradictions among these, when one realizes the mode of time count among Jewish people. There are a number of other examples in the Bible where similar language is used as already alluded to earlier in this article.

Jesus was raised on the first day of the week. The first day is when the events of Pentecost occurred in Acts 2. Disciples at Troas met for worship on the first day of the week, as we learn in Acts 20:7. This day is when disciples met for worship in Corinth and contributed of their means as we learn in I Corinthians 16:1,2. It is the Lord's Day and the day in which John was in the Spirit (Rev. 1:10). Sunday fits all these; Saturday fits NONE of these.

Armstrong just does not believe the Bible relative to when Jesus was raised. He has that trouble relative to many points as indicated in this three-part study. Sunday, without question or quibble, is the Lord's resurrection day, and to borrow an Armstrong favorite -- "You can read it in YOUR Bible!" And you can!!

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

A Salute To Mothers!

"Honor thy father and thy mother" (Exodus 20:12) is numerically the fifth of the ten commandments. God required this *before* he gave the prohibitions against murder, adultery, stealing, lying, or coveting.

Keeping this command is linked to a promise from God: ". . . that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Exodus 20:12). A millennium and a half later the Holy Spirit reminded Paul of this promise: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the



Flavil H. Nichols

first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:1-3). Thus we see that this command is the first one which carried a promise with it.

Conversely, the old covenant carried a death penalty for cursing father or mother (Exodus 21:17 and Leviticus 20:9), and Jesus quoted this law in Matthew 15:4.

We note also that outward compliance with parents is not sufficient: God demands that children "honor" their parents. He did not say to obey them "because they are always right" -- but he said: ". . . for this is right."

I am glad the world has set aside one day a year in which we can unanimously honor our mothers! But we should not limit such praise to that one day.

Below is an article submitted by a reader in north Alabama which deals with the subject of Mother.

MOTHER'S DAY OLA EDGEWORTH

Some mothers are worthy of the honour and praise they get on this day; others are not. What about the mother who is not a Christian? What about mothers who have had an abortion? What about mothers who are only living a half-way "Christian" life?

Are such mothers worthy of the honour and praise they get on this day? Can their children "arise up and call her blessed" (Proverbs 1:28)?

If one such mother dies Proverbs 31 should not be read at her funeral. What kind of talk could the preacher make? Mothers, we will surely reap what we sow, and much, much more (Galatians 6:7-8)!

Many mothers never reared their children up in the church; and now they are reaping what they sowed. Not one of the children may be faithful Christians, and it is possible that all are immoral. Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it." All know that sometimes one who was reared right goes astray, but this is an exception to the rule -- not the rule. But parents who have several children and *all* go astray, need to face it; they have failed in their duty! Rearing children right is not easy! No doubt this is the reason so many are not reared right. Some parents do not want to take the time or trouble; but then they reap what they sow when their children are grown.

The old saying is true: children step on your toes when they are small, and on your heart when they are grown. We can't help hear their prayers. Pray for God's help for it is impossible to rear children right without his help.

We often pray for our elders, preachers, and other church leaders; and we should! But who needs help from God more than our mothers?

How many prayers do you hear in *their* behalf? For too long, parents have failed their children, and our nation is crumbling before our eyes. "As goes the home, so goes the nation!"

Mothers, you have a great responsibility! Please don't let your children down. God gave them to you pure and sinless. Why not give them back to him as Hannah did? (I Samuel 1:28).

It is not easy being a mother! But it is a great honour when you do a good job. Worthy mothers deserve all the honour and praise they can get on this day.

Mothers, think of your life: Are you daily living worthy of praise and honour you will get on this day?

Happy is the mother who deserves and gets praise on this day. Happy Mother's Day!

—Rt. 2, Detroit, AL 35552.

WHICH MOTHER ARE YOU?

OLA EDGEWORTH

"Mother, you killed my brother or sister; How can I praise you?
Mother, I would like to live for Jesus,
But I don't know what to do."

-0-

"My Mother gave me away!
Can I praise her on this day?
I can't help wondering where she is
Every Second Sunday in May."

-0-

"My mother taught me to fear the Lord,
And this I'm truly glad.
I know many prayers went up to God
From both her and my dad."

-0-

"Thanks, Mother, for the prayers

Continued on page 4

— Mothers —

Annually the second Sunday in May is Mother's Day. There are many good quotations concerning mothers. Let us look at a few.

"God could not be everywhere, and so he made Mothers" (Jewish Proverb).

"I don't think there are enough devils in hell to take a young person from the arms of a godly Mother" (Billy Sunday).

"All that I am or hope to be, I owe to my angel Mother" (Abraham Lincoln).

"Men and women frequently forget each other; but everyone remembers Mother" (Jerome Paine Bates).

"A Mother is the only person on earth who can divide her love among ten children and each child still have all her love."

Yes, where would we be without Mothers?



George Reed

I am not necessarily speaking about the person who gave birth to you: I am talking about the person who loved you, fixed your meals, helped tie your shoes, put a band-aid on the cut, and rocked you to sleep at night.

I was not reared in a Christian home, but I have good memories of home and Mom.

"You may have tangible wealth untold;
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold;
Richer than I you can never be--
I had a Mother who read to me"
(Strickland Gillian).

We need more godly Mothers who will love their children like the Bible teaches. Solomon said he was, "Tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother" (Proverbs 4:3). Too many children have nothing to go home to after school: both parents are employed. The memories of going home after school to some cookies and milk -- and a big hug from Mom, I'll never forget! Mothers need to greet their children when they get home, and ask them about the day's events. There is nothing like seeing a Mother's smile after a long day

at school!

Paul told Titus that the older women should teach the younger women "to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2:4, 5). The Greek word *oikourgos* is translated "workers at home." Thayer says this word means "keeping at home and taking care of household affairs, domestic." There is more to keeping the house than just dusting, vacuuming, and washing. Mothers need to be women of the word, and not of the world. If it were not for a lot of godly Mothers out there, I know many preachers who would not be preaching today. Children can get much good, solid, advice from their dads; but patience, longsuffering, and kindness comes from Mom. Dads cannot do everything. Mothers were created for something special.

I am glad we have a Mother's Day. My hat is off to all the godly Mothers everywhere!

—17691 Pesante Rd., Salinas, CA 93907.

Reasons Why Dancing Is Sinful

Part 1

It is right and proper for one to demand a Bible reason for Christian conduct. Dancing involves one's conduct. But, if a Christian dances, his reputation for godliness suffers. No Christian boy or girl can properly impress non-Christians on the dance floor. Mothers and fathers -- Christian parents -- should recognize that proms represent times of special danger for Christian boys and girls. The word **prom** means: "A formal dance given by a high school or college class." From the Christian viewpoint the **prom** offers nothing wholesome for Christian boys and girls. Only evil can come as a result of it!

Dancing properly belongs to "the works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:19-21). No one can "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly," while on the dance floor (Titus 2:11-12). The daughter of Herodias gave a dancing exhibition and it resulted in the death of John the Baptist (Matthew 14:1-12). Thus, this girl contributed to the death of a godly man! Many boys and girls begin their journey toward hell on the dance floor . . . wrapped in each other's arms. Christians must never be responsible for the downfall of other people (Matthew 5:16; Romans 2:21-24; I Peter 1:13-17).

We shall herewith present some Bible reasons showing the sinfulness of dancing:

(1) **Dancing restricts one's appreciation of wholesome entertainment.** "If we cannot dance, what can we do for entertainment?"



W. A. Holley

--Well, is there no other entertainment? What about picnics? parties, properly supervised? Thus, those who dance often become obsessed with its thrill and tingling sensation; they think there is nothing else! Surely there is a better way to satisfy the social needs of young people. Remember God when you are young (Ecclesiastes 11:9-10; 12:1). Boys and girls, do not rebel against your parents when they try to guide you into the right way of the Lord (Ephesians 6:1-4).

(2) **Time spent in dancing is time wasted.** Young people should "redeem the time" (Ephesians 4:14-16). Many of today's youth never reach the age of twenty-one; so, do not throw away your life in foolish pursuits. Rather, use your mind and heart to read, learn and obey the truth of God (II Timothy 1:5; 3:15-17). It is too late forever when it is too late. Young people, if you have been guilty of dancing, repent of your sin and return to the Lord's way (Luke 13:3,5; Acts 17:30-31). Your example should always be on the side of truth and righteousness.

(3) **Dancing is wrong because it keeps one out too late.** When one spends Saturday night dancing, one is hardly able, morally, physically, or spiritually, to attend the Lord's service Sunday morning. If the dancers attend the services, the service appears too long and too boring to them. On one occasion some boys -- members of the church -- were serving at the Lord's table, after having been out dancing the night before, were viewed with scorn by some who knew of their conduct which had taken place just a few hours before they came to worship services. It is a sin and a shame to bring reproach, disgrace, and disgust upon the church which Jesus purchased with his own blood!! (Matthew 16:18-19; Acts 20:28). The preacher or the elders have as much right to dance all night and then preach and serve at the worship hour, as

young people have to dance and do the same thing!! If not, why not??

(4) **Dancing is sinful because it is injurious to one's health.** Many often dance till they are exhausted. If one dances just for the exercise (as is sometimes argued), why not dance men with men? Such a practice would kill all interest in dancing. Women dancing with women would not long continue. The environment where dancing occurs is unhealthy. It is not good to mingle with those who have diseased bodies. The truth is, if it were not for sexual attraction there would be no dancing.

(5) **Dancing puts one in the wrong crowd.** "Evil companionships corrupt good morals" (I Corinthians 15:33 A.S.V.). The best examples of Christianity do not practice dancing. Admittedly, some church members do; but they are poor examples of what Christianity ought to be (Philippians 3:17-19). A smoke-filled room may be entered with little danger, if one leaves it quickly, but; if one tarries too long, escape becomes less likely. Young people who drink, use drugs, and dance, the cords of sin become stronger and stronger, giving Satan all the advantage. However, alcohol, illegal drugs, and bodily contact on the dance floor never won any one to Christ.

(6) **Dancing destroys one's love for the church.** Those who dance will not appreciate faithful Christians urging them to give up such an evil practice. Young dancers often resent any person -- parents, preachers or elders -- who refuse to condone dancing. Young people who dance will find it extremely difficult to resist temptations that accompany dancing.

As a rule, the more one dances, the more irregular one becomes in church attendance; the more one dances, the less one loves the

One Hundred Days

How much time does the average child spend in the Bible School program of the church? Tragically, an average probably would be about forty minutes a week for forty weeks a year. On my handy pocket calculator, I found that this is equivalent to twenty-six hours a year. Based on an average school day of five and one half hours, a child would spend about one hundred school days in Bible School by the time he is twenty-one. This means, he is half way through the first grade of Bible School, by the time he is in college.



Ancil Jenkins

Maybe the average I figured is wrong. But even if you double it, the student at age eighteen, still hasn't spent an equivalent amount of time in Bible School that he spent in the first grade.

These figures probably prove very little, except this: If we are depending on our Bible School program to teach our children the Bible, they will be very ignorant of God's book!

How can we help our children to learn more about the Bible? We must support the Bible School program. Our example of regularity in attendance will do much to insure their presence. If we feel it is important, they will feel it is important.

Parents should take an interest in the classes of their children. Some teachers regularly meet with parents to discuss and evaluate their children's progress. If the teacher does not take this responsibility, the parents should take the initiative.

Parents should discuss the Bible School lesson with their children. An ideal time for this is during the drive home from church. In fact, it would be good if the mother and father started by discussing their own lesson.

Bible teaching should also be done in the home. How happy is the home that has a daily time for Bible Study and prayer. With young children, Bible stories can be read and discussed. As children grow older, other study guides can be used.

Some, however, are not able to maintain this discipline. This does not mean that Bible teaching is impossible. Much good material is available on cassette tape. The Bible can be

heard while riding in the automobile. Even Bible stories for children can be obtained.

Parents can relate every-day events or happenings to Bible teachings. Even a dead bird can teach a powerful lesson on God's knowledge and care for us (Matthew 10:30).

Our children will know the Bible if we want them to know the Bible. If we only take them

to Bible School, and depend on it only to teach them, the Bible very well may have little influence on them.

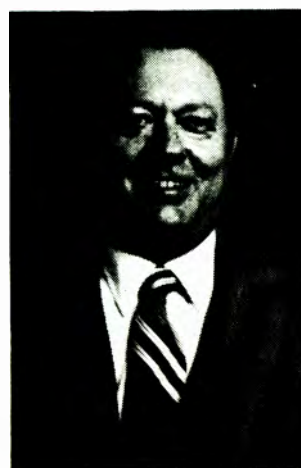
Let us heed the warning of Hosea, "My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge..." (Hosea 4:6).

—8445 SW 72nd Street, Miami, Florida 33143.

Sin And Its Consequences

(No. 3)

One comes to regret every bargain with sin. A twelve-year-old was talking to a crippled, old man who was sitting on the park bench. The boy asked, "How come you are crippled?" The man replied, "A twelve year old boy did this to me!" Immediately the boy became all eyes-- and ears-- that was his age! "Yes," said the man, "When I was twelve years old, I began to use tobacco; now my lungs do not work properly. A few years later, I began to drink beer and then whiskey; that damaged my brain. Along with drinking and smoking, I began to gamble. Now I have nothing to my name; I lost everything; I am a poor, broken-down-old man. Yes, sir; a twelve-year-old boy did this to me."



W. Edwin Kearley

Often people do not recognize the cause and effect of sin, because sin's effect is not always seen within twenty-four hours. A little introspection and analyzation will reveal the cause and effect.

OTHERS OFTEN SUFFER BECAUSE OF OUR SINS.

Physical abuse is often felt by the wife and children caused by a drunken husband and father. Failure of parents to train their children in spiritual values leaves the children without spiritual values. Paul said, "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admoni-

tion of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

PERSONAL WORRY AND ANXIETY IS A CONSEQUENCE OF SIN.

These are brought on by a lack of trust in God (Matthew 6:26-34).

THE FINAL CONSEQUENCE OF SIN IS HELL

John wrote, "But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). This list of sins is only a beginning of things, which, if practiced, will condemn one eternally.

WHAT ARE THE KINDS OF SIN WHICH BRING SUCH CONSEQUENCES?

Those who teach Situation Ethics believe in the circumvention of all law. Their thinking would make (?) evil righteous and righteousness evil. The prophet Isaiah prophesied, "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). Paul said, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7-8). Therefore transgression of God's moral law brings eternal consequences. Failure to obey the positive law brings consequences. James put it in plain words: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

The religion of Christ is stated with authority. A perversion or violation of God's law is sin (Galatians 1:6-10).

Salvation from sin does not void the consequences of sin. For example: The drunkard may cease his drunkenness, and obey the gospel of Christ. He may live the Christian life. However, if while being a drunkard, he develops cirrhosis of the liver, he must suffer the consequences.

—103 Elena Ct., Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

WHICH MOTHER ARE YOU?

Continued from page 3

You prayed both night and day,
When I was with you, and when
I was far away."

-0-

"What I am to day is because of your prayers,
And because of the toil of your hand!
Mother, I will remember all you have done,
Even when you are in another land."
—Rt. 2, Detroit, AL 35552.

Reasons Why Dancing Is Sinful

Continued From Page 3

Lord Jesus Christ. The better one dances, the poorer Christian he becomes; the more one enjoys dancing, the less one enjoys the worship. Eventually, dancing leaves one withered, dried up, with no spirituality remaining (John 15:1-6; Jude 12). It is safe to say, "The praying knee and the dancing foot never grew on the same limb."

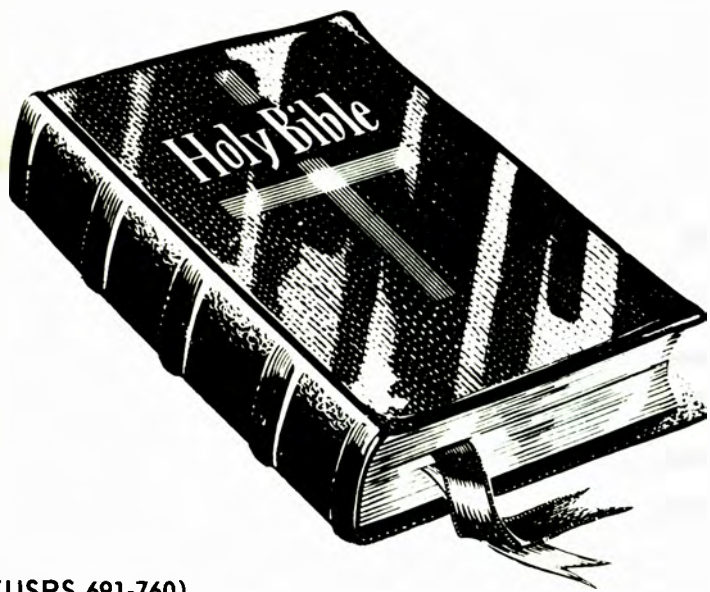
(7) Dancing destroys one's influence for Good. Dancers do not win others to Christ! One doctor says, "I attack the modern dance as a reversion toward savagery. As a medical man I flatly charge that the modern dance is fundamentally sinful and evil. I charge that dancing's charm is based entirely upon sexual

appeal. I charge that it is the most insidious of the maneuvers preliminary to sexual betrayal. It is nothing more or less than damnable, diabolical, physical dissipation. Do brother and sister dance together? Would you approve father and daughter, or mother and son, dancing together? I tell you the basic spell of the dance is the spell of illicit physical contact . . . a trail of broken homes proves this to be true."

Boys and girls, do not be deceived. Remain pure and holy. You will never regret it. Avoid the dance.

(To be continued).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.



Words Of th

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

—Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, MAY 10, 1985

NUMBER 19

A Bible Basis For Fellowship

(No. 1)

The following lesson was presented to a joint meeting of ministers of the Disciples of Christ, Christian Churches and Churches of Christ in 1969. It has been edited slightly for length.

THE MOTIVATION FOR ONENESS

The precious words of Jesus call for unity of believers. In the shadow of the cross he prayed: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them



John Waddey

there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10).

We can have fellowship today if we build together upon Christ and his word. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 3:11). Current trends in Protestantism call for fellowship on a common faith in Christ. But this is is deceptive. For these voices would ignore the teachings of Christ and allow every man to be a law unto himself. They would even disregard what the Bible says about Christ himself, as being of no consequence. This approach might make for "instant fellowship in a package," but it is not what Christ prayed for, nor what the first Christians had. We read that "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching (doctrine, K.J.V.) and fellowship" "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son" (II John 9). In many minds the passion for peaceful unity outweighs the passion for Biblical truth.

FIRST WE MUST AGREE ON AUTHORITY

If ever we resolve the question of fellowship, we must come to a common conclusion on the question of authority. The Father has endowed his Son with all authority (Matthew 28:18). The words of Jesus will judge us in the last day (John 12:48). When he sent forth his apostles, he said, "He that receiveth you receiveth me" (Matthew 20:40). Thus the apostles' doctrine is Christ's will. His word has been preserved for us in the New Covenant.

It was that respect for Christ and the New Testament that made the plea of the Restoration pioneers so attractive to the citizens of our land 150 years ago.

J. W. McGarvey wrote, "It was this supreme devotion to the word of God that developed a movement having at first only a union of believers in view, into

one having in view the complete restoration of primitive Christianity. For it was soon seen that the union for which Christ prayed and upon which the apostles insisted, could be brought about only in this way" (J. D. Murch, *Christians Only*, p. 211).

We must understand the authority of God's silence. He does not have to say "thou shalt not" in order to prohibit a thing. Failure to recognize or accept this principle has been one of the fundamental causes of our differences. Those who went before us recognized the importance of this principle.

" . . . it is evident that whatever God has not commanded and has not instituted by express commands of Scripture, he does not want observed nor does he want to be served therewith, nor will he have his word set aside nor made to suit the pleasure of men." This was written by Dirk Phillips in the 16th century in his book *Vindication* (Ibid, p. 15).

That there is such a principle is clearly stated in I Corinthians 4:6 where Paul writes that "ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written." We see it applied in at least three instances:

1. In Acts 15:1 we read of certain brethren who taught circumcision as a Christian doctrine and insisted on its observance. The apostles and elders wrote the brethren concerning this practice: "We have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment" (Acts 15:24). They proceeded to repudiate the actions of these certain men. Even though circumcision had been commanded under the Old Covenant, it could not be bound upon the church since no commandment concerning it

Satan's grandest victory in modern times has been the rending asunder of the church of Christ by creating a multitude of warring factions. The price of a divided Christendom is an unbelieving world. This is a "luxury" (?) we cannot afford! The sin of sectarianism is just as destructive and damnable today as it was when Paul wrote: " . . . I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal . . . for ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men? For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos: are ye not men?" (I Corinthians 3:1-4). Again he pleads: "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that

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 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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Agree To Agree

How often have you heard, "Let's agree to disagree . . ." This attitude cannot, of course, apply to matters of faith. Where God has spoken we have no right to our opinion. If there is a matter of faith at issue, we must be committed to God's truth. Yet, I see so much difference among brethren that is too often unsettled. The scriptures clearly show how brethren are to agree.



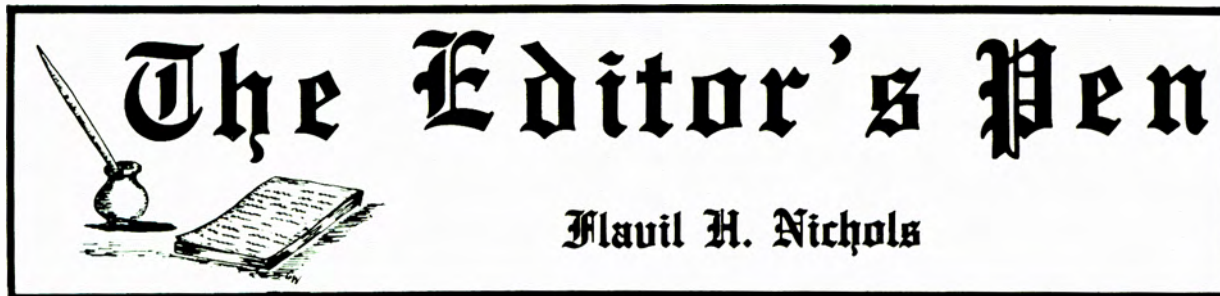
Ancil Jenkins

We need to begin with looking at our areas of agreement. We have a ground of unity among brethren because we agree on so much. Our areas of agreement should cause us to search for ways to resolve personal differences. Look to the words of Abraham to Lot. "Let there be no strife, I pray thee between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren" (Genesis 13:8). There was too much agreement between these men for there even to be a thought of disagreement.

One way to settle problems between brethren is to give in to the other person. If it is a matter of opinion, we have the liberty, and even the obligation to give in to the other person, if he is considered a weaker brother. Paul taught that the stronger should give in to the weak. We are to look to the other's good, and not please ourselves. We are to esteem others better than ourselves (Romans 15:1; Philippians 2:4). To give in is a mark of love and care for a weaker brother.

We should seek the help of the church. Paul's great argument against the Christian taking his brother to law is the lack of need for this action. He said there should be enough wise men in the church to settle

Continued on page 3



Flavil H. Nichols

Winkler To Be ACC Bible Department Dean

I am vitally interested in the training of gospel preachers, both in our Christian colleges and in the schools of preaching. We need men of unwavering faith who not only know the truth and how to present it in love (Ephesians 4:15), but who also know how to effectively refute false doctrines. It is with personal pleasure that I give editorial space to the following announcement. — Flavil H. Nichols].

Alabama Christian College, now becoming Faulkner University, announces the appointment of Wendell Winkler, well-known author and evangelist, as the Dean of the Bible Department. Winkler will assume his new position August 1.

Winkler already has extensive plans for the ACC Bible Department. He intends for the school to be "the best Bible College anywhere," with dedication to excellence in faculty personnel, in quality of teaching/content, and in the product the school produces.

Winkler plans to place an emphasis on training preachers with practical evangelistic skills and a strong reliance on the Bible. "We want to produce men who love the Lord, the Bible, the church, and who love people and love preaching," said Winkler.

Developing a quality faculty is a special interest of Winkler's. He believes in encouraging personal enrichment among the faculty, including writing for brotherhood periodicals. Winkler will also encourage the faculty to be student-oriented.

Other ideas for the Bible Department include the development of a College of Biblical Studies for graduate work, a memorabilia

room with artifacts from great preachers of past and present, a "Hall of Preachers" photo gallery, and a biblical learning center with audio and visual tapes.

Winkler is a graduate of Lamar College in Beaumont, Texas, and attended Montgomery Bible College (now Alabama Christian College) for two years. He holds a bachelor of science and a master of science degree from Alabama Christian School of Religion.

Winkler has done local church work for thirty two years, preached in twenty-five states and spoken on most of the Christian college campuses.

He directed the annual Fort Worth Christian College lectures for four years and the Fort Worth lectures for five years. He also served on the board of directors for Fort Worth Christian College and Fort Worth Christian Academy.

Winkler was a staff writer for the *Gospel Advocate* under B. C. Goodpasture and served on the staff of the *Christian Worker* under Rue Porter. He was the first speaker on the annual Preachers' Day Forum at Abilene Christian University. He taught at the Brown Trail Preacher Training School for sixteen years and served as director of the Brown Trail Preacher Training School for three years.

Author of numerous books, Winkler has contributed to countless publications.

Winkler is currently holding meetings around the country full time. He expects to continue his meeting/lecture work, as well as his writing and publishing, in addition to his college duties.

Covetousness Puts One In Forbidden Company

Ours is such a selfish and greedy age that often there is no concern or interest in the needs of our fellowman. Apartment complexes and crowded subdivisions give little incentive even to meet one's neighbor. Many are so concerned with accumulating things that they think only of "me, my wife, my son John, and his wife; us four, and no more."

Jesus warned: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of



Edsel Burleson

the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). Paul warned faithful Christians not to be associated with one who was infected with covetousness. "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (I Corinthians 5:11).

Several years ago there appeared in newspapers an account of Mrs. Emma Buhl DeHart, who starved to death with more than \$274,000 in her closet. She lived in a dreary Staten Island, New York, flat. Besides the money found in the closet, there was also some \$200,000 in her bank. And, she owned hundreds of shares of valuable stocks. Her total assets came to about a half million dollars. She ate skimpily, usually arising about noon to go to a

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Reasons Why Dancing Is Sinful

(No. II)

We recognize that there was dancing in Old Testament times. In Exodus 15:20-21 Miriam and the women danced. David (II Samuel 6:12-20) danced when the ark of the Lord was returned to Jerusalem. But this would be far from our modern dance. In the New Testament there are references which mention dancing, viz., Matthew 11:17; Luke 7:32; Matthew 14:6; Mark 6:22; but these passages do not support prom dancing.



W. A. Holley

One who supports modern dancing may ask, "Where does the Bible say that it is a sin to engage in dancing?" Let us not presume on the silence of the Scripture. No one can find a plain declaration of the Scripture which shows that God approves dancing! If one still demands a passage which says: "Thou shalt not dance," just remember that no passage

says: "Thou shalt not gamble," "Thou shalt not use instrumental music in Christian worship," "Thou shalt not join the Catholic church," or "Thou shalt not smoke marijuana or use narcotics." Since the Bible does not expressly forbid such practices, who would say that Christians are free to participate in such acts?

The question is: "Does the Holy Bible approve dancing?" If yes, let those who contend that it does furnish the Bible proof!! Who will do so??

We affirm that dancing is sinful for the following reasons:

(1) Jesus taught that a tree is known by its fruits (Matthew 7:16-20). What are the fruits of dancing? Will dancing make one more spiritual? more prayerful? more dedicated to the Lord's will and way? more willing to participate in the activities of the church? more Christ-like? Until the foregoing questions can be answered in the affirmative, honestly and sincerely, dancing is and will continue to be wrong and sinful.

One report says: "The dance halls are the modern nursery of the divorce courts, the

training shop of prostitution, and the graduating school of infamy and vice."

(2) Dancing is sinful because it robs girls and boys of purity, modesty, and shamefastness (I Timothy 2:8-12). One author of repute says, "No one has claimed that the dance fosters purity. No one should think that all who dance are immoral, but the chief indictment of the dance is its tendency and its results in impurity. Under the guise of innocence, the dance has been creeping into our homes and schools to steal the bloom of modesty from the cheeks of our girls and to undermine the chivalry of our boys. The public dance hall is the feeder of prostitution, and no sane, well informed person will deny it. Virtue dies when dancing thrives, and it is not by chance that the dance and the brothel are closely linked. The dance has as its basis the passions of human nature, and is an enemy of the moral and spiritual life, and is feeding on the impurity of the land. The conviction should obtain that this is a poor time to be an apologist of the modern dance. The admissions of those who have investigated make the modern apologist a sort of a joke to all who know the facts."

If the foregoing statement sounds bad, it is because it is bad! Dancing is sinful before God!!

(3) Dancing is sinful because it diminishes one's power to be a soul-winner for Jesus Christ. The wise Christian desires to be a soul-winner for the Lord (Proverbs 11:30). Those who waste their time on the dance floor cannot "shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever" (Daniel 12:3). Those on the dance floor have surrendered their chance to "convert a sinner from the error of his way" (James 5:19-20).

(4) Dancing is sinful because lasciviousness and reveling are sinful. What do these words mean? Young people should search for correct definitions of these Bible words. Lasciviousness comes from a Greek word which Thayer defines as "wanton (acts or manners), as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females . . . unbridled lust, excess licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence."

The word revelings is defined by Liddel and Scott as: "A jovial festivity, with music and dancing; a revel, carousal, merry-making." Brother A. B. Lipscomb said, "No one can be an example of purity and encourage dancing. Dancing comes under the head of revelings" (Galatians 5:19-21).

The apostle Paul taught that those who do such things cannot go home to heaven. (See scripture cited above.)

(5) Dancing is sinful because it causes one to fall in love with the attractions of the world. Hear John the apostle: "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 pride 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). The "world" which we are not to love is the "world" of adultery, fornication, drunkenness, dancing, and the like. There are some

Agree To Agree

Continued from page 2

problems between brothers (I Corinthians 6:4). We do well to call elders (or others in the church who possess such wisdom), to arbitrate our disputes. Too often, instead of calling for help in settling matters, we tell others and attempt to line them up on our side.

If we are to call the world to the unity for which Jesus prayed, we must give it a demonstration in every congregation. How can we preach and call for unity, when brethren in a congregation cannot be united.

"Let us therefore follow after the things

which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 14:19; 15:5,6).

Let us not "agree to disagree," but instead, agree to agree -- and to act like brothers!

—425 NW 27th Avenue, Miami, Florida 33125

A Bible Basis For Fellowship

Continued from page 1

had been given.

2. In establishing the superiority of Christ over angels, the author of Hebrews (1:4-5) writes: "Having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son . . ." The very fact that God had not said to one of the angels these words which he spoke of the Son is proof of their inferiority to Christ.

3. While explaining the need for the Melchizedek priesthood of Christ, the writer says: "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are said belongeth to another tribe, from which no man hath given attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah; as to which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priests" (Hebrews 7:12-14).

If we do not respect the sacred silence of God's word, then no one can object to infant baptism, or sprinkling, counting beads, burning of incense, (and a thousand other things that God did not specifically forbid) being

introduced into the faith and worship of the church. The concept that "I can do anything God does not forbid" in Christian worship lets in an avalanche that few are ready to accept.

The silence of the New Testament on instrumental music leads us to reject that practice and other like additions to our faith and worship. J. D. Murch comments on this theme: "Within the last generation the church of Christ has made a phenomenal growth. This is due to two things: (1) Its people have stood like a Rock of Gibraltar for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, amid the doubt and confusion superinduced by liberalism. They have challenged the spirit of compromise and worldliness and dared to be a 'peculiar' people teaching and practicing what they believe is the Bible way of life.

(2) They have come to realize that the silence of the Scriptures must be respected as well as the commandments of Scripture, but that obedience to its silence permits freedom of judgment and action" (Christians Only, p. 313).

(More to follow).

Continued on page 4

God's Precautionary Laws

"Remember now they creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Ecclesiastes 12:1).



W. Douglass Harris

"Precautionary" describes an action in advance; preventing by taking measures in advance. Some old adages stress this principle: "A stitch in time saves nine;"

and "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Our text suggests that respect for and obedience to God's laws in youth will prevent "evil days," or the consequences of sin. There are so many influences in society that blight youth, destroy happiness, and bring sorrow, which may be avoided by taking precautions. Because of failure to see the benevolent purpose of law, our age is a lawless age of rebellion and anarchy against the laws of God and man. Many ignore the blessings and benefits resulting from respect for and obedience to law. Obedience to law is a means of preventing evil and its consequences.

I. Laws of Men Illustrate the Precautionary Purpose of Law. In medicine we vaccinate to prevent disease by fortifying our immunity. Polio, smallpox, and other diseases have been wiped out by injections of vaccines. By applying the laws of health, many physical troubles can be avoided. We exercise, and keep cholesterol low to prevent heart attacks. If we abuse these laws by lack of exercise, overeating, overworking, and overindulgence, we harm our bodies. We need to remember that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:19, 20.) Traffic laws are precautions. A red light stops traffic for safety; a solid yellow line prevents headon collisions, and speed laws are to prevent vehicles from going out of control. (A driver's license is not a license to fly low!) There is no question about the benevolent purpose of these laws. We can see and appreciate their precautionary purposes.

II. God's Laws in the Spiritual Realm Are Preventive. God's word hid, or laid up, in the heart will prevent sin (Psalm 119:11). Woodrow Wilson wrote on the flyleaf of a New Testament: "This book will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from this book." Jesus resisted temptation by his knowledge of the Old Testament (Matthew 4:1-11). Wisdom (God) says, "He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul" (Proverbs 8:36). In addition to wronging others and offending God

when one sins, he wrongeth his own soul.

Every command of God says, "Do thyself no harm." The only way to prevent reaping corruption is not to sow to the flesh (Galatians 6:7,8). Every transgression and disobedience will receive a just recompense (Hebrews 2:1,2). How shall we escape this recompense if we neglect so great a salvation (Hebrews 2:3).

Jesus suggested the means of avoiding temptation when he said, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation" (Matthew 26:41). Paul said, "Abstain from (shun) all appearance of evil" (I Thessalonians 5:22). This principle is very graphically emphasized in an Old Testament passage regarding the judgment of Judah and Jerusalem. Isaiah said, "The look on their faces testifies against them; they parade their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to them! They have brought disaster upon themselves. Tell the righteous it will be well with them, for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds. Woe to the wicked! Disaster is upon them! They will be paid back for what their hands have done" (Isaiah 3:9-11, NIV).

III. Application of the Principle to the Church. To prevent apostasy and drifting away from the fundamentals there should be regular preaching on the "first principles" of the gospel. Timothy was charged by Paul to preach the word with urgency (II Timothy 4:1-4). This should be done until all know the fundamentals of the faith and are grounded in them. Paul reminded the Ephesian elders that he had "not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). This involves both negative and positive teaching. It also involves teaching against extremes, such as anti-ism and liberalism. These can be avoided by diligent preventive teaching. Precautionary preaching will help to keep the unity enjoined by the New Testament. Practicing discipline will help to prevent the corruption of the church, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," said Paul (I Corinthians 5:6). Many church problems could be avoided by adequate gospel teaching.

IV. Principle Applied to Marriage. God's guide-lines for marriage, and divine laws against divorce, are safeguards to marriage.

Marriage was ordained by God and is to be regulated by the teaching of his word. Proper preparation for marriage would prevent many divorces. Warnings are found in both the Old and New Testaments against mixed marriages of believers and unbelievers. In fact, they were forbidden in the Old Testament; and the New Testament warns against being "UNEQUALLY" yoked with unbelievers (II Corinthians 6:14). One's eternal weal or woe can be determined by the precautions he takes toward having a scriptural marriage. Parents by diligent teaching and example can assist their children in preventing many heartaches and much unhappiness in the married lives of their children. The church can help; but it cannot take the place of the parents. A constant diet of TV "soap operas" and plural marriages Hollywood style are not good preventives of unscriptural marriages.

V. Preventive Side of the Drug Problem. Let's face it! Alcohol is a drug! Our society legalizes one drug and outlaws another. This inconsistency amazes the thinking and the prudent. Alcoholism is a major problem in our nation. It is a hundred times better to prevent becoming an alcoholic than to cure it. **If one never takes the first drink, there is no way that he would become an addict.** None of the advertising of alcoholic beverages ever shows the delirium tremens of the addict or the withdrawal pains during treatment. But Solomon pictured such in Proverbs 23:29-35. This same approach applies to other drugs. Young people need to be taught that experimenting with drugs is fraught with dangers that can destroy their lives and their souls.

VI. Salvation Has A Preventive Side. It is wise to remember the Creator early in life -- it will prevent the coming of "evil days" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). If one obeys the gospel early in life before sin hardens him, he can save himself a lot of misery and shame and maybe from eternal damnation. No one ever obeyed the gospel early in life, lived a faithful Christian life, and at the end expressed regret for doing so.

CONCLUSION: In the words of another writer: "To prepare and prevent is better than to repair and repent."

—1613 19th Ave. S.W., Decatur, AL 35601.

Covetousness Puts One In Forbidden Company

Continued from page 2

nearby dime store for a hotdog or hamburger. She saved boxes and wrappings for fuel for her stove. She did not "have" money: her money "had her!"

Usually, the very ones who deny they are covetous are the ones most infected. One who is not liberal with what he has, deceives himself when he thinks he would be liberal if he had more. He has been so busy pursuing "things" that he has little interest in the

spiritual. If we can solve the problem of covetousness we will have solved the problems of benevolence, evangelism, and attendance.

The attitudes of many are seen in the actions of some North African monkeys. The natives there have a very easy way to capture monkeys. A gourd, with a hole just large enough for a monkey to thrust his hand into it, is filled with nuts and fastened firmly to a branch of some tree at sunset. During the night a monkey will discover the scent of food, and its source, and will put his hand into the gourd to grasp a handful of nuts. But the hole is too small for him to withdraw his *clenched fist*; and he had not sense enough to let go of his bounty so that he may escape. He pulls and pulls without success, and in the morning is quickly and easily taken.

This is the lesson Jesus was teaching when he said: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul" (Mark 8:36).

—West End Church of Christ, 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Reasons Why Dancing Is Sinful

Continued from page 3

things which should never even be mentioned among Christians, much less practiced (Ephesians 5:3-9).

(6) **Dancing is sinful for Christian girls and boys because it makes them partakers of other men's sins.** "Be not ye therefore partakers with them." "... Neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure" (I Timothy 5:22). Christian boys and girls, do

you wish to be responsible for helping others spend an eternity in hell? "For he that abbideth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (Cf. II John 9-11).

Boys and girls, before you engage in dancing, think of the consequences involved, for yourself and for others.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of T

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

—Acts 26:25

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You Are Not The Judge

Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). The word of God must be the deciding factor in every matter specified therein. We have no right (1) to judge harshly, (2) to judge upon faulty premises (Matthew 7:1-7), nor (3) to render a human



Roger Jackson

judgment on divine matters that conflicts with the word (Matthew 15:1-15). The Bible forbids the practice of "binding" or "loosing" for God. That God alone is the authority in spiritual matters is clearly taught in Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; and Revelation 22:18, 19. When we finally stand at the judgment bar of God we shall be judged out of the Book which was not authored by man (Revelation 20:12).

The practice of binding and loosing (judging) for God is so common place among religious people, that it is done with little thought to the seriousness of the matter. Those who are schooled constantly in this error can scarcely be convinced that they have committed any error. They are like Saul, who, in spite of his flagrant disobedience, could say in tones audible over the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen, "I have performed the commandment of the Lord" (I Samuel 15:13). David asked God to help him avoid the sin of presumption, which is substitution and high-handed rebellion (Psalms 19:13).

How are men today rendering their judgments on what God has said? We answer that they are doing so by addition, subtraction and substitution. A few examples will suffice.

Men render a false judgment on God's word

when they say baptism is unnecessary. I know of no command of God that is unnecessary or non-essential. That baptism is a command is beyond controversy according to Acts 10:48. Since an inspired apostle "commanded" them to be baptized, what man would presume to judge baptism to be unnecessary? What man would command otherwise, except one who presumes to render a judgment on what God has said that would nullify (?) its force? You are not the judge!

Even among those who acknowledge that baptism is essential to the remission of past sins (Acts 2:38), there are those who would judge, "Let every adult person, and the parent of every child to be baptized, have the choice of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion" (Methodist Discipline, 1952, p. 3). No one in New Testament times was ever baptized in any other manner except immersion, and the etymology of the word "BAPTIDZO" demands it.

Advocates of sprinkling tell us the words "baptidzo" (immerse) and "RHANTIDZO" (sprinkle), are interchangeable. If such is the case, we should be able to substitute one for the other wherever they appear without any loss of meaning. Let us test their doctrine: "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he sprinkled him" (Not in the Bible). Did Philip melt him down and pour him out? Why go down into the water to sprinkle it on him? In sprinkling the water is brought to the subject; but here it is the opposite. Apparently the theory does not work. But who says it does? Those who have set themselves up as judges.

One of the most glaring examples of the sin of becoming judges of God's word is that of affirming, "I know I am saved because I feel like it." Although one should feel good about his salvation, the feeling is the *result* -- and not the evidence. Despite the fact that God has warned us against false feelings in Proverbs 14:12 (and many other places), men still take their faulty "feelings" over what God says.


Forgiveness takes place in the mind of God, the

offended. We can no more free ourselves from the guilt of sin by doing something that makes us "feel" good, than a prisoner can free himself from his cell by informing the warden that he "feels" pardoned! But who are those who would judge otherwise? Those who have elected themselves judges over God's word.

One cannot preach very long until he hears someone exclaim, "One church is as good as another." No person could make such a comparison in the first century! -- Because there was *only one* church (Matthew 16:18, 19; Ephesians 4:3-5). That makes it better than ten thousand others produced by men! One of the greatest reasons why men make such a mistake is that they did not give their sons for one. Why treat God's Son so disrespectfully? There is no salvation to be found in any denomination. The oldest [protestant] one is less than five hundred years old! Were there no saved people more than five hundred years ago? Then no denomination is essential to salvation by virtue of the fact that people were being saved before the first one existed. What will happen to these man-made institutions? They "shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:9-15). Where will you be when "rooting up" time comes? Will you be in a human denomination judging that they are all approved of God? And to which Scripture will you appeal?

The vast majority of people judge: "Good people of all churches are saved." Others have judged that there are sincere, devout and knowledgeable Christians in all denominations. The fact is that there are no good people of any church who are saved on their goodness alone (Matthew 19:16-19). While goodness is certainly essential to salvation, it is obedience to the gospel that saves us (Romans 1:16). One who is sincere will not stay in a denomination when he learns what God says about them (Matthew 7:21-23). One who is knowledgeable knows what God has said about them. And one who is devout follows what God has said in every detail. Who says otherwise? Those who are in the judging business!

—940 Old Wood Rd., Oxford, AL 36203.



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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—Acts 26:35

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A Bible Basis For Fellowship

(No. II)

This is the second half of a lesson presented to a group of Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, preachers on the question of fellowship. The reader should review part one before reading this.

WHOM CAN I FELLOWSHIP?

Whom can I fellowship? Only God's word can answer that question.

Christ made both Jew and Gentile one, in himself (Ephesians 2:15). We are "all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ . . . for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26-28). Being one in Christ simply means that we have fellowship with everyone who is in Christ. But how then can we determine who is in Christ? Again, God's word specifically explains that we are "baptized into Christ" (Galatians 3:27). This limits my fellowship then to those baptized into Christ. Some ponder, "Shall we fellowship the unimmersed?" Without doubt, the baptism Christ recognizes is a burial with him in water (Romans 6:4; Acts 10:48). Since there is but one baptism (Ephesians 4:5), and it an immersion for remission (Acts 2:38), we can have fellowship only with those who have been thus baptized.

GOD SET BOUNDARIES OF FELLOWSHIP

Even of those properly immersed, the word of God limits our fellowship to those who con-



John Waddey

This week I am giving editorial endorsement and space to the following challenge to send another fine family into the mission field of Southeast Asia.

I have known the Dearman family since he resigned his job as a popular radio 'disc jockey' in Birmingham, and enrolled in the Memphis School of Preaching. Since graduation he has been invited to conduct radio talks, some two- and three-hours long, and has been free to have as his guests men who refuted the theories of evolution, and who opposed many social evils of our day, such as drunkenness, abortion, et al.

Brother Dearman has been especially successful in his radio evangelism, and the Red Bank church has equipped a studio for the production of his taped messages which are sent all over the world. He was recently in our area, and our eldership heard his plans for the mission field of Malaysia. We also invited him to speak on our radio program. I am happy to present to our readers his appeal for the needed funds to help evangelize the world. He seems to me to be especially gifted and equipped for this task.

How long shall we turn a deaf ear to pleas from qualified brethren who are willing to go? I urge each reader to ask the elders where you worship to consider his needs. They may wish to invite him to speak at your congregation. Here is his initial message through our columns.

THE DREAM OF GOD

Jim Dearman

Have you ever dreamed about something you wanted very much? Have you dreamed about goals you would like to achieve? We need to have dreams don't we? Someone has said, "The poorest man is not he who is without a cent, but he who is without a dream." However, having a dream without acting upon it will do no good. It has also been said that "The best way to make a dream come true is to wake up!"

Have you ever considered the dream of God? Yes, God has a dream, and the Holy Spirit revealed it in I Timothy 2:3, 4: "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." God acted upon his dream to save all men by sending his only begotten Son (John 3:16) as a missionary to a strange land. Jesus himself declared in Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Think of the magnitude of the mission of Christ! Because of the dream of a loving God, all men have access to forgiveness of sins and hope of heaven. Jesus died for the sins of "every man" (Hebrews 2:9). However, more than half of the world's population has never even heard of Jesus Christ. Some 10 years ago the church of our Lord had approximately 800 missionary families in the field; today, that number has dwindled to about 450 families. The church has entered only 137 of 200 countries or territories in the world. Yet,

A Stirring Missionary Appeal



Flavil H. Nichols

with our tools and potential manpower we should have reached the entire world with the gospel of Christ.

These statistics spark an obvious question: "With so many people in the world who have never heard of the Savior, why are so few missionaries going?" Is the "great commission" becoming the "great omission" in our brotherhood? We must never allow this to occur! We can evangelize the world if we truly believe, and trust in God to help us. *Attitude* is the key. To the Israelites long ago facing the Philistines, Goliath was too big to hit. But to young David, whose trust was in his God, Goliath was too big to miss! Our challenge is great, but our helper (Hebrews 13:5-6) is greater! And "if God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

Each Christian must ask himself honestly, "How may I best participate in the dream of God?" Not everyone can go. However, everyone may participate. In asking *myself* this question, "How may I best participate," I was forced to honestly answer, "By going!" I was faced with the statistic that 96 percent of our preachers are preaching to 4 percent of the world's population. I was faced with the fact that I have a family supportive of going into a foreign mission field. I was faced with the fact that physically, I am more able now than I will ever be, in all probability. Thus, I was forced to answer by saying, "I must go." Therefore, the Lord willing, my family and I will move to the country of Malaysia in Southeast Asia in June of 1986. We will be working with the Jimmy Goins family for a period of at least 5 years, if the government of that country permits us to remain there that long.

Malaysia is a country of 15 million people with only 13 congregations of the Lord's people and a total of 500-600 Christians. There are no American missionaries there, and only 3 native preachers in the entire country. There are literally millions of people in that area of the world who might also be reached with the gospel through our "Sound Words" radio network, with stations now reaching into that area of the world. In fact, 6 out of every 10 people in the world live within 2,000 miles of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where we will be living.

Our "Sound Words" radio programs are now reaching much of the world with the gospel. We plan to continue that work, and hopefully expand it in that part of the world by adding stations to our existing number of facilities in various parts of the world. It is felt that the radio programs will serve as a tremendous support mechanism for the on-the-field work in Southeast Asia. "Sound Words Radio" has been in existence since 1976 and is under the oversight of the elders of the Red Bank church in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

These good elders will also oversee our work in Malaysia. However, because of current commitments to mission work and other projects, including several thousand dollars a year to "Sound Words," they have asked that we raise the bulk of our support from other churches. Some have already responded in a fine way to this exciting work, and we believe that the Lord will bless us with the substantial funds we need to make the move and to live and work in the fertile field of Southeast Asia. Several individual Christians have given generously to make this work become a reality. But we need the help of many more

A Bible Basis For Fellowship

Continued from page 2

form to his rules of faith and conduct.

1. "Now we command you, brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us. . . . that ye have no company with him . . . yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (II Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15).

2. "If any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no not to eat Put away the wicked man from among yourselves" (I Corinthians 5:11-13).

3. "A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse; knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned" (Titus 3:10-11).

4. "Mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent" (Romans 16:17-18).

5. "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (II John 9-11).

These words of inspiration compel me to withhold my fellowship from those who are immoral or disorderly in conduct; those who are of a factious nature; those who cause division and occasions of stumbling contrary to the Scriptures, and those who abide not in the doctrine of Christ in their teaching and practice.

Those who dream of perfect harmony and fellowship between all who call on the name of Jesus are dreamers! For even from the beginning there were those who despised the fellowship of the saints: Ananias and Sapphira; Jewish Christians who shunned Gentile brethren; false brethren who led away disciples after them; and others who made shipwreck of their faith. There will always be many who say, "Lord, Lord," but do not the will of the Father in heaven (Matthew 7:21). Jesus does not recognize them; nor can we.

LOVE AND OBEDIENCE ARE COROLLARIES OF FELLOWSHIP

Those who love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, who seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, will love the brotherhood (I Peter 2:17). This love for brethren is the identifying badge of our discipleship (John 13:34-35). The practice of brotherly love, or fellowship, is a direct outgrowth of God's love for us and ours for him. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (I John 4:11). Yet this very love that we have for God insists that we keep his commandments (I John 5:3). We cannot escape the imperative of obedience to the doctrine, the teaching of Jesus, before there can ever be meaningful fellowship.

This point is stressed because there are some who advocate a reunion of fellowship without regard to doctrinal differences. They maintain that a common faith in the person of Jesus is sufficient. We cannot endorse that approach. It is fallacious; it is anti-scriptural.

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS

It is a delusion to mistake the compromising approaches of W. Carl Ketcherside, his sympathizers and a few others, as in any way expressing the thinking of the great body of the churches of Christ who use no man-made instruments in worship. "Mere union in a federation of churches is not true Christian unity. Such a union would be merely something which the church would have in common with human societies A mere federation in itself has nothing at all to do with real church union." Unity movements will be futile if they eventuate in nothing more than "mutual tolerance, respect and co-operation."

The splintering off of some members or congregations is not to be blamed on the church. Even in the apostolic church there were similar turnings aside -- yet the church marched on and so it does today. These and other peculiar sects should be equated with the mainstream of the movement.

HERE I STAND

We occupy safe ground. History has vindicated the action of those who respected the silence of the scriptures on instrumental music and the extra-congregational organizations like the missionary society. J. D. Murch's history, *Christians Only*, is a most eloquent witness to this fact.

Those brethren of a hundred years ago who first introduced the instruments and societies never dreamed of the final destination to which those innovations would lead. We see in the restructuring of the Disciples of Christ a completion of a 180-degree circuit back into denominationalism -- a denominationalism which our forefathers struggled valiantly to escape from. There is a great difference between those leaving New Testament Christianity for the Babylon of denominationalism, and those leaving Babylon in search for truth and the Lord's one church.

Frankly speaking, the battle fought and the victory won was too costly for us to surrender it in compromise in the name of union. Thousands of us could never enter into fullness of

fellowship so long as the instrument of music (or any other addition to the divinely given plan) is used. Really, our problem today is basically the same as it was a hundred years ago. The question of the hour is, how will history record our attitudes and actions toward its solution?

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PRESENT

Until such a time as we can resolve our differences, we can be cordial. Jesus pointed out that even the heathen salute one another (Matthew 5:46-47).

We can pray that the eyes of our hearts may be enlightened that we might know the exceeding greatness of his power toward us. . . . power that can help us overcome all obstacles to oneness in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:16-19).

We can search the Scriptures to find the heavenly pathway to brotherhood and fellowship (Acts 17:11).

We can examine our own selves to see if we are in the faith (II Corinthians 13:5). Each one should ask himself before God, "Am I part of the problem? or, part of the solution?"

We should be willing to lay aside any precept or tradition of man that might make void the commandment of God which says be "perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (Matthew 15:6-9; I Corinthians 1:10b). In the words of Thomas Campbell: "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" (*The Declaration and Address*).

We should give all diligence to discover and then maintain that unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3).

May God hasten the day when we can lock arms in victorious battle against the forces of anti-Christ and every evil thing, wresting the souls of perishing men from Satan's grasping hands and present them unto the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

—6608 Beaver Ridge, Knoxville, TN 37921.

A Stirring Missionary Appeal

Continued from page 2

individuals and congregations.

There is a tremendously exciting challenge awaiting us in Malaysia. The Lord willing, and with the help of our brethren, we will move there to meet that challenge in June of next year. We need your prayers and support to make the dream of God a reality in Asia. Contributions may be sent to Malaysian Fund, Red Bank Church of Christ, P.O. Box 15516, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37415. Telephone 615-875-4816 or 615-877-2934. Detailed information is available to churches or individuals upon request.

Remember the dream of God. "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:3, 4). Now, notice another dream:

One day as I was fast asleep I had this stirring dream;
I was caught up to be with God, with angels it did seem.
And while up there, I met God's saints from many parts of the earth.
Now some were great and famous men, and some of humble birth.

I talked to one great saint of God, the first one I had met.

He told me how he died for Christ. His words I can't forget.

He lived, he said, in Bible days and died at Nero's stake.

"It was a joy to give my all and burn for Jesus' sake.

"I was so glad to die for Christ," with humble words he said.

But as I listened to it all, I bowed my guilty head.

Another man then gently spoke, "Here is my story, Friend.

Twice cannibals that took my life, because I would not bend.

"I tried to tell those heathen souls of Christ who came to die.

They ate my flesh and drank my blood, but sent my soul on high.

Of course up here are millions more with stories rare and true.

But, Friend, before I tell you more, let's hear

Continued on page 4

Justifying Ourselves

"But he (a scribe), willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29).

We are using "justify" in the sense of "to free from blame; declare guiltless; acquit; absolve." (Webster). It is an effort to put one's self in the right, when he is in the wrong. This has been a common practice and weakness of mankind from the beginning. Adam



W. Douglass Harris

justified (?) his sin by blaming it on his wife; and Eve blamed it on the serpent (Genesis 3). Saul, the first king of Israel, blamed his disobedience on the people (I Samuel 15:21). No group in the time of Christ attempted to do this more than the scribes and Pharisees (Luke 10:29; 16:15). Read these passages.

Those who attempt to justify themselves judge by a different standard than God's standard of judgment. Do you have a self-justifying and self-excusing heart? How would you complete the sentence by using Luke's preface: "He willing to justify himself said . . . ?" We suggest in what follows what many say in completing that sentence.

I. "If I am sincere in what I believe, it does not matter what I believe." This sounds so right that some think that it needs no refuting. But we ask: IN WHAT are you sincere? This whole question turns on the *object* of our sincerity. If a mother gives her child who has croup, iodine sincerely thinking that it is cough syrup (which actually happened), does her sincerity change iodine into cough syrup? What effect does sincerity have in such a case? Was not Saul of Tarsus sincere when he was making havoc of the church by persecuting Christians? (Cf. Acts 23:1; 26:9; I Timothy 1:12, 13). Did his sincerity make what he was doing right? Solomon said, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12). He also said, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." (Proverbs 26:28). Will not the people that Jesus described as arguing with Him at the judgment have been sincere? But will they make it to heaven? (Matthew 7:22, 23). Sincerely believing religious error does not change it into truth.

Sincerity is not to be disparaged. Without sincerity life is but a mockery, but *in what* are we sincere? The concept that sincerity alone makes everything right puts a premium on ignorance. Henry Ward Beecher, the famous Congregationalist preacher, said, "But let a man sincerely believe that seed planted without plowing is as good as seed planted with plowing; that January is as favorable for seed-sowing as April; and that cockle seed will produce as good as wheat, and IS IT SO?"

II. "I am as good as, or better than, some in the church; so why should I come into the church?" But is this not using the wrong standard of comparison? Comparing ourselves by others, there may be some truth in this rationalization. But are "others" to be the standard by which we measure ourselves? Such rationalizing does not touch the point at all. The comparison should be between the soul and God; between a person himself and Christ. Comparing ourselves by "others" is man's most dangerous practice. By doing this one can always justify (?) himself. This was the mistake that the self-righteous Pharisee made who with the publican went into the Temple to pray (Luke 18:9-14). Paul said, "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves, and COMPARING THEMSELVES BY THEMSELVES, are not wise" (II Corinthians 10:12). This is just another way of justifying one's self for not coming into the church.

III. "There is so much mystery in the Bible that I cannot understand it." True, there are mysteries in the Bible; but has God made understanding of those mysteries a condition of salvation? "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but the things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deuteronomy 29:29). What God has not clearly revealed is not essential to salvation. And what he has revealed as conditions of salvation is not revealed in mysterious and ambiguous language. God, who created man with understanding, gave a revelation that is adapted to man's understanding. Is this rationalization not a justification (?) for not making any effort to study and understand what God intended for man to understand? Have we considered the implications of saying the Bible cannot be understood -- of how it reflects upon God? To say he could have given us a revelation that we could understand, but did not, is to impeach his goodness. To imply that he was not able

to do so, is an impeachment of his power? Does it not impeach his wisdom to imply that he was not wise enough to give man a book adapted to his spiritual needs? Would not God be inconsistent to require man to study something that cannot be understood? (See II Timothy 2:15).

IV. "There are so many churches that I do not know which one is right." True, there are so many churches that it is confusing. But is God the cause of this confusion? "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" (I Corinthians 14:33). Has God left us without any means of identifying the true church? Just as God gave Moses a pattern for the tabernacle in the Old Testament, he has given us a pattern in the New Testament for the church which he authorizes. It can be identified by its founder (Matthew 16:18); the place and time of its establishment (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; 2); the place and time of its establishment (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; 2); its foundation (I Corinthians 3:11); its organization (Ephesians 1:22, 23; Acts 14:23; Philipians 1:1); its plan of salvation (Acts 2:38; 16:31; Mark 16:16); and its system of worship (John 4:24; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19). So the above rationalization is a justification (?) for not diligently searching the Scriptures to determine which church is right.

V. "Rather than obey the gospel, I will put my trust at last in the mercy of God." This amounts to saying that one will ignore the doctrine of Christ and by-pass the church purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). But Jesus said, "Not everyone who 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." (Matthew 7:21). Where is mercy dispensed in God's scheme of redemption? Is it not by the life, ministry, death, and resurrection, and mediation of Christ? Where is the consistency of trusting in his mercy *at last* rather than trusting in his mercy *at first*? While we live in this world is the time of mercy. When we stand before Christ in judgment, the day of mercy will have passed. "Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation." (II Corinthians 6:2).

CONCLUSION: Do you have a justifying (?) or self-excusing heart when it comes to the matters of attending the services faithfully, giving liberally, visiting the sick, teaching others, restoring delinquents, and being ready unto every good work?

—1613 - 19th Ave. S.W., Decatur, AL 35601.

A Stirring Missionary Appeal

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your story too."

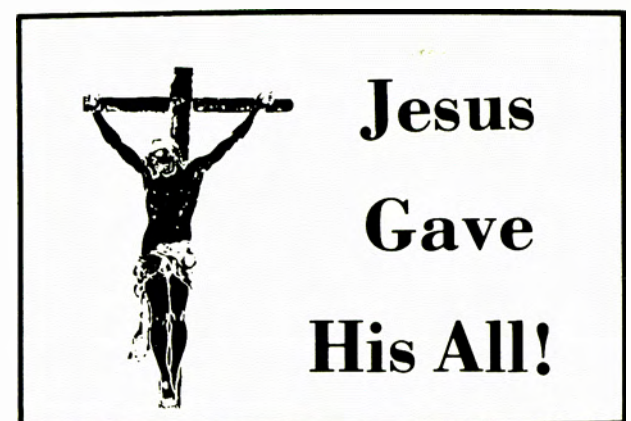
"I am ashamed of how I've failed! I've known no sacrifice.
I am ashamed of how I've failed; I've paid such little price!
I've never ever given funds to send the gospel out.
I've lived a life of luxury and never done without.

"Those costly cars, those extra clothes, seem needless now, and vain;
The very thought of how I've lived now fills my heart with pain."
Just then it seemed that Jesus said, "Take up my cross today;
I'll give to you another chance to work and give and pray."

My guilty heart began to burn, my nervous body shake.
Then I awoke with tear-filled eyes with new resolves to make.
I told the Lord from that day forth my best, my all, I'd give
To win the lost in every place; for this alone I'd live.

I told the Lord that from then on I would not waste a dime;
That I would give myself to prayer, and really use my time.
That I would seek with all my heart that power from above
To help me tell a heathen world of Jesus' grace and love.

Will we be a part of the dream of God? or, the nightmare of neglecting lost souls -- and the tragic consequences that result?
—P.O. Box 15516, Chattanooga, TN 37415.





(USPS 691-760)

Words Of Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, MAY 24, 1985

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Baptist Women Preachers

(No. 1)

According to the news accounts carried in *The Birmingham News*, February 8, 1985, the Baptist church is now troubled with the matter of ordaining women to the ministry. The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board (an institution not mentioned in the Holy Scripture) will continue to refer to "the ordination of women," although many fundamentalists among the Baptists object.



W. A. Holley

"On a 43-20 vote Wednesday, the board of trustees approved guidelines treating the ordination of women 'factually and fairly with neither point of view being ignored or disparaged.'" Here the Baptists want to straddle the fence! We ask, Why?? Can it be that the Baptist Church is bowing to pressure from the women's movement? When has it become scriptural to vote on matters taught in the Holy Bible? O, well, Baptists have never been adverse to voting against the Lord's will!!

Last year, in Kansas City, the Baptist Sunday School Board passed a resolution against the ordination of women; but now (this year) times have changed. We ask, Has the truth of God's word changed? Does not the word of God read now just as read then? Does the Bible teach that women should be ordained as preachers? If so, where can we find book, chapter, and verse? We shall continue to ask for Bible authority in all religious matters (Matthew 28:18-20; Colossians 3:17). Did the apostleship include women? Book, chapter and verse, please!!

The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board has turned itself into a bowl of jello -- devoid

of all backbone or courage. Notice carefully: "The guidelines passed by the trustees specify that writers of Southern Baptist literature must be objective, without regard for personal viewpoints," the article says. This statement, as we view it, means that their writers can teach it both ways -- for and against -- and still be in good standing with their peers. This reminds us of a public school teacher who, being interviewed for a position by the School Board, was asked about her understanding regarding the shape of the earth. She replied, "I am very broadminded -- I can teach it both ways -- round or flat!"

Furthermore, the quotation continues: "The Sunday School Board will continue to recognize not only the differences of opinion among Southern Baptists about the ordination of women but also the wisdom of not making such differences a test of faith, fellowship or biblical authority," the guidelines state.

How generous can the Baptists be? Bible authority means little to them! If some Baptists want women preachers and others do not, they intend to maintain fellowship at any cost! They will not make "such differences a test of faith, fellowship or Biblical authority," they say. Of course, the Baptist Church can do as it pleases since it is governed by the Baptist creed (human in origin); not by the Holy Bible! Scholars of the Baptist Church often boast of their commitment to the Bible, saying that it is God-breathed, inerrant, infallible; but when they come to a sticky point (as ordination of women preachers), they are ready to cave in, compromise!!

One Baptist preacher who is mentioned in the news release under review claims that to tolerate ordination of women preachers is "a very dangerous position." He argues such compromise could lead "to tolerance for homosexuality." He, ("Rev." Tenery) continues: "There's already a homosexual church in Charlotte. What are we going to do, ordain them? It is exactly the same thing."

No Sunday School Board or any other organization or preacher has any Scriptural right to ask any human being to violate the word of God. A small opening in the dike soon turns into a vast flood of compromise which knows no limits!

To show the rapid growth of the women's movement toward becoming preachers, we quote: "Women now constitute about 5 percent of all clergy members, growing from an estimated 6,000 in 1973 to about 16,000 today, and seminaries report rising enrollment of female students.

"The median salary range of clergy-women is between \$14,000 to \$16,000 compared with a range of \$20,000 to \$22,000 for men.

"The Episcopal church sanctioned women priests in 1976. In that church, women make up about 10 percent of its 10,000 priests and a third of its 1,500 seminarians. Yet, bishops heading 15 of 110 Episcopal dioceses still refuse to ordain women, and few women hold leadership positions.

"Over 300 Southern Baptist women already have been ordained, and their number is increasing by about one a week.

"From 1972 to 1983, the number of female seminarians grew from 3,558 to 13,451. During the same period, their share of total enrollment jumped from 10.2 percent to 24.4 percent.

"By the year 2000, the majority of the clergy may be women, says theologian Rebecca Chopp of the University of Chicago Divinity School." (*U.S. News and World Report* 12-3-84)"

Episcopal Bishop Furman Stough says he has always supported the ordination of women; but, in his church since 1976, a canon allows women to be ordained. He says, "The ordained ministry is incomplete without women. A dimension is missing without them. Ordination is no issue -- we're ordaining them.

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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 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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"Is It Nothing To You?"

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" (Lamentations 1:12).

These words were spoken by Jeremiah in bewailing the miseries of Jerusalem which had fallen into the hands of the conquering Chaldeans -- the people carried away into captivity and the city left desolate. No city, perhaps, has ever experienced the desolations and distresses as Jerusalem; and Jeremiah is complaining that no one seemed to care. This is a pathetic picture. People are passing by and none seem to care. Jeremiah had foretold this kind of situation (Jeremiah 18:13-17). Although Jerusalem was suffering for her sins, suffering of any kind usually attracts sympathy; but not Jerusalem! She is pictured as a widow sitting in the dust and weeping (1:1), and the elders are pictured as sitting on the ground in sackcloth and throwing dust on their heads (2:10). And still no one seemed to care. *What a pathetic picture!*

Because of the times in which we live, Jeremiah's question seems so apropos. *Is It Nothing to YOU that --*

I. *Most of the Four Billion Souls on Earth Have Never Heard of Christ?* Thousands pass into eternity each day without knowing that Christ died to save us; but they cannot be saved in ignorance of him. Do YOU care enough to pray that they might hear of him? Do you back your praying by giving so that others might go into all the world as Jesus charged? Is your attitude toward lost souls like those who were



W. Douglass Harris

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"Satan Hath Desired You"

On the dreary night of his betrayal, our Lord spoke to Simon Peter saying, "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).



Dalton Key

Centuries before, Satan had desired God's servant Job, that he might "sift" him "as wheat." The tempter has always expected the worst in people. He expected Job -- without his wealth, without his health -- to renounce God to the face (Job 1:11). The devil intended to sift Job as wheat and show him to be nothing but worthless chaff; but he was mistaken. Likewise, Satan sought divine permission to tempt Simon Peter, that he might be sifted by trial

and uncovered as chaff. Once again, in the end, Satan failed. Though Peter denied his Lord, and that openly, he soon repented, was "converted," and later strengthened his brethren. Yet Satan, at first looking at upright Job and faithful Peter, could see nothing but their potential for evil, and thus went about the business of proving it.

Satan looks upon us with this same warped and twisted presumption. He expects us to falter, to fail, to finally fall from grace. He seeks to impede our progress with hurdles of temptation, discouragement, and adversity. He attempts to distract our vision, to take our eyes off the goal. He attacks us at our weakest points, and at our most vulnerable moments. Satan fully expects us to be sifted out as chaff; he presumes our failure.

Knowing the power and the hunger of Satan, and yet realizing that "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4), we pray earnestly: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:13).

Make no mistake -- the devil is serious; So must we be!

—Box 563, Liberal, KS 67901-0563.

Freedoms Foundation Honors Harding University Programs

The Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge, Pa., has recognized the American Studies Program and senior Debbie Garrett of Harding University at Searcy, Arkansas, as national award winners in the 1984 program.

The American Studies Program was selected as the principal award winner in the category of community programs. Garrett, a native of Brookston, Ind., was the winner of a Valley Forge Honor Certificate for Excellence for an essay "What 'Free' Means In Free Enterprise."

The Freedoms Foundation Awards Program is designed to promote an appreciation and understanding for freedom and the American way of life. Gordon R. Hall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in Utah, served as chairman of the 1984 awards jury.

The multifaceted Harding American Studies Program provides educational opportunities for the students, the community, and high school students in the areas of citizenship, government, economics and business.

The program includes the highly acclaimed lecture series which annually brings nationally-known personalities to the campus. Past speakers have included news commentator Paul Harvey, economist Milton Friedman, Senator Dale Bumpers, President Gerald Ford, businessman Sam Walton, author Alex Haley and Senator Sam Ervin.

Other facets of the year-long program include the Youth Citizenship Seminar for high school students, the Management Seminar for area business and management leaders, the student business and economics teams, field trips for University students to the economic and historical centers of our country and an invitational business games for high schools and junior colleges.

Harding's special activities of the Center for Private Enterprise and the Center for Management Excellence have an outreach to the community as well as state wide.

A member of the Harding Students in Free Enterprise Economics team, Miss Garrett spoke extensively at high schools on the theme "America, Freedom and You." She is a business management major and a national winner of the Milton Friedman Economics Essay competition.

Harding is recognized as a leader in economic education and has received more than 50 awards from the Freedoms Foundation. The American Studies Program, originally known as the School of American Studies, began at Harding in 1953.

"I am not made, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." Acts 26:25

Why Are We Not Baptizing More People?

(No. I)

A constant concern of elders, gospel preachers, and all truly spiritual people is how we can lead the lost to salvation. Many of us are not finding as many people interested and willing to study with us as we formerly did. We are not seeing the number responding for baptism -- either during our regular local services, or during gospel meetings -- that we did see ten-to-twenty-years ago. We are aware that this is, undoubtedly, connected with the fact that few non-members attend our services nowadays. We used to see a regular flow of non-member visitors,



JOE E. GALLOWAY

especially during special gospel meeting efforts. Now an entire gospel meeting may go by with no non-members present except for the few non-member companions and children of Christians -- and they came at other services, too.

Why the Problem?

Are we to blame for this change in interest and results? Probably part of the responsibility for lack of "visible results" is ours. We may not be trying as we once did to interest others, invite them to services, and teach them ourselves. Such neglect may come from our letting so many other things crowd out the time it takes for this work. Or, it may be due to our not being as concerned as we should be about the salvation of those who are lost. It may be that some members do not realize their personal responsibility to teach others, thinking that such work is just for the preachers and, perhaps, the elders or deacons. At least there seems to be a general trend toward considering this to be the work of only a few. Those thinking this way need to carefully read II Timothy 2:2 and make application!

It may be that we are no longer teaching the first principles of Bible teaching distinctly enough to challenge the attention of those who are lost. We notice that often today an entire gospel meeting is preached without any such plain, first-principle lessons. The lessons preached may be true and good, but are concerned with the joy of Christian living, how to overcome worry and problems, the home, attitudes, love and compassion, etc. If a non-member does attend, he may hear little (if anything) that he could not have heard at most of the area denominations, and little that would cause him to question his personal standing before God! He is not made aware of his need to turn from denominationalism, nor of his need to obey the gospel of Christ. In fact, in some of our gospel meeting services he will not hear even a clearly-presented

outline of the plan of salvation at the conclusion of the lesson. This is a far cry from gospel meetings of the past which would have sermons on the need for Bible authority, the one church, the plan of salvation, sin and its consequences, and why denominationalism is wrong.

Undoubtedly one of the reasons we are not attracting and baptizing as many as we formerly did is the effect of contemporary thought and attitudes in today's society. Fewer people by far are concerned about their need to learn and do God's will. Their interests are in satisfying themselves and enjoying life -- NOW! Not only are they not interested in religion, they have no time for it. What time is not taken in their pursuit of material gain is spent in entertaining themselves. They are on the go to pursue personal interests constantly: to the beach, sightseeing, to ball games, fishing and hunting, to the country club, shopping, etc. What little time they are at home is consumed in front of the TV set. Should you know them through your work, or as a neighbor or friend, and try to interest them in spiritual matters you never get to "first base!" They may be polite with you, but soon their message comes across clear and plain: "We are not interested in religious matters and would rather not be bothered!" Should we who are strangers to them try to "spark" interest through door-to-door knocking, we may get a less patient and more rude response. At best the response will usually be, "Thank you; but I'm not interested!" All this does not mean that we should quit trying. *Some* people, though few and difficult to locate, are searching. We need to use every right means we can to locate such searching, receptive souls. Yet, even when our best is done we must admit that it is not as easy to find teachable people as it was a generation ago.

(More to follow).

204 Creek Trail, Columbia, TN 38401.

"Zone Of Silence"

Jesus said: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in 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" (Matthew 28:19, 20).

All Christians will recognize these words of our Lord as those given to his apostles, charging them with evangelistic responsibility. Few people will deny that the charge is applicable to us today. Biblical and profane history testifies to the dedication these men exercised to accomplish this mission. Their action is a perpetual example of the need for us to expend our energies in this direction.

Our success in this worthy pursuit does not measure up to their high standards. There may be many reasons for this. It is hoped that the following quote will help point to one of our difficulties:

In the Pacific off Vancouver Island, there is a stretch of water known as "The Zone of Silence." Because this area is acoustically dead, no sound can penetrate it. And since no bell or siren can warn ships of dangerous reefs, the ocean floor is studded with wrecks (Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations).

Could it be that the church is developing into a "Zone of Silence"? It may be that we have retreated into our comfortable buildings and have become satisfied with ministering only to ourselves. It is true we must minister to ourselves in order to be able to minister to others. However, if we are not careful, we will turn inward and become a "Zone of Silence" to those without.

—P.O. Box 345, Little Rock, AR 72103.



Arnold Sexton

indifferent to the crucifixion of Christ? Brethren who are in a position to know tell me it is harder now to raise support for mission work than it was twenty-five years ago. *Is it nothing to us that so many souls are going into eternity unprepared to meet God?*

II. *Liberalism Is Making Inroads into the Church?* Some congregations have already been carried into apostasy by compromising preachers. Others have taken the first steps in that direction. Brethren are aping denominational practices and destroying the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the Lord's church. Papers are being published to restructure the church and turn it into another denomination. Some churches are claiming to administer to "the needs of the whole man." Some so-called "gospel" preachers could preach indefinitely in a denominational church and not receive any flack, because their preaching is not distinctive.

The Lord's church was not a denomination when it was established in Jerusalem in 33 A.D.; and if it is now what it was then in all its earmarks, it is not a denomination now!

Is it nothing to you as to whether the Lord's church

maintains her uniqueness or not?

III. *You As A Parent Have a Divine Responsibility?* Are YOU sinning against your children by your failure to provide adequate spiritual training? This would include setting the proper example for them. By YOUR training and example, where will YOUR children be twenty-five years from now in relationship to the Lord's church? Do YOU consider your children as a heritage from the Lord? (Psalms 127:3). *Is it nothing to YOU that their eternal destiny is in your hands? Can any Christian parent ever fulfill his duties who never has prayer and Bible study with his children? Does your parental responsibility mean NOTHING TO YOU?*

CONCLUSION: Are you like Amaziah and Israel of old "who would not hear"? (II Kings 14:11; 18:12; Nehemiah 9:29). *Do YOU refuse to hear? IS IT NOTHING TO YOU?*

—1613 19th Avenue S.W., Decatur, AL 35601.

Invite A Friend To Church With You On Sunday!

"Is It Nothing To You"

Continued From Page 2

A Greater Trip Than To Go To The Moon

There are many great journeys which we take in the course of a lifetime. Some will visit points of interest in their own country; some will take a trip around the world; some will even go to the moon. However, man makes his greatest and most eventful trip when he comes to himself. The most important destination for man in this life is to come to that "port of self."



Edsel Burlison

The prodigal (Luke 15) had made some interesting and "enjoyable" trips while on his way into that far country. It was not until he "came

to himself" (verse 17) that he was able to really see what living is all about. "And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on this neck and kissed him" (Verse 20). This young man possessed the moral backbone which led him back to his father.

Perhaps, few have traveled as far into the far country as had the prodigal. Yet, any journey which has taken us away from God and our service to him is a "far" country and we should be continually taking that "trip around ourselves."

How long has it been since you really checked up on "you"? A young man walked into a drugstore and asked if he could use the telephone. The druggist gave permission and then heard the boy say: "Hello, Dr. Anderson? Do you want to hire a boy to cut the grass, milk the cow, and run errands for you?"

... "Oh, you already have a boy?" ... "Dr. Anderson, are you completely satisfied with the boy you have?" ... "OK, then. Good bye, doctor."

As the boy thanked the druggist and started out the door, the druggist called to him, "Just a minute, son. If you are looking for work, I could use a boy like you."

"Thank you, sir," replied the boy, "but I already have a job."

"Didn't I just then hear you trying to get a job from Dr. Anderson?"

"No, sir," said the boy. "You see, I am the boy who's working for Dr. Anderson, and I was just checking up on myself!"

No road leads one so far from God that God will not willingly and gladly receive him back. And no one has taken life's greatest journey until he arrives at the station of himself.

—West End Church of Christ, 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Missionary Training

On August 21 the first session of a new missionary training program will begin at the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Two quarters of study, lasting 22 weeks, will be offered. Ten different courses especially designed for prospective missionaries will be taught. Students will study:

Cross-cultural Communications
The Missionary and His Supporters
Missionary Team-Work
Mission Methods and Strategy
Missionary Message of the Bible
World Religions
Preparation of the Missionary
History of Missions
Church Growth
Practical Evangelism
Self Study on Chosen Mission Field
Campaign to a Multi-national City

The courses will be taught by experienced missionaries: Bill Nicks (with 11 years in



John Waddey

Nigeria), Rodney Rutherford (with 14 years in Zambia and Australia), and Jerry Dyer (with 7 years in Australia). All classes will be open to both men and women. Husbands and wives contemplating mission work are encouraged to enroll together.

The program is an extension of the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions. It is a work of the Karns church and is overseen by the Karns elders.

There is a desperate need for a renewal of interest in world evangelism. In recent years interest and involvement in foreign evangelism has dropped precipitously. The elders and faculty are committed to rekindling that missionary fire, recruiting quality volunteers for foreign service, giving them top quality training so they may do a creditable job, and then helping them reach their chosen field.

This training program should appeal to a large number of Christians: Those who plan to serve overseas; missionaries who are home on furlough who wish to further refine their skills; elders, preachers, mission committee personnel who have a special interest in overseas evangelism. Retirees who want to help in a mission field would greatly increase their usefulness by taking this course of study, as would young adults who wish to serve an ap-

prenticeship abroad.

We urge elders of sending churches to enroll their missionaries for the specialized training before sending them abroad. That 5½ months of preparation and orientation could well be worth thousands of dollars toward the success of their mission.

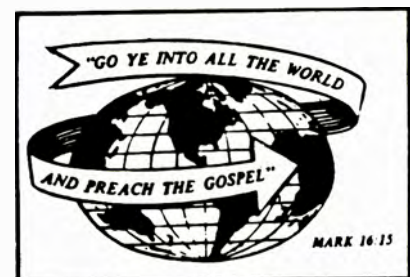
All brethren interested in knowing more about this Missions Training Program should write or call:

East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions
6608 Beaver Ridge Road
Knoxville, TN 37931-9599
Phone: 615-691-7411 or 615-691-7444.



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Baptist Women Preachers

Continued from page 1

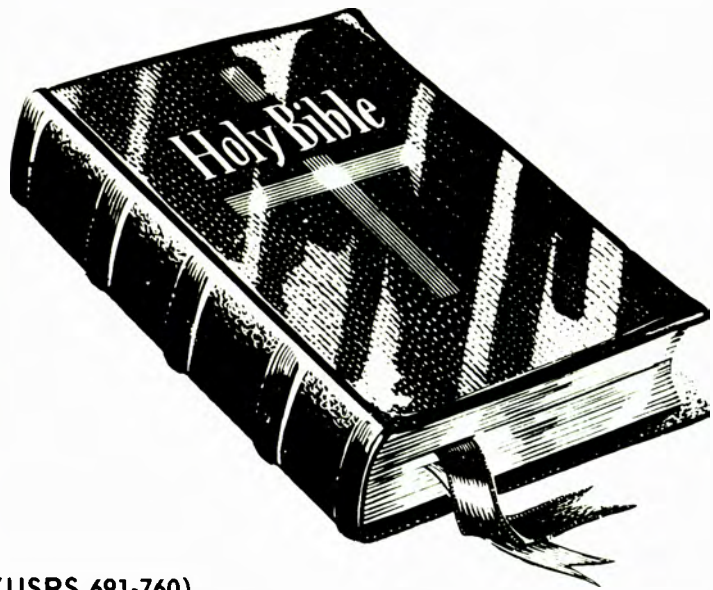
The problem is the deployment." (*The Birmingham News*, March 15, 1985).

The foregoing quotations represent pure blasphemy!! Never, never has the Lord allowed women to be ministers (preachers) of the gospel -- as men are preachers!! Note that the Bishop goes back to 1976, not the Holy Bible, for his authority. Thus, neither the Bishop, nor any Baptist, nor other religious order, has any divine authority for ordaining women as preachers.

Listen to the inspired apostle Paul: "Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to

usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (I Timothy 2:11-12). In the light of this passage may women preach? Never! The word *teach* (in this text) comes from a Greek word which means "to deliver a didactic discourse" (Thayer). One cannot preach without delivering a "didactic discourse," which women are forbidden to deliver; hence, women who follow New Testament authority cannot be gospel preachers. Furthermore, women cannot exercise *authority* in matters of religion over men (Matthew 28:18-20).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of



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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

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NUMBER 21

Some Things That "Must" Be Done

The word *must*, as used in this article, refers to "an imperative need or duty . . . an indispensable, essential requirement." The Lord God Almighty has no "non-essential commands!! The Lord's commands in the New Testament are not to be brushed aside as if the devil were the author of them. In fact, the word *must* is one of the strongest terms in our language.



W. A. Holley

Hence, the lesson herewith presented shall be one of the greatest importance to our honest readers! We shall note--

(1) *One "must" believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, if one would be saved* (Hebrews 11:6). No person can be saved in unbelief. "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).

Those who believe not die in their sins (John 8:21, 24). "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalms 14:1). The unbeliever is not *going to be* condemned -- he is already condemned (John 3:18). Abraham "believed God" when he believed and obeyed God's commands (Romans 4:2-3; Genesis 15:6, 22:1-14; Hebrews 11:17-19). No one can be saved by "faith only" (James 2:24-26). Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Could Jesus have been wrong??

Included in the command to *believe* are repentance (Luke 13:3), confession of Jesus' name (Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 8:37), and baptism (Acts 2:38; 2:41; Romans 6:3-4).

(2) *Baptism is a "must" in Jesus' scheme of things.*

Saul of Tarsus, near Damascus, asked Jesus: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The Lord's answer was, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou **MUST** do" (Acts 9:6). Ananias a certain disciple came by Jesus' direction to him for the purpose of telling him what to do to be saved. He said: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). "Be baptized" in the Greek text literally means, "get thyself baptized," thus stressing that baptism is a divine command that each individual must personally choose to obey. No parent can present his infant for baptism, and be pleasing to God.

In Acts 22:16 what does "calling on the name of the Lord," mean? Well, this expression has no reference to prayer. There is a rule in English grammar which states that an active participle following an injunction points out the manner in which the injunction is to be obeyed. The command of Ananias for Saul to "be baptized" is an injunction; "calling" is a participle which follows that command -- therefore, "be baptized" was the manner in which the injunction was to be obeyed.

Whether we wish to admit it or not, baptism saves the unbeliever who submits in obedience to God's word (1 Peter 3:21).

(3) *"Ye **MUST** be born again," said Jesus* (John 3:7). Thus Jesus taught that one *must* be "born again," "born of water and of the Spirit," in order to enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:3, 5). What does it mean to be "born again?" The Book of Acts, the book of conversions, contains many examples of the "new birth." About three thousand people, on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection, were born again, "born of water and of the Spirit," when they believed, repented of their sins, and were baptized by the authority of Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47). "Things that are equal to the same thing, are equal to each other." One cannot be "born again" out of Christ! We become "children of God" in Christ -- not out of Christ!! Your

Bible teaches that one is baptized into Christ: "For as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27; Cf. Romans 6:3-4). No one can be "born again" the moment one believes. One preacher was heard to say that "the moment one believes that Jesus is the Son of God, that one is washed in the blood of the Lamb;" but such a statement is false. According to John 1:11-12, the believer has a *right to become a child of God* -- not already is a child of God. A marriage license gives a couple the **RIGHT** to become husband and wife -- not that the marriage is already solemnized!! Even a tyro should know this fact.

No person is washed in the blood of Jesus Christ until one is baptized into the benefits of his death. Jesus shed his blood in his death (John 19:33-34). But one only reaches the cleansing blood by being baptized into his death (Romans 6:3-4). There is no "faith only" here (James 2:14-26).

(4) *We "must" worship God as it is written.* Jesus declared, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him **MUST** worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). We *must* worship him with our whole heart according to the word of God.

There are five items of worship set forth in the New Testament (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19). Mortal men cannot improve the worship God demands. The doctrines and commandments of men corrupt God's worship (Matthew 15:9). Mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship are sinful because God has not included them in his holy and divine will. Book, chapter, verse, please!!

"Where does God say not to use mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship?" some ask. That is the wrong question. The proper question is: Where does God command its use in Christian worship? Ah, that is the verse we are asking the users of pianos and organs to give us! Who will cite the passage? We shall see!! Leviticus 10:1-2 rejects an item of worship which the Lord had not command-

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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 26:35

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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Training Preachers Is Important

After his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ affirmed: "All power [American Standard Version: "authority"] is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). Then he commissioned the apostles to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16). Thus in the divine arrangement, upon the preaching of the gospel hinges the eternal salvation of "every creature" in all the world who is responsible or accountable before God.



Flavil H. Nichols

Jesus personally tutored and trained his apostles for more than three years before he sent them out to thus preach. Even then he did not want them to begin this vital work until they were "endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:46-49). He promised: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). He had explained that "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 show you things to come" (John 16:13). They could not read and study and read again the written New Testament, then preach it --for the simple reason that it then had not been put into written form. Upon them rested the colossal task of revealing unto the world, and confirming with miraculous signs for all time to come, the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. He directed them to "Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost" (Mark 13:11). Therefore he sent to them the Holy Spirit, saying: "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). The apostles thus spoke "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (I Corinthians 2:13). Their preaching was verbally inspired.

The wrath of God is upon any man who perverts, or deviates from, the gospel which the apostles preached (Galatians 1:6-9). The Spirit guided the apostle Paul to write: "The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2). Only

in this way will succeeding generations be able to "Preach the word" (II Timothy 4:2). This --committing the word to faithful men-- is the task being undertaken by the Bible Departments of our Christian colleges, and by our schools of preaching.

Christ our Savior admonished the apostles to "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:38; practically the same words are found in Luke 10:2). Surely if it is right to pray for laborers, it is right to provide training for them. Each congregation should be a 'training camp' to prepare recruits in the army of the Lord to become good soldiers. Our Schools of Preaching supplement that training, and those which faithfully fulfill this purpose deserve our moral and financial support.

We have previously in this journal given favorable mention to the Memphis School of Preaching, conducted by the Knight Arnold church. This issue carries an article by one of the Elders of the Karns, Tennessee, church which in that Knoxville suburb conducts the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions. No one should misconstrue the favorable mention of these two as an indication that they are the only ones we endorse. Let us encourage and financially support all scriptural efforts to train more laborers for the Lord's harvest.

East Tennessee School Of Preaching And Missions

Harold Duncan

It has been said that a school is like a seesaw with students on one end and teachers on the other. Both are absolutely essential if there is to be a school of any sort. The East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions (a work of the Karns church) has six teachers and 25 students. The school has graduated more than 100 gospel preachers who have the training and balance to be great servants of God.

These are good men because, among other reasons, they have been trained by good men. Our dedicated teachers give themselves to the training of preachers for the Lord's work here and abroad.

1. John Waddey, Director, has been preaching for 29 years. He is a graduate of Alabama Christian School of Religion. He has written a number of books and articles, and has been (and continues to be) active in evangelistic work. He is also a frequent speaker on lecture-ship programs. He has taught in the school from its inception. Old Testament courses are

Continued on page 3

Why Are We Not Baptizing More People?

(No. II)

Some Wrong Solutions

COMPROMISE: In order to make ourselves more acceptable to other people some have taken the route of compromise (although they would not call it by this name). They say there are saved people in all "churches," while not emphasizing Bible teaching on the one church, its essentiality, and how to identify it today. They steer away from



Joe E. Galloway

discussing such topics as why instrumental music is sinful, or the error of premillennial doctrines, hoping to "convert" people without teaching them out of these errors. They try to convince people to submit to baptism to obey God, but do not stress that one is lost until he so obeys the Lord from the heart. Such a "soft-soap" approach may result in more "baptisms," but are these people really converted? Little wonder that so many in some congregations are doctrinally illiterate. They have never been taught the whole truth in a firm, uncompromising manner. We may "swell our numbers" by "easing" prospects to the baptism; but we deceive ourselves if we think we have converted souls to Christ in this manner. While we do not advocate being crude or rude in teaching prospects the gospel, we do stress our need to teach the whole truth without compromise. No less can satisfy the injunction to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season" (II Timothy 4:2).

BRIBERY. In an effort to substantially increase the numbers at our services some

Continued on page 4

What About Astrology

(No. 1)

Today, as more and more people are turning from belief in the true God and the Bible to religions which appeal to fleshly desires, mysticism, and little self-control and personal commitment, it is little wonder that the ancient superstition of astrology has made a comeback. Nearly every newspaper and secular magazine carries some type of astrological forecast. Hundreds of books can be found in our bookstores on this practice. Popular songs (such as *The Age of Aquarius* of a few years back) often contain material about astrology. Nearly any jewelry display will include items which depict the various signs of the zodiac. It seems that on nearly every TV talk show someone is asked what his birthdate sign is (vis.: Aquarius, Gemini, Pisces, etc.).



Joe E. Galloway

time of his birth.

Although we may not have been very much aware of this occult practice until recent years, astrology reaches far back in the history of civilization. The ancient Akkado-Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Chinese, Indians (of India), Greeks, and Romans were given to the practice of astrology. Even the pyramids of Egypt and the temples of the pre-Indian people on the American continents are thought to have been constructed in connection with this superstitious belief. The present-day formulation of astrology can be largely traced to the codification done by Ptolemy in the second century A.D. A large part of the idolatrous religions, both past and present, have practiced various things related to astrology.

The Bible Strongly Condemns Astrology

The man or woman who worshiped the heavenly bodies was to be stoned to death under the law of Moses (Deuteronomy 17:2-5). Israel was warned not to participate in the abominations of those people dwelling in Canaan when they would inhabit the land, and "an observer of times" is included in

these forbidden practices (Deuteronomy 18:9-12). Later in II Kings 17:16 a list of Israel's sins is given which resulted in the Assyrian captivity, and worshipping "all the host of heaven" is one of them. During Josiah's reformation of Judah he put down "them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven" (II Kings 23:5, ASV -- the footnote gives "twelve signs" as an alternate reading for "planets"). Isaiah 47:13 chides condemned Babylon to "let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee." Jeremiah 10:2 warns Israel not to be "dismayed at the signs of heaven" as were the heathen. Several times in the book of Daniel astrologers are shown to be powerless (e.g., 2:27).

In a second article we shall show that astrology is both worthless and harmful. Also, several New Testament scriptures which condemn various principles involved in astrology will be presented.

—204 Creek Trail, Columbia, TN 38401.

East Tennessee School Of Preaching And Missions

Continued from page 2

his specialty.

2. George Goldman, Academic Dean, has been preaching 20 years. He holds the M.A. and M.Th. degrees from Harding Graduate School of Religion. He has spoken on various lectureships. He teaches New Testament courses, doctrinal courses, and is particularly interested in greek.

3. David Lipe, Director of Development, has been preaching 17 years. David is a graduate of Freed-Hardeman College and Harding University; he holds the M.A. from Harding Graduate School of Religion, and is presently a candidate for the Ph.D. degree. He has had two public debates and has written books and articles. David's specialties include Christian Doctrine and Evidences, Biblical Ethics, and Logic.

4. Rod Rutherford, Dean of Students, has been preaching 27 years, many of which were in foreign mission work. Rod graduated from David Lipscomb College, and from the Memphis School of Preaching. He teaches a wide range of subjects, including the Life of Christ, and Missions.

5. Bill Nicks, Instructor, has preached for 44 years, 11 of which were in Africa. He graduated from Freed-Hardeman College, and from Abilene Christian University. He has written both books and articles. He has

been instrumental in establishing churches, including the Karns church. He teaches in establishing churches, including the Karns church. He teaches Sermon Preparation and Delivery Acts, World Evangelism, and many other classes.

6. Jerry Dyer, Instructor, has been preaching 19 years, and has been active in mission work. A graduate of Sunset School of Preaching, his specialty is personal evangelism and campaigns. He is also the local preacher for the Karns church.

In addition to their full-time task of teaching, our men spend two Sundays a month with sister congregations encouraging them, recruiting students, and securing funds to carry on the work.

In 1985 it will cost us \$248,000 to provide our program of preacher-training. The Karns church gladly supplies \$104,000 plus the facilities for the school. This is a small budget when compared to similar operations. We believe in getting all we can for the dollar invested. Because new programs and teachers have been added, we will have to raise \$40,000 more in 1985 than in 1984 for the faculty to continue their work. I believe our work is worthy of your help.

Will you consider helping us \$10 a month for one year, or with a one-time gift in 1985 of \$100 (or more)? Remember: Lost souls are desperately in need of gospel preachers to lead them to Christ. Please help us meet that need. As a token of our appreciation, we will send you a copy of our lectureship book on *Christ*. Thank you for your interest, prayers, good will, and whatever contribution you can make to our work. May God continue to bless you richly.

Yours for a lost world,
Harold Duncan (an Elder)
For The Elders

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

Some Things That "Must" Be Done

Continued from page 1

ed. The silence of the Holy Scriptures must be respected.

(5) "And the servant of the Lord **MUST** not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient . . ." (II Timothy 2:24). It is possible to contend for the faith without fussing and fighting among ourselves (Jude 3). We must learn well the art of getting along with others (Romans 12:18; Proverbs 15:1; I Peter 3:8-12).

(6) *We "must" stand before the bar of judgment.* (II Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:12). We shall be judged according to God's word (John 12:48). Have you heard and obeyed the truth of God (Hebrews 9:27; II Thessalonians 1:7-9). If not, do it today -- Tomorrow may be too late!

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Taking A Public Stand

"The trouble with the Christians is not that they have strict morals but that they don't seem to care very much. They don't care about the agonies of unhappy marriages, about the loneliness of the unmarried, about the dilemma of the homosexual" (M. Thornton, quoted by L. Hodgson in *Sex and Christian Freedom*, London, 1967, S.C.M. Press).



Barry Fike

As I read that one sentence I hung my head. I hear on the mass media about a young boy who has done more for loners in the street than the Lord's church in that area collectively! I hear testimonies from followers of the "Church Of Satan" tell how God (?) changed their life so they became members of a caring denomination! Now think about it: What have we done? Have our cathedrals and buildings so enclosed us that to have a change of temperature inside becomes more important than reaching those down the street who are going

to divorce and split a family? Is that new paint job so important that it can't wait so that we can reach out to the homosexual and the prostitute who need Christ so much?

Our Lord cared! He was interested in people, in their problems, in those who were sick, the poor, the widowed, the distressed (Matthew 25:35,36,40). Paul stated that our life is to be "worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Philippians 1:27, A.S.V.). Well, is it? Doesn't being worthy of the gospel, include evangelization and the concern for the civilization that surrounds us? Could it truthfully be said that a church which appears to care for men's souls without caring for their bodies cannot claim to be following the principles laid down by Christ? How can we quote James 1:27 and not practice it? And when some do practice this "pure religion," they gripe and complain because they have to spend an extra buck to help, or bring another can of food to the pantry!

Who among us really cares for those lost and dying in the world? Who has lost sleep, or has sat up and cried because someone went to hell? We can talk about what is good and moral, and believe it, yet lose our soul because of it. What good is truth or faith, if it is not shown? James talks about this dilemma

in James 4.

How many of us have taken a public stand against pornography, abortion, and basic social unrighteousness. We do have freedom of speech, don't we? Let's face it: in a democratic society it is indeed an inescapable responsibility for the Christian to use his influence because, like every other citizen, he bears a measure of personal responsibility for misgovernment, bad laws, or wrong policies, unless he has played his full part in trying to get a better government into power, better laws on the statute books, and better policies adopted (J.N.D. Anderson, *Into the World; the need and Limits of Christian Involvement*, London, 1968, Falcon Books).

I realize how unpopular it is to stand on a soapbox and talk about the standard the Bible sets forth for the world. We will be called "fanatics," "busybodies," and a host of expletives to demonstrate the world's distrust for our master. But after all, the Lord's church is the salt of the earth. And salt does purify, but in doing so it also stings.

Let us take a bold and noncompromising stand on public issues. Let us help in ridding our towns and counties of detriments to society. Let us warn men that God will deal with them if they do not repent. The Christian has no less a love of his country than other men; therefore where he sees evil trampling he must speak.

—3051 8th Ave. SW, Hickory, N.C. 28601.

Why Are We Not Baptizing More People?

Continued from page 2

have turned to the promotional methods of the sales world. Congregations have offered free helicopter rides for those who will attend, bicycles as prizes to the ones who will enroll the most in a given time to come on the bus to services, and many, many other such material inducements. Not only does such cheapen the gospel which we are supposed to be teaching, but it emphasizes the material over the spiritual. If it takes material bribes to bring people to services it will probably require such to keep them coming. If it is all right to use such promotional methods as we have already mentioned, by what rationale would we exclude giving green stamps to all who attend services? or object to having a drawing at each service with a cash award for the person in attendance whose name is drawn? This may increase our attendance, substantially! We might even sell raffle tickets, "killing two birds with one stone" as we both raise more money for the church and increase our attendance! Might we not well adapt Christ's statement to our assembly today: "Make not my Father's house an house of merchandise" (John 2:16)? Or, "My house shall be called the house of prayer but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Matthew 21:13)?

ENTERTAINMENT. Some have tried to increase attendance by offering entertainment. Movies have been substituted for sermons, in some instances puppet shows and drama have been used, and at least one congregation has shown "G" and "PG" movies on a small fee basis in their building on Saturday nights to provide something for the young people, and to thus increase their Bible school attendance the following day. A few weeks back this writer was shown a bowling alley in a denominational building. We wondered at that time how long it will be until we learn of such in some of "our" buildings? "Family life centers" (Gymnasiums)

have already been accepted in some areas. When will we learn that the end does *not* justify the means? We cannot draw people *to Christ* by means of entertainment. We may draw many people in such ways; but we shall not have drawn them to the Lord! People who are seeking entertainment today have a wide field to choose from. We cannot begin to successfully compete with the entertainment business, nor should we. We should, instead, be in the God-pleasing, soul-saving business. Helping people to see this need, locating those who are searching for God, teaching God's saving message, and helping the saved to grow should occupy our time and energy!

WORKSHOPS. As attendance and baptisms began declining we have turned to large numbers of soul-winning workshops, lecture-ships, and seminars. There is good training in many of these efforts. Methods are learned that may help us be more productive workers. Sometimes needed zeal and encouragement is generated at these gatherings. Yet, that such is not the entire answer to our needs is obvious, and sometimes some workshops are even harmful due to questionable or wrong methods being taught, encouraged, and accepted. (For example, the Crossroads problem has been propagated in many workshops). One problem with workshops, lecture-ships, etc., is that often those who attend are the ones who already are the working force of congregations, while the majority needing to become involved never attend. Another weakness seems to be that some have mistakenly identified the attendance of such training sessions as being sufficient within itself -- they never seem to get around to the *work* of teaching the lost! So, while such training gatherings can be beneficial, they are not, themselves, the solution to our need.

(More to follow).

—204 Creek Trail, Columbia, TN 38401.

Why Do You Stop Listening?

Nick Hamilton

"And they gave audience to him unto this word (Acts 22:22)." This sad commentary is given of the Jews who listened to Paul declare the acceptance of the Gentiles in the sight of God. It could be said of many others. Their solution to the problem was very simple -- if you don't like the message, don't listen. It is either that, or get rid of the one who said it!

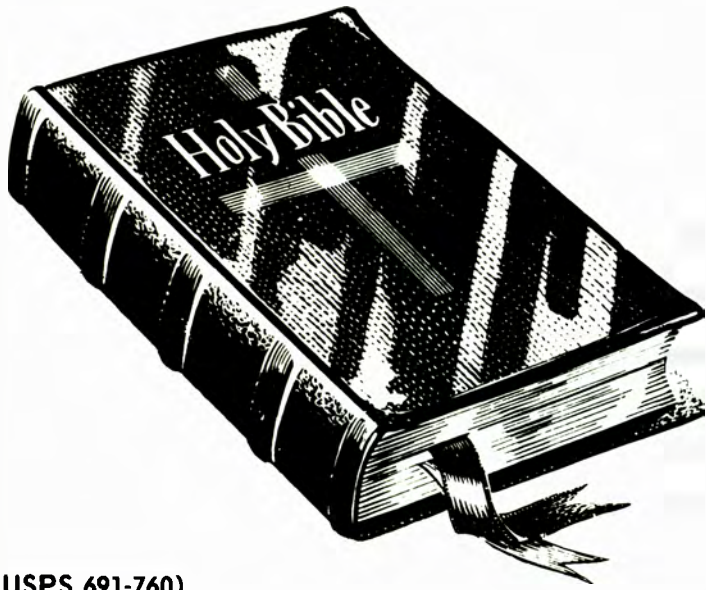
Think that attitude is past? Wrong! Many still possess it!

Our problem in the church today is not that the truth has ceased to be preached. Most preachers, at least the ones I know, still preach it. The problem is on the other end -- on the one who hears it preached. If they don't like the message, if they disagree on a point, if it isn't the most dynamic thing they have ever heard, they simply QUIT LISTENING! It is as simple as that.

The end result is a set of new problems with which we are hardly equipped to deal: members of the church thinking one church is as good as another; general acceptance of divorce and remarriage; lack of respect for the authority of the Scriptures; the feeling that it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you believe something, the thought that there are good Christians in all churches. The point is, preachers have not quit preaching on these matters; but many of the brethren have quit listening.

Jesus gave the instruction to take heed both how and what we hear. That instruction is more needed now than at any time in my life. Please, please give careful attention to every preached word, and "search the scriptures daily to see if these things are so. (Acts 17:11)."

—Pleasant Valley Church, Little Rock, AR 72215.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of T

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

—Acts 26:25

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The Second Coming And Resurrection

The second coming of Christ and the resurrection of all the dead are a part of the gospel (I Corinthians 15:1-19). To teach otherwise is to teach another gospel (Galatians 1:6-9). That which makes a preacher a "gospel preacher" is the fact that he preaches the gospel, and not some ordination of some human ecclesiasticism. If he omits the future coming of



Roger Jackson

Christ and the resurrection of the dead he is a theorist and not a gospel preacher; and such is to be concluded from an examination of the content of the gospel and subsequent determination that these two elements are a part of it.

The gospel is composed of facts to be believed (I Corinthians 15:1-4). One of these FACTS is that Jesus promised: "I will come again" (John 14:1-6). At his second coming the dead will be judged (II Thessalonians 1:7-9) and *days* will end by virtue of the fact that *that day* is called the "last day" (John 6:39-44). "Last" has no significance if there have been nineteen hundred years of *days* since the *last* one!

The gospel is also composed of commands to be obeyed. They include faith (John 8:24-32), repentance (Acts 17:30, 31), confession of Christ (Romans 10:9,10), and baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Of course we must remain faithful even if it costs us our lives (Revelation 2:10).

The gospel contains threats or warnings to be feared and avoided (Revelation 20:12-15). This vengeance is everlasting, and equal in duration to everlasting life, which two are described by the same word in Matthew 25:46. One cannot consistently believe in an instant

hell without believing in an instant heaven, i.e., one that is over in a moment's time.

The gospel is composed also of precious promises to be enjoyed (Revelation 21:1-22:6). This is the purpose of the resurrection of the righteous (John 5:28,29). "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom" of heaven (the final state); so inspiration tells us that our vile bodies will be changed (I Corinthians 15:50; Romans 8:11). Those who endorse Max King-ism aver that the reference in Romans pictures the church as a dead body being resurrected from the ruins of Judaism. But the term is plural! How many churches would that allow for? It is a strange hermeneutic principle that must change a plural noun to singular in order to defend it. The same is true of I Corinthians 15:50. At verse fifty-one Paul says "We shall all be changed." Who are the "we?" Are they *churches*? Such a position would necessitate an apology to sectarians for teaching there is one church!

It comes as no surprise that the *facts* of the gospel were first to come under attack by unbelievers and theorists. Even before his ascension the fact of his resurrection raised a question (John 20:24-25). The Grecian philosophers excused themselves at that juncture of Paul's speech (Acts 17:30-32). The sin of Hymenaeus and Philetus was denying the resurrection by saying it is passed. It is amazing that their tribe has survived in "Realized Eschatology." In a most remarkable admission one "Realized Eschatologist" remarks: "How long has it been now since Christ promised His second coming? It has been a long time, has it not?" Later in the material he resumes: "Haven't you ever asked in the recesses of your mind, 'Where is the fulfillment of Christ (sic) second coming?'" And all of this is after his noting Peter's warning that men would arise asking that question and postulating that he is not coming again in the future because of the lengthy delay. We can only marvel! Peter says God does not reckon his promises with

regard to time.

The future coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead are an important part of the hope of the church. John 14:1-3 records that Jesus promised it to us. If it does not refer to mansions in heaven, pray give me their address. In Acts 1:9-11 the Saviour promised to come as he went away. One objector argues if so we must know exactly what kind of cloud received him in order to know what kind of cloud to look for (i.e., cumulous, cirrus, etc.).

Isn't false doctrine silly?

Perhaps the most damaging passage to "Realized Eschatology" is I Corinthians 11:26, which states that we must observe the Lord's Supper "till he come." If he has already come we should eliminate the supper! I have seen these advocates break themselves over this passage repeatedly. It has no answer.

I Thessalonians 4:12-18 clearly says that the hope of the church is to be taken up in the air with Christ at his second coming and ever be with him. Common observation tells us this has not happened.

II Peter 3:9-10 still says the earth will be burned up when he returns. A favorite method of interpretation (hermeneutics) of Realized Eschatologists is to take a figure of speech or an expression in the Bible and make it apply to the same thing every time it is used. Most expositors and Bible students recognize the fallacy of such a procedure; but it must be demonstrated to others. That such cannot be done with Peter's "heavens and earth," that is making it apply to Jerusalem and the Mosaic economy, is apparent from the fact that the heaven and earth of II Peter 3:5 refers to the literal heaven and earth of Noah's day, the same that was overflowed with water. Did God overflow Jerusalem and the Jewish economy with water in Noah's day? Well, the same heaven and earth is that which is

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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 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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Judging

"Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matthew 7:1). "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

There seems to be a contradiction in the two passages cited above, but only to those who fail to understand that the word "judge" is used in a good and a bad sense in the New Testament. This failure is the reason many misapply and pervert Matthew 7:1.



W. Douglass Harris

Someone says, "But you judge people," not realizing that *they* are making a judgment by their accusation! But the other passage (John 7:24) enjoins "righteous judgment." So we are to judge in the sense allowed.

In another passage in the same chapter, Jesus said that we can judge one's character by his fruit (Matthew 7:15-20). Did the Lord contradict himself in the same chapter? When he said, "Judge not," He was condemning censorious, harsh, carping, self-righteous judging. We are involved in making judgments every day; and to accuse others of judging because they exposed our sin is to involve ourselves in hopeless inconsistency and in the smearing of others to cover up sin. Jesus said it is like trying to remove a mote (speck) from another's eye when one has a beam (plank) in his own eye (Matthew 7:3-5). We should not form hasty conclusions from wrong motives about others without knowing all the facts.

There are many reasons why we should not do this. We shall note as many as space will allow.

1. Jesus said, "That ye be not judged." The same judgment we pass on others will be passed on us (Matthew 7:2). When Jesus said, "measure for measure," he was referring to the irrevoc-

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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Attend Vacation Bible School!

It has become customary for many congregations to conduct what is called "Vacation Bible School" during the summer recess from school, or the children's *vacation* from school. Some churches have such special classes the **FIRST** week after school is dismissed; others wait a week, or several weeks, to allow the children time to get tired of having 'nothing to do,' so they will be eager to gather for classes again each day for a week.

When they were first introduced, many such Vacation Bible Schools lasted for two weeks; but now I seldom hear of one that long. My opinion is that the teachers were overworked, and the one-week school is their preference.

Some congregations ask each class, beginning the very first day, to practice some feature for a closing program to be presented the last session. Some who have day-time classes will have a program the **NIGHT** following the last class, to which all the parents are invited. Whether children from various denominations attend the V.B.S., or whether only our own children are in the classes, the night session allows parents to see and hear their children participate in the closing program, visit their rooms, and meet their teachers and other friends.

Many churches have V.B.S. classes for children only. Others have classes for "all ages." In some congregations, the adult class is the largest group of the school. My observation is that day-time Bible schools have more of the younger children in attendance, while those at nights draw more of the older school-age, and adults. But let all who can attend Vacation Bible School!

That God requires his word to be taught is abundantly clear from the Scriptures. In the Old Testament he had Moses to write this: "Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that their children, which have not known anything, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God . . ." (Deuteronomy 31:12-13).

It is the responsibility of each generation to teach those who are succeeding them. The Psalmist said: "I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation

to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children" (Psalms 78:2-6). Notice that the fathers should make known to their children what God had commanded them.

In the New Testament God speaks in this wise: "And ye, fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

Those who have been taught the truth have a responsibility to teach that same truth to others. To a young preacher Paul wrote: "The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2).

True, not one of these passages mentions by name "Vacation Bible School." Neither does one of them mention "Sunday School," nor a "Protracted Meeting." But these are fine ways or methods of learning and reviewing the will of God for man today, and of teaching it to others.

So, whenever there is a class for Bible study, or a series of revival services where God's word will be preached, avail yourself of the opportunity to become enlightened in the truth. Enroll in the V.B.S. -- and attend every session.

There are many reasons why each person who can participate **SHOULD** attend Vacation Bible School. These same reasons should motivate each of us to be present for Sunday Bible classes, and for mid-week Bible study also.

(1) To obey the scriptures quoted above, and others which teach this same truth.

(2) To learn God's word, growing in grace and knowledge.

(3) To set a good example before others, wielding a good influence both in the church, and out of it.

(4) To be warned of the dangers of sin, and to be reminded of my duty to God.

(5) To demonstrate my love for the Bible, for Christ, and for his church.

(6) To encourage those who work diligently to make Vacation Bible School a success, and to be encouraged by others to live closer to God's will.

(7) To show my love and respect for, and my submission to, the Eldership which planned and provided the classes.

(8) To encourage and otherwise to help other learners.

(9) To rejoice in all the good that is accomplished.

(10) To assist as I may be able those who

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You Can't Live Wrong and Die Right

"Detour," "Beware The Dog," "Thin Ice," etc., are signs we often encounter telling us of dangers which could destroy us. In spite of such warnings, many prefer to do "their own thing" convinced that somehow everything is going to turn out all right.

Someone told of a little boy who listened to his Bible class teacher tell the story of the rich man and Lazarus. The teacher then asked the class, "Which would you rather be, the rich man or Lazarus?" The little boy very honestly replied, "I would rather be the rich man while I live and Lazarus when I die!"

Sadly, this describes what many grownups have decided. Many are ignoring all the danger signs which would prevent destruction. Paul warned: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10:12).

The destructive forces come upon us so gradually that sometimes there is no reason, seemingly, to be alarmed or even concerned. Yet, when we feel completely secure, tragedy strikes.

A little girl was playing in the sands along the seashore. She was building a city in the sand. She laid out the streets, built the houses, stores, banks, and wall. Outside the wall she laid out a highway and roads, farms and farm houses. All afternoon she worked building her city. She did not notice that the sun was setting, the clouds were gathering and that the



Edsel Burleson

wind was growing chilly. She was too busy with her city. She did not notice that the tide was coming in, the waves mounting higher and higher, until one wave, mightier than the rest, came sweeping in about her, washing away her houses, and her lands, her city and her farms. In terror the child ran back alone and afraid.

We, too, become so involved building our houses, filling our banks, and stocking our stores, that we ignore the heavy clouds that often move in creating the storms which sweep us into eternity. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians

6:7).

An old man asked a young friend, who sought advice, "What do you want to do with your life?" He replied, "I intend to go to college, graduate, and set myself up in business." "Fine," said the old man, "What then?" "I want to marry, settle in a community, and be a successful businessman." "That is wonderful," said the friend. "What then?" "Then I want to retire; and then I suppose I'll die." Then said the wise old man, "What then?" WHAT THEN?

—West End Church of Christ, 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Judging

Continued from page 2

able law of reaping as one sows (Galatians 6:7; James 2:13). "We judge ourselves or condemn ourselves by judging others, when we are guilty of the same sin; again we are judged by our fellowmen, for we give occasion and invite severe judgment from others when we pass sentence on others" (H. Leo Boles).

2. *Inability to Form a Correct Judgement.* Jesus said that when we have a beam in our own eye it unfits us for passing judgment on others. "Censoriousness is a compound of many of the worst passions; *latent pride*, which discovers the mote in our brother's eye, but hides the beam in our own; *malignant envy*, which, wounded at the noble talents and superior prosperity of others, transforms them into the objects and food of its malice -- if possible obscuring the splendor it is too base to emulate; *disguised hatred*, which diffuses, in its perpetual mutterings, the irritable venom of the heart;

servile duplicity, which fulsomely praises to the face and blackens behind the back; *shameless levity*, which sacrifices the peace and reputation of the absent, merely to give barbarous stings to a jocular conversation; altogether forming an aggregate the most desolating on earth, and nearest in character to the malice of hell" (E. L. Magoon).

3. *Not Everything We Condemn in Others Is in Reality a Sin.* Jesus and Paul were often condemned by their critics; but they were not sinners. Job's three friends condemned him; but they misjudged him. And critical, severe condemnation of others may be a cover-up. It is easier to judge others than to improve ourself that loves not his own soul enough to refrain from judging (the wrong kind) can hardly be trusted with the souls of others.

4. *Failure to Understand Circumstances.* A judge should never pronounce final sentence until he has heard all the facts on which to base a judgment. If we form hasty judgments about others, society will judge us without pity. An old Indian expression says, "Don't criticize another until you have walked a mile in his moccasins." "He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy" (James 2:13).

5. *Not Our Prerogative to Make Such Judgments.* It is God's prerogative to pass final sentence (I Corinthians 4:3-5). "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth . . . But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God. 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 14:4, 10-12).

Conclusion: Self-improvement is a necessary qualification for the improvement of others. Jesus said, "First cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then thou shalt see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matthew 7:5).

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling" (Romans 14:4a, 10-13).

—1613 19th Ave., S.W., Decatur, AL 35601.

God Is The Author Of The Bible

God is the very source of the Bible. Every word of the Bible comes from God. There are those who want to say that it came from some man; but this is not true. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:16). Notice that "all" or "every" (A.S.V.) scripture (not some), but "every scripture is inspired of God" (American Standard Version).

Inspired means "God breathed." There are some who say that those inspired writers of the Bible wrote on their own experiences. But the Bible says, "The spirit of Jehovah spake by me and his word was upon my tongue" (II Samuel 23:2). The margin in the American Standard Version of 1901 says, "Jehovah spake in me." Here David by the pen of inspiration said Jehovah spake by me and his word was upon my tongue. Whose word was upon David's tongue? God's word.

Then notice what Jeremiah said by the pen of inspiration, "But Jehovah said unto me, Say



Timothy Richburg

not, I am a child; for to whomsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak" (Jeremiah 1:7-9). Now notice verse nine: "Then Jehovah put forth his hand, and touched my mouth; and Jehovah said unto me, Behold I have put my words in thy mouth." Whose words were in his mouth? God's words.

The Bible says, "Thou shalt speak my word" (Ezekiel 2:7). Whose word? God's word!

Now let us look at the New Testament. The apostle Paul said with reference to himself and other inspired men: "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words" (I Corinthians 2:13). The Bible, says, "Not in words which man's wisdom teacheth." Man is not the author of the Bible!

God spoke, telling those inspired writers what to write. The apostle declared that "the things which I write to you . . . are the commandments of the Lord" (I Corinthians 14:37). Notice that these are the Lord's commandments.

The Bible was not written by human wisdom nor is it based upon human experience. It's author was God.

Let us look to the Bible and believe that it is word-for-word what God has said (II Peter 1:21).

—Rt. 1 Box 75-B, Selma, AL 36701.

What About Astrology?

(No. II)

Many today who think of themselves as fine Christian people are very careful to read their horoscopes each day. If their horoscopes suggest that it is a bad day for travel or for business transactions they may even put such off until later. On the other hand, if they are told that some desirable thing will be theirs they expect it to occur, and may even help such to happen.



Joe E. Galloway

In our previous article we gave some background on the superstition known as "astrology." It was shown that this practice was condemned in no uncertain terms in the Old Testament. But, is *astrology* any less dangerous today? May a Christian dabble in it with impunity?

Astrology Is Worthless

That the stars do not control our personalities, actions, and future should be recognized by any thinking person, and certainly by Christians. So many well-known predictions of astrologers have failed. Even claimed successes have involved predictions which were so vague that many other events could just as easily have been claimed as "fulfillments." It is a historical fact that astrologers predicted that the earth would be destroyed by a flood in 1524. Some of our readers will remember reading about the astrological prediction in India in 1963 that the world would end. It was reported that half of India's population sat up all night at the predicted date, expecting the world to end. That Adolf Hitler relied heavily on the advice of his astrologers for his military strategy should provide ample proof that there is nothing to its predictions.

One can easily show that astrologers often contradict themselves -- they cannot even agree on horoscope predictions. A few years ago while preparing a lecture on this topic I noticed that our local newspapers each had an astrological forecast column, but by different authors. For the *same* Monday under the sign of Gemini one column told the ones under this sign to be aggressive and to insist on their rights, but the other column told these same persons that they should remain in the

background of activity for that particular day. The forecasts, supposedly telling how the stars would effect lives, could hardly have been more in disagreement! Similar differences can be found in almost any such comparison.

Several other considerations should show that astrology must be false in its claims -- and powerless. (1) Twins born at the same time and place should have the same fate if astrology is true, but we know this is not the case. One twin may even die years earlier than the other. (2) Those born north of the Arctic Circle during some months are not born under the sign of any of the area in the heavens called the zodiac, yet astrologers ignore this in claiming that all mankind is effected by the sign of the zodiac under which one is born. (3) *Astrology* has not even kept up with the science of astronomy. Due to the position of the earth's axis having changed, astronomers tell us that the positions of the constellations have slipped westward to the extent that the "houses" of the zodiac named after them are about a full division off what they were when the houses of the zodiac were mapped out by the early astrologers. Yet astrologers have ignored this change and still base predictions on their original positions. So, it is evident that the present-day horoscope information is not even based on the celestial bodies' positions which are supposed to effect the person in the horoscope's prognostication.

Several exhaustive tests have been made by various educators and scientists to see if the astrological claims have any validity. Time and time again it has been shown that they do not. For example, in an effort to see if the sign under which one is born influences marital compatibility (as is claimed by astrologists) a psychologist at Michigan State examined the records of 2,978 couples who had married and 478 couples who had divorced in Michigan in 1967-68. He found no correlation with the zodiac signs. Marriage and divorce resulted just as often in both those born under compatible signs, and those who were not!

Astrology Is Harmful

Someone may yet be thinking, "What harm can come in following one's horoscope? If it doesn't work it still does no damage." It is this writer's conviction that such scriptures as I Chronicles 10:13, 14 and Galatians 5:20 show it to be sinful to even inquire of the occult concerning the future. Other Bible principles

violated in following one's horoscope are: (1) One is to worship and serve the Creator rather than the created (Romans 1:25). When one follows the horoscope he is turning this around and claiming that the created (viz., the heavenly bodies) governs his life rather than the Creator. (2) In *astrology* one tries to learn the best for man apart from God's revealed will, the Bible (II Timothy 3:15-17). Those who are really interested in learning and doing God's will will not be following their daily horoscopes. (3) James (4:14) clearly tells us that we cannot know the future. Astrology falsely claims that this is wrong -- that the stars do reveal one's future. (4) In claiming that the stars control one's actions, astrology encourages one to be apathetic and to blame the stars for his problems and misdoings. The Bible teaches that we are responsible beings who can choose the right way (Revelation 22:17). (5) Astrology avoids moral imperatives and makes truth and right relative and subjective. Acts 17:30, 31 plainly shows that man must act in a responsible manner, obeying God's will, in view of the coming judgment.

Let us all stay as far away as possible from that which is worthless, harmful, and unscriptural. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearances of evil" (II Thessalonians 5:21, 22).

—204 Creek Trail, Columbia, TN 38401.

Rules For A Perfect Day!

1. JUST FOR TODAY I will try to strengthen my mind by reading something that requires effort, thought and concentration.

2. JUST FOR TODAY I will do somebody a good turn and not get found out.

3. JUST FOR TODAY I will do a task that needs to be done but which I have been putting off. I will do it as an exercise in will-power.

4. JUST FOR TODAY I will dress as becomingly as possible, talk low, act courteously, be liberal with praise and criticize not one bit nor find fault with anything.

5. JUST FOR TODAY I will have a quiet half hour all by myself and relax. In this half hour sometime I will think of God so as to get a little more perspective in my life.

6. JUST FOR TODAY I will be unafraid. Especially, I will not be afraid to be happy, to enjoy what is beautiful, to love and to believe that those I love, love me.

Author Unknown

The Second Coming And Resurrection

Continued from page 1

to be destroyed with fire in the future -- THE SAME -- the text says!

In conclusion we list some consequences of denying the resurrection of Christ and all men in the future at the last day. (1) If the resurrection has passed no one is permitted to marry (Matthew 22:30). (2) If the resurrection is passed no one in the grave will hear his voice and no one will come forth (John 5:28, 29). (3) If the resurrection is passed the end of days came on the same day it came (John 6:39-44). (4) If the resurrection has passed at least a part of the Lord's Supper has no meaning and should be abandoned (I Corinthians 11:26). (5) If the second coming of Christ has occurred, the Bride of

Christ is left desolate with no hope of ever being united with her husband (II Corinthians 11:2). (6) Since the second coming and judgment transpire together, if the second coming has passed, so has the judgment -- and it is not true that "all" the dead will stand before God (Revelation 20:12). (7) If the resurrection has passed the apostles are liars (I Corinthians 15:1-19). Furthermore, according to the same text, Christ is a deceiver, our faith is vain, our sins are unforgiven, hope is gone, and we are miserable people.

The hope of the resurrection burns bright in the heart of every true believer. Surrender it for no man!

—940 Old Wood Rd., Oxford, AL 36203.

Attend Vacation

Bible School!

Continued from page 2

teach.

Let all who possibly can enroll in, and attend faithfully, Vacation Bible School -- and all other teaching programs of the church. It would appear hypocritical for us to pray God's blessings upon a work of the church which we are unwilling to support with our presence!



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of Truth

Words of Truth and soberness.

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

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Radicalism

(No. 1)

Radicalism has been a plague to the Lord's church, both ancient and modern. Radical Jewish brethren sought to impose their traditional Jewish customs on Gentile converts (Acts 15:1). They hated and persecuted Paul as though he were the number one enemy of Christ (Philippians 1:17). The twentieth century church has yet to be free of a radical element.



John Waddey

Radicalism is a disease of the attitude and heart that results in destructive action and conduct. It is not unique to Christianity, but is seen in every dimension of life: politics, government, social matters, education, institutions and "religions" of all sorts. So great is their zeal and so narrow their view that radicals will often destroy the cause they profess to love and even themselves in so doing.

While the word radical is not found in our English Bible, the concept is soundly denounced and condemned.

Solomon exhort: "Make level the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left" (Proverbs 4:26-27). This verse warns us to avoid extremes on either side of the middle road of truth.

"He loveth transgression that loveth strife" (Proverbs 17:19). Radical brethren are constantly enmeshed in strife. Strife is a work of the flesh that will keep one from heaven (Galatians 5:20-21).

"He that harpeth on a matter separateth chief friends" (Proverbs 17:9). Harping on their chosen point of controversy is a hallmark of a radical. Division always follows in their wake. Those who cause divisions contrary to the doctrine of Jesus are to be mark-

ed and avoided (Romans 16:17). "He that separateth himself seeketh his own desire, and rageth against all sound wisdom" (Proverbs 18:1). Any radical will eventually separate himself from those he despises and constantly condemns.

"A man of great wrath shall bear the penalty" (Proverbs 19:19). Radicals are filled with heated indignation toward those they view as enemies. They cannot contain their displeasure, it has to spew out in vitriolic attacks. Calm and reasoned discussion is generally viewed by such men as a waste of time.

"It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife; but every fool will be quarreling" (Proverbs 20:3). To a radical, quarreling with brethren is an honorable pursuit, and to avoid strife is cowardly weakness.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF RADICALS

A radical attitude springs from the root of self-righteousness. He believes his view to be totally right --beyond question. Those who disagree must then be wrong. He will usually proceed as well to judge their motives as less than honorable. Radicals develop a suspicious attitude toward all others. Even if a brother is not yet "liberal" he probably soon will be, he reasons. Thus he feels compelled to keep a watchful eye on him. The self-righteousness of the Pharisees brought scathing condemnation from the Master (Matthew 23:1-36).

Radicals always view themselves as the only "sound brethren" left, and view all who do not buy their views as "liberal." So did the one-cuppers, the anti-located preacher brethren, the anti-cooperation brethren and their modern day relatives.

Radicals like to identify with the great brotherhood heroes of the past. This they feel gives them respectability and standing. One familiar with those great men, now deceased, know that they would have no sympathy at all with radicals. Radicals seldom become "great preachers" in the brotherhood. They end up at war with the brotherhood, thus losing any respect they might have earned. Furthermore, if today's

radicals knew those past heroes well, they would soon fall out with them for some faulty view they held. [If you doubt this, find me a past champion whose views you accept on every issue]:

Radical brethren are inconsistent. They will separate from the main stream of the brotherhood on their favorite issue, but tolerate serious disagreements and short-comings in their fellow-radicals as long as they share their zeal against the target issue, institution, or brother.

Those who are radical are constantly narrowing their circle of fellowship. New issues arise, new extremes are reached. Each demands total agreement, or a break in fellowship! Biting and devouring takes its toll (Galatians 5:15). Eventually one is driven to a handful that he can recognize. That will commonly be the leader one blindly follows or the disciple that heels to the radical leader. The author regularly hears from an old radical in Tennessee who thinks he is the only faithful preacher left in the church. Of course he has no church to preach for. He issues his "bulletin" now and again with twenty-five challenges to an apostate brotherhood. His is the destiny of many "younger" radicals of our day. It is especially painful when radicals learn that their own loved ones refuse to travel with them further into oblivion. All have known parents, wives and children who repudiate the extremes of their beloved.

Radicalism results in division. Although Jesus and the apostles condemned division as a great sin (Romans 16:17) the radical sees division as honorable and desirable. Not content to disagree, he insists that his view be accepted. Not satisfied to impose his practice on only his own congregation, he would coerce the whole brotherhood as well. Unity on his terms is the only situation he can live at peace with.

(More to follow).

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
—Acts 26:35

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Good Intentions Do Not Save Souls

Mark Brinkerhoff said, "There is no such thing as a born hard-worker, a born salesman, or a born genius. We are all born ignorant, with innate underdeveloped abilities. What we do with these underdeveloped abilities is up to us. You can't afford to merely let things happen. If you want to be successful, you have to *make* things happen.

One of the outstanding features of the book of Acts is the fact that Luke did not record the good intentions of the New Testament church; but he did record many of their good acts. Instead of thinking about what should be done, and arguing about the best way to do it, they were motivated to put their thoughts to work. There can be no doubt that this was one of the primary reasons for the growth enjoyed by the early church.

A church that has put its intentions to work has little time for discord among brethren. Unconcern and lukewarmness are unable to get started. Trouble just does not have any place to start. Abilities used will bring more opportunities for service; unused, they soon lose the power to serve.

An aqueduct was built in Segovia in A.D. 109. For 1800 years, that aqueduct carried sparkling water to hot and dusty Segovians. About the turn of the century, thoughtful Spaniards decided that the aqueduct should be preserved for posterity and should be relieved of its age-old labor. So, they laid modern



Edsel Burleson

Would You Shut Up The Kingdom?

"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matthew 23:13).

The foregoing language is figurative. The quotation presents the kingdom of God as a house around the door of which the Pharisees have gathered, not entering in themselves, but blocking the way against those who would enter. What a terrible crime against God and suffering humanity!! These religious leaders (like many others today), would not enter themselves, but hinder those who would enter from doing so.

Another example of those who hinder entrance into the kingdom of God is found in Luke 11:52: "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered." Lawyers, in New Testament times, referred to those who were learned or skilled in the law of Moses. What was the lawyers' sin? They took away the key of knowledge. Verily, the true knowledge of the Holy Scriptures is the key that opens the door into the glorious blessings of the kingdom of God. A correct knowledge of God's truth is essential to entrance into the kingdom or church (John 8:30-32; 17:17). How did the lawyers go about taking away "the key of knowledge?" Not by teaching the truth of God, but by binding their traditions upon others. Obedience to the doctrines and commandments of men always blocks the entrance into the kingdom of God or the church of Christ (Mark 7:6-13; Matthew 15:6-14).

In the New Testament the kingdom and church are one (Matthew 16:18-19). One cannot be *in* the church and *out* of the kingdom. The same steps of obedience that puts one into the kingdom also makes one a member of the church (Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47; Colossians 1:13-14).

How do false teachers shut up the kingdom of God, thus preventing others from entering? We note ---

(1) *The scribes and Pharisees were hypocrites.* Hence, their poor example helped to turn others from the way of truth. Hypocrisy is one of Satan's deadliest weapons! Christianity mislived lacks vitality and power. "How can I hear what you say, when what you are is forever thundering in my ears?" Be yourself. Ape no greatness. Be willing to pass for what you are. A good dime is better than a counterfeit \$20.00 bill. Dare to do right though you must walk alone. The scribes and Pharisees feigned their love for the law of Moses, but loved doctrines and commandments of men.

(2) *Another way to shut up the kingdom, as far as honest inquirers are concerned, is to always be in "the objective case and in the kickative mood."*

"Ism and "Schism" were two little cats; Because of their notions they got into spats. They fought for the word but not for the spirit, And as for the truth, they never got near it. Said one to the other, "You never are right!" And so they fought on from morning till night. They fought and fought on as well as they



W. A. Holley

knew how, But neither remembered what started the row.

---Anon.

Jesus prayed for all his disciples to be one (John 17:20-23). Paul urged Christians to "strive together," not against each other, "for the faith of the gospel" (Philippians 1:27). To follow different preachers is to be carnal (I Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:1-8). We are certain that Jesus Christ does not want his followers to live in the midst of a great fuss! When the church becomes fragmented, its ability to carry on the work of Christ is diminished and ends in almost total failure.

(3) *When we refuse to support the church or kingdom of God with our money we are helping to shut up the kingdom, thus preventing others from hearing the truth of God.* As powerful as the word of God is, it cannot preach itself (Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12). If you cannot preach the gospel, you can support those who can (Acts 11:29; I Corinthians 16:1-2; II Corinthians 9:6-7).

Once there was a Christian;

He had a pious look,
His consecration was complete

Except his pocketbook.

He'd put a nickel on the plate

And then with might and main,

He'd sing: "When we asunder part

It gives us inward pain."

---Anon.

(4) *Another means of shutting the door to the kingdom of God is preaching the doctrine of "sal-*

vation by faith only." Of course, sinners are saved by faith, not "by faith only" (James 2:14-26). The faith that saves is the faith that obeys (Acts 6:7; Romans 1:5; 16:26). Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16, cf. Acts 2:36-38; 22:16). If one could be saved "by faith only," one would be saved by a *dead faith*!! (James 2:26).

(5) *To teach people that the Bible is a fable--- the words of men--- that it is out of date--- that it has no authority for 1985--- is to shut up the kingdom of God.* If we are interested in teaching atheism or any of its many cousins, we have only to destroy faith and confidence in the veracity of God's holy word (Genesis 1:1-2; Psalms 33:6, 9; Hebrews 11:3).

Read the Holy Bible daily. It is a lamp, a mirror, a microscope, a telescope, a volume of fine poetry, a few wonderful biographies, a book of songs, a sword, a hammer. Many men throughout the ages have tried to demolish the Holy Bible. For example: Voltaire said that in one hundred years the Bible would be an outmoded and forgotten book, to be found only in Museums. When the hundred years were passed, Voltaire's house was used and owned by those who were dedicated to the printing of the Bible. Voltaire's name is now almost forgotten: it is said that recently ninety-two volumes of his works were sold for two dollars. But the Bible still marches triumphantly onward.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

**Be Sure And Invite
A Friend To Church
On Sunday!**

What About "Called" (?) Preachers

Does God "call" preachers directly, miraculously (according to the New Testament) today?? Countless thousands of preachers claim to have been "called" directly and miraculously into the ministry of the gospel of Christ. We do not attack the character of these men, nor do we doubt their sincerity. Verily, honest and sincere men/women can be honestly and sincerely wrong!



W. A. Holley

For example, Saul of Tarsus (later called Paul) thought himself to be honest and sincere while he was engaged in deadly persecution of Christ and the church (Acts 8:1-3; 23:1; 26:9-11; 9:1-6). Before Saul's conversion to Christ, he was a violent, injurious man. Paul explains his persecution of Christ and the church with these words: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (I Timothy 1:13).

We shall now quote a newspaper report of a man's "call" (?) to preach:

"I was just riding along when suddenly I felt the presence of the Lord speaking to me. The Lord didn't speak to me in a voice that I could hear, but it was a presence so powerful it was not something you argue with. It was the Lord telling me to return to what he had called me to do . . . I guess some ministers would say it was a call to the ministry" (*The Birmingham News*, February 8, 1985).

The foregoing statement may sound good to thousands of people, but it does not represent Bible teaching. In fact, the author of the above quotation appears to be somewhat uncertain as to its meaning. He says, "The Lord didn't speak to me in a voice that I could hear, but it was a presence so powerful it was not something you argue with . . . I guess some ministers would say it was a call to the ministry." Since when has the Lord used his "presence" to communicate his will? How can one interpret "presence" with certainty? Would not two or more individuals differ in their interpretation? We think so!

Have you ever thought about subjective feelings? What does the word *subjective* mean? "Proceeding from or taking place within the individual's mind such as to be unaffected by the external world . . . Existing only in the mind; illusory -- Existing only in the experiencer's mind and incapable of verification" (*American Heritage Dictionary, 2nd College Edition*).

Many denominational preachers seek to justify their supposed call by making reference to Paul's call to be an apostle; but such does not support their claim. It was necessary for Paul to be a witness of Jesus' resurrection; but preachers do not need to be a witness of the resurrection of Christ the Lord (Acts 1:22; 9:1-9). In fact, Paul claims to have been the last person to have seen Jesus after his resurrection (I Corinthians 15:8). Who are we to deny what the Holy Scriptures so clearly teach?? The apostles of Jesus have no successors (I Corinthians 4:9, ASV). Actually, the Master pronounces a special blessing upon those who "have not seen, and yet have

believed" (John 20:29; I Peter 1:8).

At this point in our lesson, we pose a very serious question which deserves some profound thought on the part of our readers: Does God Almighty "call" preachers to preach different doctrines?? Read this question the second time and consider carefully what the Bible answer should be (I Peter 3:15; 4:11; Revelation 22:18-19).

Today, we have more than 300 different major denominational churches -- all of them with different names, different doctrines, different terms of membership, different creeds, different ways of worship, and different forms of government. Does God Almighty "call" preachers to preach such opposite, contradictory, and irreconcilable doctrines and practices?? Did Paul preach one doctrine, and Peter another? Did James preach one doctrine, and John another? *No! No! No!* is the Bible answer! Verily, all the apostles, and all other faithful preachers (evangelists), in the apostolic age, preached the same gospel (Galatians 1:6-9). Which apostle preached sprinkling, while the other apostles preached immersion? Which apostle preached "once in grace, always in grace?" while the other apostles contended for the possibility of apostasy? Truly, no apostle ever contradicted another apostle! No apostle (nor any other inspired preacher) declared salvation to be a matter of "faith only" (James 2:14-26; Mark 16:15-16). The apostles, et al., knew nothing of "subjective feelings," where revelation of God's truth was concerned (II Timothy 3:15-17; I Corinthians 2:9-16).

If God "calls" preachers to preach different doctrines, it would mean that the unity for

which Jesus Christ so earnestly prayed could never be realized (John 17:20-23). Jesus prayed for his disciples to be ONE. Only the truth of the Bible, unmixed with human creeds, can achieve this majestic goal. Different doctrines create divisions! God's formula for unity is found in Ephesians 4:3-6.

Finally, does God "call" preachers? He does, indeed! How does God *call* preachers? The answer is simple and clear: God "calls" preachers through the power of the gospel of Christ. We quote: "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thessalonians 2:13-14). This passage ought to settle the matter. The power that God uses to "call" one into his service is the gospel of Christ.

Again, the Scripture says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). The power that God uses to "call" men and women to become Christians, is the same power he uses to "call" men to become preachers.

Beware of those who claim to have been "called" (?) by some subjective experience which can never be proven. Trust always in the teaching of God's written will -- the Holy Bible.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Why Are We Not Baptizing More People?

(No. 3)

God's Drawing Power

Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). The next verse tells us he said this concerning his coming death on the cross. Jesus intends for people to be drawn to him by his death. He died for our sins (I Corinthians 15:3). Our desire for salvation, coupled with our appreciation for his sacrifice, plus our love for him should cause us to seek to learn his will, to believe in him, and to then obey and live for him.

Jesus also said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44). The next verse explains how the Father draws people to Jesus: "And they all shall be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." So, the means God designed to draw people to Christ is the doctrine or teaching of God. Those who hear and learn will be those who "come to Christ" in obedience.

Romans 1:16 tells us that the gospel "is the



Joe E. Galloway

power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

These three Bible passages make it clear that God has provided a power to draw man to him. It is his word, the gospel. The death of his Son for us should make us see the enormity of our sin, our hopelessness and helplessness to save ourselves, and our need to learn and do his will. "For the love of Christ constraineth us: because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (II Corinthians 5:14, 15).

"But," someone will say, "what if people will not be drawn to Christ by this means?" We must reply that God has no other means! If people will not be attracted to the Lord by his gospel, we dare not substitute some easier, more appealing plan, nor try to entice them by some other means.

Let us do all within our power to find those who are seeking for the Lord and to draw them to Christ by the gospel! God requires faithfulness on our part in teaching the gospel to the lost; but he does not require of us the results of souls being baptized. We need to teach to the best of our abilities and leave the results up to him. Our job of teaching the gospel is a constant, life-long task, and all faithful Christians are needed to carry it out.

—204 Creek Trail, Columbia, TN 38401.

That's Not Fair

While on vacation you drive into a state in which you have never been before. You encounter a road sign with a lot of markings of which you can not make heads nor tails. In no time a highway patrolman is behind you signaling for you to pull over. You pull your car over to the shoulder and stop, the highway patrolman walks up to your door and motions for you to step out of the car. He then asks you if you had seen the sign. You respond saying, "Yes, but I could not understand what it was saying or what was meant." The officer is unsympathetic and hauls you to the jail. When your turn before the judge arrives, the case is explained to the judge. Your only defense is that you did not know what the road sign said. After all is said and done, the judge makes his ear shattering decree, "Guilty as charged, the sentence is life in prison." You cannot believe what you have just heard, there must be some mistake, you begin to struggle as you are lead away to prison, you cry out, "That's not fair, Judge! That's not justice! I did not *know* what you expected of me!" Those are the last words of freedom you ever utter as you are carred out of the courtroom to a life of incarceration.

This story was made up, I do not have any reason to believe that it has ever really happened like this. But there are many of our brethren who tell a story that is even more far-fetched than this one. They tell of a road sign (the word of God) which no one can understand, that *no one can know* which path in life to take to please God. Their story pictures man standing before the judge (God) charged with violating a law that they could not know and understand. The pronouncement is the same, GUILTY, but the sentence is not life, but *death*. Those who are found guilty are pictured, by these brethren's doctrine, as being carried away crying at the top of their lungs, "That's not fair, God! That's not justice! I did not know what you expected of me because you made your truth so that I could not know!"

If this scenario were to be actually true, then our God would be the most unkind, unfair, unjust, and cruel being this world has ever seen. Jesus said that "the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). In addition he 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). The words of Jesus are the truth by which we will one day be judged. When we say we can not know absolute truth, we say that we can not know the standard by which we are going to be held accountable, therefore we picture God as something much less than just. Such thinking is blasphemous and a disgrace to the God of grace. The Bible tells us that God is kind, fair, and just. The Psalmist says to God that "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face" (Psalm 89:14). God does not want any man to perish but that all men would come to a *knowledge* of the truth



Garry Stanton

and thereby be saved (II Peter 3:9; I Timothy 2:4). Jesus said that we *can know truth*, and that truth is that which can free us from the bondage and penalty of sin. Why do men contradict the words of Jesus by saying that we cannot know truth? Some still contend that truth is unattainable, that we cannot know absolute truth. If this were true, not only is God pictured as unfair, but the following problems would also arise. Please read the results of this fasle notion carefully:

(1) We could not *know* Jesus because he is truth. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).

(2) We could not purify our souls. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth" (I Peter 1:22).

(3) We could not be "born again." "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth" (James 1:18; cf. I Peter 1:23-25).

(4) We could not enter the kingdom of heaven because only those who are "born again" can do so (John 3:3,5).

(5) We would receive tribulation and anguish. "But unto them that . . . do not obey the truth, . . . tribulation and anguish" (Romans 2:8,9).

(6) We could not know the gospel and therefore we could not know God's power unto salvation. "Ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13; cf. Romans 1:16; Colossians 1:5).

(7) We could not wear the "whole armour of God" and therefore we would not be "able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11). Having our "loins girt about with truth" is included in the Christian's armor, (Ephesians 6:14).

(8) We would miss our calling unto salvation because God chooses us "to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the

Good Intentions Do Not Save Souls

Continued From Page 2

pipelines and stopped the flow that for all those years gushed and gurgled in the aqueduct. Soon after this the aqueduct began to fall apart. The blazing sun dried the mortar and made it crumble. Its stones sagged, and fell; soon it lay in ruins. What ages of service could not destroy, idleness rapidly disintegrated.

"Doing" is continually stressed by the Lord. James declared: "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).

"Two brothers once lived down this way.

And one was DO, and the other SAY.

If streets were dirty, taxes high,

Or schools were crowded, SAY would cry:

'My, what a town!' But brother DO

Would set to work and make things new.

And while DO worked, SAY would cry:

'He does it wrong -- I know that I
Could do it right.' So all the day

Was heard the clank of brother SAY.

But this one fact from none was hid --

SAY always talked. DO always did."

—West End Church of Christ, 420 7th St. S.W.,
Birmingham, AL 35211.

truth" (II Thessalonians 2:13).

(9) We would be workman who are ashamed because we could not handle "aright the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

(10) We would not be able to worship God in the way that he wants to be worshiped.

"They that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23, 24). Our God is a just God, who does not pervert justice and judgment. He wants us to be saved and so he has given us his truth which *we can know* and which will set us free.

—P.O. Box 382 Pratt, KS 67124.

A Question Answered

Question: We all have faults, and we all need to be prayed for, but where is the command to confess one's sins before the church? Or, where is there an example of this?

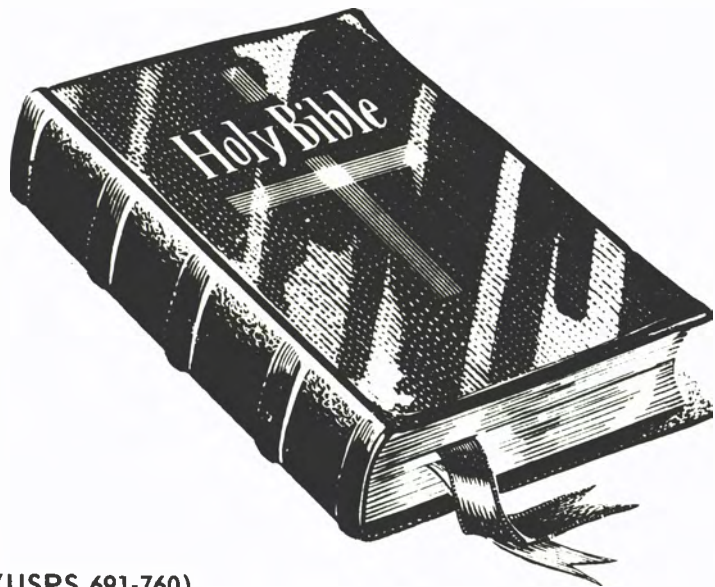
Answer: You are totally correct in saying we all have faults and need each others' prayers. Yet James (5:16) commands Christians to: "Confess your faults one to another . . . and pray one for another . . ." For an example, read Acts 8:22-24. Peter told Simon (formerly a sorcerer) to "repent . . . and pray . . ." --whereupon Simon responded: "Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me" (Acts 8:24). This is equal to a confession, or an acknowledgement that Peter was right.

Long before Christ came, Solomon wrote: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13). We should recognize the difference between "secret" (or, private) sins, "personal" offenses, and "public" sins. (A) There is no need to announce one's secret sins (Psalms 90:8), which are known only to God. Since no sin is secret from God, these need be confessed to God alone. (B) Where one has transgressed against another individual, he should make it right with God, and with the wronged person -- but no public confession is needed (Matthew 18:15-18), unless private efforts to rectify the wrong fail. (C) However, some sins are against the whole CHURCH (I Corinthians 10:32), and these are the ones which should be publicly confessed.

Actually the word "CONFESS" comes from two Greek words [mono plus logos] which, when combined, mean "say the same words." In reality, it is impossible (in the light of the Greek) to "CONFESS" a sin which is not already known. One may ANNOUNCE his sins, or REPORT his transgression; but in order for it to be (in the light of the definition) CONFESSED, it must be known. Where one is accused, he does not deny his guilt, but "says the same words," acknowledging his guilt, announces his repentance, and asks pardon of those who have been hindered by his guilt.

Is there a New Testament example of this? I have cited Simon (the sorcerer); but when we have a Bible command (James 5:16) to do a thing, we do not need an example!

--The Editor.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

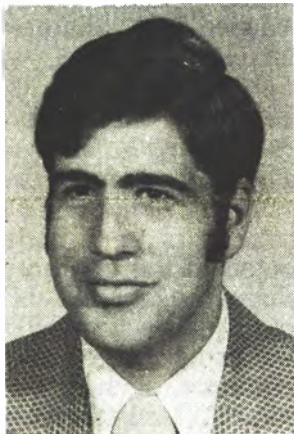
FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 1985

NUMBER 25

How Do I Know The Bible Is The Word Of God

Much has been written concerning the Bible. The Bible still remains the best seller. The Bible has been the anvil for the atheist's hammers throughout the centuries. But the Bible remains the same, and will remain the same forever (Isaiah 40:8; I Peter 1:25).

Hy Pickering says that about 30 years ago for the British and Foreign Bible



George Reed

Society to meet its demands, it had to publish: "one copy every three seconds day and night; 22 copies every minute day and night; 1369 copies every hour day and night; 32,876 copies every day in the year. And it is deeply interesting to know that this amazing number of Bibles were dispatched to various parts of the world in 4583 cases weighing 490 tons (Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, p. 21).

The question sometimes asked is, "How can I prove to my friend (who does not believe in the Bible) that the Bible is the word of God?" There are rules of credibility in proving something to be true or false. Let us state four of these rules in question form: (1) Is it in harmony with history? (2) Is the book canonical? (3) Are the manuscripts reliable? And (4) were the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled accordingly?

First, is the Bible in harmony with history? Even going back as far as Abraham (1900 B.C.), we have evidence that Ur existed. Henry Halley writes that in Abraham's day there were "Dictionaries, Grammars, Reference Works, Encyclopaedias, works on Mathematics, Astronomy, Geography, Religion and Politics." He also goes on to add that a school was found dating back to Abraham's

time "with 150 school Exercise Tablets, with Mathematical, Medical Historical texts, and one large tablet in parallel columns with a Complete Conjugation of a Sumerian verb and its equivalent in Semetic" (*Halley's Bible Handbook*, p. 51). This shows that Abraham knew how to write (not even to mention Moses), and that the places were real.

The ancient historians (Josephus, Tacitus, and Phiny, etc. [40-150 A.D.]), and the discovery of the ancient tablets (Code of Hammurabi, 2000 B.C.; Tel el-Amarna, 1400 B.C.; Nuzi, 1350 B.C.) testify to the dates, places, and people of the Bible. Truly the rocks and stones cry out as evidence that demands a verdict.

Second, is the book canonical? By the word *canon* (rule or law) we mean did the book come from God? Geisler and Nix say, "Canonicity is determined by God. A book is not inspired because men made it canonical; it is canonical because God inspired it . . . Canonicity is *determined* or established authoritatively by God; it is merely discovered by man" (*A General Introduction to the Bible*, p. 136). Let us note five rules for canonicity:

1. *Is it authoritative?* Does it claim to come from God? Does it have a "thus saith the Lord"? (cf. Samuel 23:2; Ezekiel 6:3; Joshua 1:8).

2. *Is it prophetic?* Was the book written by a man of God? Peter said, "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21). The apostle Paul argues that his apostleship was "not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ . . ." (Galatians 1:1).

3. *Is it authentic?* John urges us to "prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1; cf. Revelation 2:2).

4. *Is it dynamic?* That is, does it have the power to change lives. God's word is powerful and has the power to change lives if obeyed (Hebrews 4:12; Jeremiah 23:29; James 1:21; I Peter 1:22). The Bible is its own proof. "It needs no other authority to confirm it because, in fact, there is no higher authority by which

to establish it (cf. Hebrews 6:18). The Scriptures may be likened unto a lion that does not need to be defended, but merely loosed so it can defend itself" (Geisler and Nix, p. 115). The Jews spoke right when they said, concerning the disciples, ". . . These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also" (Acts 17:6).

5. *Was it received?* Was the book accepted by the people of God? When dealing with acceptance, we must always consider the other four qualifications. The book itself is examined on its own merits.

Third, are the manuscripts reliable? Let it be pointed out that we do not have any of the original manuscripts. That should not put a dint in anyone's faith. We do not have any of the original copies of the writings of Caesar, Livy, Plato, Taitus, Pliny, Horace, and Aristotle. In most of these writings the earliest copy is some 500 years later; yet no one disputes their works. Why should we dispute the apostles? A. T. Robertson speaks out concerning the manuscripts:

A. T. Robertson, the author of the most comprehensive grammar of the New Testament Greek, wrote, "There are some 8,000 manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate and at least 1,000 for the other early versions. Add over 4,000 (we now have over 5,000) manuscripts and we have 13,000 manuscript copies of portions of the New Testament. Besides all this, much of the New Testament can be reproduced from the quotations of the early Christian writers (John McDowell, p. 46).

If there were no original manuscripts, where did the copies come from? Geisler and Nix show that from seven church fathers we have 36,289 quotations from the New Testament (p. 357). From these quotations alone, we could reproduce the New Testament. Now, dear reader, if the New Testament manuscripts did not exist at that time, from what were they quoting?

Continued on page 2



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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

—Acts 26:35

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How Do I Know The Bible Is The Word Of God

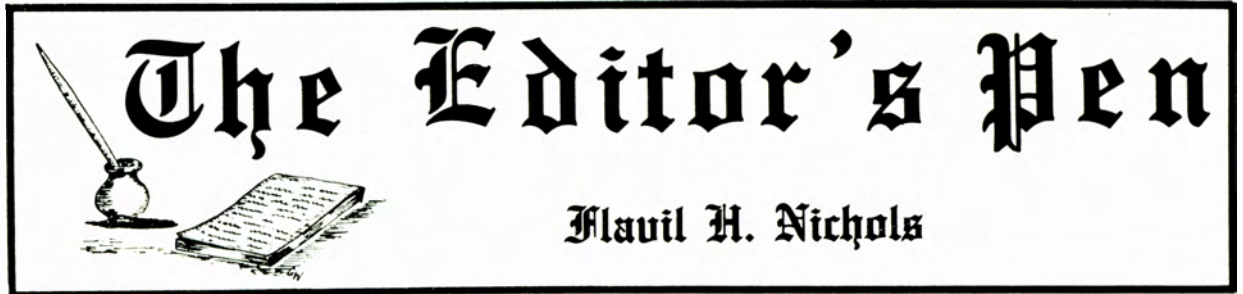
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If there were no original manuscripts, where did the copies come from? Geisler and Nix show that from seven church fathers we have 36,289 quotations from the New Testament (p. 357). From these quotations alone, we could reproduce the New Testament. Now, dear reader, if the New Testament manuscripts did not exist at that time, from what were they quoting?

Fourth, were the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled according to their time and place? It was in prophecy Jesus would come from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10; Hebrews 7:14), be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-23), betrayed by a disciple (Psalms 41:9; Matthew 26:14, 15), be forsaken by all (Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 26:59-61), his feet and hands be pierced (Psalms 22:16; Luke 23:33; John 20:24-28), none of his bones be broken (Psalms 34:20; John 19:33-36), and he would rise from the dead (Psalms 68:18; Luke 24:46). Here are just seven prophecies fulfilled to a "T." Peter Stoner writes concerning just eight prophecies of Jesus:

Suppose we take 10¹⁷ that's one followed by seventeen zeros, silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state 2 feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? (*Science Speaks*, p. 107).

There is proof that God has given us to prove that the Bible is his word. The evidence he has given us surely does demand a verdict. "Every scripture is inspired of God and is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction for instruction which is in righteousness. . . ." (II Timothy 3:16) — 17691 Pesante Rd., Salinas, CA 93907.



"Modest Apparel" (I Timothy 2:8-10)

"I will therefore . . . that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (I Timothy 2:8-10).

This text has been perverted by some, and ignored by others. Let us examine it carefully, noting in some detail some of the words in it.

"Adorn" means: "1. To deck or dress with ornaments; to set off to advantage. 2. To add to the beauty, splendor, or attractiveness of." As synonymns for "Adorn" the dictionary lists "decorate, ornament, embellish, beautify, deck, garnish," and says they mean "to enhance in appearance. ADORN implies not only a heightening of background or setting, but beauty in that which enhances." The Greek word [KOSMEO, whence we get our English word "cosmetic"] which means "primarily to arrange, to put in order . . . is used of furnishing a room . . . Hence, to adorn, to ornament, as of one's person, I Timothy 2:9" (W. E. Vine).

"Modest" is the next outstanding word in this text, and it is defined as "Evincing, or arising from, lack of boldness, presumption, display, etc.; unpretentious . . . Observing the proprieties of sex; chaste; decent." Synonymns include "Humble; shy; chaste;" and its antonym is IMMODEST. Modesty is defined as " . . . the temper resulting from a modest estimate of oneself; absence of self-assertion, arrogance, or presumption." Vine says the Greek word [KIOSMIOS] means "orderly, well-arranged, decent, modest (akin to KOSMOS, in its primary sense as harmonious arrangement, adornment . . . [this word] is used in I Timothy 2:9 of the apparel with which Christian women are to adorn themselves." It is interesting to note that this very same Greek word is used of elders of the church in I Timothy 3:3, where it is translated "of good behavior" (American Standard Version: "orderly"). This qualification is essential for a bishop (elder) or overseer. Of this requirement of elders, Trench says: "The well-ordering is not of dress and demeanor only, but of the inner life, uttering indeed and expressing itself in the outward conversation."

The Greek word KATASTOLE (translated "apparel") "was primarily a garment let



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

down; hence, dress, attire, in general (compare STOLE, a loose outer garment worn by kings and persons of rank . . ." (W. E. Vine). Webster defines our English word "apparel" to mean "to dress or clothe; to attire; to adorn."

"Shame" is "a painful emotion excited by consciousness of guilt, shortcomings, or impropriety . . ." Under its synonym "Disgrace," we read: "*shame* stresses a particularly humiliating disgrace or disrepute . . ." When the suffix "-fast" [meaning "firm"] is added, we have the word "shamefastness" (American Standard Version), or "shamefacedness" (King James Version), which means "Modest; also bashful; ashamed; abashed." "Shamefacedness" is from the Greek AIDOS, which means "a sense of shame, modesty? is used regarding the demeanor of women in the church, I Timothy 2:9 . . ." (W. E. Vine).

The way a woman dresses should reveal her MODESTY, not her FEMININITY! "Shamefastness is that modesty which is 'fast' or rooted in the character . . . The change to 'shamefacedness' is the more to be regretted because SHAMEFACEDNESS . . . has come rather to describe an awkward diffidence, such as we sometimes call sheepishness" (Davies: *Bible English*, p. 12). Under SHAMEFASTNESS, W. E. Vine indicates the following distinction between two Greek words, which are translated "Shamefastness" and "Shame" respectively: "As to AIDOS and AISCHUNE . . . AIDOS is more objective, having regard to others; it is the stronger word. "AIDOS would always restrain a bad one" (Trench). It is the Greek AIDOS which is used in the text we are studying.

The next word we note is "sobriety." Its definition is: "The state or quality of being sober; specifically, a. Habitual temperance. b. Habitual moderation. c. Sedateness; gravity." Since this word comes from "sober," note the definition of that word: "Serious or subdued in mood, expression, appearance, color, etc.; solemn; grave; sedate." "Serious" [a synonymn for SOBER] means "showing signs of deep thought, absorption in important affairs, or the like. *Serious* implies a concern for what really matters; *grave*, somberness of expression or attitude; *solemn*, gravity that is highly impressive; *sedate*, a composed and decorous seriousness; *staid*, a settled sedateness, often a prim self-restraint; *sober*, seriousness of purpose; *earnest*, soberness with sincerity and often, zealously."

"Sound judgment" practically expresses the meaning of" SOPHROSUNE (the Greek word for SOBERNESS, SOBRIETY), says W. E. Vine. "It is that inner self-government, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder the temp-

Radicalism

(NO. II)

A radical approach to a problem will usually result in a radical response on the opposite end of the spectrum. Being disgusted with the extremity of the radical brother's attack, the man who is being attacked ignores all his criticisms, even the valid ones and moves further away from the carping critic -- just the opposite of what the radical hoped to accomplish. Like a



John Waddey

father who provoked his child to wrath, the radical himself will bear some of the blame for the departure (Ephesians 6:4).

It should be remembered that radicalism is not reserved to either the left or right of any issue. Either or both can be extremists. Even truth and right can be dealt with in a radical way. That is why Paul cautioned us to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). Thus a radical brother may be basically correct in his convictions, yet wrong in the way he deals with brethren. Paul exhorts us: "rebuke not an elder, but exhort him as a father? the younger man as brethren" (I Timothy 5:1).

SOME OTHER CONSEQUENCES

Brethren who are radical rend and divide the church in the name of saving the church. They seem unable to see the contradictions in their conduct. Radicals then condemn those against whom they had directed their missiles, for causing the problem that they themselves have stirred.

Where radicalism prevails, it hamstring and cripples the church and often destroys it. If we surrendered every point criticized by such brethren, the church could not function in the modern world; it could not grow; it could not lay aside faulty or mistaken views

or methods of the past for new, better or even more scriptural ones.

Those who are radical are greatly offended if you call them "radical." You are depicted as persecuting them if you fight back against their attacks. While acting the role of nit-pickers and attack-dogs, they want to be honored as noble leaders of truth, and defenders of the Lord's cause. Every radical will one day learn that there is always a brother more radical than he. To such a super-radical he is a liberal and will be attacked and labeled as such.

Radicalism breeds bitterness, sourness of spirit and often results in complete apostasy from the church. These doleful results are terrible for them. Sad to say, the church is blest

when they finally depart into the world!

Paul's enemies preached Christ of envy and strife (Philippians 1:15). Today radical preachers seek to regulate the lives of fellow-Christians, gospel preachers, and the brotherhood. The concepts of Christian liberty, and congregational autonomy, are not dear to such men. They stand condemned with "fornicators" and "idolaters," because their "strife" and "divisions" are "works of the flesh" (Galatians 19:21).

From decade to decade the issues change; but the problem of radicalism is perennial. May God deliver us from such unreasonable men!

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

Why Not Fill Up Your Oil Can Tonight?

Joe Laird tells of finding a terrapin when he was a child in the country. As he began to examine him, the terrapin pulled in his head and closed his shell like a vice. He then picked up a stick and tried to pry open the shell. His uncle saw what was happening and said: "No, that's not the way! You may kill him but you'll never get him open."

He took the terrapin into the house and set him on the hearth. It was but a few minutes until he began to get warm. Then his new-found friend pushed out his head, and then his feet



Edsel Burleson

and began crawling. "Terrapins are like that," the uncle said; "and people are, too: You can't force them into anything. But, if you first warm them up with some real kindness, more than likely they will do what you want them to do."

Every day will be a better day if it is begun with kindness, continued with kindness, and closed with kindness. Too many folk allow themselves to be poured into the cold, selfish, unfriendly mold of our unhappy world.

In defining kindness, Webster uses such words as: gentleness, goodness, generosity, favor, clemency, mildness, kind manner, sympathetic, kind, gracious, agreeable, kind act, kind feeling, and good will. In the Bible we find many references to kindness. "God is of great kindness" (Joel 2:13). "God is slow to anger and of great kindness" (Psalms 117:2). "Remember, O Lord thy tender mercies and thy loving kindness, for they have been of old" (Psalms 25:6). Paul urged the Colossians to "put on kindness" (3:12). Peter said add "brotherly kindness" (II Peter 1:7).

Perhaps, the greatest remedy for the healing of wounds in society, in the neighborhood, in the home, or in the church, is found in Paul's instruction to the church at Ephesus: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32). When we follow this advice, we will find that kindness begets kindness.

It is said that once an old man carried a little can of oil with him everywhere he went; and if he passed through a door that squeaked he poured a little oil on its hinges. If a gate were hard to open, he oiled the latch. And thus he passed through life lubricating all hard surfaces and making it easier for those who came after him. People called him eccentric, strange, and cranky; but the old man went steadily on refilling his can of oil when it emptied, and oiling the hard places he found.

Which are you? The man with the oil can? Or, the man that needs oiling? Why not fill up your oil can tonight and have it ready first thing tomorrow?

—West End Church of Christ, 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

God's Design For The Home

(Part I)

Many today seek to change God's design for the home. A few years ago certain people were using the news media to try to topple the idea of a husband-wife relationship. Sexual encounters would involve no commitment on the sexual partners. But this so-called freedom did not bring the utopia they expected. Yet many are still trying this way to find happiness. Those who



W. Edwin Kearley

pursue happiness are always pursuing. Happiness is found in the person satisfied with God's plan for his life. He does not look for THINGS to bring him happiness. "Pleasure" is not a synonym for happiness.

When God had prepared the world for man, he created him. "And the Lord said, it is not

good that man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him" (Genesis 2:18). The words "help" and "meet" are words that are ignored by many today. "The expression indicates that the forthcoming helper was to be of similar nature to the man himself, corresponding by way of supplement to the incompleteness of his lonely being, and in every way adapted to be his co-partner and companion" (Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 1, pg. 59). If the woman complements the man, it follows woman is incomplete without the man.

When God made woman, "The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof; and the rib, which the Lord had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man" (Genesis 2:21-23). It is said woman was not taken from the head of man that she should rule over him, nor from his feet that he should trample on her: but from under his arm, that he should

Continued on page 4

Is Holy Spirit Baptism For Man Today?

Thomas W. Weaver

Many are saying that Holy Spirit baptism is for man today. Is man's word to be our standard or the Word of God? The only basis for acceptable faith is God's word (Romans 10:17). "To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no mourning for them" (Isaiah 8:20). What does the Bible teach about Holy Spirit baptism?

First, Holy Spirit baptism was to be administered only by Christ (Matthew 3:11, 12). Furthermore, it was promised, not commanded (Acts 1:5).

The apostles and other faithful men baptized those who believed and repented. This was a burial in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). The "one baptism" mentioned in Ephesians 4:5 has to be baptism in water; if not, there are two baptisms. God's word says there is one (Ephesians 4:5).

One essential principle of understanding the Bible is to note to whom it is addressed. Holy Spirit baptism was promised to the apostles (Acts 1:1-11). The apostles were "men of Galilee." They were the only ones baptized in the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost after the ascension of Jesus (Acts 2:1-14). The pronoun "they" in chapter two of Acts refers to its antecedent "apostles" in the last verse of chapter one. Furthermore, those baptized in the Holy Spirit were "all Galileans." A third proof that the Holy Spirit fell on only the apostles is found in Acts 2:14: "But Peter, standing up with the eleven . . ." The apostle Paul, "as a child untimely born," received the baptism of the Holy Spirit later (Acts 8:17; I Corinthians 15:8).

The apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit for three important reasons:

1. The Holy Spirit was to "guide them into all the truth" (John 16:13). We now have all the truth. This work of the Holy Spirit is finished.
2. The Holy Spirit was to confirm the spoken word (Mark 16:20). There is no further need of confirmation: ". . . though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it hath been confirmed, no one maketh it void, or addeth thereto" (Galatians 3:15). To think that a man today would call upon God to keep confirming his word by miraculous means! To demand further proof is rank infidelity!

3. The Holy Spirit was to enable them to im-

God's Design For the Home

Continued from page 3

love and protect her.

The inspired apostle Paul commented: "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man" (I Corinthians 11:8-9). Too often today this divine relationship between God, Christ, man and woman is forgotten. Much of the turmoil and home break-up can be attributed to this refusal to accept God's word on this matter.

Adam and Eve were one. Adam and Eve were told by God, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" (Genesis 2:24-25). This involves more than sexual oneness. Husband and wife are to establish an independent home.

(More to follow).

—103 Elena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

part the nine Spiritual gifts (I Corinthians 12). No complete copy of the New Testament was available, so spiritual gifts were to last until the "perfect law of liberty" was completed (James 1:25). When the perfect came, that which was in part was done away. Spiritual gifts ceased as promised (I Corinthians 13:8, 9). No apostle lives today who can impart these by the laying on of his hands (Acts 8:18; 19:6; II Timothy 1:6).

Cornelius and his house received the baptism of the Holy Spirit to convince the Jews that the Gentiles had been "granted repentance

unto life" (Acts 11:13-18). God's word tells us the gospel is for all (Mark 16:15, 16).

Holy Spirit baptism has accomplished all the above purposes. This alone is proof that there is no Holy Spirit baptism today. But in one specific scripture God declares: "There is one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5). This one baptism is in water (Acts 8:36-39; 10:47, 48).

No one can find any Bible authority for Holy Spirit baptism today. It cannot be a matter of faith; and "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6).

—50 Ranch Drive, Montgomery, AL 36109.

Getting Around To It

Solomon said: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in sheol, whither thou goest" (Ecclesiastes 9:10). Jesus said: "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" A.S.V. (John 9:4).

A dear brother in Christ recently remarked that he had not read an article written by me in some time. He was very generous and complimentary regarding my efforts in this area of work. In response I said: "Yes, I know; I have some topics that I want to write about, but I just haven't gotten around to it."

As I reflected upon my answer, I realized that I had not given a legitimate reason for not doing it; I had simply used a very familiar excuse. As I contemplated the matter I thought about how much of the Lord's work goes undone every day because we just never get around to it. There are very few members who are operating at the maximum of their abilities and opportunities. There is probably not a congregation in the brotherhood -- regardless of how zealous and busy it may be -- that is not to condemn, but to challenge.

The introductory scriptures used here make it very clear that the Lord's work is immediate. It is urgent. It is continuous. It is not



Roy Fuller

to be taken lightly. We will have to give account for the abilities, opportunities, and privileges that the Lord has placed in our hands. We need to lift up our eyes and look to the fields: they are white unto the harvest! We now have the stage set before us for taking the gospel to more people in this world within the next few years than at any time in the whole of man's history. God has opened the doors. God has provided the means to do it. God has made the opportunities for us. Will we get around to it?

Oh, that someone would come up with a formula of "getting-around-to-it" medicine that we could take, and arouse us all to the potential and the challenges before us! But of course, there is no such formula; so what will it take to get us around to it?

(1) It will take VISION. We must open our eyes to see the hungry souls around this world starving for the precious gospel (Matthew 4:4; I Peter 2:2). We must be able to see the many opportunities for service before us each day. (2) It will take FAITH (Hebrews 11:6). We can accomplish nothing without first believing that God can work his will through us (Philippians 2:13). (3) It will take WORK (Philippians 2:12). All of the grandiose plans and schemes in the world will get nowhere without some headaches, backaches, and sore feet to carry them out. (4) It will take COMMITMENT (Matthew 22:37). By this we mean a firm determination by every Christian to get on the job and stay on the job for the Lord until his or her life is consumed in God's work (Ephesians 2:8-10). (5) It will take LOVE FOR SOULS (Luke 19:10). The mission of the Lord's church is to save lost souls. If you have no love for lost souls, you can forget all of the above.

—Rt. 4 Box 479, Elba, AL 36323.

"Modest Apparel" (I Timothy 2:8-10)

Continued from page 2

tation to these from arising, or at all events from arising in such strength as would overbear the checks and barriers which AIDOS (shamefastness) opposed to it" (Trench).

The attire of a Christian woman should indicate to all who see her that she is indeed a Christian, of sound judgment. Her clothing announces to all that she is lacking in boldness. She does not make a display of her body, but with propriety her clothes denote that she

respects her own sexuality and reflect her seriousness of purpose to serve God day by day.

Ladies, this means every one of you!

Invite A Friend To Church With You
On Sunday!



(USPS 691-760)

Words of Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

JUNE 28, 1985

NUMBER 26

Apollos, The Eloquent Preacher

Real genius does not characterize many men, but Apollos seems to be one of these few. A. T. Robertson wrote of him: "A man who could divide honors with Paul is worthy of study." It is as a preacher that Apollos' name has passed down to us. A study of his life helps us appreciate the ingredients of a great preacher. We read of his conversion to Christianity in Acts 18:24-28.



John Waddey

His Place of Origin

Apollos hailed from Alexandria in Egypt (Acts 18:24), the cultural center of North Africa and the Near East. This city was founded by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. and was given the name of its famous founder. It was renowned for its great university and huge library of 900,000 volumes, the greatest of that age. One hundred thousand Jews made their home there. Alexandria was the birthplace of the great Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. Philo, the Jewish philosopher, taught there. The cultural center it was, it became the distribution point for Hellenism, the culture of Greece that had such an adverse effect on Judaism. Alexandria soon became a stronghold for early Christianity. Great teachers such as Clement and Origen labored there. Tragically, it became the fountain head of serious doctrinal corruption in the third and fourth centuries A.D. The allegorical method of explaining Scripture originated there, and did great harm to the church.

Apollos the Preacher

He was an *eloquent* man, says Luke (Acts 18:24). He was a learned man, gifted in speak-

ing power. He was mighty in the Scriptures (*ibid.*). He knew the Law and the Prophets and was an able expositor. A man may have considerable knowledge of the Bible and yet have not the ability to communicate his knowledge effectively. One thing is certain, a man can never be mighty in the Scriptures without a broad and thorough knowledge of them. He was *fervent in spirit* (Acts 18:25). He was "boiling over with zeal." God wants all disciples to be fervent in their zeal (Romans 12:11).

Apollos had been instructed in the way of the Lord Jesus (Acts 18:25). This tells us he was a student, looking for and accepting the truth wherever he found it. He spoke and *taught accurately* concerning Jesus. This commendable trait is a prerequisite in all who would be teachers of God's word. There is a constant need for accuracy in our teaching. Paul exhorts us to handle aright the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15).

Apollos preached *boldly* (Acts 18:26). All of the apostles were likewise bold in their presentations of the gospel (Acts 4:13). Timid, fearful souls should not presume to teach publicly. Boldness, however, is not brashness or crudeness. Nor is it ignorant ranting which is sometimes called "bold preaching." Preaching with boldness is courageous preaching of God's truth as God intends it. Apollos took his message *into the synagogues* (Acts 18:26). So must we go to those willing to hear us, into their church buildings and their homes.

Apollos As A Person

Although a great preacher, Apollos was limited in his knowledge. He knew "only the baptism of John" (Acts 18:25). Yet he was willing to be taught. He was not too important to allow a non-professional like Aquila the tent-maker and his wife to instruct him in the Lord's way (Acts 18:26). It is a weakness of many preachers that they cannot receive correction by one of less stature than they. One is never too old to learn. Like Apollos, we should gladly sit at the feet of those Priscillas and Aquilas who know something

we do not. Thank God for the finesse and skill of this godly couple who salvaged that great preacher for the Lord. A preacher like Apollos who is always learning, will always have a hearing.

Apollos and the Corinthian Church

Leaving Ephesus, Apollos journeyed to Corinth in the Greek province of Achaia. He carried a letter of recommendation from Priscilla and Aquila. Churches today would be well advised to ask for a similar recommendation of those who wish to work in their midst. Many a congregation has discovered that the man they thought was a gift from heaven originated in a different realm -- only after permanent damage was done. Such disasters can be avoided by proper investigation before hand.

"He helped them much" (Acts 18:27). Apollos was a church builder, not a demolition expert. What Paul had planted, Apollos watered and God gave the increase (I Corinthians 3:6). Apollos refused to be a party to the factious spirit at Corinth. Later, he refused to return to Corinth since some were seeking to follow him in a sectarian way (Compare I Corinthians 3:4; 16:12). Notice that Paul does not imply that he will be party to their carnal discord.

Apollos the Apologist

Apollos "powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ" (Acts 18:28). To confute means he argued them down. They could not match his knowledge and his logic. The enemy was stilled. He made his defense (that is the meaning of the Greek term *apologia*) by using the Scriptures to establish his arguments. After 1900 years there is yet no better way to defend Christianity against its enemies. The gospel by its very nature challenges every false religion and philosophy. Those who would be faithful preachers must be "set for the defense of the gospel" (Philippians

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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—Acts 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor

1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501

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Single Again!

His massive shoulders shook. Tears ran down his cheeks and rolled off his chin. He buried his face in his huge hands and sobbed. His wife had left him. He didn't want her to go. He had done everything humanly possible to keep her with him. He had sought help from others. All efforts had failed. She slipped quietly away. Two days later he laid her body to rest next to her parents in the little country cemetery close to her old home place. Cancer had claimed another victim.

That night he lay alone in a bed they had shared for thirty-three years. It seemed so empty now. Hurt shot through him. Tears welled up in his eyes and soaked his pillow. The house seemed so much larger, darker, and noisier than it ever had. There was no fear, only the loneliness that gripped him like a vice and racked his body. He now understood why people who have lost a mate did not want to remain at home after the funeral, but went to stay for a while with children or relatives.

Time dried the tears and made the house more bearable, but loneliness took on new forms. He was alone when he ate. The times they had had at the breakfast- and supper-table took on a deeper meaning now. How pleasant and wonderful those times had been. She had been there. Now there was only her empty chair. The times he had picked her up at work and they had gone to one of the restaurants to eat were only a memory now. Now he hated going out. He did not like eating alone in public.

Church activities took on a new meaning. He was no longer part of a couple. He was



Ray Hawk

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The Editor's Pen



Flavil H. Nichols

Childhaven Needs and Deserves Support

Last year some very serious problems put Childhaven, Inc., at Cullman, Alabama, in a very critical situation. As soon as this news hit the papers, radio and TV, some counties removed from this facility every child they had sent to Childhaven. Also, several congregations stopped their contributions, and a restaffing of the home was called for.

A spirit of full cooperation with the Alabama Department of Pensions and Securities characterized Childhaven's entire Board of Trustees, and the problems were dealt with speedily. Very soon the D.P.S. restored their approval of Childhaven, and they notified all child-placement agencies throughout the State to resume referring to Childhaven any children needing these facilities.

Many brethren seem unaware that (under a separate license) Childhaven operates a Foster Home program across North Alabama, in addition to the campus at Cullman. Under this program, and in cooperation with the academically qualified and experienced staff hired by Childhaven, fifteen or twenty couples are actively engaged in taking homeless children into their natural families. The number of children in these Foster Homes remained about the same even during the problem period in 1984.

At the end of May, 1985, there were 25 children in Childhaven's Foster Homes, with 23 others being cared for at Cullman, plus 3 in college. A college education is expensive—even with the concessions made by some schools to children from orphan homes! Childhaven has financial responsibilities to all 51 of these children.

Some of the congregations which ceased to support this home financially when its problems came to light last year, have subsequently resumed their support -- but not all of them. Despite this the number of children in the "Cottages" at Cullman has doubled since then.

With full respect for each congregation's autonomy and independence, I wish to appeal to all Churches of Christ, and especially to those who *ceased* to support this work last year: Support Childhaven again! (I fully understand and firmly believe that each congregation is free under Christ to plan its own work). The Trustees of Childhaven are grateful for all brethren who formerly supported this work. Every dollar that has been contributed has been sincerely appreciated.

All agree that it is wise for a 'natural



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

home' to have a reserve fund from which to operate in an emergency. This is also true of Childhaven. Years ago Bro. E. L. Cullom bequeathed Childhaven some stocks and other securities, the interest from which is to be used in supporting this work. Through wise management [and special credit is given to Bro. T. F. Gossett] the "Cullom Fund" has grown so that at present it provides \$4,000 a month for Childhaven. Brethren, this equals \$48,000 a year!!! Practically all with whom this has been discussed agree --and we believe YOU will concur --that Childhaven should NOT have to "KILL THE GOOSE THAT LAYS THE GOLDEN EGG!" The 'paper value' of this fund is not cash in hand with which to pay bills. So, unless support increases, some of the "Cullom Fund" stocks may have to be sold. This would reduce the home's income every month! It is imperative, therefore, that additional support be obtained. The alternative is to refuse to accept any more homeless children -- and perhaps send away some of the children now being cared for, and close down some of the "Cottages" now occupied.

Without a broad base of support, this home for the homeless could not exist. Childhaven NOW NEEDS your support as much as it ever has in the past. And I believe this home again merits *your* approval, too. I respectfully recommend that brethren everywhere reconsider this work, and support Childhaven by regular contributions.

Childhaven, Inc. P.O. Box 160 Cullman, AL 35055.

Fourth Annual Lectureship At Garfield Heights Church

FRED DAVIS

The Garfield Heights Church of Christ, 2842 Shelby Street, Indianapolis, Indiana will host its fourth annual lectureship October 6-10, 1985. The theme of this lectureship will be "The Gospel Is For all," using the book of Luke as our text. This will be dealing with the basic mission of the church—which is seeking and saving the lost. We believe some have lost sight of our basic divine mission, and we pray that this lectureship will cause us to rekindle our hearts and souls so that we may focus upon the millions of lost souls that we are failing to reach.

Thirty-one speakers have been selected for our lectureship. We believe that some of the finest material that can be found comes from the book of Luke. Also, there will be ladies' classes taught by Vada Rice and Irene Taylor. Why not mark these dates - October 6-10 - on your calendar and plan to attend this great lectureship?

The lectureship will be available in a lovely hardback book of approximately 500 pages, and on cassette tapes and video tapes for those who cannot attend. — 2842 Shelby Street Indianapolis, Ind. 46203.

Southeastern Singing School

Singing is an important part of each worship service, yet is often given very little attention. It is the only act of worship in which each member may vocally participate. God did not just arbitrarily decide that we should sing. Rather, singing serves several purposes.

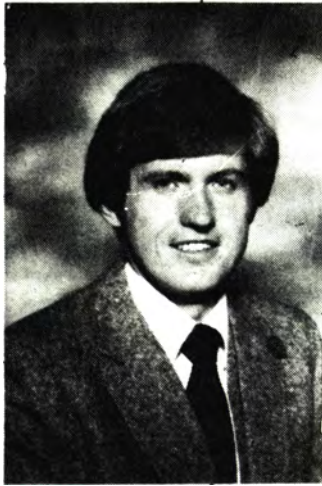
In singing we may instruct others (Ephesians 5:19), even telling an alien sinner how to reach God. Singing serves to edify and encourage fellow Christians (Colossians 3:16). And, of course, we sing in order to praise and worship God (Hebrews 2:12; 13:15). When we consider the purposes of singing, should we not give it more attention and effort?

To this end, Southeastern Singing School was begun in August of 1974, with 17 students. The enrollment has grown every year, with 78 students present for the 1984 session. Each year there are students from 12-to-14 states. The school, which meets at Camp Ney-A-Ti, on beautiful Guntersville Lake at Guntersville, Alabama, begins on Sunday afternoon with distribution of textbooks and class assignments. There is a Sunday evening worship service, with classes beginning Monday morning at 8 a.m. The school dismisses on Friday after the noon meal.

It takes four years to complete the curriculum outlined by the director, Walter H. Chaney. The first year class involves the basics of music: learning the shaped notes, a study of rhythm, and time signatures. Great emphasis is placed upon pitching songs and much time is spent practicing to lead songs.

The second year class is a review of the first year basics and an introduction to the study of Harmony. The third year class is an advanced study of Harmony, a study that presents the laws of music involved in writing four-part music. The fourth year class is the song-writing class. Each student, with the help of the instructors, writes a gospel song.

One of the highlights of the week comes on Friday morning when the fourth year class sings the songs each has written. Each of



Ricky Phillips

these classes covers four areas of training: (1) music knowledge; (2) vocal skills; (3) leadership skills; (4) a better understanding of gospel music.

Southeastern Singing School is under the direction of Walter H. Chaney, an outstanding song-leader. He spends a great deal of time and effort from one school year to the next to insure the school's success. He has assembled a very competent staff to instruct each year.

Several hours each day are spent in classes and songleading, but there are other activities to enjoy. There is a break each afternoon when one may engage in swimming, canoeing, ping-pong, pool, tennis, horseshoes, basketball, or just making new friends.

Who may attend Southeastern Singing School? Anyone interested in developing music skills. Teenagers and adults alike will benefit from their studies. Wives may also attend the school. The cost is \$100.00 for students and \$70.00 for wives.

Beside all the good instruction received, there is another benefit that is just as important: The spiritual atmosphere throughout

the week is outstanding! Imagine how uplifting it is to spend six days singing spiritual songs. Beside learning about music, students grow spiritually through being there. Brother Chaney said at the close of the 1984 session, "If we make every person a better person, it's worth it, even if they never sing a note correctly."

So, there are several reasons to attend Southeastern Singing School: (1) To learn better how to sing praise to God. (2) To help your congregation's song service. (3) To meet new people, renew acquaintances, and have a good time, and (4) To become a stronger Christian.

We look for the session of July 28-August 2, 1985 to be our best year yet. If you would like more information about the school, you may contact Walter H. Chaney, 899 Indian Creek Rd., Huntsville, AL, 35806, phone (205) 837-8547. — Rt. 1, Box 48, Andalusia, AL 36420.

[Editor's Note: Bro. Phillips serves as a teacher each year, and he is convinced that the school serves a definite need in the church.]

The Christian Soldier

When writing his Ephesian epistle, Paul was under house arrest, chained to a Roman soldier. The garb of the soldier provided a fitting analogy for the soldier of Christ. The concept that Christians are part of God's army is frequently used by the apostle. We are to "fight the good fight of faith" (I Timothy 6:12). We are to suffer hardship as good soldiers of Christ (II Timothy 2:3).

I. In Ephesians 6:10-18 we find our marital orders. (A). We see: The Call for Courage, "Be strong in the Lord" (6:16). God needs and wants saints of courage and conviction to serve his cause. There is no place in Christianity for the fearful and cowardly soldier. We are plainly told that the fearful will have their part in the lake of fire (Revelation



John Waddey

21:8). We need not fear, for Christ hath promised, "I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?" (Hebrews 13:5-6 A.S.V.).

(B). Know Your Enemy. Our "adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8). He is a wily opponent (Ephesians 6:11). He is an invisible, spiritual entity. He is near enough to touch us (Zechariah 3:1). Jesus labeled him a liar and a murderer (John 8:44). Paul warns that "Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light" (II Corinthians 11:14). His evil purpose is to destroy every human soul by turning each heart away from God and taking them as his bondservants (Romans 6:17). His strategy is to deceive and accuse God's children (Revelation 12:9-10).

(C). Arm Yourselves. The armor for our battle comes from God, which means it is divine in nature (Ephesians 6:10). It is a *whole* or complete and perfect armor. With it upon us, nothing else is needed. Each saint's suit of armor is complete. It will never wear out nor grow obsolete. No single piece of this armor can safely be dispensed with. We receive our suit of armor as a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8). We must take it up and put it on. Each disciple must put on his personal armor. It is not enough that *others* are suitably clothed. It is not sufficient just to *know* all about this armor. Just to have your armor *finely polished* and neatly stored in the armory will not avail. We must "*put on* the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:11).

(D). We Must Take Our Stand. We must "be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11), "to withstand in the evil day . . ." (verse 13). Those were the days of hand-to-hand combat. Men locked their swords in deadly combat until the battle was decided. God wants his soldiers to take their stand for truth and then tenaciously hold their

Single Again!

Continued From Page 2

amazed at how quickly he was left out of many of the goings-on at church. Everything seemed to be planned around couples. He had never noticed it before. The loneliness he felt at home now extended to the church because his wife was no longer there so he could share in the activities planned for couples.

So often the above case has been true. The church often has failed to be sensitive toward the singles, whether it is a person who has lost his mate, one who has never married, or a person who has been married but is now divorced. It is urgent for us to be more aware of the need of others, especially our

singles, and include them in our visitation, personal work, and other programs. If Jesus, the head of the body "took compassion" on others, the body can do no less (Matthew 9:35, 36; Galatians 6:1-5; Romans 14:1; 15:1; Galatians 5:14). Look around and take special notice of one or more of our singles. Invite them to eat with you. If you are a single, find another single and ask him to go with you as you visit shut-ins, the sick, or some erring person. You might visit someone who has just become a single. You know how they feel!

—39 Webb Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

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The Christian Soldier

Continued From Page 3

ground without flinching. As Christian soldiers we must stand both for and against those things which Christ approves or condemns. Courage and conviction, responsibility and dependability are hallmarks of the Christian way.

II. The Items of Our Armor: (A). Our loins must be *girded with truth* (Ephesians 6:1). The Roman legionaire had a wide leather girdle belted tightly around his waist to strengthen his back and hold his other equipment in place. With our Satanic enemy being a liar and a deceiver, we can readily see the appropriateness of having a girdle of *truth* to protect us. But what is this girdle of truth? Jesus is the truth (John 14:6). His word is truth (John 17:17). We are to walk in truth (II John 4). We must speak the truth (Ephesians 4:25) and lie not to one another (Colossians 3:9). Error and falsehood will leave us weak and vulnerable before our adversary.

(B). We must wear our *breastplate of righteousness* (Ephesians 6:14). The breastplate covered the upper torso of the body and protected the heart and other vital organs. Righteousness protects us from Satan's deadly blows. We must be righteous in our words, thoughts and deeds. We must always do right, for this is the essence of righteousness. "Having put on the breastplate of righteousness" suggests that we must never take it off. There is not a moment when we can afford to leave off righteousness. Christ is our righteousness (I Corinthians 1:30), and we are made righteous in him (Philippians 3:8-9). One vice clinging to us would leave a chink, a weak spot, in our armor, and could be fatal in combat.

(C). Our *feet must be shod* "with the preparation of the *gospel of peace*" (Ephesians 6:15). The Roman troops had their rugged sandals with greaves or brass coverings for their shins and the tops of their feet. Without good shoes no man could march long over rough ground or stand in toe-to-toe conflict. The word "preparation" suggests that we are ever ready to move out when the orders are given. The state of ready alertness is essential for faithful Christian soldiers. The gospel is the good news about Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-4). But it is also the sum total of Christ's revelation to us (Philippians 1:16). We can best preserve the gospel by spreading it. The best defense against our enemy is to win his troops to the gospel. Ours is a gospel of peace. As warriors of Christ we love peace not war. The peacemakers "shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:9).

(D). The ancient soldier dared not enter the fray without his shield. So Paul exhorts us and "withal taking up the *shield of faith*, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one" (Ephesians 6:16). He speaks not of the small round shield, but of the large shield of the heavy infantry. It was oblong in shape, measuring 4 feet by 2½ feet. It would protect the entire person. Roman shields were made of wood covered with hardened leather. It would block the flying arrows and javelins, even those tipped with burning cloth. Our shield is our faith. We are saved by faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). We walk (or live our lives) by faith (II Corinthians 5:7). We will win our victories by faith (I John 5:4-5). Saving faith is always a believing, loving, trusting and *obedient* faith (Galatians 5:6). The Scriptures offer no promise for "faith alone" (James 2:4). Above all else,

we must have *faith*, for "without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him" (Hebrews 11:6). It is the foundation on which all other virtues rest (II Peter 1:5-7). It is the well from which our spiritual strength flows. It will guard us and preserve us when all else seems to fail.

(E). A soldier must have the *helmet of salvation* (Ephesians 6:17). In ancient combat the head is always most exposed and most vulnerable. Satan goes for the Christian's mind. If he can corrupt the mind, he has the life. Solomon charges us: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). When saved, we are renewed in the spirit of our minds (Ephesians 4:23). We must strive to have in us the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5). Only then are we safe from Satan's savage blows.

(F). *Our sword is the word of God* (Ephesians 6:17). A sword is a mighty weapon, but is of no value at all until unsheathed. Even so your Bible must be in your hand and heart -- and on the shelf, or table. The sword was usable both offensively and defensively; and so is our knowledge of scripture. Our sword was forged and presented to us by the Holy Spirit. Every word was inspired of God (II Peter 1:21). It is our duty to study the Scriptures that we

might handle aright the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15). With God's warrior King, David, we should lay his word up in our hearts (memorize it) to keep us from sin (Psalm 119:11). We must train ourselves to be skillful in the use of the word. The inspired writer chides those Hebrew brethren who were "without experience of the word of righteousness" (Hebrews 5:13). We must be willing to take up our weapon and enter the fray in Jesus' name (I Timothy 6:12). Christ wants warriors not spectators.

(G). Paul stresses the need for *prayers and supplications* for all who would do battle -- both for self and others (Ephesians 6:18). There is no more effective soldier than one purified and strengthened by prayer.

(H). Last he reminds us of the need for watchfulness (Ephesians 6:18). A careless, thoughtless soldier is of little value. He may even jeopardize his entire troop. We need to watch lest we fall into temptation (Matthew 26:41): Watch for our evil foe (I Peter 5:8) and for the Lord's return (Matthew 24:42).

III. Conclusion: We sing "Soldiers of Christ arise, and put your armor on." Are you a good soldier of Jesus (II Timothy 2:3-4)?

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931—9599.

Joe Williams - Northport's Minister For 25 Years

DON WILLIAMS

On May 15, 1960, Joe E. Williams and his wife, Dot, and their children moved to Northport, Alabama. For 25 years he has served as minister of this congregation in the Tuscaloosa area. On May 18, 1985, 268 friends, members of the congregation, and family members came together to honor them.

The three elders of the congregation, Harvey Milligan, Bill Sanders, and Billy Pearson, served as hosts of the evening. All of these men spoke in honor of the occasion, as well as the three children. The Williams' sons, Ron and Don, are both ministers of the gospel, and Cindy (their daughter) is married to Philip Hathcock, also a minister. A brother-in-law, John Richard, spoke as well, and told of his remembrances of Joe in his early days, growing up around Vina, AL. Musical entertainment was provided by the Alabama Christian College Chorus.

The elders presented a plaque to Bro. Williams in honor of the 25 years of service with the Northport congregation. An album was given to them with letters and remembrances from many of the members, relatives and friends. \$3,500.00 was given by the members of the congregation, to send Bro. &

Sis. Williams to the Holy Lands.

It is not often that you hear of a preacher staying in one place for such a long time. In most situations, the longevity of the preacher at one congregation makes for more effective work and more accomplishments for the Lord.

As a son, I am most appreciative for the long stay of my parents at Northport. My life as a preacher's son was atypical in that we did not move from place to place. I feel this was most helpful to me in my days of growing up. It allowed us to have roots established in a place with people who we knew cared for and loved us. We felt like part of the Northport family, not just as the preacher's family, but as a family that belonged. I am grateful to the Northport congregation for giving us such a home. I will forever be indebted to my parents for the training they gave me. My prayer is that other congregations will so support their ministers so that long tenures and relationship can be established for years to come for the growth of the church, and above all, to the glory of Almighty God!

—934 Florence Street, (minister Farmington Church of Christ) Lewisburg, TN 37091.

Apollos, The Eloquent Preacher

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1:16). May we never allow truth to suffer in controversy because of incompetence on our part.

What a great man this Apollos was. We need 10,000 of his tribe today. Many good men are laboring in denominational fields, preaching some truth but tainted with some error. We all need to be like that godly couple,

Priscilla and Aquila, seeking out such prospects and teaching them the way of the Lord more perfectly. They can be won to the Savior's way -- Apollos proves it. Are we willing to reach out to them? May God help us to do so.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931 -- 9599.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most no
Words of Truth and soberness."

but speak forth the

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, JULY 5, 1985

NUMBER 27

Alcoholic Counselors Do A Great Work!

The past few months I have heard several counselors on alcoholism and drug abuse speak. In every case they were dedicated men or women who appear to have a real commitment to arresting the disease of alcoholism (and they are unanimously convinced it is a disease). They report that when an alcoholic comes and follows through on their programs there is a 72 percent rate of success over a minimum of two years. This is tremendous! I'm not sure we have that high a rate in the church of converting the lost and keeping them faithful for two years.



Martel Pace

But, in spite of my admiration for the success of their work, I always come away wondering, "What did he tell me to do to *prevent* alcoholism?" They seem to rejoice at the news that a chemical from the system of alcoholics can be placed in mice that formerly would not drink and now the little rodents will drink themselves to death. The conclusion is that alcoholics have a pre-disposition which makes them alcoholics, and, that if they begin in drinking, they are virtually certain to become such.

I have a problem with this for two reasons: (1) It virtually removes the free moral agency of the person -- he has no choice but to be an alcoholic if he drinks; and (2) How can we be certain that the alcohol in the person's system did not create the chemical imbalance rather than the other way around (the imbalance creating the dependency)? Of course, the counselors express optimism that at some future time scientists will be able to test the blood of babies and tell whether they have this chemical deficiency.

But what are we to do in the meantime? Do we tell everyone, "You have a right to

drink, so just keep on drinking until the chemical dependence on alcohol shows up in your system; then come to me for treatment of what has proved to be a disease?" Or, do we have the temerity to suggest, "You should not drink at all because it may turn out that you have this chemical problem and you are taking an unnecessary risk with your life and probably your soul?" But most alcoholic counselors shy away from the very idea that drinking is a sin. They prefer to call it a "disease" -- and I can understand their reluctance since they are not preachers, but rather are psychological counselors. But if one admits the fact of sin, is it not possible that for one to take this risk of drinking, when he may have the predisposition for alcoholism, he is thereby endangering his eternal soul? And if he were only endangering his life and future happiness, is it even then worth the risk of drinking alcohol?

I get the feeling, and please correct me if I am mistaken, that most alcoholic counselors know it is not yet socially popular to denounce all drinking; therefore they will not take this narrow stand against it. In other words, their psychology and advice is based as much on social pressures as it is on what they know to be wise and prudent. One counselor told me that he does not drink. I inquired why; he replied: "My father was an alcoholic and I might have a chemical predisposition towards alcoholism and so I just don't believe it is worth the risk." Probably half (at least) of all alcoholics come from homes where one

(or more) family member was an alcoholic. Alcoholics tell themselves, "I know what alcoholism is and so I can drink without becoming addicted." They fail in spite of their intellectual knowledge. Why? Counselors *assume* it is because of some inherited weakness. This remains to be proved. It *may* be more due to the influence of friends and relatives, most of whom drink. The person thus begins to drink because of what he has learned to be socially acceptable; then, when he has become addicted, he can fall back on the chemical dependency syndrome. This helps to justify (?) the purely "disease" approach to alcoholism, and to draw people into AA and other associated programs.

It may be well and good to preach the "disease" of alcoholism idea; but this must not disarm me from using another weapon -- that drinking of alcoholic beverages for any reason other than medicinal is not only possibly very dangerous, but also is sin! If it is sin, we have a two-fold reason for abstinence -- (1) that of consequences to my soul, and (2) the consequences which drinking may bring to my body as well as my overall life. Therefore, I choose the path of abstinence because I believe it pleases my God, more than for any other reason. Timothy chose abstinence, and it required the admonition of an apostle to even get him to use a "little" for medicinal purposes (II Timothy 5:23). I choose to stand with Timothy and try to be a faithful evangelist in action as well as word.

—3414 Elaine Drive, Montgomery, AL 36109.

Are You A "Square"?

G. K. Wallace

Many, in these days, are being turned from the path of right by the taunts of their friends. They will say, "Don't be a square." Or to others they will say, so as to be heard, "He is a square."
There was a time when all men sought to be a

square. They wanted "a square deal" and a "square meal." They desired friends who were "square" -- that is friends who were just, upright, honest, honorable, open-handed and above-board. Who among us has decided that

Continued on page 3



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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS . . . Editor
1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501

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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

"No Substitute For Good Judgment"

I read recently that Sears, Roebuck & Company adopted -- and is enforcing! -- a respectable DRESS CODE for its sales staff in Los Angeles. They make no apology for their code, explaining: "There is no substitute for good judgment in appropriate dress. Our customers deserve and expect to shop in pleasant, professional-appearing, courteous environments. Our employment relies on our ability to attract and retain the business of our customers."



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

The report I read listed the following specific items:

For Men:

1. Men must wear dress shirts, ties, dress slacks, and dress shoes.
2. Jeans are not allowed.
3. Tennis shoes are not acceptable dress.
4. Shirts with writing and cartoons are not appropriate.

5. Hair styles must be neat, trim, and clean.

For Women:

1. Women are required to wear dresses, skirts and blouses, or pants outfits, and all must be coordinated and conservative in style.
2. Strapless or spaghetti-strap dresses and bare midriffs are not acceptable.
3. Dress shoes and hosiery are required.
4. Tennis shoes are not appropriate.
5. Jeans are not allowed.
6. Shirts with writing and cartoons are not appropriate.
7. Hair styles must be neat, trim, and clean.

If a sales organization can see that the way its employees dress makes an impression on potential customers, can not all Christians see that the way we dress for worship makes an impression on our guests -- the ones we are trying to win for Jesus Christ? We want to 'sell' Christianity to them.

Suppose the Eldership where you worship adopted such a code for your congregation, and requested your cooperation: Would you have to make any drastic or radical changes? If so, don't you think that you should make those changes voluntarily, without being asked to do so, purely on the basis of "good judgment in appropriate dress"? God requires "modest apparel" (I Timothy 2:9), and no Christian should even consider doing less.

Judging

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matthew 7:1-5).



Garry Stanton

One of the most abused and misused passages in the New Testament is found in Matthew 7:1-5. Any time an elder or a gospel preacher begins talking about "church discipline," someone objects by quoting Jesus in this passage. They say, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." They say, "You do not have the right to judge anyone," or, "Leave the judging to God." Some would have us think that we do not have the right to say anything about the false life one lives or the false doctrine he teaches.

But this type of thinking presents a problem because it contradicts other passages of scriptures. The same Jesus tells us in John 7:24 to "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." Also, a judgment must be rendered if we are to obey the command of Paul when he says, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17). How can we obey the command to withdraw from "every brother that walketh disorderly" (II Thessalonians

Fourth Annual Denton Lectures Planned

The Pearl St. Church of Christ in Denton, TX will host its fourth major annual lecture-ship November 10-14, 1985. The FOURTH ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES will be devoted to a study of the book of Acts. A wide variety of material will be covered by 34 speakers from all parts of the nation, delivering 38 lectures. The Pearl St. elders aim for these lectures to provide, for all who come, fundamental and sound Biblical teaching to help combat the profusion of doctrinal error both within and without the church. A book of approximately 500 pages of these lectures will be published in a binding that matches *Studies in I Corinthians*, *Studies in Hebrews* and *Studies in the Revelation*. All of the FOURTH ADL will also be available both on audio and video cassette tapes.

A special feature of these lectures on Acts will be the daily (Monday-Thursday) two-hour "Discussion Forum" in which subjects of con-

trovery will be discussed. The subjects will be: "Are Alien Sinners Amenable to the Law of Christ?"; "Are There Christians Besides Ourselves, Both Immersed and Unimmersed?"; "Should the Use of Instrumental Music in Worship be a Barrier to Fellowship?"; and "Is Holy Spirit Baptism Still Being Administered to Men?" Questions will be allowed and encouraged from the audience on these topics.

Exhibit space is available for both commercial and non-commercial interests, subject to invitation and/or approval by the Pearl St. elders. Housing in the homes of local Christians will be provided as long as it lasts. Hook-ups (water and electricity) will be provided on the church parking lot. For further information, inquiries may be addressed to: Dub McClish, ADL Director, 312 Pearl St., Denton, TX 76201; 817/387-3531, 387-1429.

Keeping The Saved Saved

The figures we read from time to time regarding a high mortality rate are alarming. In one summer campaign a large number were baptized; twelve months later only three of these could be found. Every congregation has experienced similar situations. The new convert seems to be easier prey for discouragement and apostasy.

Jesus taught that not all soil into which the kingdom seed falls is good, and that a final harvest will not be reaped (Luke 8:11-14). It is inevitable, in view of this, that some will fall away. Many are lost -- all of whom should have remained faithful. We simply cannot afford the tremendous loss of souls, especially among the younger folk, our greatest treasure.

Every prospective mother is aware of the importance of prenatal care. If the child in the womb is not nurtured properly, complications (even death) may result. She knows also the risks involved in a premature birth.



R. W. Gray

The tiny infant is just not strong enough to withstand the pressures of a big world.

Herein lies some of the difficulty. In our zeal to baptize, we sometimes forget to first make disciples (Matthew 28:19). While we do not agree at all with those who advocate what they term "Lordship baptism," the opposite extreme is equally unscriptural. Too many are given a short lessonette and rushed to the baptistry. In this way a great many are immersed in water who are not converted. Baptism is an essential part of the conversion process; but it is far from the only thing (Acts 2:38). Such prospects are "born" prematurely. They are too weak to survive.

New-born babies must be protected from exposure to disease. Germs that the mature person can throw off can be fatal to an infant. We are always careful to see to it that all objects to which the infant is exposed are clean. We know they, in their innocence, will attempt to "swallow" anything in reach.

But the same concern is not always shown for the new convert. They need to be shielded from "diseases" within the church. Some seem to feel an obligation to expose them to every ill the church has ever experienced. Babies in Christ cannot throw these things off, and they often become ill and die.

Good parents see to it that the baby is fed a light diet. They also take precautions with

the food that it is unadulterated. While older ones may survive some food contamination, not the baby.

Too often we expect the babe in Christ to eat the same diet as the mature members. They cannot always digest such food. It makes them ill, even though the food is wholesome. We must protect such from false doctrine if possible. Contaminated doctrine can prove fatal for them.

Such care requires planning, expense, and some extra effort on the part of the mature members. But it is worth the cost. If this means a new class must be formed, a new and skilled teacher employed, then so be it. Babies must be fed regularly and properly.

Another requirement for proper development in infants is tender loving care. A child may be well fed in a clean environment, but if left to himself will become ill nevertheless. New babies demand attention. We do not resent providing it; it is a pleasure, and it pays great dividends!

But the babe in Christ is often left to himself. He must form his own friendships, make his own way into the homes, hearts, and fellowship of the local church. Observation has shown that brother Yeakley is right when he writes in his book of the need for close social ties on the part of the new convert with the older members. Man is a social creature. Becoming a Christian does not change that need. Local churches have an obligation to provide an atmosphere that will encourage the forming of such ties.

Equally important for development is proper exercise. We encourage the infant to crawl or walk as soon as possible. It does not end there. We encourage the development of all his or her motor skills at an early age. Proper growth demands that we do so.

Too frequently we take the view that "serving at the table" or "assisting in the nursery" (the crawling state for the new convert) is all the spiritual exercise needed for a healthy development. He will find his own way, we feel, and growth will be automatic. But this is not happening. Help and encouragement, even some on-the-job-training, is needed.

When the child is mature he or she will bear children of their own, and the cycle is complete. Teaching the saved to save others is one of the best ways to assure growth and maturity. After all, isn't this the way Jesus said it should be? (Matthew 28:18-19-20).

Are You A "Square"?

Continued from page 2

one should not be virtuous, chivalrous and honorable? When you are told not to be a square, you are being asked to be false-hearted, unfair, double-tongued, dark, slippery, shabby, dirty, low-minded, corrupt, disloyal and immoral.

The advocates of rejecting standards of right, think they can justify themselves by calling high morals "Victorian." The ten commandments were not given by Queen Victoria! They came from God-- and we should be glad that Queen Victoria urged people to obey the moral principles of the Bible.

What have these people who are chiding the moral principles of the Bible given us? They have given us a generation of corrupt youth.

Continued on page 4

Judging

Continued from page 2

3:6), unless we *judge* them to be walking disorderly? Why do so many insist on obeying one passage to the exclusion of others of equal importance? There are numerous passages that teach we are to take action toward those who are not doing as the Lord expects them to do. Yet, the *assertion* that Matthew 7:1-5 teaches that we are not to judge contradicts these other passages. Therefore, *since truth never contradicts truth, and since God's word is truth* (John 17:17), we know that the interpretation of Matthew 7:1-5 which says that we are never to do any judging, is an *erroneous* interpretation.

What is the intended meaning of Jesus in this text? The true meaning revolves around hypocritical judging. The problem with which Jesus deals is one where those judging were doing so with a *double standard*. They were judging others by one standard, and then judging their own actions by a different (less restrictive) standard. The standard they enjoined upon others was greater than God's standard, and/or the standard enjoined upon themselves was less than God's standard. Jesus warns them that if they continue in this, they would be judged by the same standard enjoined upon others (Matthew 7:2). Jesus is not forbidding all judging but he is requiring that righteous judgment be made. The idea that Jesus is saying we are not to judge so that we will not be judged, overlooks the fact that the Bible tells us that we are going to be judged regardless. Jesus said, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). We will be judged by the same standard, the word of God, regardless of whether or not we have judged others.

As if the foregoing were not enough proof of their misunderstanding of Matthew 7:1, then a look at verse 5 should be. Here Jesus says, "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of

thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." Jesus shows that he is referring to hypocritical judgment by the use of the words, "Thou hypocrite." Also, he says that after the hypocrisy is removed, *we are to judge*: "then (emphasis mine) shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." The instruction to cast the beam out of our own eye, in no way means that we have to be *perfect* before we judge others. Such a requirement would render all the passages that we have mentioned, useless and a waste of the paper on which they are found -- because no Christian can say that he is without sin (Romans 3:23; I John 1:8, 10).

We have often accused the denominationals of pulling scriptures out of their contexts and twisting them for their own purposes, and yet we find some among us doing the very same thing with regard to Matthew 7:1-5. Jesus tells us exactly what he means later in the chapter. In verse 16 he tells us that we can judge the false prophets *by the fruit they bear*. It is not the one who says, "Lord, Lord" who will be saved forever, but he that "doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). Then in verses 24 through 27, Jesus describes those who do not obey as "a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand." God wants us to watch for one another and to try to help each other avoid these things that can cause the loss of our souls.

Christians are to judge! The purpose of such judging is the ultimate salvation of the souls of all by restoring those who are "overtaken in a fault" (Galatians 6:1). Let this be the *reason* for our judging one another so that heaven will be our eternal home one day.

—807 Welton, Pratt, KS 67124.

Character Is What You Are In The Dark

D. L. Moody said, "Character is what you are in the dark. If you take care of your character, your reputation will take care of itself."

Many folk are far more concerned about the impressions they make on *men* than those they make on *God*. Reputation is what others think us to be, while character is what God knows us to be. What we are in this life determines where we will go when we leave this world.

The apostle Paul sums up the traits God desires in the lives of his children: "Put on there-



Edsel Burleson

fore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (Colossians 3:12,13). Here, delicately woven, are the beautiful strands of Christian character.

A poor boy in a Pennsylvania town was struggling for an education. He studied and toiled until he finally got through. Hearing of a vacancy in a Chicago bank, he decided to try for it. His mother objected and his friends laughed at him, telling him there would be many applications in a big city like Chicago and no chance for him. But he went. He met the bank president, who touched a button. The bank's detective stepped in, looked at the boy, and went out. The president said, "Come back in a week."

When he came back, the president said, "There were forty-three applicants we were considering for this position. All have been

watched for a week. Only two boys passed the character examination, which touched particularly these points: extravagance, vice, where evenings are spent, and the Lord's Day. All this is strictly business, and not at all an inquisition into private character. This bank must take an account of these things for its own sake. Of the two, you have the best qualifications, and the place is yours."

Would you be ashamed for your companion, or your parents, or your children, or a prospective employer, or the elders, to see a record of your actions for an entire week? **REMEMBER!** The Father of us all has an accounting, not only of our actions, but our thoughts as well, for every week of our lives.

"A person's character is like a fence: all the whitewash in the world won't strengthen it."

West End Church of Christ, 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

God's Design For The Home

(Part II)

God established the home to be a permanent institution. He said of the married couple, "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6). The divorce rate in this country tells us our society does not respect God and his word. Many married people seem not to realize there is love other than erotic love.

If both husband and wife want to serve God, they will work toward cultivating their love for one another. Selfishness seems to be the underlying cause for three out of five marriages to end in divorce.



W. Edwin Kearley

are areas where man is her superior. This is why they complement one another. Why must people ruin their happiness by wanting to change their God-given roles? Looking for "greener pastures" is often a hindrance to peace and happiness.

The inspired Paul said, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything" (Ephesians 5:22-24). This is God's plan, and we must not elevate our wisdom above his wisdom.

God did not leave the wife at the mercy of a heartless and cruel husband. His instruction to the husband is as follows: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. . . So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man

ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Ephesians 5:25, 28-29). The wife should not fear being in subjection to this type of character. Both man and woman should be obedient to God. Each should be wise in the selection of a mate.

The man who places his wife in bondage, speaks harshly and unkind, or harms her physically, is a beast. He needs to be ashamed and fall to his knees in penitence and obey God Almighty.

There is nothing so beautiful as two people who have gone through life having love and respect for one another, and reared a family with the same love and respect. Peace and contentment is written on their faces. Purity of heart is reflected in their speech and seen in their actions. (More to follow). — 103 Elena Court, Bay St., St. Louis, MS. 39520.

Are You A "Square"?

Continued from page 3

Fifty percent of high school girls over the nation are giving birth to babies. Alcoholism is rampant and dope addicts crowd our society. What can we expect when parents keep pornographic material in their homes and serve cocktails at their tables?

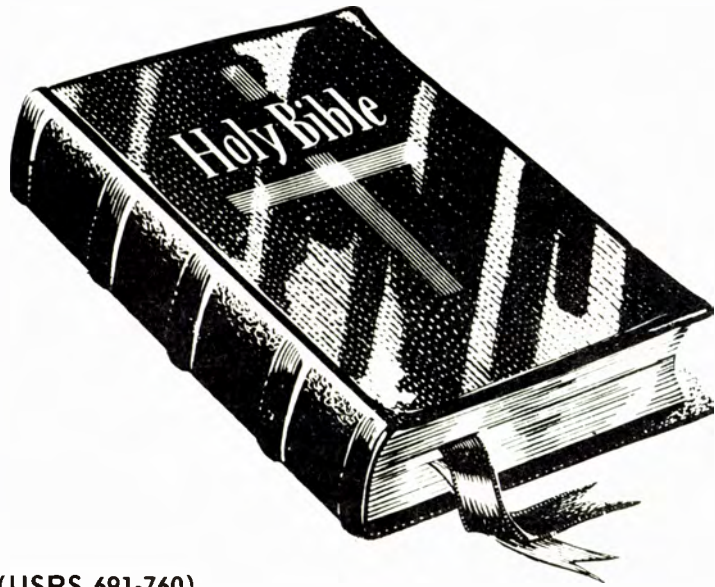
We urge young folk to tell their friends they are proud to be called a "square" and that they hope to live "foursquare" lives. Let us

not be afraid of the taunts of men. Jesus said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile (reproach) you . . . and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake, rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:11, 12).

—Via "Reminder," Bell Shoals Church of Christ, 2908 Bell Shoals Road, Brandon, FL 33511.

Be Sure And Invite

A Friend To Church On Sunday!



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of



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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, JULY 12, 1985

NUMBER 28

The School Of Hard Knocks

The story goes that a young man who expressed delight upon having received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. was encouraged to "go out into the world and learn the remainder of the alphabet!"

Many young preachers will identify with one thus instructed, as they feel they received their best training in the school of hard knocks. The matter is far more frustrating for such

optimistic young men than most of us realize. One enters his life's chosen vocation with high (sometimes unrealistic) expectations. He knows he has chosen the greatest work in all the world! He has observed that God has elected to save the world by the work he is to do, and that Christ has promised to be "with him" wherever he may go in that worthy endeavor (I Corinthians 1:21; Matthew 28:20).

Possessed with such knowledge, a young preacher would be less than normal if he failed to expect a reasonable degree of respect and cooperation from brethren with whom he will share his life, and with whom he shares a common goal.

We would not here minimize the contribution made by so many fine brethren, especially godly elders, to the success of many young men who have chosen to preach.

If the design of this article were in that direction, numerous examples could be cited wherein men survived only because they were surrounded by brethren who loved them and the cause they served.

But in far too many instances the encouragement needed is *not* provided. The following



R. W. Gray

story is altered just enough to protect the guilty. It is a story repeated in the experiences of many who enters the great work of preaching the gospel.

While being interviewed for work with a congregation the young man was assured that his ideas, input, and suggestions would be needed and expected in promoting growth in the congregation. Right away he is invited into decision-making meetings where he assumes the stage is set for his "suggestions" to be seriously considered. To his dismay he finds that time and time again his ideas are swept aside as "not what is needed here," or simply ignored with not so much as a comment from his fellow workers in the Lord (I Corinthians 3:9).

In time the young man requests a special meeting wherein he will express his frustrations and inquire as to the reason(s) for such treatment. He makes it clear that he knows all his "ideas" are not the best, and he knows they should not be accepted without deliberation. He moves to say, however, that suggestions offered by other members receive a fair hearing and serious consideration. He asks whether he might expect "equal" consideration with others in the congregation. He is shocked when the spokesman in that original interview responds, "This is as good an opportunity as any for you to be informed that the preacher does not run this congregation."

It goes without saying that the young man will now cease to be ready with a good "plan for growth" in future meetings with his brethren. He hereafter disciplines himself to accept the decisions of others, doing his best to assist in the implementation of their ideas.

Because such a climate does not lend itself to success, the work will not prosper. In time the inevitable occurs. Brethren concerned for the future of the church seek an audience with the elders. Concern is voiced for the lack of progress. They are assured the elders share their apprehensions.


It is decision-making time: the general consensus is that a need exists for a minister who can "provide more meaningful leadership." The young man is called in and told of the decision made "in the best interest of the church." He must now seek another work where there will be no guarantees that the same cycle will not be repeated. His first semester in the school of hard knocks is over. But it is not graduation time. The young man and his family must uproot, move on, and hope for greener pastures.

The circumstances herein described present a scenario written numerous times in our brotherhood. So often repeated are such lessons in the life of evangelists in our midst that a sizeable number reading this article will likely be wondering, "Who told him of my experience?"

Perhaps some of the underlying cause for such misguided plots is a general misunderstanding of the role of both elders and preachers. There exists a communication gap that could be closed with the proper desire and effort. *Evangelists are not in competition with elders.* Most have no desire to dictate in any manner to the elders. The congregation will respect "more" the eldership that promotes and encourages the minister. Preachers will not "take the place" of elders in the heart and life of the members. Mutual respect between minister and the elders will promote growth while a competitive spirit promotes disharmony and retards growth.

Rather than demanding preachers become acquainted with the rest of the alphabet in such a hard manner, the great cause of Christ would be best served if we learn to cooperate with and encourage them. Not all their suggestions will be best. Some will be worthwhile. Simply having one man move on while we seek another, will not solve our problems; nor will it assure growth. Unless there is a change in attitude, the next man will

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Should Infants Be Baptized?

One of the most widely - accepted teachings concerning baptism is the practice of baptizing (?) infants. Those who practice "infant baptism" do so because they believe that every infant is lost in sin when it is born. Is this practice a scriptural one? does the Bible teach that infants should be baptized? is one, who was baptized as an infant, in a saved condition as an adult? Let us look to the Bible for the answers to these questions.



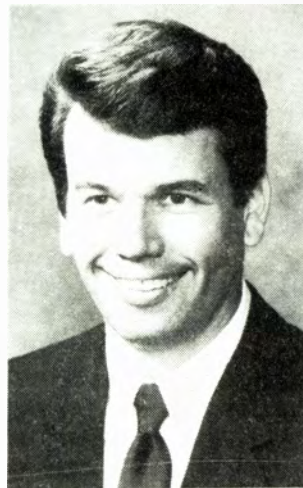
Garry Stanton

(1) The so-called "mode of baptism" usually employed with infants is sprinkling a small amount of water. This idea is not in harmony with the definition of *Baptizo*, the Greek word translated baptize in the New Testament, which means to dip, plunge, or immerse. The analogies associated with baptism point to baptism being more than just sprinkling. Romans 6:4 says that "we are buried with Christ by baptism into death," and in verse 5 Paul says that we are "planted . . . in the likeness of his death." Is something considered "buried" with the sprinkling of a small amount of dirt over it? do we dig a hole to plant a tree and then sprinkle only a little dirt over the roots? Neither are we "buried" with Christ by baptism by sprinkling a little water on our heads. The action of baptism takes *much water*. John the baptizer baptized in Aenon "because there was much water there" (John 3:23). In Acts 8:38, when Philip baptized the eunuch, they "went down, both into the water." Question: Is "*much water*" needed to sprinkle? is it necessary for both (or, even one) to go "into the water" to sprinkle? The answer is NO. The baptism of the New Testament is not sprinkling but a total and complete immersing in water.

Continued On Page 4

"Just Trust In The Lord"

TRUST DEFINED
Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines trust as: "(1) assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something; one in which confidence is placed; (2) dependence on something future or contingent: Hope." The word trust in the Bible conveys a variety of concepts and ideas.



Kenneth Bayles

The Hebrew words *mibtach*, *batach*, and *chacah* are translated trust in various scriptures, and each overlaps the other to some degree. *Mibtach* is defined as: "a refuge, security, assurance, confidence, hope, sure, and trust." *Batach* is rendered as "trust, confidence or sure." *Chacah* possesses the idea of fleeing for protection. Figuratively it means to confide in, have hope, make refuge (Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, pgs. 20, 41, 61; Job 8:13, 14; Psalms 37:3; Proverbs 3:5).

The corresponding words of the Greek New Testament are: *elpizo* (which is defined as; to hope expect, to repose hope and confidence in, trust, confide" (Luke 23:8; John 5:45). Another word which comes to mind is *peitho*. The idea is: "to believe, give credit to, have a mental persuasion, to believe in or on" (Luke 16:11; Galatians 5:8). Studying these words in the contexts in which they are written is very helpful to the careful Bible student.

DENOMINATIONAL CONCEPT OF "TRUST"

The phrase, "Just trust in the Lord" is used in various ways by people in denominationalism. Many times these words are given in answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Often it is the case that one may be experiencing a trauma in life, or carrying the burden of the loss of a loved one. During this time of desperation when he has lost all hope and surrenders to despair, he cries out, "What am I going to do?" "Just

trust in the Lord" is the answer given.

As one considers the word "just" in this statement you realize its restrictions. This answer is actually saying that trust, in and of itself, is *all* that you need to do in order to be a recipient of the Lord's care and spiritual blessings. This phrase becomes parallel with, "Just believe in the Lord," or "Man is saved by faith *only*." This terminology is not in harmony with the word of Jehovah.

BIBLICAL "TRUST"

An adult man can recall the days of his youth when his father would place him high upon a fence. Father then would stretch forth his arms and tell his son, "Jump, and I will catch you." On every occasion I jumped! Never was I allowed to fall to the ground! Why did I jump? I *trusted*, had confidence in, and was sure that his words were true and that he would do exactly as he had stated. My friends, our heavenly Father says what he means, and means what he says.

We can trust the Bible when it says — (1) that *all* men are amenable to the law of Christ (Acts 17:30); (2) that one day there will be a universal judgment (Hebrews 9:27); (3) that the words of the Christ will be the standard by which we are judged (John 12:48); (4) that the wicked will be cast into the eternal fire (Matthew 25:41); (5) that the righteous will inherit the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 25:34); and (6) that *all* spiritual blessings are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

If all spiritual blessings are in Christ, the conclusion which is demanded is that there are *NO* spiritual blessings outside of Christ. To be in Christ is to be in his body, the church, (Colosians 1:18). In order to be a recipient of the spiritual blessings of the Christ, you must trust his word to the extent that you *obey* it.

Do you trust in the Lord's command to — hear his word (Romans 10:17)? Believe on him (John 3:16)? Repent of your sins (Luke 13:3)? confess him as Lord (Romans 10:9, 10)? Endure to the end, (Matthew 10:22)?

The Sweet Singer of Israel said, "Trust in the Lord, and do good," (Psalms 37:3). Indeed! The obedient one is the one who truly *trusts* in the Lord.

—P.O. Box 897, Wetumpka, AL 36092.

Unjust Judgment

A young man from Ohio visited the campus of Bethany College in 1854. He was deciding where to continue his college education. Because he was a Christian — a member of the Lord's church — he gave much consideration to this college founded by Alexander Campbell. However, this young man decided not to attend Bethany, but attended Williams College instead. He went on to great achievements: teacher, college president, general in the army, and finally, President of the United States! This young man was James A. Garfield.



ANCIL JENKINS

Despite these great achievements, we wonder what *might* have been. Garfield was interested in preaching, and for this reason he considered Bethany College where he could find the best in Bible teaching. Yet, he was disappointed by an attitude among the students that he called "Southern Dandyism". His prejudice against the South played a great role in deciding where he attended college and what he would become.

Do we make the same mistake? Someone said that prejudice is handy: it helps one make up his mind without considering the facts! This is what Jesus was teaching against when he said, "... judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

We are commanded to examine the fruit of a tree to see if the tree is good. This means we must determine the character of each person according to his works. To do otherwise, or to overlook sin because of

Continued on page 3

What God Has A Right To Expect Of Us

Clifford Dixon

We belong to God by right of creation. He made us in his own image and gave man priority over his animals and other things of creation. Man is not worthy of this. The Psalmist said, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet . . ." (Psalms 8:4-6). We also belong to God by right of redemption, at such an awful cost! (I Corinthians 6:19-20). In view of all of this, what does God have a right to expect of us?

1. He has a right to expect that we open our ears to his instructions. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 2:11). We are to also take heed what we hear. "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given" (Mark 4:24). Also, "Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have" (Luke 8:18). We need to hear with open hearts ready to receive the truths God presents. He puts them there for our good and for our eternal benefits.

2. God expects that we shall have honest hearts with which to receive his word. "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15). We should want to do God's will because it is right. We should not be seeking to please men, nor to gain the favor of men, in our religious acts -- but to be pleasing to God.

3. God expects whole-hearted obedience. "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" (Romans 6:17, 18). We need to have the disposition, "Speak Lord thy servant heareth; command, and I will obey." God's word says it: we need to believe it, and that ought to settle it.

4. God has a right to expect that we love him

first and above all. The first and great commandment of the law was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matthew 22:37). To love God with "all" of these is to be fully dedicated to his service. That is the reason that in matters of worship, service, and morals, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

5. God expects that we give him the very best in talents, living, and goods. Solomon wisely says, "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst with new wine" (Proverbs 3:9,10). Jesus exhorts, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). In the words of a beautiful song,

Give of your best to the Master;
Give of the strength of your youth;
Give of your best to the Master;
Give of the strength of your youth;
Throw your soul's fresh, glowing ardor
Into the battle for truth"

(Mrs. Charles Barnard).

If we teach, we should do our very best to teach with all the fervor and knowledge that we can muster. This requires the ultimate

in preparation and acceptance of the truths we present. "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11).

6. God expects that we glorify him. "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). We can rest assured that it is someone's business what we do with our lives: It is God's business! He holds us responsible for our actions (Romans 14:11, 12). And he will punish the evil doers (Romans 2:8, 9). God is glorified with fruit bearing (John 15:8). To bear fruit we must be in the vine, and abide in the vine (John 15:1-6). This we do when we are good examples by reflecting the life of Jesus in our lives. God is glorified when we suffer patiently and faithfully as disciples of Christ. "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (I Peter 4:16).

Are you doing the things that God expects of you? If not, you need to begin doing those things *today*. One day you will face him to give account of your life.

—P.O. Box 507, Jay, FL 32565.

Lost Opportunities?

A few years ago a popular song was on several radio stations with the title, "The Cat Is In The Cradle." It was about a father who had a son but never seemed to have enough time for him. The son grew up, married, has his own family, and work. When the father was older and had time to spend with his son, he found his son was too busy for him. One of the last phrases in that

song was, "He grew up to be just like me." The morale behind the song was we need to spend time with our children while we have the opportunity! Perhaps that is one reason God blesses us with grandchildren: We are given an opportunity to make up with our children's children what we failed to give our children -- ourselves!

When we are young, we think we are immortal, indestructible, and ageless. "We can always do tomorrow what we have put off today." "There is plenty of time." We convince ourselves that it will not hurt if we miss our baby's smile, ignore outstretched arms seeking a hug, overlook an awkwardly-drawn picture with a scrawled message that says, "I love you daddy," or be too involved in our own interests to listen to a little heart that needs our attention. Little hearts grow up. Cute little faces all too soon have acne. Arms eager to hug don't, but soon embrace others. Scrawled messages stop and a mailbox now stands empty. Toothless smiles, braces, mismatched socks, childish questions, allowances, giggles, and other memories become



Ray Hawk

just that — memories! Rivulets of tears that find their way down mother's cheek when her baby goes off to kindergarten all too soon flow again when he enters college. Too quickly we are no longer 20, our children are! Where did the time go? Those lost opportunities all too soon become today's regrets. No wonder Paul said, "Redeeming the time ("Making the most of every opportunity," NIV), because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16).

As we watch our children grow and the number of candles increases on our birthday cakes, we discover things do not remain the same. All too soon we become that generation we used to call "old people!" Everything changes. We change. If that change is for the better, and occurs inwardly, we are blessed because of it (II Corinthians 4:16; 5:17). If we give ourselves to the changeless One, growing old and seeing changes will be an exciting time (Hebrews 13:8; 12:1, 2). Let us enjoy life as we walk hand in hand with Jesus and our loved ones (Philippians 1:21-23). One who lives faithfully for Jesus will look back upon his life with pleasant memories, and not with regrets (Revelation 2:10; II Timothy 4:7, 8).

—39 Webb Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

Unjust Judgment

Continued from page 2

affection, is to judge wrongly.

It is even possible to miss the point in judging ourselves. We are to examine ourselves (II Corinthians 13:5). This is one great value of the Lord's Supper: we have a weekly opportunity to see ourselves. To fail to make this weekly appointment is to fail to examine ourselves, and opens ourselves up to a wrong judgment.—South Miami Church of Christ, 8445 Sunset Drive, Miami, FL 33143.

The School

Of Hard Knocks

Continued From Page 1

face the same insurmountable obstacles erected by those who think of *themselves* as "having the best interest of the church" foremost in their minds. Learning to cooperate with your present man will save him much distress, and will save the church a great deal of money and needless frustration.

A change is sometime necessary. Some will not meet the needs of the work even with the best of cooperation from brethren. But a great deal more could be done to protect dedicated and sound preachers of the gospel. Some would be "amazed" at the "difference" in their local evangelist if they would learn to practice the golden rule in their attitude toward him.

These matters are serious, brethren.

Let us all do what we can to correct them.

—P.O. Box 90236, East Point, Ga. 30364.

Patient In Tribulation

(The following is a letter sent to a Christian whose home congregation was being torn assunder by controversy. Perhaps the thought of it will be helpful to others in similar circumstances. Personal matters have been deleted and scripture citations added.)



John Waddey

Dear Brother:

Thank you for taking time to write me. My heart goes out to you and all the brothers and sisters at your congregation. It is so painful and debilitating to go through the kind of spiritual turmoil you have been enduring.

When any problem arises that threatens to "blow up" a congregation of God's people, it calls for the utmost in patience and prayer

from all to solve the problem without "killing the patient" (James 5:11).

It sometimes happens that in our zeal to oppose error we allow ourselves to be swept into a mood and attitude that is counterproductive. We can easily create such an atmosphere of agitation and hostility that division and chaos are inevitable. Peaceful, scriptural solutions are not possible in such a situation. God's faithful child is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy . . ." and a maker of peace (James 3:17-18).

Your elders are very much aware of the problem. They doubtless are diligently working to *solve* the problem and *save* the congregation. They without question are good men who dearly love the church. They deserve the full cooperation and support of every member, "Esteem them highly in love for their work's sake" (I Thessalonians 5:13). They need time and room to operate -- in dealing with the matter. As it is, they are being pressured by both sides so aggressively that

they are finding it difficult to do what must be done.

If you can be patient for yet a little while, I feel confident that a satisfactory solution will be reached. I really believe that your leaving at this time would be detrimental both to you and the congregation. In times of crisis, God's church desperately needs the perseverance, prayers, and help of every faithful child of God. Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

Be assured of my respect for you, your love for God's word, and his church. I doubt not your motives.

Pray without ceasing (I Thessalonians 5:17)! Be a peace-maker (Matthew 5:9)! Love the brotherhood (I Peter 2:17)! Give diligence to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace (Ephesians 4:3). Be "patient in tribulation" (Romans 12:12).

God be with all of you.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

The Sad State Of The Uninvolved

It is the goal of the church for each member of the body to be active. This is done by each member filling his role which God has in mind for him. The role is determined by the abilities each member possesses. This means that each member of the church has a meaningful responsibility that helps the church to do its work. (Read Ephesians 4:16).



Ancil Jenkins

This is the ideal arrangement. Some people want to be involved in the work, but circumstances prevent it. Others want to but there might not be a suitable responsibility for them.

The saddest case, however, is one who is not involved, and has no desire to be.

SUCH MEMBERS ARE USUALLY THE MOST CRITICAL OF WHAT IS BEING DONE. The uninvolved often do not like what is being done, and may be quick to say so. This criticism is often not directed to those who can change the situation, but to other critics who will tell others also. "murmuring is complaining to someone who can do nothing about the situation." It is a sin to murmur (I Corinthians 10:10).

THEY ARE OFTEN THE MOST SELF-WILLED. *Whatever* the church does, must meet their approval! If not, there will be no co-operation or help. If there is co-operation, it may be accompanied by constant complaining. Read and obey Hebrews 13:7, 17.

THE UNINVOLVED USUALLY HAVE THE LEAST LOYALTY TO THE CHURCH. They are more likely to fall away. Things of lesser value in their lives often replace the work and plans of the church. Uninvolved members usually are most likely to go to another congregation if matters do not suit them.

UNINVOLVED MEMBERS USUALLY HINDER THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH. The church that is growing in numbers and morale usually has a majority taking part in

one or more activities of the church. The vitality of the church will usually depend on the number of people who will commit themselves to some aspect of the work of the church.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Leadership must understand the need for involvement. Elders have a responsibility of training and appointing the members of the body to do the work -- not doing the work themselves. It *IS* easier to do it yourself than to help someone else do it. Yet, the church is weaker when leaders do the work and do not lead and train others.

We must be willing to work. Many are willing to do something. Yet, how many are willing to do anything, within the range of our

abilities? We need to present ourselves for duty, willing to serve wherever necessary.

We need more love for the church and more desire for unity. Do we love the church, or do we just love a particular work? Are we willing to forget our own desires and work for what the majority wants to do? Do you lovingly support the program adopted by the Eldership? To do so, is a mark of Christian maturity.

There is an old Chinese proverb which says:

"Tell me, I'll forget.

Show me, I may remember.

Involve me, and I will understand."

—South Miami Church of Christ, 8445 Sunset Dr., Miami, FL 33143.

Should Infants Be Baptized?

Continued From Page 2

(2) The Bible is equally clear as to the subjects that were baptized. In each example of baptism given in the New Testament, those baptized did so of their own free will. Infant baptism is clearly not an act of an infant's free will; it is *forced* upon him by his parent's will. Notice the required response of one who is to be baptized. 1. Mark 16:16 -- "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Does an infant have faith before he is baptized? NO. 2. Acts 2:38 -- "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Can an infant *repent* before baptism? How does a one-week-old baby change his life? 3. Acts 8:36-38 -- The eunuch asks Philip what prevented his being baptized, and Philip said that if he believed with all his heart, nothing prevented it. The eunuch responded by stating the great confession: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." What infant has faith in Jesus as the Son of God and is able to make that affirmation? Unless a person has responded to faith in Jesus, repented of his sins, and confessed his faith -- all *before* his baptism -- he has not followed the examples of baptism found in the New Testament.

(3) The premise that infants are born in sin, and are lost, is not taught in God's word. The Bible shows us that sin is an action, a *transgression* of God's will (I John 3:4). A person can sin by thinking evil, speaking evil, doing evil, or failing to do good. God will judge us ac-

cording to each man's work. We will be held accountable *only* for those sins we commit. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity (sin) of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son . . ." (Ezekiel 18:20). Paul writes that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in *his body*, according to that *he hath done*, whether it be good or bad" (II Corinthians 5:10). Infants are not capable of sinning and they are not held accountable for the sins of others; therefore they do not need to be baptized. Jesus, instead of picturing children as sinful, says that the adults need to be pure and white as children, "for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14).

Is the practice of sprinkling infants a scriptural one, that is, one that the scripture teaches? NO! Does the Bible teach that infants should be baptized? NO! Is one who was sprinkled as an infant (supposedly as an act of baptism) in a saved condition as an adult? NO! Only when one follows the steps of salvation as given in the gospel can he justly claim the promised salvation.

The vital importance of this matter demands our attention. Please think carefully about these things. Paul says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (II Corinthians 13:5).

—807 Welton, Pratt, KS 67124.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of T

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

—Acts 26:25

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God's Design For The Home

(Part III)

God's plan calls for the permanence of the home. After making woman, God's word says, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall CLEAVE unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). After quoting this passage, Jesus Christ said, "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6). Therefore there is no doubt God intends for marriage vows to be permanent.



W. Edwin Kearley

affected emotionally. If there are children, the brunt of rearing the children will usually be on the part of one parent. Children will be robbed of either a father or mother.

If the adulterer marries, both he and the second mate are placed in a state of adultery. Jesus said, "... and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced COMMITTEETH adultery" (Matthew 5:32).

Those guilty of this sin have no hope of heaven unless they repent and obey God's other commands. Paul wrote, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor

effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind. . . ." (I Corinthians 6:9).

However, God knew the impossibility of some couples living together. Paul said, "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife" (I Corinthians 7:10-11). God has no double standard.

If both husband and wife grow in their faith in God and in love for one another, marriages will last as long as both shall live. — 113 Elena Court, Bay St. Louis, Ms. 39520.

Dangerous Men

Paul states God's marriage law: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law: so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" (Roman 7:1-3). The word "adulterer" denotes one who has unlawful sexual intercourse with the spouse of another.

There is only one exception which allows a second marriage. Jesus said, "... Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matthew 19:9). This matter affects at least three lives. Usually it affects four lives plus the children involved. The innocent, the one sinned against by the adulterer, will be

Paul warned the Ephesian elders of dangerous men who would attack the disciples like "grievous wolves" (Acts 20:29). Jesus spoke of false teachers who were like thieves and robbers (John 10:8).

Most brethren would immediately spot and be wary of brazenly advocates an immoral practice.

We would quickly reject the teacher who announces his intent to divide the church. The problem is, few false teachers would be so stupid as to openly announce their diabolic plan. Rather, they come with smooth and fair speech to deceive the hearts of the innocent (Romans 16:18). They may be wolves, but they will present themselves to us in the disguise of harmless sheep (Matthew 7:15).



JOHN WADDEY

Brother David Lipscomb well describes another category of dangerous men who are a threat to the well-being of the church:

"Those most hurtful in drawing evil into the churches, that divide and weaken and destroy the innocent, are the non-committal that agree with all and oppose none. The most effective worker to bring in evil is one who does not favor it, but can work with it. He is so liberal and generous that he does not desire it, but sees no harm is the evil. . . the man who does not vigorously and actively oppose an evil really favors it. . . God has so made it that not to actively oppose an evil is to admit that it is a virtue, a good thing to be approved. . . ."

"These are men of 'smooth and fair speech' that ignore the authority of God and can work with or without what God authorizes and oppose no persons in particular, agree with everybody, are

Continued on page 2



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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

—Acts 26:35

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Dangerous Men

Continued From Page 1

popular with men; but they work ruin to the church and cause of God." (The Apostasy of Churches, *Gospel Advocate*, 1909.)

While we have a few dedicated heretics in our midst, we have a bumper crop of those brother Lipscomb was concerned with in 1909. Isaiah likened such preachers to worthless watchdogs. "His watchmen are blind, they are all without knowledge; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark. . ." (Isaiah 56:10). Not only are blind and mute watchdogs worthless, they are a liability — for they leave one with a false sense of security.

THE NEED OF THE HOUR

The church desperately needs faithful men who are set for the defense of the gospel (Philippians 1:18).

She needs men who will "cry aloud and spare not, lifting up their voices like trumpets to declare unto God's people their transgression" (Isaiah 58:1).

Men like Paul are needed who will not shrink from declaring the whole counsel of God and admonishing everyone night and day with tears (Acts 20:27; 31).

The times demand men who will "preach the word. . . in season, out of season," rebuking, reproving, exhorting (II Timothy 4:2).

Men are desperately needed who will "contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

Teachers are needed who will speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), but "mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to doctrine. . ." (Romans 16:17).

Elders are needed who will expect such faithful teaching from their preachers and who will exhibit that same decisive leadership themselves. Jesus expressed it thus: "He that is not with me is against me" (Matthew 12:30). We cannot be uncommitted fence straddlers and still be faithful soldiers in the good fight of faith (I Timothy 6:12). To refuse to take our stand for Truth and Right makes us most dangerous, and a menace to the church for which Christ died. — 6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

Precious Memories

How truly wealthy are we who have known the love and discipline of Godly parents. A treasure so great cannot be measured in dollar marks. It is far too precious for such a puny comparison. One inspired writer observed that the price of a virtuous woman is "far above rubies" (Proverbs 31:10). One of her rewards is that her children arise to "call her blessed" (Proverbs 31:28).



R. W. Gray

In a moving tribute to the memory of his sainted mother, the late T. B. Larimore wrote the following eulogy:

"My mother's religion was Christianity, pure and simple; and in her convictions with Truth for her stay, she was immovable as the mountains — steadfast as the everlasting hills. Her faith never faltered, her hope never wavered, her love never failed. The last thing I ever heard her say was: 'Good-by, my son.' Her race is run, her work is done, she has gone home; and her son hopes to spend eternity with his mother." (*Life, Letters and Sermons of T. B. Larimore*, p 62).

My mother had six children. There is no one of them who would not say that brother Larimore's words describe her strong character and convictions perfectly.

My mother, the late Tessa McBrayer Gray, stood firm on the Rock of Ages. She blessed all who came into contact with her, strengthening faith, sharing love and understanding, exhorting to greater heights, and instilling a greater appreciation for individual potential and worth.

The memories that linger are a tower of strength that is priceless in its stabilizing influence. I remember that all wanted to be her "favorite," and she had the capacity to make each one feel he or she was the "special one" in her life. I remember the prayers she prayed for her children as we passed in the field for a break from the summer's heat. I remember that she gathered her small children at her feet to read to them from the word of God, insisting upon this also when weather and road conditions prohibited attendance at Sunday School. I remember her respect for and faithfulness to our father. I remember the unselfish sacrifices she made on behalf of those she loved. I remember that she loved truth above all else, willing to trade away a box-car load of opinion or error for one thimble-full of that precious commodity! I remember her ability to memorize scripture, poetry, and the birthdates of every child, son and daughter-in-law, grand- and great-grandchild.

But along with the late brother Larimore I remember above all else her parting words. Realizing that the time of her departure was at hand, mother called to her bedside her five children yet living, along with their mates -- three daughters-in-law and sons-in-law. In her hospital room also were three grandchildren. As she looked into our faces she spoke of the "joy of having had the privilege of living in this world -- of how 'wonderful' it had been,

and how sweet would be the reunion in the better world." She requested that the oldest son lead the family in a devotional prayer. She then began to quote from the Bible, especially the Great Commission of Mark 16:15- intending her words, no doubt, for the ears of her preacher sons. Prayers that were so weak we could not make out the words came from her lips as her life waned away, but the expression "In Jesus name, Amen!" was very clear. Finally she said, "Good night, sweet children," and lapsed into a coma from which she never rallied before her spirit winged its flight upon the strong arms of God's ministering spirits to that place where sin and darkness are never known (Luke 16:22; Hebrews 1:13-14).

May these words inspire some mother or father to leave a similar heritage for their children. If this should be the case how happy my mother would have been to know of it. Those who read these lines whose parents are yet with them are encouraged to make the love you have for them known, both in word and deed, before their eyes and ears are forever closed to the sounds of earth.

"As I travel on life's pathway
Know not what the years may hold;
As I ponder hope grows fonder,
Precious memories flood my soul."
—J.F.B. Wright

—Rt. 3 Box 306, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

If Another Stalls, Give Him A Gentle Push

You, no matter what your circumstances may be, can be that "something" that will provide those around you with the encouragement they need to bring out the best that is in them. Emerson once wrote: "What I need most is something to make me do what I can." All of us need a little push sometimes to cause us to undertake the tasks which face us.

Someone told this story of an automobile which presents very accurately the situation many of us face. "I was sitting in my car the other day when an old MODEL "A" stalled nearby. The driver was utterly unable to start the old vehicle and traffic was halted for a block. Horns sounded and angry drivers shouted unpleasant words at the embarrassed man.

"After a time, cars began to move around the unfortunate owner of the old Ford. Finally one driver in the long line of retarded cars drove up behind the stalled car and gave it a push. Soon it began moving under its own power and traffic got underway again."

Haven't you had that happen on occasions when you were not in an automobile? Being unable to muster the energy or the determination to undertake a given challenge, finally, someone says just the right words to get you to



Edsel Burleson

Continued On Page 3

Uppercase And Lowercase Fellowship?

In a recent speech, I stated,

"Brother _____ speaks of Uppercase Fellowship (F) and lowercase fellowship (f). Perhaps I am not reading some of the material others say they have seen, or heard some of the speeches others have heard, but what I understand brother _____ to be saying is that when one obeys the gospel, he is IN the body of Christ



RAY HAWK

which is Uppercase Fellowship (F). THAT MEANS he is my brother. He may go into error, whether it be the sin of adultery, murder, or denominationalism, but he is still my brother - an ERRING brother, but still my brother. Therefore I have the type of Fellowship (Uppercase Fellowship ((F)) with him BECAUSE we are in the SAME family. WHEN HE REPENTS he does not come back into the family, because he is already in it. However, BECAUSE OF HIS ERROR I AM NOT In lowercase fellowship (f) with him. These are the two kinds of fellowship brother _____ refers to." *The Biblical Doctrine of Fellowship, "Balance Without Compromise," Ray Hawk (Magnolia Bible College Lectureship, 1985), p. 38, All emphasis mine, RH.*

A brother indicated to me that the expressions "Uppercase Fellowship (F)" and lowercase fellowship (f) did not mirror the biblical teaching on the subject of fellowship. I do not want to be guilty of teaching error or giving anyone the impression that I do.

We use the expression "fellowship" in different ways. We talk about "fellowship meals." The New Testament does not use "fellowship" to describe a common meal. However, "fellowship" (koinonia) is used to describe the Lord's supper (I Corinthians 10:16). So, we use the expression differently than the New Testament does. We do not believe we are unscriptural in this use of the word. We sometimes speak of the body of Christ as ONE fellowship and the Baptist Church as ANOTHER. When we use the word in that sense, we take in both the faithful as well as the unfaithful which are in Christ's body. That is the way I was using it in my explanation of Uppercase Fellowship (F).

It has come to my attention that some view the expressions Uppercase Fellowship (F) and lowercase fellowship (f) in a different light. I DO NOT believe nor hold to the following idea.

Brother A believes and practices worshipping with mechanical instruments of music. Brother B believes the practice is unscriptural and will not fellowship (participate - lowercase fellowship ((f)) with brother A when the instrument is used. However, in areas where the instrument is NOT used, brother B will have fellowship with brother A, such as cooperation in meetings, VBS, pulpit swapping, and worship, because they have uppercase Fellowship (F).

This view says we may have fellowship with

anyone who is a member of the body of Christ in all areas where we have agreement. If a matter arises that we CANNOT participate in, (have lowercase fellowship (f)), we refrain from its practice, but we do not withdraw fellowship (Uppercase Fellowship (F)) due to those differences. As far as I can determine, this is the old Ketcherside position. IF this is what is meant by Uppercase Fellowship (F) and lowercase fellowship (f), I CANNOT condone it and will NOT defend it! This was not my use!

If one will compare this use of the expressions with what I said in my speech above, he will see the two cases are not parallel! However, because of the new light shed on the subject and my desire to not be aligned with

that concept, I will refrain from using the expressions and apologize for any confusion this may have caused by my use of them.

I appreciate the brother talking with me about my statement. If brethren would sit down and talk with one another as this brother has done with me, much of the misunderstanding that exists among brethren would disappear. It is sad that some will report what another believes, based upon gossip, hearsay, innuendos, misrepresentations, and statements taken out of context, rather than talk with the person. This ought not to be. Let us speak the "truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15). — 39 Webb Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

Whispering Hate

Have you ever played the game of gossip? A number of people sit in a circle and one tells a piece of information to a person on his right. That person tells the same message to another person and it continues until the last person in the circle, tells the message out loud. You can imagine the results. However, the results are not so hilarious when we realize that such a tale-bearing, gossiping, evil speaking, backbiting monster is



Barry Fike

in the church. Regardless of the warnings that God gave his people in the Old Testament (Leviticus 19:16) and in the New Testament (Titus 2:3; I Timothy 3:11) such continues in full force. The question comes up: Why?

Knowing that scandal makes "news," do we simply enjoy discussing everyone else's faults? I know that such is easier than facing up to our own; but is it right? Aren't we to go to our brethren if they are overtaken in a fault? Or, if we have a problem with them? (Galatians 6:1, 2; Matthew 5:23, 24; 18:15-18). Surely such an attitude would show what we have in abundance in our heart (Luke 6:45). Are we full of tale-bearing? or, truth-sharing? Can't our minds be stimulated to more important things? If we were involved in studying our Bibles, a good prayer life, and teaching others about the gospel of Jesus Christ we wouldn't have time for such (Proverbs 11:13). But then if we do have all that time, we are simply idle (I Timothy 5:13).

When it gets down to "bare metal," the real reason so many of us can't wait to tell that juicy tid-bit about our brothers or sisters is because we simply don't love them. When Christ said, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15), the word for love was "agape"—a deep abiding love that will sacrifice anything to please another. This kind of love leads us to love the unloveable, pray for our enemies, help those who hate us. It motivates us to examine our own feelings,

and helps us to be interested in others. One cannot destroy another when "agape" fills his heart (Proverbs 10:12).

Before you whisper hate about one of your own brethren again (or anyone else, for that matter honestly ask yourself some questions:)

1. Am I absolutely sure of the facts?
2. Is there any beam in my own eye before I get the sawdust out of everybody else's?
3. Do I really love this person?
4. What is the scriptural way of dealing with this problem?
5. Would I want this done to me?
6. What would the Lord do if he were I?

Remember: one day our words will be a judgmental factor in our eternal destiny (Matthew 12:37). Instead of whispering hate, as we so often do, let us sing and live the whispering hope!—3051 8th Ave., SW., Hickory, N. C. 28601.

If Another Stalls, Give Him A Gentle Push

Continued from page 2

move.

This portrays the condition in the lives of many who have not become Christians, and of those who have fallen by the wayside. Someone just needs to "give them a gentle push" by speaking words of encouragement which will help them to take the necessary action to meet with the Lord's approval.

Christians are taught to continually be alert to the opportunities to give that encouragement. "Lift up the hands that hang down" (Hebrews 12:12). Paul urged: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). James put it this way: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20).

It is so consoling to know that when you help someone up a hill you are a little nearer the top yourself.

—West End Church of Christ, 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Thomas B. Warren Honored At M.S.O.P.

On April 1, 1985, during the Nineteenth Annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship, a large crowd assembled for the Thomas B. Warren appreciation dinner in which brother and sister Thomas B. Warren were honored for their incalculable influence for truth and right. Nine faithful, noted gospel preachers spoke of brother Warren's powerful work for New Testament Christianity.



Thomas B. Warren

Brother Warren's efforts are prominent in

the battle for primitive Christianity and against the forces of atheism, secular humanism, neo-orthodoxy, liberalism, and religious compromise. He was praised and honored by the participants for his love for and unwavering devotion to the church; he was described as a man eminently prepared, both spiritually and academically, and, also praised was brother Warren's ability as a master teacher, uniquely able to instill in his students the love of hard study and valid reasoning, inspiring them to stand courageously in the Old Paths. Brother Warren was also lauded for his power as a gospel preacher and for his tremendous love and concern for the souls of his fellow man. He was described as a great example demonstrating genuine compassion while at the same time being set for the defence of the gospel — speaking the truth in love.

Brother Warren's international influence as a writer, editor, and debater was described,

including his great work as editor of the *Spiritual Sword* and as director of the *Spiritual Sword* Lectureship, along with brother Garland Elkins. Also mentioned was that this scholar not only writes on the home as God would have it but is an exemplary husband and father. He and the former Faye Brauer, married October 3, 1941, have three children.

Whereas the world often honors people who have influenced society but *little* in the area of truly moral, decent, and ethical standards, the Memphis School of Preaching counted it a privilege to honor brother Thomas B. Warren and thereby also to honor the truth of God, which he holds so dear and defends and proclaims so successfully. To God be the glory!

Curtis A. Cates, Director
Memphis School of Preaching
4400 Knight Arnold
Memphis, TN 38118

Thank God

Jerry T. Bramlett*

**Editor's note: This may be the last article Bro. Bramlett wrote, for it was postmarked only a very few days before his death. I was away when it arrived, and by the time I returned, and actually received it, I was informed also of his death.*

How thankful are we to God for all of the wonderful gifts that he has bestowed upon mankind? Are our prayers to God prayers of thanksgiving? They should be; because we have been given so very much that so many take for granted day after day.

Do we thank God for the air we breathe every day? or, do we take it for granted? If a person should have his breath knocked out, he would want air more than any thing else at that precise moment. Paul said, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (I Thessalonians 5:18).

Many people drink water every day and never give it a thought that water is a gift from God. A person awaiting surgery cannot have water past mid-night prior to the day of surgery and cannot drink water for several hours following surgery. Ask such a person how precious a glass of water would be? More than likely he will respond by saying, "Water during this time was my primary desire!" The Psalmist writes, "O give thanks unto the Lord . . ." (Psalms 105:1).

As I am writing this brief article I have laryngitis and cannot speak. The thought has occurred to me that it is possible for a person to lose his voice and never be able to speak again. I am so thankful to God that I have preached for twenty-one years! I have preached every sermon as if it were my last one. Are we as thankful to God in word or deed as we should be? "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).

"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). If we would be more thankful to God for all of his

gifts, our attitude would change from being negative to positive, and our influence could be greater. Let us all be thankful to God that we may enjoy each day that we have upon this earth. May we study and believe what James penned in the following state-

ment: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variability, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).

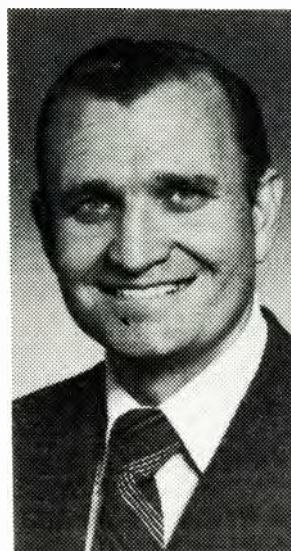
—P.O. Box 97, Nettleton, MS 38858.

Bro. Goebel Music

Available For Meetings

The Pearl St. church of Christ, Denton, Texas has assumed the oversight of the work of brother Goebel Music as of April 1, 1985. Brother Music will continue his gospel meeting work and lectureship speaking schedule, averaging about two weeks each month in this work. He will spend the remainder of his time writing.

Brother Music has served as local evangelist with the church in Colleyville, Texas, since 1980. He will continue to live in Colleyville where he has set up an office in his home. He served as evangelist with the Pearl St. church in Denton before moving to Colleyville and both he and the congregation are happy to renew the association of previous years. He has proved himself over many years of service as a dedicated student of the word of God and an able gospel preacher and writer. Beside numerous articles that have appeared in many gospel papers, brother Music is also the author of several books. He now has a new book entitled, *Notes on James*, being printed. He will soon have another recently-completed



Goebel Music

book ready to print, entitled, *Separation is Sin*. He has other books and tracts in various stages of completion.

The elders of the Pearl St. church are pleased to recommend without hesitation or reservation the life and work of brother Music. Brother Music also has a letter of commendation from the elders of the Colleyville church which is available upon request. Congregations all over the world are encouraged to contact him for gospel meetings and lectureship engagements. He may be addressed at 5114 Montclair, Colleyville, Tx. 76034 or c/o Church of Christ, 312 Pearl St., Denton, TX 76201. His home phone number is 817/283-3634.

6TH ANNUAL
GUS NICHOLS
WORDS OF TRUTH
LECTURESHIP

THEME:

FELLOWSHIP AND UNITY
SEPT. 29 - OCT. 3, 1985

SIXTH AVENUE
CHURCH OF CHRIST
JASPER, AL 35501

PHONE (205) 384-6446 or 387-1670



Words Of Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

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One Of The Bible's Most Misused Verses

What do you think is the most misused verse in the Bible? In our world of Bible ignorance it would be impossible to say for certain what it is; but Matthew 7:1: "Judge not, that ye be not judged" would have to be a top contender on any list. How many times have you heard this verse quoted in defense of every type of sin? If jail sentences were handed out for "verse abuse," there would



David Courington

be millions serving terms because of this verse. The typical person applies the rules against *judging* to every circumstance and every condition. If one says that homosexuals will be lost, the reply is: "You shouldn't judge them." Upon saying that the Bible teaches the necessity of being baptized and those not doing so are in a lost condition, one may hear: "You aren't the judge. You shouldn't be judging." If some false teacher is quoted and his teaching condemned, the statement that might be made is: "Well, you don't know his heart. The Bible says that we shouldn't judge."

First, in ascertaining what the verse does mean, let us note the meaning of the word "judge" and ask a question in regard to the verse. The word *judge* means (according to Vine) "to separate, select, choose . . . pronounce judgment." Clearly one sees that our text prohibits making some judgment. But, "Does it prohibit all judgment in every circumstance and area, in every case? or, does it prohibit judgment under certain circumstances? There are other verses in the Bible which prohibit judging, but there are also verses which require it.

Indeed one is prohibited from judging others in matters of opinion or liberty.

In regard to the matter of eating meats (which was not legislated, but was left as a matter of liberty) Paul wrote: ". . . let not him which eateth not *judge* him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that *judgest* another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Romans 14:3-4). Continuing, in verse 13 Paul said: "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to stumble in his brother's way." Of matters which the new law does not require, Paul said: "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days" (Colossians 2:16). Where God gave no judgment or law, we should make no judgment. If we do so, we fall in the same category as the Pharisees who made the laws of man equal to the law of God (Read Matthew 15:1-9).

On the other hand, judgments are required of Christians at times. In the same chapter as the statement under consideration is this exhortation: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matthew 7:15). Does God make one aware who is a false prophet and who is not by giving us a list of them? or, must one make some judgment based on evidence? The next verse tells us, "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). One observes the action and judges whether or not the subject is really a sheep, or is a wolf. Where God's word makes a law, the child of God may state that law and make application of it, (otherwise man is left without a sense of right and wrong!) Judgment of any dispute between brethren is not to be carried to secular courts, but given by fellow Christians (Read I Corinthians 6:1-5). Paul said it was a shame if brethren could not settle any dispute among themselves by selecting a brother to judge. If all judgment had been condemned by Christ (as some suppose), it would have been a shame instead for


them to have selected a brother to *judge* such a matter. If withdrawal from the disorderly is to be practiced as it is commanded in I Corinthians 5 and II Thessalonians 3, then judgment is necessary. If no judgment is to be made by anyone, how could Christians withdraw fellowship from another?

The point made in our text, rather than disallowing all judgment, is that we should not judge others too harshly or by a standard different from the one we use to judge ourselves. Our judgments should always be fair and equitable. In order to make sure that judgment is right, one should follow these guidelines in making any necessary judgment.

(1) *Never judge by appearance only, nor with respect of persons.* John 7:24 says, "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." God gave Moses instruction in this regard, saying: "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor" (Leviticus 19:15). James said in regard to respect of persons: "Are ye not then partial in yourselves and become judges of evil thoughts?" (James 2:4). Any judgment that we render should consider what the truth is, and not who the person involved is, how much influence he has, or how much money he controls. Elders would especially do well to remember this when practicing discipline. Much trouble has been caused, not because discipline was practiced, but because it was not fairly practiced, and some were ignored while others engaged in the same sinful acts were disciplined.

(2) *Our judgment should be after hearing all the facts, and not without hearing the accused.* When some of the chief priests were condemning Jesus, Nicodemus spoke up and said, "Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth" (John 8:51). Some are too quick to judge others before all the facts are in and both sides have been heard.

Continued on page 2



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—Acts 26:35

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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Lectureship September 29-October 3, 1985



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Each year the "Gus Nichols—Words Of Truth" Lectureship begins the last Sunday night in September, and continues through Thursday night. The dates this fall will be September 29-October 3.

For about ten years the late Gus Nichols conducted a week of intensified study and training for gospel preachers the last week in September. Operated by a board of trustees, the *Gus Nichols Preachers' Workshop* was conducted at a 'Christian Camp' site near the Gulf Coast, not far from Mobile, AL. Some of the time other preachers assisted by teaching a class or two during the day.

Due to his illness, no session was conducted in 1975; and following his death (November 16, 1975) the next year also may have been skipped. The series was revived for a year or two, but eventually was discontinued. Meanwhile his brother, Pervice Nichols, had moved to Jasper where he preached at the Midway church. He contacted the board, and obtained permission to move the Gus Nichols' Preacher's Workshop to Walker County, Nichols had been born and where he had lived

his last forty-three years. At least one year the workshop was held at nearby Indian Creek Youth Camp. The Sixth Avenue church had continued to publish this weekly journal, *Words of Truth*, and in honor of its founding editor had conducted at Jasper a "Words Of Truth" Lectureship for possibly more than one year. At Pervie's request the two efforts were combined, and the merger resulted in the First Annual "Gus Nichols-Words Of Truth" Lectureship. This will be the Sixth Annual such lectureship under this merger.

Theme: "Fellowship and Unity"

Due to the current emphasis on Fellowship, and the resurgence of interest in Unity, these topics were selected for the 1985 series. Fifteen speakers have accepted assigned topics, most of which deal with these subjects. They are: Frank D. Young, W. T. Hamilton, Huge McCord, Lois McCord, W. Truitt Allison, Franklin Camp, Elsie N. Roney, Gary Workman, Winfred Clark, Joe Cook Van Dyke, Jr., Kenneth Randolph, Robert Atkins, Floyd Deathrow, Glenn A. Posey, and Wendell Winkler. Housing in the homes of area Christians is available, and nearby motels serve the public needs. Display space will also be reserved on a first come, first served, basis.

All readers are invited to reserve September 29 - October 3, 1985, for the GUS NICHOLS — WORDS OF TRUTH LECTURESHIP at Jasper, Alabama.

One Of The Bible's Most Misused Verses

Continued from page 1

One man took a lady's umbrella by mistake and she saw him leaving with it. The lady stopped him and he sheepishly gave her the umbrella and went on his way. It was raining hard so the man decided to buy an umbrella for himself and he found such a good buy he got one for his wife and one for his son as well. As he was leaving the store with three umbrellas in hand, he ran into the lady whose umbrella he had taken by accident earlier in the day. Her reply was, "Well, I see you had a good day after all!" [What conclusion would you have drawn?] Get all of the facts!

(3) *Make sure your judgment is with the proper motive.* In John 8:1-11 a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery was brought to Jesus. Those who accused her had no concern for righteousness, but were interested in finding something to use against Christ. One's motives should be right. We should never be moved to act by hate, envy, or jealousy.

(4) *Our judgment should always take into account ourselves, and not be too harsh with others.* Christ reminds her accusers of the beam in their eyes when the woman was taken in adultery: ". . . He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her" (John 8:7). He wants all to consider themselves. David's judgment came back home when Nathan told him, "Thou art the man" (II Samuel 12). Our judgment will come home as well, for the Lord said, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged" (Matthew 7:2).

It helps one to remember that final judgment rests with God (I Corinthians 4:2-5). How will you fare when you stand before the throne in the great and final judgment of God?

—P.O. Box 323, Mulga, Alabama 35118.

Patient In Tribulation

(The following is a letter sent to a Christian whose home congregation was being torn assunder by controversy. Perhaps the thought of it will be helpful to others in similar circumstances. Personal matters have been deleted and scripture citations added.)

Dear Brother:
Thank you for taking time to write me. My heart goes out to you and all the brothers and sisters at your congregation. It is so painful and debilitating to go through the kind of spiritual turmoil you have been enduring.

When any problem arises that threatens to "blow up" a congregation of God's people, it calls for the utmost in patience and prayer from all to solve the problem without "killing the patient" (James 5:11).

It sometimes happens that in our zeal to



John Waddey

oppose error we allow ourselves to be swept into a mood and attitude that is counter productive. We can easily create such an atmosphere of agitation and hostility that division and chaos are inevitable. Peaceful, scriptural solutions are not possible in such a situation. God's faithful child is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy . . ." and a maker of peace (James 3:17-18).

Your elders are very much aware of the problem. They doubtless are diligently working to solve the problem and save the congregation. They without question are good men who dearly love the church. They deserve the full cooperation and support of every member, "Esteem them highly in love for their work's sake" (I Thessalonians 5:13). They need time and room to operate -- in dealing with the matter. As it is, they are being pressured by both sides so aggressively that they are finding it difficult to do what must be done.

If you can be patient for yet a little while, I feel confident that a satisfactory solution will be reached. I really believe that your leaving at this time would be detrimental both to you

Continued On Page 3

Solomon, The Magnificent

In the course of human history, few men have been the equal of Solomon, king of Israel. Few have risen so high, excelled in so many areas, or fallen to such depths as this mighty king. It has well been said that "the shipwreck of Solomon was the most terrible tragedy in the world."



John Waddey

His Early Life

Solomon was the second child of David, king of Israel and Bathsheba (II Samuel 12:24). He was the 10th son born to David. He was born in Jerusalem about 1,000 B.C. His parents gave him the lovely name Solomon which meant "peaceful." The prophet Nathan bestowed a second name upon the babe, calling him Jedidiah which meant "beloved of the Lord" (II Samuel 12:24-25). Growing up, the young prince enjoyed all the advantages of a king's son. He was blest to have as his father a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22).

A poetic description of Solomon in his prime is placed in the mouth of one of his brides in Song of Solomon 5:10-16:

My beloved is white and ruddy,
The chiefest among ten thousand.
His head is as the most fine gold;
His locks are bushy, and black as a raven.
His eyes are like doves beside the water-
brooks,
Washed with milk, and fitly set.
His cheeks are as a bed of spices,
As banks of sweet herbs:
His lips are as lilies,
Dropping liquid myrrh.
His hands are as rings of gold set with beryl:
His body is as ivory work overlaid with
sapphires.
His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon
sockets of fine gold:
His aspect is like Lebanon, excellent as the
cedars.
His mouth is most sweet;
Yea, he is altogether lovely.

Allowing for the intoxication of romance, we can still see a handsome man with ruddy cheeks and wavy black hair; physically strong, with all the features of a born leader.

His Coronation As King

By God's decree Solomon was anointed king in the place of David his father (I Chronicles 28:4-5). While David was yet alive, another son, Adonijah, the son of Haggith (another wife) sought to usurp the throne; but the aged king thwarted it. He had Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet to publicly anoint Solomon and bring him to sit upon the royal throne (I Kings 1:30-35). "They blew the trumpet; and all the people said, Long live king Solomon . . . and rejoiced with great joy . . ." (I Kings 1:39-40). The new king was some 20 years of age when he began to reign in about 970 B.C.

His Accomplishments

Solomon excelled in many areas, one of which was as a builder. His chief architectural accomplishment was the great Temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem (I Kings 6:37-38). Thirty-three hundred supervisors and 150,000 laborers took seven years in constructing the temple. "And the house . . . was built of

stone made ready at the quarry; and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building" (I Kings 6:7). The splendor and beauty of the temple made it one of the attractions of the ancient world.

In addition, "Solomon was building his own house thirteen years" (I Kings 7:1). The record reveals that it was truly a king's palace. Along with these feats, he built numerous store cities and fortified cities (II Chronicles 8:3-6). He built the Millo which is thought to have been a kind of city hall or civic center, and even a heathen shrine for his pagan wives (I Kings 11:7-8). Truly Solomon was one of the great builders of antiquity.

Economically, he developed Israel as a commercial power. He built a merchant-fleet that brought him treasures from afar (II Chronicles 8:17-18). Israel's national treasury burgeoned with six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold flowing in annually, plus all the other sources of wealth (II Chronicles 9:13-14).

Solomon's personal wealth was immense. He "made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold." "All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold." "Silver was nothing accounted of in" his days. "Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches . . ." (II Chronicles 9:13-21).

The borders of Solomon's kingdom stretched from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, and from Mt. Lebanon on the north to the border of Egypt (I Kings 4:21). For 40 years he ruled in pomp and power (I Kings 11:42). Israel reached its pinnacle under his leadership. His was a peaceful reign. For 40 years, Israel hardly saw a battle — a situation unique in their history.

The wisdom of Solomon was fabulous. "God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding, exceeding much . . ." His wisdom excelled that "of all the children of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt." He was an authority on plant and animal life. "And he spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of birds, and of creeping things, and of fishes." He spake 3,000 proverbs of which we have some 800 preserved. Solomon gleaned the wisdom of other wise men (Ecclesiastes 12:9). Of his 1,005 songs, we have only three (I Kings 4:29-34).

Three of the books of our Bible were authored by Solomon: *Proverbs*, a guide book for practical godliness; *Ecclesiastes*, a book on moral philosophy, describing the author's search for meaning and happiness in life; *Song of Solomon* which celebrates the beauties of married love; plus Psalms 72 and 127.

Solomon's Religious Life

"Solomon loved Jehovah, walking in the statutes of David his father . . ." (I Kings 3:3). He worshipped the Lord and sought to please him (I Kings 3:4-9). He built the beautiful temple for the public worship of God and wrote important chapters in the sacred Book of God.

Patient In Tribulation

Continued from page 2

and the congregation. In times of crisis, God's church desperately needs the perseverance, prayers, and help of every faithful child of God. "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

Be assured of my respect for you, your love for God's word, and his church. I doubt not your motives.

His Failures

"King Solomon loved many foreign women . . . and he had seven hundred wives . . . and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart" (I Kings 11:1-3). Such marriages were usually designed to cement political alliances. But God had forbidden such alliances (Deuteronomy 7:2-5). He built a strong military machine which God also forbade (Deuteronomy 17:16). He dedicated himself to a life of materialism and indulgence which God specifically condemned (Ecclesiastes 2:1-10). The God whose law he broke judged him (Deuteronomy 17:14-17). His idolatrous wives turned his heart away from the Lord. He built a shrine for their gods; he worshipped their idols, and God was angry with him (I Kings 11:4-9).

In Ecclesiastes we have recorded Solomon's fruitless search for happiness without God. He sought it in worldly wisdom, materialism, sensual pleasure, wealth, possessions and power. Each of them he found to be vanity and striving after the wind, i.e., like seeking to capture the wind (Ecclesiastes 1:14). Only in fearing God and keeping his commandments did he find the prize he sought (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

His lavish programs were a burden to his subjects, and brought the nation to the brink of disaster (I Kings 12:4). This was the spark that caused civil strife and division in his son Rehoboam's day.

His End

Solomon died after a long and prosperous reign of 40 years. He was an old man, worn out from excessive indulgence. He left behind an impoverished treasury, a bitter people, a tottering throne and an incompetent heir. From Ecclesiastes we can hope he found his way back to God when he died (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

Lessons To Remember

Solomon has been called the most disappointing man in the Old Testament. Jesus said, "To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required" (Luke 12:48). From him we can learn where happiness is not to be found. It is not where most folks are yet looking -- i.e., in worldly wisdom, wealth, pleasure, or power. Only by fearing God and keeping his commandments can we find true happiness. Solomon grasped at the attractiveness of power and missed its substance. Many like him, in their pursuit of luxury and pleasure have betrayed the best interests of their families and caused great harm.

We see the importance of marrying a mate who shares our faith in God, lest we be turned away from God (II Corinthians 6:14-16).

Solomon *taught* much better than he *lived*. May our family and friends be safe in following our example (Philippians 4:9). Even from his tragic mistakes, we can learn much from Solomon that will help us in finding the happy life.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

Pray without ceasing (I Thessalonians 5:17)! Be a peace-maker (Matthew 5:9)! Love the brotherhood (P Peter 2:17)! Give diligence to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace (Ephesians 4:3). Be "patient in tribulation" (Romans 12:12).

God be with all of you.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, Tn. 37931-9599.

Unity and "Summitry"

Unity of the professed believers and followers of Christ is a matter of deep concern in a world rent asunder by religious division, factions, and competing sectarianism. This was not the way the Lord made his church; and certainly is not the way he would have it be now.

We are now told that there are over two thousand different religious groups claiming to belong to the same Lord. Most of the people in these differing groups know full well that there is something very wrong with all of this division. Many sectarian leaders have tried to approach the problem through ecumenical meetings, and dialogue; but in general they all still reject the only solution to the problem.

They have been misled and mistaught for too long that such division is not only acceptable to God but is in fact permitted and encouraged by God. For example: "The Christian church has therefore, a most intimate organic unity, but it is a unity in diversity, where each main branch is permitted to grow and develop according to inherent characteristics." -- "A great lesson from the past appears to be that no single church branch or denomination has been big enough to minister to the fullness of Christ's message to the entire world. In consequence God has permitted the Greek, the Roman, the Reformed, the Lutheran, and the Anglican branches to develop in various directions. Each brand has performed and is still performing its characteristic duty, and who can fail to see the beautiful symmetry of it all? Unity and strength in the Christian church is consequently best promoted, not by obliteration of the past, and not by coercion into one great outward organization, but by the cultivation of mutual recognition and good will" (A history of the Christian Church, p. 626, Lars P. Qualben rev. 1958; Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York). This is essentially the message that is communicated by denominational churches.

From this we can easily see that their answer to the unity problem is: (1) Accept everyone who claims to be a "Christian" without question of doctrinal beliefs. (2) Allow broad latitude in teaching and practice. (3) Allow everyone to "develop according to his own inherent characteristics." (4) Exhalt mutual respect and good will above scriptural authority, doctrine, and practice.

This false brand of unity promotes a false view of God, a false view of the Bible, and a false view of Christ and his church. It repudiates all that God has said concerning the oneness of faith, obedience, organization, and worship of the church.

Now, we have in our brotherhood some well-intentioned brethren who have begun a new "movement" to resolve the unity problem. I suppose it will eventually come to be known as the "Summitry Movement." I do not question any man's motive, as I too would most earnestly long to see all believers united according to God's concept of unity. I would urge these and all brethren everywhere to first look at all of the miserable failures



Roy Fuller

of ecumenical movements which have been going on for many years.

But more importantly I would remind these and all brethren everywhere that salvation, discipleship, fellowship, and fellowship are attained by accepting and obeying the doctrine of Jesus Christ. "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 (II John 9-11). There is only one way to unite people of denominational fellowships and communions. They must be taught the TRUTH, they must obey the TRUTH, they must forsake ERROR, and they must submit to the AUTHORITY of Christ and his word in

all things.

When this is done, God will unite them with all of those who are already in the ONE BODY, the church which he purchased with his own precious blood. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Unity (?) and fellowship upon any other basis is nothing more than an agreement with, and an acceptance of, the damnable denominational doctrine of "unity in diversity" where God has spoken, which constitutes a repudiation of God's plan for unity of his church.

Yes, we should all work for and pray for the unity of all believers, but ONLY upon God's terms and conditions as clearly set forth in his inspired word. "The words which I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48).

—Rt. 4 Box 479, Elba, AL 36323.

A Militant Church

(I)

There are numerous verses of Holy Writ which portray the church as the army of God. Ephesians six is probably the most lengthy passage wherein an army is implied. Here, the gospel armour is revealed and each child of God is urged to put it on: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (verses 10, 11).

An army implies that there is an enemy to be fought. In verse 12 of Ephesians 6, Paul describes this enemy against which we war when he wrote: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." The captain of these evil forces is none other than Satan, whose name means "enemy."

Yes, we are to wage war against the wickedness of the devil. Paul in writing to Timothy said, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (I Timothy 6:12). In other words, the Lord, the captain of the forces of all that is good and righteous, wants his army to be militant. He does not want a do-nothing battalion, but rather a group of soldiers who will contend earnestly with the foe. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and to exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

The Lord desires that we be actively engaged in combat against the wicked warriors of Satan. But when we look at the Lord's army today, do we see a militant group? For the most part we do not. We rather see soldiers who believe peace exists rather than warfare.



Victor M. Eskew

We find that the army becomes enraged at that soldier who does go on an active campaign against evil. And most of the Lord's (?) militiamen will either retreat to the rear or even turn traitor when the battle on the front line becomes hot and heavy.

This article is the first in a series of several on the militant church. In this series we will discuss such things as: 1) things against which we must be militant, 2) ways we can be more militant, 3) what hinders militancy? 4) what if we are not militant? and 5) the rewards of being militant. It is the Lord's wish that the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17) be wielded by each soldier in a way in which the enemy will be destroyed. He wants each member to be aggressively active in the campaign against unrighteousness. He desires that we fight the fight, battle the battle, and war the warfare. Our captain demands that we be a militant church! May this series help in this endeavor.

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS 38843.

"Basic Bible Lessons"

FRANK D. YOUNG

With all the 'helps' for Bible study today there is still a real lack of good material available. In our rapid, industrialized age many — especially those who teach — have difficulty 'getting' (or making!) TIME to do needed Bible study. However, "helps" are worse than NONE when they do not open the Scriptures, and lead us to God.

Brother Roy J. Hearn's "Basic Bible Lessons" is truly a "Work" book. It has fifteen Bible lessons, dealing with foundation truths. In addition to questions on the Scriptures, blanks are given, and Scriptures are cited which lead one to study on his own.

This "work" book will be a blessing to any who wants to study for himself. Any Bible class at any age-level will do well to use it as a guide. These lessons have enough material for six-months.

Brother Hearn is a capable Bible student. He loves truth, and his book will help individuals and classes to learn just that — God's truth. — 500 Third Avenue N. E., Jasper, AL 35501.



(USPS 691-760)

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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God's Design For The Home

The Psalmist wrote, "Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath a quiver full of them. . ." Psalms 127:3-5). Also he spoke of "...thy children like olive plants round about thy table" (Psalms 128:3).



W. Edwin Kearley

Today many people evidently think children are a "penalty"

for sex. We are reminded daily by the news media of parents' abusing their children, murdering their children, and aborting their children. Our society seems to be reverting to infanticide. "The Greeks and Romans, with all their notions of civilization, were guilty of favoring this horrible practice by legislative enactments, and Plato and Aristotle are found among its supporters. Thus, at Sparta, the law required that a child, immediately after birth, was to be exhibited to authorities for inspection, and if its look was not wholesome, or its limbs crippled, it was thrown into a deep cavern at the foot of the mountain Tayetus. . . Among the Romans, it seems to have been the duty of the father to decide the fate of his new-born babe. . . If weak, or of the weaker sex, the father not infrequently 'disapproved of its living, and it was exposed to die by wild beast or weather.'" (Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, Ecclesiastical Literature. Vol. IV, Pg. 577; Baker Book House). Paul wrote, "...thou shalt not kill. . ." (Romans 13:9).

Paul commanded the aged women to "teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children. . ." (Titus 2:4). In a Bible class a lady was astonished that Paul

said older women should teach mothers to "love" their children! She evidently learned to love her children from her loving mother. Humans are not endowed with instinct, like animals; love must be *taught*. Examples are the best teacher.

God places the leadership upon the father in the home. 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 hand that rocks the cradle rules the world" is true. Historically, the mother does most of the cradle-rocking; but it takes both father and mother to do the job

well. Solomon wrote, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6). This passage must be understood generally. There are no perfect parents. Adults are given by God the power of choice. They must choose to be faithful to God or the devil.

Those who have seen the example of godly parents, and have been recipients of Christian training, will much more likely reflect righteousness in their lives.—113 Elena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

(More to follow)

1985 Spiritual Sword Lectureship

Garland Elkins

The theme of the Tenth Annual *Spiritual Sword* Lectureship October 20-24, 1985 will be "The Book of Genesis." Held at the Getwell Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee, this lectureship will cover every verse in the entire book of Genesis, involve detailed study of historical facts, explain the great lessons (for men living today) to be learned from texts throughout the book, discuss how the great themes and great lessons of Genesis should be applied to situations in the world and in the church today, have for speakers some of the best Bible scholars in the world today, be comprised of thirty-six sermons, and result in the printing of a book.

The book will constitute a commentary on the book of Genesis by faithful members of the church. When the Tenth Annual *Spiritual Sword* Lectureship book is printed, the set of ten books will comprise a wealth of usable material and abundance of sound doctrine. These books teach the truth and expose error in a plain but kind fashion. Cassette tapes are available of all the lectureships, and video tapes of the more recent ones are also available.

WOODS TO BE HONORED

At 5:00 on Wednesday, October 23, 1985, there will be an Appreciation Dinner for brother Guy N. Woods to be followed by tributes to him by several brethren. Brother Woods is truly one of the great stalwart servants of the Lord in this generation. It is a sad day in Zion that he is no longer editor of the *Gospel Advocate*. He served in that capacity with faithfulness and distinction as he has done as a Christian, preacher, debater, et al. We anticipate an unusually large number to be present at that time, and we trust that you will be in the number.

Another plus for the Tenth Annual *Spiritual Sword* Lectureship is that an index of the first fifteen years of *The Spiritual Sword* (a quarterly Journal for church leaders) will be available. Sister Annette Cates, a professional college librarian, has been working on this project for more than a year. She has made a monumental contribution in undertaking and completing this task. She is the wife of Curtis A. Cates, director of the Memphis School of Preaching.

—Getwell Church of Christ, 1511 Getwell, Memphis, TN 38111.



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

—Acts 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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The Preacher's Task

Consistent throughout the writings of the apostle Paul is much sound advice relating to preaching the gospel. The suggestions and recommendations he makes are not only inspired but based on many years of preaching experience. Every minister of the gospel would do well to carefully analyze Paul's counsel which was given to him by the direct command or authority of God (Titus 1:1-3).

A fraction of Paul's suggestions is addressed to Titus. Titus was Paul's "own son after the common faith" (Titus 1:4). He was one of Paul's truly great helpers, especially in Corinth and Crete. Titus was a trustworthy and extremely capable young preacher. Paul laid some very heavy responsibilities on his shoulders. He was left in Crete to "set in order the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city" (Titus 1:5).

In the letter to Titus Paul begins chapter two with this statement: "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1). He thus challenges Titus to emphasize to the Cretans the Christian lifestyle and reflect sound teaching. He concludes chapter two where he began: "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Titus 2:15). This final four-fold exhortation is the subject of this article.

Paul begins the verse by saying, "These things speak." This is the same charge he gave to Timothy: "These things teach and exhort" (I Timothy 6:2). What does "these things" refer to? The phrase includes all the qualities of



JIMMY EDWARDS



Looking Ahead

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

One year has passed since the "Summit" meeting at Joplin, Mo., of some preachers from churches of Christ and some from the Independent Christian Church. These two groups are thought by some to be very similar, separated only by the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship. Others regard even this difference as originating in a much more fundamental difference — a difference in basic attitude toward the Bible. Churches of Christ plead for a "Thus saith the Lord" for everything we believe, or teach, or practice in religion. We insist that there must be divine authority, either specific or generic, for everything we do religiously. Our respect for the authority of the Scriptures does not allow us to accept or introduce any practice simply because it is not expressly forbidden. Rather, in order for anything to be "Scriptural" it must be authorized in the Scriptures.

During the past twelve months much has been said and written on the subject of "Mechanical Instrumental Music In Worship." But many have never (even yet!) made a careful analysis of the arguments made to 'defend' (?) such music in the worship. I therefore requested brother Robert R. Taylor, Jr., to prepare a series of articles on this theme for *Words Of Truth*, which he has done.

For three months, beginning with the issue for August 16, we plan to give front-page space to this subject. Robert R. Taylor, Jr., wields a mighty pen, and he has taken up practically every argument made, and has examined them one by one. Each reader is urged to impartially investigate with brother Taylor these 'arguments.' This Editor believes that honest readers will surrender mechanical instruments in worship. You will probably want to save all these articles, for they can serve for years to come as a storehouse of information on this subject.

"Biographical Sketches" of some of our preachers in an earlier era will begin September 7. Among those featured will be T. B. Larimore, J. H. Hallbrook, and C. A. Wheeler, to name only a few. Again, I appeal to our readers who have any information relative to Bro. Wheeler (who converted my father and started him to preaching) to pass it along to me for this biographical sketch.

To mark the tenth anniversary of his death [on November 16, 1975], Gus Nichols will be featured in the issue dated November 15, 1985. Much of that issue will consist of his writing.

For only 20¢ a week, where can you get so much valuable reading? Increase the circulation of *Words of Truth*, and file your copies for future reference. It costs less than a first-class postage stamp each week, and is worth immeasurably more!

Obey God Rather Than Men

W. Edwin Kearley

It is true that the government should not establish a state church. It is not true that the government should make no laws concerning religion. Paul said, "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil . . . 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 13:3-4). The government must have a sense of what is right and wrong. Without that knowledge it could not distinguish between right and wrong. The Roman government, under which Paul lived, did not have enough knowledge or courage to protect good from evil. Though the Roman government protected Paul, it also executed him for practicing his religion (II Timothy 4:6).

Peter and John, and then all the apostles, were arrested, threatened and commanded "that they speak henceforth to no man in this name" (Acts 4:17). After the second arrest, "Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Humanism has so influenced our society until a jury has ruled the church has no right to discipline an ungodly member of the church. This has the effect of a government ruling that the church cannot enforce what type of charac-

ter it will allow in its membership. All religious groups should realize that the government in this case is protecting evil rather than good. It is hoped that the appeal process will reverse the jury's decision as being outside its jurisdiction.

The courts have been influenced by Humanism for many years. They financed the defense of Leob and Leopold, youths who killed a boy in Chicago because they wanted to see someone die. They continue to seek to destroy all moral laws.

The church has the responsibility to discipline the unruly in the church. Paul wrote the church at Thessalonica, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (II Thessalonians 3:6). The same author lists some of those sins which must be disciplined. He wrote, "But now I have written unto you NOT TO KEEP COMPANY, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one, no, not to eat" (I Corinthians 5:11).

These commands are as strong as "repent and be baptized" (Acts 2:38). "WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN" (Acts 5:29).—P. O. Box 506, LaFayette, GA 30728.

A Militant Church

(No. II)

That Against Which We Must Be Militant

The church must be a militant institution. It must be willing to put its non-carnal "weapons" into use. We must pull down the strongholds and imaginations and "every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God" (II Corinthians 10:4, 5). In order to do this, however, we must know who the enemy is. Thus, in this installment we wish to name some of the things against which we must be militant.



Victor M. Eskew

Denominationalism is one enemy we must combat. This enemy can be especially hard to fight because many members of the church have relatives and friends who occupy positions in this company of Satan's army. The tendency is to keep hands off this foe of our Lord. But, regardless of the close connections we may have serving on the enemy's side, we must lay seige to this wicked encampment anyway! It opposes the words of the Master, and causes the world to continue in disbelief (John 17:20-22). It is a work of the flesh which will not inherit the kingdom of our God (Galatians 5:19-21). It exalts itself against the pure platform of unity which our God has given within divine revelation (Ephesians 4:4-6). Each denomination is a house which has been built in vain (Hebrews 3:4). Each is a plant which has not been planted by the heavenly Father, and shall be root-

ed up (Matthew 15:13). May we come to hate this practice as God hates it, and oppose it with all the might which we through God can muster.

Another enemy of the church is *humanism*. Humanism is a religion which directly opposes true religion as found in the Bible. Man verses God; human reason verses divine revelation; immorality verses morality; annihilation verses immortality; hopelessness verses hope -- these are merely a stitch in the hem of the garment, but make manifest humanism's opposition to God. Let us determine in this portion of the battle to dethrone all self-exalted mortals, and elevate God to his supreme position as creator and maker of the universe. And let us preach the "unknown God" of whom many minds are ignorant (Acts 17:24-31).

Unbelief is a third foe of the church today. It expresses itself when members rebelliously oppose the commands of God. It is seen when the saints disregard the promises of the Most High. It is evident when the church makes a mockery of God's warnings concern-

ing the punishment of the disobedient. In summary, unbelief is nothing more than a departure from the word of God, the source of faith (Romans 10:17). And when we depart from the word, we depart from God himself: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Hebrews 4:12). If we do not believe this is an enemy in our midst, we are merely failing to view many of the church members' lives from the Biblical perspective.

In this article we have directed your attention to three deadly forces confronting the Lord's army. Denominationalism, humanism and unbelief plague the church daily. Only a militant church will be able to overcome. The inactive, non-aggressive churches will fall to these foes. Many can already be seen doing so. They have left the ranks of righteousness and have sided with Satan and sin. May we, however, never be included with the apostates. Let us set our sights, fire our weapons, and drop the enemy in his tracks. In essence, be militant!

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS 38843.

Where Would You Be

Ricky Long

"BUT THEY, SUPPOSING HIM TO HAVE BEEN IN THE COMPANY, WENT A DAY'S JOURNEY; AND THEY SOUGHT HIM AMONG THEIR KINSFOLK AND ACQUAINTANCES" (Luke 2:44). Joseph and Mary had been to Jerusalem, as they had every year, to observe the feast of the passover. Jesus being twelve years old at this time accompanied them to Jerusalem. After the feast was over they began to return and after a day's journey they missed their

son. They began to ask those in the company of his whereabouts, but to no avail. They returned to Jerusalem, and after three days they found him in the temple with the doctors, hearing and asking questions.

They looked for Jesus in the wrong places and were very much surprised to find him in the temple in the midst of the doctors. Both old and young people are found in wrong places today throughout the world. Look at Jesus: he was not found in a place that was wrong; he was just looked for in the wrong place.

Parents, where would our young people be if we were to look for them? Where are we when our young people are looking for us? As parents we need to think seriously about the places our young people find us, because we are examples to our children and really need to realize this in our everyday walk of life.

We see many in the beer joints, gambling halls, and other places that are sinful. No wonder many young people are getting themselves involved with drinking and drugs. Many times parents set the wrong example for them to follow.

Parents, where would you be on Saturday night if the Lord were to return then? Would you be found in the wrong place? Where would you be on Sunday? Many choose to stay away from services of the church for any "reason," but can be found in many other places on a Lord's Day.

Young people, where would you be found on Saturday night? We are encouraged to be an example in word, conversation, charity, spirit, faith and in purity (I Timothy 4:12). Would you be the right kind of example on Saturday night when you are out with friends?

All need to watch where we go, and be careful -- because people are watching us. We are an example and influence in the lives of others. A good way to satisfy our minds on this matter is to ask the question: "Would Jesus go with me to this place I am about to go?" REMEMBER, he would not be found in the wrong places. ARE WE?

—Route One, Carbon Hill, AL 35549.

The Preacher's Task

Continued From Page 2

life that should characterize every Christian. These traits are elaborated in the epistle to Titus, chapters 1-3. Paul wants Titus to let these truths be the substance of his message. he wanted him to make these spiritual principles known to every member of the church on the island of Crete.

Secondly, Paul urges Titus to "exhort." Exhort means "urge strongly, to give warning or advice, or to make urgent appeals." Paul encourages Titus to repeat the qualities of the Christian life again and again. This method would probably get the attention of the Cretan Christians and perhaps weigh heavy on their consciences, thus producing positive results.

Third, Paul writes, "rebuke with all authority." In other words, preach decidedly, without ambiguity, without compromise, without keeping anything back. Show the members of the church at Crete the importance of living a Christian life-style. Tell them God requires obedience. Speak clearly about the things Christians must be and do. Do not preach with the impression this is just human advice or counsel, but impress on the Cretans that living right is a requirement of God. Do not hold back. Your message and authority comes from a knowledge of God's will.

Finally, Paul says, "Let no man despise thee." William Barclay translates this: "Let no one regard your authority as cheap." Titus

had no reason to allow others to treat him with contempt or view him as inferior. Basically, this is what Paul wrote to Timothy: "Let no man despise thy youth" (I Timothy 4:12). The best way for Titus to receive the respect as a minister of the gospel from the Cretan Christians was to conduct himself as a true Christian, that is, practice what he preached. Titus was to act so no person would have a reason or cause to despise him, his work, or the attitude in which he performed it. Too, Titus had no reason to be "ashamed" (Romans 1:16).

The advice Paul gave Titus in approximately A.D. 67 is still applicable to every minister of the gospel today. The time, place and circumstances may have changed, but the basic personalities of people have not. Gospel preachers now must also give serious consideration to the suggestions found in Titus 2:15. They must "speak" constantly of the qualities members of the church of Christ must possess; "exhort" these same members to keep their attention and keep them thinking; and "rebuke" them "with all authority" when necessary to impress them the fact that all members of the Lord's kingdom must live according to the faithful Christian life-style. In this process the gospel preacher must "let no man despise thee" his message or his work!

—512 Gardendale Drive, Montgomery, AL 36110.

You Can Change Your Life

Judas, because of his having betrayed Jesus Christ, became so distraught with himself, he went out and committed suicide (Matthew 27:5; Acts 1:18). But, Judas, being a free moral agent, could have pursued a different course. Surely Judas, in his remorse, wished that matters had been different!



W. A. Holley

Nabal, the husband of Abigail, stupidly became drunken with alcohol and died in that condition (I Samuel 25:36-38). How different his life could have been if he had led a life of soberness! How foolish can one be? Elah spent his time "drinking himself drunk," and suffered the consequence of his own rashness (I Kings 16:9-10). How much better his life would have been had he kept control of his life! His life could have been changed for the better had he so willed!! Benhadad "was drinking himself drunk," in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him" (I Kings 20:12, 16). Drunken kings and soldiers cannot fight successful battles! Although Benhadad escaped, his army was decimated! Remorse, "a gnawing distress arising from a sense of guilt for past wrongs," is of little value after it is too late.

But thousands of others, after having started along the wrong road, have changed their lives for the better. This is the meaning of repentance (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30-31; II Peter 3:9). What a wonderful blessing it is to be able to turn away from evil and have the high privilege of embracing right!!

Peter denied the Lord three times, but later corrected his mistake (John 21:15-17; Cf. Luke 22:54-62). Paul persecuted the Lord Christ but when he learned the truth, he became obedient unto the commands of the Master (Acts 9:1-6; 22:16; I Timothy 1:13).

Those Jews who had crucified Jesus Christ, later heard the glorious gospel of Christ, and were convicted of their sins (Acts 2:36-38). They asked the world's most important question: "Men and brethren, What shall we do?" The Holy Spirit speaking through Peter answered their question, saying: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins . . ." (Acts 2:38, ASV).

How can one go about changing one's life? We shall offer a few pertinent suggestions:

(1) If you have been pursuing a life of lawlessness and crime, you can cease such activities. Such pursuits always exact a heavy price (Galatians 6:7-9). The Bible clearly teaches that people should be law-abiding (Romans 13:1-7). Our prisons are literally filled to overflowing with those who have willingly chosen to violate the law, but you do not have to be one of them! One famous bank-robber who stole more than \$5 million during his career of crime, said that, counting all the years he spent in prison, he earned about 50 cents a day for his efforts! Crime does not pay!! Parents, hear this: "We learned long ago that we can prevent more crime in the high-chair than in the electric chair!" (Cf. Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-4).

(2) If you, dear reader, have chosen to follow a life of immorality, debauchery and unchastity, you do not have to continue such a course. We are living in the midst of Sodom and Gomorrah now!! The ancient sins of the past are still with us. Hedonism (the doctrine that pleasure or happiness is the sole or chief good in life) is being promoted through TV and magazines every day. Pornography, the depiction of erotic behavior (as in pictures or writing) intended to cause sexual excitement, floods America and the world today. You can change your life! Minds can be filled with something that is pure, and holy, and good. One's heart need not be filled with garbage! What is wrong with filling one's heart with truth? kindness? sympathy? tolerance? harmony? and love? (Matthew 15:18-19; Mark 7:21-23; Proverbs 6:12-15).

(3) You can change your life even though it has been damaged by the consumption of alcohol, the use of illicit drugs, or just plain negligence. A few positive steps are required. Alcohol and drugs cannot bring peace and happiness to one's life. The sin of negligence leads straight to damnation (Hebrews 2:1-4; Acts 24:25). One needs over-riding restraints in his life. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand" (Psalms 37:23-24).

Note: Bad habits need not become a way of life. There is such a thing as *REPENTANCE* (Luke 13:5).

(4) If you are living in the midst of an overwhelming storm, you can change your life. There is an anchor which is "both sure and steadfast" (Hebrews 6:19). Affliction, calamity, misery and adversity are part of the world in which we live. Temporary defeat does not necessarily mean failure. We need to understand that our nation was built by men who took risks -- pioneers who were not afraid of the wilderness; brave men who were not afraid of failure; scientists who were not afraid of truth; thinkers who were not afraid of progress; dreamers who were not afraid of

action.

We need to learn that God still rules in the lives of those who will choose to follow his way. When Israel was about to enter Canaan, even though their journey would be fraught with many dangers, they were urged to "not be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee . . ." (Deuteronomy 20:1). Centuries later, in the midst of a great storm on the sea of Galilee, Jesus said to his fearful disciples, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid" (Matthew 14:27). We should remember that we are not responsible for all the things that happen to us; but we are responsible for the way we behave when they do happen.

(5) If you wish to change your life for the better, become a real, genuine Christian -- not a counterfeit one. The gospel is God's power to change one's life (Romans 1:16-17). This gospel of Christ must be heard, believed and obeyed (Romans 10:17; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Hebrews 5:8-9). You can do it!!

No social or political change, no scientific discovery, can alter the fact that sin curses and blights and withers our lives (Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 3:23; 6:23). There is a life that requires more courage, greater determination, more patience and constancy than in any other endeavor, because its real strength is founded upon the rock of God's eternal truth (John 8:30-32; 17:17; I Peter 1:22-25; I Corinthians 3:11). Dear Reader, do not become satisfied with anything less. Hear and obey the truth of God today!!

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

WORD OF GOD

Given unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.

The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

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 Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.

The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

Psalms 29:1-4, 9-11

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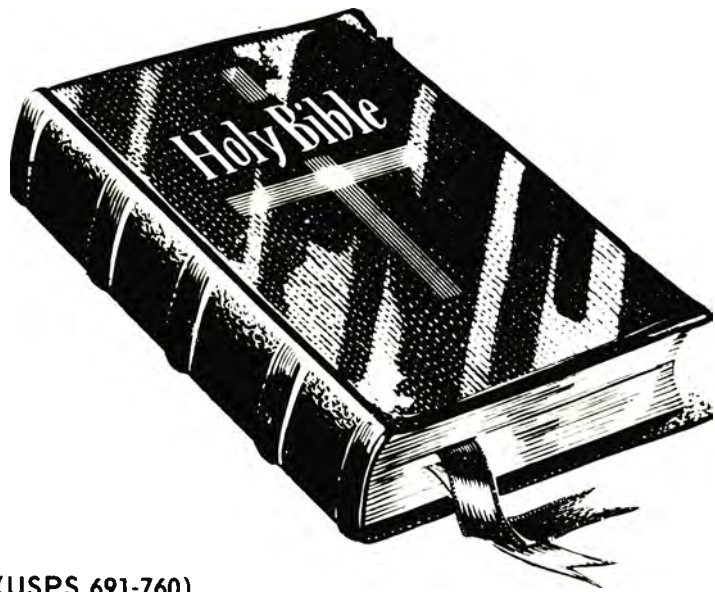
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Words Of Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

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God's Design For The Home

(Part V)

Discipline must be in the home, if God's design is accomplished. Discipline has two parts. The first (and perhaps the most important) involves teaching and training. The second involves correction.

The more successful parents are those who are self-disciplined themselves. One of the fruits of the spirit is self-control or "temperance" (Galatians 5:23). Solomon wrote, "He that is



W. Edwin Kearley

slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Proverbs 16:32). A father and mother, who cannot control themselves, are not ready to discipline their children. Some parents have said, "Do as I say, and not as I do." This is a statement of folly!

The discipline of teaching and training children is a necessity. Paul taught, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). Solomon stated, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Fathers have been given this responsibility of training. With the father's leadership, his wife must assist him in this work. Unity between parents is essential. Confusion in the mind of the child is the result of disharmony between his parents.

There must be a deep and abiding faith in God. Parents then can accept the Biblical principles. This kind of faith will allow parents to instill the Biblical morality in the hearts of their children. They can exemplify these principles before their children. Their leadership will enable the children to have practical experience in application of Christian prin-

ciples. If parents manifest that they love God with all their hearts and with all their souls and with all their minds, their children will learn and imitate their parents (Matthew 22:37).

The discipline of correction of children must come from their parents. Our society often goes to both extremes of the pendulums. People have swung from the extreme of brutal correction to the extreme of no correction. Without love there can be no successful correction. Today we hear stories of assault -- and even murder -- of children under the pretext of correction. Such is the result of hatred, not love.

Improper correction produces the wrong kind of adult.

Solomon wrote, "A wise son maketh a glad father; but a foolish man despiseth his

mother" (Proverbs 15:20). Also, "He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getting understanding" (Proverbs 15:32).

There comes a time when parents must correct their children. Another proverb states, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes" (Proverbs 13:24). When a child rebels, parents must look beyond the unpleasantness of the moment to the kind of adult they wish their child to become. Correction involves chastening, not beating.

Reason would require parents to consider the age and experience of their children in the type of correction given. The better job done in teaching and training, the less likely much correction will be needed.

—113 Elena, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

"Is It Sin Or Sickness?"

The above caption is taken from the *Birmingham Post-Herald*, Saturday, May 25, 1985. Following the above question is a rather long article. Its purpose seems to be an apology for those who consume alcohol to excess. A subtitle reads: "Clergy dispel myth of intolerance toward alcoholism." About forty preachers were involved in trying to convince alcoholics that drinking alcoholic beverages is a disease. In all the statements made toward solving the drinking problem, nothing is said about turning to God and his word for help. Is God and



W. A. Holley

his word to be by-passed for philosophical reasonings? (Cf. Colossians 2:8).

As a matter of fact, many preachers were apologetic toward what the Bible really teaches concerning alcoholic beverage consumption. One preacher said, "I discovered it (alcoholism) was not a problem of will . . ." Another quotation from the article under review says: "Many Bible-Belt religions have traditionally taken a hard line against drinking. The result often has been an image that clergy view those with drinking problems as weak-willed sinners." Following is another quotation: "The alcoholic feels guilty. Society has said, 'This is wrong.'"

Now we shall raise some questions for your consideration: Is it wrong to become drunk? Does one's will have nothing to do with alcoholism? Jesus said, "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from

Continued on page 3



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—Acts 26:35

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Here Am I

"Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, thousands upon thousands of young men said, "Here am I; send me." When the President sent men into Grenada and freed that land from Communism, we stood up as a nation and cheered. Patriotism swelled our chests with pride. We were glad to be Americans.

It is great to be an American. It is wonderful to be proud of our nation. It is good to stand up for what is right. But, freedom costs! I have seen thousands of white crosses and stars of David at Normandy, Belleau Woods and in other locations in Europe. We have all seen the statues of a World War I soldier in our town squares. Those statues, crosses, and stars represent human sacrifices offered for the freedom we too often take for granted. Those men died that we might have the privilege of living in a free nation. Men who died in their late teens or early twenties never returned to marry their sweethearts, never saw their Mothers again, never came home to cheering crowds, nor became fathers or grandfathers. Men who married young brides never saw them again nor the children born to those unions. You would think their descendants and benefactors would always be grateful. At times their sacrifice has been profaned by the draft dodgers, card burners, and Communist sympathizers that plagued our country in the late sixties and early seventies. What has not been paid with sweat, blood, and tears is so often taken too lightly. We frequently pine for the days when men




Ray Hawk

The new year is traditionally used as a time when we can begin anew. And, it is a good and expedient tradition. Where would we be without opportunities and incentives to renew, recommit, and reaffirm? There are times of weakness and "backsliding" to some degree in all our lives. We all need encouragement to evaluate ourselves and mend our ways and attitudes.

The principle (if not the specific day) is a Biblical one. God spent much energy and love in trying to get his people to re-evaluate their lives and make changes away from wrong to that which is right. Think of the missions of Noah, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, the apostles, and of Jesus Christ, himself. The constant message was, "Look at the way you are living, and return unto the Lord." Sometimes the warnings were successful, such as with kings Hezekiah, Josiah, and Asa. At other times the warnings went unheeded and even despised, such as with Ahab and Manasseh.

Did you determine this New Year to be a better servant for your God? Did you vow



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

"Voice Of Freedom" Ceases Publication

A third of a century has passed since a group of brethren with convictions and vision began publication of "The Voice of Freedom." This monthly journal cried out against the evils of Communism and Roman Catholicism. Authorities within those systems were quoted year after year, showing their own, self-proclaimed goals, dogmas, and methods. Only



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

eternity will reveal the good that has been accomplished by this "Voice."

Earlier this year that journal took a different tack, changing its aim and its purpose for existence. Some of us have been readers since the first issue, and we regret that the paper abandoned its unique cry against two great and powerful enemies of pure, primitive, unadulterated New Testament Christianity.

Now comes notice from our brother P. D.

Wilmeth, the esteemed Editor of "The Voice Of Freedom," stating that the paper will cease publication altogether with the July issue. The reason given is finances: increased costs of postage, plus rent, secretarial services, and other costs, simply exceed the income. Usually gifts from the private sector enable the paper to end the year in the black; but at the present rate this year would have seen a deficit of more than \$25,000. So they decided to stop now.

Perhaps some readers of *Words of Truth* will ask in self-examination: "Did I contribute to the demise of that paper, 'The Voice Of Freedom'?" No one deliberately killed the paper --it died from being ignored and neglected! We are grateful for all the good accomplished through that journal for 33 years! It has pricked our consciences --and we shall miss this invaluable service.

Let all who have appreciated their stand for truth and righteousness send a note of "Thanks!" to:

Mr. P. D. Wilmeth, Editor
The Voice Of Freedom
P.O. Box 24836,
Dallas, TX 75224.

A New Start



Ronnie A. Missildine

to break some of the bad habits you possess? Did you promise to be more caring and concerned for the needs of others? What about your spiritual life and growth? Will you acquire more Bible knowledge this year and determine to use that knowledge in your daily living for God?

I pray that we all have resolved specific things in these areas and *that we will keep them!* If these are realistic and if the commitment is firm, WE CAN KEEP THEM! The New Year can indeed be a time for a new start, a new lease on life, a lease which God Almighty holds.

—P.O. Box 4171 Pensacola, FL 32507.

Church Bus For Sale:

An 8-cylinder 1976 International 38-passenger bus for sale. This church bought it new, and it has less than 25,000 actual miles on it. The motor is just well 'broken in.' It has never been wrecked. The upholstery and floor mats are in excellent condition, and the tires are fairly good. A new bus like it would cost about \$30,000. Price -- \$6,000. See it at Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501 [Phones: (205) 384-6646 or 387-1670]. Or contact Elders: John Panter (384-5290) or Wayne Primm (384-5635).

Letter To A Truth-Seeker

The following is a letter written to a man who has left a cultic group and is trying to find a church that is truly non-denominational. It has been edited slightly to remove personal references.

Dear Friend:

Your letter has been forwarded to me. I am pleased that you found my lessons in the gospel paper helpful to you.

God promises that "if any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God . . ." (John 7:17). Your search for truth will not be in vain.

In a world so saturated with denominational thinking, it is difficult for most folks to con-



John Waddey

ceive of simple, non-denominational Christianity. The word "denomination" suggests a religious organization that is a part of the whole; that is different from the other parts. A denomination is a religious group founded and organized by men for the purpose of worshipping and serving God as they judge best. Each has its own unique doctrines, worship, practice, and often quite different from the Bible.

Those familiar with the New Testament know that it speaks of the church which Christ built (Matthew 16:18), but it nowhere speaks of denominations such as Methodists, Baptists, etc. Jesus prayed that all his disciples would be one as he and the Father are one (John 17:20-23). When the Christians in Corinth started to separate from one another and label themselves as followers of Cephas, Paul, and Apollos, Paul rebuked them (I Corinthians 3:3-5). He besought them, "let there be no divisions among you" (I Corinthians 1:10).

Clearly, denominationalism is contrary to

God's will. What then are our options?

1. Many, discouraged by the chaos and confusion of the varied denominations, turn away in disgust from all attempts to serve God. It has well been said that the cost of a dividend Christendom is an unbelieving world.

2. Some have assumed it is impossible to ever find the true church of the Lord and thus resigned themselves to be members of some man-made denomination in quiet protest.

3. Yet others have gone to their Bibles and vowed, with God's help, to be non-denominational Christians; to find a church that is faithfully worshipping God and doing his will. And if that proved impossible, they have taken the New Testament as their blueprint and built a congregation according to God's divine pattern (II Timothy 1:13; Hebrews 8:5). This is my commitment and that of those known as the Church of Christ. We use this name since the church in the Bible was so called (Romans 16:16).

We are dedicated to restoring the original church that Jesus built. Surely that which divine hands erected is perfect. It is timeless, and fully adequate for modern man.

Denominationalism and sectarianism is more than an institution or organization that is foreign to the Bible. It is also a spirit concerning religion. It is a willingness to obey men rather than God (Matthew 15:14). It is a determination to have our own way in religion. Rather than be self-willed, we should submit to Christ's will (Titus 1:7; Galatians 2:20). It is a spirit that feels no pain when the people of God are separated and alienated. It is the party spirit that produces strife, factions, and divisions (Galatians 5:20). It is the love of traditions more than God's will (Matthew 15:6-9). This sinful attitude must be crucified, and be replaced with the mind of Christ that gives diligence to "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Philippians 2:5; Ephesians 4:3).

That church which you read of in your Bible exists on earth today. It is composed of disciples who are striving to be nothing more or less than Christians like those at Antioch (Acts 11:26). The divine concept and pattern of the church are perfect. The human element is always as fallible as you and I. We are sinners, saved by grace, trying to imitate Jesus (I Timothy 2:15; I Peter 2:21). Occasionally all of us will sin and fall short of his glory (Romans 3:23); but we confess our wrongs and keep trying (I John 1:9). Thus you should not expect perfection in a local congregation of the church.

It is also important to remember that restoration is a never-ending challenge and commitment. It is our goal to be like Jesus in word, thought, and deed, and that Christ's church be just as he wants it to be. Should we find any area wherein we are not measuring up to the scriptural standard, we must be willing to make the necessary adjustments.

I hope you will visit a church of Christ near you. Ask to speak to the minister. Discuss with him any questions you have. Observe their worship and compare all you see and hear with your Bible. If it is in harmony with God's word, you know you will be safe in being a part of it.

If you have further questions, please feel free to write. May God bless you in your search for the way of truth. I am, Sincerely yours, John Waddey.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

"Is It Sin Or Sickness?"

Continued From Page 1

myself" (John 7:17, A.S.V.). The sin of drunkenness is condemned in Sacred Scripture (Romans 13:13; I Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21). No preacher worthy of the name should ever deny the Holy Oracles of God!! "Yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar . . ." (Romans 3:4).

The tone of the article under review seems to be to exonerate (?) the alcoholic of any responsibility for his drinking -- his problem is an "illness" -- no blame is to be borne by him! If such is the case, why are we so upset about drunk drivers? Surely, we believe that these, and all other consumers of alcoholic beverages, can and should control themselves!

Is there no such thing as *abstinence*? This word means: "to keep oneself from all evil practices of an immoral nature." Involved is voluntary habitual abstaining from intoxicating beverages (Cf. I Thessalonians 4:3; 5:22; I Peter 2:11). Verily, the sight of one drunkard is a better sermon against the vice than all the excuses ever presented! Have you noticed, that a drunkard is like a whiskey bottle, all neck and belly, but no head!!

As a matter of fact, all alcoholics need all the help they can obtain; but they must learn to help themselves. No alcoholic can stop drinking if he/she does not want to stop. One thing alcoholics do not need is to become sold on the idea that uncontrolled drinking is a "disease" over which they have no control. For example, recent studies at some of our larger universities have shown that people who smoke cigarettes can quit smoking if they have confidence that they can do it. One Psychologist said, ". . . People who were confident they could quit smoking cigarettes were more likely to do so than people who did not think they could quit." "Lots is in the mind, studies say, in getting over heart attacks or quitting cigarettes," the head-line reports. Dear Readers, this is the exact principle which we are applying to the alcoholic-beverage drinker.

Is alcoholism a disease? Not really! If alcoholism is a disease, so is addiction to tobacco, so is addiction to cocaine, or to any other drug!! The truth is: Alcoholism is not a disease in the common, ordinary definition of

the term. The "alcoholic disease" is a term concocted or devised to relieve (?) the drinker of his/her guilt-feelings: "He/she drinks because drinking is a disease, and can't be helped." In some instances, preachers and doctors have gone to bed with the breweries and distilleries, whether wittingly or unwittingly. When preachers deny that drunkenness is a sin, they show their lack of reverence for the teaching of the word of God (I Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8).

Is alcoholism a sin? Dear Reader, consider carefully the following:

If alcoholism is a disease, it

--Is the only disease one needs a license to propagate.

--Is the only disease bottled and sold.

--Is the only disease that produces taxes.

--Is the only disease that provokes crime.

--Is the only disease that's habit-forming.

--Is the only disease that is spread by advertising.

--Is the only disease that leads to imprisonment.

--Is the only disease that condemns one to hell.

The alcoholic drinks to "escape" the hard realities of life. But, his wife does not "escape;" his children do not "escape;" society does not "escape;" and in the end, the alcoholic does not "escape." A life of misery and shame awaits him, not only in this world, but also in that world which is to come.

Alcohol, in all of its forms, is advertised in glowing and glamorous and romantic terms, but it ought to tell the truth. If it did, it would say:

In the theater,

On the radio, on TV,

On the signboard,

In papers and magazines

I say what I'm paid to say.

But in the laboratory,

In the wrecked automobile,

In the city jail,

In the roadhouse,

In the veins of the drunks,

I tell the truth.

--Author Unknown.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Our Need To Imitate John

John the immerser was standing with two of his disciples when Jesus walked by. John told them Jesus is the "Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." The Bible gives this result: "And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus" (John 1:37). Later, some complained to John that all men were going after Jesus.



Joe E. Galloway

John answered, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

What a fine attitude, and how much this attitude is needed by all of God's people today!

Preachers are needed who rejoice to see people following Jesus as a result of their preaching; who do not expect those whom they teach to be followers of them. So often we are prone to want people to say: "What a brilliant man he is." "He can really preach." "He knows the Bible well." "He is a good man." "He is my favorite preacher." It is so much better if people look beyond the preacher and are impressed with Christ and with his word, showing and expressing joy with having found the truth and with being followers of Jesus Christ. The preacher with the proper attitude will be less concerned with personal criticism and more concerned when people speak against Christ's word; less concerned when personally slighted and more concerned when he sees Christ rejected; less concerned when people seem to care little for him and more concerned when people do not put suitable emphasis on doing the Lord's will.

God, not the preacher, is to be glorified. "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but

ministers by whom ye believed . . . I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (I Corinthians 3:5,6).

Elders are needed who have John's attitude; who do not care so much whether they are popular as long as the congregation is sold on the Lord and on being faithful to his word. Each member agreeing with his personal opinions should not be important to the elder as long as each member does agree with God's revelation, the New Testament! Each elder must not be self-willed (Titus 1:7), nor be lifted up with pride (I Timothy 3:6), but must be concerned with what is best for the flock and with honoring the chief Shepherd (I Peter 5:2-4).

Deacons often serve with little congregational praise, but they, too, should care little for this: it should be reward enough to see the congregation increasing in works and effectiveness as God is receiving the praise for all growth.

There is a lesson in this for each member, too. Often jealousy is shown when one member excels in ability and in visible results of work done. Instead, we should rejoice that God's

kingdom is growing through this member's ability. At times members feel slighted by the preacher, elder, or other members. For example, they may not think they are being visited enough, so feel neglected. Others are being given more attention than are they! Each member should rejoice that such extra attention is being given others, for it will strengthen them. Also, this may indicate that the elders and preacher do not believe the ones who seem to receive less attention to be as weak as others, needing so much care. Just as our physical body is honored when one part of it is honored (maybe through a new hair style), so in Christ when "one member is honored, all rejoice with it" (I Corinthians 12:26).

John the immerser was really a remarkable man! He was able to rejoice when his followers turned from him to Jesus. But, we may say, "There's a difference. John's whole purpose was to prepare people to follow Christ." Question: Should our purpose be any different? Does God not expect the same of us? Let us all cultivate this attitude of John! —204 Creek Trail, Columbia, TN 38401.

Where Does Your Ability Stop?

Abilities are different from person to person. Some have many abilities; others have few abilities. The abilities which we do have, whether few or many, have been given to us by God. These lessons are manifest in our Lord's parable of Matthew 25:14-30, which has been called, "The Parable of the Talents."

Another lesson which one cannot help but see is that the Lord does not condemn a person because he has few talents. Nor does he reward a man just because he has many talents. The five talent man did not receive a blessing because of his many talents, but because he used the talents he had. "And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . ." (vs. 20-21). On the other hand, the one talent man was not condemned because of his one talent, but because he did not put the talent to use. "Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant . . ." (vs. 24-26). We, too, will give an account. We, too, will stand blessed or condemned, not because of the number of abilities which we possess, but because we have either used the talents, or have



Victor M. Eskew

not used them.

Many people in the Lord's body possess talents. Many of them are as the one talent man and are not using them. They will be cast "into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 25:30). For one reason or another they refuse to use the talent. To those who have buried their talents in the earth we want to ask this question: "Where does your ability stop?"

With some individuals their abilities stop where the "I don't want to's" begin. It is not that one does not possess the ability to teach a Bible class, but he just does not want to. One may be able to lead singing, or lead prayer, or wait on the Lord's table; but his "I don't want to" keeps him from it. Visits to shut-ins, nursing homes and hospitals are not made by members just because they don't want to.

With others, ability stops where indifference sets in. Multitudes of preachers could reprove false teaching, but they are indifferent to it since it does not directly effect them. Hundreds of Bible studies could be taking place, but the saved are indifferent about lost souls.

Another place where ability stops is when using the ability will cause time to be lost from more preferred activities. These are those who would rather watch television than prepare a dessert for a family facing a funeral. For a host of others, the beach takes precedence over Bible study. Clubs and associations are more important than the work of the church for scores of others.

Where does your ability stop? Is it where your "I don't want to" comes in? Could it be where indifference has tilled your soul? Maybe, it is where time lost in other areas can be felt. It may be that your ability has stopped where your anger has begun. Remember the parable of the Master, whatever your excuse is for not using your talents. You will stand condemned for not putting to use the talents which God has given you.

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS 38843.

Here Am I

Continued From Page 2

were dedicated and cried out, "Here am I; send me."

When you and I became Christians, we were like those boys who wanted to sign up to serve. "Here am I; send me" was OUR cry, heard from OUR lips. No hill was too steep, no mountain too high, no river too wide, no task too difficult, and no challenge too great because we belonged to the greatest body of people that God ever graced the earth with (Matthew 16:18). We had the greatest, most wonderful message to be told and we just had to share it with someone; and share it we did. We truly were *soldiers* of the cross! We were proud to be in uniform. We sharpened the sword of the Spirit and without fear ran to the battle (Ephesians 6:17; II Timothy 2:3; I Timothy 1:18). But, our sixties and seventies came! Our armor rusted, our swords fell inactive, and in our apathy we turned to house keeping.

It is TIME we rekindled our pride in the church, sharpened the sword of the Spirit, joined ranks, and marched gallantly into battle. Let us hear once again the dedicated sound of voices crying out, "Here am I; send me"!

—39 Webb Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.



(USPS 691-760)

Words of Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

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Singing Is Authorized In Christian Worship

(NO. 1)

An immediate impression made upon most initial visitors to the services conducted by churches of Christ has to do with the absence of any and all types of mechanically made music. We believe in, teach, and practice a cappella or unaccompanied music, i.e., unaccompanied by any mechanical piece of machinery. Sometimes we are accused



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

of being the people who do not believe in "music." Such is an unwarranted misrepresentation. We have a specific type of "music" in our worship. We have the type of "music" made by human voices -- not the kind made upon a mechanical instrument such as a piano, organ, or brass band. "Music" can be of three types: (1) vocal only; (2) mechanical only; or (3) a combination of vocal and mechanical. We render vocal music only. We KNOW it is authorized as I shall scripturally exhibit and Biblically demonstrate in this current article.

This is the beginning of a lengthy series for WORDS OF TRUTH dealing with singing and mechanically made music in worship for today. We in churches of Christ, at least the sound ones, reject mechanical music or a combination of vocal and mechanical on ONE Primary ground -- a TOTAL lack of scriptural authorization. Now if ANY dissenting reader will produce just ONE scripture where New Testament Christians in Christian worship ever used mechanical music only or a combination of both vocal and mechanical, we shall be happy to present in this journal the verse before this series is concluded, and shall adjust our practice accordingly. This should

be fair enough! But should it not work the *other* way also? If any user of such cannot find Biblical proof for it in Christian worship, should he not adjust his practice accordingly? Consider this a challenge -- and I shall await the scriptural proof from the words of Christ or the writings of the apostles.

Now, do not produce something from the Old Testament unless you are willing to go back to ALL its laws which would include sabbath-day worship (Saturday), polygamy, animal sacrifices, circumcision as a religious rite, the three trips to Jerusalem each year for every male, a Levitical priesthood, temple worship on Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem, and an almost unending host of other relics from an abrogated and abolished system of religion -- Judaism. Resorting to highly figurative passages in Revelation likewise will not successfully meet this extended challenge.

SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT FOR SINGING SUBMITTED

Read reverently and believingly the following scriptures. Look carefully for I shall be using EVERY passage in the New Testament which speaks of the type of music enjoined and authorized by Jehovah for Christian worship. I shall number and then note them with locations of these nine verses given at the end of the copious quotations.

- (1) And when they had SUNG an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives . . .
- (2) And when they had SUNG an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives . . .
- (3) And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and SANG praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them . . . (4) And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and SING unto thy name . . . (5) What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also . . . (6) Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,

SINGING and MAKING MELODY IN YOUR HEART to the Lord . . . (7) Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, SINGING with grace in your hearts to the Lord . . . (8) Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I SING praise unto thee . . . (9) Is any among you afflicted: let him pray. Is any merry? let him SING psalms. (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25; Romans 15:9; I Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12; James 5:13 -- all emphasis supplied).

A LOGICAL CONCLUSION

These are the nine scriptural passages which authorize singing. This is NINE more than the advocates for mechanical music in Christian worship can marshal for any type of so-called proof for their innovation. Admittedly mechanical music is popular and pleasing, but is minus any support from sacred Scripture and any warrant from the word of God Almighty. In fact, the New Testament is as silent as a tomb and as blank as a piece of unused paper as touching mechanical music in Christian worship. We may ask those who use it for their scriptural authorization. The Bible says, "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). To do something "in the name of the Lord Jesus" is to do it by his authority. That which he NEVER MENTIONED, either explicitly or implicitly, CANNOT be done by his authority. If so, how? How?? HOW???

Why is singing authorized? The NINE quoted verses answer. Why is mechanical music not authorized? ZERO passages favoring such are the forthcoming answer.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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

—Acts 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS . . . Editor
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The Art Of Self-Control

Self-control is a Bible subject. One can control one's self. Jesus Christ is the one person who set a perfect example of self-control. Never did Jesus lose control of his life! Thus, Jesus set us an example "that we should follow in his steps" (I Peter 2:21).

We shall consider Jesus, for the moment, as our pattern: he was sinless (Hebrews 4:15-

16); he was not treacherous (John 18:20); he was patient (Matthew 26:63); he would not retaliate (Luke 22:49-51); he fully trusted God (Mark 14:36); he sacrificed for others (Matthew 20:28). We can follow him!!

Since Jesus has set us such a wonderful example, we should not say that we cannot control our lives. It can be done! Self-control involves order and discipline! One must reach a decision to do certain things and not to do certain things. No person can control himself unless he wants to control himself. The only person who can bring discipline of mental faculties, or moral character, or spiritual order into control is the individual -- man, woman, boy or girl. No one can force another to control himself!

Question: Is your life out of control? Are you living in the midst of a great storm? Like an 18-wheeler truck, rushing down a mountain highway, without brakes, is your life one of extremes, being rudderless? Does your life seem like a roller-coaster, with all of its turns, ups and downs? No one can live successfully without regular and harmonious arrangement in daily living.

One who lives with his life out of control



W. A. Holley

The Blessed Privilege Of Prayer

Yarbrough Leigh

David the shepherd-King and sweet singer of Israel wrote: "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come" (Psalms 65:2). Now note this reading from that same Psalmist, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him: and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psalms 8:3-4).

Indeed! Why should the Great, Almighty God, the Creator of all things and the Giver and Sustainer of all life -- why should he be so mindful of *man*, the creature, as to keep his ear attuned to his prayer, and to answer him when he calls?

It is a distinguishing mark of his deity, his GODness, that he is not cruel nor indifferent toward the needs of even the smallest of his creatures. The gods of the heathen idolaters, yea, even the gods of the great philosophers and logicians of ancient man, the renowned gods of Greek and Roman mythology, are monsters in comparison with the God of holy scripture: the only true and living God. Those gods, the creatures of man rather than their creator, are pictured as using the earth and its creatures for their own selfish profit and amusement. But in speaking to his disciples of their Father in heaven, Jesus said: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:28-31). In Psalms 147:9 David also wrote: "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry." We are reminded of a line in the chorus of an old hymn which admonished:

"Leave it to Him who knoweth all,
He who marks the sparrow's fall,
Who listens to the raven's call:
Leave it to Him, leave it to Him."

This great, omnipotent God (Revelation 19:6) condescends to listen and to respond to the prayers of his faithful believers, his obedient children; yea, he opens his store/house of blessings in response even to the cry of the penitent sinner who humbles his heart sincerely in genuine repentance and contrition of spirit, turning to God in submissive obedience to his word. To his disciples Jesus said: "If thy brother 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" (Luke 17:3, 4). And, will God ask of us that which he will not, himself, do for us? Nay, verily His mercy is far beyond that of man! He encourages us, warns us, NOT to sin; but, if we sin, he promises us that he will forgive us if we repent and turn to him confessing our sins in fervent prayer, as his children, and in prayer ask his forgiveness.

But there are some who cannot pray and be heard. Who are they? Note carefully, and search the scriptures whether these things be so:

1. Those who have not penitently and in faith obeyed the gospel and entered into the fellowship of Christ our Lord cannot pray and be heard of the Father.

We pray, in our own name nor by our own right of access, but in the name of Christ, our Lord. It is only through the merit of the blood of Christ that we may approach unto God and

be heard. We are instructed: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17). Further: "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20). Even his blessed apostles were to pray only in his name: "And in that day ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:23-24).

We enter into that fellowship according to the Lord's promise, and in no other way. Paul wrote, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death?" (Romans 6:3; and for comparable passages read Galatians 3:27 and Colossians 2:12). After we have entered into that fellowship, and have become children of God and joint heirs with Christ, we have the privilege of prayer in his name. We cannot "pray" our way into that fellowship. First, we must believe the gospel, and in faith, repent and be baptized in his name for the remission of sins (Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24: 46-47 and Acts 2:37-38). Christ is the High Priest, the Intercessor, for those who have entered into his fellowship through penitent confession and obedience to him in the commands of his gospel (Hebrews 3:1; 5:8-9; 7:24-25; I John 2:1).

2. The impenitent, or wilfully disobedient cannot be heard when they pray. Though it be from the Old Covenant, yet its message sets forth an ageless principle -- hear it: "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?" (Proverbs 21:27). "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Proverbs 28:9). James, probably the brother of the Lord, wrote, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your own lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

If such would be heard of God, they must REPENT and turn to God in all sincerity, in humble, submissive obedience to him, asking his forgiveness. He promises to hear and restore (I John 1:7-10).

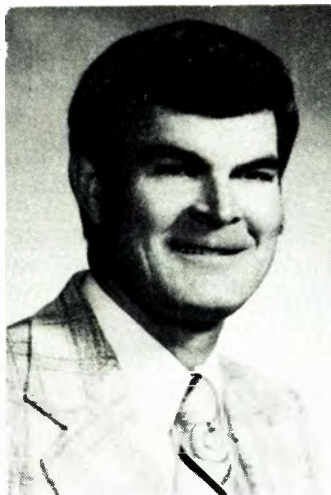
3. The "doubters" and "waverers" (not sure of faith) cannot be heard in their prayers. James also wrote: "if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God . . . and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven of the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord" (James 1:5-7).

4. The self-deceived hypocrite cannot pray acceptably. Again, it was James who wrote: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves . . . If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:22-27).

Those who turn away from faithfulness, either in their "religious devotions" in obedi-

What About "Original Sin?"

The previous *Presbyterian Confession of Faith*, states: "By this sin (eating the forbidden fruit) they (our first parents) fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. They being the ROOT of ALL mankind, the GUILT of THIS SIN was



Ray Hawk

IMPUTED and the SAME DEATH in sin and CORRUPTED NATURE CONVEYED to ALL their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions."

The idea of "original sin" is that when Adam sinned, he became totally corrupt, and this sinful nature or corruption was passed on to his descendants. Since we are his descendants, we have this sinful nature called "original sin." To overcome this "sinful nature," one MUST have a DIRECT operation of the Holy Spirit upon his heart before he is capable of believing in Christ Jesus. Although one becomes a Christian and takes on the nature of Christ, he still passes the Adamic nature on to his children.

If this doctrine is correct, it means every child dying at birth goes to hell! Hebrews 11:6 says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is." A baby does not have the ability to exercise faith in Christ Jesus. If that baby is born with SIN and is thereby a SINNER, he is lost until he can exercise faith in Christ Jesus and obey the Lord (Hebrews 5:8, 9). Since he dies at birth, and does not have the faculties to exercise faith, he goes to hell -- IF the doctrine of "Original Sin" is correct.

In the past ten years, more than ten million babies have been MURDERED through legal abortions. Those babies are living souls. IF the teaching of "Original Sin" is correct, here are more than ten million babies that have gone to hell! Who can believe such a doctrine?

The advocates of "Original Sin" cite us to Romans 3:10-18 as a proof text. If we CAREFULLY read the passage we see that it cannot apply to any inherited corruption of nature existing at birth, but to those adults who had CORRUPTED THEMSELVES by wicked works. Have infants, whether newborn or those in the womb that have been murdered by abortion, had tongues that "used deceit"? Are the mouths of these babies "full of cursing and bitterness"? Are their feet "swift to shed blood"? Can you imagine a three-day-old baby lying in wait to murder a one-day-old baby? or an adult? How can anyone believe these verses are speaking of infants? When we look at the context, we see Paul quoting from Psalm 14:1-3; 52:1-3; 5:9; 140:3; 10:7; Isaiah 59:7, 8; and Psalm 36:1. These passages are referring to ADULTS who have CORRUPTED THEMSELVES by wicked works -- NOT babies!

Psalm 51:5 is another "Original Sin" "proof

text": "Behold, I was shapened in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." One of the shortcomings of the NIV is its translation of this passage. However, whether one uses the KJV, ASV, or RSV, the verse is not clear in translation. Was sin on the part of David as he was being conceived? or on the part of his mother? If one said: "In drunkenness my father beat me," would he mean he was drunk when his father beat him? or, his father was drunk when he beat him? One would not be responsible for his father's drunkenness any more than David was guilty of sin because his mother did wrong when he was conceived. Another possible interpretation is that David is so remorseful due to his sin with Bathsheba and its results, that he projects this sin to cover his entire life, from birth to the time he wrote this. What we do not see is a statement from David's pen saying he INHERITED Adam's sin.

Another passage used to prove (?) "Original Sin" is Isaiah 1:5, 6. This passage is not talking about an individual, but about the nation of Israel. It is always a good idea to look at the verses before and after a passage to get the context. Verse 7 says, "Your country is desolate, your cities . . ." This shows a person is not being described, but a nation. "Original Sin" is not being discussed, but a nation leaving the paths of righteousness and going into sin.

The next passage is Psalm 58:1-8. Verse 3 is used more than the others, "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." These verses cannot be speaking of babies who are supposedly born with the sinful nature (?) of Adam. Who ever heard of infants "speaking lies" "as soon as they be born"? Verse 6 states, "Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth." How many new-born babies have you known that had TEETH? Adults have teeth, not newborns.

The last passage is Romans 5:12: "Where-

fore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, FOR THAT ALL HAVE SINNED." Sin did enter the world through Adam. We suffer the CONSEQUENCES of his sin. Due to that sin, man was cut off from the tree of life. Man dies. Sin brought on physical death. "It is appointed unto man once to die" (Hebrews 9:27). Babies as well as adults suffer the CONSEQUENCES of Adam's act. However, SPIRITUAL DEATH occurs when a person sins, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:20), not "The soul that inherits Adam's sin, it shall die"! Romans 5:12 does not address itself to the idea of "Original Sin." If it did, it would say, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, FOR THAT ALL HAVE INHERITED THE SIN OF ADAM"!

If Romans 5:12 MEANS we INHERIT Adam's nature because of Adam's ACTIONS, then Romans 5:18 means we INHERIT Jesus' nature because of his ACTIONS upon the cross! That would be universal salvation!!! Actually, the Bible teaches neither extreme.

Ezekiel 18:20 shows that the person who sins brings death (separation from God) upon himself by HIS actions. It also points out that the son does not inherit the guilt of the father's sin, nor the father the son's iniquities. Jesus pointed out that babies are innocent (without sin), and adults MUST become as little children, otherwise they (adults) cannot "enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). In Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them; for the kingdom of heaven BELONGS TO SUCH AS THESE" (N.I.V.).

The doctrine of "Original Sin" is a teaching of the devil to keep people out of the kingdom of God. If one will "rightly divide the word" (II Timothy 2:15), he will see the falsity of such teachings.

—1490 Campbell Street, Jackson, TN 38305.

The Art Of Self-Control

Continued from page 2

endangers himself, as well as his whole family. We sincerely urge such a person to bring his life under control for his own sake, and for the sake of those whom he dearly loves -- and to do it now -- before it is too late. A lack of control drives others away.

IN WHAT AREAS IS THERE NEED FOR CONTROL??

(1) *The tongue.* Is it possible for one to control the tongue? It certainly is! Think of the anguish and heartache a loose tongue can bring to others. Tale-bearing (Leviticus 19:16), slander (Exodus 23:1); whisperings (II Corinthians 12:20) should never proceed out of one's mouth. "He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander is a fool. In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise. The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth. The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom" (Proverbs 10:18-21). The tongue is a very small member of our bodies, but it is capable of much harm (James 3:1-12).

(2) *Where passions are concerned, self-control is always in order.* Sexual passions are God-given, but sex is not a toy with which responsible

people play. Promiscuity -- indiscriminate sexual relationships is a sin before God!! Monogamous sexual relationship -- one man and one woman -- honoring the holy bonds of matrimony, is the Lord's way (Genesis 2:21-25; Hebrews 13:4; I Thessalonians 4:3-8). Today, thousands want the pleasures of sex, but not the responsibility that goes with it! One of the ugly results is a horrendous increase in abortions. Those who live in adultery (unless they repent) are certain to be lost (Colossians 3:5-7; Revelation 21:8).

"A successful marriage is an edifice that must be rebuilt every day." "It takes two to make a marriage a success and only one to make it a failure."

(3) *Anger must be the object of self-control, if one is to be the master of his life.* "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil" (Ephesians 4:26-27). Anger weakens a man. It puts him at a disadvantage in every undertaking in life. The sudden flash and flame of anger can wither the flowers in the fairest paradise of any earthly home. Self-control is the order of the day.

Just go to the mirror and look at yourself

Continued on page 4

“Neither Be Partaker Of Other Men’s Sins”

Those who become children of God should sever all connection with the world, fully and completely. Such a relationship is very essential in God’s sight. One cannot serve both God and mammon (Matthew 6:24).

It is possible for a child of God, in moments of weakness, to join in partnership with others who lead lives of sin. Christians must



W. A. Holley

never cooperate or partake jointly with any evildoer. “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11). Paul’s instruction to the young preacher Timothy was: “. . . neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure” (I Timothy 5:22). No gospel preacher who allows himself to become involved in the sinful practices of others can ever be successful as a preacher. It is said that “a bird with a broken wing can never soar so high again.” Of course, preachers who sin can obtain forgiveness of their sins, if they meet God’s demands; but they must suffer the aftermath or consequences of their sins, just as others do.

Christians cannot afford to bid others Godspeed in sinful acts, no matter how minor these actions may seem. The lives of Christians must be superior to the lives of non-Christians (Matthew 5:16; Titus 2:11-12; Romans 12:1-2). We are told that both Jews and Gentiles can so conduct themselves as to “fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel” (Ephesians 3:6).

How can we “be partaker of other men’s sins”? We shall note the following points:

(1) Those who support financially or morally false doctrine are partakers with them in their sin. II John 9-11 says: “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 Godspeed: for he that biddeth him Godspeed is a partaker of his evil deed.” This passage does not forbid Christian hospitality (Romans 12:13), but it does forbid any support or encouragement of false teachers. It is right to try to correct a false teacher, thus setting him on the right road, provided that in so doing we do not abet or encourage him in the propagation of false doctrine (Romans 16:17-18). Christians must never aid others in preaching false doctrine.

(2) If one is partaker with others in sowing discord among the brethren, one must share the blame for the division that results (Proverbs 6:16-19). One can do no greater evil than to cause trouble in the home, in the state, and in the Lord’s church. Sometimes there are those who plot various schemes, and evil plans, through lies and misrepresentation, to set brethren against each other. “He that hath a wayward heart findeth no good; and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief” (Proverbs 17:20, ASV.).

According to the Scriptures there are things

that make for peace and there are things that cause trouble (Romans 12:18; 14:19). Jesus, your Saviour and mine, prayed for the unity of all true believers (John 17:20-23; Ephesians 4:3-6).

(3) We can join with those who practice sin. For example, if they drink alcoholic beverages, we can drink with them; if they curse, we can curse with them; if they choose to fuss and fight, we can fuss and fight with them; if they are immoral, we can join them; if they blaspheme sacred things, we can be irreverent too. It is sinful for a Christian to join others in their sinful pursuits!! (II Corinthians 6:14-18).

(4) We can overlook sin in the lives of others, thus pretending that sin is not so bad after all. Has not sin been the common lot of humanity throughout the centuries? Are not sinful practices very popular? If we aid and abet drunkenness, immodesty in dress, abortion and suicide, homosexuality and incest, dancing and sexual promiscuity, pornography and gambling and smoking, we are partaking of other men’s sins. We are our brother’s keeper whether we wish to admit it or not (Genesis 4:1-15). Rather than apologizing for sin in others lives, we should reprove them and help them escape the shackles of sin (II Timothy 4:1-4).

(5) We partake of another’s sin when we prompt or incite others to commit evil.

Bathsheba led David into adultery when she bathed in the open (II Samuel 11:1-13). Joseph refused the advances of Potipher’s wife (Genesis 39:1ff). Girls and women who wear their clothing too short and too tight cannot be held guiltless when they have driven some man to attack them!! (See Matthew 5:27-28). Here we offer no apology for men whose hearts are filled with evil thoughts (Matthew 15:10-20).

(6) Paul talked about being “pure from the blood all men” (Acts 20:26-27; cf. 18:6). “I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome” (Romans 1:14-15). Hence, Paul felt a heavy responsibility toward the lost.

Men need all the restraints of the gospel; if we do not use this great power, how can they ever be turned toward lives of truth and righteousness (Romans 1:16)? Since Jesus commanded us to share the gospel with all men, we sin if we withhold its wonder-working power from lost men and women (Mark 16:15-16). No one needs any encouragement to commit sin! Rather, we should encourage others to find the higher road, to live on a higher plane, and to stand a little taller, if we wish to see the lost saved (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:36-38).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

The Art Of Self-Control

Continued from page 3

And see what that man has to say;
For it isn’t your father, or mother, or wife,
Who judgment upon you must pass.
The fellow whose verdict counts most in your
life
Is the one staring back from the glass.

--Author Unknown.

(4) *The thoughts of an evil heart can be controlled.* One is as one thinks in his heart (Proverbs 23:7). All evil thoughts proceed from one’s heart (Matthew 15:19-20). Thus, evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings, and the like, are those seeds which can destroy one’s life, here and hereafter. But these thoughts and activities can be brought under control (II Corinthians 10:3-5).

One person’s heart was not right in God’s sight, according to Peter (Acts 8:19-21). Those who permit alcohol, drugs, and lascivious living to dominate their lives are simply taking a shortcut to death and destruction, unless they can come to themselves (Luke 15:11-24; Mark 7:22; II Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19-21). Only when one hears and obeys the truth of God can one’s heart be made right with God.

(5) *Self-control must begin with the new birth.* Each sinner needs to be “born again.” In Christ one becomes a “new creature” (II Corinthians 5:17). How does one enter Christ? By “faith alone?” Certainly not! (See James 2:14-26). Is one saved by faith? Yes. But when is one saved by faith? The Bible answer is simple: It is when one believes that Jesus is the Christ, and repents of his sins, and confesses Jesus’ name before men, and is bap-

tized into Christ for remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Luke 13:3; Acts 8:37; 2:36-38, 41, 47; Romans 6:3-4). These steps are what Jesus was talking about when he instructed Nicodemus of the necessity of being “born again” (John 3:3, 5).

(6) *In the light of what has been said, what will be required to bring a disorganized into an organized life?* (1) Put God first in your life (Matthew 6:33-34). (2) Pursue a daily course of Bible study (II Timothy 2:15; 3:15-17). (3) Pray several times each day (I Thessalonians 5:17-18, 23). (4) Attend church services regularly (Hebrews 10:24-25). Associate with people who are calm and well-organized (Proverbs 22:24-25).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

The Blessed Privilege Of Prayer

Continued From Page 2

ence to God’s instruction in the New Testament scriptures; or in unrighteousness of life in defiance of the instruction, forfeit their relationship of fellowship with the Lord. They must genuinely repent and turn again to him, making things “right” with both God and man (if they can), if they wish to again enjoy communion with our Lord in his mercy and grace. Let them REPENT [TURN], CONFESSING their sins and their need of forgiveness; THEN let them pray, and he will graciously hear and pardon (I John 1:6-9).

—Shades Mountain Church of Christ, P.O. Box 26156, Birmingham, AL 35226.



(USPS 691-760)

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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Why Mechanical Music In Christian Worship Is Wrong

Perhaps you have wondered why churches of Christ refuse to have any type of mechanical music in our worship. The WHY of this choice is not traceable to any dislike for music that comes by way of a piano or organ. Many of us have such instruments in our homes and enjoy the music therefrom. It is also not to be traced to simply a desire to be different. The choice



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

is basically this: **THERE IS NO DIVINE AUTHORIZATION FOR SUCH IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.** We reject burning incense in worship for precisely the same reason. We reject counting beads as a religious rite for the very same reason. We reject sabbath-day keeping (Saturday) currently for the same exact reason. There must be Biblical authority for all we do in Christian worship. There is **NO** Biblical authority for mechanical music in Christian worship. If so, where is it found? Hence, its use lacks Biblical authorization and is therefore sinful -- regardless of its multitude of avid users.

VOID OF A COMMAND FROM THE CHRIST
Jesus Christ **NEVER** **COMMANDED** the use of mechanical music in Christian worship. If so, where is the scripture? I produced a number of scriptures in the previous article which authorize singing in Christian worship. Not a single one mentioned the mechanical instrument. One can search the whole of Jesus' teachings and never find any command, example, or necessary inference for the use of a mechanical instrument in Chris-

tian worship. Jesus told the apostles to disciple all nations by teaching and baptizing. The teaching involved all things "whatsoever I have commanded you . . ." (Matthew 28:20). Unless one can find where Jesus commanded the use of mechanical music, then one is doing something Christ never commanded when he uses it today.

NO SANCTION FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT
The Holy Spirit **NEVER** **SANCTIONED** its usage. The Spirit guided the Biblical penmen into the inerrant writing of the entire New Testament Scriptures. Not one time did he prompt any of them to sanction the usage of any type of mechanical music in Christian worship. He sanctioned or authorized vocal music only. God provided the **ONLY** instrument we need for music in Christian worship, and that instrument is the human voice. It will be recalled that the Spirit guided the apostles "into all truth" (John 16:13). Yet they never mentioned the mechanical instrument in worship that first time! Does that not say something? It does to me; likewise it should to you. The Holy Spirit was to bring back to apostolic memories "all" Jesus had said while he tabernacled among them (John 14:26). Yet they never wrote or spoke a single syllable about mechanical music in Christian worship. Does not that say something? It does to me; likewise it should to each reader also. The Holy Spirit **NEVER** sanctioned this practice, i.e., mechanical music in Christian worship. If so, where is the book, chapter, and verse authority for it?

VOID OF APOSTOLIC AUTHORIZATION
The apostles **NEVER** **AUTHORIZED** mechanical music in Christian worship. They knew of its connection with worship under the Mosaic Economy during David's time. Yet they never endorsed it for Christian worship. Does not this say something? It does to me; likewise it should to every reader. These men, guided by the Holy Spirit's inerrancy, were

as silent as a cemetery on its use. Does not their silence say something? It does to me; likewise it should to every reader of this article. Those who think they did authorize it for Christian worship are hereby challenged to produce Biblical proof.

NO PART OF NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP
NO New Testament church ever used mechanical music in Christian worship during the first century. It was not brought in until the seventh century A.D., and then it occurred in Roman Catholic -- not Christian -- worship. The Protestants simply borrowed it from the Catholics. When something is borrowed, it needs to be returned. Then Catholics need to give it up for they had no New Testament authority for its initial introduction and usage as is true with hundreds of their innovations. The early church sang; they did not play on mechanical machinery in worship. Does this not say something? It does to me; likewise it should to every reader!

NOT INCLUDED IN NEW TESTAMENT
The New Testament Scriptures **DO NOT** **INCLUDE** it. In fact they excluded it by leaving it without any authorization, mention, sanction, command, or implication of ANY type. Paul was prompted to write, "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 Timothy 3:16, 17). The Scriptures furnish us "unto all good works." The Scriptures do not furnish us into the using of mechanical music in Christian worship. Therefore mechanical music in Christian worship is not a good work.

Peter was led to write: "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). We have been

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Words Of Truth

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—Acts 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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Why Mechanical Music In Christian Worship Is Wrong

Continued From Page 1

given "all things that pertain to life and godliness." We have not been given the authority to use mechanical music in Christian worship. Therefore mechanical music in Christian worship is not a part of life and godliness.

Jesus Christ told the faithful eleven in John 16:13: "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." The Holy Spirit would guide the apostles "into all truth." He did not guide them into the introduction and continued usage of mechanical music in Christian worship. Therefore their usage in Christian worship is not a part of the "all truth" into which the apostles were led by God's Spirit.

The major premise in each of these syllogisms is based upon scripture. The minor premise in each one is based upon the obvious silence of the New Testament in regard to mechanical music in Christian worship. Those who attack each major premise are lacking in respect for God's Word. Those who attack each minor premise should be ready to show wherein each one is in error. Each major and minor premise being true, the conclusion has to follow with irrefutable logic. If not, WHY NOT?

These are some of the WHYS of our refusal to use such.

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Flavil H. Nichols

"Unity In Diversity"

The slogan, "Where the scriptures speak, we speak, and where the scriptures are silent, we are silent" is a valid statement of my aim as a Christian. This means that in matters of faith, there is not only unity, but there is unanimity. The idea that there is, or can be, "unity in diversity" IN MATTERS WHERE GOD HAS SPOKEN, is totally foreign to divine authority.

Of course, in areas of human judgment, where the Bible does not legislate, there always has been "unity in diversity." Under GENERIC AUTHORITY, one congregation may own its place for worship, and another may rent a building -- and perfect unity exists between them. One may have a brick building, and the other a frame house, and they are still united. One may have the Lord's day worship at 9:00 a.m., and the other at eleven -- but they have perfect UNITY "in diversity" so far as schedules are concerned.

In the current quest for fellowship with others who claim their roots come through the "Restoration Movement" there apparently are many more issues to be resolved than instrumental music in worship. Writing from the vantage point of one who has been there, Bro. Tim Nichols tells of a major problem which must be resolved. He is no stranger to our readers, and knows whereof he speaks. I am happy to give his article space in this Editorial column to show my endorsement. Carefully evaluate what he writes.

Unity In Diversity Among Independent Christian Churches Tim Nichols

One of my reasons for leaving the Independent Christian Church was the general pride that most members of that body had in their toleration of false teachers. This is something for which I have repented. We were preached to, "witnessed" to, and sung to, by men and women from the denominations. I recall one man with a cowboy hat, guitar and a wide assortment of funny stories and songs being given an entire Sunday evening service to give us his "testimony." He told us how he had gone to the altar and gotten himself saved (?) by praying through -- and that we should do the same. His error was not refuted (even though the regular preacher did express that he did not happen to agree with all of the man's conclusions).

It has been my experience that, even among themselves, the Independent Christian Churches tend to be proud of their willingness to tolerate gross error. There seems to be



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

an unwritten rule, among them, that anything beyond faith, repentance, confession, and baptism is to be regarded as a matter of opinion (although some have challenged even these). Virtually any error can be aggressively taught among them without being seriously challenged. It is extremely rare, among them, to hear of someone being marked and avoided for teaching false doctrine (Romans 16:17; Titus 3:10) even though many of them are willing to admit that much false doctrine is taught.

This situation produces an atmosphere in which men feel free to teach human doctrines as divine, without any fear that their brethren will correct them. I recall that it was a "comfortable" atmosphere: I knew that I could teach the truth as I understood it and seldom be corrected in any way, by those who disagreed. But I also recall that it was extremely "uncomfortable" to sit by and listen to error being taught, while doing nothing to refute it. It was socially unacceptable to confront even the most obvious errors, and those who did so were considered unChrist-like rabble-rousers. It was an atmosphere that cultivated and sanctioned error by rewarding it only with fellowship and silence, or endorsement.

The Independent Christian Church is, therefore, a breeding ground for error because this atmosphere has created a nurturing environment for it. The same atmosphere (agree to disagree) that encourages error to multiply holds the Independent Christian Church together as one body. But in matters of faith, unity in diversity is not God's program for unity (I Corinthians 1:10; I John 1:7). The liberals among them rejoice in their freedom to teach what they will without being challenged -- while the more conservative men among them are frustrated and speak of their concern in private conversations more than in the public arena.

There is no issue more basic to the Christian faith than the issue of biblical inerrancy. A few years ago, Jack Cottrell (a preacher and teacher among Independent Christian Churches) began an article on this subject in the November 7, 1982, issue of CHRISTIAN STANDARD with these words:

It is now public knowledge that a considerable number of preachers, teachers, and leaders within the Christian churches (churches of Christ) reject the inerrancy of the Bible. They do not believe that the original manuscripts, as first penned by inspired writers such as Moses, Matthew, an Paul, were necessarily free from errors and mistakes.

This is serious enough, but even more serious is the widely-held notion that *it really doesn't matter* whether one accepts inerrancy or not.

He went on to argue the case for biblical

Continued on page 3

What Hinders Militancy? A Militant Church

Last week we listed three enemies of the church. We emphasized that we must be aggressively active in opposing these forces lest we be overcome. A fourth adversary which must be fought is *false teachers*. John warned in his first epistle of the *many* "false prophets" circulating in the world. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). This enemy is extremely dangerous because he clothes himself in the garb of innocence. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves" (Matthew 7:15). False teachers slip into a congregation privily (Jude 4). These individuals with feign words make merchandise of their listeners (II Peter 2:3). If not struck down when their appearance is made known, they will have many to follow their pernicious ways (II Peter 2:2).

Another force which stands in opposition as the enemy of God is *Crossroad-ism*. This movement as it is presently known originated at the Crossroad church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida. The man who heads this push is Chuck Lucas, minister of the Crossroad congregation. Another name by which it is known is Campus Advance. This wicked force began on the college campus in Gainesville, Florida, and has now spread its venom throughout the United States. It aggressively seeks the young, and with cult-like tactics converts and holds them in their closely-knit framework. In order for them to get on the college campus, however, they must first infiltrate a congregation in the college town, or (as is more recently being done) establish their own congregation in the city. The Crossroad-trained minister comes into the congregation and very slowly spreads his false teachings (soul-talks, prayer partners, quiet time, Lordship baptism, etc.), among the membership. After winning the confidence of many, the eldership is overthrown, the congregation divides, and this new philosophy has gained the victory. Well over 100 times this has happened to various congregations. The church needs to be well informed of this movement, and do all in its power to oppose its threat to our brotherhood.

A sixth enemy, and most certainly not all that we could discuss, is *liberalism*. "Liberalism" seeks to loosen laws which God has established in his divine word. "Liberalism" is bent on broadening the borders of fellowship beyond the line set by God. It is a "liberal" mind who will seek unity with the Christian church without demanding a change. The "liberal" element has no reservations at all about the use of instrumental music in the worship, the use of the modern versions which are filled with doctrinal error . . . , the teaching of direct operation of the Holy Spirit, extending fellowship to the denominational world, and on the list could go. This enemy is rapidly growing amidst the army of God. And it will take more than just a few to stop it from spreading



Victor M. Eskew

farther. May the militant forces of the Lord's army raise up against all these enemies of

the church which we have briefly discussed.
—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS 38843.

"Unity In Diversity"

Continued From Page 2

inerrancy and to point out that to deny it is to open "the floodgates to errors and excesses of all kinds." Brethren, while we can appreciate the fact that *some* (not all) in that body are willing to express a belief in this truth, we cannot "pat them on the back" for their continuing to remain in "fellowship" with those who clearly espouse liberalism and other errors among them.

Consider some of the reactions to the aforementioned article on inerrancy as they appeared in "The Mailbox" of CHRISTIAN

STANDARD in the January 2, 1983, issue: Foolish Tests of Orthodoxy -- I was very disappointed by the unjust accusations and incorrect conclusions expressed by Brother Cottrell in his "Reflections" column on inerrancy . . .

The thing that will bring disaster to our "movement" is not a rejection of inerrancy; but rather "tests of orthodoxy" such as he so foolishly proposes. The strength (keystone) of our movement is that we believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This is our only creed. There is no other written statement or series of questions to which a person must subscribe. The deductions and opinions that each person derives from his or her own study of the Bible must never constitute tests of fellowship. Brother Cottrell should keep his views on inerrancy private and not seek to bind them upon others further than they can personally agree . . .

--Ralph E. Salzgaber II, Columbus, Ohio
Faults Cottrell's Logic -- I respect Mr. Cottrell's view and honor his opinion on the question of inerrancy, but I find fault with his logic and his conclusions.

In defining inerrancy as being "free from errors and mistakes," Cottrell implies that there was an original manuscript of every Biblical book, perfect in all aspects: historically, doctrinally, literally, grammatically, and literally. He then assumes that Jesus taught "inerrancy" (as defined by Cottrell) when He taught that the Old Testament "cannot be assailed or shown to be false" and that He had "absolute confidence in its historicity and truth." Believing the Bible to be historically and doctrinally correct is not equal to teaching grammatical inerrancy. Jesus affirmed the truth and authority of Scripture, not inerrancy.

Finally, I find it very disheartening that a people who claim to speak only where the Bible speaks and to have no creed but Christ find it necessary to make the answer to a question about the book of Genesis or the book of Daniel equal to the answer about belief in Jesus as the Christ.

Sorry to disappoint you, Jack, but I don't hate you. I feel sorry for you that you have so little confidence in your brothers

in Christ. Why is it so hard to see that one can totally accept the his historical and doctrinal accuracy of the Scriptures and the authority of the Bible for the Christian without swallowing the doctrine of inerrancy of unrecoverable original documents?

--Denis L. Whittet, Portland, Oreg.

Anyone who has been reading carefully can see that the Independent Christian Church is a very *broad* fellowship. It is a conglomerate of a great variety of beliefs and practices. It is easily seen why they would have no problem having "fellowship" with us the way that we are. As long as our people are willing to tolerate a great variety of false doctrines and *be* tolerated for our "peculiar views" regarding many things, we can simply jump into the salad bowl called the Independent Christian Church. No doubt the "agree to disagree" atmosphere that exists within that body is attractive to those among us who do not want anyone to question what they teach and practice. But those who are more conservative among Independent Christian Churches are tired of compromise, and are confused by the compromising statements that they are hearing and reading from among us concerning instrumental music and the nature of truth. Perhaps they are as dismayed as I am as they watch many of our members rapidly moving in the direction from which many of us have painfully come.

Brethren, it seems that there have been those among us who have, for some time, tried to bring the "agree to disagree" mind-set into the churches of Christ. The growing similarities between the two bodies may bring comfort to some; but they cause great concern for some of us. No doubt many of those who believe in and teach "unity in diversity" among us will soon take their disciples with them and, somehow, move into greater fellowship with the Independent Christian Churches. Please do not "follow a multitude to do evil." Let us love God and one another enough to help one another to "walk in the light as he is in the light" knowing that then "we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6
 10:00 AM — Charles Blair — The Mission Of Christ
 And Its Consequences
 11:00 AM — Ken Burleson — This Man Receiveth Sinners
 And Eateth With Them
 7:00 PM — Ira Rice — The Virgin Birth And The Implications
 8:00 PM — Joe Gilmore — Lord, Teach Us To Pray

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8
 9:00 AM — Phil Davis — The Harvest Indeed Is Plenteous,
 But The Laborers Are Few
 10:00 AM — Clinton Elliott — The Necessity Of Humility
 11:00 AM — Fred Davis — By What Authority
 12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH
 1:00 PM — Robert Taylor — The Necessity Of Kindness
 2:00 PM — Gary Colley — Take Heed Therefore How Ye Hear
 2:00 PM — Irene Taylor — Mary and Martha: Dedication Versus
 Domesticity (Ladies)
 3:00 PM — James Boyd — Investment Of Life
 7:00 PM — Dan Jenkins — The Call Of Christ And Its Sacrifices
 8:00 PM — James Boyd — The Rich Man And Lazarus

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10
 9:00 AM — Dennis Gulleddge — Freedom From Materialism
 10:00 AM — Mac Deaver — This Is My Beloved Son
 11:00 AM — Dan Jenkins — The Saviour's Compassion For
 Physical Suffering
 12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH
 1:00 PM — Roy Deaver — The Resurrected Christ
 2:00 PM — Bob Jent — Christ's Teaching On Marriage
 and Divorce
 2:00 PM — Vada Rice — Mary Magdalene And The Risen
 Christ (Ladies)
 3:00 PM — Ron Cosby — Last Hours With The Disciples
 7:00 PM — Mac Deaver — The Lordship Of Christ
 8:00 PM — Joe Gilmore — A Heavy Assignment

MONDAY, OCTOBER 7
 9:00 AM — Jimmy Thompson — The Parable Of The Pounds
 10:00 AM — Leroy Medlock — The Temptation Of Jesus
 11:00 AM — Wally Kirby — The Widow's Two Mites
 12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH
 1:00 PM — James Davis — Opposition To The Mission Of Christ
 2:00 PM — Ronnie Whittemore — Art Thou He That Should Come
 Or Look We For Another?
 2:00 PM — Irene Taylor — Two Women In God's Plan Of
 Redemption (Ladies)
 3:00 PM — Melvin Elliott — The Outside Of The Cup And
 Platter Or Your Inward Heart
 7:00 PM — Robert Taylor — Courageous Christians
 8:00 PM — Gary Colley — Qualities That All Christians Must
 Strive For

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9
 9:00 AM — Mitchell Temple — The Sin Of Ingratitude
 10:00 AM — Tom Bright — Is There A Resurrection?
 11:00 AM — Terry Varner — The Promise, The Mission And
 The Message Of John
 12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH
 1:00 PM — Winston Temple — The Great Need For Steadfastness
 2:00 PM — Grady Miller — The Necessity Of Forgiveness
 2:00 PM — Vada Rice — The Woman And The Lost Coin
 (Ladies)
 3:00 PM — Charles Pugh — Danger Of Self-Trust
 7:00 PM — Roy Deaver — The Supreme Sacrifice
 8:00 PM — Max Miller — The Necessity Of Repentance

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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

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, AUGUST 30, 1985

NUMBER 35

Why Mechanical Music Is Used

(No. 1)

Most religious bodies now use one or more types of mechanically made music in their worship. It might be the piano, an organ (the most commonly employed ones), a guitar, or an entire brass band. Those who use such are not without attempted arguments employed for supporting proof. Respect for scriptural authority and the soundness of correctly employed logic are thrown out the window by the use of the obviously weak arguments (????) they usually assemble. This I shall clearly demonstrate and amply exhibit.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

"THE BIBLE DOES NOT FORBID THEM"

By this argument (?) the mechanical music proponents mean to say that one cannot find the following statement explicitly or directly stated within Holy Writ: "Thou shalt not use the piano, organ, or ten-member brass band in Christian worship." To presume upon God's silence has always been an unsound argument. Noah was not explicitly (directly) told, "Do not build the ark of oak wood." Jehovah God specified "gopher" wood -- and that eliminated *all* but gopher wood (Genesis 6:14). He was not told explicitly (directly), "Do not build the ark ten stories high." He was told to put in "three" stories -- and that eliminated any more than three or less than three (Genesis 6:16). God did not tell Moses explicitly (directly), "Do not strike the rock." When Jehovah said "speak to" the rock, that eliminated the striking of the rock. God never said explicitly (directly), "Thou shalt not use hamburgers, Girl Scout cookies, or Coca Cola in the Lord's Supper as ingredients" -- but the

authorization of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine eliminated all other elements.

In reality God has eliminated the mechanical music instrument in Christian worship. He did such by authorizing singing. Such a command eliminates music made upon mechanical instruments (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). God's word is inclusive and exclusive. What is authorized is INCLUDED. What is unauthorized is EXCLUDED. This excludes the mechanical instrument lock, stock, and barrel. If not, WHY NOT?

"DAVID USED THEM"

One of the most overworked defenses (?) in the whole arsenal of so-called arguments seeking justification for this innovation is resorting to what David did. There is no disagreement about David's usage of such. Whether he was ever authorized to use such by God is another matter. I am persuaded that he was not authorized to introduce such. Regardless of whether he was authorized or unauthorized, he lived under a different law than we do. David lived under a law that demanded circumcision as a religious rite, the keeping of the sabbath day, the officiation of a special priesthood (the Levitical order), infant membership in the Israelite Economy, the offering of animal sacrifices, and a host of other practices not commanded under the Christian covenant. Is the person who appeals to David's example relative to mechanical music willing to appeal to David's example in these other realms? David also practiced polygamy on a rather extended basis. He even obtained one of his many, many wives through the most foul of methods -- adultery, deception, and murder. Shall we follow him in this realm? David is not our law-giver. He is not our Prophet, Priest, and King. What *Jesus* authorized is the all-pervading issue -- not what the Shepherd King of Jerusalem three thousand years ago did, or did not do. Those who use David as their authority would do well to note what a later Hebrew prophet penned

toward David's mechanical music, "Woe to them . . . That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick like David; . . ." (Amos 6:1, 5). That "Woe" does not inculcate a like duplication of David's practice -- by any stretch of the imagination.

THE MUSIC OF LUKE 15:25

The argument has even been advanced that since there was music upon the return of the wayward prodigal of Luke 15 that such is permissible for use now in Christian worship. Any cause is drastically desperate and hard-pressed indeed for supporting proof when a resort is made toward this type of lame reasoning. Real reasoning it is NOT!! I wonder what the mention of "dancing" would permit because the music *and dancing* were both linked in the same verse. What will the robe, ring, shoes, and the slaying of the fatted calf permit? They, too, are a part of the context (Luke 15:22, 23). Would anybody allow me to suggest that steak would be all right served on the Lord's Table next Sunday and use Luke 15:23 as my supporting proof? Steak is from fatted calves you know!! Such would be no greater abuse or more grievous misuse of Luke 15:23 than using the "music" of Luke 15:25 as attempted proof to get music in worship from Luke 15:25. Luke 15:25 is set in the context of a home situation -- not one involving Christian worship.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

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—Acts 26:35

1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama, on a non-profit basis. Entered as Second Class Matter at Haleyville, Alabama post office. Send change of address notices on POD Form 3579 to Box 430, Haleyville, AL 35565.

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS . . . Editor

1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501

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"You Can Count On Me, Lord!"

Few of us give much thought to the amount of pressure we would be able to withstand before we would yield our convictions. Perhaps, too often, there is so little conviction that we have done no "yielding." Even the Apostle Peter had convinced himself of a far greater devotion to the Lord than he really had. Jesus said, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: . . . But



Edsel Burleson

Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise" (Mark 14:27-31).

Peter was saying, "You can count on me, Lord." But how wrong he was about himself, as verses 67-72 show.

Early Christians faced numerous situations which required great suffering, or even death, unless they renounced their faith. One such example was Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna in Asia Minor, who died in 155 A.D. When brought before the governor and commanded to curse the name of Jesus Christ, he answered, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he has done me nothing but good; and how could I curse him, my Lord and Saviour!" He was then burned to death.

A number of years ago when our late brother Marshall Keeble was on a preaching tour in Nigeria, he converted a ju-ju witchdoctor. This new convert immediately destroyed his

Continued on page 4



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

An Appreciation Dinner For Guy N. Woods

Garland Elkins

EDITOR'S NOTE: As an admirer of Bro. Guy N. Woods, I am happy to print in the Editorial column this announcement of a dinner in his honor. I trust many brethren will attend. I concur in the appraisal of his accomplishments expressed in the following article.

Brother Guy N. Woods is an extraordinary Christian gentleman. For more than half a century he has excelled as a preacher of the ancient gospel. He has distinguished himself as an outstanding debater, having engaged in more debates than any other man in this generation. His poignant pen has been busy as a writer of many religious articles which have appeared in numerous journals, but he has done most of his writing for the *Gospel Advocate* spanning a period of more than forty years. For three and one-half years he has distinguished himself as one of the most capable of all of the editors of the *Gospel Advocate*.

He has written many valuable books. For more than thirty years he conducted the annual Open Forum at Freed-Hardeman College during lectureships. It is the judgment of this writer (and thousands of others concur) that no man could have done a better job, and few, if any, could have equalled his efforts. The first volume of *Questions And Answers Open Forum — Freed-Hardeman College Lectures* by Guy N. Woods has been in print for several years. Thousands of these books are in circulation. Brother Woods is currently working on a second volume of *Questions And Answers* dealing with questions that he received and answered during Open Forums at Freed-Hardeman. He has sought to avoid dealing specifically with any of the questions that were answered in the first volume or in the volume entitled *Questions Answered* by Lipscomb and Sewell. Like its companion volume, this second book will be a masterpiece, a collector's item. Few men in this generation or in any generation have accomplished more for the Lord than brother Guy N. Woods.

We are aware that there is a sense in which we are not to compare ourselves with others (II Corinthians 10:12), but in the sense of faithfulness and service to God we believe that brother Guy N. Woods would compare favorably to the spiritual giants of this or of any other generation.

In an effort to show at least token appre-

ciation for brother Guy N. Woods, during the Tenth Annual *Spiritual Sword* Lectureship the elders, and also Thomas B. Warren, Garland Elkins, and the entire membership of the Getwell Church of Christ (along with numerous other brethren who will be in attendance) propose to honor brother Woods for his great contributions to the Cause of the Lord. The Bible teaches us to "render to all their dues . . . honor to whom honor" (Romans 13:7). On October 23, 1985, at 5:00 p.m. there will be an Appreciation Dinner for brother Woods. The dinner will be catered, and tickets may be obtained by writing to the address below. Following the dinner, appropriate tributes will be paid to brother Woods. Plans for honoring brother Woods include the following speakers and subjects:

Thomas B. Warren - Master of Ceremonies
Wendell Winkler — "Guy N. Woods As A Preacher"

Garland Elkins — "Guy N. Woods And The F-HC Open Forum"

Alan E. Highers — "Guy N. Woods As A Debater"

Roy Deaver — "Guy N. Woods As A Scholar"
Robert R. Taylor, Jr. — "Guy N. Woods As A Writer"

Noel Merideth — "Guy N. Woods As An Editor"

Curtis A. Cates — "Guy N. Woods — His General Influence In Education In The Training of Preachers"

Harrell Davidson — "Guy N. Woods As A Ham Operator"

Emerson J. Estes — "Guy N. Woods -- Overall Summary Of His Work"

We hope that great numbers of brethren from across the nation will be present to honor brother Woods. We are inviting brethren everywhere to write letters to us with appropriate tributes to him. We plan to bind those letters and present them to brother Woods during the program on October 23, 1985.

—Minister, Getwell Church of Christ, 1511 Getwell Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38111.

Annual Denton Lectures Nov. 10-14, 1985

The FOURTH ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES will be hosted by the Pearl St. church in Denton, TX. The theme of the lectures is "Studies in Acts." There will be five types of material presented: expository sermons on the entire text of Acts; lectures dealing with false doctrines relating to Acts; lectures on prominent topics in Acts; lectures on many of the difficult passages in Acts; and a daily "Discussion Forum" on controversial subjects.

In alphabetical order the speakers are:

Continued on page 3

What Hinders Militancy? A Militant Church

(No. 4)

Thus far in our series on the militant church we have learned that God desires the church to be aggressively active against the powers of Satan. We have also considered some of the forces against which we must show our aggression. In the next two installments we want to consider some of the things which hinder the militancy of the army of God.



Victor M. Eskew

One of the first obstacles to a militant church is *poor leadership*. Poor leadership is characterized by numerous items; (1) a failure to possess the qualifications God has given for elders (I Timothy 3; Titus 1); (2) a lack of leadership ability; (3) fear of criticism and opposition to forceful campaigns; (4) an unconcerned attitude in carrying out the commands of the Master; (5) willingness to compromise truth; and (6) more concern for the physical than for the spiritual. Others could be added to our list, but when one of the above or a combination of them exists, the leadership will not be *actively opposed* to evil. And if the leadership is not as it should be, then the company they are leading will be of the same caliber.

A *lack of knowledge* is a second barrier to having a militant church. Destruction of the ignorant is the inevitable end, even of those who attempt a skirmish against the enemy (Hosea 4:6). First and foremost there must be knowledge of how to operate the weapon we are to use in battle. This, therefore, requires that the army of the Lord possess a workable knowledge of the word of God, because this is our sword (Ephesians 6:17). Oh, how we have fallen short in this area! Few in the church can locate the plan of salvation, much less wage warfare against Pentecostalism, premillennialism, Advertism, Mormonism, and the other false doctrines found among the denominational world. The sword has been sheathed, and is removed from its resting place only for a few minutes each week by most. As real soldiers need to know how to tear down, rebuild, load, and fire their weapon, we, too, must possess this knowledge. If not, militancy is hindered.

Knowledge must also include knowledge of the enemy. Before proceeding in battle the U.S. troops are briefed about the enemy. They know the location of the enemy, the number against which they will fight, the amount of weapons and artillery which the enemy possesses, and some of their techniques used in battle. If physical armies can see the importance of knowing the enemy, why cannot the church? Yet, it seems that most want to be ignorant of the harmful influences they will do battle with from day to day. They think that if they have no knowledge of the enemy, he will not hurt them. How deceived these soldiers are! For whether we know our enemy or not, he will be on the offensive against us, and his mission is to kill the soul.

A third hindrance to militancy is *worldliness*.

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (II Timothy 2:4). Many a battle has been lost because the troops were engaged in revelry and merriment, rather than concentrating upon the war. The church today is also losing many battles because its soldiers have become entangled in the affairs of this life. Young people can be found concentrating on education, part-time jobs, clubs and societies, boy-friends and girl-friends, all affairs of this

life -- rather than on the spiritual warfare they should be fighting as soldiers of Christ. Older people become wrapped up in careers, hobbies, recreation, social events, the children and grandchildren, providing a good retirement, and numerous other activities of this life to the neglect of the conflict between the powers of good and evil. Yes, involving ourselves in the affairs of this life has most definitely hindered our militancy!

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, Ms 38843.

Annual Denton Lectures Nov. 10-14, 1985

Continued From Page 2

Curtis Cates, Winford Claiborne, Darrell Conley, Andrew Conally, Mac Deaver, Byron Denman, Buster Dobbs, Bobby Duncan, Garland Elkins, Perry Hall, Bill Jackson, Wayne Jackson, B. B. James, Dub McClish, Pat McGee, James Meadows, J. Noel Merideth, Jerry Moffitt, Goebel Music, Flavil Nichols, Steve Orduno, Johnny Ramsey, Oran Rhodes, Ira Rice, Don Tarbet, Robert R. Taylor, Jr., Bert Thompson, John Waddey, Thomas B. Warren, Marvin Weir, Wendell Winkler and Gary Workman.

Housing in the homes of area Christians will be made available on a "first-come-first served" basis. Denton is also served by several motels. Water and electrical hook-ups will be furnished at no charge for travel

trailers and motor homes (call or write for reservations -- we had 26 rigs last year). A staffed nursery will be provided for all sessions at no charge.

The Pearl St. church aims for this lecture series to provide sound, solid and practical Bible teaching. Much of the material presented will also combat false doctrine, both within and without the church. A book of approximately 500 pages containing these lectures will be available during ADL for \$13.00 (add \$1.50 postage for one book, 6 percent for more than one book for mail orders). Audio and video tapes will also be available. Inquiries may be addressed to Dub McClish, 312 Pearl St., Denton, TX 76201; 817/387-3531.

"The Day Of The Lord Will Come!"

In the privacy of Jehovah God's mind lies a pre-determined day, for "he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31). Such is termed "the day of judgment" (Matthew 11:22), "the day of the Lord" (I Thessalonians 5:2), "the day of God" (II Peter 3:12), and "the last day" (John 12:48). On this day, the isthmus of time set between two vast seas of eternity will blend into the never-ending nightmare of hell or the never-ending bliss of heaven. For this cause, Jesus warned, "Be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 24:44).

To incite a greater readiness for this day, consider the following three questions as answered by Peter in the third chapter of his second epistle.

WILL THE LORD REALLY RETURN
TO JUDGE ALL MANKIND? (II Peter 3:3-10)

Is the second coming of Jesus and the day of judgment actually to transpire? or, is such the "scare tactics" of preachers, used to manipulate people into a specific lifestyle? Peter answered with a brazen certainty: "The day of the Lord will come" (II Peter 3:10)! To undergird this confident certainty, Peter directed his readers to:

(1) *The irrationality of those who mockingly denied*



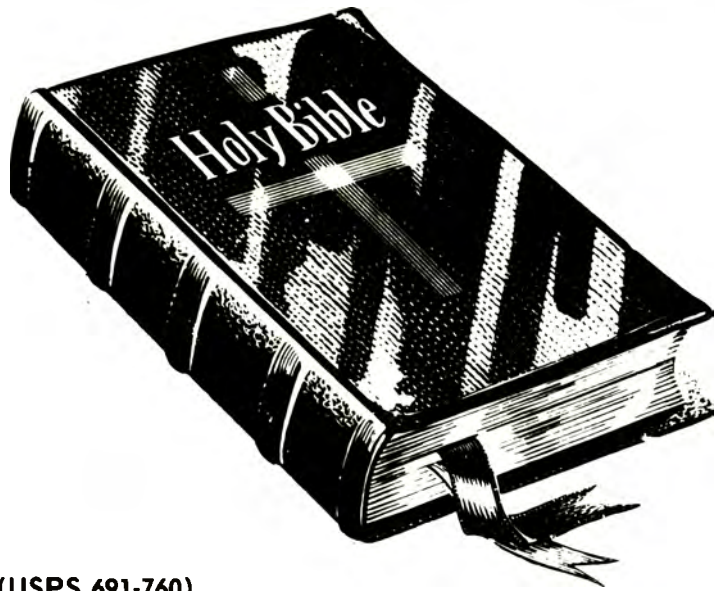
Dan Winkler

the second coming (II Peter 3:3-7). "Where is the promise of his coming?" the mockers asked. Their denial was based on thoughts of uniformity: "Since the day of our fathers things have not changed." In answer to such denials, Peter first rebuked the mockers' character, "This they willfully forget." Note: they did not forget out of senility or negligence; they forgot willfully. They prejudicially turned from the evidence. Secondly, Peter refuted the mockers' premise of uniformity by setting forth three basic changes that had transpired: the heavens were brought into existence out of nothing (Cf. Genesis 1:1); the earth was compacted out of and amidst water (Genesis 1:9-13); and, the earth was destroyed by a universal flood (Genesis 6-8).

(2) *The nature of the Lord* (II Peter 3:8-9). Whereas the mockers had willfully forgotten explicit evidence, Peter charged his readers not to forget the Lord's nature. First, he bore reference to the Lord's eternal existence in that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (Cf. Psalms 90:2; John 1:1-3, 14). Peter's point: with the Lord engulfing eternity, he should not be deemed negligent because his return does not fit into man's limited speculations or expectations. Secondly, Peter referred to the Lord's integrity. He "is not slack concerning his promise" to come again. He promised to return as judge of all mankind (Matthew 25:31, 32) and he will keep his word (Cf. Titus 1:2).

Just as surely as Jesus marched victoriously from the tomb, he will come again! (Acts 17:31). Just as surely as man shakes hands

Continued on page 4



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of



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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1985

NUMBER 36

Why Mechanical Music Is Used

(No. II)

We are currently noting some of the arguments(?) advanced by people who use mechanically-made music in their worship. If you read these with an open mind, I think you will have to conclude that they all are totally void of New Testament authorization and Biblical warrant for acceptable usage in Christian worship.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

"WE SHOULD USE OUR TALENTS FOR GOD"

Those employing this argument (?) evidently feel that ALL talents are special gifts from God and should be used in worshipping him. Those who play well on mechanical instruments of music thus have one of these special gifts, it is contended. Hence, it should be used to worship God. Such reasoning is absolutely preposterous!! What about a person who has the talent to tap-dance? Should this be injected into Christian worship? What about the person who can perform well in the area of acrobatics or gymnastics? Should such be injected into Christian worship? What about people in sports who are gifted at throwing a football, hitting home runs in baseball, or making beautiful goals from far out in basketball games? Should these be done as matters of Christian worship? What about the person who paints well? What about a person who can perform with art and skill the clever techniques of a master magician? Should his "trick of hand" demonstrations and display be used as Christian worship? Nothing should be used as Christian worship unless Jehovah or Jesus has

authorized such.

"IT MAKES US FEEL GOOD"

Some contend that the melodious music that comes from the piano and the organ makes people feel so good and uplifts their religious feelings. The same could be offered for the burning of incense and the counting of beads. Some far-out groups religiously are now showing dirty movies, or using strip-tease artists in a live show to get people to come for their worship. Mechanical music appeals to the ear; the burning of incense appeals to the nose; the counting of beads appeals to the sense of touch; the showing of feminine flesh in a strip-tease act is an appeal to the sensual or base appetites of men and boys. Each is an appeal to one of man's physical senses or appetites for justification, and not to the Bible for supporting proof. The important thing is totally missing from this attempted argument -- how does God feel. Man's feelings about the propriety and correctness of a practice do not ensure God's feelings will be the same. The Bible says, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). The "Behold, I thought" philosophy was almost the ruin of the leprous Naaman (II Kings 5:11). Paul said, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26:9). But Paul was grossly mistaken while looking to his own thinking as a religious guide. Christian worship is to include what God has authorized and sanctioned, not what makes a man feel good. How God feels is the thing that counts, not the feelings of man. There are many things that give people a temporary good feeling but which would not be an appropriate or right act for Christian worship at all. Paul Southern has well stated: "Nothing is expedient in worship unless it is required by God" (WHAT IS WRONG? p. 102).

"WE USE THEM AT HOME; WHY NOT IN WORSHIP?"

Those employing this argument(?) feel that since the piano, organ, or some other mechanical instrument is all right in the home, it would be perfectly permissible to have it in the worship also. But such proves too much. It is perfectly all right to have steak, potatoes, gravy, and iced tea in the home for a meal; but who would advocate that these are perfectly permissible ingredients for use in the Lord's Supper each Sunday? While our children were growing up we had a Ping-Pong table in the basement of our home. I spent many pleasant hours with both of them in this wholesome activity. But a Ping-Pong contest in a worship assembly would be wrong; it would be sinful. Many wholesome activities can be carried on within the confines of the home environment that could not be done acceptably in Christian worship at all. The home and the church are both divine institutions but that does not prove that all acts acceptable in a home situation would be all right in a religious assembly.

Not any of these commonly-employed arguments(?) can be supported by ardent, accurate appeals to sacred Scripture. That is what the proponents for mechanical music need in order to substantiate their practice. This is the ONE thing they desperately lack.

Reader friends, PLEASE THINK ON THESE THINGS if the mechanical instrument in Christian worship is fondly favored in your way of thinking!

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

Think before you act; think twice before you speak.

* * * *

Folks who never change their minds have stripped the gears.



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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

A Correction

A statement was unintentionally omitted from the article by Bro. Kenneth Bayles on page 2 of Words of Truth dated July 12, 1985 (Vol. 22, No. 28), which materially alters the gospel plan of salvation. We regret this error, and in order to properly correct the accidental omission, below is the context in which it occurred as it should read:

"Just Trust In The Lord"

Kenneth Bayles

"Biblical 'Trust'"

An adult man can recall the days of his youth when his father would place him high upon a fence. Father then would stretch forth his

arms and tell his son, "Jump, and I will catch you." On every occasion I jumped! Never was I allowed to fall to the ground! Why did I jump? I TRUSTED, had confidence in, and was sure that his words were true and that he would do exactly as he had stated. My friends, our heavenly Father says what he means, and means what he says.

We can trust the Bible when it says -- (1) that ALL men are amenable to the law of Christ (Acts 17:30); (2) that one day there will be a universal judgment (Hebrews 9:27); (3) that the words of the Christ will be the standard by which we are judged (John 12:48); (4) that the wicked will be cast into the eternal fire (Matthew 25:41); (5) that the righteous will inherit the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 25:34); and (6) that *all* spiritual blessings are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

If all spiritual blessings are in Christ, the conclusion which is demanded is that there are NO spiritual blessings outside of Christ. To be in Christ is to be in his body, the church (Colossians 1:18). In order to be a recipient of the spiritual blessings of the Christ, you must trust his word to the extent that you *obey* it. Do you trust in the Lord's command to -- hear his word (Romans 10:17)? Believe on him (John 3:16)? Repent of your sins (Luke 13:3)? Confess him as Lord (Romans 10:9-10)? Be baptized for the remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38)? Endure to the end (Matthew 10:22)?

To Sweet Singer of Israel said, "Trust in the Lord, and do good," (Psalms 37:3). Indeed! The obedient one is the one who truly TRUSTS in the Lord.

—P.O. Box 897, Wetumpka, AL 36092.

Mrs. Gus Nichols To Be Honored

"How lady-like, how queen-like she appears:
Noble by birth, yet nobler by great deeds."
—Tales of a Wayside Inn.

Mrs. Gus Nichols is to be honored by Faulkner University (formerly Alabama Christian College) in Montgomery, Alabama, during their 44th Annual Lectureship, September 15-18, 1985. The dinner in her honor is to be held Tuesday, September 17th, at 5:30 p.m., in the cafeteria on the campus.

The widow of the late Gus Nichols, for whom the library at Alabama Christian College was named, resides in Jasper, where he preached for 43 years. Her husband was the founder of *Words of Truth* and was its editor until his death. She was 91 years old March 29th, and continues to support Christian education. Mrs. Nichols is a great influence among Christians wherever she is known.

Her children, along with the college, invite you to attend the dinner. For reservations please call the college: 1-800-824-4527 (outside Alabama: 1-800-427-0387).

Your God Is Too Small!

Isaiah chided Israel for believing in idols. He pointed out how small their gods were. The people went out and cut down a tree. Most of it was used as fuel for a fire to warm, and to cook by. A small portion was taken and carved into an idol. When finished, it was sent to the smith to be covered with gold. When completed, the owner set it in his house and bowed down to what he had made. This idol had to be carried from one place to another. It could do nothing for itself (Isaiah 41:6-7; 44:9-20; 46:5-7)! It could neither tell the future, nor deliver the family of Israel from trouble (Isaiah 41:21-29). Their gods were too small!

What about us? Some seem to think the growth of the kingdom depends upon the STRENGTH that RESIDES IN the members. If a task seems impossible, we "chicken out." We think, "It can't be done." We often say, "We've never done it before," or "Let us be realistic about this." These are nothing but excuses, mouthed by little people with a small god. The strength of the church does not reside in us, but in Jesus! Paul said, "I have planted, Apollos watered; BUT GOD gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; BUT GOD that GIVETH THE INCREASE . . . For we are laborers TOGETHER WITH GOD" (I Corinthians 3:6-9, all emphasis mine, RH). To think the increase of the kingdom depends ENTIRELY upon us is to be guilty of replacing God with our own strength. That would be a very small god indeed!

We sometimes get so lost in our smallness that we fail to see the GREAT THINGS God can do with us IF we will only be "laborers/workers together with him" (II Corinthians



Ray Hawk

6:1). If the church in the first century could multiply day after day, so can we WITH God giving the increase (Acts 6:1, 7; 9:31). It will take strong hearts and courageous people who move out on faith before the "impossible" becomes common place (Romans 1:16, 17). We must return to the practices of the first century (Acts 2:46, 47; 5:42). We must stop thinking SMALL and start believing BIG. "I can do ALL things IN him that strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

Any time a congregation has success, others may react sourly. Some will criticize rather than celebrate. They will pick rather than praise. However, as Nehemiah would not give in to unjust and destructive criticism, neither should we (Nehemiah 6:3). Just because others follow a petty god does not mean we should be trapped by their example.

Do you think it is impossible to have 100-150 plus souls saved each year by each congregation? If so, you are caught in the trap of small thinking. Many congregations have become satisfied with ten or fifteen baptisms a year. Converting has been left to the "professionals!" The average "pew-warmer" feels no responsibility to comply with Mark 16:16. He applies the great commission to "the staff" of "his church."

If we are interested in RESTORING New Testament Christianity, we MUST get EVERY member INVOLVED in converting the lost. Large numbers of baptisms are not impossible. God will do his part if we do ours!

I watched the series "Columbus" a few weeks ago. Christopher Columbus felt God had a special mission in life for him. Whether this was so is not as important to me as how do we feel about OUR mission in life? God has a special work for us (Mark 16:15, 16; Matthew 28:19, 20). He is WITH us (I Corinthians 3:9; II Corinthians 6:1).

If the church taught great numbers of people DAILY to have "multitudes" obeying the gospel in the first century, we MUST do likewise to have the same results today. How large is YOUR God?

—39 Webb Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

A Militant Church — (No. V)

What Hinders Militancy?

Our last installment reviewed three hinderances to a militant church: poor leadership, lack of knowledge, and involvement in the affairs of this world. A fourth hinderance is the *failure to recognize the authority of leadership*. A leader may possess all the attributes of a capable and effective leader, yet if his men fail to recognize his authority, the battle will be lost. Over the church God has placed elders. This group of men has the "rule" over the congregation (as long as they abide in Biblical teaching), and the members must "obey" them. "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" (Hebrews 13:17). Many churches have highly qualified leaders, but because the members imagine that *they* have as much authority as the elders, they rebel; and the militant church ceases the battle. Such teachings as evangelistic authority, and elders ruling merely by example, have helped to bolster this obstacle. We long for the day when the church stands behind its leaders, giving those who rule well the honour the Bible demands: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word



Victor M. Eskew

and doctrine" (I Timothy 5:17).

Strife and division among the members of the army is a fourth blockade to militancy. When an army unit is divided, it cannot fight effectively against an aggressor. Too, when a church is divided, Satan can well have his way. When members of a congregation bite and devour one another, they in a short time will consume one another. Thus, Paul says: "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Galatians 5:15). On the other hand, if the congregation dwells together in unity, the potential of taking the world is unlimited. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me*" (John 17:20, 21, emp. mine).

A final obstacle we will enumerate is *poor communication*. Several wars have been lost be-

cause, either the leaders did not communicate with one another, or, the leaders and soldiers did not communicate. All of us need lessons in learning to communicate one with another. The Bible clearly stresses our going to one another when differences and offenses come among ourselves. Matthew 5:21-26 teaches this as well as the classic Matthew 18:15: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." This confrontation needs to take place quickly, even before the sun does down on thy wrath (Ephesians 4:26). Failing to effectively communicate will solve insurmountable problems, such as misunderstanding, and confusion, which things hinder the militant church.

This closes our section on things which hinder militancy. In next week's article we will view some ways we can be militant.

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS 38843.

Do You Want The Truth Told?

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Hebrews 11:4). The things people see in our lives continue to influence them long after we have gone from this life. Often, the actions or habits that we scarcely notice are making deep impressions.



Edsel Burleson

Someone told the story of having gone to a funeral parlor to pay respect to the earthly remains of an old acquaintance. Some thoughtful person had placed in her hands a well-worn Bible. It looked fitting and symbolic. One could see how her face used to shine as she would sit for hours and read from its pages. Yes, it was most appropriate.

What if someone put the thing that would seem most appropriate in *our* hands after we die? Would it be a cigarette? a bottle? fishing pole? car keys? a knob from the television set? hunting rifle? a deck of cards? or a worn Bible? or a Bible not worn at all? What would you want put in your hands?

Almost everybody is prone to underestimate the influence he has upon his associates.

There is a degree to which we influence every person whose life touches ours. Paul said, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself" Romans 14:7.

What about your attitude toward the church? your attendance? your stewardship? what are these saying to your associates? These do show the truth about you and about me.

A certain preacher received in the mail this request, "Will you please tell us all you know about Mr. A., his character, his habits, and his financial responsibility?"

His reply was, "I found his name on the roll of the church when I came here two years ago. Neither he nor his family attend church. They say it is the only time father can sleep mornings. His name is not recorded in our treasurer's book, so I cannot tell anything about his financial responsibility. This is all I know."

Somehow the letter got back to Mr. A. Was he ever burned up? and did he get that preacher told! Among the things he said was, "Any minister worthy of the name should know that a man's relationship to the church and his financial contributions are of a confidential nature."

So the preacher wrote a second letter. "All I know of the gentleman in question is of a confidential nature and he has explicitly requested that I not tell the truth."

Do we want the truth told? It WILL be one day! (Romans 14:12).

West End Church of Christ, 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

"Creation Vs Evolution"

Rod Rutherford

Russell C. Artist, retired chairman of the Department of Biology, David Lipscomb College, Nashville, Tennessee, presents a one-day "Creation Versus Evolution" seminar wherever he is invited.

Artist, a former missionary to Switzerland and Germany, holds the Ph.D. degree in biology with a minor in geology from the University of Minnesota. A former agnostic, Artist was converted by Otis Gatewood during his work in Salt Lake City in the 1940's. A member and past president of the Tennessee Bible Science Association, he currently serves as minister for the Hills Chapel congregation in Nashville.

Brother Artist is a scientist of the first rank and has a profound knowledge of, and respect for, the word of God. Our faculty and student body were blessed June 28 by his excellent presentation of the facts of science and their complete agreement with the Bible account of creation. We would highly recommend this learned Christian and his faith-building presentation to any church or Christian school.

—Easte Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions, 6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

The Heart Of The Machine

Doug Milligan

Two brilliant scientists once undertook a great endeavor. They planned to build a perfect machine. Their goal was to design a computer which would solve all the problems of mankind. Their machine would store all of the medical information available to science, thus it would be able to make perfect diagnoses

and recommend the perfect treatment.

Their machine would use perfect logic to solve all disputes and thus would end all wars. It would direct all agriculture and thus end all famine. It would control the population, end

Continued on page 4

"Get Your Goose Juice!"

While at an Atlanta Braves baseball game recently, I heard one of the hawkers cry out, "Get your goose juice, goose juice, Budweiser! Budweiser!"

This hawker knew what his brew would make out of those who bought from him! Solomon, long years ago said, "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? they that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again" (Proverbs 23:29-35). It seems that the wise man of long ago thought that alcohol was "goose juice" and would make a man behold strange things and utter perverse things.

As I sat there viewing the Atlanta Braves winning a game, another hawker yelled out, "Got an alcohol problem? I've got the answer — Budweiser! Budweiser!" I thought of the tragic statistics relating to alcohol and then watched the people laugh at the hawkers words and raise their hands and holler, "I'll take two!"

The rain started falling about the fourth inning and the umpires called for a "rain delay" in the game. We stood around the concession area where it was nice and dry and waited for a break in the weather. During that delay we observed some of those who had been



Demar Elam

drinking earlier and observed that they continued to drink their beer. They started acting extremely silly for grown men. To observe these men conducting themselves in such a way brought to mind again the words of the wise man. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler: and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1). The prophet Isaiah said, "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink" (Isaiah 5:22).

The weather improved and the game resumed. Many baseball *goers* had left but the *die-hard* fans scrambled back to their seats to see if Atlanta would indeed win this game. No sooner were we seated when the cry of a hawker rang out, "If you're dumb enough to sit out here in the rain, you're dumb enough to buy my beer — Budwesier! Budweiser!" I

thought to myself, "He's right in two ways. We're dumb for sitting here in the rain and they're dumb for drinking that beer."

What good things comes from the drinking of alcohol? The fruits of alcoholic beverages are always evil. The New Testament has numerous explicit condemnations of alcohol and its effects. Drunkards will not go to heaven (I Corinthians 6:9-11). Drunkenness is a work of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). Christians are not to be "drunk with wine but, filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18).

Does the Bible contradict itself? Does it both extol and condemn alcohol? The Bible calls alcohol a mocker, a brawler and those who drink it are unwise. Yes, perhaps this hawker's cry says it all, "Get your 'goose juice' — Budweiser! Budweiser!"

—2072 Valley Woods Dr., Riverdale, GA 30296.

What Are You Worth?

Several years ago I read that the human body is worth \$.98. Just a few days ago our local paper had a brief article that said that the 5 pounds of calcium, 1.5 pounds of phosphorus, 9 ounces of potassium, 6 ounces of magnesium and an ounce each of iron, copper and iodine that make up

our bodies are now worth --\$8.37. Lest we feel we are not worth very much, here are facts I found several years ago. The hemoglobin in our body is worth \$83.63. The crystallin insulin, \$1,367 per ounce. Follicle stimulation hormone, \$136,000 per ounce and prolactin \$496,000 per ounce. The total value of the chemicals in a 168 pound human is over \$6,000,000! We are all 6 million dollar men!

Yet these are only the value of the elements and compounds of man. Man



Ancil Jenkins

possesses something worth much, much more than this. Man is endowed with a living soul. This soul is made in the image of God and will live forever (Genesis 1:27; Ecclesiastes 12:7). Jesus said that nothing is equal to the value of the soul (Matthew 16:26).

The value of the soul of man is seen in what it is compared to in worth. Christ gave his life to save the soul of man and to ransom us from sin's power.

Our bodies are priceless by man's values. Our soul is worth far, far more than our bodies. Let us give them both the respect due because of their worth. Let us give God the glory for these great gifts.

—South Miami Church of Christ, 8445 Sunset Drive, Miami, FL 23143.

The Amazing Grace Bible Class

The historic Cane Ridge Meeting House, near Paris, Kentucky, was the site of a recent taping of the Amazing Grace Bible Class. The theme of this special program is the 'Restoration Movement' and its roots, with emphasis on Barton W. Stone and his contribution to the restoration of New Testament Christianity. In addition to Bro. Mankin's lesson, Bro. Cecil Wright appears on the program with a synopsis of the life and work of Barton Stone. This unique presentation may be seen in the various Amazing Grace markets during the fall of '85 and the winter of '86.

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The Heart Of The Machine

Continued from page 3

pollution, manage cities, enforce the law and stop all crime. It was a glorious plan!

After years of work they finally completed their project. The machine was capable of everything they had dreamed. Technically, it was a great success! But in practice their wonderful machine proved a colossal failure! You see, there was one thing even two brilliant scientists could not do: they could not give their machine a heart! They could not instill within the micro-chips, and diodes the passion of a patriot for justice and liberty! They could not give their machine a soul of compassion and mercy! They could not make it stir zeal and enthusiasm in the hearts of men! Their machine was just a machine!

There are many lessons to be learned from this parable. It was written to illustrate that no program or method, no matter how close to perfect, is going to save even one soul if we do not develop the *heart* of a soul winner! God forbid that we should ever become so dependent upon programs and plans and methods that we trust in them more than in

the *gospel* of Christ! There is but one problem which keeps us from preaching the Gospel to all the world, and there is but one way to overcome this problem. We do not have the mind of Christ in us to the extent that we truly love the lost! We have not learned the lesson of doing things the way Jesus did. We often say "the Lord told us to go into all the world, but he didn't tell us how." That is not entirely true: Paul tells us how in II Timothy 2:2. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." The only solution is to die to self and sin, and to live for Christ! Colossians 3:2-4 says "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, WHO IS OUR LIFE, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Is Jesus your "life" today? Or are you just a spiritual machine without a heart?

—Rt. 4, Box 391, Hamilton, AL 35570.



(USPS 691-760)

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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Why Mechanical Music Is Used

(No. III)

The New Testament is as silent as a tomb relative to the authorization of mechanically-made music for Christian worship. Yet this self-evident silence has been little respected or heeded by modern religionists. Currently, I am noting some of the attempted arguments (?) set forth by the determined devotees of mechanical music for its employment in their worship.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

had harps. But this is not the way it is done today. If the piano is used, every one does NOT have a piano. If the organ is used, every one does NOT have an organ upon which to play. Such would not work well at all where hundreds or perhaps thousands are in one religious assembly!! Why see that word "harps" as being in great big letters, but for all practical purposes ignore that expression "EVERY ONE?" Without exception the succeeding verse in each of these cases mentions "singing," not "playing" -- not even a combination of "singing and playing." Revelation 5:9 says: "And they sing a new song, saying, . . ." (American Standard Version). Revelation 14:3 says, "and they sing as it were a new song before the throne, . . ." (A.S.V.). In Revelation 15:3, "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, . . ." (A.S.V.). In Revelation 14:2 the Seer of Patmos heard the "VOICE" of harpers harping with their harps. It was the "VOICE" -- not the PLAYING -- which he heard. Revelation 15:2 simply mentions those who had the harps of God. No mention is made of their being played.

of the early disciples offering? Where did they ever offer incense along with prayers in Christian worship? Jesus said there would be no marriage in heaven (Luke 20:34, 35). Does this mean we can have no marriage among Christians now? It surely does if what either is (or, is not) in heaven is to be our chief standard of authority for Christian worship and Christian living. Paul says flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, or the heavenly kingdom on high in yonder's world (I Corinthians 15:50). Does this then mean that no flesh and blood can be in the Lord's church here? If it does mean this, that eliminates all of us from church membership, for we all partake of flesh and blood characteristics in the here and now. Any argument that proves TOO MUCH, really proves nothing!!

"If In Heaven, Why Not In The Church?" Some argue that mechanical music will be in heaven and therefore we may use such in the church now. The passages upon which they rely for this argument are all taken from Revelation, a highly figurative and deeply symbolic book. There are three passages to which they usually resort. They read,

It would be quite interesting to hear these desperate proponents give a lecture on how strictly spiritual beings can play upon material harps?

The proponents of mechanical music for Christian worship need to find their supporting proof in other areas than appeals to what David did in the Old Testament, or what may be or may not be in heaven. Why not find where Christ authorized it for his church? Why not find where the Spirit commanded it for the church? Why not find where an apostle endorsed its use in Christian worship? These are areas in which supporting proof for the practice of mechanical music needs to be found. Who will come forth with the type of proof that is really needed for the commonly-practiced usage of mechanical music in worship for today?

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours (incense--marginal reference), which are the prayers of saints . . . And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps . . . And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God (Revelation 5:8; 14:2; 15:2).

The following observations are certainly in order. In the first verse cited EVERY ONE

I wonder if these mechanical music proponents are willing to follow their logic to some of its ultimate conclusions. Are we free to have everything in the church that is in heaven? Brother Marshall Keeble used to say that he read of a white horse in heaven but that did not mean we could have a white horse in the church (Revelation 19:11). But someone quickly counters by saying the horse is figurative. Then what about the harps? We read about the offering of incense along with the prayers of the saints of heaven (Revelation 8:3, 4). Does this then mean we can offer incense with our prayers in Christian worship? Does this mean we can offer to God in Christian worship that which we never read

The most trouble is produced by those who do not produce anything else.

* * * *


Truth does not hurt unless it ought to.

* * * *

Killing time is not murder — it is suicide.

* * * *

Our heart is the main spring for the tongue.



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
—Acts 26:35

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Ways We Can Be A Militant Church

No. 6

In Philippians 1:17 the apostle Paul stated that he was set for the defence of the gospel. Paul was a militant member of the Lord's church. He was ready both for offensive fighting and defensive battling. So must we be, as members of the blood-bought institution of our Lord (Acts 20:28). But we might wonder: "In what ways can I show forth militancy?" This we want to answer in this installment.



Victor M. Eskew

Study is where militancy begins. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of God" (II Timothy 2:15). With study, one grows and matures in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. And at a full age one is able to discern between good and evil. "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:14). This ability of discernment is essential in the fight against wickedness. Thus, militancy begins with study.

Once we have acquired the needed knowledge, we must then put it into action. It must be put into action first in our lives. Until our lives harmonize with the message of truth, we will do as well to sit at home. Paul teaches the essentiality of taking heed to self in the saving of others: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:16).

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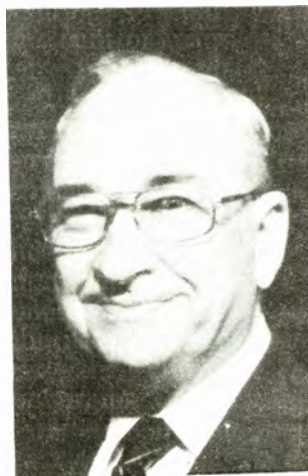


The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Biographical Sketches Of Gospel Preachers

With this issue I begin a series of articles about preachers who have "laid the foundation" (I Corinthians 3:10) upon which others later built. Brother H. Leo Boles published "Biographical Sketches Of Gospel Preachers" in 1932, including in it some of the preachers who blazed the trail in this general area. From the Gospel Advocate Company I have obtained permission to reproduce some of these sketches for our readers. For this permission we are duly grateful.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

There is no precise order in which these will be given, but chronology is taken into consideration.

In the preface of this book Brother Boles wrote:

"Honor to whom honor" is due, is a divine injunction; another command of God is to "love the brotherhood." An earnest desire to please God in these two commandments has resulted in the production of this book. The fruits of Christianity may be seen in the great men which it has produced; great not according to the standards of the world but according to the standards of true greatness. In the following "Biographical Sketches Of Gospel Preachers" we have exemplified some of the rarest and greatest characters known to man. There will be found sketches of men who had great learning and piety, men who have sacrificed and suffered, men who lived and loved and labored for the Lord, men who were aglow with zeal for God and who displayed such moral courage that they may be numbered among the heroes of earth.

"The preachers of the gospel who are given a place on these pages represent the diversities and varieties of traits of character that have graced the modern pulpit. A great preacher of the gospel is a gift from God to the church and to the generation which he serves. No effort has been made to differentiate them into formal groups or to classify them according to their ability or success in their chosen field of labor. They have been placed in chronological order in decades according to the date of their birth."

Brother Boles further says: ". . . this book begins with the "Restoration Movement" and includes the most prominent of the pioneers who helped to give form and direction to that "Movement," which directed religious people back to "the ancient order of things," or back

to the New Testament for a pattern of all work and worship in the church. A line of succession has been followed down through the decades of the departure of falling away of a large portion of those who started out and pledged themselves to "Speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent;" then the line has been followed down through those who adhered to the New Testament order as preached by the "Pioneers" of the "Restoration Movement."

"This book is given to the public with the hope that it may give honor to whom honor is due and that the present and succeeding generations may pay just tribute of respect to the preachers of the gospel who endured hardships as good soldiers of Christ Jesus; it is the earnest desire of the author that the young preachers of the gospel today may learn from these great men how to sacrifice, suffer, and serve the Lord as did these godly men, and that they may take courage from the examples set by these men of God, who left the rich legacy of churches dotted all over this great country of ours.

H. Leo Boles
September 5, 1932.

JOHN SMITH

John Smith was born on October 15, 1784, in East Tennessee, in what is now Sullivan County. He was truly a unique character, a product of the age in which he lived. Alexander Campbell is quoted as saying: "John Smith is the only man that I ever knew who would have been spoiled by a college education." He meant that the unique character would have been so greatly modified by an education that he could not have done the work that he did.

John Smith had very little schooling. He attended school four months in a log schoolhouse when he was but a lad. A little later he enrolled as a student in a private school. This school was so crude that it accomplished very little. The teacher was a drunkard and gave but little attention to his duties as a teacher. It is said that young Smith, to express his contempt for such a teacher, poured a shovelful of hot embers in the teacher's pocket while he sat before his pupils in a drunken stupor. This broke up the school, and Smith never enrolled any more as a student. These few months' schooling quickened his thirst for knowledge, though they furnished him but little opportunity for the acquisition of knowledge.

His parents were Calvinistic Baptists in faith and were rigid in their enforcement of their peculiar theories upon their children. As young Smith verged into manhood he became

Continued on page 3

Biographical Sketches Of Gospel Preachers

Continued from page 2

interested in the subject of religion. He sought the Lord after the custom of the Calvinistic theory. He anxiously waited for the Lord to call him; he truly expected him to call him as one of the elect. He freely and unconsciously imbibed the teaching of his father's creed. All the stories of conversion at that time were full of marvelous incident and spiritual adventure. John Smith listened to the narration of these stories and prayed that they might be made his own experience. His father died about this time, leaving John Smith to take charge of the family affairs. The death of his father and the responsibilities that now fell upon him caused him to more earnestly seek salvation. He tried in vain, it seemed to him, to "get religion." He next turned to reading the Bible, thinking that he might get some comfort from his distressed condition. He had strong convictions that he was a sinner, and his struggles were painful indeed. Finally he was told that he had been "converted." He rejoiced to hear this and believed it; however, he had not had the marvelous experiences that commonly attended conversions of that kind. There was an element of doubt in his own mind. He was assured that this doubt was one of the tokens of God's mercy to him. He submitted his case to the Baptist Church, and the church unanimously passed on his conversion and he was immediately taken into the fold of the Baptist Church.

Soon after he became a member of the Baptist Church he had a strong desire to be a preacher. He worried no little about "a call to preach." He could not understand why he should have such a strong desire to preach and yet the Lord would not call him. He began to talk at prayer meeting, and the more he participated in the prayer-meeting work, the stronger grew his desire to preach. He continued talking at prayer meeting and at the houses of his neighbors. He was reprimanded for preaching "without a call." Finally he persuaded himself that he had received the "call to preach." He lost no time in getting into the work of a Baptist preacher.

He began reading the New Testament and pondering over the word of the Lord. He memorized much of the Scripture, which was a strange thing in that day. He read and studied the New Testament until, when he would arise to preach, he quoted freely from it. Some of his Baptist brethren who were preachers again reprimanded him for preaching so much of the Bible. It was a rare thing for preachers then to quote any of the Bible. The reprimand of his brethren distressed him, and he tried earnestly to satisfy his mind on the proposition. He presented the matter seriously to them in the following way: "Brethren, what shall I do? I must preach; I cannot preach if I do not study the New Testament." He was told that the Lord would give to him what he should say.

About this time he began reading the *Christian Baptist*, published by Alexander Campbell. From this he learned much and was led into a fuller appreciation of the New Testament teaching. Some time after this Alexander Campbell made a visit to Kentucky, where Smith was living. There was much discussion among the Kentucky Baptists as to whether Mr. Campbell knew anything about "experimental religion," or "heart-felt religion." All agreed that Mr. Campbell was a learned man, but many doubted whether he was one of the "elect." So when Mr. Campbell came to Kentucky he was received with some hesitancy on the part of the Baptists. John Smith said that

he could tell just what Mr. Campbell was if he could hear him once. He did hear Mr. Campbell. He sat and listened for two hours and thirty minutes, and the time seemed to him only thirty minutes. Some one asked Smith afterwards what he thought of Mr. Campbell-- if he was one of the elect or not. Smith replied: "I know nothing about the man; but, be he saint or devil, he has thrown more light on the Galatian letter and on the whole Scriptures than I have received in all the sermons that I have ever heard before." Through the help he received from Mr. Campbell and an earnest, prayerful rereading of the New Testament Scriptures, Smith saw that the Baptist Church was not the church of his Lord and that the theories which were preached by Baptists were not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He at once renounced the Baptist faith and embraced the faith of the gospel. It was a hard task to turn away from the religion of his mother and the fellowship and friendship of the Baptist brotherhood. It was quite a task to turn away from such a large and popular brotherhood as was the Baptist Church in Kentucky at that time and become identified with a despised and weak religious body, as were the true disciples at that time. However, he did not hesitate to make the sacrifice. He did it with joy in the newfound truth of the gospel.

He devoted himself faithfully to the preaching of the gospel. He labored hard to get others to accept the truth, and his labors were not in vain. He was happy in this great work. He could preach the gospel with convincing power in a unique way. Few could withstand or resist the truth as presented by him. His unique way of handling a subject reached the hearts of the people of the rural sections of the country where he lived. He did a work among them that no other man could do. This he did without the promise or hope of any earthly reward or financial aid. He thus labored for the love of the truth and the salvation of souls.

Perhaps John Smith is remembered more for his witticism and repartee than anything else. Many amusing incidents are related about his work. At one time he was preaching on the gospel and contrasting the different theories in religion with the gospel. He said that the gospel had this mark which was peculiar to it: "Whosoever does not believe it shall be damned." This could not be said of any of the theories of man. He put the different theories to the test, and showed that even those who believed in these theories did not claim that those who did not believe them would be "damned." At another time, after he had shown the absurdities of the mourners' bench theory of getting religion, he was asked: "What is the difference between your baptism and our mourners' bench?" He replied: "One is from heaven, the other is from the sawmill." He preached in Sparta, Tennessee, before a number of lawyers and judges. Afterwards he was asked if he was not very much embarrassed in the presence of such learned men. He replied: "Not in the least; for I have learned that judges and lawyers, so far as the Bible is concerned, are the most ignorant class of people in the world, *except for Doctors of Divinity.*" Again he said that he had spoken in the presence of all the great preachers of Kentucky, but, "I confess that the first time I ever preached before Alexander Campbell I did falter a little."

John Smith died on February 28, 1868, and was buried in Lexington, Kentucky. He died in the triumphs of the faith of the gospel. His sacrifice and service in the cause of Christ made him a hero in the services of God. Every young preacher can gain much information and inspiration from a study of the life of "Raccoon" John Smith.

(Reprinted from **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF GOSPEL PREACHERS**, by H. Leo Boles, with permission from the Gospel Advocate Co., Publishers.)

Ways We Can Be A Militant Church

Unless we truly believe in the cause for which we are fighting and exhibit that in our lives, we cannot expect to make an impact on the enemy.

Next our knowledge needs to be employed in the teaching of others. Jesus said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Every person who will heed the gospel, and obey its condition, sides with the army of the Lord. Thus, as we sow the seed and the seed produces, the troops with which we can fight Satan become larger and larger. And a large army, when faithful to God, can always do more than a smaller one.

Also we must be ever watchful. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8).

Vigilance must be maintained by both leaders and followers. For at the moment we become satisfied and secure, we will most certainly be overcome. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10:12).

Finally, we will be militant if we never cease

our labours. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58). The works which we are performing may seem small, but we must keep labouring. Others may cease the battle, but we must continue fighting. It is only when we totally cease, that we have laid the victory aside and have accepted defeat.

How can we be militant? First acquire knowledge. Second, apply knowledge to our lives. Third, teach others whether by tract, Bible study, classroom, or pulpit. Fourth, let us watch. And finally never quit. Every member of Christ's body is able to complete all of these things mentioned. There is no reason, other than that which lies within ourselves, that we cannot be a militant people of God.

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS 38843.

“Good King Hezekiah”

Doug Milligan

The book of II Kings (chapters 18-20) tells the story of King Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz. Hezekiah began to reign at the age of twenty-five and reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. He was a good King and followed in the footsteps of David in serving God. Most people remember Hezekiah as the King whose life the Lord spared for fifteen years.

Actually there were four great crises in Hezekiah's life. The first one was a crisis of choice. When Hezekiah began to reign at the age of twenty-five, he had to make a decision whether to obey God, or to follow the sinful ways of his father Ahaz. It must not have been an easy choice for him. His father had been an ardent idol worshipper. Ahaz followed in the ways of the Kings of Israel even to the point of offering some of his children as burnt sacrifices. The Bible says he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places and on the hills and “under every green tree.” It is almost amazing that Hezekiah made the decision to follow the Lord. Yet the Bible says that he so fervently obeyed God's Law that “He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the Kings of Judah, nor any who were before him.” Hezekiah brilliantly passed the first

test in his career as King of Judah.

The second crisis he faced was an invasion by Sennacherib, the King of Assyria. Sennacherib brought an army of 185,000 men against Jerusalem. Unlike his father before him, Hezekiah didn't try to bribe his way out of trouble, nor hire mercenaries to do his fighting for him; Hezekiah prayed! As a result of his prayer, “It came to pass that night, that the Angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand (185,000), and when they arose in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.” In this second great time of trouble, Hezekiah trusted in the Lord for deliverance -- and he received it.

The third crisis in Hezekiah's life came about when Isaiah advised him to set his house in order because he was going to die. Again Hezekiah turned to his Lord. When Isaiah told him he would die, he “turned his face to the wall, and prayed.” As a result of his prayer, the Lord spared his life for fifteen years. God confirmed his promise with a great miracle. He moved the shadow of the sundial *BACK* ten degrees! Many would consider this a great triumph for Hezekiah; but was it? Oh yes: the Lord extended Hezekiah's life; but was it

really a blessing?

You see, the next crisis in Hezekiah's life came when the messengers from Babylon viewed all the treasures of the Kingdom. This colossal mistake by Hezekiah greatly displeased the Lord. In II Kings 20:17 God prophesied through Isaiah: “Behold, the days come that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith the Lord.” If Hezekiah had been looking beyond the here and now, and had trusted in God past this life, he would never have failed so miserably during the visit of the Babylonians.

When will we realize that there is more to life than length of days? What good did Hezekiah's fifteen extra years bring him? The only blemish on his great record as King of Judah came during those extra years. Let us learn the lesson from Hezekiah to be careful how we pray. Let us realize that what we want may not be what is best. Let us learn to pray: “not my will, but thine.” As faithful children of God we may not always get what we want, but we will *ALWAYS* get what is *BEST!*

—Rt. 4, Box 391, Hamilton, AL 35570.

“Lord, Give Us Rattlesnakes!”

Once upon a time there was a family of wayward church members, who had once been active, but who had lost all interest and had fallen from grace. There was the father and three sons, Jim, John and Sam. The elders had talked to them about their lost condition, the preacher had visited them, and many of the brethren had tried to get them to come back to church. But all this did not seem to do the least bit of good.

One day when the boys were out in the pasture, a rattlesnake bit John, and he became very ill. The physician was called.

and after an examination, he pronounced John to be in a very critical condition. Said he, “About all you can do now is pray.” The father called the preacher and told him of John's condition. He asked the preacher to pray for John's recovery.

This was his prayer: “Oh wise and righteous Father, we thank thee that thou hast in thy wisdom sent this rattlesnake to bite John, in order to bring him to his senses. He has not been inside the church house for years, and it is doubtful that he has in all that time felt the need for prayer. Now we trust that this will prove a valuable lesson to him, and that it will

lead to genuine repentance.

“And now, Oh, Father, wilt thou send another snake to bite Sam, and another to bite Jim, and another **BIG ONE** to bite the old man? We have all been doing everything we know for years to restore them, but to no avail. It seems, therefore, that all our combined efforts could not do what this snake has done. We thus conclude that the only thing left that will do this family any good is rattlesnakes; so, Lord, send us bigger and better rattlesnakes! In the name of Jesus we pray. --Amen.”

--Anonymous

Purpose In The Sacred Writings

“Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (II Timothy 3:16-17). From Peter's writing we learned of the *origin* of the scriptures; in this from Paul we learn the *purposes* of the scriptures. They have been *revealed* and *written* by men as the Holy Spirit directed. The commandments of God are given “for our good always” (Deuteronomy 6:24).



Virgil E. Bradford

The sacred writings, Paul has said, are in-

spired of God. The “inspired of God” idea is that the words are *God breathed*. By the Spirit of God, God breathed, or infused, into the minds of select men just what he wanted them to know, and what we *need* to know. Nothing is needed for our knowledge of God or of our responsibilities toward God but what has been written. Our duties toward self and one another are quite adequately covered by the word of God. Since all the scriptures came from God, and since men are separated from God by our own sins, we must all be taught, reproofed, corrected and disciplined in order to become “the righteousness of God in Christ” (II Corinthians 5:21). Unfortunately, some think they can improve on God's revealed will and write up laws, rules and regulations in *addition to* and *contrary* to the infinite mind of God revealed in the Bible.

Truth is always objective, not subjective. It can never come from within us, it must come *to* us from without; and the source of divine truth is the Bible, the scriptures. What is so special about the scriptures? They are

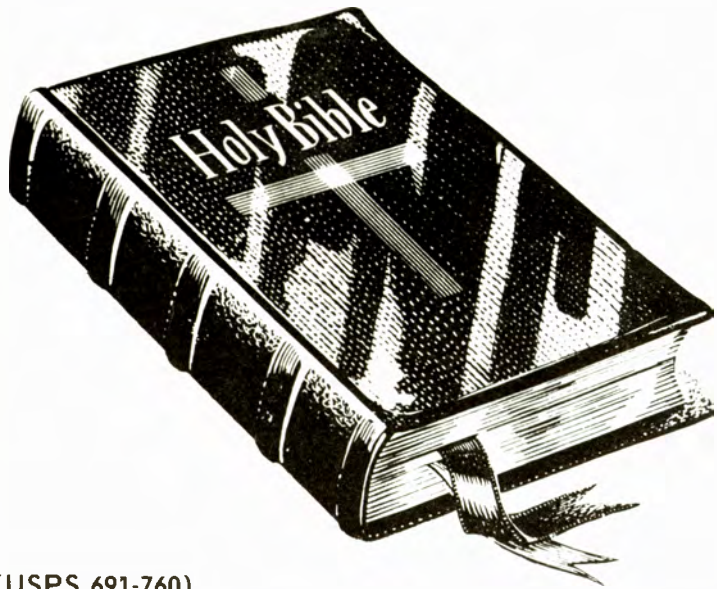
God breathed, Spirit inspired.

The Bible, then, will teach us. The central truth of the Bible is that all have sinned, and that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. It teaches the need of being faithful to God through Christ and his gospel.

But the Bible is more than academic instruction: we often find that we are wrong about this or that. Let God's word furnish “reproof,” that is, *prove again*, what is true and accurate. Our space vehicles often check their course and make corrections by the stars. Christ operating through his word is our daystar to guide us unerringly (II Peter 1:19-21). When we turn to the Lord, his instruction leads us to a state of righteousness. There is a law laid down in the Bible that tells us that God always punishes for sin, and blesses for faith and obedience to the word.

No wonder, then, that Paul said to Timothy: “Preach the word.” It is God's power to save us.

—1113 Biltmore Drive, Nashville, TN 37204.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1985

NUMBER 38

Testimony From Great Religious Leaders Relative To Mechanical Music In Christian Worship

(No. II)

In the previous article I submitted unequivocally clear opposition to the use of mechanically made music in Christian worship from such men as Adam Clarke, John Calvin, John Wesley, and Charles H. Spurgeon. These were highly representative men of their religious organizations. They spoke the sentiments of their contemporaries to a very great extent also. To the four already listed more will be added in this current article.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

(5) Martin Luther was primarily responsible for originating the great Reformation Movement of the sixteenth century. The great German Reformer's work led to the formation of the Lutheran Church though he pleaded with his followers to call themselves Christians and not Lutherans. His valiant voice produced a clarion call to vacate the vices of corruptible Catholicism. The resolute reformer was inalterably opposed to mechanical music in Christian worship. He "called the organ an ensign of Baal" (McClintock's and Strong's CYCLOPEDIA OF BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND ECCLESIASTICAL LITERATURE: MUSIC, Vol. VI p. 672). An "ensign" is a flag, banner, sign, signal, or badge. "Baal," of course, was an idol of antiquity frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. Hence, Luther called the organ a banner or badge of idolatry, a sign of signal of sin. In this extended series of articles for WORDS OF TRUTH I surely have said nothing any plainer than Luther

did over four centuries ago!

(6) John Knox was a contemporary of Martin Luther. He was just twelve years of age when the courageous Luther nailed the ninety-five theses to the church building door in Wittenberg, Germany, in 1517. Knox was a Scottish Reformer and belonged to the Presbyterian persuasion. He died a little over four centuries ago. He called "the organ a kist (chest) of whistles" (Ibid.). Most of his religious descendants no longer pay any attention to the opposition he waged relentlessly against their organs in worship.

It is significant to observe that both of the above quotations are listed in this greatest of all religious encyclopedias under the heading which says, "The early Reformers, when they came out of Rome, removed them as the monuments of idolatry" (Ibid.).

(7 and 8) W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson were great scholars and internationally known writers of the Church of England. I have owned a copy of their classic and definitive work, THE LIFE AND EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL, for nearly thirty-five years. In

their comments on Ephesians 5:18, 19 they said,

Throughout the whole passage there is a contrast implied between the Heathen and the Christian practice . . . When you meet, let your enjoyment consist not in fulness of wine, but fulness of Spirit; let your songs be, not the drinking-songs of heathen feasts, but psalms and hymns; AND THEIR ACCOMPANIMENT, NOT THE MUSIC OF THE LYRE, BUT THE MELODY OF THE HEART: WHILE YOU SING them to the praise, not of Baccus or Venus, but of the Lord Jesus Christ" (pp. 714, 715 -- Emphasis supplied).

In this article I have presented telling testimony from representatives of three religious denominations. Is there NO significance to be attached to their unequivocally clear opposition to mechanically-made music in Christian worship? I, assuredly, think there is. What do you say?

—P.O. BOX 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

Songs And Excuses

"I love thy church, O God:
Her walls before me stand:"
But please excuse my absence, Lord;
This bed is simply grand!

"A charge to keep I have;
A God to glorify;"
But, Lord, no cash from me:
Thy glory comes too high.

"Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the lamb?"
Yes! 'nough I seldom pray, or pay--
I still insist I am.

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?"
No! Others, Lord, should do their part;
But please don't count on me.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below!"
Oh, loud my hymns of praise I bring
Because it doesn't cost to sing.

--Selected



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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

—Acts 26:35

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The First Freed-Hardeman College Preachers And Church Leaders Forum, Oct. 12, 1985

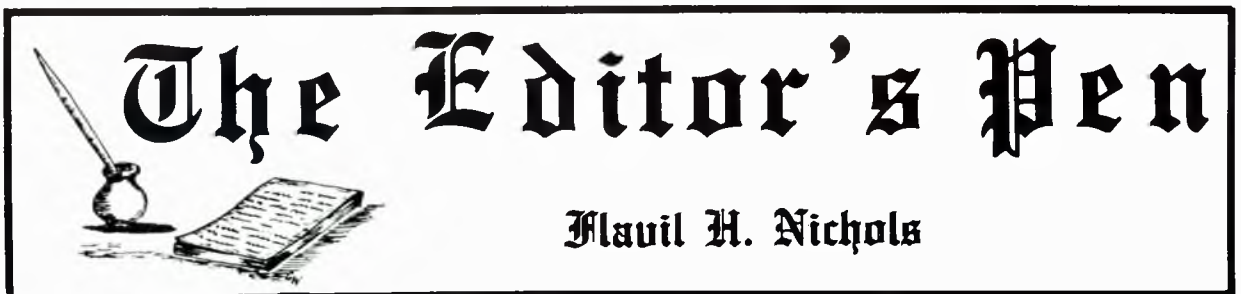
E. Claude Gardner, President
Freed-Hardeman College
Henderson, Tennessee 38340

Freed-Hardeman College has scheduled its first Preachers and Church Leaders Forum which we anticipate will become an annual event each fall. The first Forum is scheduled for Saturday, October 12, 1985. It will begin at 9:00 a.m. and conclude by 4:00 p.m. It is scheduled to be held in the Loyd Auditorium on campus.

The theme will be "The Restoration Movement and Unity." The moderator will be Hardeman Nichols of Dallas, Texas. Speeches will be given by Alan Highers of Henderson, Tennessee and Rubel Shelly of Nashville, Tennessee. Each of them has selected a panelist who will also speak in the Forum. Alan Highers has selected William Woodson of Nashville and Rubel Shelly has selected Monroe Hawley of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The theme for the Forum is timely and is a subject of concern and interest throughout the brotherhood.

For those who are unable to attend, copies of the tapes may be purchased from the College. Also, a video will be made. The meal at lunch may be purchased from the College food service at reasonable cost.

On Friday evening, October 11, at 7:00 p.m., the College will host the annual Elders' Appreciation Dinner in the Pruett Banquet Hall. Elders and their wives, along with the preacher and his wife, are invited as guests of the College. The speaker this year will be John R. Hall who serves as an elder in the church at Woodbridge, Virginia. Those who plan to attend the Forum on Saturday may also want to write or call the Office of the President to make reservations for the Elders' Appreciation Dinner.



Flavil H. Nichols

An Aid To Understanding The Minor Prophets

In Sunday Bible school, many congregations use literature published by the Gospel Advocate Company. The current quarter is a study of the Minor Prophets. Without some comprehension of the time in which those men of God lived and served, one is not likely to grasp the situations about which they spoke and wrote.

For my own use I compiled from various sources the following chart which enables one to see at a glance what was going on in

the world around the prophets. In some instances it is impossible to pinpoint the exact time the prophet lived. For example, Obadiah may have lived in 845 B.C., or in 586 B.C. I have largely followed G. Dallas Smith's outline, comparing it with the Gospel Advocate "Elam's Notes" (and its successors), Jack Lewis' writings, Homer Hailey's Commentary on the Minor Prophets, and McClintock & Strong's Cyclopedia. I am happy to share this research with our readers.

The United Kingdom:

1095-975 B.C. — 120 Years
1095-1055 Saul — 40 years
1055-1015 David — 40 years
1015-975 Solomon — 40 years

(End of the United Kingdom)

The Divided Kingdom:

975-722 B.C. — 253 Years

<i>Israel (Northern Kingdom)</i>	B. C.	<i>Judah (Southern Kingdom)</i>
Cap. Shechem, then Samaria, I Kings 12:25; 16:21-28 JEROBOAM (22 Yrs)		Cap. Jerusalem
	975	REHOBOAM (17 Yrs)
	952	ABIJAH (3 Yrs)
	955	ASA (41 Yrs)
NADAB (2 Yrs)	954	
BAASHA (24 Yrs)	953	
ELAH (2 Yrs)	930	
ZIMRI (7 Days)	929	
TIBNI (4 Yrs/½ K.)	929	
OMRI (12 Yrs)	929	
AHAB (22 Yrs)	918 (Elisha)	
	914	JEHOSHAPHAT (25 yr)
AHAZIAH (2 Yrs)	898	
JEHORAM (12 Yrs)	896	
	892	JEHORAM (8 Yrs)
	885	AHAZIAH (1 Yr.)
JEHU (28 Yrs.)	884	[ATHALIAH] (6 yrs)
	878	JEHOASH (40 Yrs)
JEHOAHAZ (17 Yrs)	856	
	845? Obadiah	
JEHOASH (16 Yrs)	841	
	839	AMAZIAH (29 Yrs)
	830? Joel	
JEROBOAM II (41 Yrs)	825	
	810	UZZIAH (52 Yrs)
[INTERREGNUM] (11 Yrs)	... *Isaiah	
790-750	790?	
ZECHARIAH (6 Mos.)	773	Jonah
SHALLUM (1 Mo.)	772	
MENAHEM (10 Yrs)	772	
	765	
PEKAHIAH (2 Yrs)	761	
PEKAH (20 Yrs)	759	
	758	JOTHAM (16 Yrs)
	755 Amos	
	745 Hosea	
	742	AHAZ (16 Yrs)
[INTERREGNUM] (8 Yrs ?)	... Micah	735-700
	740	
HOSHEA (9 Yrs)	730	
	726	HEZEKIAH (29 Yrs)
--Fall of Samaria to Assyria	722	

(End of Kingdom of Israel)

Continued on page 3

And Aid To Understanding The Minor Prophets

Continued from page 2

(End of Kingdom of Israel)	722	
		<i>722-587 Kingdom of Judah alone (135 Yrs)</i>
	698	MANESSEH (55 Yrs) II Kings 12: 1-18 Idolatry is again introduced into Judah
--Thebes (Egypt) fell to Assyria	664	
	643	AMON (2 Yrs) II Kings 21: 19-26 Idolatry continues to flourish
	641	JOSIAH (31 Yrs) II Kings 22: 1-23: 30 Introduced many reforms: last king to "Walk in the ways of David"
	630	Zephaniah 630-625
	626	*Jeremiah
	625	Nahum 625-612
--Nineveh (Assyria) fell to Babylon, Media, & Scythia	625-605	Habakkuk 625-605
	612	
	610	JEHOAHAZ (3 Mo.) II Kings 23: 31-34 Dethroned by Pharaoh-Necho, of Egypt
	610	JEHOIAKIM (11 Yrs) II Kings 23: 36- 24: 6 Tributary to Nebuchadnezzar; *Daniel, his companions, taken to Babylon
--Battle of Carchemish; Babylon became dominant in the Mid-East: II Chron. 35: 20; Jer. 46: 2 Nebuchadnezzar was King of Babylon 605-562	606-536	70 Yrs. Captivity [19 Yrs. in own land; 51 Yrs. in Babylon] Partial captivities: a) The 2½ Tribes E. of Jordan; b) Remainder of "10 Tribes;" c) Daniel and his companions; d) Ezekiel and 10,000 Jews. (I Chron. 5: 25-26; II Kings 18: 9-12; Dan. 1: 1-7 II Kings 24: 10-17; Ezek. 1: 1 II Kings 17: 5-6).
	599	JEHOIACHIN (3 Mos.) II Kings 24: 8-17 Dethroned by Nebuchadnezzar; *Ezekiel plus 10,000 Jews taken to Babylon
	597	*Daniel
	592	*Ezekiel-570
	587	ZEDEKIAH (11 Yrs) II Kings 24: 18-25: 17 Ezek. 12: 13 with II K. 24: 7 Dethroned by Nebuchadnezzar; Jerusalem, Temple destroyed.
	586	Obadiah
--Persia conquered Babylon Persian period begins	539	
		<i>537-445 Restoration of Jews (92 Yrs)</i>
Decree of Cyrus allowed Jews to return, rebuild Temple	536	First Return: Zerrubabel plus 50,000 Jews return
	520	Haggai
	520	Zechariah
	516	--Temple completed, dedicated.
	457	--Second Return: Ezra plus 7,000
	445	--Third Return: Nehemiah rebuilds walls.
	440	Malachi

END OF OLD TESTAMENT

400-4 B.C. - Between The Testaments

UPPER CASE — KINGS

Lower Case -- Prophets

* — Major Prophets

() — Earlier Prophets

—Compiled by Flavil H. Nichols: 1985

A Militant Church: What If We Are Not Militant?

(Part VII)

In previous articles we have discussed much regarding militancy. We have shown that the Lord desires a militant church. We have seen some hinderances to militancy. And we have noted some ways in which we can become actively aggressive in the fight against the prince of this world. The question now arises: "Are we going to be that militant group which God desires?"



Victor M. Eskew

To help us make up our minds, we want to discuss two more subjects connected with militancy. This week we will discuss answers to the question. "What if we are not militant?" Next week, "The Rewards of Militancy" will be the theme.

"What if we are not militant?" First, if we are not aggressive in the good fight of faith we will not be pleasing to our Lord, the one who leads in this mighty battle. We have already seen that Christ desires that his army be engaged in battle. If this be his desire and we seek not to fulfill it, then most certainly we will be displeasing to him. "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more" (I Thessalonians 4:1).

Second, if we do not engage in the warfare against the devil and his ministers, the pits of hell will be filled with many who could have been saved. Brethren, do we want to be held responsible for lost souls? We say "No," but we continue with such attitudes as "do-nothing," "Peace, peace when there is no peace;" "Don't rock the boat," "Let someone else do it," "All positive and no negative," "Don't tell them where they are wrong," and "Leave them alone and they will be okay." Such attitudes are passive in nature. They are the opposite of militancy. And they will send thousands upon thousands through the broad gate into destruction.

Third, if we are not battling the enemies of Christ, we will ultimately lose our own souls to eternal damnation. To Timothy, Paul states that one of the grounds for his receiving the crown of righteousness was due to his having fought the fight of faith (II Timothy 4:7, 8). This being true, we can be assured that who-soever refuses to fight the fight, will lose his soul to satan. On this ground alone, all members of the body of Christ should become militant. For what is more important than one's soul? (Matthew 16:26).

Again, what if we are not militant? We will be displeasing to Christ, multitudes will be lost who need not be, and we will lose our own soul. Are these enough reasons to cause you to answer positively to the question: "Will you be a militant soldier in the forces of Christ?" If not, maybe the rewards of militancy will produce such a response.

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS 38843.

Sixth Annual - Gus Nichols - Words Of Truth - Lectureship

— SPEAKERS —



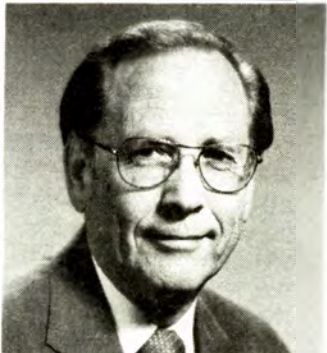
ALLISON



ATKINS



CLARK



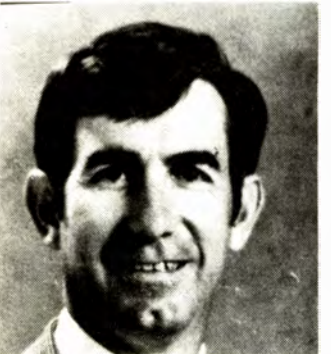
HAMILTON



H. McCORD



POSEY



RANDOLPH



VAN DYKE



WINKLER



WORKMAN



YOUNG



L. McCORD



RONY

Theme: "FELLOWSHIP AND UNITY"

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1985

7:00 - 7:25 Congregational Singing Various Directors
 7:30 - 8:30 CHRISTIANS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH:
 "Christ And The One New Testament Church In
 Prophecy" Frank D. Young

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1985

9:30 - 10:20 CHRISTIANS ONLY AND THE ONLY CHRISTIANS:
 "How They Became Christians In The First
 Century" W T Hamilton
 10:30 - 11:20 A STUDY OF WORDS:
 Relating To Discipleship Hugo McCord
 LADIES: THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN
 As A Wife Lois McCord
 11:30 - 1:30 Lunch Break
 1:30 - 2:00 KEYNOTE ADDRESS:
 "The Cross And Unity" W Truitt Allison
 2:10 - 2:50 CHRISTIANS AND FELLOWSHIP
 "What Is Fellowship?" Franklin Camp
 LADIES: A LOOK AT MYSELF AS A WIDOW:
 "What I Learned When I Became A
 Widow" Elsie N Roney
 3:00 - 3:40 CHRISTIANS AND UNITY
 "Unity In The New Testament And Demanded
 Today" Gary Workman
 3:40 - 7:00 Break For Dinner
 7:00 - 7:25 Congregational Singing Various Directors
 7:30 - 8:30 CHRISTIANS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH:
 "The New Testament Church, And The 'Falling
 Away'" Winfred Clark

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1985

9:30 - 10:20 CHRISTIANS ONLY AND THE ONLY CHRISTIANS
 "How Christians In The First Century Were Taught
 To Live" W.T. Hamilton
 10:30 - 11:20 A STUDY OF WORDS:
 Relating To Discipleship Hugo McCord
 LADIES: THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN
 As A Mother Lois McCord
 11:30 - 1:30 Lunch Break
 1:30 - 2:00 KEYNOTE ADDRESS:
 "Take Heed Unto All The Flock"
 The Responsibility Of Elders To Maintain
 Unity Joe Van Dyke, Jr
 2:10 - 2:50 CHRISTIANS AND FELLOWSHIP
 "Withdrawal Of Fellowship" Franklin Camp
 LADIES: A LOOK AT MYSELF AS A WIDOW
 "What A Widow Can Do For Herself" Elsie N. Roney
 3:00 - 3:40 CHRISTIANS AND UNITY
 "Historical Efforts At Unity" Gary Workman
 3:40 - 7:00 Break For Dinner
 7:00 - 7:25 Congregational Singing Various Directors
 7:30 - 8:30 CHRISTIANS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH
 "The New Testament Church - And The Sin Of
 Division" Kenneth Randolph

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1985

9:30 - 10:20 CHRISTIANS ONLY AND THE ONLY CHRISTIANS:
 "How Christians In The First Century Were Taught
 To Worship" W.T. Hamilton
 10:30 - 11:20 A STUDY OF WORDS:
 Relating To Discipleship Hugo McCord
 LADIES: THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN
 As A Neighbor And Friend Lois McCord
 11:30 - 1:30 Lunch - Honoring W.A. Holley
 1:30 - 2:00 KEYNOTE ADDRESS:
 "Ye Are All One In Christ" Robert Atkins
 2:10 - 2:50 CHRISTIANS AND FELLOWSHIP:
 "Those Withdrawn From Can Be Saved" Winfred Clark
 LADIES: A LOOK AT MYSELF AS A WIDOW:
 "How A Widow Can Help Others" Elsie N. Roney
 3:00 - 3:40 CHRISTIANS AND UNITY:
 "Where the Scriptures Speak, We Speak"
 (Unity Where God Has Spoken) Gary Workman
 3:40 - 7:00 Break For Dinner
 7:00 - 7:25 Congregational Singing Various Directors
 7:30 - 8:30 CHRISTIANS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH:
 "What It Means To Become, And To Be, 'Just
 A Christian'" Floyd Deathrow

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1985

9:30 - 10:20 CHRISTIANS ONLY AND THE ONLY CHRISTIANS:
 "What Christians In The First Century Were Taught To
 Believe And Teach" W.T. Hamilton
 10:30 - 11:20 A STUDY OF WORDS:
 Relating To Discipleship Hugo McCord
 LADIES: THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN:
 "Not Slothful In Business" Lois McCord
 11:30 - 1:30 Lunch Break
 1:30 - 2:00 KEYNOTE ADDRESS:
 "Obstacles To Unity" Glenn A. Posey
 2:10 - 2:50 CHRISTIANS AND FELLOWSHIP:
 "Love The Brotherhood" Winfred Clark
 LADIES: A LOOK AT MYSELF AS A WIDOW:
 "I Can Accept Being A Widow" Elsie N. Roney
 3:00 - 3:40 CHRISTIANS AND UNITY:
 "Where The Scriptures Are Silent, We Are Silent"
 ('Unity In Diversity' In Matters Of
 Expediency) Gary Workman
 3:40 - 7:00 Break For Dinner
 7:00 - 7:25 Congregational Singing Various Directors
 7:30 - 8:30 CHRISTIANS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH:
 "Thou Shalt Love The Lord Thy God With All Thy
 Heart" Wendell Winkler

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Telephones:
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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

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1985

NUMBER 39

Why Mechanical Music Is Used

(No. 4)

There have been many attempts to justify the employment of music made by machinery in Christian worship. I am noting a few of these arguments (?) and am seeking to exhibit clearly and quite decisively how very fallacious each argument advanced really is when closely investigated.

Another argument is now taken up that has been employed by some. It is no stronger than any of the preceding ones which have been examined.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

"THE APOSTLES WORSHIPPED WITH THEM IN THE TEMPLE, AND SO WE MAY USE THEM IN THE CHURCH"

I ask promptly for Biblical proof of this allegation! Where does it say in the Bible that the apostles worshipped with them in the temple? This demands more than a baseless assumption. In logic we call this a begging of the question, i.e., assuming as true what one has not proved. In this case he *cannot* prove it! At least this is my judgment that he cannot, and I shall spell out in this article the WHY of that statement. *Saying* something like this about what the apostles did, and then *proving* it in the whole absence of Sacred Scripture, are totally different things!

We can read in the Bible where the apostles and early disciples praised God in the temple. Luke says in Acts 2:46, 47, "And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with

all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." They "praised God" in the temple. The Bible does *not* say they worshipped God with mechanical music. This is to read something into the text that is not there -- NOT THERE AT ALL!! They were PRAISING GOD, not PLAYING on a mechanical instrument to him.

We can read about two of them who went into the temple at the hour of prayer. Luke says, "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour" (Acts 3:1). They were going to PRAY -- not PLAY on a mechanical instrument of music as worship to God. PRAY is NOT the same as PLAY!!

We can read about their teaching and preaching in the temple area. Peter's great sermon in Acts 3 was delivered in the temple area known as Solomon's porch (Acts 3:11). The remainder of this chapter tells us what he preached on this interesting, intriguing occasion. In Acts 5 we read about the second persecution aimed at the early church and especially its apostolic leadership. The apostles were imprisoned. Luke relates what happened as they were spending a night "in the common prison" (Acts 5:18). "But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:19, 20). The next verse portrays beautifully their implicit obedience to the angelic commandment: "And when they heard that they entered into the temple early in the morning and taught" (Acts 5:21). They *taught* in the temple. This we know for a surety. No one knows that they worshipped with mechanical music. Such is a totally-unwarranted assumption! It is to assume as true what needs to be proved to be true!!

Our readers who are close students of the Bible and religious history know that the

temple Jesus and the apostles worshipped in was NOT the one Solomon built a full millennium before. That one was destroyed by the Babylonians nearly six centuries before the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem. The one Jesus and the apostles worshipped in was NOT REALLY the one erected by Zerrubbabel. Years before Christ and the apostles worshipped in that magnificent edifice that adorned the crown of Mt. Moriah in the holy city of Jerusalem [holy then but not holy now, for God has no holy city or holy land now but only a holy people who are Christians]-- Herod the Great had torn down little by little that old temple erected by Zerrubbabel during the sixth century before Christ, and had begun to rebuild it on a much greater and more majestic scale. This temple-rebuilding was going on all the time of Christ's sojourn on earth and for many years after he returned back to the Palace of the Universe on high. Paul Southern (who holds a Doctor of Theology degree from Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky), says: "The Old Testament shows that the whole range of music was employed in the temple at one time, but historians hold there was no instrument in the temple during the time of Christ . . . Reliable sources maintain that it never had a musical instrument in it" (WHAT IS WRONG, PP. 103, 104).

Even if Southern and the sources from whom he quotes are wrong about the absence of all mechanical instruments in the temple during the time of Christ and the apostles, it yet remains that those who so contend that Christ and the apostles worshipped with them must produce something stronger for proof than mere assumptions. An assumption is not a synonym for proof!

A CONCLUDING ARGUMENT

In reality what proves too much really

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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 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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Led By The Spirit

Let us remember that the Spirit is a divine personality, not a mere influence; and in both the Roman letter and Galatians Paul discusses the law of Moses showing that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. Now, it is evident to every Christian that the Spirit does lead him. It is also evident that since we cannot be saved or justified by law, we must have some influence apart from that law -- which demanded perfection. None ever kept the law perfectly; therefore, none were saved *by the law*.

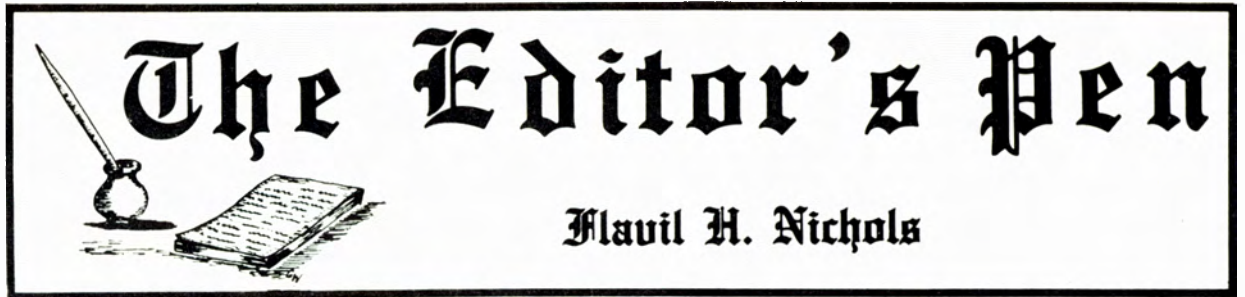
Now it is evident that the Spirit leads; but does he operate directly upon the heart of sinners? or, is it indirectly done? The Holy Spirit leads, teaches, convicts of sin, sanctifies and enlightens. All agree. But remember that truth *does not* and *cannot* contradict itself. In this same Roman epistle Paul wrote: "I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For *therein* is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith." We must also remember that "faith comes by hearing the word of God." We have never heard of one who *believed God* without hearing of him through the Word. In Galatians 3:26 the Spirit tells us that we are sons of God through faith, in Christ Jesus. But who knows anything about God or his Son except through the scriptures?

But let me ask: If the Spirit leads men and converts men *directly*, as some confidently affirm, why is not everyone a Christian?



Virgil E. Bradford

Continued on page 3



Flavil H. Nichols

Biographical Sketches

1. 2)

Perhaps no man of recent generations has come from such low depths of poverty and obscurity and has risen to such heights of fame in the brotherhood as T. B. Larimore. He was born on July 10, 1843, in East Tennessee. Little is known of his parents. His early advantages were very gloomy and his poverty discouraging, yet through it all he arose to heights of great prominence and service among his fellows upon earth.



T. B. LARIMORE-

He worked on a farm in East Tennessee during his early youth and went to school only ten or twelve weeks in the year. He studied hard at night, not only while he was in school, but during the entire year. At the age of sixteen he entered Mossy Creek Baptist College in East Tennessee. He walked from his home to the college. He walked forty miles the first day, starting early in the morning and walking until late in the evening. He received a diploma from this college. During his sojourn as a student in Mossy Creek Baptist College he sought religion after the fashion of that day, but failed to get it. However, he made a firm resolution to live right and honor God so long as he lived upon the earth. When the Civil War began, he entered the service of the Confederate Army, and remained in it until the close of the war. On his twenty-first birthday anniversary -- July 10, 1864 -- he obeyed the gospel. He began preaching in 1866, and in the fall of the same year he entered Franklin College, near Nashville Tennessee.

Brother Larimore remained in school at Franklin College about two years. Tolbert Fanning was president of the college at that time. Through patient and diligent efforts he made rapid progress in all of his courses. He often said that Tolbert Fanning was one of the best teachers that he ever had. He was graduated with honors in 1867. He was chosen to deliver the valedictory address at the graduating exercises. After leaving Franklin College, he went to North Alabama and preached the gospel with much power and persuasion. While in that section of the State he became acquainted with the Srygley family. In the fall of 1868 he began teaching with J. M. Pickens at Mountain Home, in Lawrence County, Alabama. He remained there only one year. In 1869 he went to West Tennessee and taught for a short while. He was next found at Stantonville, Tennessee, where he taught for ten months. He next went to Florence, Alabama, and on January 1, 1871, he opened a school and called it "Mars' Hill Academy." He continued here for a few years, and as his school grew he changed its name to "Mars' Hill

College." Mars' Hill College continued for a period of sixteen years -- from 1871 to 1887. Hundreds of young men were trained in this college by brother Larimore. The lamented E. A. Elam taught for a while with him there. This college did more for young people in that section of the country than all other schools there. The usual branches of study were taught, also the Bible. Brother Larimore emphasized the study of two books above all others. These were the English Bible and Webster's Dictionary. Those who had thorough courses in these books, together with the few allied courses, were far better educated than those who have taken many courses according to our modern system of education.

Brother Larimore began preaching soon after he was baptized, and his preaching attracted much attention from the first. His humble manner and pious behavior gave him ready and easy access to the hearts of the people. He walked from Tennessee into North Alabama, where he held his first meeting. One had described him as follows: "On his face there was a settled expression of goodness and melancholy which touched the hearts of the people with a feeling of sympathy and love. There was an indescribable and irresistible pathos in his voice, manner, and general appearance which melted audiences to tears and moved hearts long hardened by sin to repentance at the appeal of the gospel." He preached where an opportunity was given him. He preached in schoolhouses, under brush arbors, and in log cabins. He baptized hundreds of people and established many congregations in the hill country of Alabama in a short time.

While teaching at Mars' Hill he preached every Sunday, often three times on Sunday, and during vacation he devoted his entire time to evangelistic work. After closing his school at Mars' Hill in 1887, he gave his entire time to preaching the gospel. His field of labor increased and the calls for his services multiplied until he had much more work than he could possibly do. Perhaps he preached more sermons to more hearers and baptized more people than any other preacher of his day. He traveled extensively and preached in Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Arizona, New Mexico, California, Arkansas, and Washington D.C. He preached "from Maine to Mexico and from Canada to Cuba." His program for preaching was twice every day and three times every Sunday. His longest meeting was conducted at Sherman, Texas. This meeting began on January 3, 1894, and closed on June 7 -- five months and four days. During this meeting he preached three hundred and thirty-three sermons, preaching twice every day and three times on Sunday; and there were more than two hundred additions to the church during the

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The Shulamite Bride

King Solomon penned 1,005 songs during his illustrious career (I Kings 4:32). The Hebrews judged his song about the Shulamite bride to be his best, calling it "The Song of Songs." Our translations label it the *Song of Solomon*. Jewish rabbis compared Solomon's writings to their temple: Ecclesiastes they likened to the outer court; Proverbs, to the holy place; and the Song of Solomon, to the holy of holies.



John Waddey

This is one of the least-studied, and therefore least-understood, books of our Bible. Aglen wrote: "The Song of Songs . . . holds . . . first place among the puzzles of literature." Franz Delitzsch called it "the most obscure book of the Old Testament."

No book of scripture has provoked more controversy than this one. God's name is mentioned only once, and that indirectly. Not grasping its meaning, some have questioned its right to be in the canon of sacred Scripture. Jerome tells us that ancient Jews discouraged their young folks from reading the Song until age 30.

Some Hints For Understanding The Song

One cannot understand this lovely song unless he treats it as poetry, rather than prose. Remember that we grant the poet a broad license for flowery expression. Furthermore it is *Oriental* poetry. Orientals revel in figures of speech at which we Westerners are shocked. Nothing in the song would offend the most modest Oriental. "The book is a wedding song containing collections of the antenuptial experience of Solomon and Shulamite. The events mentioned . . . depict the emotions of the lovers in times of union and separation" (John Raven). The Song celebrates the beauties of married, monogamous love.

The book is best understood as an operetta with dramatic scenes, dialogs, and songs. The cast of characters includes Solomon (King

Led By The Spirit

Continued from page 2

Is God a respecter of persons? The Bible affirms he is not (Acts 10:34). This only leaves the *indirect method*. The Spirit teaches, convicts, and saves, and continues his work of salvation *by the word of God* which lives and abides forever.

Again, look at Romans 8:16: "The Spirit *himself* beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God." Note that the Spirit bears witness, NOT *to*, but *with*, our spirit. The Spirit says Jesus Christ is the Son of God; my spirit says "Amen; I accept that." The Spirit says repent and be baptized for the remission of sins; my spirit says *I have*. We are on course, by faith. And so the Spirit of God continues to teach and instruct me as long as I will allow it.

Let us be sure that we lay up God's word in our hearts that we may not sin against him. Let us be faithful -- full of faith -- even unto death and Christ will give us a crown of life (Revelation 2:10).

—1113 Biltmore Drive, Nashville, TN 37204.

of Israel), Shulamith (the bride from northern Israel), and the daughters of Jerusalem who were her maiden court attendants and who serve as the chorus.

About the Bride

Chapter 6:13 calls her Shulamite. Her name is a feminine form of Solomon. Hence we have both the prince of peace and princess of peace, for that is the meaning of Solomon. She was a farm girl from northern Israel, who by her beauty and purity captured the king's heart (7:10-12). She was darkly tanned from working in the vineyards of her family (1:5-6). Solomon evidently met her while travelling in her region and courted her with the hope of making her his bride.

Intoxicated with her love and beauty, he painted a poetic picture of her:

"I have compared thee, O my love,
To a steed in Pharaoh's Chariots
(Proud and majestic).

Thy neck with strings of jewels.
We will make thee plaits of gold
With studs of silver" (1:9-11)

After their marriage he wrote:

"Thou art fair, O my love, as Tirzah"
(a scenic city of Palestine),

"Comely as Jerusalem,

Terrible as an army with banners"
(majestic and awesome).

"Turn away thine eyes from me
For they have overcome me.
Thy hair is as a flock of goats," (shiny black)
"That lie along the side of Gilead.
Thy teeth are like a flock of ewes,
Which are coming up from the washing"
(clean and white)

"Whereof everyone hath twins,
And none is bereaved among them."
(No teeth were missing).

"Thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate" (Rosy cheeks)
"Behind thy veil" (6:4-7).

Her beauty excelled that of all the other 60 queens and 80 concubines of Solomon's harem (6:8-9).

In chapter 5:10-16 she describes Solomon as seen through her eyes of love:

"My beloved is white and ruddy" (a light complexion was cherished in a land of dark skinned people. He had ruddy cheeks).

"The chiefest among ten thousand.
His head is as the most fine gold;
His locks are bushy and black as a raven"
(black curly hair).

"His eyes are like doves beside the water-brooks,
Washed with milk, and fitly set" (not blood-shot nor crossed).

His cheeks are as a bed of spices" (he used a nice cologne)

"As banks of sweet herbs:
His lips are as lilies, dripping liquid myrrh"
(sweet kisses).

"His hands are as rings of gold set with beryl"
(five rings).

"His body is as ivory work overlaid with sapphires.

His legs as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold" (strong and attractive).

"His aspect is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

His mouth is most sweet;
Yea, he is altogether lovely" (5:10-16).

In chapter 3:6-11 we are given a glimpse of

the royal groom coming to claim his bride. The chorus of attendants asks:

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness

Like pillars of smoke" (perhaps the dust of his entourage on the road)

"Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense
With all powders of the merchant?

Behold it is the litter of Solomon:

Threescore mighty men are about it" (his body guards)

"Of the mighty men of Israel.

They all handle the sword, and are expert in war:

Every man hath his sword upon his thigh.

Because of fear in the night.

King Solomon made himself a palaquin" (his sedan-chair).

"Of the wood of Lebanon" (made of cedar of Lebanon).

"He made the pillars thereof of silver,

The bottom thereof of gold, the seat of it of purple,

The midst thereof being paved with love,
From the daughters of Jerusalem" (probably pillows made as wedding gifts from her court attendants).

The bride says:

"Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon,

With the crown wherewith his mother had crowned him"

(a garland worn as a token of her approval and blessing)

"In the day of his espousals," (his wedding day)

"And in the day of the gladness of his heart.

We are granted a brief view of their wedding feast in 5:1. The groom toasts his bride. As they drink the cup of blessing, Solomon says:

"I am come into my garden, my sister, my bride;

I have gathered my myrrh with my spice;
I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey;
I have drunk my wine with milk."

He then charges his guests:

"Eat, O friends:

Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

The climax of this lovely book is seen in 8:6-7 where the couple sings the praises of true romantic love.

First we see the *demands of love*. Shulamite says: "Set me as a seal upon thy heart." The king evidently wore his royal seal of office on a chain about his neck. It was always with him, next to his heart. It was a precious and cherished object to him. The bride wanted always to have that kind of relationship with her husband, as does every true lover.

We see the *strength of love*. She reminds him that "love is strong as death." Death never lets go of those it embraces. Death can not be bribed nor deceived; it never gets discouraged in its pursuit. The same is true of genuine love. It spans oceans and years and will endure a world of pain. Love is not easily turned aside. In a house with many wives, one would not automatically enjoy the husband's daily company.

She speaks of the *cruelty of jealousy*. It is "cruel as Sheol." Nothing is more destructive and devastating to a relationship than jealousy. This deadly emotion will poison and kill the very love it seeks to preserve for itself. It is deadly as a bolt of lightning, "the flame of Jehovah." In a polygamous family, jealousy is a constant problem among wives. Jacob's wives had the problem (Genesis 30:1-24). Perhaps

Continued on page 4

A Militant Church: The Rewards Of Being Militant

VIII

Last week we asked the question: "Are we going to be the militant people God wants us to be?" To help us answer we showed the dangers of not being actively aggressive in the fight against evil. In this final article of the series, we hope to inspire a positive answer to this same question by showing the rewards of being militant.



Victor M. Eskew

Our first reward for being militant is that we will be numbered with great soldiers of the past. Men such as the prophets of old, John the Baptist, the apostles, and Jesus Christ himself were great warriors on the battle against wickedness. To be included among such a line-up is truly a tremendous reward.

Another reward for militancy is the assurance that the church will not face apostasy in our generation. As long as we will continue to man the trenches and fight the foes, whether from without or within, we can preserve the church. It is only when we lay down our armament, cease the battle, and pretend peace exists that we have been defeated. The militant church however, is not defeated. The church will be strong when our children step to the forefront of the battle upon our call to glory.

Our greatest reward is that eternal life will be our possession. It is interesting to note that militancy and eternal life are connected in the inspired texts of I Timothy 6:12 and II Timothy 4:7, 8. In the first Paul writes to Timothy: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life . . ." In the latter, his words to his son in the faith are: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." The bounds of heaven will not be filled with conscientious objectors, or, traitors, or those who went AWOL. Only those who have labored

in the heat of battle can expect to be seen on eternity's shore.

The Lord encourages us to militancy. It is now our choice. To those who would be militant, we welcome them to the battle and with the sword of the spirit in hand will stand with them against the adversaries.

To those who will not join in the fight, we ask you to expose yourselves, and step out of our

way, lest we stumble over you as you flee from the appearance of the enemy. And as you sit on the sidelines and watch the ensuing battle, we pray that courage will soon fill you, and that you will repent of your wickedness and step down with boldness and join fellow-soldiers.

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS.

Biographical Sketches

Continued from page 2

meeting. His next longest meeting was conducted at Los Angeles, California. This meeting began on January 3, 1895, and closed on April 17 -- three months fourteen days. In this meeting he followed his usual program of preaching twice a day and three times on Sundays; and there were one hundred and twenty persons baptized during the meeting.

Brother Larimore was kind and gentle in his manner and very pleasing in his address. It was not his style or disposition to engage in controversy or to be offensive in his preaching. He chose his subject and presented it in a simple, straightforward way without turning aside to notice any religious error. He preached the truth with earnestness and clearness and said little or nothing about any of the popular religious errors of the day. He was an eloquent speaker, with music and charm in the well chosen phraseology with which he clothed the thoughts which he gleaned from the Book of God. All who heard him loved him and felt that it was good to hear him.

He wrote no books, and yet a number of books have been written about him. These books are as follows: "Larimore and His Boys," "Letter and Sermons of T. B. Larimore" (three volumes), and "Main to Mexico and Canada to Cuba." All of these books breathe the gentle spirit of the great man whose life and work inspired them. They are rich in spiritual blessings to those who read them.

Brother Larimore died on March 18, 1929, in Santa Ana, California. He was in his eighty-sixth year.

Brother Larimore still lives in the hearts of thousands whom he taught the word of God

and encouraged to live faithful to God. He left his imprint on his students and all who listened earnestly to his preaching. In a few things he excelled most men, and in many other things he was the peer. The world in better and happier because T. B. Larimore lived in it.

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Why Mechanical Music Is Used

Continued from page 1

proves nothing. Are the proponents of mechanical music for Christian worship willing to do all that was done in first century temple worship? They burned incense as we learn from Luke 1:8-10. Does this mean we can offer incense in worship today? Even at the very time Hebrews was written, Levitical priests were offering gifts and sacrifices in the temple (Hebrews 8:3-5). Does this authorize animal sacrifices for Christian worship? If not, why does it not -- if temple worship is our authoritative criterion? In temple worship they had a special priesthood. This would please our Catholic and Mormon friends, but not very many others in the realm of modern religious activity. Could we have a fleshly-determined priesthood today similar to theirs since it was actually in their temple worship during the era of Christ and the apostles? If not, why not? -- if temple procedure is our official guideline?

Let it be kept firmly fixed in mind that the laws governing temple worship were under the Mosaic law. We live not under that law, but under the Christian covenant.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

The Shulamite Bride

Continued from page 3

Shulamith had already tasted the bitter cup from some of Solomon's other wives.

We are reminded of the *design of love* "Love is of God" (I John 4:7). Made in his image, we are capable of loving. He made us male and female so we could know such love. Marriage was ordained to provide a holy realm for that love (Hebrews 13:4).

Love is unquenchable, responds Solomon: "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it." Love is like an eternal flame.

Love has no price tag: "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, he would utterly be condemned." To attempt to buy love is to insult it. Love can endure poverty, but not insult.

Lessons to Remember

Bunsen writes "There would be something wanting in the Bible, if there was not found

there an expression of the deepest and strongest of human feelings."

Someone said "If you would be holy, read the Psalms; if you would be wise, read Proverbs; but if you would learn love's language and understand the action of love to establish real and lasting communion, read the Song of Songs."

Surely God placed the Song in the canon to teach us the purity and sanctity of monogamous love in marriage, which he ordained in Eden. Thus this is a veiled protest against polygamy.

As we reflect on their beautiful celebration of love, let us remember the divine relationship of Christ and his church (Ephesians 5:22-23).

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

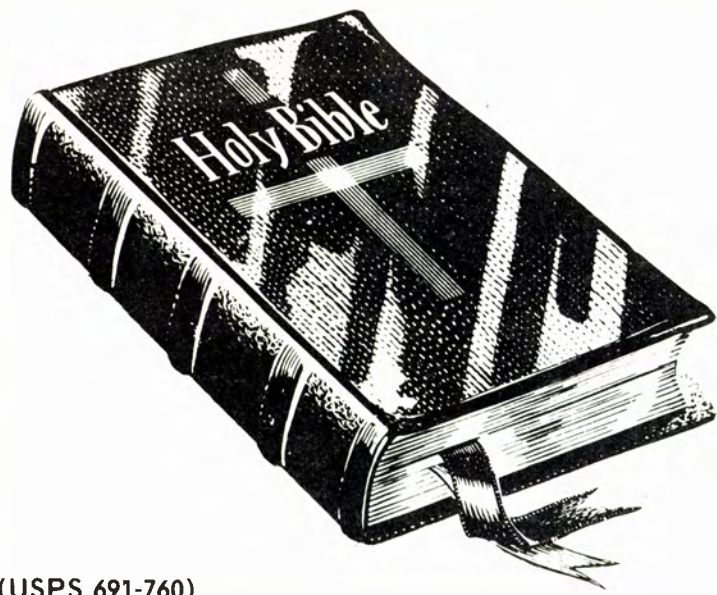
Telling troubles multiply them. Keep them to yourself. Only a baby has to whine for sympathy.

The most trouble is produced by those who do not produce anything else.

Truth does not hurt unless it ought to.

Killing time is not murder—it is suicide.

Our heart is the main spring for the tongue.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of



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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1985

NUMBER 40

A Letter To A Christian Church Preacher

Some years ago I wrote the following letter to a minister of an Independent Christian Church. Events of recent months prompt me to share it with the reading public.

Dear Brother:

It is tragic that we who share a common heritage, who stand so close together in faith, cannot worship together and work together in the service of the Lord. Surely our greatest need in today's world is:



John Waddey

"To restore unity, peace and purity to the whole church of God. This desirable rest, however, we utterly despair either to find ourselves or to be able to recommend to our brethren by continuing amid the diversity and rancor of party contentions, the veering uncertainty and clashings of human opinions; nor, indeed, can we reasonably expect to find it anywhere but in Christ and his simple word, which is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Our desire, therefore, for our brethren and ourselves would be that, rejecting human opinions and the inventions of men as of any authority or as having any place in the church of God, we might forever cease from further contentions about such things, returning to and holding fast by the original standard, taking the divine word alone for our rule, the Holy Spirit for our teacher and guide to lead us into all truth; . . . that by so doing we may be at peace among ourselves, follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

If we would but promote simple, evangelical Christianity, free from all mixture of human

opinions and inventions of men, I believe we would be able to resolve our differences.

"Our differences, at most, are about things in which the kingdom of God does not consist -- that is, about matters of private opinion and human invention. What a pity that the kingdom of God should be divided about such! Who, then, would not be the first among us to give up human inventions in the worship of God and to cease from imposing his private opinions upon his brethren, that our breaches might be thus healed?"

"There is no thing we have hitherto received as a matter of faith or practice which is not expressly taught and enjoined in the word of God, either in express terms or approved precedent, that we would not readily relinquish, that so we might return to the original constitutional unity of the Christian church, and, in this happy unity, enjoy full communion with all our brethren in peace and charity."

As a minister, you have a sacred trust and responsibility. Your knowledge of the scriptures and position of leadership fit you to serve God in bridging this gap.

"To you, therefore, it peculiarly belongs, as the professed and acknowledged leader of the people, to go before them in this good work, to remove human opinions and inventions of men out of the way by carefully separating this chaff from the pure wheat of primary and authentic revelation, casting out that assumed authority, that enacting and decreeing power, by which these things have been imposed and established. To the ministerial department, then, do we look with anxiety . . . His dying commands, his last and ardent prayers for the visible unity of his professing people, will not suffer you to be indifferent in this matter."

Likely, only one major obstacle stands between our fellowship; that is the use of instrumental music in the worship of the church.

Surely you would agree that:

"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."

The Bible only! What more beautiful, more worthy claim could ever be made? It is yet another thing to fulfill one's *claim*. Our Restoration "fathers" set out upon this proposition:

"A partial neglect in some instances of the expressed will of God, and in others an assumed authority for making the approbation of human opinions and human inventions a term of communion by introducing them into the constitution, faith, or worship of the church, are, and have been, the immediate, obvious, and universally acknowledged causes of all the corruptions that have taken place in the church of God."

Looking back we know that it was some 670 years after Christ's birth before the first instruments were introduced into the worship of any kind of Church. Pope Vitallian was the leader in this. In the first 58 years of the Restoration Movement no instruments were used. Those were the golden years of our great movement. The same brethren who introduced the Missionary and other Societies also introduced the musical instruments. They opened the flood gates and you now see the tragic end of that movement in the Restructured Disciples Denomination. You have rejected most of their departures: why not lay aside the one impediment to our fellowship? What greater gift could we give to the world in this age than a reunification of your brethren and mine on the Bible only? May God help us to that end.

Oh yes, all the paragraphs above that are inset are from the sainted Thomas Campbell's *Declaration and Address*.

Sincerely,
John Waddey

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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

—Acts 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor

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A Needed Book

Brother Robert R. Taylor Jr. has recently published a new book entitled, *A Review of "Shall We Splinter."* The book was published by the National Christian Press of Jonesboro, Arkansas and consists of 97 pages. Though short, the book is to the point and exposes the errors of James D. Bales with regard to marriage - divorce - remarriage in the excellent Taylor manner.



Victor M. Eskew

Seven chapters make up this work: Chapter one, "The Why of This Study;" Chapter two, "Is There Not A Cause?"; Chapter three, "Who Stirred Things Up?"; Chapter four, "Shall We Splinter?"; Chapter five, "Fellowship and Religious Error;" Chapter six, "Fellowship And Marriage, Divorce And Remarriage;" and Chapter seven, "Baleism: Contentions, Implications, And Far Reaching Consequences." If for nothing more than chapters 3 and 7, the small price of \$3.50 would be well worth spending.

In chapter one brother Taylor sets forth the why of his book. The errors relative to marriage - divorce - remarriage are one of his reasons for the penning of this manuscript. Secondly, he states that little has been written with regard to fellowship and divorce and remarriage. Thus, "much about fellowship will be stated in this material" (p. 9).

Chapter two opens with the question, "Is There Not A Cause?" This question is taken from the Biblical text of I Samuel 17:29 when Eliab and David conversed after David gallantly accepted to do battle with the mighty Philistine, Goliath. Within the chapter brother Taylor sets forth various times when prob-

Continued on page 4



Biographical Sketches

(No. 3)

F. D. Srygley

A truly good man is also a great man. The standards of the world do not make goodness and greatness synonymous, but no one can be truly great without being good. The subject of this sketch was a good man, and therefore a great man. There are other traits of character which helped to make him great.

F. D. Srygley was born on December 22, 1856, in the hill country of North Alabama. His parents were James H. and Sarah J. Srygley. They lived at Rock Creek, in Colbert County, Alabama, when F. D. Srygley was born. His mother was the daughter of a Cumberland Presbyterian preacher. She was a pious, good woman. Both his parents were honest toilers and lived a simple, frugal life; so their children were nurtured in industry and learned the valuable lessons of economy. F. D. grew up with small advantages of an education; however, he was endowed with a strong intellect and a yearning desire to acquire knowledge. He took advantage of the few opportunities that he had and made rapid progress in his education. He entered Mars' Hill Academy and studied under the late T. B. Larimore. He became a Christian in August, 1874.

There sprang up a genuine love for brother Larimore early in his life. He loved him as he loved no other man, save his father; and his love was reciprocated by brother Larimore. Their love for each other was like that of Jonathan and David and Damon and Pythias. They were in each other's company at every moment possible, and when separated they frequently wrote long letters to each other. Their love for each other helped both of them to be good and useful men. Brother Srygley wrote for the public much about brother Larimore, and brother Larimore publicly acknowledged his love and gratitude for brother Srygley.

Brother Srygley was a close student of the word of God. He never doubted it for a moment. He began preaching the gospel soon after he became a Christian. He was logical in presenting his subject; and, above all, he was Scriptural in his teaching. He had no theories to preach; but he loved the truth of God, and loved to preach it. His style was simple and direct. The common people understood him and loved him. His labors were largely among the country people. No church or community was denied his services because of lack of funds. He said that the large and wealthy churches could get almost any preacher they wanted, but that the weak churches could not; so he preferred to labor with the weak ones.

Brother Srygley was not only a preacher of great ability, but he was a ready writer.

Early in his career as a preacher he began wielding the pen, and those who have read his writings know that he was mighty with the pen. He was associated with the lamented F. G. Allen in publishing the Old Path Guide, and traveled extensively in the interest of this paper and increased its circulation very much. F. G. Allen established this paper in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1879. Brother Srygley and brother J. C. McQuiddy were schoolmates in Mars' Hill Academy under T. B. Larimore. Through brother Srygley's influence brother McQuiddy became associated with F. G. Allen in editing the Old Path Guide. At that time the paper was giving its influence to organized mission work as an expedient for preaching the gospel.

In November, 1889, he became one of the editors of the Gospel Advocate through the influence of brother J. C. McQuiddy. When he began his work of writing for the Advocate, he held to his views of organized mission work as expressed in the Old Path Guide. He was asked to write in the Advocate against the missionary societies. He would not agree to do this, but did agree to be true to his convictions and follow where the Bible led him. He also agreed to make a thorough study of this question from the light of Scriptural teachings. He really entertained the hope that he would teach those who were opposed to societies the error of their way; but he soon found that there was no authority in the New Testament for such organization. He studied the question earnestly and prayerfully, and finally reached the conclusion that organized human societies, other than the local congregation, for the preaching of the gospel, were sinful and should be condemned. He had the courage of his conviction and began writing with emphasis about the New Testament church, together with its organization and mission. He studied the church from every angle as revealed in the New Testament. He wrote much about it, and no one of his day, and probably no one since his time, had a clearer conception of the New Testament church and its mission than did F. D. Srygley.

In writing of the New Testament church, he expressed frequently and clearly the great truth that "one cannot be a Christian and not belong to the church, for the reason that the same process that makes one a Christian constitutes him a member of the church." He emphasized that the church is the household of faith, or family of God, and, as such, includes all Christians; that the church is the body of Christ, and every Christian is a member of it. He continued teaching on this point until the readers of the Advocate of that generation learned the lesson well. He

Continued On Page 3

Bad Habits Are Like Chiggers And Cockleburs

Bad habits can get such a hold on us so that we cannot break them except through the guidance of God's word and the great strength that comes in obedience thereto. Thoughts and desires need to be wholesome, for by these our habits are formed. James wrote: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any



Edsel Burleson

man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:13-15).

If one places a large stone in the hand of a monkey and then throws him into deep water, he will hold on to the stone and drown, rather than let loose and swim out. When a

bad habit gets a firm hold on a man, he will cling to it and fail, rather than give it up and succeed.

Someone has written:

"I am a weed. It is fun to grow
Beside a flower. It is fed, you know,
And it's cultivated. If I'm not pulled out
I steal its food, and grow tall and stout.

I'm a bad habit. I can grow
Stronger each day that you let me go.
All the good resolutions you may make
I can surely, swiftly break.

Look for the weed beside the flower!
Break that habit's evil power!
Do not wait till they grow so strong
You must hurt the good to kill the wrong."

A wise old man was once taking a stroll through a forest with a shiftless youth by his side. The man suddenly stopped and pointed to four plants close at hand. The first was a tiny sprout, just coming out of the earth. The second had rooted itself quite firmly in the fertile soil. The third was a small shrub. And the fourth had grown into a well-

developed tree. The old man said, "Pull up this first plant." The youth pulled it up easily with his fingers.

"Now pull the second," said the old man. With slight effort the plant came up, roots and all. "And now the third," continued the man. The boy pulled with one hand, then the other, but it would not come. Then he took both hands, and the plant finally yielded to all his strength.

"And now," said the man, "try the fourth." The youth grasped the trunk with all his might, but hardly a leaf shook. "I cannot move it," he exclaimed. "Just so, my son," said the wise old man, "with our bad habits. When they are young and small, we can cast them out; but when full grown, they cannot be uprooted."

A habit cannot be tossed out the window; it must be coaxed down the stairs one step at a time. And, like chiggers and cockleburs, bad habits are easy to acquire but difficult to shake off.

—West End Church of Christ, 420 Seventh St., S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Purity Of Life

Purity of life has been the crying need of every generation. The temptation to render normal or mediocre service to God has always been in existence. Immortality has always made the claim that happiness is not found in serving God. This claim is false. The pleasure of sin is only momentary (Hebrews 11:24-25). The security and blessings in Christ bring happiness both for time and eternity.



W. Edwin Kearley

DEEDS BEGIN IN THOUGHTS. "Certain of the scribes said within themselves, this man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, WHEREFORE THINK YE EVIL IN YOUR HEARTS" (Matthew 9:3-4). Jesus also said, "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Matthew 12:35). Another statement Jesus made was, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man . . ." (Matthew 15:19-20).

HOW WE ARE TAUGHT HAS A BEARING ON OUR THINKING. Teaching and learning are two processes. However, if we are taught right, we are likely to learn right. Paul said to Timothy, "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also" (II Timothy 1:5). Also he said, "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" (II Timothy 3:15).

When the right teaching begins early, the greater likelihood the thinking will be right. Then the actions will be right. Children in the cradle-roll classes soon begin to sing, though they cannot say the words. The attitudes of life are learned in the first few years of life.

The greatest motivating factor should be the word of God. The Psalmist wrote, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105). Solomon said, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5). Faith comes from hearing God's word (Romans 10:17).

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHRIST SHOULD DIRECT OUR ACTIONS. Love is a great motivating force. Allegiance is built upon both faith and love. Paul stated, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity (love), it profiteth me nothing" (I Corinthians 13:3). Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matthew 22:3). Since we have the power of choice we can place our allegiance where we desire. If we desire to do right, and if we love God, we will put our allegiance on Christ and his righteousness (Matthew 6:33).

Many attitudes clamor for our allegiance. Humanism demands our loyalty. Many seek to make us think that humanism is the same as humanitarianism. "Humanism" opposes every principle which causes man to love, to treat his neighbor as himself. These principles come from God, who is the motivating power of love. John wrote, "We love him because he first loved us" (I John 4:19).

Immortality claims yielding to the lust of the flesh brings happiness. The truth is that it brings only sensual pleasure. One thrill calls for another thrill greater than the first one. Dissipation of both body and mind is the

result. It ends in destruction and ruin.

Some think that purity of living is putting family and the necessities of life first. Christianity involves love for family. It teaches, "But if any provide not for . . . his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than infidel" (I Timothy 5:8). But Jesus promises, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things" (the necessities of life) "shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

—103 E. Lena Ct., Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Biographical Sketches

Continued from page 2

had no apology to offer for repeating this fundamental truth. He said: "To hammer constantly on one point is both tedious and monotonous; but no man can drill a hole in a hard substance without hitting many licks in the same place." He further said: "It has been urged in these columns, in season and out of season, for several years, that the popular denominational idea that folks can be Christians without belonging to the church is contrary to the plain teaching of the New Testament." Brother Srygley met every phase of error on this principle and refuted it. All opposition to this central thought of the church and the process of becoming a Christian was doomed to fall when attacked by F. D. Srygley.

Brother Srygley's permanent work for the cause of Christ consists in the main in the books which he wrote. All of his books are worthy a place in the library of any home. They are as follows: "Larimore and His Boys," "Seventy Years In Dixie," "Biographies and Sermons," and "Letters and Sermons of T. B. Larimore." Since his death

Continued on page 4

A Needed Book

Continued from page 2

lems arose in the church which called for warriors such as David. In each case there was a cause. And relative to marriage - divorce - remarriage he answers the question in the affirmative. "Yes, there is a cause, and too much has not been said and written yet on the side of truth. As long as errors relative to marriage - divorce - and - remarriage are taught, then lovers of truth have no other alternative than keep active their tongues and pens in upholding the majesty of marriage, the holiness of the home" (p. 20).

The third chapter of brother Taylor's book sets forth the true troubles of Israel. This chapter is much needed within the church today. For as brother Taylor says: "Errorists of the deepest dye have always had difficulty in accurately analyzing just who the troublers are" (p. 21). And not only do errorists have difficulty, but also many faithful brethren. Within the 15 pages of this chapter brother Taylor names those involved in teaching error relative to marital matters.

Chapter four is the longest chapter of the book. It is within this material that brother Taylor examines James D. Bales' booklet, "Shall We Splinter?" One important aspect of this chapter is where brother Taylor notes the differences between brother Bales' position and the positions of some whom brother Bales quoted in his booklet in order to help bolster his position. This Bales had failed to do. Brother Taylor deals with "Bales and Brewer," "Bales and Foy E. Wallace, Jr.," and "James D. Bales and R. L. Whiteside." The points brother Taylor brings to light are interesting and all would do well to have this information.

Chapter five contains general information regarding fellowship. Fellowship is the "bottom line" of the booklet, "Shall We Splinter?" Of this, brother Taylor speaks much. Many preachers and elderships would do well to read and learn from brother Taylor's teaching on this point.

Chapter six brings fellowship and marriage - divorce - and - remarriage together. Brother Taylor first defines his terms. Second, he sets forth God's laws on fellowship and marriage - divorce - and - remarriage. Finally, this chapter discusses the question, "What about fellowship and adulterous remarriage?"

Brother Taylor concludes his efforts with a chapter entitled, "Baleism: Contentions, Implications, And Far-Reaching Consequences." Herein brother Bales' covenant legislation, the guilty party's being free to re-

marry, the law of the heart and teaching on I Corinthians 7:15 are exposed in light of gospel truth. This chapter is worth the price of the book, the time spent to read it, and the labors necessary to have it as a continual reference in our minds.

Robert R. Taylor, Jr. has done another service for the kingdom of Christ. We urge you to purchase this material for your library. May God bless him in all his efforts. May his tribe increase.

—P.O. Box 251, Fulton, MS 38843.

"The Preacher Who Quit Sports!"

There is a story about a preacher who had attended every sporting event in town for years, but suddenly decided to quit. Of course all the coaches and other fans wondered what had happened. Finally one of the coaches went to visit the preacher and asked him what had happened.

The preacher began to explain: "Well, every time I went to a game they always wanted some money."

"But the money we get from tickets is what keep the athletic programs going," explained the coach.

"Well," said the preacher, "that's not the only problem. The people I had to sit with weren't very friendly. They always wanted to talk about the game and never what I was interested in."

"Of course the people around you are interested in the game," replied the coach; "that's what sports are all about."

"Well, the last game I went to, the referee made some decisions I just couldn't go along with," said the preacher.

"Sometimes I don't like his calls either," said the coach, "but all the referee can do is follow the rules and call the game as he sees it."

"You always schedule the games at times when I want to do something else," the preacher said.

"We try to schedule the games at times which are most convenient for everyone," answered the coach; "but it is impossible to please everyone."

"I don't like it when the games go into overtime. It makes me late getting home," the preacher complained.

"There aren't that many games that go over," replied the coach; "Besides, you should be glad for the chance to enjoy the sport longer."

Then the preacher said, "Well the band played some tunes I have never heard before!"

The coach patiently explained: "But if the band never plays anything new, how are you going to learn new songs to enjoy?"

Said the preacher: "You never come to me and ask my opinion on how to run the team. I've read books on sports and I know a lot about them too!"

"I'm sure that you do," said the coach, "and I would invite your suggestions; but I have studied coaching for years and have practiced my skills. I'm not saying that I have all the answers, just that I do the best job that



Doug Milligan

I can."

The preacher said, "Some of the ladies that came weren't interested in the game at all. They just wanted to see what everyone else was wearing. I can't stand hypocrites! And not only that, but the seats were too hard and uncomfortable."

"Well, sure," said the coach, "there are some people who aren't good fans who come to the games; and sometimes the seats are a little uncomfortable; but if you really love sports, those things won't make any difference! Besides that, your children love to come to the games. Doesn't it bother you that you are depriving them of a chance to enjoy sports?"

"No," said the preacher, "My parents took me to too many games when I was growing up and I don't want my kids to burn out on sports like I have. Besides, I don't want to take my children to the games because I want them to choose for themselves what sport they like best."

"But that's ridiculous!" answered the coach.

"Is it, Coach?" asked the preacher. "These are the very excuses you gave me for quitting church!"

—Rt. 4, Box 391, Hamilton, AL 35570.

Biographical Sketches

Continued from page 3

his able and gifted brother, F. B. Srygley, has compiled many of the editorials published in the Advocate into book form, bearing the title, "The New Testament Church." Brother Srygley was first-page editor of the Advocate for a little more than ten years, and occupied this position when he died.

Brother Srygley died on August 2, 1900, at his home in Donelson, Tennessee. His lifelong friend, the late T. B. Larimore, preached his funeral. His body was laid to rest in the beautiful Mount Olivet Cemetery, Nashville, Tennessee.

(Reprinted from BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF GOSPEL PREACHERS, by H. Leo Boles, with permission from the Gospel Advocate Co., Publishers).

SENTENCE SERMONS

Men, because of speech, have the advantage over brutes: but beasts are preferable to men whose language is indecent.

* * * *

Bernard Baruch sagaciously states: "Every man has a right to an opinion, but no man has a right to be wrong in his facts."

The Inexorable Law

A man rocked a boat to see if it would tip. It did.

A laborer stepped on a nail to see if it would go through his shoe. It did.

A man looked into a gun to see if it was loaded. It was.

A woman looked into a patent medicine booklet to see if she was sick. She was.

Last June a helper smelled escaping gas and lighted a piece of oily waste to find the leak. He found it.

A young man tried drinking to see if it would make him behave like a fool. It did.

A young girl kept late hours to see if it really would injure her office work. It did.



(USPS 691-760)



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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1985

NUMBER 41

Why Mechanical Music Is Used

(No. 5)

By deliberate design I am noting in lengthy detail the major arguments (?) that proponents have used across the years as attempted justification for mechanical instruments of music in their worship. Another artful and sly argument (?) is now set forth, and will be refuted with rousing argumentation of a scriptural and logical brand.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

"THEY ARE AIDS, AND THEREFORE ARE PERMISSIBLE"

From time to time the proponents of mechanical music for Christian worship have employed what might be called the "aid" argument. In explanation of what they mean they would say that the mechanical instrument serves the same purpose as do lights to lighten a building, a furnace or air conditioning to heat or cool a building, song-books, pitch pipes, or tuning forks in singing, or as baptisteries do for immersion purposes. Let us now view the argument (?) to see if it offers any sustaining proof for the practice under current examination.

Are lights in a building, a furnace in the basement, or an air conditioning element at the side of the building in the same category with mechanical instruments? INDEED NOT! -- and for obviously strong reasons. They are not added elements to our worship in any sense of the term.

Is the song-book in the same class as are the piano, or the organ? INDEED NOT is my instant reply. If one sings from memory, what is he doing? He is just singing. If one employs a song-book, what is he doing? He is just singing? The song-book has added no new

element to what he is doing in worship. If so, WHAT NEW ELEMENT HAS BEEN ADDED? Men may sing bass, or tenor, or the lead. What are they doing? They are just singing. Women may sing soprano or alto. What are they doing? They are just singing. The song-book is just an aid or help -- and nothing more. But what happens when mechanical music is employed? There is an addition. Singing has been joined by another act, another element, i.e., playing. People then are singing AND playing. They no longer just sing. Another act has been added.

Are tuning forks or pitch pipes in the same class as are the piano and the organ? INDEED NOT!! The former are merely aids in enabling the song director to fix in mind the proper pitch in which the song is to begin. Their work is completed before the song is begun!! The leader does not continue to blow on the pitch pipe all the way through the song. The tuning fork is not sounded and held to the ear of the song director throughout the song. Are these standard procedures with the piano and the organ? INDEED NOT!! They are going strong when the song is begun, and even before the vocal part begins as a usual rule. They continue to go strongly as the song continues and frequently keep going after the vocal part ends. It is frequently the case of where the blaring piano or organ will drown out the very words which are sung by the vocal participants. I have never heard a tuning fork or a pitch pipe do such. Have you?

Are baptisteries in the same category as are mechanical instruments in Christian worship? INDEED NOT. The baptistery is simply an accommodation for the baptismal candidates. "Much water" is still "much water" whether it be running in a stream such as the Jordan River, a large pool such as they doubtless used in Jerusalem on Pentecost in Acts 2, a large lake, or in a baptistery. All that is essential is sufficient water in which to immerse or bury a person (Romans 6:4; Colossians

2:12). What happens when a person is baptized in a running stream, a large lake or an open pool such as Jerusalem contained? The individual is just baptized or immersed -- nothing more, nothing less. What happens when a person is baptized in a baptistery? He is just baptized -- nothing more, nothing less. There is no new act or element added. Nothing is taken away. The baptistery is just an aid -- not an addition to the command and its submissive execution.

When the mechanical instrument is employed, another act has been added! No longer is there just the singing. Now there is both singing and playing! Singing is not the same as playing; playing is not the same as singing. Each is a SPECIFIC type of music. "Music" is general. *Singing* is specific; *playing* is specific.

CONCLUDING ARGUMENT

Is the mechanical instrument really an "aid," even if it were not a sinful addition? In NO SENSE as far as religious music is concerned! It hinders -- not helps. It detracts. I have attended and helped with many funerals in denominational buildings or funeral homes where the piano or organ playing so dominated the musical part that it was virtually impossible to tell what the singers were saying in song. If the song happened to be one I had never heard before, I could seldom catch a word from the singers that was intelligently understandable. Such makes impossible any appreciable degree of teaching from the actual words of the song.

Dependence upon the mechanical machinery keeps people from developing vocal independence. An accomplished musician, Mrs. Carrie Carlton, for many years was an able organist for a large denominational church in the northwest Tennessee town of Union City. She taught voice for many years. I studied voice under her for a number of years. Amidst

Continued On Page 3



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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—Acts 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS . . . Editor
1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501

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The Fatal "Ease" Disease

We live in an age of comfortable Christianity. Complacency, compromise, and toleration seem to be the rule of the day. To take a stand upon truth, and then maintain that stand, is seldom seen any more. Too many seem to be afflicted with the "ease" disease.

Jesus said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:11-12). The trials, hardships, and even death, suffered by early Christians came as the result of their conviction, and not ease.

One person suggested that if Stephen, the first Christian martyr, had been more discreet and tactful, he would not have been martyred. Stephen died because he stood upon his convictions. Such was the courage shown by many in the early days of persecutions against the church.

In a portion of a letter written by the Roman ruler, Pliny, to the Emperor Trajan, this sad (but revealing) information is found: "When people are brought before me accused of the crime of being Christian, I ask them, 'Do you believe that Christ is the Son of God?' If they answer negatively, I release them . . . If they answer affirmatively, I have them scourged and warn them of the danger of persisting in that course, and ask them a second time; if they answer negatively and



Edsel Burleson

Continued on page 3

The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

A Tribute To Guy N. Woods

I know few men who have wielded more influence for good than has brother Guy N. Woods, who until recently was Editor of the Gospel Advocate. His impact on the church has been equalled by very few men in this century.

In my early preaching years I read to great profit from his pen, and heard him preach whenever I could. I did not know any other preacher his age who had as many debates as he did. By the time he was 37, he had engaged in about fifty debates having met more than once -- even in his youth! -- such men as D. N. Jackson and A. U. Nunnery. His published debate with Nunnery exposes more denominational error and quibbles than many people confront in a lifetime. Brother Woods' style is to answer everything his respondent says. His ready recall of scripture [and everything else he has read!] enables him to detect errors and refute them. His logical mind enables him to make plain his response in clear, concise statements. He can say in one paragraph what many would take a whole page to explain -- and still leave the reader without the clear concept he gets from Bro. Woods.

The scope of his knowledge is vast, and he has engaged in discussions with representatives of many denominations, including Baptists, Methodists, Holiness, Adventists, Christadelphians, and Materialists, as well as



Guy N. Woods

errorists from our own ranks.

Few (if any) gospel preachers have been for meetings in more places than Guy N. Woods. He has preached from Canada to the Gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific; in the smallest of churches, and in the largest congregations; to the old and to the young; to the educated and to the illiterate; to the rich and to the poor. His preaching leaves the church stronger, more unified, and instills in all the desire to live closer to God. His sermons are clearly outlined, and are usually compacted into 20 or 30 minutes.

His work on the Open Forum at Freed-Hardeman College is significant in the refutation of numerous errors, and in letting the light of truth shine on manifold questions. That one work, and the subsequent book he prepared, would alone have distinguished him for a lifetime. But in his case it is only one of MANY outstanding contributions he has made.

As Editor of the Gospel Advocate he was, in my judgment, at his best, and did some of his greatest work. In Bro. Woods we had one in that office who not only could refute error when it made itself plain, but one who also could detect the slightest tendency toward error, and was not too timid to cry aloud and spare not. May his tribe increase! It is my opinion that those who would compromise with denominationalism comprise no more than 10 percent to 15 percent of our brotherhood, and that Bro. Woods represents from 75 percent to 90 percent of our preachers and elders. May his tribe increase!

I rejoice that the Getwell church in Memphis plans to honor brother Guy N. Woods at a dinner during the Spiritual Sword Lectureship on Wednesday, October 23, and am happy to pay this tribute to him.

How To Stay Awake In Services

TOM L. CHILDERS

A man went to the doctor to get some advice on how to stop snoring. The doctor asked him "Does your snoring disturb your wife?" "Does it disturb my wife?" he said! "Man, it disturbs the whole congregation."

There is no denying it -- some people do go to sleep in worship services. Eutychus (Acts 20:9) probably was not the first, and he certainly was not the last. It is always a challenge to stay interested in the sermon and stay awake.

Different methods have been devised to keep people awake. Many years ago, the Puritans used a long stick to punch any sleepy member. Some today think banging on the pulpit, or a "hollering" preacher, will keep people awake. One preacher threw a song book at a sleeping elder. Sitting beside a wide-awake spouse has kept many a husband from nodding and snoring. Still, people go to sleep!

One thing I have found that keeps me awake and interested in the sermon is to take notes. Assuming a person *plans* to stay awake and he

wants to hear the sermon, a Bible and a note pad works every time. A person might get sleepy because it is too cool; the preacher is too dry; he has not had enough sleep or he is on medication; but one will never go to sleep in services if he takes notes.

One of my prize possessions is over 30 stenographer's note -- pads of sermon notes I have taken since 1971. I have notes on hundreds of sermons of outstanding preachers in the brotherhood, and some of them are no longer living. While I was living at Olive Branch, Mississippi, one of the members took notes in shorthand on each of my sermons. In over 500 sermons (5 years of preaching), not once did *she* ever go to sleep. If you are fighting to stay awake in services and usually end up on the losing end, why not trying using a Bible and a note pad?

There is a time to sleep, and a time to stay awake. May the Lord bless our efforts to stay wide awake in every worship service.

609 E. Main Street, Alamo, TN 38001.

Who Should Not Preach?

Preaching the gospel is a wonderful and necessary activity. God has ordained that it is by preaching the gospel that souls are to be saved (Romans 1:16; I Corinthians 1:21; Acts 15:7-19). The first-century preachers were ever conscious of the great burden that was upon them to stand soundly for the truth (II Timothy 4:2). Sadly, there are some who are leaving the pulpit, and few who are replacing them. The loss of good men in the pulpits is a thing to be alarmed over; but this article is written to suggest that some men *SHOULD NOT PREACH!* Who should not preach?



Jerri Manasco

in spirit, in faith, in purity . . . Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:12, 16). Paul did not say that no man would despise Timothy or any other gospel preacher; but he is instructing the preacher to so live that no man will have a just cause to despise him, or cast accusation against him for improper conduct. That preacher who will not take heed to himself will not likely be able to do much good in persuading others to take heed to themselves! Let the preacher be a "pattern of good works" (Titus 2:7). How many preachers have been ruined and the good they have done been overturned because of simple indiscretion in their lives? Let the preacher exercise discreet behavior toward the ladies of his congregation (I Timothy 5:2). Let him not be overbearing in his work (I Thessalonians 2:3-5). There are some who are so evil that they bring the truth itself into disrepute (II Peter 3:1-3, 12-19). If an apostle had to guard his own life (I Corinthians 9:27), then we today can do no less if we shall have any measure of success at all in our work as preachers of the gospel.

1. A man whose moral life is in question should not preach. There is already enough (*too much!*) hypocrisy in the church driving away good souls, without the *preacher* contributing to the problem. "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation" (A.S.V.: "manner of life"), "in charity,

2. A man who does not believe in the power of the gospel should not preach. He should not even *presume* to enter into the pulpit if he has little or no confidence in the

gospel itself to do the work God has appointed it to accomplish!! The power of the gospel is not in man; no amount of eloquence or dynamic oratory can within itself save souls or build up the church. The word of God is what produces faith in the heart (Romans 10:17; Acts 15:7). The word of God is the seed from which one can expect a harvest (Luke 8:11). He who supposes that he can somehow enhance the gospel's power by his own wisdom, is sure to find that he is far off base. "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect" (I Corinthians 1:17). "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:1-2). Paul knew nothing about gimmicks which appeal to the flesh, nor of entertaining the audience with frivolous tales.

3. He who conceives of the preaching of the gospel only as a "job" to hold down, rather than a *work to do*, ought not to preach. The hireling tends to forsake the flock when real danger threatens (John 10:12). The preacher who sees himself simply as having a job may be likely to compromise with sin and error in the church while he pampers the whims of the influential members or the elders who "hired" him. The preacher who is truly worth his salt will do nothing by partiality (I Timothy 5:21). The one who "knows which side his bread is buttered on" will spend a great deal of his time "warming up" to the "right people" in the congregation, while those in need of his services will be sinking in seas of sin and despair. Preaching is a work to be conscientiously tended to (Acts 13:2; 15:38; I Corinthians 9:1; II Timothy 4:5). Let the hireling find other amusement!

4. A man who does not love souls should not preach. This is, or at least should be, obvious! Every effort of the preacher should be aimed at bringing in the lost and restoring the fallen. The preacher's task is not simply that of "getting up a sermon" or getting ready for his Sunday pulpit work. Pity that poor person who spends his week wearily searching through his books merely to find something to have ready for Sunday! Let the preacher learn to see the *needs* of the church and address them! Sin, sorrow, broken homes, broken hearts, unemployed husbands and fathers, and scores of other problems need to be addressed in preaching. He who cannot sense the urgent needs in people's lives ought not to be preaching.

This is not to suggest that the preacher can read minds and know the real depth of need in the hearts of his hearers. But the preacher should be aware of the "real world" and speak with authority to the problems and sins of the people. Paul wrote the Corinthian church "with many tears . . . that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you" (II Corinthians 2:4). He also pointed out that "I seek not yours, but *you* . . . 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 12:14-15). Here was a man who was not just writing in order to write: he wrote with the people

Why Mechanical Music Is Used

Continued from page 1

our lessons from time to time she would frequently stop and say something like this to me; "Mr. Taylor, you people in the church of Christ sing better than we Baptists do. We depend on the piano or the organ. You do not have such, and therefore develop greater singing ability." Her appraisal was quite interesting, and destroyed the long-cherished "aid" argument.

Of course I am quick to point out that singing is right because it is commanded; the mechanical instrument is wrong because it is minus any and all authorization from Sacred Scriptures. I have long rejected a careless statement some of our well-meaning brethren (but not with a well-thought-through argument) have used by saying, "The very best argument we can pose against the mechanical

instrument used by our religious neighbors is to have great and good singing." No, the chief and really *ONLY* argument is, that singing is authorized, and playing is not authorized!

One of the primary purposes of singing is to teach, to admonish. Anything that makes it more difficult for this to be accomplished could hardly be classed as an "aid" if it were not an addition as the piano and organ clearly are in this worshipful realm. It is the *ADDITIONAL* aspect that produces the wrong.

The mechanical instrument is an *addition* to the worship. For this foreign element we have no New Testament authorization -- not as much as a particle!!

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

The Fatal "Ease" Disease

Continued from page 2

renounce their faith, I discharge them: if they answer affirmatively, I have them scourged more severely and assure them that they have, but one more opportunity for their lives -- if they answer affirmatively, there is no appeal. I ask them the question the third time, and if they answer affirmatively, I hurry them away to execution, to make room for the next." In face of such pressures, many remained faithful "unto death" (Revelation 2:10).

Seldom is there a similar situation, anywhere in the world, where today a Christian is threatened with death. But the possibility of ridicule, or the slightest difficulties, cause many to sacrifice their convictions for ease.

The story of the church member who was going to a lumber camp in the North describes many. A friend said to him: "If those lumberjacks find out that you are a Christian they will make sport of you." The man went away. When he returned, his friend asked, "Well, how did you get along with the lumberjacks? did they make sport of your convictions?"

The man answered, "Oh, I did fine. They didn't find out that I was a Christian."

Are you so afflicted with the "ease" disease that a stranger would have difficulty recognizing you as a Christian?

—West End Church of Christ, 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

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Can You Remember...?

Memory is a beautiful thing. To recall many of the pleasantries of childhood is so very enjoyable. Many folk find great pleasure in "reliving" the "good ole days." Most visits with friends will include several "do you remember?" questions.

Memory can also bring some unpleasant experiences to mind. Those disappointments of childhood, which we would prefer to forget, sometimes surface again. But the saddest thing memory does is to bring to mind the service and devotion that have characterized some in the church in the past but whose lives now show great indifference, or (in some cases) are being completely wasted spiritually.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if the things we remember about those in the church would show a complete commitment to the Lord. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could recall only such statements as these: "Would you recommend some good books which would help me in my Bible study?" "We have made it a practice for the last several years to invite at least one new family each week to attend services with us." "We had an invitation for dinner Wednesday, but we declined because



Edsel Burleson

it would have kept us from Bible Study." "I turned down those two days of overtime because it included all of the Lord's Day." "We have regularly increased our contribution and never give less than 15 percent to the Lord." "Please give me another visitation card; I want to use more of my time for the Lord."

The Lord desires that we use memory for our spiritual improvement. Read carefully the letters to the churches in Asia in Revelation 2 and 3. To Ephesus: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works" (Revelation 2:5). To Sardis: "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent" (Revelation 3:3). Each of the churches received instructions which called upon them to remember actions, attitudes,

and conditions of the past.

It was memory that prompted the prodigal in Luke 15:11-24 to take a good close look at himself. "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." **AND HE AROSE AND WENT!**

"Memory is a wonderful treasure chest for those who know how to pack it." Try to so live that memories will be a part of your happiness.

—West End Church of Christ, 420 7th St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

A Plea Regarding Wednesday Night

Bill Jackson

In so many congregations, Wednesday night attendance records are shameful! Indeed, in some places the Wednesday night support of the truth is less than half of the Sunday morning attendance. And, we worded it that way purposely: Support of the truth.

An old fable said the Sunday morning crowd shows the popularity of the church, the Sunday night crowd shows the popularity of the preacher, (and whether these are true or not, the last point is!) and the Wednesday night crowd shows the popularity of God and the Bible! When we do much speaking about the Bible, and so much condemnation of the religious world for not abiding by the Bible,

and then our mid-week audience reflects a disregard for Bible study, our influence is damaged terribly.

Some members are going to lose their eternal souls because **THEY DON'T HAVE (MAKE) TIME** to be a Christian! They use Wednesday evenings for their own purposes, and ignore the kingdom, the planned program of work, the study of the Bible, their own hurtful influence upon others, etc.

Let all of us purpose to increase our Wednesday evening **ATTENDANCE AND INTEREST!**

—Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, TX 78748.

FATHERS, Be sure YOU read this . . .

Daddy Had A Little Boy

Author Unknown

Daddy had a little boy--
his soul was white as snow;
He never went to Sunday School
'Cause Daddy wouldn't go.

He never heard the word of God
That thrills the childish mind--
While other children went to class,
This child was left behind.

As he grew from babe to youth,
Dad saw, to his dismay,
A soul that once was snowy white
Become a dingy gray.

Dad even started back to church--
And Bible study, too!
He begged the minister, "Isn't there
A thing that you can do?"

The preacher tried, and tried; and said,
"We're just too far behind;
I tried to tell you years ago,
But you would pay no mind."

And so another soul was lost,
That once was white as snow;
Sunday School would have helped,
But Daddy wouldn't go.

"That Is Your Interpretation"

Nick Hamilton

Make no mistake about it, there are two areas of life where people insist on their privacy — religion and money. When discussing the faith of the Scriptures, more often than not people will seek to terminate the discussion by saying, "That's your interpretation."

I always know what they mean. "You have your interpretation, and I have mine" is but a protest meaning "your interpretation might be valid for you, but it is not valid for me." In other words, "I have just as much right to believe what I want to believe as you do."

Merely to protest against teaching by saying "that's your interpretation" is to overlook one fundamental fact — there are such things as correct and incorrect interpretations. If your interpretation is a correct one, then I need to make it my interpretation, too.

You see, truth is not private property — it is a public commodity. It might be my boat or my house or my car, but the truth belongs to all. It is "worthy of all acceptance." (I Timothy

1:15)

If my interpretation is an incorrect one, I must change it. If it is correct, I must persuade others of its absolute validity.

—Pleasant Valley Church of Christ, Little Rock, Arkansas 72215.

Who Should Not Preach?

Continued from page 3

in his heart. How we need preachers like this! It is true that each preacher must be careful to provide time with his own family and not allow his own family to go without his companionship. However, it is also true that the man who puts his own convenience ahead of the Lord's church, and the souls of men and women, is in the wrong work. Let him who is resting on his "tenure" with a church realize that there is still much to be done as young people grow into adulthood in the congregation, and as older people in the church grapple with their own lives.

Brethren, these are not times to get by on a winning personality or scholarship alone. We need men to stand for the truth and join in the fight against error on all sides.

—Rt. 2 Box 513, Haleyville, Alabama 35565

Progressiveness is looking forward intelligently, looking within critically, and moving on incessantly.

Avoid the necessity of secrecy, for time sees and hears all things.

Not by years but by disposition is wisdom required.



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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Why Mechanical Music Is Used?

(No. 6)

An effort has been made quite frequently to defend (?) the correctness (?) of mechanical music in Christian worship by employing the "psallo" argument. This is an appeal to the Greek, the language in which the New Testament was originally penned. The proponents of mechanical music in worship would not resort likely to this argument if they could find their needed proof in our English translations. NO RELIABLE English translation known to me has ever rendered the Greek word "psallo" as including and demanding the mechanical instrument for christian worship.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

why not? They say "psallo" means to "pluck, pull or twang" the strings of a musical instrument. Someone else could not do such for him. It could not be a proxy system by any stretch of the imagination.

Yet only the organist or the one at the piano is doing both the singing and the playing. Furthermore, any wind instrument would not fill the order, for in such there is not a plucking, pulling, or twanging of STRINGS such as would be true with a harp, a guitar, or a fiddle. If the mechanical instrument inheres in the New Testament meaning of "psallo," then as J. P. Sanders, a former Bible teacher of mine at David Lipscomb College, has so well stated: "the apostles violated the confidence the Lord placed in them, for they did not use musical instruments in their praise, nor did they teach the church to use them" (Quoted by Paul Southern in WHAT IS WRONG? p. 109).

HISTORY OF "PSALLO"

In the long history of the word "psallo," the word has had varied and sundry meanings. It has meant to pluck the hair, to pluck the beard, to pluck the strings of a musical instrument, and twang the bow or pluck the strings of a carpenter's marker. The object plucked, pulled, or twanged has to be determined by the context. An object has to be supplied much as when I say "I hit." Hit what? A ball? a nail? another car? etc. The same is true here -- pluck, pull, or twang what? The object has to be supplied.

"Psallo's" meaning in *New Testament usage* is the very vital issue of this particular study. As related to Christian worship does "psallo" mean to pluck the hair?? NO!! Does it mean to pluck the beard? NO!! Does it mean to twang the bow string? or to twang a carpenter's line marker? NO!! I think every reader will agree with my negative conclusions to the foregoing queries. But now for the vital question: Does "psallo" in the New Testament mean to pluck the strings of a mechanical instrument? Many are ready to say, "Why yes, that is just what the term

means." But does it? Why reject its meaning as applied to the hair, the beard, and the carpenter's instrument for marking, and just park upon its connection with the mechanical instrument? Such is a very strange type of Biblical exegesis of word meanings.

ITS MEANING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT
Does "psallo" in the New Testament mean to pluck, pull, or twang the strings of a mechanical instrument? **ABSOLUTELY NOT!!** Jehovah God told us the instrument that is to be plucked, pulled, or twanged. It is the "heart" -- not a harp! Read reverently and believably as Paul says, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making MELODY IN YOUR HEART to the Lord . . ." (Ephesians 5:19 -- emphasis supplied). Did he say make melody on a piano? He did NOT!! Then why use such? Did he say make melody upon an organ? **INDEED NOT!!** Then why use such? Did he say make melody with a ten-piece brass band? **NO INDEED!!** Then why use such? Did he say make melody in the heart? **INDEED HE DID!!** Then why not be submissive to such? and to such *only*? This is precisely why the melody should be made in the HEART -- not upon HARPS. The *heart* is that which is plucked, pulled, or twanged in the making of the prescribed melody. I believe and practice the making of the melody with the heart in Christian worship as the prescribed instrument; I do not believe and practice the making of the melody in Christian worship by employing mechanical machinery as the prescribed instrument because **PRESCRIBED IT IS NOT!!** The former is Biblical; the latter is sinful. Relative to the type of music we should have in Christian worship it is SINGING. "The Bible said it; that settles it; therefore I believe it!"

In the next article I propose to list some significant findings from some of the finest Greek scholarship the world has ever produced relative to the meaning of "psallo" in its New Testament usage.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

But let us examine in quite some detail the argument in this and a subsequent article, to see if there is any mechanical instrument that inheres in this term as it occurs in the Greek text of the New Testament.

THEY REJECT THE FULL DEMANDS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR OWN ARGUMENT

Simply stated, those who employ this argument (?) claim that the word "psallo" contains New Testament authority and commandment for the use of mechanical music in Christian worship. If they are right in this, then no one can worship God in song without mechanical instruments. Yet this is a conclusion that few would seriously seek to defend. In fact, many of the advocates through the years from whom I have read acknowledge that God can be worshipped either with, or without, the mechanical instrument! But if the mechanical instrument inheres in the word "psallo," then every worshipper must have his own mechanical instrument. If not,



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Single Again

Tugging At The Heart Strings

Several weeks ago I wrote an article, "Single Again," which appeared in this publication. I appreciate brother Nichols' printing the essay. I suppose, of all the pieces I have submitted, that one caused more people to respond than any other I have written. I received several letters from both male and female readers. I thank each individual who wrote.



Ray Hawk

I wrote the article for several reasons. First, about a year ago, my wife found she had lupus. Her health had gradually worsened over the past three years and tests proved she had the disease. The doctors frankly told us she had the kind that was often accompanied with cancer. They put her in the hospital and began extensive testing, informing us they were looking for and expecting to find cancer somewhere in her body. It was a very trying time which God eased through our prayers and those of others. All tests were negative. She did not have cancer. About once a year, she undergoes tests to make sure she continues to be clear of a malignancy.

It was during this period that I began thinking about what my life would be like if something happened to Mary Nell. It wasn't a very comforting thought! We celebrated twenty-five years of marriage in February and they have been wonderful. Mary Nell became my wife as an answer to several years of prayer that I would find the right woman to share my life. If no other prayers had been answered, the answer to that request has proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that

Continued On Page 3

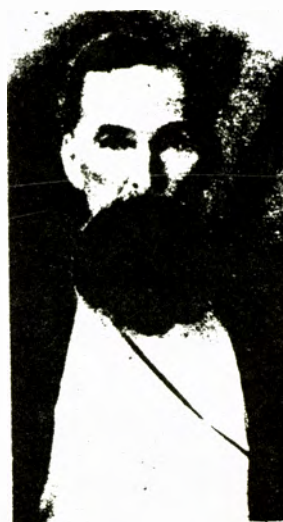


The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Biographical Sketches: (No. 4)

In this sketch of the life of Joseph H. Halbrook we have another lesson in the struggles in poverty and obscurity to prominence and usefulness in human society; also a lesson how one struggles from the bondage of superstition and denominationalism to the light and liberty of Christ Jesus. These lessons ought to encourage any one who may be handicapped by the circumstances of life. Any one who wills to become good and useful may do so.



Joseph H. Halbrook

J. H. Halbrook was born on December 14, 1841, in Perry County, Tennessee. His parents moved to Hickman County while he was quite young. His parents were accustomed to hard work and poverty. Young Halbrook learned the lesson of economy and self-denial in childhood. He knew what it was to be pinched with poverty and endure hardships in this life. He had very few opportunities for an education. The school terms were short, and he never had the opportunity to attend a full session. There were very few churches of any kind in his younger days, and the preachers were not educated.

Young Halbrook's mother was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. His father was one who waited for the "call." His mother had deep convictions and entertained the preachers of her faith in her home with a hope that her husband would receive the "call" that he was one of the elect. Young Halbrook loved his father and knew that he was a good man. He could not understand why his father, who wanted to go to heaven and who was deeply interested in religion, was not chosen. Much of the preaching that he heard was only the religion of experiences. The preachers always started in relating their experiences with the fact that they were very wicked in their former days, but that God had saved them. Young Halbrook could not understand why the Lord would call to be his children the extremely wicked men, but would not call his father.

On December 14, 1862, J. H. Halbrook enlisted in the Confederate Army. He was twenty-one years old the day that he enlisted. He made a good soldier, as he was used to hardships of poverty and self-denial. He was captured by the Federal Army at Nashville, Tennessee, December 15, 1864. He was carried as a prisoner of war to Camp Douglass, at Chicago, Illinois, and remained a prisoner till the war closed. When he was mustered out of service, he returned home with very little clothes, almost naked, and was seventy-five dollars in debt, with not a penny to pay

his indebtedness. He returned home too late that year to plant a crop. He had courted a sweet girl before he enlisted in the army; and so, when he returned in such dire circumstances, he borrowed two dollars with which to get married. He married a girl, to use his own language, "who had nothing but a pure heart and a good stock of religion." His wife was a member of the church of Christ. She began to teach him the way of the Lord. She had godly influence on him and soon brought him to see the light which is revealed in the New Testament. He had not been married long before he was baptized by E. A. Land, who was preaching in that country.

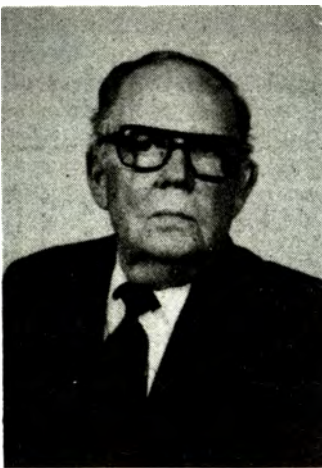
Brother Halbrook was anxious for his neighbors and relatives to learn the truth, so he began trying to preach. He knew but little about the Bible and had no opportunity to associate with any preachers who were well informed from whom he could learn. He was forced to study the New Testament. He did this, and within a few years no other preacher in that country knew more of the word of God than did J. H. Halbrook. He was industrious and exercised good judgment with his economy and bought a little farm. He paid for this farm and accumulated some property. However, his desire to preach the gospel was so great and urgent that he decided to sell his farm and go to school. He did this, and he entered school at Mars' Hill, near Florence, Alabama. The justly famous T. B. Larimore was operating the school at that time. Brother Halbrook was older than Brother Larimore, his teacher. He remained in school there two years and preached as he had opportunity in North Alabama. He had nothing left of his farm, save a horse and buggy and his good wife. He lived in Fayette County sixteen years. He preached throughout the counties of Fayette, Lamar, Tuscaloosa, Walker, Marion, Lawrence, Franklin, and Colbert, all in Alabama. He traveled over the mountains and hills and plains on horseback and preached in schoolhouses, under the trees, in private homes, in courthouses, along the highways, and wherever people would assemble to hear him. He was very successful as an evangelist and baptized thousands of people.

One day, while he was preaching, he was interrupted by a man, who said to him: "Parson, water baptism may do for such folks as you; but if I am ever baptized, I want it to be with the Holy Ghost." Brother Halbrook was not in the least excited or disturbed, but calmly said to him: "Well, now, my brother, you had better take such as you can get. Any preacher can baptize you with water, but God only can baptize with the Holy Ghost, and he may not consider you of sufficient importance to require such special attention." At another time he was interrupted by another man, who said to him: "If you have not been baptized with the Holy Ghost, I would not give much for your religion." Brother Halbrook replied: "It is of no concern to me whether you would give much for my religion or not. I

Continued on page 4

Jesus And Prayer

(1) **JESUS TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES HOW TO PRAY** (Matthew 6:9-15). To pray acceptably, one must be *eligible* to pray. God hears the prayers of his children only. God has children, and the Devil has children (1 John 3:10). Only those who have been "born again" are children of God (John 3:3-5; Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47). If Satan's children pray to their



W. A. Holley

"father," they pray to Satan (John 8:44). Rebellious prayers prayed by sinners, God does not hear (John 9:31; Psalms 66:18; Proverbs 1:24-33; Isaiah 1:15; Jeremiah 11:11; Micah 3:4).

(2) At the time John the Baptizer baptized Jesus, Jesus prayed unto Almighty God (Luke 3:21-22). Think of this example thus set by our Saviour. From our baptism into Christ onward, our lips should lift unto God our thanks and praise for the manifold blessings of his divine grace (Psalms 19:14; Ephesians 1:3; 1 Timothy 2:1-5; Romans 10:1).

(3) **AFTER JESUS HAD CLEANSED A LEPER, HE WENT INTO THE WILDERNESS AND THERE PRAYED UNTO GOD** (Luke 5:12-16). Thus, after performing a great work for this unfortunate man, Jesus desired to spend some time in prayer. When God has blessed so wonderfully, as he does so often, we should take time to thank God through earnest prayer.

(4) **BEFORE SELECTING HIS APOSTLES, JESUS "CONTINUED ALL NIGHT IN PRAYER TO GOD"** (Luke 6:12-16). Thus, Jesus taught his disciples that no great work should be attempted without first imploring God's blessings upon it (Cf. James 4:13-17).

(5) **WHEN SATAN DESIRED TO HAVE PETER AS HIS SERVANT, JESUS WARNED PETER OF SATAN'S DESIRE, AND JESUS ENCOURAGED PETER, SAYING: "BUT I HAVE PRAYED FOR THEE, THAT THY FAITH FAIL NOT: AND WHEN THOU ARE CONVERTED, STRENGTHEN THY BRETHREN"** (Luke 22:31-32). Jesus thus prays for a disciple about to fall into sin: he prayed that Peter might be able to endure the trial, and that he might be "converted" from evil (Cf. James 5:16; 1 John 5:16). Jesus told Peter that he was praying for him. Let us tell others we are praying for them.

(6) **JESUS PRAYED JUST BEFORE JUDAS BETRAYED HIM INTO THE HANDS OF SINFUL MEN** (Luke 22:39-46). Jesus, three times, "kneeled down and prayed." His prayer was: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." We are told that after Jesus had thus prayed, an angel came from heaven and strengthened him. Hence, in the hour of trial and temptation, Jesus fortified himself against it through prayer. Jesus also urged his disciples to follow his example. Those Christians who wish to resist and overcome temptation, must fortify themselves, through the power of prayer and God's word — for God makes no miraculous

intervention in delivering his children from sin (Psalms 119:11; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 John 3:9). The Holy Scriptures provide us with three strong and powerful examples of how Jesus resisted Satan's overtures (Matthew 4:1-11).

(7) While Jesus was suffering the agonies of the cruel cross, he prayed for those who were responsible for his crucifixion, saying: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Was Jesus' prayer answered? Yes, beyond doubt! when? On the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection, when the gospel of Christ was preached in its fullness and completeness, by Spirit-guided apostles (Acts 2:1-4, 36-38, 41, 47). On that memorable day, these apostles were asked: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" What was the answer? "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . ." This is how they obtained the forgiveness for which Jesus prayed. What happened to these honest inquirers? "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). In verse 47 of this same chapter, it is recorded, "Praising God, and

having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." We ask, How many of these obedient ones joined the church of their choice? Not one!

And just before his death, Jesus prayed: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said this, he gave up the ghost" (Luke 23:46). Thus, at the very moment of death, a prayer was upon his lips. It is altogether proper, when surrounded by enemies (as Jesus was), and as we come near the gates of death, to breathe a prayer asking for a present help in such an hour (Hebrews 4:15-16; Psalms 46:1-4).

(8) **JESUS SPAKE TWO PARABLES, THE MIDNIGHT FRIEND** (Luke 11:5-13), **AND THE UNJUST JUDGE** (Luke 18:1-8), to teach his faithful disciples the certain and blessed results of continued prayer. The word "importunity" as here used means "to press on, to impel; to ply or press with requests; to urge persistently."

The child of God must not become discouraged: let him pray; let him keep on praying; and let him learn that the answer to his prayer is sometimes, "NO!"

— P. O. Box 274, Parrish, Al. 35580.

Single Again

Continued from page 2

God answers prayer.

Second, in the past few months I have noticed how singles have often been shut out of church activities because they are not part of a couple. Because of these two things, I decided to write the article, "Single Again," using the particular style I did.

I never dreamed that a number of people would read the article and think it was talking about me. When I started receiving letters telling me how true the article was in the life of the letter writer, and words of encouragement were given, I understood how the article could be taken to mean I had lost my wife to cancer. I regret that this misunderstanding has occurred. However, I deeply appreciate the letters sent and the kindness which motivated them to be written. Those letters told me a number of things.

First, each writer had lost a mate and was now single again. Very few people can understand the emotions experienced by the surviving spouse. When friends and loved ones hear about the death, they make room in their busy schedule to drop by to give comfort, sympathy, and encouragement. People are there the day the death takes place. People drop by the funeral home the evening before the burial. A number attend the services and go to the cemetery. Several may drop by the house for a day or two. After a few days, busy people turn back to their regular schedule, or fit into it *others* who now need their time. The surviving mate is left alone; and the awareness of the loss begins to dawn fully upon that person. How can you explain *loneliness* to someone who has never experienced the death of a mate?

Second, each knew the hurt experienced by another who had just lost a lifetime partner because he or she was (or, is) still undergoing it. Time helps, but it does not take away the pain. Nothing, or no one, can take the place of that individual. Each of us is

unique and that uniqueness cannot be replaced by another. Death, especially when sudden, forces the surviving partner to face some situations he may not be ready to meet. Other people with their own interests in mind, can be very cruel. I have known of survivors receiving telephone calls from the opposite sex, offering physical favors. Others will take advantage of the bereaved. One Bible salesman appeared at the door of a recently-widowed woman, telling her he was delivering the Bible her husband had ordered. No Bible was ordered; but in her state of grief, she bought it — thinking he had. Others are willing to take advantage of a woman when the car breaks down, plumbing needs repairs, or a house needs painting, by padding the bill. Some husbands find themselves in a new roll of a single parent. Adjustments must be made and some are not at all simple to make.

Third, each was willing to take time to write and offer sympathy and help. Each in his/her own way, indicated that life must go on, that others understand, and can help. Several suggested Single's Classes that might be within driving distance that would offer encouragement and help. They didn't have to write, but they did. Such acts of kindness and the desire to assist others, help to make the church the greatest fellowship upon the earth (Galatians 6:2). Each was trying to use his experience to help another. These gestures are appreciated! It pulls at my heartstrings to know others are out there who are ready to help me (or anyone else) when a wife or husband passes away.

May the church use this experience to help others who are freshly experiencing it. Let us realize that here is a group of people who have a need to remain active when the mate dies. Let us not add to their grief by shutting them out of the work and fellowship of the church.

—39 Webb Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

Habakkuk, The Troubled Believer

Habakkuk is one of those little known men of Scripture whose message is of immense practical value to twentieth century man.

About the Man

We know nothing of Habakkuk save that written in his small book. He was a prophet in the kingdom of Judah during the last quarter of the seventh century B.C. His world was rotting at the core, flying apart at the seams.

Wickedness prevailed in his homeland. God seemed to be totally unconcerned, doing nothing to rectify the situation (1:2-4). The prophet's tract is like a page out of his personal diary, recording his doubts and complaints poured out to God in prayer --and the answers he found.

His Doubt Expressed

"O Jehovah, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? I cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save" (1:2). It seemed as though God was ignoring his prayer. Wickedness was prevailing. On every hand was violence and destruction, strife and contention (1:3). The law of God was chilled or paralyzed, and justice was perverted (1:4).

Anon God did answer his prayer. He was long since engaged, working a work which the prophet would not believe, though told (1:5). Wicked Judah would be punished as justice demanded. The bitter and hasty Chaldeans would be God's instrument of judgment on his rebellious people. They would come for destruction and then pass and be gone like a stormy wind (1:6-11).

Doubts Upon Doubt

As predicted, the answer did not satisfy the bewildered soul of Habakkuk (1:12-13). God's answer raised even more problems in his troubled mind. He asked God: "How could you do such a thing?" How could the holy God use a wicked nation like Babylon as the agent of his will? How could God allow the wicked to swallow up a man more righteous than himself? Habakkuk did not understand that the sovereign God can use an *evil nation* for purposes of chastisement, and then destroy them because of *their own* wickedness. Isaiah defines this great doctrine (Isaiah 10:5-19). God said the Assyrian king was "the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation. I will send him against a profane nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge." The Assyrian was not even aware of God's plan, "but it was in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations" Wherefore when the Lord had performed his whole work of discipline upon Jerusalem, he promised: "I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria. . . ."

Faith's Determination

Even though he had not yet fathomed God's plan and method, faith prevailed over doubt in Habakkuk's heart. He resolved to stand upon his watch tower and patiently wait for God to reveal the end of the matter to him (2:1). The root of true faith is *trust* in God's providence to handle things aright.

His waiting was rewarded, for God gave him the answer in words he could understand:



John Wadley

"And Jehovah . . . said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that he may run that readeth it." In a short while judgment would come upon the proud Babylonians, "but the righteous shall live by his faith" (2:2-4). The antithesis remnant of Hebrews would live through it all triumphantly because of their faith in God.

Following a series of five "Woes" of judgment pronounced upon the Chaldeans, he saw the great Jehovah seated on the throne of the universe, in control of every situation. Therefore all the earth, including the complaining prophet, had best keep silence before him. Let there be no criticism of the divine Ruler's way of ordering his world aright!

With the poet we sing a similar song today:

Jesus, Savior, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea:
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treacherous' shoal;
Chart and compass came from thee:
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

His faith renewed and his spirits now bouyed against the storm, Habakkuk wrote a beautiful hymn to celebrate the victory.

He sang:
O Jehovah, revive thy work. . .
In the midst of the years make it known;
In wrath remember mercy (3:2).

Then he was rewarded with a thrilling vision of God's future plan. He saw God coming up from Teman — even as the light of his presence had led Israel through the wilderness (3:3).

He "stood, and measured (or, surveyed) the earth;

He beheld, and drove as under the nations" (Babylon) (3:6)

He "didst march through the land in indignation;"

He "threshed the nations in anger"
He "wentest forth for the salvation of (his) people" (3:12-13).

Such scenes of divine intervention in the affairs of men thrill the soul and move us in times of danger to sing:

Mine eyes have seen the glory
of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage
where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning
of his terrible swift sword
Our God is marching on."

The prophet closes with three great lessons he had learned. We must "wait quietly for the day of trouble" (3:16). This speaks of patience. "Quietly" suggests that we must not fall into murmuring and complaining at our lot. We must "rejoice in Jehovah . . . the God of (our) salvation" (3:18). No matter what happens, we must rejoice in him. We can be confident of the future for:
Jehovah . . . is my strength . . .
he maketh my feet like hinds feet,
And will make me to walk upon my high places (3:19).

The victory will ultimately be ours.

Lessons to Remember

There are times when our world seems to fall apart, as it did in Habakkuk's day. At times our prayers seem unanswered, and God's ways confuse us. When such is our lot, remember: A doubting mind needs a devoted heart. God never scolds the sincere questioner.

Be thankful for questions: they inspire us, humble us, provoke us, and drive us to search

out the marvelous will of God.

When Habakkuk only looked at his circumstances, he was bewildered and confused (1:3). When he waited for God, and listened to his word, he rejoiced in song (3:18-19).

Since God's ways and thoughts are superior to ours, we should not expect to fully fathom everything he does, or allows to be done (Isaiah 55:8-9).

In times of doubt and trouble, God wants us to look to him and await his answer. "Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding: In all thy ways acknowledge him, he will direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

The real purpose of religion is not to have a doubt removed, but to help us be sure of God's control of our lives and world.

Be assured that the righteous man by his faithfulness to God will live and walk triumphantly in the high places.

When our perplexing problems come (and come they will!), we like Habakkuk must also mount the watch tower of faith, and catch the vision of God at work in his world.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

Biographical Sketches:

Continued from page 2

did not come here, anyway, to auction off my religion; I came to tell you how to live so that you might have a religion of your own. My religion is not on the market." He was asked at one time by one who was interested in the Alabama Christian Missionary Society how much could be raised in his field for missionary purposes. He replied: "I do not know how much can be raised in my field for missionary purposes this year. I have planted my field in cotton, and it is too early in the season yet to tell how it will pan out, but all it makes is for missionary purposes."

Brother Halbrook was so successful as an evangelist that his services were in demand in other States. He preached extensively in Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Missouri, and Texas. There are prosperous churches in all of these States now which are the result of his preaching. He seldom went into a new section that he did not establish a congregation there. The joy of his life was to plant churches in new territory. Many prominent citizens in the various callings of life today were baptized by J. H. Halbrook. In his latter days he moved from Alabama to Levy County, Florida. For a number of years he was in bad health, but preached as he had opportunity. He was a good man, and lived to do good, loved to do good, and did good all the days of his life. He died at his home in Florida on October 1, 1905. Human Society is better because J. H. Halbrook lived on earth; the cause of Christ has spread and reached the hearts of thousands because he has lived; and many of the redeemed of earth will rejoice at the judgment because J. H. Halbrook influenced them for good while upon the earth.

His wife preceded him some years, and Brother Halbrook left his property so that one or two young men could be educated in the Nashville Bible School, now David Lipscomb College. He not only did good while he lived, but made such arrangements for his property to do good after he was gone. What a beautiful example for others!

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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

VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1985

NUMBER 43

Why Mechanical Music Is Used?

(No. 7)

Does the use of mechanical music in Christian worship inhere in the Greek term "psallo" or one of its forms, such as are found in Romans 15:9; I Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; or James 5:13? If it does, then the use of mechanical music in Christian worship is not an optional matter. It then becomes a necessity.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Not only that but every worshipper would have to be plucking, pulling, or twanging the strings of a mechanical instrument. One talented musician playing for several hundred people (or perhaps even thousands) would not meet the demands.

Not only that but the instrument would have to be a *stringed* instrument. The harp would be a stringed instrument; so would the guitar, or the fiddle; so would the piano. But the organ would not be counted as a stringed instrument. Dictionary definition establishes it as a *wind* instrument. Users of mechanical machinery in their worship will not stay consistent with the full demands of their own argument on "psallo."

But what does Greek scholarship say relative to the meaning of "psallo" in the New Testament?

COLLECTIVE TESTIMONIES FROM RELIABLE TRANSLATIONS AND THEIR TRANSLATORS

The King James Version was produced by forty-seven of the finest Hebrew and Greek scholars of seventeenth-century England. (One of the chief critics of the KJV in our day and who is a stickler for being precise with

information imparted uniformly in his oral and written works refers to the KJV as being a sixteenth century product and with sixteenth century English. But it was begun in the seventeenth century and was published in the seventeenth century). The KJV translators left out the mechanical instrument in their renderings of the "psallo" passages.

The American Standard Version was produced more than three-quarters of a century ago (in 1901). One hundred and one Hebrew and Greek scholars worked on it. They constituted the cream of Hebrew and Greek scholarship for their day. Like their predecessors who produced the KJV some centuries earlier, these men likewise did not include the mechanical instrument in the "psallo" passages. Thus we have nearly one hundred and fifty Greek scholars who went on public record as saying the mechanical instrument does not inhere in the word "psallo" as used in the New Testament text. To say it does, is to go contrary to the great scholarship represented in these men of KJV and ASV fame.

INDIVIDUAL TESTIMONY FROM GREEK SCHOLARSHIP AT ITS VERY BEST

Henry Thayer was one of the men who helped produce the American Standard Version. He was one of the greatest Greek scholars who ever lived. His *Lexicon* has been standard for decades, and is one of my most-used Greek books for a fourth of a century (since the late 1950's when I first purchased it). On page 675 of his *GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT* he says of "psallo" this significant expression, "in the N.T. to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song, Jas. v. 13."

W. E. Vine in his very fine work, *AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS*, says that "psallo" means or "denotes, in the N.T., to sing a hymn, sing praises; . . ."

Sophocles, Greek professor of Harvard fame,

is reported to have made a study of the definition of words from 146 B.C. to 1100 A.D. This certainly includes the period of the first century, when Christian worship was first begun, and when all the New Testament was penned by the eight selected penmen. He did not find that "psallo" meant to sing with the accompaniment of mechanical music. Sophocles said "psallo" meant: "To chant, to sing religious songs" (*WHAT IS WRONG?* p. 110).

Paul Southern, in the book previously mentioned (*WHAT IS WRONG*), quotes the eminent German lexicographer, Walter Bauer, who says "psallo" means, "to extol by singing praises, to sing praises" (*Ibid.*).

Southern also quotes J. W. McGarvey who was a Greek scholar with few peers in his day. McGarvey, recognized by the *LONDON TIMES* as being perhaps the ripest Bible scholar of the English Bible of his era, said,

It is universally admitted by those competent to judge that there is not the slightest indication in the New Testament of divine authority for the use of instrumental music in the Christian worship. . . . No scholar has ever taken the position that the singing of psalms requires the use of a musical instrument. . . . The Greek Psallo originally meant to touch, then to twang a bow-string, or play a stringed instrument with the fingers. . . . It meant to play a harp, and finally to sing.

Such is precisely the position taken in this series of articles in the last installment. Thus I stand with the finest Greek scholarship in so doing. It meant SINGING in the New Testament -- NOT PLAYING.

Southern also quotes I. B. Grubbs whose attainments in Greek scholarship have been

Continued on page 2



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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

—Acts 26:35

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Why Mechanical Music Is Used?

Continued from page 1

widely acclaimed. Grubbs was asked the question, "Is there any authority in the Greek for the use of instrumental music in worship?" In dealing with the question of whether we can get mechanical instrumental music in worship from the Greek word "psallo" Grubbs said,

It is only ignorance that could lead anyone to think that. While the word originally meant to strike or twang the strings of a musical instrument, it had (like many terms) outgrown this original sense, and cannot have this meaning in the New Testament. What sense would be conveyed by the expression: Play an instrument in your heart to the Lord? Or what could be gathered from the direction: Speaking to yourselves in twanging the strings of a musical instrument: (Eph. 5:19)? If Paul directed that musical instruments be used in the worship, how came it to pass that he and all primitive Christians utterly ignored the requirement?" (Ibid.).

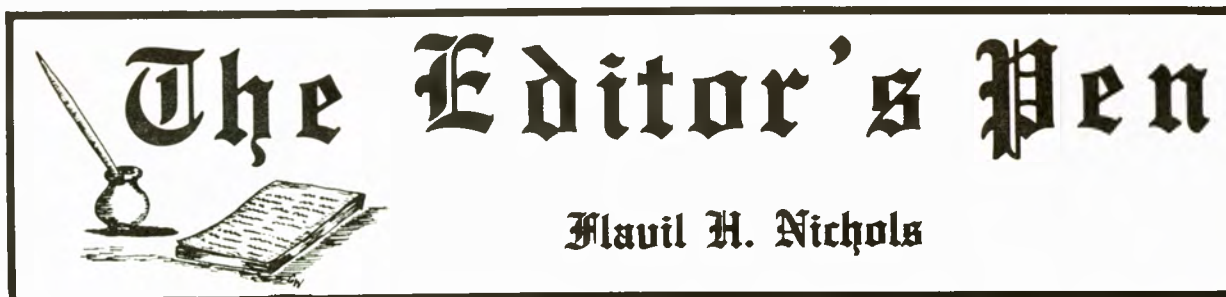
CONCLUSION OF THE "PSALLO" MATERIAL

There is absolutely NO support for mechanical music in Christian worship by making appeals to the "psallo" passages of the New Testament. Employment of mechanical music in Christian worship today is as void of scriptural sanction as incense burning, sabbath-day keeping, polygamy, Jewish tithing for today, or pursuing a fish diet on Fridays as a religious custom which one religious group practiced for centuries to help European Catholic fishermen in their thriving business interests.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

SENTENCE SERMON

Some people are like buttons — always popping off at the wrong time.



Flavil H. Nichols

J. Wayne Kilpatrick Statement:

At Joplin, Missouri, during the "Summit Meeting" last year a filmed segment of an informal session showed two brethren, J. Wayne Kilpatrick, minister of the Homewood church in Birmingham, and F. Furman Kearley, who was then on the staff of Abilene Christian University. Their remarks have brought both brethren under criticism and censure. I am happy to give editorial space to the following statement from brother Kilpatrick. It was read with brother Kilpatrick's permission by brother William Woodson at the Preachers & Elders Forum at Freed-Hardeman College on October 12. I recommend that it be carried in all brotherhood publications, and understand it has been submitted to the GOSPEL Advocate. Brother J. Wayne Kilpatrick is a good and capable man, and I commend his forthright facing of the matter. Now it behooves us to obey II Corinthians 2:7-8: "... forgive him, and comfort him . . . (and) confirm your love toward him." His statement follows:



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

The Editor SOME UNWISE STATEMENTS J. Wayne Kilpatrick

Sometimes, even when we are trying so hard to do good, we make mistakes, and say and do the wrong things. Such was my experience during the much publicized Joplin meeting. The statements I made in our group discussion, and which were video recorded and

quoted by concerned brethren in several articles, were poorly worded statements should have been made more accurately. In these group discussions we had no prepared speeches, and the things said were sometimes said without our having had time to think them through. I hope my brethren, realizing this, will forgive me.

Please be assured that my intentions were honorable, and I certainly had in mind no devious plan whereby our brethren would be indoctrinated with error, though I can see how some might think otherwise upon seeing the short segment of our meeting which was video recorded.

Since some have been made to wonder by the statements I made, I would like my brethren to know that I am opposed to the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship. I have preached this from the pulpit, and on radio and television. The use of the instrument in worship is without scriptural authority, and is, therefore, in violation of such passages as John 4:24; II John 9; and Matthew 15:9. It is my firm conviction that those who use mechanical instruments of music in worship sin in so doing.

Furthermore, I do not believe it would be in harmony with the will of God for us to extend fellowship to those who use the instrument in worship. To do so would constitute a violation of such passages as II John 10 and Romans 16:17.

I regret the hurt caused by my statements at Joplin, and I am certainly sorry for whatever harm might have been done by them. Brethren, please forgive me and pray that I might be wiser in the future.

—Homewood Church of Christ, 1721 Oxmoor Rd., Birmingham, AL 35209.

The Struggle Of Two Natures

Paul wrote, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I" (Romans 7:14-15). Also Paul said, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8).

Here we have a conflict between the carnal (or flesh), and the spiritual. Just what is Paul saying? Is he saying man cannot please God? Is he saying man can only serve God with good intentions



W. Edwin Kearley

of the mind?

Some say the "flesh is evil and can do no good." With this affirmation, they seek a way for man to be saved. They then teach that if a person has even a fleeting belief in Christ as God's Son, that person is saved -- and cannot be lost. They promote this idea by saying, "All evil deeds from idolatry to murder will not destroy this individuals hope of heaven. All of the good deeds done and all the church services attended will not enhance his hope of eternal life."

Paul contradicts this idea. He said, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, whether it be good or bad" (II Corinthians 5:10). Since man is to be judged by his deeds, it follows man is responsible for what his body does. Man has

Continued on page 4

Some False Views Regarding Women

A lot of erroneous teachings have arisen about the role of women in the home and church. In this lesson we note several of these false doctrines.

It is a false doctrine taught by the Roman Catholic Church that certain women who choose to devote their lives to serving God must take a vow of chastity. "The vow of chastity consists in a promise made to God to refrain from matrimony and all sins of impurity."¹ The



John Waddey

Scriptures condemn this by saying "Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled . . ." (Hebrews 13:4). Paul wrote that when some fell away from the faith they would teach demonic doctrines such as forbidding to marry (I Timothy 4:1-3). It is conceded by Catholic scholars that laws of celibacy originated no earlier than the Council of Elvira early in the fourth century.² Thus an enforced celibacy of either men or women is rejected as a false teaching, contrary to God's word.

(1) Some Forbid Make-up and Jewelry

Frequently we hear of "holiness type" churches that forbid their women to wear make-up and jewelry. Their rationale for this is based upon a misunderstanding of two verses: "In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair and gold, or pearls, or costly raiment; but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works" (I Timothy 2:9-10). Peter writes: "Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (I Peter 3:3-4).

An analysis of these verses shows the following contrasts:

God Wants Women:

1. To adorn themselves in modest apparel;
2. With shamefacedness;
3. And sobriety;
4. As becometh women professing godliness;
5. Adorning the hidden man of the heart in incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit.

God Does Not Want Women:

1. To adorn themselves with braided hair, gold, pearls or costly raiment;
2. To put emphasis on outward apparel to the neglect of the inner man.

The context shows that he is prescribing the modest life-style and fashion of a godly woman. This is done by contrast. The godly sister's emphasis is on the inward man of the heart, the worldly woman concentrates on the outer, physical body. If the words are taken literally they ask more than anyone is willing to grant. Peter says "let it not be the . . . putting on of apparel." All would qualify this by understanding it to mean that she must not put on immodest apparel or devote so much time and interest to the outer man's apparel that she neglects the inner man. If we understand it literally, then along with no gold, would be *no apparel*. It

is also noteworthy that those who forbid jewelry and makeup do not forbid their women from styling their hair. Often they have elaborate coiffures -- usually a few years out of date, lest they be offensive to their peers.

While any woman may choose to use no make-up or jewelry, no one has the right to forbid these if they are used in a modest, discreet fashion.

(2) "Women Exist to Serve Men"

Some see women as existing only for the benefit of the man in her life. This faulty view flows in two directions: a). The "playboy view," and b). the "male chauvinist view."

The playboy says that woman exists to provide sensual pleasure for man; i.e. she is a sexual toy.

The male chauvinist says that woman's role is to be a servant to the man. This was typical in most cultures until the present century, and still prevails in most societies other than ours, British and western European nations.

Besides being totally selfish, both of these views fail to recognize that woman is made in the image of God even as the man (Genesis 1:27). Both mistake the divine decree of submission for subjugation. Such men overlook their duty to "love (their) wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it" (Ephesians 5:25). They do not hold the high view of women expressed in the poem of the Worthy Woman in Proverbs 31:10-31. Such men are often found to physically and mentally abuse their women. In fact, some will defend wife-beating as a God-given prerogative. But Paul speaks to that in Ephesians 5:28-29: "Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself; for no man ever hateth his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church." Even as a rational man would not beat himself, so he would not abuse his wife. The golden rule of Jesus would forbid such abusive attitudes toward women (Matthew 7:12). If a man treats his wife as he would want to be treated, he would love, honor and respect her as a person made in God's image, with inherent dignity and worth. A prudent wife is a gift from God (Proverbs 19:14). Her price is far above rubies (Proverbs 31:10).

The New Testament makes it very clear that each local church was governed by a group of men appointed from among its members. They were known as elders, bishops, pastors and/or shepherds (I Peter 5:1-2; Acts 14:24; 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5; Philippians 1:1; Ephesians 4:11).

According to God's pattern, one elder is never exalted above any of the other elders. But it is a fact of history that soon after the death of the apostles (if not before) one elder was exalted

(3) "Women's Lib"

In considering false teachings relating to the role of women we cannot overlook the pernicious philosophy of the "women's liberation movement." These folk, rejecting the Scriptures as authoritative, refuse to accept God's guidelines for the respective roles of men and women in the home, church and society. Paul, directed by the Holy Spirit, wrote: "Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord" (Colossians 3:18). When the feminists refuse Paul's words they "that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God who giveth his Holy Spirit . . ." (I Thessalonians 1:8). The things Paul wrote "are the commandment of the Lord" (I Corinthians 14:37). In reality the commitment of the feminists is to be a different god and religion - the god is power and the religion is *Secular Humanism*. Their creed is set forth in the *Humanist Manifesto I, II*. It is not to be expected that people devoted to a different system would honor the decrees of Jehovah. The tragedy is when they find comfort and shelter within churches that profess allegiance to God and his Word!

In summation we affirm that God's plan for woman when observed by both sexes brings the highest degree of happiness to the home and the church. Woman's role of subjection does not imply inferiority. It does not forbid her to teach the Bible in situations where she is not "over" men (I Timothy 2:12). Nor does it forbid her to exercise authority and leadership in areas other than the church. Her divinely-given role is no insult to her intelligence and talent.

The history of humanity from the fall to the present time has been blotted by subjugation and oppression of women. The only exception to this dark record is in those areas where the light of God's word has enlightened the minds and hearts of men. Rather than resent the limitations God has placed on them, women should rejoice and thank him for the benefits his system as brought unto them.

Endnotes

1. Bernard Von Acken, *A Handbook for Sisters* St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co. 1930. p. 265.
2. T. Lincoln Bouscaren, *Canon Law, A Text and Commentary* Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1946. p. 111.
—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

One Man Rule?

above the other elders and wore the title of "Bishop." Years later this "head-bishop" would become the "Pope" to rule over all the Bishops. While churches of Christ have the same organization as in the days of the apostles, it is not too uncommon to hear such statements as: "He is the head-elder," or "He is the elder that runs the church." The early church apostatized into a one-man rule, and it can happen in our time. As a matter of fact, it has already happened in some places. There are three factors which contribute to this problem.

It may be the result of a power-thirsty elder. Some people like to have power and run things. The church is no exception. There probably are some elders who want to run things their way. John said that Diotrophes



Tom L. Childers

Could Jesus Be Your Companion?

If Jesus were your companion, how would you treat him? How would his presence cause you to feel? After Jesus' resurrection, on the road to Emmaus, he talked with two of his disciples about events which they did not understand. Beginning with Moses and the prophets, Jesus expounded the scriptures concerning himself. When these disciples finally recognized him, "they said one to the other, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:13-35). If you could have a similar experience, would you feel somewhat uneasy? and secretly wish he would leave you?

If you read your Bible, you know that Jesus has promised to be with his disciples both in worship and wherever they go (Matthew 18:20; 28:18-20). Jesus wants to be invited into your heart, but he never enters contrary to your will (Revelation 3:20).

We sometimes sing: "There's A Stranger At The Door." To countless millions Jesus is a "stranger" indeed. But it need not be so! Jesus wants to come into the hearts of earth's millions, yet in far too many instances he is an unwelcome guest and an unwanted companion. His company is not desired by many churches, and many individuals. He would be your steadfast friend if you would but permit him to be (John 15:13-15; Cf., II Chronicles 20:7; James 2:23).

As you may know, *Jesus* and *sin* stand poles apart! He cannot tolerate sin, which is condoned and approved and sanctioned by so many. Let it be understood that sin cannot be made respectable -- no matter how hard man may try to rationalize it away; or how he may try to dress it up so as to give it dignity and acceptability. Sin is ugly and revolting to Jesus. Sin is the transgression of God's law (I John 3:4). All who die in their sin are certain to be lost eternally (John 8:24, 21; Romans 3:23; 6:23; I Peter 4:17; II Thessalonians 1:7-10).

Would you permit Jesus to visit in your home as once he visited in the home of Mary and Martha and Lazarus? If he should come to your house, what would he see? and what would he find there? In some instances, perhaps, he would not be invited inside, because he would find a living room littered with lewd, disgusting, and offensive magazines. Would he find the refrigerator filled with wine and beer? Would Jesus find your house filled with cursing and swearing? with fussing and fighting? Or, would Jesus find living well-ordered lives and children well-trained? and all of them growing in favor with both God and man?

We read of visitors who came in long ago to Hezekiah, the King. Isaiah asked the King what these visitors had seen in his house? The reply was, "All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them" (Isaiah 39:1-8). The Holy Scriptures teach, "The eyes of the Lord are in every



W. A. Holley

place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3). Again, "His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings" (Job 34:21; Cf., Hebrews 4:13).

Of course, if some special visitor (as, the preacher) should visit in your home, you may hide some things from his view; but you cannot hide anything from God, whether good or bad. Whatever the conditions might be, he will see them.

You are writing a gospel,
A chapter each day;
By the deeds that you do;
By words that you say;
Men read what you write,
Whether faithless or true,
Say, what is the gospel,
According to you?

--Author Unknown.

Is Jesus your companion while you are attending the Lord's day services? Do you suppose he would appreciate your conduct? Do you talk during the services (Some do!) Do you play with small children, thus paying almost no attention to what is going on? Does your mind take a flight to the South Pole as the sermon is delivered? or, are you thinking about getting the service over with as quickly as possible, so that you can get on with more interesting activities? One brother could not attend the Sunday evening service because he had to stay home to watch a TV football game. We suggest reading and digesting Matthew 6:33. What does "putting first things first" mean??

Is Jesus your companion while you are on your job? If you knew Jesus were present, would he hear you cursing and telling dirty, filthy stories (Ephesians 5:3-12). Or, would he hear you telling others of his wonderful plan of salvation? It is possible that the person with whom you work will never hear heaven's marvelous message unless *you* tell him! A precious soul may hang in balance:

The Struggle Of Two Natures

Continued from page 2

the ability to overcome the evil in his life (Romans 12:21).

Paul comes to the rescue of our dilemma. He taught, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1). One must be in Christ, and must live a spiritual life, if he expects to please God.

The conscientious individual fights an ongoing battle within himself. There are two forces seeking his allegiance. God and the devil are both seeking to influence him. However, man has the power to say "yes," or "no." Paul said, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:21-24).

Only through Christ can we overcome. Paul stated, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Romans 7:25). The spiritual mind through Christ can overcome the influence of the lust of the flesh.

WHOSE SERVANT ARE YOU?

—103 Elena Ct., Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

-- will you meet your responsibility?

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

Jesus' teaching is strong and demanding. Near the time of his brutal crucifixion, "he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem . . ." (Luke 9:51-53). If we are determined to follow Jesus, we must put forth our best efforts. Those who wish to walk with Jesus must make every necessary sacrifice. We cannot be Jesus' companions on our own conditions.

For example: ". . . As they went on their way, a certain man said unto him, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But he said unto him, Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God. And another also said I will follow thee, Lord; but first suffer me to bid farewell to them that are at my house. But Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:57-62, ASV.).

True discipleship of Jesus is costly. All commands of Jesus must be honored, despite all conflicting obligations, of whatever nature.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

One Man Rule?

Continued from page 3

loved the preeminence (III John 9).

The one-man rule can be the fault of the other elders. They gladly turned over their work and responsibility to one man. They drag their feet and will not take a stand or do anything about anything. The "head elder" feels that if the Lord's work is going to be done then he must make all the decisions and do all the work -- or else it will not be done. If a man accepts the work of an elder, he should have the courage to do his share of the work. He certainly should "stand up" and oppose any man who wants to run the church. Fellow elders can be the cause of "one-man rule" in the church.

Members of the local church can be the leading cause of the "one-man" rule. If the members 'believe' that one man has more authority, and they 'feel' that they can get their way by pressuring one of the elders, then they push him into that position -- whether he wants to be or not. A good test for each member to take is: when I go to the leadership, to whom do I go? Do I always go to one man? or do I go to all of the elders? Paul called *the elders* from Ephesians (Acts 20:17). He did not call the 'chief' elder! Why? Because the elders (plural) oversee the church -- not one man. One elder has absolutely no authority. Some churches have a one-man rule because they push it upon one of the elders. Such churches usually see the day that they regret it.

Faithful elders must not allow their wives, the preacher or his wife, the deacons, the Bible teachers, the Ladies Bible class or any other group to take away their God-given power. It is *the elders* who must oversee the local church. This is God's will. May he help us to honor it.

—609 E. Main Street, Alamo, TN 38001.



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Words Of Wisdom

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

—Acts 26:25

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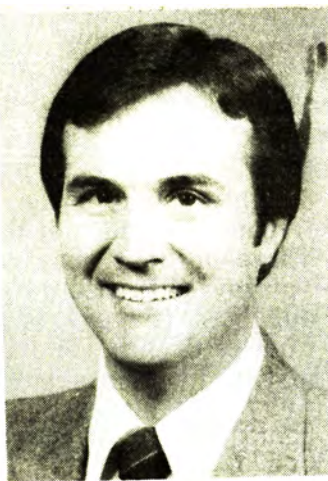
NUMBER 44

"A Faith That Caused Jesus To Marvel"

INTRODUCTION

When one squares off against the forces of evil and fights for an eternity with God, his pace is steadied, his heart is guarded, and his conquest determined by faith. Yea, "this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4).

Yet there are different kinds of faith: little (Matthew 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8); great (Matthew 8:10; 15:28); strong



Dan Winkler

(Romans 4:19, 20); vain (I Corinthians 15:14, 17); unfeigned (I Timothy 1:5; II Timothy 1:5); and shipwrecked (I Timothy 1:19). There is a faith that "shrinks back unto perdition" and its antithesis, a faith that is "unto the saving of the soul" (Hebrews 10:39). The question to ponder is, "What kind of faith do I have?"

On one occasion, Jesus marvelled [literally, "was astonished"] over the faith of a centurion (Matthew 8:5-13). A study of this man's faith will reveal several factors involved in a faith that pleased the Lord, the kind of faith one should have today.

I. THE CENTURION'S FAITH WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO PRODUCE A SUBMISSIVE SPIRIT

(1) *By faith, the centurion humbled himself before Jesus* (Matthew 8:5,6,8,9). Legions of the Roman army were composed of 6,000 men divided into 60 groups of 100 which were overseen by centurions. The man under study, was one of great position and authority; yet, he humbled himself before the Lord. (a) The centurion, though a man of rank, referred to Jesus as "Lord" [*kurios*, a term used in refer-

ence to one of superior position]. (b) The centurion, though a man of authority, came to Jesus with a condescending request rather than orders, innuendoes, threats, or demanding expectations. He came "beseeching" the Lord's help. (c) Then too, even though the centurion was deemed worthy (Cf. Luke 7:2-6), he described himself as "unworthy" [literally, "insufficient"]. This man's faith conquered self!

(2) *Today's Christian must also submit to God in humble submission* (James 4:7,10). It was said of one: "He'll have a front seat in heaven." Another rebutted, "He wouldn't be happy with a front seat anywhere!" Christians must follow the example of Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30) and possess a lowliness of mind (Cf. Psalms 138:6; Proverbs 3:34; 11:2; 16:19; Ephesians 4:2; Philippians 2:3).

II. THE CENTURION'S FAITH WAS ACTIVE ENOUGH TO MOTIVATE COMPASSIONATE SERVICE

(1) *By faith, the centurion took the role of a servant, and that, in behalf of one of his own servants* (Matthew 18:6; Luke 7:2 — Note: *pais*, translated "servant" could also mean "boy" but Luke's account described the infirmed as a *doulos*, a "bondservant"). Roman slavery [remember, the centurion was a Roman soldier] provided a depraved state of humanitarianism. On one occasion, Caeasar hosted a gladiator show with 600 slaves in the arena for the purpose of fighting wild beasts. Then, there was Flaminius who, according to Plutarch, put a slave to death for a guest who had never seen a man die. Pollio, according to Seneca, fed fish by cutting slaves into pieces. Trajan forced some 10,000 slaves and gladiators to contend for life in a blood bath which lasted 123 days. Out of such an environment, this centurion conquered selfish indifference. His faith compelled him to move in behalf of another.

(2) *Today's Christian must also be involved in active service for the Lord in behalf of others* (Cf. Matthew 25:31-46). Eighteen times the prepo-

sitional phrase, "by faith" was used by the writer of Hebrews in calling for Christians to imitate Old Testament examples of those whose faith was active (Hebrews 11:4-12:1). Such poses the question: "What - on - earth - are you doing for - heaven's - sake?" Too many who should be launching into the deep waters of active and productive service, are content with wadding in the shallow waters of impotent excuse-making. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love" (Galatians 5:6; Cf. James 1:22, 25; 2:14-26).

III. THE CENTURION'S FAITH WAS COMPREHENSIVE ENOUGH TO ACCEPT JESUS' ABSOLUTE POWER

(1) *By faith, the centurion believed in Jesus' power.* Jesus manifested his power over death, disease, demons, and material elements during his ministry. (a) First, the centurion believed in Jesus' power over "disease" (Matthew 8:8,9). He believed that the factors which made for his servant's palsy would forcibly submit to Jesus' verbal command, even as his troops and slaves gave heed to his own voice. (b) Second, the centurion believed in Jesus' power of "distance." He accepted Jesus' power to telepathically traverse the barrier of space and take command of the factors which made for his servant's difficulties.

(2) *Today's Christian must also believe in the absolute power of God, power exercised today through providence.* Someone has said, "Faith is not believing that God can, but that God will!" Christians are to "walk by faith, not by sight" (II Corinthians 5:7) with a spirit of "power, love, and discipline" rather than a spirit of fear (II Timothy 1:7). "With God all things are possible" is the Christian's battle cry. "The weakness of God is stronger than men" is the emphatic statement of Paul which stands as

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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 26:35

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"A Faith That Caused Jesus To Marvel"

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the Christian's assurance.

IV. THE CENTURION'S FAITH WAS SUFFICIENT TO WARRANT DIVINE PRAISE

(1) *Jesus commended the centurion's faith* (Matthew 8:10, 13). (a) First, he did so by comparative analysis: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." (b) Second, he commended the centurion's faith by corresponding appropriation; that is, the man's request was granted in keeping with the degree of his faith.

(2) *Today's Christian, in like manner, must ever strive for a faith that God could commend to others.* God often ascribed descriptions to individuals based on their life-style. Negatively: Nabal was "churlish and evil" (I Samuel 25:3); Isaiah's priestly contemporaries were "greedy dogs" (Isaiah 56:11); Judas Iscariot was a "traitor" (Luke 6:16); and Demas "forsook me, having loved this present world," Paul said (II Timothy 4:9). Positively: the Shunamite was "a great woman" (II Kings 4:8); David was a man that walked after God's heart (Acts 13:22); Abraham's faith set him apart as "the father of all them that believe" (Romans 4:11); and Barnabas was the "son of exhortation . . . a good man" (Acts 4:36; 11:24).

How would God describe some [you] based on faith possessed and manifested? With some it would have to be, "O ye of little . . . vain . . . shipwrecked faith." Yet, there are those to whom he could say, "I know of thy great . . . strong . . . unfeigned faith!" Every Christian should strive to fall into the latter of the two preceding descriptions.

CONCLUSION

"When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth" (Luke 8:18)? Again, the question to ponder is, "What kind of faith do I have? . . . when the son of man comes again, will he find the proper kind of faith in my heart and manifested in my life?"

—P.O. Box 166, Huntingdon, Tennessee 38344.



Flavil H. Nichols

Biographical Sketches Of Gospel Preachers

[Editor's note: We are grateful to *The Gospel Advocate* for permission to reprint from H. Leo Boles' BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF GOSPEL PREACHERS some glimpses of some of the 'pioneer preachers' who blazed the trail in north Alabama. T. B. Larimore established Mars Hill school where he taught the Bible and trained others to preach. One of his students, Joseph H. Halbrook, lived in Fayette County, and preached a great deal in Walker County, of which Jasper is the county seat. "Joe" Halbrook baptized C. A. Wheeler, the subject of this current sketch, who in turn baptized my father, the late Gus Nichols. Brother Wheeler was not included in brother Boles' book, and I know of no written biography of him. In this journal I have requested such materials as our readers may know, but very little has been sent to me. From his descendants I have compiled the following. — Flavil H. Nichols].

Charlie Alexander Wheeler was born near Vernon (in what is now Lamar County), Alabama, January 2, 1851. He was reared on a farm a few miles east of Vernon, near Crossville. His family worshiped at the Bethel church of Christ, where a loyal congregation still thrives.

Little is known of his ancestors, or of his early life. He had at least three brothers: Tom, John, and Jesse; and he had at least three sisters: Maggie (who married a Mr. Lawrence and remained near Vernon), and Rachel, (who lived in Birmingham where she was employed, but never married); and Georgie who married Dude Hollingsworth of Fayette County.

C. A. (Charlie) Wheeler's early years were spent in Lamar County, where he obtained very little formal education. After he married, Charlie became interested in learning to read the Bible; so at home his wife used the Bible as her text-book to teach him to read. When his own children were old enough to go to school, he enrolled in school with them so he could improve his reading skills in order to learn more of God's will so he could better preach it. Although he did learn well to read *what was printed*, he never learned "script" (or "handwriting"), and could barely write his own name. Words in the newspaper were not in his vocabulary; but he could read fluently the words in the Bible!

Brother Wheeler married Adeline Dotson, whose family homesite is now occupied by a telephone company tower across Alabama



C. A. Wheeler

Highway 69 from the Midway church building, south of Jasper. He was a farmer, and was never very prosperous; but his industry and toil provided food aplenty for his large family, and for the countless guests who came to visit him, often spending the night. In 1924, when he was 73, his wife preceded him in death. Here is a brief note of the Wheeler's seven children:

1. Mollie married John Hyde, of Blount County, Alabama. They had 11 children, one of whom (Joe S.) preached the gospel of Christ.

2. Reuben married Hester Rose, of Lynn, Alabama. They had 7 children.

3. Belle married Bud Hyde, also of Lynn (but no kin to John, who married Mollie). They had 5 children.

4. Ora married E. R. Morris, of Oakman; and they also had 5 children.

5. Della and her husband, Columbus Deason, of Jasper, had only one daughter.

6. Minnie married Jack Clark, of Jasper; and they had 7 children.

7. Joe Alexander married Pearl Ellis, of Jasper. Brother Wheeler gave them a Bible on their wedding day, which is in the hands of their son, Joe B. They had 13 children, eleven of whom were born in the same house, where they all grew up. [I am indebted to their daughter, Inez Trice, a member of Sixth Avenue, for much of this biographical data.] Three of their sons (Charley, Joe B., and Tommy) preached the gospel; and one granddaughter (Peggy) is the wife of minister Charles Crump. [She also has supplied information for this sketch.] A great-grandson, Kelly Joe Wheeler, also preaching near Montgomery while attending Alabama Christian College.

At least in later life, all his family called him "Grandpa Wheeler." One characteristic remembered by the family was his strict discipline. They all knew to be on their 'best behavior' when "Grandpa" was around!

Those with whom I have conferred do not know the religious convictions of his parents, nor if the Dotsons were members of the Lord's church when C. A. Wheeler married into that family. It is known that he was baptized by Joseph H. Halbrook, who studied under T. B. Larimore at Mars Hill Bible School. Studying his Bible at nights by a kerosene (or, "coal oil") lamp, he learned much about it; and at the age of 24 he began to preach what he learned. Being a farmer himself, many of his meetings were only on week-ends, or in the summer after his crop was "laid by." He never owned an automobile, but rode the train to almost all his meetings. In later life brethren who owned cars would 'haul' him to his appointments. His sermons were clear, and well documented with Bible quotations, for he stressed Bible authority for all that we do in religion. He taught many, baptizing 6,000 people --one of whom was my father (the late

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Biographical Sketches Of Gospel Preachers

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Gus Nichols), and started about 100 congregations.

When he was 83 [which would have been in 1934] the following article about him, written (I believe) by G. C. Brewer, appeared in *The Gospel Advocate*.

A Gospel Veteran

On this page we present a picture of C. A. Wheeler, of Jasper, Alabama. Although this is a recent picture and shows brother Wheeler as he looks now, one might suppose that this picture was made when he was not more than fifty years old. He is now in his eighty-fourth year, and is still preaching the gospel with almost unbelievable vigor. He does not just preach on Lord's days only; he is still doing evangelistic work, and preaches every day and often twice a day during his meetings. He also does his own baptizing when there is no one else available to do it for him.

Brother Wheeler is a remarkable man in many respects. Born in Lamar County, Alabama, January 2, 1851, he knew all of the hardships of life in a primitive and rugged country. He, in his own language, was "a considerable chunk of a plowboy" when the Civil War came on, and took the men away to the army and left the country in a practical state of starvation. Under these conditions, he, of course, had no chance to go to school. Schools were almost nonexistent in that country in that day. But in some way brother Wheeler managed to acquire the elements of an education, and he even yet reads and speaks with an accuracy, and an inflection, that would put to shame many preachers who have been to college. He possesses a logical and an analytical mind, and his sermons are models of clear thinking and concise arrangement. He has read and loved God's book all his life, and he preaches it to his fellow men just as he reads it from the sacred page.

Brother Wheeler had a number of debates in his early preaching life, and it was in his debates that he made some of his converts who afterwards became stalwart contenders for the faith. Some of these converts tell of seeing brother Wheeler go into debate with denominational giants, who brought ponderous volumes with them, and who were surrounded by confident and admiring friends; and brother Wheeler had only a small pocket Bible, and no brethren to encourage and help him. This made the other man's defeat the more full of meaning. The people were ready to listen to the humble man who relied wholly on God's word to refute the other man's claims.

Brother Wheeler has preached in some 8 or 10 states, but the greater part of his labor has been within a radius of a hundred miles of his present home at Jasper, Alabama. He has converted hundreds of people from denominational error, and he often relates that the first man he baptized was a Baptist preacher. More than a dozen men who are now preaching the gospel were baptized by brother Wheeler. He has received practically no financial support for his work. When he began preaching, there were no churches and very few members in his country. He recently remarked that we have more congregations and meetinghouses now than we had members in his early day. He worked on the farm to support himself and his family, and preached the gospel for naught. It was no unusual thing for him to walk twenty-five miles to an appointment and preach Saturday night, Sunday, and Sunday night -- and then walk back home and

spend the rest of the week working in the field.

Brother Wheeler is now not able to work, and still gets little support for his preaching. If any of the readers of the *Gospel Advocate* would like to cheer the heart of this veteran of the cross and help to supply his necessities, they could not do anything that would more surely abound to their account than to send a contribution to C. A. Wheeler, Jasper, Alabama. Come, let us give him a shower. --*The Gospel Advocate*.

Earlier an issue of *The Mountain Eagle*, a weekly paper at Jasper, said:

"Although seventy-nine years of age, Rev. [sic] C. A. Wheeler is still actively engaged in preaching, not only in Walker County but all over the state and in other territory. He is a minister of the Church of Christ, and was born in what is today Lamar County, but at the time of his birth was Fayette County, and the little schooling that he acquired was obtained in Walker County schools.

"For fifty-five years, Rev. [sic] Wheeler has preached, covering Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, Missouri, and Alabama. He was married to Miss Adeline Dodson [sic], who died about six years ago. It is said of Rev. [sic] Wheeler that he has preached more discourses, baptized more people, and built up more congregations than any other preacher of the Church of Christ that is now living in North Alabama. He has added between 40 and 50 additions to the [local] Church of Christ in the past few months. He now resides about three miles west of Jasper with his son, Joe Wheeler, and has made his home in and around Jasper about 20 years."

As a boy I heard the following story of brother Wheeler's first meeting, which was (I believe) at Mount Pleasant in Lamar County. He went down to preach from Sunday through Friday night. By midweek the interest was so great that the brethren insisted he stay on and continue the meeting another week. He refused, saying that it simply MUST close Friday night. Upon learning that he did not have another engagement for the next week, and knowing that his crop was already "laid by," they rather pressed him to continue. He insisted that he HAD to go home Saturday! They inquired if his wife, or one of the children, might be sick, --and were relieved to find this was not the case. He did NEED to get home to pull fodder -- but the brethren told him they would pull him some fodder and give it to him -- if he would stay another week. As Friday night approached, he finally explained to one of the brethren why the meeting MUST close that night: He had only seven sermons -- and he would preach the last one of them that night! But about 33 had been baptized, and others were almost converted! So, he yielded to their pleas that he stay longer! He preached the *same sermons* again --and 37 more were baptized! However, he did not carry their fodder home with him --for he did not have train fare, but had to walk home --about 60 miles!

Brother Wheeler was a firm believer in the power of the word of God, both spoken and written. He utilized the printed page to spread the truth. At least three of his sermons were printed in individual tract form: *Proper Division of the Word of God*, *The Conversion of an Honest Gentile*, and *What Must I Do To Be Saved?* In his writing he refers (see below) to a tract on "Walking By Faith," and I am almost certain a fifth one was entitled, "Reconciliation." In addition, a booklet. The

Heavenly Guide, contains his picture standing in his familiar stance, with four of his sermons: *The New and Living Way*, *The New Testament Church*, *Walking By Faith*, and *Handling Aright the Word of Truth*.

In the preface to this booklet, he wrote: "As long as time lasts it will be necessary to preach the gospel, 'for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes' it. But 'how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?' Paul foresaw that 'perilous times' would come, and that men would 'turn away their ears from the truth and turn aside unto fables.' In view of this he gave the most solemn charge to Timothy that mortal man ever delivered: 'I charge thee,' said Paul, 'IN THE SIGHT OF GOD AND CHRIST JESUS . . . PREACH THE WORD.'

Brother Wheeler continued: "A few days ago a noted woman evangelist was preaching in Washington City, and she asked which the audience had rather hear her preach on: 'Christ's Coming?' or 'Her Life's Story?' The latter subject was chosen by a majority of 2,000 votes. There is no power in a subject like that to 'save' people. Since therefore we are now living in 'perilous times,' when many people had rather hear anything than the gospel, and a majority of preachers had rather preach on anything else than the gospel, it makes the obligation all the more important that the 'Word' be preached. For this reason I feel the great weight of the responsibility pressing heavier and heavier as the flood of years swiftly rolls upon me.

"For almost half a century it has been my constant endeavor to fulfill the charge delivered by Paul -- to 'preach the Word' -- both by tongue and pen. But since no man can stay the hand of Time, these will, in all probability, be the last sermons I shall ever publish. And while my pen and tongue shall both be forever stilled in a little while, my message of His Truth will live on."

Soon after he began preaching, brother Wheeler visited the home of a brother Holley who inquired if he had ever preached a funeral. Upon learning that he had not, brother Holley sent his son for the gun, and told him to go kill the first bird he saw. Strolling down toward the hollow, he scarcely was out of sight when they heard a shot, and he presented the dead bird to his father. Laying it on a nearby stump, brother Holley said: "Brother Wheeler, meet Mr. Jay Bird. He is dead, and we want YOU to preach his funeral." Pretending that 'Mr. Bird' was a person, brother Wheeler got some practical experience before a sympathetic brother Holley, and this helped him be at ease in real-life situations later.

In my boyhood days my father would bring brother Wheeler to spend the most severe weeks of the winter with us. Although our home had no central heating system, but a coal-burning fireplace in each of the four bedrooms, plus one in the parlor, it had some advantages over the farmhouse where he lived: --it was underpinned; and we did have running water and indoor plumbing. While he was staying with us, mother at dinner passed him a dish of beans which she had just taken up. The dish was 'piping hot!' Aged brother Wheeler, with his tender, shaky (palsied) hands trembling, managed to set it down without spilling any of the contents . . . and ex-

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Let Us Find The Alternative

Would students of history affirm that Pre- World-War-Two Germany would have been better off had they chosen Communism rather than Naziism? Probably not. Neither choice was a viable alternative for a people who felt they had lost their way. As Americans, and as facts of history would indicate, we feel that a highly intelligent German people might have sought and found a system that would have rescued them from economic depression and social upheaval had they given all they had to such a cause. What a difference it could have made for them and for the rest of the world.



R. W. Gray

From a political perspective we observe the wreckage wrought by those on the far left and those on the far right. While we do not suggest that religious life should be determined by the success or failure of a political philosophy, it is the case that comparisons to religious life and radical political systems may be used as a warning to God's people.

Some age-old conflicts within the Restoration persist. We seem destined to run the same cycles every few decades. Mind sets, schools of thought, publication and preacher rivalry contribute to this perennial problem.

There are those who find the "walls of Jerusalem" too confining. They are constantly striving to be "like the nations about them," looking to denominational leaders as their guide in religious life.

On the other end of the spectrum are those who in reaction to the "liberal" tendency of others run past Jerusalem in their attempts to walk in the "old paths."

Either extreme is to be avoided, as they do great harm to the cause of Christ. Surely we can find an acceptable alternative if we reason together around the word of God.

That these extremes are rapidly taking form among us in the decade of the eighties surely few will deny. One very sober-thinking educator and preacher observed:

"We are in a period of great crisis for the Lord's church. On the left are the dragons of Crossroadsism, false unity, and compromise with unscriptural worship and practice. On the right are the dragons of ultra-conservatism who will devour not only the heretics, but every one who does not acquiesce in their extremism. In their blind fanaticism they will drive many weak brethren into the kinder arms of the false teachers.

This super-conservatism has reached a fever pitch and will probably precipitate a division even if the others do not. It grieves my heart . . ."

From another state far removed from the source of the foregoing, comes another letter that contains a similar assessment from a relatively young man. Brethren are grieving over what they are seeing and hearing in this connection. The cause so much needs a united effort at a time when cracks appear in the walls of Zion.

Perhaps our appeal should go first to those on the far right, as their intentions are noble

despite the error of their approach. If they can come to see that a "dogma-eat-dogma" strategy tends to develop a mind-set comparable to the fanaticism of Naziism in the political arena, perhaps they can be deterred from their present course.

No one who truly loves the Lord will advocate that the errors on the far left be ignored. But even in dealing with such men we need to "temper" our tempers. seeing to it that our

speech is always with grace, seasoned with salt (Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 4:6).

If the current trend to "brand" all who do not "appear" to be in "my camp" on every issue continues, the division fostered by an ultra-conservative element in the fifties will be repeated in the decade of the eighties. For the sake of the greatest cause in all the earth may we seriously think on these things.

—Rt. 3, Box 306, Bremen, GA 30110.

Perseverance

Paul was one who persevered to the end. He said, "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). Three facts should be recognized from Paul's



W. Edwin Kearley

statement: (1) Paul had not reached the height of his spiritual ambition. (2) He realized that he had to forget the past. (3) He was doing his best to reach his life-long goal.

HAVING SPIRITUAL AMBITION AND REACHING IT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CONTEMPLATION OF MAN. Paul was always zealous and true to his conscience. His zeal caused him to seek to exterminate Christianity by exterminating Christians. Before Agrippa, Paul said: "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them" (Acts 26:9-10). When he learned better, he was zealous for that which he had tried to destroy. While preaching the gospel of Christ, he was beaten, frequently placed in prison, stoned, shipwrecked, in perils of robbers, in weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness and had care of all the churches (II Corinthians 11:23-28).

In Acts 23:1 Paul declared to the council: ". . . Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." When he learned better, he changed his practice.

Too often today many in the church may be spurred into action one time and then return to the old rut. This see-saw action never achieves progress. It is motivated only by the emotion of the day. Sustained action is created by deep and abiding conviction. It is caused by deep and abiding faith in God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the inspired word.

PAUL FORGOT THE PAST. He said, "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the

church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Philippians 3:4-8).

The Jews wanted to go back to the flesh pots and bondage of Egypt (Exodus 16:3). Demas forsook Paul and the Lord "having loved this present world" (II Timothy 4:10).

Far too many in the church today still love "this present world." Christ will not accept a heart reserved for the world.

PAUL'S DEDICATION PROMPTED HIM TO PRESS ON TOWARD THE ETERNAL PRIZE OF HEAVEN. Is there anything worth more to you than eternal life? Paul wanted heaven more than life itself. He was willing to be beheaded for his faith in Christ.

Some are willing to throw away their hope because of some statement by a member of the church made without intent to harm. One's desire to serve God and to go to heaven should be great enough to imitate Paul.

Perseverance calls for steadfastness, endurance, patience, etc. MAY WE ALL PERSEVERE UNTO THE END OF OUR EARTHLY SOJOURN AND HEAR THOSE WORDS: "ENTER THOU INTO THE JOY OF THY LORD" (Matthew 25:21, 23).

—103 Lena Ct., Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Biographical Sketches Of Gospel Preachers

Continued From Page 3

claimed: "Sister Nichols, this is STILL A-COOKING!" We laughed heartily! -- and have related this story numerous times when a hot dish has been passed to us!

When he died, I had been preaching for three years, and was honored to be one of the preachers who served as his pall-bearers. After the service in the old Fifth Avenue church building, his body was buried at the Dutton Cemetery, near where he lived, and not far from the Midway Church of Christ just south of Jasper. My father helped raise funds to erect a suitable marker for his grave, on which is brother Wheeler's portrait, perfectly preserved (shown here). The inscription reads:

C. A. Wheeler

Jan. 2, 1851

Apr. 29, 1937

Evangelist

Church of Christ 63 years
Baptized 6,000 souls, and
established about 100

congregations. His influence
abides with us while his
spirit is at rest.

Watch for one of his sermons to be printed soon in Words of Truth. -- The Editor.



(USPS 691-760)

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 45

Why Mechanical Music Is Used?

(No. 8)

Many major arguments(?) -- "major" from the standpoint of those who use the mechanical instrument, and not "major" with Biblical emphasis or accuracy at all -- have been presented to justify(?) mechanical music in the worship of the church. One which is frequently used in our day will be the examined one for this study. It goes something like this: The



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

New Testament is silent in regard to the usage of mechanical music in Christian worship; such instruments are not explicitly forbidden, and therefore Christian liberty allows our having them.

The *silence* argument is as fallacious as it can be. The Roman Catholic can use the same logic(?) in defending his seven sacraments. Where does the Bible explicitly state, "Thou shalt not have the seven sacraments in service to God under the New Testament?" It will also allow the counting of beads or the offering of incense in worshipful activities. Where does the Bible say expressly or explicitly, "Thou shalt not offer incense, or count beads, in Christian worship?" The same will allow the Sabbatarian to have his sabbath-day worship. Where does the New Testament explicitly state, "Thou shalt not worship God on the sabbath as his special day of worship?" Such fallacious reasoning will allow the showman to put on a show of comedy, and count it as worship. Where does the New Testament explicitly say, "Thou shalt not have a comedy routine as worship on the

Lord's Day in your worshipful assembly?" Some far-out religious groups have already injected dancing and strip-tease shows by Go-Go Dancers as part of their 'worship!' Where does the New Testament say explicitly, "Thou shalt not have dancing in worship?" or, "Thou shalt not allow an attractive woman to disrobe publicly in a worshipful assembly to please flesh-loving men?" Such would allow a gifted magician to put on a magic show and count it as worship. Where does the New Testament explicitly state, "Thou shalt not have a magical show in your worship?"

It is readily granted that some of these would be wrong anywhere and others would be all right if done in an appropriate place. But let no one say that such things as the dancing and the Go-Go Dancers in scanty apparel would be wrong because they corrupt morals. Granted!! But recall that the introduction of ANY innovation into worship is a CORRUPTION of that worship, though it may be something that could be done elsewhere -- such as the putting on of the magic show, or the burning of incense in a home setting. It is my seasoned judgment that a religious song should NEVER be sung at any time, at any place, and for any purpose accompanied by mechanical instruments. It seems to me that those who dissent here, and practice using religious songs with a piano or organ in the home, will have one more Herculean task in convincing their denominational friends that they are really serious in objecting to mechanical music in Christian worship.

Those who use this argument should realize that the Bible is just as authoritative in its implicit teaching as in its explicit teaching. Mechanical music in Christian worship is forbidden within Holy Writ. *It is forbidden by the law of exclusion!* God demands a specific in music -- singing! That excludes playing. We employ this well-known principle every day

we live. A parent sends a child to the store for two items -- a loaf of bread and a dozen eggs. The parent does not have to list a thousand things the child is NOT to spend the five-dollar bill in purchasing. The specified items exclude the purchase of candy, comic books, or a model plane to put together.


A physician writes out a prescription for an ill patient. He does not have to list five hundred ingredients that he does NOT want the pharmacist to put into the prescription. What he specifies excludes all other possible elements.

A woman sends an order to Sears for one pair of brown shoes in size six. Imagine her chagrin if Sears rolled up to her door with an eighteen-wheeler loaded down with five hundred items for her. When she inquired into the WHY she was told that they run their business on the "silence" or business LIBERTY principle; and since she had not told them explicitly NOT to send these other four hundred ninety-nine items, they just knew it would be all right to send them to her and bill her for \$15,000.00 and truck transportation charges of another \$1,000.00.

A man takes his car into a service station to have the oil changed, a new oil filter put on, and a lube job. When he comes back to pick up the car the station owner has had his mechanic to overhaul his motor, reworked his transmission, and put on four new tires. When asked why, the station owner answers, "You did not forbid my doing these additional items of repair." The irate car owner would likely answer that such was FORBIDDEN by the crystal clear authorization of what you were asked to do.

WHAT IS NOT AUTHORIZED FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IS FORBIDDEN. That gets the mechanical instrument -- lock.

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Words Of Truth

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—Acts 26:35

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Why Mechanical Music Is Used?

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stock, and barrel, and then some!!

It is a most serious abuse of Christian liberty to turn such into a permissive license that will allow for any and every innovation that any self-centered worshiper wishes to inject.

I close this article with an appeal to three scriptures. The Bible says in Hebrews 7:12: "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." Moses was *silent* relative to priests from the other eleven tribes. He did not have to specify that priests were NOT to come from Judah, from Benjamin, Dan, etc., When he specified the *Levitical* tribe, that did not give physical Israel the *liberty* to make priests of any tribe they desired. Christian church preachers should not be so naive that they cannot see the very obvious point here.

In the second place the Bible says in I Corinthians 4:6, "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (A.S.V.). It is exceedingly strange that Christian church preachers can see the validity of this principle in contending that Roman Catholics violate this passage by introducing incense, and the Rosary, into their worship. With such innovations they have "gone beyond that which is written." Yet they cannot see(?) their own violation with the innovation of the mechanical music? They cannot produce written authorization for such within the New Testament. If they have not "gone beyond that which is written," *why* have they not done so?

In the third place the Bible says in Colossians 3:17, "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." This

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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Proper Division Of The Word Of God



C. A. Wheeler
1851-1937

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

The above is the language of the great apostle Paul writing to Timothy, a young preacher. Paul, together with the other apostles, was divinely inspired, and they spake and wrote as the Spirit gave them utterance.

They did not have to study nor make any preparations to preach; the Spirit was always present to guide them. But as direct inspiration ceased with the death of the last apostle, the word of God was committed to record, to thoroughly furnish the man of God unto every good work. Timothy, a young preacher uninspired, was required to *study* it so that he could "rightly divide" the word of truth in his teaching.

Now in the proper division of the Scriptures it must be remembered that the Bible is the oldest and best book in the world. It is translated into more different languages and read by more people than any other book. It teaches us our origin, duty, and destiny. Take the Bible from us, and we would never know that we sprang from the dust of the earth. The Bible has God for its author: and man's eternal redemption is its object.

The Bible gives us a history of all times, from the dawn of creation till time on earth shall be no more. The Bible tells us of the best men that ever lived, and (I presume) the worst. The Bible gives us a history of three different dispensations of God's mercy to man: first, the Patriarchal; second, the Jewish; third, the Christian Dispensation. Each of these three dispensations had its own laws and ordinances.

What God required the people to do to be saved under the first, or the second, dispensation is not necessarily required of us now. Men and women in all ages of the world have only been required to obey the commands and keep the ordinances of the dispensation under which they lived. God was four thousand years slowly unfolding his purposes, training and elevation of the human family for the reign of Christ or new covenant, which was established upon better promises (see Hebrews 8:6). Since *we* are living under the new covenant or last dispensation, in order for *us* to be saved, we don't have to go back to Abraham, nor to Moses; but we must come this side of the cross of Christ, where the gospel dispensation began, where the blood of Christ had been shed for us -- where the apostles in laboring under the last com-

mission, told the sinners what to do to be saved: then *we* must do likewise.

OLD TESTAMENT

The Bible is divided into two grand divisions, called the Old Testament, and the New. There are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, and twenty-seven in the New, making in all a library of 66 different books. Both the Old and New Testament begin in history, progress by law, and end in prophesy. The titles of the different books give us the idea of their contents, unless it is a few books that are called after the men who wrote them.

In order to learn the system or plan upon which the Bible was so wisely adopted we will now notice a few books of the Old Testament and show how systematically they were arranged to meet the wants of the human family. The first book is called Genesis, which means beginning or generation. This book gives an account of the creation of all things, the origin of man. It begins with creation and ends with the death of the Patriarch Joseph, covering a period of at least twenty-five hundred years.

This is a very useful book and fills its proper place in the volume called the Bible. Still it does not tell us what God wants us to do now. It says nothing about how to become a Christian or how to live the Christian life.

The second book is called Exodus, which means the going out or the traveling of the children of Israel from Egypt, the land of bondage, across the Red Sea into the Wilderness and on toward the Promised Land, and no one can read this book carefully without being impressed with the goodness of God and his wonderful power. Still, like the first book, Exodus tells nothing about how to become a Christian nor how to live the Christian life. It was never designed for that purpose.

The third book of the Old Testament is called Leviticus. Leviticus comes from the word Levi, and is only the history of the sons of Levi, being set apart for priests and also gives their duty as priests. It tells of Aaron, the first high priest, and of the law that governed them in the worship of the tabernacle. This also is a very interesting book; but, like the other two, it does not teach Christianity.

The fourth book is called Numbers. We learn by reading this book that God commanded Moses and Aaron to count or "number," all the children of Israel of each tribe and family of a certain age.

The fifth book, Deuteronomy, contains a second copy of the law of Moses.

So we rightly divide the Old Testament this way -- if we want to know something about our origin we must read Genesis. It is the only book in all the Bible that teaches this lesson. If we want to know something about the children of Israel being delivered from bondage we must read Exodus; if we want information on the order of the priests and their relation to the tabernacle, we must read

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Proper Division Of The Word Of God

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Leviticus; and if we want to learn the numbers of the children of Israel at that time, we (of course) must read Numbers; and if we want the second copy of the law, given by Moses forty years after leaving Egypt we read Deuteronomy; and so on, with all the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament. Each one teaches a lesson or gives a history of something that transpired at that time that can't be learned in any other part of the Bible. In this way we read the Old Testament intelligently; we see that each book was designed for a noble purpose. This is "rightly dividing" it. And while Christianity is not taught directly in the Old Testament, still the punishment inflicted on the people under the former dispensation for their disobedience serves as a warning for us, that we should not commit sin, and lust after evil things as they did (I Corinthians 10:1-12).

NEW TESTAMENT

Now having learned how to "rightly divide" the Old Testament scriptures, we will examine the New Testament. In the New Testament, Christianity is taught. We learn how to become a Christian, and how to live the Christian life; but like the Old Testament it has to be rightly divided in order to learn these important lessons.

The New Testament is divided into four different divisions. It is arranged so systematically and so wisely adopted by its author, that by careful thought the reader can hardly fail to understand how it is rightly divided. For instance, the four first of the books (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) compose the first division of the New Testament. They are rightly called the four witnesses, because they all testify of Christ.

The fifth book of the New Testament (called Acts of the Apostles) is the second division. This division gives a history of the apostles' preaching under the last commission, where they began to preach, and what they told sinners to do to be saved and to become members of the one body, the church.

The third division of the New Testament is the twenty-one letters written to the Christians, beginning with Paul's letter to the church at Rome and ending with the little book called Jude, next to the last book in the New Testament.

The last book in the New Testament is called Revelation. It is the 4th and last division. In this division we have a description of the destiny of all the world.

Now, in order to read the whole book intelligently and rightly divide it and understand our duty to God and to each other, we rightly divide it this way. If we want evidence to

believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, we examine the testimony of the four witnesses: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Then, after believing the testimony of the four witnesses, if we want to know how to become Christians and members of the church of God, we read Acts of the Apostles, the second division of the New Testament. In this division of the book the apostles told the people what to do to be saved. In their obeying the gospel, the Lord added them to the church. So if a man just simply wants to be a New Testament Christian he can't help but know how, if he will read this division of the book carefully.

Then after we become Christians, if we want to know how to live the Christian life, we must study the third division of the New Testament called "Epistles," or the "Epistolary Writing." The design of this division of the book is to teach Christians how to run the Christian race, and how to live and act in the house of God that they may be eternally saved.

The book called Revelation, the fourth and last division of the New Testament, teaches the final destiny of the human race. In this book we have a wonderful description of the final home of the righteous, and a sad description of the home of the wicked.

Now, kind reader, to further show you the importance of the proper division of the word of God, and that I am correct in my solution of it, we will suppose (for instance) that we have an unbelieving Jew with us, knowing that he can never be saved in his unbelief. We want him to become a believer, obey the gospel and be saved. How will we go about converting him? Now as we proceed with the Jew we will learn how to become a Christian and at the same time learn how to rightly divide the word of Truth.

Since "faith" is the outgrowth of testimony, and he cannot "believe" unless we bring evidence to bear on his mind, we will let him examine the testimony of the four witnesses, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In carefully examining the testimony of these witnesses he sees that they trace the sacred line (or "lineage") of Christ back to Adam -- that the Virgin Mary -- the birth of Christ -- the place in which he was born -- his ministerial life -- the great miracles that he performed -- his death, his burial, and his resurrection the third morning -- all correspond with his own Jewish prophets. He notes carefully that the witnesses corroborate each other in testifying that Christ was the long-expected one of whom Moses and the prophets did write. He becomes so impressed with the testimony that he asks, "Is it possible that Christ has stepped into the door of prophecy unnoticed to us Jews?" And in reading John (the fourth and last witness) his attention is especially called to the 20th chapter and 30th verse where John says: "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." And he exclaims "It is enough! I believe it with all my heart."

So he is now converted in mind. He is changed from an unbeliever, to a believer. And while we have many good examples of our Savior in this division, and the greatest principles laid down in his teaching that the world has ever known, and some incidental allusions to conversions; -- still the great

design that God had in giving us this division of the New Testament was to inspire faith, and to give to the world undeniable testimony that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Now the Jew, having become a believer in Christ, wants to obey the gospel and become a Christian and live the Christian life. So we advance him a step farther, give him the book called *Acts of the Apostles*, which is the second division of the New Testament. This is to teach him how to obey the gospel and thereby become a Christian. In reading the first chapter of this book he learns that the apostles were assembled together at Jerusalem and that the Savior told them to not depart from there, "but to tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." A cloud received him out of their sight and he went home to his Father.

Then the Jew remembers that while he was reading Matthew (the first witness) that after the Savior rose from the dead, when giving the last commission to his apostles that he told them to "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in 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 alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20).

And he remembers that Mark (the second witness) also records the same commission in these words: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16).

He also remembers that Luke (the third witness) records the same commission in these words: "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:45-47). He learn also from the above scriptures that Jerusalem was the place where the great work of preaching the gospel was to begin.

After the resurrection of Christ he now turns to the second chapter of the book of Acts, where he reads that the apostles were all of one accord and at one place and the Holy Spirit was poured out on them. They begin to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Being thus enabled to speak in all the different tongues, they were then ready to begin the great work of preaching the gospel to all the world as the Savior had previously commanded them. He also noticed that when this was noised abroad, the multitudes came together. Peter, standing up with the eleven began the great work of preaching, and in his preaching he told them that that same Jesus they had crucified had become both Lord and Christ. When the people heard it, they were "pricked in their hearts and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" He notes carefully that Peter, in telling them what to do, told them to "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

He observes that the people gladly received the word and were baptized, and in doing so

Why Mechanical

Music Is Used?

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crystal-clear passage demands that all we do in word or deed must have authorization from our Spiritual Commander-in-Chief on high. But the instrument (such as a piano or an organ) in Christian worship is lacking such authority. Therefore it is an *addition* minus any and all authority from the legislative Lord.

The proponents of mechanical music "strike out" in this argument also, just as they have in every other argument we have examined.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.

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the Lord added them to the church. He sees that what Peter here tells these sinners to do to be saved is the same conditions embodied in the commission that the Savior had previously given the apostles. He notes also that they went from Jerusalem to all parts of the habitable earth as the Savior had commanded them and all that became Christians under their teaching believed the same facts, and obeyed the same commands, and became members of the same church. He himself believes the same facts, obeys the same commands and becomes a member of the same church.

Now, he says, I have become a believer, I have obeyed the gospel, and have become a Christian -- just as they did when the apostles preached to them. Now I want to know how to live the Christian life. This prepares him for the third division of the New Testament, the twenty-one letters written to the Christians. He reads them all carefully and learns how to live the Christian life. He visits the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and keeps himself unspotted from the world. He faithfully adheres to all the admonitions given to the Christians. He forsake not the assembling of himself together with the church of God.

By this time he is old, leaning on his staff. He now wants to know what his reward will be for his faithfulness? For his information and encouragement we give him the last division of the New Testament, called Revelation. There he reads a wonderful description of Heaven, the everlasting home of the final faithful, where there is to be no sickness, sorrow, pain nor death; where there will be no more sad parting with loved ones:

Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
And the Savior and brethren transported to greet,

While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord will be the feast of the soul.

He now says, "I long to be there." God calls him home: he passes over the silent river of Death; his body sleeps in the dust and awaits the resurrection morning.

Now, kind reader, in pursuing this course, would he not be saved? And would not the same course pursued save everybody who will do likewise? Then does this not teach us how to "rightly divide" the word of truth?

Now having these facts before the minds of the reader, I want to further say that in reading the Bible note carefully (1) who it is that is speaking, and (2) to whom the language is addressed -- whether he is a saint or a sinner, Jew or Gentile, and (3) under what dispensation did they live. Remember that all who live under the same dispensation sustain the same relation to God and must necessarily obey the same commands in order to enjoy the same blessings. In observing this rule we can rightly apply what we read. (Some passages mention the customs of the people in olden times to whom the Bible was addressed.)

Now I am very sure that if all the preachers for the last hundred years had just simply preached the gospel as it is revealed in the Book, and urged the common people to read the Bible for themselves, teaching them the importance of "rightly dividing the word of truth" as they read it, we would have now a united people as the New Testament teaches they should be. But as long as unskillful preachers misapply the word of God -- in try-

ing to support their denominational doctrines, advocating different churches wearing different names, being governed by different man-made rules -- just that long the people will be divided.

When the denominational preachers of any town or community get together and decide to hold a union meeting, each one agrees not to preach the doctrine of his church, they will just make a united effort to save souls. This is positive proof within its self that their church doctrine is no part of the gospel. If it were, the people could not be saved without it! Paul says, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." The gospel that Paul and other apostles preached was the doctrine that saved the people in New Testament times.

If leaving off their church doctrine in union meetings (as they do) is a more effective way in saving the people, why not leave it off all the time? Why advocate church doctrines and party names, when they themselves acknowledge that the people can be saved better without them?

I still hope and pray that the time is near when all people will throw off the yoke of denominational bondage, and will discard old articles of faith and rules of decorum written by man, leaving off the party names that now divide them, and will take their stand upon the word of God, and will be governed by his word in all their worship, and will wear only the names that God gave his people to wear as they did in the New Testament times. Why have anything else? The Bible thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto every good work. It tells us how to become

Christians, it teaches us how to live the Christian life, and how to treat each other. It tells the husband how to treat his wife and the wife how to reverence her husband. It tells the parents how to rear their children and the children to obey their parents. In fact, it tells us all that God wants us to know and do.

The teaching of the Holy Bible has done more to elevate and purify the human race than all the wisdom of men combined. In the word of God there is a name by which the church is called. It also furnishes a name for his people (the children of God) to wear. It says that they were called "Christians." And the New Testament closes with a fearful warning to those who will add or take away from the word of God. Oh! how careful we should be. We should be satisfied with what is written, and we should be governed by the word of God in all matters of religion, in all work and worship of the church, so that heaven will be our home.

Now, kind reader, are you a Christian? IF you are not, could you, if called to the judgment, offer any reasonable excuse for not being one? In view of the fact that our Savior died for you, that he stands with his great loving heart and outstretched arms and says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," will you not come? Procrastination is the thief of time! Tomorrow it may be too late! Oh, that you may come while you have time and opportunity, is the prayer of

Your humble servant,
C. A. Wheeler

Amending The Record

Roy Fuller

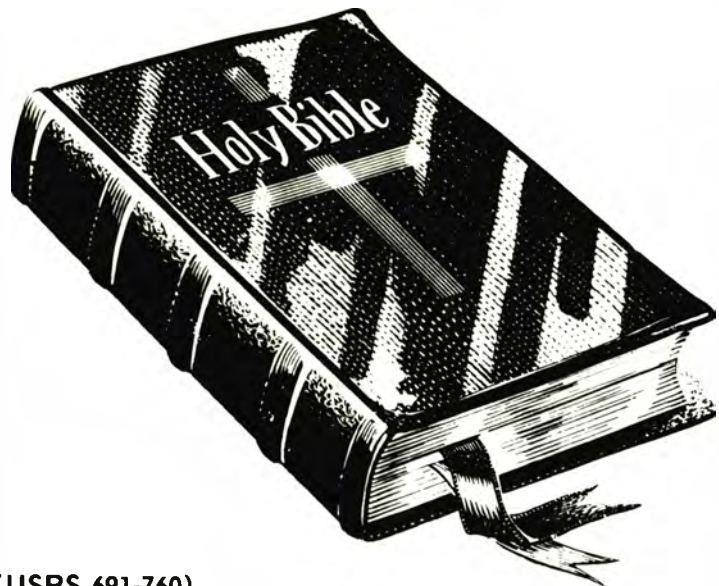
I recently wrote to the State of Alabama Department of Vital Statistics requesting that I be furnished them with all of the correct information in order to expedite the transaction. Within a few days I received an answer stating that my birth was recorded, but there were some discrepancies in the records according to the information that I furnished. Accordingly, I was furnished a partially completed affidavit with the incorrect information and a place to enter the correct information in order that the original record could be amended. Upon submission of the correct information, properly verified, I then received a correct certificate of birth.

This experience caused me to reflect upon God's infallible record, the Bible. It is one record that is totally reliable and needs no amending. It is perfect. It is complete. And it thoroughly furnishes us with ALL of God's will for mankind (II Timothy 3:15-17). Yet, all of its original perfection notwithstanding, it is one of the most "amended" records in history. It has been amended not so much by stroke of pen as by rejection and substitution when men find their own wills to conflict with God's will. The Old Testament abounds with examples of attempted "amendments" or "substitutions" to God's will, each of which received their own just recompense of reward. Cain's offering (Genesis 4:1-15), King Saul's rebellion (I Samuel 15:1-35), Nadab and Abihu's offering of strange fire (Leviticus 10:1-7) are but a few of the notable examples

and grave reminders that God does not, and will not, allow "amendments" to his will. Omissions, changes, deviations, and substitutions by men cannot alter God's will, nor will they justify or validate man's own actions. Someone has said: "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." The idea still seems to prevail that men can improve upon God's perfect will, and a thing added in the name of "religion," "more meaningful worship," etc., must surely be pleasing to God. NOT SO! The record is clear. Those of former dispensations often received immediate punishment for such rebellion. They, along with those in the present dispensation who offer to God "amendments" and "substitutions," rather than complete obedience, will suffer eternal punishment when our Lord returns to judge the world in righteousness.

Let God's record stand! It needs no amendments. Let every man accept it as it is, let us live by it without change, and stake our eternal destiny upon it. "And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and the books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by the things written in the books, according to their works" (Revelation 20:12). "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same will judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). AMEN.

— Rt. 4 Box 479, Elba, AL 36323.



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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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In Memoriam: Gus Nichols

(Editor's Note: It hardly seems possible that a full decade has elapsed since my father died! On this tenth anniversary of his death (on November 16, 1975), we honor him by this abbreviated story of his life. This article concludes the present series of Biographical Sketches of Gospel Preachers. --Editor).

Gus Nichols
(1892-1975)

On January 12, 1892, Gus Nichols was born in a log cabin near Carbon Hill, Walker County, Alabama. He was the oldest child of William Calvin and Velma Elizabeth (Wyers) Nichols, who had twelve children, two of whom died in infancy. His elementary education was obtained in a one-room, one-teacher school at the "Iron Mountain" log school house. In those days schools convened only two or three months of the year, when the weather was too bad for much outdoor farm activity. To help make a living for the growing family, Gus had to drop out of school when he had 'finished' the sixth grade; but on his 20th birthday his father 'set him free' --and the next day he returned to school, 'passing' grades seven, eight, and nine in about six weeks! After he married and they had four children, he again returned to school.



The parents of Gus Nichols were strict moralists, but did not regularly attend church services. His mother was a Baptist (in name, at least), so Gus joined the Missionary Baptist church when he was sixteen.

As a boy he learned well the rudiments of music, and never saw an instrument he could not play. In his teen-age, he memorized the Showalter rudiment book, and soon was teach-

ing singing schools. He and an uncle about his age would spend rainy Saturdays singing all day long, which cultivated a melodious voice for his later preaching.

As usual, he closed a singing school at the Iron Mountain school house with a concert. It was announced that the next night evangelist C. A. Wheeler would begin a revival there. With nowhere else to go, everyone in the community returned to hear this itinerant preacher from Jasper. He told them that if someone would lead the songs, they could sing 20 or 30 minutes before he preached, but that he could not sing. Upon learning that Gus Nichols was the 'best singer' in the community, he was invited to lead the singing --but the young singer wanted it understood that he was not a member of the evangelist's church, and he may not want a Baptist to lead the singing. Given the options of beginning without any singing, or singing for 20 or 30 minutes, they (having just closed a singing school) wanted to sing, and assured Gus that they would sing with him -- so he led the singing.

His girl friend perceived that he was paying careful attention to the sermons, even taking notes which he studied the next day. He discussed with her the difference between the preaching of brother Wheeler and that which they had been accustomed to, including the New Testament church versus the one he had joined. There was a difference between what the Bible teaches one to do to be saved and what he had done. Upon seeing his evident interest in that 'new' (to that community) religion, his girl friend 'ditched' him! By the end of the revival he obeyed the gospel, being baptized "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

Within a year or two after his conversion he won the heart of Frances Matilda Brown. When he asked her parents for her hand in marriage, he explained that he had rented some farmland and had raised a crop that year, telling them how many bushels of corn and how many bales of cotton he had made. He also explained that he had saved the seed from three bales of cotton --to which her

mother inquired: "You don't think 'Tildie' can eat COTTON SEED, do you?" He replied that he thought if HE had to, SHE could, too!!! --They were willing, and had agreed, to share their lives together! With her parents' approval they were wed at the bride's home November 30, 1913. To this union were born eight children --four boys and four girls.

While still a youth, Gus had worked on the farm, and at a sawmill; and as a hired hand he had been required to dig ditches. To make sure it was straight, he stretched a string to mark the sides; and he worked so fast that he finished it in far less time than the 'boss' anticipated --and he paid him only half as much as he promised! Gus Nichols was also a section hand on the Frisco Railroad, and after marriage he worked in the underground coal mine after his crop was 'laid by.'

Upon his conversion, he and perhaps a dozen others formed a congregation which worshipped in the "Iron Mountain" School House, and he taught the adult Sunday School class. Brother Wheeler would come back one Sunday a month to preach for them. To better prepare himself to teach, Gus walked three miles to the depot with an empty suitcase, then rode the train to Jasper, whence he walked three miles out to brother Wheeler's home, where he borrowed his suitcase full of books which the knowledgeable preacher recommended that he read. These included McGarvey's *Commentary On Acts*, Lard on *Romans*, Milligan on *Hebrews*, *The Gospel Plan Of Salvation* by Brents, Campbell's *The Christian System*, the *Campbell-Rice Debate*, and other such books as would help him discern truth from error. Back home with his borrowed treasures, he read them at nights by the light of pine-knots burning in the open fireplace. He would read aloud to his wife until his eyes would become red and watery --but instead of quitting, he would cover one eye with a hand, forcing it to rest while he read with only one eye --then he would alternate, making the other eye rest!

One Sunday brother Wheeler announced that

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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 26:35

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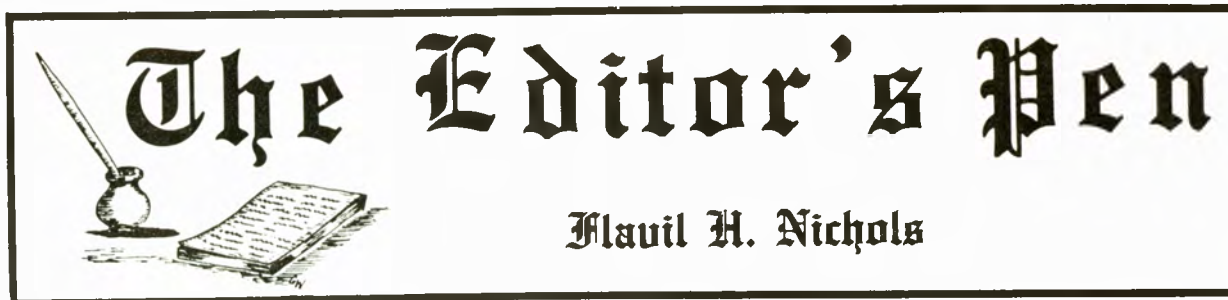
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Flavil H. Nichols

In Memoriam: Gus Nichols

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he would be away in a revival the next month, but that Gus would preach in his place --without having previously discussed it with him! Instead of refusing, Gus decided he would try, and would do his best. He took to the pulpit seven pages of handwritten notes; but in the midst of his first sermon he lost his place in the notes! Instead of allowing his confusion to stop him, he simply folded the notes, tucked them into his pocket, and continued to speak out of the overflow of his knowledge of the subject. He learned another important lesson that second Sunday in June, 1917: A neighbor asked him if he realized how many times he buttoned and unbuttoned his coat during the sermon? Gus replied that he was not aware of having buttoned or unbuttoned it at all. The friend told him that, after he started counting, he counted fifty-seven times! This taught the speaker to be aware of what he did with his hands while preaching!

From several communities there came invitations for him to preach, and he gladly filled all the appointments he could, preaching at some places once a month. He planned to support himself on the farm, while doing all the good he was able to do as a part-time preacher. But he came to realize he needed further teaching. Also his wife encouraged him, saying, "Gus, if you are going to be a preacher, make a good one --don't be a 2 x 4! --And I'll stand behind you, and will take care of the children and the 'stuff'." So, in 1920 they sold their farm and moved to Berry, Alabama, where he enrolled in the old Alabama Christian College. He continued to preach on week-ends, riding the train and walking to his appointments. At Berry he bought a 7-acre plot on which he built a house and a barn, had a well drilled, and planted a large garden. He built the road to the house by using a mule-drawn slip-scoop.

His first full-time preaching was at Cordova (1924-1925). While living there he preached in a 'mission' meeting in Jasper, the county seat, where he started a congregation which became today's Sixth Avenue church. Each Sunday afternoon for a year and a half he preached for them, until he moved to Millport at the first of 1926. In that (Lamar) County, there were seven congregations, and he preached monthly for each of them. For seven years they supported him, buying a tent which he used all over the area. One summer he preached under that tent (in various locations) for six months (April through September) *without missing a single night!* The brethren promised him \$100.00 a month --but the depression of 1929 hit, and some months they simply did not have that much to pay him, so he received only \$80.00, and sometimes only \$60.00 a month!!! And by 1930 they had eight children, too!!!

On January 1, 1933, he began work with the church in Jasper, where he lived and preached for the next forty-three years --until his death. The congregation he had established

while living at Cordova had built a brick building at Fifth Avenue and 15th Street. At first he preached only two Sundays a month at Jasper, and one each at Carbon Hill and Cordova.

With his wife's constant support and encouragement to become more than a "2 x 4" preacher, he studied the Bible for an average of five hours a day for more than fifty years! He sometimes challenged the children to read any verse they selected --and he would QUOTE the one before it, the one they read, and the one after it --and tell where it was found. Such knowledge of the Bible made him in great demand.

Gus Nichols preached in at least 27 states and four foreign countries (Canada, Egypt, Germany, and Israel). Two colleges awarded him LL.D. (Honorary) degrees. In his honor Alabama Christian College (now Faulkner University) at Montgomery named its library *The Gus Nichols Library and Learning Center*. Overseas, in Andhra Pradesh, India, the Preachers' School library is named *The Gus Nichols Library*. *The Nichols Cottage*, at Childhaven, in Cullman, Alabama, is named for him. In 1957 he received the *Award For Outstanding Service To Freed-Hardeman College* from the Alumni Association, Henderson, Tennessee. He received the *Outstanding Christian Service Award* (1963) from Pepperdine University (then College), Los Angeles, California. Posthumously he was awarded the first annual *Effective Communications Award* (February, 1976) from Abilene Christian College (now University), Abilene, Texas, in recognition of his effective use of radio and other media to spread the gospel.

"*The Gus Nichols Story*," a 30-minute documentary-type film, was prepared for and aired by the Herald Of Truth television series. "Why Did Jesus Die?" was filmed in the auditorium of the Sixth Avenue church, Jasper, Alabama, for the Herald of Truth television series, with Gus Nichols preaching on the title theme. Numerous series of his lectureships, from Michigan to Mississippi, have been tape recorded.

By a special act of the Alabama State Legislature, he was made an Honorary Member of the Governor's Staff. In 1962 he was awarded a 5-week all-expense paid tour of Palestine for himself and his wife for his promotion of *The Gospel Advocate's* circulation; and they visited ten countries. He was featured at the Gus Nichols Appreciation Dinner at the annual lectureship at Freed-Hardeman College (1962). *The Gus Nichols Pavilion* at Indian Creek Youth Camp near Parrish, Alabama, is a monument to his interest in and promotion of that facility. He was the only man who appeared annually on the Lectureship at Freed-Hardeman College (Henderson, Tennessee) from the very first one (1937) unto and including the year of his death (1975), on which lectureship

The Saving Name

In Peter's defense before the supreme court of the Jews, he said, "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:11-12). This "stone," which they had set aside, is Christ. Peter was saying their accusers had set aside their only hope of salvation. They could expect no higher authority than Christ Jesus.



W. Edwin Kearley

The Psalmist makes a prophetic statement about THE STONE. He wrote, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head of the corner" (Psalms 118:22). We have seen in Peter's statement (above) the fulfillment of this prophetic statement. The Jews were the builders. They were erecting the building of their national life. When they came to Jesus, they found no place for him.

They rejected all which Jesus in mercy offered them. Jesus said, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, BECAUSE MY WORD HATH NO PLACE IN YOU" (John 8:37). The same rejection today keeps many from the salvation found in Christ. They rejected his reign. They looked for an earthly reign, and he offered a spiritual reign. He pleaded, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! (Luke 13:34). Jesus offered the abundant life. He said, ". . . I am come that they might have life, and that they might

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In Memoriam: Gus Nichols

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he for many years conducted the Open Forum. At Abilene Christian College (now University), Abilene, Texas, about 1958 he delivered the first Annual "Lectures On Preaching." Other colleges which have had him speak on their campuses included Alabama Christian College, Nashville, Tennessee; Fort Worth Christian College, Fort Worth, Texas; Harding College (now University), Searcy, Arkansas; Harding Graduate School, Memphis, Tennessee; International Bible College, Florence, Alabama; Memphis School of Preaching, Memphis, Tennessee; Nashville Christian Institute (Marshall Keeble's school for black preachers), Nashville, Tennessee; Oklahoma Christian College, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and George Pepperdine College (now Pepperdine University), Los Angeles, California. He spoke frequently at the Blue Ridge Encampment, near Asheville, North Carolina. In 1971, 1972, and 1973, he conducted the *Gus Nichols Bible Workshop* for preachers at Gulf Coast Bible Camp near Lucedale, Mississippi --which subsequently has been moved to Jasper, Alabama, and is merged with the *Words Of Truth Lectureship* and begins the last Sunday night in September.

Gus Nichols believed in the power of the word of God (Romans 1:16), and sought to spread the gospel by pen as well as orally. In the 1930's he published a mimeographed church bulletin --when most congregations did not have one. In the 1920's he was Editor, publisher, and printer (on his own press) of *The Gospel Way*. For many years he wrote a weekly article for *The Mountain Eagle*, a weekly paper, Jasper, Alabama. Three paper-back volumes of these sermonettes were issued in book form. For about 25 years he was "Query Editor" of *The Gospel Advocate*, Nashville, Tennessee, and served as a Staff Writer for that journal even longer. He helped originate and for a time was Editor of *Truth In Love*, a monthly printed journal. In 1962 he originated and until his death (1975) was Editor of *Words Of Truth*, a weekly paper published in Haleyville, Alabama. Many lectures he prepared and delivered were printed in published volumes of lectureship books. In addition, he was author (or co-author) of the following: *What Must I Do To Be Saved?* (a tract, 1930's); *Nichols-Weaver Debate* (1943); *Sermons By Gus Nichols* (1948); *Sermons By Gus Nichols, Volume Two* (1949); *Sermons By Gus Nichols And Others* (1950); *Speaking The Truth In Love* (1956); *Great Preachers Of Today, Volume IX* (1966); *Lectures On The Holy Spirit* (1967); *Sermon Outlines, Volume I* (1968); *Nichols-Batts Debate* (1972); and *Nichols-King Debate* (1973). In addition, his written works include literally thousands of sermon outlines which he made for his weekly classes at Jasper and distributed freely in mimeographed form to preachers, elders, and all others interested.

For many years he conducted two daily radio programs. One continued for 27 years before his death (and on November 2, 1985 celebrated its 40th anniversary), and has never been presented by tape recording. The other lasted for 15 years during his lifetime, and was taken over by another congregation at his death, but does not now continue. He was a friend of every good work, and served as Trustee of Alabama Christian College (now Faulkner University), Montgomery, Alabama. He was on the original board of Childhaven, Incorporated, Cullman, Alabama, and presented the check which pur-

chased the old facilities from the Odd-Fellows. Gus Nichols estimated that he had engaged in more than one hundred debates. The following list is by no means exhaustive, but it gives an idea of the wide range of topics he discussed.

Nichols-Abercrombie --Brother Cecil Abercrombie opposed Bible classes, uninspired literature, and women teachers. Gus Nichols and he engaged in several discussions. Among the first was at Kansas, Alabama, and the last was at Piedmont, Alabama.

Nichols-Batts --Albert Batts represented the Church of God (with headquarters in Cleveland, Tennessee). They probably met first in or near Chattanooga, Tennessee. The fifth night of their debate at Anniston, Alabama, was on *Instrumental Music In Worship*; and Batts published that night only.

Nichols-Busbee --He met Wes Busbee, of the United Pentecostal Church, on "The Godhead," and "Baptism in the name of Jesus Only." They once debated under a large tent at Greenville, Mississippi.

Nichols-Higdon -- In the late 1920's he debated Ernest Higdon on the plan of salvation, the identity of the church, and Holy Spirit Baptism several times in Lamar County, Alabama. One was in the school auditorium at Kennedy, Alabama.

Nichols-Holder --At least twice Gus Nichols debated "Calvinism" with J. D. Holder, a Primitive Baptist, of Corinth, Mississippi. In the late 1940's they met at Tallassee, Alabama; and in 1956 at Medina, Tennessee. This debate was published.

Nichols-King --Gus Nichols' last formal debate was in 1973 with brother Max King, in the High School Auditorium, Warren, Ohio. They discussed the "A.D. 70" theories of eschatology which brother King has espoused to the dividing of congregations. He 'spiritualizes' the "end of the world," the "second coming," the "resurrection of the dead," the "judgment," and "the new heaven and the new earth;" he affirms that all these occurred with the fall of Judaism in A.D. 70. Brother King published that debate.

Nichols-Lodge --At Vinemont, Cullman County, Alabama, he met a Church of God preacher named Lodge. Later they had another discussion in Powderly, a suburb of Birmingham, Alabama.

Nichols-Mullins --In 1951 Frank Mullins, a premillennialist of Dallas, Texas, and Gus Nichols addressed the same audiences on the same themes; but the premillennial brethren would not agree to a formal "debate." Brother R. H. Boll originally agreed to this dialogue, but asked (due to his health) to substitute Mullins. Nichols refused to accept anyone else without Boll's unqualified endorsement, which was given Mullins. The topics were: "The Kingdom of God," "The Second Coming," and "The Resurrection and the Judgment." Three nights they met at Galatin, Tennessee, and three nights at Charlotte Avenue church, Nashville, Tennessee.

Nichols-O'Neal --Among the "anti-cooperation," and the "anti-orphan home" men with whom Gus Nichols discussed these issues were Irvan Lee and Tom O'Neal, who moved into Walker County. When on their radio programs they presented (either in person or by tapes) such men as Yater Tant and A. C. Grider, Gus Nichols responded to them also. But with Lee and O'Neal he kept up a continual radio debate. For three weeks

he and Thomas G. O'Neal discussed specific propositions, which debate was tape recorded and is available on cassettes.

Nichols-Sanders --In the (then) new facilities of the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, Jasper, Alabama, Gus Nichols met Ronald Sanders, of the Church of God. They had exchanged arguments over their respective radio programs, and the 700-seat auditorium literally overflowed with people.

Nichols-Scott --At Carbon Hill, Alabama, he debated a Mr. Scott, Ph.D., of the Church of God with headquarters in Cleveland, Tennessee. This was the only Doctor of Philosophy he ever debated.

Nichols-Stewart --Another of his radio debates was with the local Nazarene preacher whose name was Stewart.

Nichols-Tallman --At the Brownsville Church of Christ, Pensacola, Florida, he met a member of the church, Dr. O. H. Tallman, Sr., who argued that all Christians are BAPTIZED with, or in, the Holy Spirit.

Nichols-Tingley --About 1940 Gus Nichols and Glen V. Tingley (of Birmingham) had a week-long discussion at the Oak Grove Church of Christ ('Pumpkin Center') near Quinton, Alabama. Mr. Tingley was for several decades pastor of the Birmingham Gospel Tabernacle, which is a Christian and Missionary Alliance church.

Nichols-Weaver --C. J. Weaver, of the Church of God (with headquarters in Anderson, Indiana) and Gus Nichols debated in 1943 at Huntsville, Alabama. The debate was carried 'live' over two radio stations, and was also printed. The subjects included the plan of salvation, Holy Spirit baptism, and feet-washing in worship.

Nichols-Welch --At least three times he debated D. L. Welch, of the United Pentecostal Church, on his "Jesus Only" doctrine, and "Baptism in the name of Jesus only." Their first discussion was under a tent in Pensacola, Florida. They debated at Montgomery, Alabama, and again in Athens, Alabama.

Nichols-Wright --At the theater building in Dora, Alabama, he debated a Church of God preacher named Alonzo Wright. I think they also met near Cordova, and later near Jasper in a vacant store building where Mr. Wright's group worshiped.

Others --He debated a Baptist preacher named Brown at Woodbury, Tennessee, and two Mormon Elders at the Marion County Courthouse, Hamilton, Alabama. Other discussions included Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, 7th Day Adventists, Methodists, and Atheists.

In the summer of 1975 he was stricken with transient ischemic attacks, often called 'mini-strokes.' Little by little he lost more and more use of his body until it was absolutely --totally! --motionless. His heart was beating, and he was breathing --but he could neither wiggle a finger, nor a toe, nor blink his eyes, nor even swallow. We fed him through a tube, and continued to talk to (or at) him, but do not know if he heard anything --for he was incapable of indicating any response! The family doctor sat with us for nearly two hours as he died peacefully at home on Sunday afternoon November 16, 1975.

His body lay in state for twenty-four hours at the Sixth Avenue church building, where the funeral services were conducted. The radio station on which he had preached for

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The Fruits Of Alcoholism

W. A. Holley

Who hath woe? who hath sorrow?
 who hath contentions?
 Who hath complaining? who hath
 wounds without cause?
 Who hath redness of eyes?
 They that tarry long at the wine;
 They that go to seek out mixed wine.
 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red,
 When it sparketh in the cup,
 When it goeth down smoothly:
 At the last it biteth like a serpent,
 And stingeth like an adder.
 Thine eyes shall behold strange things,
 And thy heart shall utter perverse things.
 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down
 in the midst of the sea,
 Or as he that lieth upon the top of
 a mast.
 They have stricken me, shalt thou say,
 and I was not hurt;
 They have beaten me, and I felt it not:
 When shall I awake? I will seek it
 yet again.

--Proverbs 23:29-35, ASV.

Alcoholism is one of our greatest dangers today. Millions upon millions of dollars are spent each year to promote its consumption: Liquor, wine and beer. The breweries and distilleries cannot sell enough of their mind-wrecking and health-destroying products. These sellers of alcohol are now using beautiful girls and handsome young men in their advertisements as if these young people represented the end result of a life given over to alcoholic drunkenness. If one would see the true picture of what drinking alcohol does to people, whether young or old, let one look into the homes of alcoholics and see frightened

children, battered husbands or wives, and the true picture will begin to emerge. Let one look further along skid-row and see all the human wreckage, degradation, and demoralization exhibited in the consumers of alcohol. Let one look in the jails and penitentiaries where countless thousands are there because of crimes committed through the influence of alcohol.

One woman said, "My husband is an alcoholic. So are two of his brothers. And a grandfather. I know the odds are against my daughter," who is now only four years of age! The alcoholic influence is so strong in some homes it is almost impossible to shield our children from it. Another mother remembers that the first words ever spoken by her son were: "Mommy," "Daddy," and "whiskey." It is well-known that the children of alcoholics are subjected to great violence, nerve-racking tensions, instability, and unpredictability in their homes. There can be no greater measure of child abuse!!

Is the danger real? It certainly is! The statistics are indeed grim. Sons of alcoholics are four times more likely to become alcoholics than sons of non-alcoholics; daughters are three times more likely, we are informed. And daughters of alcoholics are more likely to marry alcoholics, according to the latest information.

Many parents refuse to admit that alcohol is a problem in their homes. But parents need to remember that their children learn by example. When parents keep alcohol -- wine -- beer -- whiskey -- in their homes, they can expect their children to follow their example. It would be unreasonable to think otherwise. In fact, thousands of children suffer from alcoholism which they learned from their parents in their own homes. It is a myth to think they are too young to know, since they are living with it every day. Many children recognize its danger. One little girl said, "I poured out Mommy's wine."

But the liquor industry is unhappy with its sales. The liquor distillers cannot sell enough of their product to satisfy them. They claim that raising the drinking age, the passage of tough drunken-driving laws in several states, the scrapping of "happy hours," by many bars and restaurants, and stepped-up road-checks by police seeking to spot intoxicated drivers cuts too deeply into their sales. The liquor distillers also complain that a reduction in the hours during which alcoholic beverages can be sold, plus a 19 percent planned increase in federal taxes limits unfairly their profits. Thus, greed, cupidity and covetousness, characterize the alcoholic beverage distillers: They are little concerned with what harm is done to the consumers of their products. If it were within their power, they would happily double (or quadruple!) the consumption of liquor, wine, and beer, even if the whole nation should become drunken.

To prove our contention, we shall quote from a newspaper article printed in The Birmingham News, July 5, 1985. "The distillers say that the measures taken are part of a growing anti-alcohol climate that has caused U.S. per capita consumption to fall from a peak of 2 gallons in 1979 to 1.8 gallons last year. Distillers also are suffering a decline in their share of alcoholic beverage sales."

The article continues: "According to the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, liquor sales between 1969 and 1983 slipped from 50.5 percent to 34.1 percent of total

retail spending for alcoholic beverages. During the period, wine sales grew from 6.5 percent to 12.3 percent of the total, and beer sales grew from 43 percent to 53.6 percent."

Joseph E. Seagram & Sons, the nation's largest distiller, has become so alarmed over its declining sales, it has decided to spend \$5 million for the purposes of "image-enhancement." What is needed is not better "image-enhancement," but the complete cessation of the production of all alcoholic beverages! Only then can the great harm through drinking of alcoholic beverages be stopped!!

The truth is: Alcohol is alcohol. "A 12-ounce can of beer, a 5-ounce glass of wine (12 percent alcohol by volume), and a 1½ ounce shot of 80-proof spirits are all about equally intoxicating" (Consumer Reports, July, 1983).

Think of the cost of alcoholic advertising! Who pays the bill? Well, the consumer does!! Think of it! "Advertising in almost all media (money spent) rose from \$92.7 million in 1972 to \$406.5 million in 1982 -- an increase of 338 percent." (Ibid).

We understand that pouring millions of dollars into advertising to convince people to buy a product is as American as apple pie. But alcoholic beverages are not apple pie, or soap, or toothpaste. Alcoholic beverages can and do harm those who drink, and countless thousands who suffer the consequences of those who become drunken.

Like cigarette advertisers, alcohol advertisers are quick to protest that their increased spending is merely intended to introduce new products or to gain a larger share of the market. The alcohol apologists say that the ads do not encourage young people to start drinking. Who can believe it? We know that advertising does increase and encourage drinking. If it were otherwise, why would General Motors, or Ford, or Chrysler, spend millions to advertise their products??

BUT, Dear Reader, do not be deceived by deceptive, delusory, and fallacious advertising. Alcoholic beverages do not make one a successful athlete, or actress/actor, or business-person, or the like. Drunkenness is drunkenness -- regardless of by what name it is called! Those who think that drinking alcohol is a deserved reward for a hard day's work are foolish indeed!

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

The Saving Name

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have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Jesus said of their response, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40).

Christ is A CHOSEN STONE and "was made the head of the corner" (Acts 4:11). The blunder of the Jewish builders did not hinder the plan of the Almighty. Christ was and is the living stone (I Peter 2:4, 16). Angels sang at his birth (Luke 2:14). He was shielded in his infancy (Matthew 2:13-23). He was acknowledged by the Father (Matthew 3:13-17). He was approved by his miracles (Acts 2:22). He was transfigured on the "Holy Mount" (Matthew 17:1-8). He was raised from the sealed tomb (Romans 1:4). He was laid in Zion for a foundation (Isaiah 26:16).

He is the STONE OF SALVATION. In "none other name" is there salvation (Acts 4:12). 1. He is our example to guide us (I Peter 2:21-23). 2. He is our high priest to atone for us (Hebrews 9:24). 3. He is our advocate to intercede for us (I John 2:1-2). 4. He is our mediator to stand between us and God (I Timothy 2:5). 5. It is through him alone that we have certainty of a happy immortality (II Timothy 1:10).

Those who are building upon the sand have need of this stone. He offers security no other can provide. He only has the power to give eternal salvation.

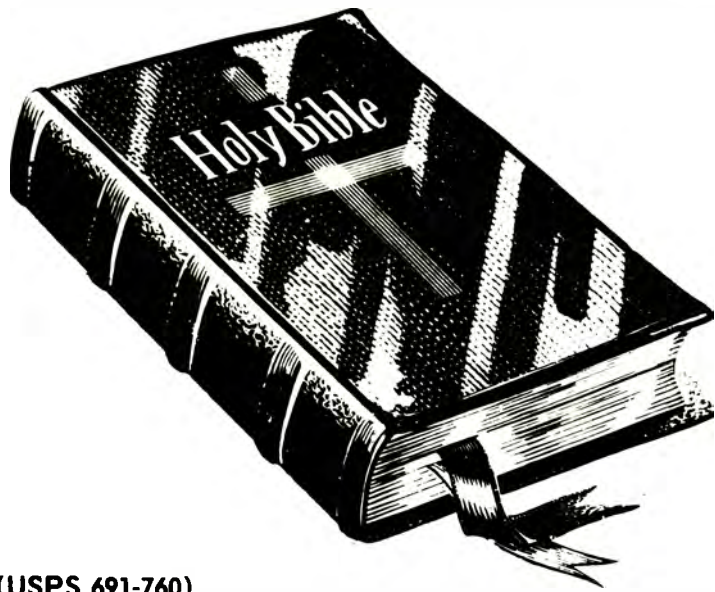
Unto all who live in obedience to hsi word, he is the author of eternal salvation (Hebrews 5:8-9).

—103 E. Lena Ct., Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

In Memoriam: Gus Nichols

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thirty years broadcast the funeral as a public service. Gospel preachers of the area asked permission to stand, one at the head and another at the foot of his casket, as an 'honor guard' (round the clock) for the 24 hours he lay in state. As other preachers arrived, many of them asked to take a turn among them. The chorus from Freed-Hardeman College sang for an hour before the funeral, and participated in the congregational singing of the actual service. Messages of comfort and tribute were delivered by B. C. Goodpasture, W. A. Black, and William Woodson, with Ray Dutton, Sixth Avenue's other minister, introducing each of them. His body was laid to rest in the Circle of Honor at the Walker Memory Gardens in Jasper.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of h

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

—Acts 26:25

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Why Mechanical Music Is Used?

(NO. 9)

Several arguments employed by the proponents of mechanical music for Christian worship have been set forth in this extended series in recent weeks. I firmly and fully believe that an impartial reading of what has been written in answer to those oft-employed arguments will clearly reveal that I have *refuted* every one of them with both scripture and logic. I have left the proponents not ONE leg upon which to stand in these important matters.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

In this current article I wish to notice what one advocate said was the reason she and her brethren use mechanical music in their worship, as well as what another lady once told me as to why she left the Lord's church and went into denominationalism. I think you will find both conversations to be rather revealing confessions, two very frank appraisals.

Between the years of 1962 and 1968 I taught Bible for University credit at the University of Tennessee at Martin (or "UTM," as it is known in Wes' Tennessee and surrounding areas). Close to 1,000 students took my courses over a seven-year period. Well over 80 per cent of them were not members of the church of Christ. Some were not anything religiously; and some were even hostile to religion, but took the courses anyway. Quite frequently, some of these students would come by for religious counseling.

One day a young lady came by for a rather frank talk about religious matters. She belonged to the Christian church. She accepted freely and fervently their usage of

mechanical music in their worship. She knew of my opposition to such a practice. Quite frankly she observed in our private conversation: "I know the New Testament does not authorize the mechanical instrument in Christian worship. MY BRETHREN AND I USE IT BECAUSE WE LIKE IT!"

I could only admire the honesty with which she spoke and the very apparent candor of her confession. She had stated the case as it really is. And this is something most all of its proponents WILL NOT DO!!

I propose to raise some questions for each reader to answer realistically and honestly? Do people REALLY use mechanical music in worship just "because David did?" or, because they LIKE it? Do people REALLY use mechanical music in worship "because they think it is going to be in heaven?" or, because they LIKE it? Do people REALLY use mechanical music in worship just "to employ their (or another's) talents for musical playing?" or, because they LIKE it? Do people REALLY use mechanical music "because song leaders use pitch pipes or tuning forks?" -- "because congregations use songbooks in their singing?" -- and "because church buildings have baptistries?" or, because they LIKE it? Do people REALLY use mechanical music "because of the "psallo" contention?" or, because they LIKE it? (Multitudes use mechanical music in worship, including a great many preachers, who would not know the difference between "psallo" and a solo!) This young lady was frank enough and sufficiently honest that she by-passed all these desperate dodges commonly employed, and gave the real motive behind its usage -- human desire, the people's preference, and congregational choices in these worshipful matters.


But now to the second of the personal experiences to which I alluded in the introduction of this article. A young lady of my acquaintance grew up in a prominent Protestant denomination -- the Lutheran church. Later

she was taught the truth and obeyed the gospel. After staying in the Lord's church for a few years she decided that the Baptist people were more to her liking than were just New Testament Christians. I sought the why of her change. She answered, "I just feel more comfortable where there is a piano or an organ in worship." "Comfort" was the name of the game to her. This is WHY multitudes of people do what they frequently do in religious activities, i.e., what they like, what they desire, and what gives them comfortable, pleasant feelings. SELF is center -- not God.

Why do people sprinkle their babies and call it baptism? Is it not because they WANT to do such and find COMFORT in the practice of affusion? Why do people count beads and count it worship? Is it not because they WANT to do such and find COMFORT in the practice? Why do people keep the sabbath day (Saturday) as their day of worship instead of Sunday? Is it not because they WANT to do such and find COMFORT in the same? Why do people pray to Mary or some other departed saint and not to God through the name of Christ and under the Spirit's instructions set forth in the New Testament? Is it not because they WANT to do such and find COMFORT in the same? Many unauthorized practices characterize today's religionists. What are the prompting motives? "WE LIKE IT," or "THIS IS WHERE WE FIND COMFORT AND PLEASURE." Now, just who will deny it? and upon what grounds of proof?

What is basically wrong with the motive of "we like it?" or, "such gives me personal comfort?" It substitutes man's desires for God's revealed wishes in his word. It puts man at the center instead of God's being the center. It makes an idol out of man's preference. Does the Bible say anything about preferring human traditions over God's will in matters of worship? Indeed it does: Jesus said

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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 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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Why Mechanical Music Is Used?

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plainly, positively, and pointedly, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). In the parallel account Mark relates the Saviour as saying, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition . . . Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye" (Mark 7:9, 13).

Paul is very clear in writing of "will worship" to the Colossians:

Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in WILL WORSHIP, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh (Colossians 2:20-23 -- Emphasis supplied).

WILL WORSHIP is worship directed by man's will, and not by God's will. Jehovah's wishes, not human preferences, are of major importance in determining how we shall worship him who inhabits eternity.

John Milton, author of such great English classics as PARADISE LOST and PARADISE REGAINED, wrote in 1673,

True religion is the true worship and service of God, learned and believed from the word of God only. No man or angel can know how God would be worshipped and served unless God reveal it; he hath revealed and taught it us in the holy scriptures by inspired ministers, and in the gospel by his own Son and his apostles, with strictest command to reject all other traditions or additions whatsoever.

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Alabama Christian Is Now Faulkner University

I have long encouraged and promoted Christian Education, and still do. Within the state of Alabama is an excellent Christian College which many have been overlooking. Among other dedicated Christians, my father (the late Gus Nichols) served until his death on the Board of Trustees of Alabama Christian College at Montgomery. Soon afterward I was elected to that Board, on which I continue to serve.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

This four-year college is fully accredited by the Southern Association. It operates several 'satellite' colleges (in Mobile, Birmingham, Florence, and Huntsville), some of which are larger than Freed-Hardeman College was when I attended it. From the University of Alabama, the prestigious "Jones Law Institute" was bought by Alabama Christian College, and we are in the process of bringing it up to the standards required for its full accreditation.

The successful operation of these schools year after year means that Alabama Christian has been functioning as a "university," with various "colleges" under its 'umbrella.' Hence the board voted to move officially into "University" status. The name was changed to honor the Faulkner family, who have given untold hundreds of thousands of dollars, and incalculable wisdom, time, and energy to this great cause. The basic, fundamental aims and goals for which the school was established remain unchanged. Alabama Christian College of Fine Arts is operated on the Montgomery campus, and the School of Biblical Studies will continue to be called Alabama Christian. Degrees are offered in Law, Business, and in Education, as well as in Bible.

Since our other Christian colleges are located in other states, I shall not write at this time so much about them as about Alabama Christian; but this should not be misconstrued as indicative of a lack of endorsement. We also have some fine schools of preaching which train soul-winners, generally specializing in those who are past the usual 'college age,' of (say) 18-25 years.

A year in college helps broaden and enlarge the high school graduate's concept of the world, its challenges and opportunities, and his own potentials and abilities. Where that year is spent on a CHRISTIAN college campus, under the influence and supervision of New Testament Christians, both in, and out of, the classrooms, and where his peers

are predominantly Christians also, its worth is vastly enriched. In such a setting the student is far less likely to use his college years as a "vacation" from Christ and his church.

Many --far TOO MANY!-- are school 'drop-outs!' Some do not even finish high school. One who drops out of high school in this modern technological age is certain to be left far behind by those against whom he must compete for jobs and his livelihood. And some who enroll in college do not graduate. I here lift my voice to encourage everyone to get the very finest education within his reach. The more, and the earlier, you learn about more and more subjects, will enable you to enjoy using such knowledge that much longer! So, learn as much as you can, about as many different things as you can, and as soon as you can, to lead the maximum life.

Education Pays

On N.B.C.'s "TODAY" show it was reported (October 17, 1985) that the average High School graduate earns \$15,000 a year; however, after only ONE (1) year in college, the average earned is \$22,000 a year! There is a salary gap of \$7,000 PER YEAR --and the report says this annual income gap WIDENS with each additional year of college training received!

Aside from the aesthetic values of education, and the expansion of one's own talents and improvement of his abilities to serve God and his fellow-man, take a hard look at what this means in cold cash. A young man who finishes high school and enters the work force at age 18 and works until he is 65, faces 47 years of employment. EACH of those 47 years he will earn \$7,000 LESS than his classmate who attended college only ONE YEAR! In other words, his lack of just ONE YEAR in college costs him \$329,000 by the time he reaches age 65!

"But," some protest, "college is SO EXPENSIVE!" --And it does indeed cost far more than it formerly did. However, there are grants (which do not have to be repaid) and low-interest loans and scholarships which enable almost any student from any home to get a college education. Just suppose it costs \$5,000 to attend one year at Alabama Christian College. What parent is there who cannot appreciate a \$5,000 investment for one year which (on the national average) will bring in a return of \$329,000 by the time that son (or daughter) reaches retirement age (65)? In this illustration, just ONE YEAR in college is worth --in dollars and cents!-- about 60 times what it costs! Young people, from purely a FINANCIAL viewpoint, you simply can't "afford" to NOT go to college!

Parents, I challenge you to take your children --especially those in the Junior High grades --to spend a week-end, or (better still) a school day at Alabama Christian

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Lessons From A Merchant

The Master-teacher made extensive use of parables to impress timeless truths on people's hearts. The thirteenth chapter of Matthew contains a number of parables about the kingdom of heaven, one of which claims our present attention.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls: and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it (Matthew 13:45-56).

God's kingdom is like a rare pearl. The ancients highly prized pearls not just for their monetary value, but also for their beauty. They were willing to invest huge sums of money to acquire pearls of the best quality. History notes that Queen Cleopatra of Egypt possessed two choice pearls valued at some \$400,000 each. It is interesting to note that folk in Christ's day thought the oyster conceived the pearl from the dew of heaven when it lightened, according to Origen of Alexandria. Like a pearl, the kingdom of God is a beautiful thing, of unmeasurable worth and value. Only one way exists to bring peace to the human heart and joy to the soul, that is by entering the heavenly kingdom. Paul writes, "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17).

The merchant of the parable reflects traits and actions worthy of our emulation. He was a man with a definite purpose in life. He was *seeking* precious pearls. He knew where he was going and what he was looking for. His search was determinate, discriminative and unrelenting. Too many folk live aimless, school years cultivate on their part an appetite direction. The man devoted his life to his search and was greatly rewarded for it. He had the highest possible purpose: he was determined to find the finest pearl. Nothing else would satisfy his heart.

The merchant recognized the best pearl when he found it. Doubtless many others had passed over this pearl. Some may have been in a hurry and simply overlooked the treasure. Others may have seen it; but, not appreciating its value, they walked on by. Perhaps some

Alabama Christian

Continued From Page 2

College of Fine Arts, or any of the other schools of Faulkner University. I predict that both you, and your children, will be thrilled at the facilities, opportunities, advantages, and challenges afforded right here in Alabama. During the remainder of their high school years cultivate their part an appetite for a CHRISTIAN COLLEGE education. By words of commendation, be a BOOSTER of our colleges. Help support them financially. Attend their special functions, such as lectureships, ball games, and fund-raising events. After all, if Christians don't support them, WHO WILL???



John Waddey

had faulty preconceptions about what they wanted, or about pearls in general, which kept them from purchasing it. Some might have thought the cost was too great. Paul prayed for the Philippians that they might "approve the things that are excellent" (Philippians 1:10).

This merchant was ready to pay the price necessary to possess this treasure. Appreciating the true value of his discovery, he was not content just to admire, wish, or talk about it: he must possess it! We do not read of his arguing over the price, nor waiting for a sales reduction in the price. He was well rewarded for his diligent search and sacrifice: he now owned the pearl of great price.

There are valuable lessons for us in this story. Like that merchant we must dedicate ourselves to searching for the precious things of God. The treasures we seek are found by searching the Scriptures (Acts 17:11). "If you seek [for wisdom] as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of Jehovah and find the knowledge of God" (Proverbs 2:4-5). Those who search the Scriptures will find them bearing witness of Jesus (John 5:30).

Few people are grossly evil and vicious; but most do waste their lives on trivial, wasteful things, and neglect the truly important matters of God.

We must dedicate ourselves to finding and possessing *God's* will, *his* church *his* salvation and *his* worship. Nothing else should satisfy us. Too many earthlings have no goals. They have put their minds into neutral and will go where they are pushed.

There were other lovely pearls for the merchant to consider, but only one supreme pearl. So there is a satisfaction to be found in many things, good in themselves: knowledge, art, music, literature, nature and human relationships. Service to man and human achievement are lovely and worthy goals. Yet not one of them compares with seeking and finding a place in God's kingdom.

Our subject counted the cost, and paid the necessary price, to gain that pearl. So should we for the kingdom of God (Luke 14:25-30, 33).

The merchant did not have to be prodded, or begged to buy the pearl. Nor should we need to be prodded to obey God's terms for pardon and admission. To enter Christ's kingdom, a man must be born of water and spirit (John 3:1-5). Simply put, he must in faith be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of his sins and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

Whatever the cost and sacrifice, it is worth the price if we can enter the Lord's kingdom. Paul wrote "I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus . . ." (Philippians 3:8).

God promises that if we seek his blessings we shall find them. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find. . ." (Matthew 7:7). Again Jesus said "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching . . ." (John 7:17).

The kingdom of God is the church that Jesus built. Christ himself used the terms interchangeably in Matthew 16:18-19. Having discovered the pearl of great price, "what would you give in exchange for your life" (Mark 8:31-38). Some folk are waiting for a convenient season to enter the Lord's kingdom. Such thinking is risky and foolish, for no one has the promise of tomorrow (Acts 24:25). Today the priceless pearl of salvation in

Christ's kingdom is set before *you*. Be like that wise merchant, and secure for yourself the pearl of great price!

—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931

How Do You Receive The Truth?

Dean Fugett

It always excites us when anyone responds to one of our messages with the following statement: "I don't agree with that, but I am going to study the Bible to determine the truth." We can ask for nothing more. We never expect people to "take our word" for anything relating to so valuable a commodity as their soul and its eternal destiny. We are happy for them to "search the scriptures." So did the noble Bereans of Acts 17:11: "They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." A person with this attitude will either come to a knowledge of the truth, or will respond by pointing out our own error, thus leading us to the truth. To receive the word with gladness is an admirable attitude. We are only saddened that it is not always the case -- even among brethren in the church.

On the other hand, there are some like Stephen's audience in Acts 7:54-59. "When they heard these things" (with which they disagreed) ". . . they cried with a loud voice, and stopped their ears. . ." Some would probably like to follow through as they did. We must remember that their action removed the preacher, but it didn't change the truth which he had spoken. I am reminded of the actions of some churches who think that because they have removed the preacher who was teaching the truth about fellowship with denominations, fellowship with the Christian church, marriage-divorce-remarriage, Biblical discipline, holy living, Biblical giving, etc., that they have freed themselves of the responsibility of meeting the teaching in judgment. The attitude of getting rid of the preacher and the preaching identifies one with Stephen's audience. Some would probably go as far as *his* audience did if they thought they could get by with it.

Then, there is a third attitude: "I don't know, and I don't care." This attitude seems to think that ignorance is bliss, and if we ignore the truth, it will go away. It will go away, but we will meet it again (John 12:48). Then, it will be too late to listen, read, investigate, or even consider -- much less obey. I don't suppose that I will cease to be amazed at the number who demonstrate this attitude by their absence at all services but the Sunday morning worship. We have never yet been convinced from the Bible that such behavior will get us to heaven.

Luke records: "they that gladly received his word were baptized" (Acts 2:41).

Which attitude represents your attitude toward the truth?

—P.O. Box 75, Cave City, Arkansas 72521.

The Infiltration Of Denominationalism

Don Ruhl

Psalm 106 is the history of Israel summarized. In verses 34-36 the Psalmist explains the time of the Judges in a nutshell with these words: "They did not destroy the peoples, as Jehovah commanded them, but mingled themselves with the nations, and learned their works, and served their idols, which became a snare unto them." God had wanted his people to be distinctive. This involved destroying idolatry and the idolators. Instead, the Israelites fellowshipped idolatrous nations and investigated to see why they were so successful. Having imitated the works of the false religionist they found themselves in a snare. Their error hindered their prosperity.

God's people have always followed this pattern; even today it is repeated. Those who make up the church "are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession" (I Peter 2:9). This means that we are not to mingle and fellowship with those in error, lest the pure race and royal blood become defiled. Brethren, let us not be ashamed of our distinctiveness, but wear the pure name of Christ with honor and dignity. As God instructed Israel, we too are to destroy and refute error. Let us contend earnestly for the faith and be set to defend the precious word of God.

There is a need for vigilance, for denominational philosophy is infiltrating the body of Christ. Convictionless preaching is one of those philosophies. If you are absolute in your preaching it by some is considered arrogant. Whereas if you are uncertain or ambiguous you are praised for being able to "stir brethren up." Feelings and dialogue are the 'sophisticated' way and fearless preaching is to be avoided at all costs!

The pressure to preach "positive" sermons only is another denominational philosophy that has found its way into the church. Robert Schueller and Norman Vincent Peale are imitated by so many brethren, it is a wonder that these denominational preachers have not spoken at one of our so-called "Church Growth" seminars! But this is not new: Isaiah was requested to be positive only (Isaiah 30:10), and Amos had to answer this same God-denying request (Amos 7:12, 13). Contrary to this, God has always required balanced preaching (Jeremiah 1:10).

One denominational philosophy that has had the easiest time infiltrating the church of God is the over-emphasis on self-esteem. The doctrine of high self-esteem has found little resistance. How to feel good about ourselves, rather than how to make God feel good about us, is the emphasis. It is true that low self-esteem is dangerous and unhealthy. The same testimony can be given for high self-esteem. The Bible answer is to stop thinking about ourselves (Romans 12:3; Philippians 2:3,4). I am to lose myself in my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (Galatians 2:20).

We have begun to look 'softly' upon denominationalism when denominational preachers are used freely to teach the children of God. James Dobson has found his way into many of our pulpits via films. Francis Schaeffer has found a similar welcome. Win Arn, a Baptist preacher, spoke on a "Church Growth Seminar" sponsored by brethren. His topic was, "How to Effectively Win and Incorporate New Members." This man himself has not been effectively won and incorporated as a new member! He was used because the leaders of this seminar no longer see the power of conversion in the message, but in the

method. Many churches send their youth without reservation to Bill Gothard's *Institutes in Basic Youth Conflicts* seminar. Paul's question to the Corinthian church has great application today, "... cannot there be found among you one wise man ...?" (I Corinthians 6:5).

Denominationalism has also infiltrated the church's thinking through a heavy emphasis on the meeting house, and the false doctrine of salvation by grace only. Brethren, we have already reached the point where denominational philosophy has become a snare to the body of Christ!

It is time for us to herald the truths that will halt the infiltration of denominationalism. A

"Get Your Goose Juices!"

While at an Atlanta Braves baseball game recently, I heard one of the hawkers cry out, "Get your goose juice, goose juice, Budweiser! Budweiser!"

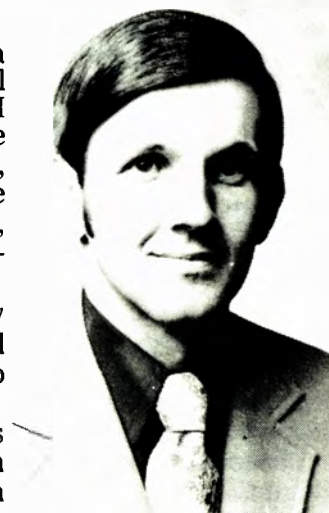
This hawker knew what his brew would make out of those who bought from him! Solomon, long years ago said, "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again" (Proverbs 23:29-35). It seems that the wise man of long ago thought that alcohol was "goose juice" and would make a man behold strange things and utter perverse things.

As I sat there viewing the Atlanta Braves winning a game, another hawker yelled out, "Got an alcohol problem? I've got the answer -- Budweiser! Budweiser!" I thought of the tragic statistics relating to alcohol and then watched the people laugh at the hawkers words and raise their hands and holler, "I'll take two!"

The rain started falling about the fourth inning and the umpires called for a "rain delay" in the game. We stood around the concession area where it was nice and dry and waited for a break in the weather. During that delay we observed some of those who had been drinking earlier and observed that they continued to drink their beer. They started acting extremely silly for grown men. To observe these men conducting themselves in such a way brought to mind again the words of the

bold recognition of the all-sufficiency of the Sacred Pages cannot be avoided. Profane babblings and the traditions of men are profitless and are to be refused by the saints of God. Religious fellowship with denominationalists has to be severed as fast as it was formed.

Beloved, let us keep God's commandments regardless of what the secular and religious worlds are doing. Let us consistently expose false doctrine with sound arguments, in a courageous spirit, out of a loving heart and according to kindness. May the church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be magnified!
—2521 Nile Street, Klamath Falls, OR 97603.



Demar Elam

wise man, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1). The prophet Isaiah said, "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink" (Isaiah 5:22).

The weather improved and the game resumed. Many baseball goers had left but the die-hard fans scrambled back to their seats to see if Atlanta would indeed win this game. No sooner were we seated when the cry of a hawker rang out, "If you're dumb enough to sit out here in the rain, you're dumb enough to buy my beer -- Budweiser! Budweiser!" I thought to myself, "He's right in two ways. We're dumb for sitting here in the rain and they're dumb for drinking that beer."

What good thing comes from the drinking of alcohol? The fruits of alcoholic beverages are always evil. The New Testament has numerous explicit condemnations of alcohol and its effects. Drunkards will not go to heaven (I Corinthians 6:9-11). Drunkenness is a work of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). Christians are not to be "drunk with wine but, filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18).

Does the Bible contradict itself? Does it both extol and condemn alcohol? The Bible calls alcohol a mocker, a brawler and those who drink it are unwise. Yes, perhaps this hawker's cry says it all, "Get your 'goose juice' -- Budweiser! Budweiser!"

—2072 Valley Woods Dr., Riverdale, GA 30296.

Short Sermons

The man who thinks the world owes him a living usually wants it a "loaf" at the time.
* * * * *

Some folk's minds are like concrete: all mixed up and thoroughly set.
* * * * *

Two can play a game and both lose.
* * * * *

Flattery is a key that fits many locks.
* * * * *

Very little slander is able to prove itself.
* * * * *

All who are on the right side are on the same side.

Beware of the man whose main thought is to advance himself.
* * * * *

A life makes a pretty worthless package is it is all wrapped up in itself.



(USPS 691-760)

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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Testimony From Great Religious Leaders Relative To Mechanical Music In Christian Worship

(No. 1)

I propose to end our articles relative to this issue with some three installments relating what some outstanding religious leaders have said in regard to this practice. I do this not because they serve as authorities: they DO NOT! but to suggest that my brethren and I are not ALONE by any means in opposition to this perilous innovation. In fact, if you have labored under the impression that churches of Christ have been THE ONLY ONES strongly opposed to this popular innovation, then you are badly mistaken as I shall begin to exhibit in this article and complete in two more articles. For a number of centuries religious leaders have spoken plainly and pointedly concerning their opposition to this popular practice. To make the selected list even more impressive I shall number them and then note what they said in opposition to mechanical music in Christian worship.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

(1) Adam Clarke was a distinguished Methodist scholar who wrote a full commentary on the entire Bible. It is still a great and useful commentary. In his comments on Amos 6:5, which pronounces a woe upon those who "invent to themselves instruments of music, like David," the learned English commentator wrote:

I believe that David was not authorized by the Lord to introduce that multitude of musical instruments into the Divine worship of which we read; and I am

satisfied that his conduct in this respect is most solemnly reprehended by this prophet; and I further believe that the use of such instruments of music, in the Christian Church, is WITHOUT the SANCTION and AGAINST the will of God; that they are subversive of the spirit of true devotion, and they are sinful. If there was a WOE TO THEM who INVENTED instruments of music, as did David under the law, is there NO WOE, NO CURSE to them who invent them, and introduce them into the worship of God in the Christian church? I am an old man, and an old minister; and I here declare that I never know them productive of any good in the worship of God; and have had reason to believe that they were productive of much evil. Music, AS A SCIENCE, I esteem and admire; but instruments of music IN THE HOUSE OF GOD I abominate and abhor. This is an abuse of music; and here I register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the Author of Christianity (CLARKE'S COMMENTARY, Vol. IV, p. 684. All emphasis -- his).

Though the usage of "Christian Church" is objectionable (some of our own brethren in churches of Christ to the contrary notwithstanding), yet his other comments are very much to the point.

(2) John Wesley, founder of the Methodist church and a leading religious leader of the eighteenth century, was once asked regarding his opinion in regard to the use of mechanical music in the chapels of the Methodists. Though a great lover of music and an elegant poet in his own right he answered

truthfully and tersely, powerfully and pointedly: "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither HEARD nor SEEN" (Ibid., Emphasis his).

(3) John Calvin, founder of the Presbyterian church and well-known religious leader of the sixteenth century, said: "Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law" (WHAT IS WRONG? p. 105).

(4) Charles H. Spurgeon was perhaps the greatest Baptist preacher who ever lived. For many years he preached to twenty thousand or more each Sunday in the great Metropolitan Baptist Tabernacle in London, England. I have read more than once and with intense interest that mechanically made music was never offered during these years in Spurgeon's tabernacle.

I do not hesitate in the least in agreeing with these men when they were right. And they were RIGHT ON TARGET in their opposition to mechanical music in Christian worship. Present-day Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists would do well to hear and heed what these men said in the past. In fact VAST MULTITUDES of their religious descendants in later centuries would do exceedingly well in such hearing and heeding. But to make the application even more personal, may I ask in all sincerity, Dear Reader, are YOU LISTENING to or READING WELL what they said? If not, why not??

—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063.



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(USPS 691-760)

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—Acts 26:35

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Both Simple And Profound

One summer I held a meeting in the midst of the great Iowa corn country. One night in a sermon I dealt with the idea so often presented that "the Bible cannot be understood." I pointed out that some scriptures are difficult, very difficult, of understanding; but those scriptures which tell us how to be saved, how to worship, how to live, etc., are plain enough for every honest soul to understand.

To illustrate this, I made the point that God's book of revelation is like God's book of nature. Any farmer knows how to plant and harvest his corn, and any one of us knows how to eat it. Yet, the most talented scientist does not fully understand all about it. Who can explain the germ of life that causes the seed to sprout and reproduce after its kind? Yet, we do not wait until we understand that process before we eat the corn!

I asked, "How can one grain of corn grow a large green stalk and reproduce 'three or four' big ears of corn?" One good brother who is an experienced farmer knew I had that grain over-producing! He sent me a good stalk of Iowa corn --and it had "two good ears and one nubbin." (Perhaps he wondered about our Texas corn!)

But anyway, I was fascinated with that Iowa corn. It really does produce! That one grain of corn planted in Iowa soil reproduced ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN grains! And all of that was from a germ of life which the most intelligent scientist cannot see, understand, nor copy. Yet, how we do enjoy it! Truly, this old world, like man (Psalms 139:14), is fearfully and wonderfully made!

—16026 Diana Lane, Houston, TX 77062.



W. T. Hamilton



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Galatians: An Introduction

Gary C. Hampton

Somewhere between 281 and 277 B.C., three tribes of Gauls invaded lands to the southeast. They were repulsed by the Greeks at Delphi and soon had to withdraw from Macedonia. They crossed the Hellespont into Asia, where, by 232 B.C., they were confined to one basic area bordered by Asia, Bithrnia, Pontus, Cappadocia and Lycaonia. The Gualish language was imposed upon all the old inhabitants and the area was divided into three sections, one for each tribe. In 189 B.C., they were subjugated to Rome, but allowed to maintain independence and be governed by their own leaders. After 63 B.C., they were ruled by three kings. Deiotaros set himself up as the sole king by murdering the other two. After his death in 40 B.C., Castor assumed power; and then Amyntas ruled from 36-25 B.C.

Amyntas was killed in war in 25 B.C. and Augustus made Galatia a Roman province. Included in the Roman province were also parts of Phrygia, Pisidia, Lyaconia and Isauria, likely because Amyntas had ruled over these areas before his death.

Some suggest that the book of Galatians was addressed to the original Gauls of what has been called North Galatia. Others say it was the people of the South in the Roman province of Galatia.

On their first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas visited Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. Luke tells us they also visited the region around these last two cities. So, we know that Paul has visited and established churches in Southern Galatia. This, combined with the fact that Barnabas is mentioned in 2:1, 9 and 13, causes us to think that this letter was intended for the Southern region that Paul and Barnabas had worked in together on that first missionary journey. Interestingly, this is Paul's only letter addressed to a group of churches.

In Acts 15:36 Paul stated his purpose for the second missionary journey by saying, "Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do." The text tells us Paul and Silas visited Derbe and Lystra and we assume they also went to the other cities in the South of Galatia. Acts 16:6 seems to indicate that they also passed through North Galatia. A brief return visit may well have been made on the third missionary journey (18:23).

Paul makes it clear that he brought the gospel to this group of churches (1:8, 11). He had displayed a crucified Christ before them, they had received the Holy Spirit by the obedience of faith, and had seen miracles worked which confirmed the truth of what he preached (3:1-5). His work began among them while he was suffering some physical problem, yet they had given him a good reception and had so much compassion for him they would have given their own eyes to help

Paul (4:13-15). They had endured persecution for their faith, evidently remaining faithful (3:4). Paul was with them enough initially to know they were off to a good start (5:7). Paul counted them as his spiritual children and was grieved to think that they might have left the teaching of Christ (4:19-20).

Many of the converts in these churches apparently were Gentiles. They had been idolaters and had not been circumcised (4:8; 5:2; 6:12). However, it is apparent that there were some who had been Jews (3:27-29). Paul expected them to be very familiar with the Old Testament, which would be natural since those scriptures pointed to Jesus and would have been nearly all of God's word that was available in written form at that time (4:21-31; 3:7-12).

The letter was written because they were being drawn away to another, or a false, gospel (1:6-7). Evidently, for the false teachers to draw them away from the truth, they had attacked Paul's apostolic authority. Chapter 1:11 through 2:21 is Paul's defence of his authority. Chapters 3 and 4 show the law's inability to justify man and the gospel's full ability to justify man. Chapters 5 and 6 set forth a beautiful description of the Christian's liberty in Christ. Paul shows that submission to circumcision puts one in slavery to the law and effectively causes one to abandon Christ. He closes this section with a beautiful statement about the real source of a Christian's pride, which is not the flesh or its works, but the cross of Christ and the great work of salvation that was done upon it.

The book should be dated somewhere around A.D. 50, or just after the Jerusalem council. Paul mentions a visit to Jerusalem three years after his conversion (1:18) and another some fourteen years later, which appears to be at the time of the council (2:1; Acts 15).

The tone of this book is more stern than Paul's other epistles. He begins to attack their problem from almost the first verse. He has no real words of praise, unless one counts references to their good beginning. He had been touched by their early compassion for him, and was greatly disturbed by their move away from the faith. The book should stand as a warning to us against false teaching, while at the same time stressing our need to preach the truth in the face of error.

—2576 Pleasant Valley Rd., Mobile, AL 36606.

Folks who never change their minds have
stripped the gears.

* * * *

Errors to be dangerous must have a great deal
of truth mingled with them.

* * * *

Looking ahead is a good way to keep from
falling behind.

* * * *

Prejudice is a great time-saver; it enables one
to form opinions without getting the facts.

The Evils Of Partyism

A multitude of people in this country, and around the world, are tired of partyism. They have seen its divisive effects and the misery it leaves in its path. But these same people are exasperated because they do not know where to turn. On every hand they hear conflicting claims about soundness and the Lord's approval that range from faulty exegesis of the Bible to fakery in the field of the supposed



ROGER JACKSON

miraculous. After being repeatedly beguiled into joining a few of these groups, people tend to become defensive and rather reluctant to believe anyone.

The consequences of joining one of these humanly derived institutions or parties are extremely serious. One's soul literally hangs in the balance as well as his peace of mind and temporal happiness. Even to make the right choice is to cause some strife according to the Master's own words (Matthew 10:34). This would not be so if it were not for the rival institutions of men's devising. These institutions thrive because men preach that which is not to be found in the Bible, and build these parties around that teaching (Romans 16:17, 18; Matthew 15:9-15). Paul marked "seditions" ("parties") as one of the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-20). And yet, with all the problems of partyism, the Bible requires that we make the right decision (Ephesians 4:14). Then, it must be the case that God has given us enough simple, understandable information to avoid partyism and make the right choice.

Partyism in our confusing world can be avoided because Jesus said that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand (Mark 3:25). The correct division in the religious world is not a matter to be applauded by the masses, but a situation to be avoided and eliminated.

You do not have to be a part of any man's party in order to be a faithful Christian. Jesus told us what his will is in the matter in John 10:16: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." The "other sheep" of whom Jesus spoke were the Gentiles. The "one fold" is the church that you read about on the pages of the New Testament, also called the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 2:16-19; Colossians 1:18). It was the will of the Lord, and still is, that all his followers be one (John 17:20, 21). While so many men today are praying that this prayer of the Lord will be answered some day, it is a fact that it was answered in the first century. They came about many centuries later.

Concerning the church of the first century we learn that they were "... together, and had all things common" (Acts 2:44). Is that the situation today in the denominational world? Is that what we call "together?" "Denomination" means division. As long as one denomination exists on the face of the earth there will be division. Acts 2:47 expressly

states that the Lord adds every Christian to the church. "Which church" you ask? Well, how could it be any single one of the denominations since not a one of them existed? The church that has nothing to do with partyism is no part of denominationalism and goes far behind it for its origin. If you are one of those souls who is tired of partyism, you should know that it IS possible to find that church today and avoid partyism.

The search for the ancient congregation of God's people is not an easy one, but not because God has made it so. Men are to blame! Neither those who founded these parties, nor those whose livelihood is derived from their existence, will soon surrender. They have become professionals at defending their institutions. Paul described men like them as those who are self-serving and silver-tongued (Romans 16:18). While he said there is simplicity in Christ, he warned that the devil transforms himself into an angel of light in order to deceive people (II Corinthians 11:3, 11). Peter added that there were men even in his own lifetime who "wrested" (or, twisted) the Scriptures (II Peter 3:16). The great and expensive temples and cathedrals of our world do not exist because of some accident, but are monuments to the success of deceptive men.

The solution to partyism is a simple one, and yet it is by no means an easy one. It is the solution that has been proposed by the church of Christ as long as it has existed (Romans 16:16), because it is found on the pages of the Bible (II Timothy 3:16, 17). If we will be simple New Testament Christians to the exclusion of any and all party names, we will have taken the first step (Acts 11:26). That name is not only authorized in the Scriptures, but it has no divisive features. It is unlike the names attached to it by men, or worn as substitutes for it. It glorifies no man but Christ, no human system of theology at all and no party of man's genus. In the divided "Christian" world, are men feuding over the name "Christian?" or over party names? Then would it not go a long way to eliminate much of the problem if we eliminated one of the chief causes?

A second part of the solution to partyism is for all of us to be members of only one church. Before one gasps in unbelief that anyone would make such a proposal, just ask yourself how many churches you read about in the Bible (Matthew 16:18). When Paul

wrote to the church at Ephesus he wrote to only one and all the saints in Ephesus were in it (Ephesians 1:1). The same was true at Philippi (Philippians 1:1). If it is incredible (and it is not!) to think that all men can be members of one church today, and yet they were in the first century, who has changed man's thinking? When one obeys the gospel, the Lord takes care of his church membership (Acts 2:47). You don't have to worry about which church to join; God has taken the guesswork out of that. If the church of Christ identifies with that church, that is it to which you have been added. We confidently affirm that such is the case.

A third part of the solution to partyism is for all of us to worship one God and acknowledge one Messiah, Jesus Christ. We will never eliminate partyism as long as some seek the favor of Buddha, others are Hindus, and a third class engage in the occult. Partyism will live and thrive as long as Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy, or the Pope share a throne of authority in men's hearts. The Bible makes no room for any of these, from the giving of the ten commandments to Jesus' pronouncement, "All authority hath been given to me in heaven and on earth . . ." (Matthew 28:18). It is he who has given us the only confession of faith, the Bible (John 16:13-15), and sealed it with the warning not to add to or take from it (Revelation 22:18, 19). In its pages is not only the word of life, but the one form of church government that pleases God (Philippians 1:1; Acts 14:23).

Finally, we suggest that partyism can be avoided if we expel those, and only those, from our fellowship who break divine law and refuse to repent (II Thessalonians 3:6-11). We have no right to devise laws that men are to bow to, and limit our fellowship only to those who submit to our wills. Neither must we accept those who violate the Divine will (II John 9-11). Those are the limits prescribed in the Bible.

There is no need for you to be a member of any party. If you are among those good souls who deplore partyism, take new courage! You don't have to be a part of it. The churches of Christ solicit your earnest investigation. We humbly ask that you join hands with us on the Bible, and the Bible alone, in our efforts to be simple New Testament Christians.

—940 Old Wood Rd., Oxford, AL 36203.

A Payday For Sin

Raymond Allen Hagood

There is, on the part of some, a type of thinking which excludes the possibility of punishment for the sins one commits. It is as if some believe that they can sin with impunity. While this rationale is extremely comforting, it has no support from the scriptures. In fact, the Bible teaches exactly the opposite.

Paul has this to say concerning the matter: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

The inspired writer assures us that we are not to deceive ourselves into believing that there is not a payday for sin. Paul says that we reap what we sow. If then we have sown the seeds of sin, we will also reap the perdition of sin. King David discovered this great truth

in the long ago (II Samuel 11 through 18).

After David had sinned with Bathsheba and after he had brought about the death of Uriah (Bathsheba's husband) to cover up his sin, he took Bathsheba as his own wife. David perhaps thought, at least at that point in his life, that he could commit adultery and murder with full exemption from any penalty or payment for sin. He soon learned that such thinking is the grossest kind of folly.

God sent Nathan the prophet unto David. Nathan told the king a story of two men in one city. One of the men was rich and the other, very poor. The rich man had vast flocks and herds; the poor man had but one little ewe lamb. He viewed the house of the rich

Continued On Page 4

What Are The Rules?

"What are the rules?" That was always the first question that was asked whenever we would start one of our childhood games. Such a query stemmed from the blessing of having parents that demanded honesty and fair play. It was of utmost importance that the rules be clearly stated at the beginning for harmonious play and the correct and quick settlement of any dispute.



Bobby Liddell

Occasionally, there would be one who, because of pride or bad sportsmanship, would want to ignore the rules, or even worse, to change the rules in the middle of the game. Such an attitude always brought problems, and when the offending party was reminded of the rules, often there would be an angry outburst, or tears and the threat of not coming to play anymore.

"What are the rules?" Should that not be the first question that man asks about life? A clear understanding of the rules would prevent many problems, and would settle others. To God man must go with the question, "What are the rules?" God replies by directing man to hear the word of the Lord (Luke 11:28), keep his commandments (I John 5:3), and thus receive the promise of victory (I John 5:4). The rules of life are clear, understandable, and unchangeable. They have even been written down that man might not be unwise, but upon reading might understand what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17; 3:3, 4).

Sadly, some folks, for one reason or another, want to ignore the rules of life or change them in the middle of the game. Not only those outside of Christ, but saints, even bishops, deacons, and gospel preachers, fall to this temptation. The world ignores God's rule that demands obedience in order to obtain eternal life (Hebrews 5:8, 9). Some disciples who have lived faithfully for many years in accordance with God's rule (Galatians 6:16), have a loved one involved in an unscriptural divorce and remarriage: and to them, that calls for a change in the rules. An elder or an eldership, under pressure (whether real or imagined), decides social drinking, dancing, and such like are all right, and that the strict morality demanded by God's rule is out of date. A gospel preacher preaches fervently and faithfully against immodesty for many years in keeping with God's rule (I Timothy 2:9), until his daughter reaches the teen years; and suddenly there is a call for a change in the rules.

"What are the rules?" Equally important, "Who makes the rules?" The New Testament of Christ is the rulebook of life (John 6:68), and God is its author (Hebrews 1:1, 2). The rules have not changed since given nearly two thousand years ago, and they will not change so long as this earth stands (Matthew 24:35). By them, our lives shall be judged (John 12:48), and by them, we must live if we shall live.

All accountable ones have broken the rules, for "all have sinned" (Romans 3:23). What shall be our attitude when confronted with that transgression? Shall we become angry? Shall

we feel offended and mistreated? Shall we leave to look for someone with the same disregard for the rules as we? Or, shall we know the peace and harmony that comes with adherence to the will of God, living by his

rules?

As we contemplate life, should not the very FIRST question we ask be, "What are the rules?"

—P.O. Box 118 Parrish, AL 35580.

A New Wrinkle

Ray Hawk

A new "wrinkle?" Are we talking about growing old? No. There are some who have introduced a new way of trying to justify mechanical instruments of music in the worship of the New Testament church.

These brethren agree that mechanical instruments of music are NOT found in the New Testament. They agree that the church in the first century used ONLY vocal singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). They agree that mechanical instruments of music were NOT USED FOR SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS AFTER the first century. They agree that mechanical instruments of music are an ADDITION to the worship; and that additions are FORBIDDEN by the Lord (Revelation 22:18, 19; II John 9). They will tell you mechanical instruments of music are WRONG, and that they cannot use them in good conscience. HOWEVER, they do not believe there are sufficient grounds to make the practice a test of fellowship — in spite of the above!

Here is their argument: All of us sin. No one is sinlessly perfect. All depend upon God's GRACE to save. Since those brethren who use mechanical instruments of music are honest and sincere in their use of them, God's grace will cover their imperfect practice, just as his grace will cover our imperfect ways. Even the Corinthian church is used to illustrate this new wrinkle. We are told these brethren had all kinds of sin, yet Paul did not withdraw from them. This may be true; but he DID NOT tell them to REMAIN in their error! In fact, he told the brethren to withdraw from one man who was living with his father's wife, and from those who were practicing several other categories of sin (I Corinthians 5:1-11). This they did (II Corinthians 2:5-11). He also instructed

them concerning their error, and how to get out of it. One may not remain in sin, continue to practice it, and expect God's favor (grace) — unless he believes in the doctrine of once saved, always saved! I do not (I Corinthians 10:12).

What bothers me about this new wrinkle is that brethren who ADMIT that mechanical instruments of music are an ADDITION to the word of God, are NOT AUTHORIZED by scripture, are FOREIGN to New Testament teaching, and A SIN for us to practice — are trying to JUSTIFY it for others! Those who are using it are not giving it up. They think WE are the weaker brethren and that we need to give up our OBJECTIONS to the practice, and allow them to use their mechanical instruments.

Conclusion

Mechanical instruments of music were used under Old Testament worship (Psalms 150). They were not carried over into New Testament worship. God's authorized instrument on which to make melody today is the human heart (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). To ADD any other KIND is to ADD to the word of God, and to be guilty of preaching another gospel (Galatians 1:6-9). To continue in a practice that is FORBIDDEN by the Lord is to place oneself in a position of being cut off from God's fellowship (II John 9). Are those who are our brethren who use mechanical instruments of music in worship, who try to justify their practice, who are unwilling to give it up for the sake of unity, and who insist that we stop objecting to their unscriptural practice, really trying to remain in God's grace?

—39 Webb Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

A Payday For Sin

Continued from page 3

man. The rich man wished to feed the traveller, but instead of taking one of his many lambs, he went and stole the poor man's only ewe lamb and killed it for the wayfarer.

When David heard this story, his sense of equity was stirred, and he said unto Nathan: "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity" (II Samuel 12:5-6).

Nathan responded to David's pronouncement of penalty by saying, "Thou art the man" (II Samuel 12:7). David, who had been beside himself for so long, was now awakened to the fact that he was the rich man who had many wives and yet who had entered into a poor man's house and stolen the only wife the poor man had.

David repented of his sin (Psalms 51), and the Lord put away his sin so that he would not die. That putting away, however, did not set aside the immutable law of God that we reap what we sow. David had sown grievous sin, and now the payday had come. Nathan told David that the sword would never depart from his house. His own family would fight

and kill each other. He was also told that the baby born of Bathsheba would die. Further, he was informed that one of his own house would lie with David's wives and that all Israel would know of the shameful deed.

David learned that day that there is truly a payday for sin. Before this tragic episode was over, a baby died; Tamar, David's daughter, was shamed for life; Absalom, David's son, killed his brother Amnon; Absalom incited an insurrection against his father David; and, finally, Absalom was killed by the forces of David.

Truly David learned that there is a payday for sin when news came to him that Absalom, the son he loved so dearly, had been killed. David cried, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (II Samuel 18:33).

We would prosper if we could be convinced that, even though sin promises great things, it can only bring heartache and tragedy to all our lives. Truly, there is no such thing as sinning with impunity.

—Rt. 1, Box 110, Indian Mound, TN 37079.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of



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

—Acts 26:25

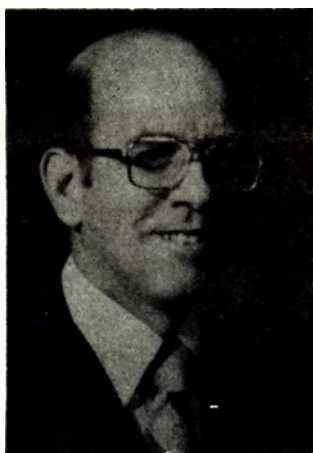
VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1985

NUMBER 49

Our Declining Growth-Rate "Frustration"

Many of us have been distressed the last few years at the subsiding growth rate of the Lord's church. A few years back we enjoyed the acclaim of statisticians that we were one of the fastest growing religious groups in the United States! Now our rank in rate of growth is too low to be considered noteworthy. Many gospel preachers, including myself, can remember both some of



Joe E. Galloway

our past located works, and some of our gospel meetings, when we baptized large numbers of people in a short period of time. Few see this happen today, although we are preaching the same gospel and are "knocking doors" just as diligently as we did in the past. All want to see more souls added to the Lord! But what is the problem?

Elders, preachers, and congregations are "frustrated." We reason that someone must be at fault. Sometimes this has caused congregations to become discontent with their eldership. Some think that the elders must be at fault, and should be replaced. We are aware also of more and more gospel preachers who are "moved on" by elderships who seem to think that lack of substantial growth *must* be the preacher's fault! Perhaps most of the time nothing is solved (or bettered!) by either the change of elders, or of preachers. In fact, this may only add to the problem due to the disruption it always causes in a local congregation.

Dissatisfaction because of our decreased rate of growth has also resulted in some problems in doctrine, and in practice. Undoubtedly, one reason so many congregations are turning to increased entertainment and social-oriented emphases, is to draw and hold larger numbers. The idea of "discipling" a select

number of "totally committed" people, which has resulted in a cult-type life-control of adherents, has undoubtedly come (at least in part) from a desire to see faster numerical growth. So also has the idea of putting one eldership over several "satellite" congregations. Attempts to broaden our lines of fellowship to include those divorced and remarried without scriptural cause, and those who worship with the instrument, are probably (at least, in part) prompted by the desire to see numerical growth. Too many seem to be sold on the pragmatic line of "if it works, it is all right!" or, "The end justifies the means!" That it is never right to "do evil, that good may come" (Romans 3:8) should be understood by us all. One does evil when he ignores and acts without Bible authority (Colossians 3:17; II John 9).

Some Incorrect Reasoning

At times we hear some say that if we do our part correctly, there always will be increase. I suggest that such is not necessarily so! Was the apostle Paul remiss in doing his best when the Jews spoke against, contradicted, and blasphemed the gospel he taught them in Acts 13:15? What about those who mocked at his teaching at Athens (Acts 17:32)? or Felix (Acts 24:25)? or king Agrippa (Acts 26:28)? Was the lack of increase due to Paul's not teaching as well as he had on other occasions (e.g. Corinth, Acts 18:8) when "many" were obedient?

Someone may respond, "Doesn't the Bible teach that if we plant and water sufficiently, the increase will always come? (I Corinthians 3:6)" We reply, "No; it does not!" In this scripture the apostle was pointing out the need to follow God instead of the teacher of the gospel. He was showing that he and Apollos were merely "planters" and "waterers" as they taught the gospel; it was God who gave the increase. So, the lesson was that God should be the one glorified and followed, not Paul or Apollos. This scripture does not guarantee increase when we plant and water. In fact it only discusses two of the three parts involved in conversion: God's part, and the part of the teacher. It does not discuss

the part the one who is being taught has to perform before the increase comes. This is a crucial part, for the one who is taught has free-will. He must *choose* to believe and obey if increase is to result.

The parable of the sower, the seed, and the soils (Luke 8) discusses all three essential elements. The sower is the teacher of the gospel. "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). This is God's part. It has the power to save (Romans 1:16; James 1:21). Yet this very parable shows that even when the seed is faithfully sown it will not result in increase unless the proper "ground" (or soil) conditions are present. (1) The wayside ground was too hard for the seed to penetrate. Some minds are so hardened that God's word will make little impression on them! (2) The rocky ground allowed no depth of root to hold the plant that resulted when some of the seed rapidly sprouted. Some people will not grow past initial obedience, so will fall away when temptation comes -- regardless of how well the teacher performs his duty of teaching them! (3) The plants that came up in the thorny ground were ultimately choked out. Even though one faithfully preaches the gospel, some will let the cares, riches, and pleasures of this life finally turn them away from faithfulness and usefulness! Only those with an "honest and good" heart will finally bring increase. It takes all three: (1) God's powerful word, (2) the faithful preaching of it, and (3) the proper response to it, to bring increase and growth!

There are times and places when a larger percentage of those who are lost are good material for conversion and faithfulness. We have noticed this in our mission work in other countries: In some countries, the masses of the people have been easily taught and baptized by the hundreds; in others, just as hard work has been done and just as faithful a presentation has been made of the gospel -- but very few Christians have resulted. Likewise, in our country there have been times (such as the period following World War II)

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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 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501

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An Urgent Need

Public education is morally decadent. The situation is frightening. The tidal wave of humanism is sweeping over secular education, leaving a trail of broken and ravaged minds in its wake. Belief in evolution is extolled as an intellectual virtue. Drinking, dancing, drugs and profanity are inherent modes of conduct in the public school system. Sex is treated as an animalistic activity, void of moral restrictions. God and the Bible have been voted out except for purposes of ridicule or derision. There are exceptions in both faculty and students, but they are few and far between.



Frank Chesser

Christian education is not perfect, but it is superior to public education as to defy comparison. Only those who have tasted of both worlds can testify to the truthfulness of this statement. Georgia Christian School, (formerly Dasher Bible School) located in Dasher, Georgia, five miles south of Valdosta, is a prime example of the beauty and value of Christian education. This school is not a "Johnny-come-lately" effort to escape the problems of integration. Established in 1914, it is 72 years old, with students from kindergarten through the 12th grade.

This school is unique in that it also serves as a boarding school for high school students. Over the years, many of the dormitory students have been non-Christians from extremely negative home environments. One of our missionaries in Jerusalem, Joseph Shulam, was converted while attending school here as a dormitory student. Presently, there are twenty-one students in the dormitories, from

Continued on page 3



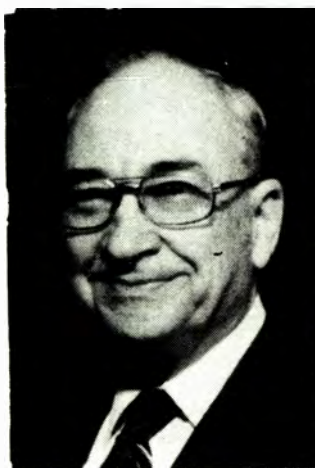
The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Friday Night Classes Set In Jasper

For many years my father conducted a "Friday Night Class." Many came from great distances to benefit from the class and to receive the outlines he gave out. Each year for more than thirty years at least one who attended this class from the Jasper area began preaching. Many who were already preaching were encouraged to keep up the good work. It is impossible to recall the names of all who attended what has been called by some the 'Gus Nichols School of Preaching,' but they doubtless number into the hundreds.

That those who already preach should continue to study is evident from Paul's instructions to the young preacher Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). To the same evangelist he wrote: "The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2).



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

For three months (January 3 - March 28, 1986) the Sixth Avenue church invites all to attend such a class again. Few subjects have been neglected or misunderstood more than the subject of the Holy Spirit and his work. Therefore I propose that this first class shall concentrate on this topic. I have a series of charts on The Holy Spirit which were designed by my father. An outline of one of these will be presented each class night until all are covered.

Also the same nights brother W. Gaddys Roy will teach a class on The Holy Spirit. He studied with my father on this subject, and has many debate notes dealing with various aspects of the topic. Brother Roy (who married the sister of brother Rex A. Turner, Sr.) has taught in the extension classes offered by Alabama Christian School of Religion, and those who wish to earn college credit through this class may do so. The church offers the course free to any who wish to take it simply to learn; but naturally those who want college credit will be required by ACSR to register and pay tuition, as for any college course.

All -- both men and women; but especially preachers, elders, and other church leaders-- within driving distance of Jasper are invited to these Friday night classes beginning January 3, 1986, The two classes (combined) will last from 7:00 till 9:30 p.m. each Friday night.

A Class On The Holy Spirit At Sixth Avenue In Jasper

W. Gaddys Roy

"The Holy Spirit" will be studied in a class at the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper beginning Friday night, January 3, 1986, and continuing about ten weeks.

For college credit, the pre-registration fee is \$50.00. If you wait until the classes start, registration will be \$70.00; and the late registration fee will be \$85.00. All registration (for college credit) will be done by phone through the Alabama Christian School of Religion. The toll-free number for Alabama residents is 1-800-351-4040. Those living outside Alabama should call 1-800-351-3939.

The course will consist of two parts: in the first part we will study the identity of the Holy Spirit, his work, Holy Spirit baptism, the laying on of the apostles' hands, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Part two will consist of about one hundred arguments which are made by those who claim that Holy Spirit BAPTISM is for us today, and Bible answers to those false arguments will be

given.

Every one is invited to attend these sessions at 7 p.m. each Friday night, whether for your own private edification, or for college credit.

—Rt. 3, Box 680, Dora, AL 35062.

Short Sermons

Think before you act; think twice before you speak.

Folks who never change their minds have stripped the gears.

The right angle to approach a difficult proposition is the try-angle.

If you marry a child of the devil, you are nearly certain to have trouble with your father-in-law.

An Urgent Need

Continued From Page 2

Japan to California to New York to Miami.

This school is a virtual mission field. There have been some 65 converts over the past two years alone. It has served as a real training ground for preachers and missionaries for three-quarters-of-a-century. There are men and women, serving in every possible capacity throughout the brotherhood, whose present course commenced under the influence of Georgia Christian. The present potential of this school is greater than ever before. Heavy emphasis is being placed on spiritual and academic matters. Every student receives an hour of Bible class instruction each school day.

Tragically, all of this will soon come to an end if sufficient monies are not raised to meet the school's present financial crisis. The school must raise \$250,000 by December 31 of this year in order to remain open. It must raise an additional \$235,000 by June of 1986 or it will have to close. The high inflation rate of the early 1980's set the stage for the school's present condition. Financial figures were in the black at the close of 1980 with a surplus of \$51,000. However, the high inflation years witnessed a tripling of operational expenses and a diminishing of contributions. Donations plummeted from a high of \$226,000 in 1980 to a low of \$79,000 in 1984. Thus, the present crisis.

Will you not respond to this great and worthy need? The board of directors have personally borrowed to the limit of their financial ability. The average salary of the faculty is less than \$14,000 per year. And yet every teacher has agreed to return one month's salary back to the school in order to assure its continued operation. If this were just a "reading, writing and arithmetic" matter, there would be no justification for this plea. However, the contribution that this school has made to the cause of Christ over the past 72 years is in-

valuable. It cannot die. It must not die. With your help, it will not die. Surely, this great brotherhood can match the Oral Robertses of the world who can raise a million dollars with one single plea. Will you not help? Send

your tax-deductible contribution to: Georgia Christian School, Route 2, Box 310, Valdosta, Georgia 31601.

—Evangelist, Dasher Church of Christ, Rt. 2, Valdosta, GA 31601.

Georgia Christian School

Dear Editor,

Our financial problems at Georgia Christian School are very critical. We are facing the possibility of closing this great school that has served so well for over 70 years.

To save this great work we are appealing to Christians all over the nation for help. Many local parents, preachers, business leaders are all helping in whatever way they can. Brother Frank

Chesser has prepared the enclosed article hoping you will publish it in order that our brotherhood might be aware of our problems.

Your usual help and cooperation will be appreciated.

In Christ,

Carl W. Walker

President

Georgia Christian School

CQ CQ CQ All Christian Hams DE NW4L

Ray Hawk, NW4L

If you are a newly-licensed amateur radio operator or you do not have your information in the 1985 Christian Callbook, please send me your call, license classification, name, and address. Also include whether you have a phone patch. If you would like a copy of the 1985 Callbook, please include \$1.00 to help defray the expense of printing and mailing. If you know of hams who are not in the 1985 book, please send their infor-

mation. We will be sending the 1986 book out after the first of the year.

The Sunset Net meets each Saturday at 1600 GMT on 21.395 MHz. KC2PZ, Dale and KE5IZ/PJ3, Gary are our Net Control Operators. If the band is dead on 15 meters, we try at 1615 GMT on 14.340 MHz. Join us if you can.

—39 Webb Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.

Our Declining Growth-Rate "Frustration"

Continued From Page 1

Our Need

If we are correct in suggesting that much of the problem in the "slowdown" in our numerical growth is due to the lack of receptiveness of those being taught, then let us (1) quit blaming the sowers -- the ones faithfully working; (2) quit blaming the seed -- the gospel; and (3) start trying harder to locate and help prepare the proper soil conditions -- honest and good hearts.

To keep changing the teachers of the word does not help if those being used are faithfully teaching the gospel. Changing our message and emphasis to meet the desires of the hearers, will not change their hearts or lives, as is needed. The gospel as God gave it is sufficient for all of man's spiritual needs. To *change* it is to *pervert* (Galatians 1:6-10) and makes it worthless. We may have more attending our services, and more who go through the action of being "baptized" if we can attract them by appealing to their worldly interests; but what have we accomplished? Such are not converted *to Christ!* Not only are they not being helped, spiritually, but we are weakening ourselves as we try to accommodate or adapt the gospel to their level

of acceptance!

There are still honest, truth-seeking souls who can be converted to Christ! Their percentage may be lower than previously, so we may need to do more searching, more advertising, and more teaching than we once did to win such souls to Christ; but the results will be worth the extra cost and effort! We may need to utilize other methods of gaining good contacts to teach. We should use the best methods possible to make the gospel message understandable, interesting, and challenging to those we teach. Let us strengthen our present members, and try to involve more of them in teaching their acquaintances, or in arranging for them to be taught by others. Before all we should live lives that will "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" (Titus 2:10).

Having done all this, we need to accept the fact that it is our job to faithfully teach the gospel. God does not require us to produce the responses. "God gave the increase" (I Corinthians 3:6). His gospel has the power to save (James 1:21). The sinner must, ultimately, make the decisive choice!

—218 Pinecrest Dr., Greeneville, TN 37743.

when growth came rapidly; but there have been times when growth has been much slower. Also there are areas in our country where growth has come much easier.

Why this extreme variation in results at various times and places? The answer is not always that the teachers are not doing as effective a job as before, or as they did in other places. Often the answer is in the "soil" -- in the sinners who need the gospel. Social and cultural conditions often cause many not to be as receptive as those in other places, or at other times. For example, a person who is "well off" materially, has a challenging job, and who enjoys many of the available pleasures in society, may be much more difficult to interest in religious matters, than one who has to work long hours to provide even the necessities of life for his family -- one who has little time for the pleasures and pleasures of society. This should not surprise us when we read in the beatitudes the type people who are the good prospects for the kingdom. These are "the poor in spirit," "they that mourn," "the meek," "they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," etc.

Free Nursery (Infants — 5 yr. olds) Available At All Times



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THE FORT WORTH LECTURES

Theme: "EXEGETICAL STUDIES OF GREAT BIBLE THEMES"

January 12 - 16, 1986

Sunday, January 12

TIME	SUBJECT	SPEAKER
9:00 a.m.	"My People Are Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge" (Hosea 4:6)	Eddie Whitten
10:00 a.m.	"Singing Redemption's Song"	Dowell Flatt
5:00 p.m.	"The Beautiful Place Called Heaven"	W.B. West
6:00 p.m.	"Herein Is Love"	David Roper
7:00 p.m.	"By Grace Have Ye Been Saved"	Maxie Boren

BOOKS & TAPES

Lectures will be put into book form and will be available for purchase during the lectureship.
Cassette recordings will be made of each lecture and may be purchased immediately.

MEALS

One meal per day will be served at the meetings at a nominal cost.

LEADERSHIP DINNER

For all elders, preachers, deacons, Bible School teachers, and their wives — Tuesday, 8:00 p.m. — Robert Taylor — speaker.

DISPLAYS

Publishers, authors, dealers, children's houses, Christian schools, homes for aged, etc. located in the meetinghouse.

Monday, January 13

TIME	SUBJECT	SPEAKER
9:00 a.m.	"Church Discipline: A Must or A Mistake"	Walter Buchanan
10:00 a.m.	"Truth In Doctrine (Galatians 1:6-10)"	Dub McClish
11:00 a.m.	"The Impact of the Kingdom of Heaven In the Lives of Men"	Rusty Peterman
11:00 a.m.	"The Influence of Biblical Women In Shaping the Nation"	Pat Suba
12:00 noon	"The Little Man of the Eye"	Hugo McCord
1:30 p.m.	"Now The Works of the Flesh ... Are These (Galatians 5:19-21)"	Jerry Moffitt
2:30 p.m.	"Place of Suffering in the Life of the Christian"	Bill Jones
3:30 p.m.	OPEN FORUM	Hugo McCord
4:30 p.m.	Evening Break	
6:00 p.m.	Singing	
7:00 p.m.	"The Weak and the Strong (Romans 14)"	Robert Taylor, Jr.
8:00 p.m.	"Jesus and Marriage and Matthew 19:3-9"	Tommy Hicks

Tuesday, January 14

TIME	SUBJECT	SPEAKER
9:00 a.m.	"The Courage of Conviction (Daniel 1:8)"	Don Simpson
10:00 a.m.	"Cautions Concerning Discipleship"	Hugo McCord
11:00 a.m.	"This Present Distress"	Norman Gipson
11:00 a.m.	"The Influence of Biblical Women In Strengthening the Church"	Elaine VanSteenberg
12:00 noon	"Honor To Whom Honor" Luncheon (Joe Malone)	
1:30 p.m.	"The Reality of Future Punishment"	Joe Gilmore
2:30 p.m.	"Faith is the Substance"	Dick Sztanyo
3:30 p.m.	OPEN FORUM	Robert Taylor
4:30 p.m.	Evening Break	
5:00 p.m.	"The Need for Proper Hermeneutics in Leadership"	Robert Taylor
7:00 p.m.	"The New Anti-Jam"	Garland Elkins
8:00 p.m.	"Our Great Loving and Righteous God"	Tom Warren

SPECIAL CLASSES FOR LADIES

Theme: "THE INFLUENCE OF BIBLICAL WOMEN" 11:00 - 12:00 Daily

TIME	SUBJECT	SPEAKER
11:00 a.m.	"The Influence of Biblical Women In Shaping The Nation"	Pat Suba
11:00 a.m.	"The Influence of Biblical Women In Strengthening the Church"	Elaine VanSteenberg
11:00 a.m.	"The Influence of Biblical Women In Guiding the Home"	Sunny Workman
11:00 a.m.	"The Influence of Biblical Women In Assuring the Future"	Pat Surles

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1987 Lectureship Theme "QUESTIONS MEN ASK ABOUT GOD" January 11-15, 1987

Wednesday, January 15

TIME	SUBJECT	SPEAKER
9:00 a.m.	"The Deity of Christ (Pre-incarnate, Carnate, and Glorified States)"	Max Miller
10:00 a.m.	"Glorifying God Through the Restoration Plea (Haggai 1:8)"	James Willcutt
11:00 a.m.	"And So Shall All Israel Be Saved (Romans 11:26)"	Furman Kearley
11:00 a.m.	"The Influence of Biblical Women in Guiding the Home"	Sunny Workman
12:00 noon	"Some Things I Have Learned After 40 Years Of Preaching"	J.T. Marlin
1:30 p.m.	"Thou Shalt Worship the Lord Thy God" (Matthew 4:10)	Gary Workman
2:30 p.m.	"God Wrote A Book (Jeremiah 36)"	Bill Cline
3:30 p.m.	OPEN FORUM	Johnny Ramsey
4:30 p.m.	Evening Break	
6:00 p.m.	Singing	
7:00 p.m.	"The Office of Elder — Should It Be a Problem?"	Bill Jackson
8:00 p.m.	"Eternal Security"	Johnny Ramsey

Thursday, January 16

TIME	SUBJECT	SPEAKER
9:00 a.m.	"The Awesomeness of Justification (Romans 3)"	John Waddey
10:00 a.m.	"Heirs of the Promise (Galatians 3:29)"	Perry Hall
11:00 a.m.	"The Triumph of Obedience (Hebrews 5:9)"	Tom Gaumer
11:00 a.m.	"The Influence of Biblical Women In Assuring the Future"	Pat Surles
12:00 noon	"Humorous Things That Have Happened To Me As A Preacher"	
1:30 p.m.	"How Faith Deals With Unbelief"	Hershel Dyer
2:30 p.m.	"The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration"	Roy Deaver
3:30 p.m.	OPEN FORUM	Roy Lanier, Jr.
4:30 p.m.	Evening Break	
6:00 p.m.	Singing	
7:00 p.m.	"Thy Kingdom Come"	Roy Lanier, Jr.
8:00 p.m.	"The Perfect Law of Liberty (James 1:25)"	Bobby Duncan

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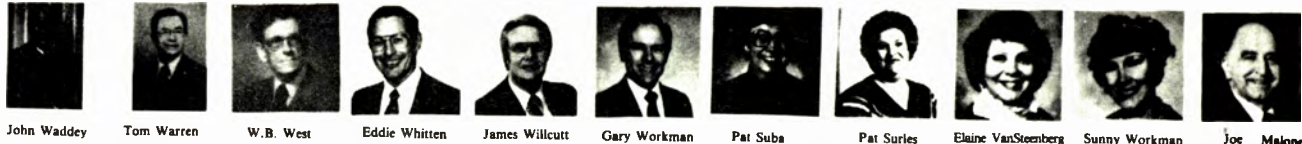
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Words of Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

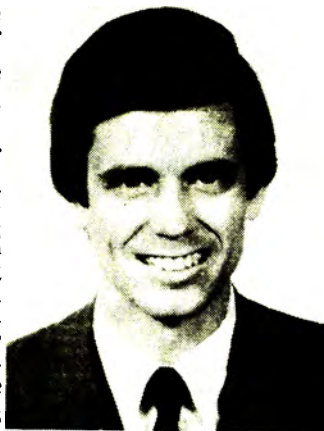
VOLUME 22

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1985

NUMBER 50

Galatians: Chapter I

Verse 1. Paul introduced himself at the very beginning of every letter he wrote (unless one counts Hebrews to be his), as was the custom of that day. In Philipians, I and II Thessalonians, and Philemon, he does not mention his apostleship as an identifying characteristic. In all his other writings, he identifies himself as an apostle; but Galatians contains



Gary C. Hampton

his strongest defense of that truth in its opening words. Just as surely as Peter and the others were called by Christ, Paul was called by the resurrected Lord, and was sent to preach the gospel of peace to the Gentiles (Acts 26:15-18). His commission came from the Lord, and not from men, as some of the false teachers may have claimed. One main issue of the book is thus set forth in the first verse: the proof of Paul's apostleship.

Verse 2. We do not know who the brethren with Paul were. We do note there are no words of praise for these churches, which is unlike Paul's other writings.

Verse 3. Despite the fact that he has no words of praise for them, Paul still prays that God's blessings and peace will be upon them. Of course, we realize that one must walk in the light for these to be his (I John 1:7; II John 9).

Verse 4. The second main issue of the book is now set forth, which is God's plan to save man in Christ. The Galatians were turning to the law of Moses as a source of salvation, but God's will had been that Jesus should come and offer himself as a sacrifice for many (Romans 5:6-8; Matthew 20:28; I Timothy 2:6). Coffman says the word *deliver* "suggests rescue from a state of utter helplessness." Paul says the world is evil because

the people of it are largely dominated by the evil one, Satan (I John 5:19). A Christian is delivered from the kingdom of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's Son (Colossians 1:13).

Verse 5. Having mentioned God's great plan to save men, the apostle stops to give him the praise he is due.

Verse 6. The word "marvel" carries with it the idea of wonder, and even of admiration. This could be like a man staring in wonder at a tornado, or great fire, about to descend upon him. The object of his amazement was their quick desertion of the gospel, for another so-called gospel. This quickness may merely be in terms of action taken without proper thought, or it may be in regard to the time elapsed since their conversion or Paul's departure. It is God who calls us into the grace of Christ (Romans 8:28-30; I Corinthians 1:9; I Thessalonians 1:12-13; John 6:44-45).

Verse 7. Actually, there is but one gospel, or "good news." The false teachers wanted to "trouble," which McGarvey says has the force of the word revolutionize, them. They said that one could not be saved by Christ without doing the works of the law of Moses. Thus, they made Christ's sacrifice worthless (5:1-2) and corrupted the true gospel. There is a pattern (form) of sound words and one must diligently study the word of truth to be able to rightly divide it (II Timothy 1:13; 2:15). This verse makes it clear that all divisions in the religious world are brought on by twisting and changing the truth.

Verse 8. Even though Paul had been the one to first deliver the gospel unto them, they needed to know that to preach something contrary to that originally preached would make him worthy of the greatest condemnation. The angels had been God's messengers in the past; but now God's spokesman is his Son, and we must listen only to his message (Hebrews 1:1-2; 2:1-3). The Galatians had, at first, received Paul as an angel of God and may have been doing something similar with the false teachers (4:14). Remember: Satan

can make himself appear as an angel of light (II Corinthians 11:14). Also, when Peter rebuked Christ for speaking of the death he must die, Jesus said, "Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men" (Mark 8:27-32). The word "accursed" means "devoted to the direst woes" (Thayer). This would have to be more than being disfellowshipped, or excommunicated, as some have suggested, as such would have little effect upon angels.

Verse 9. It would not matter what office or former accomplishments a man might claim, preaching another gospel should, and will, call down destruction upon him (compare Matthew 7:21-23). In this verse and the preceding one, Paul makes it clear that this danger of teaching a false gospel is one that he feared and kept before himself that he might avoid it (James 3:1). This verse makes it clear that the Judaizers had added circumcision and other requirements of Moses' law to God's great plan to save man, and had thus called down God's wrath upon themselves.

Verse 10. Evidently some had accused Paul of adjusting his preaching to suit the audience. Lipscomb says, "in proof of this accusation they could point to the circumcision of Timothy as an effort to gain Jewish favor, and to his repudiation of the law as an attempt to conciliate the Gentiles, in admitting them to salvation in Christ without circumcision." Paul asks them whose favor he was now seeking: man's? or God's? If it were true of his former preaching that he sought only to please the audience, why was he taking such an unpopular stand now? The problem is that one cannot seek man's favor, and God's at the same time (Matthew 6:5; John 5:44). Paul admits that he had tried to please men and God at the same time, which is an obvious reference to his life as a Pharisee. It was proven that one cannot please men and God at the same time when Paul was converted.

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 26:35

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Apostasy

John Calvin, the fiery Swiss reformer of the sixteenth century died on May 27, 1564. His most famous work was the publication of the "Institutions of the Christian Religion." In this manual he set forth some of the most controversial doctrines in the history of Christendom. Today, more than four centuries later, many people are still following some of his doctrines.



Roy Fuller

Unaware of their true origin, many believe them to be ordained of God. Such is his doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy.

"Calvin asserted that God had from the beginning foreordained all things that should come to pass. Absolute predestination was the divine program of human history, involving a decree of ELECTION of certain people unto salvation, and a decree of REPROBATION for others unto eternal damnation. This was the way Calvin understood the teaching of the Bible. He admitted that this was a horrible decree, but the will of God is the highest rule of justice; so that what he wills must be considered just, for this very reason, because he wills it. The elect were made willing to be saved by God's grace which was irresistible. They were regenerated by the Holy Spirit and ONCE SAVED, ALWAYS SAVED. The saved ones could not finally fall away from a state of grace . . ." (History of the Christian Religion, P. 269, Thomas Nelson and Sons Pub. 1958).

There is no clearer evidence than the record of the Churches of Galatia that one who has been converted to Christ and baptized into Christ -- a true child of God -- can be turned

Continued on page 3

Sodom: 1985 Style

Shades of Sodom! So much is being said about homosexuality these days taht it seems it is fast becoming an obsession with our nation. Who could have believed it? But the most surprising thing is, how many think there is nothing wrong with it! I have heard people, all the way from prominent denominational preachers, to the man in the market place, declaring that it is an innocent practice. The fast-developing philosophy is that "nothing is wrong so long as no one gets hurt." With all due respect to the reasoning of man, it might be well to open the Book, and see what God says about it.



W. T. Hamilton

Of course, there are those who say it is not mentioned in the Bible. They have not done their homework well. They are using a version (even though a good one) which was made 374 years ago. At that time, the word "homosexual" was not in use. Today it is a household word. However, the *idea* was present then and is expressed in accurate language in the King James Version. For those who are looking for the word itself, or the most modern description of this ancient sin, we give the following quotations from the more recent versions:

"You shall not lie with a man as with a woman; that is an abomination" (Leviticus

18:22, New English Bible).

"If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination" (Leviticus 20:15, Revised Standard Version).

"Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another . . . even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perverseness" (Romans 1:24-27, New International Version).

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God" (I Corinthians 6:9-10, Revised Standard Version).

" . . . for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine" (I Timothy 1:9-10, New American Standard Version).

I know of no way to make these Scriptures plainer. Nor are they the only ones which condemn such perversion. But these are adequate to establish the Bible teaching on this subject.

When God speaks, it is time for man to listen.
—16026 Diana Lane, Houston, TX 77062.

Peleg

Bob Duncan

In recording the descendants of Noah, Genesis 10:25 says, "And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided . . ." The Hebrew word which is here rendered "Peleg" means division, and this verse makes clear that the name was given this son of Eber because it was in his days that division occurred. It is not clear whether he was given this name prophetically at birth, or whether it was given to him after the division occurred. The division under consideration is, without doubt, that recorded in the very next chapter when their languages were confused at the tower of Babel.

It strikes me that there were many other people living on the earth and working in connection with the tower of Babel when this division occurred, but Peleg is the only name mentioned in any way with that division. If this man's name was attached to him after the division occurred, and others were not given this same name, there must have been some reason. Could it be that he was the leader in doing the thing they were doing which caused the Lord to confuse their tongues? True, many others were also very obviously involved, but when something of a concerted effort like building a tower takes place, there has to be a leader. Unfortunately thousands of good people who will not stand for what is right

can be led into sin by one person who will stand for what is wrong.

The world has never recovered from the division of tongues which took place in the days of Peleg, though thousands of years have come and gone. That is the nature of division. When division occurs among God's people today, there is usually never a complete recovery. Though the names of those associated with the division may be largely forgotten, like the name of Peleg, the division and the fruits of it will continue as long as the world stands.

Peleg is mentioned in no other connection in the Bible. If he ever did anything else, good or bad, the Bible does not mention it. He is in the lineage of Christ, but the only other thing we know about him is that he is identified with the division which took place at the tower of Babel. Shakespeare had Mark Anthony say, "The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones." It is a fact that the memory of a lifetime of good deeds can often be erased by one sinful act.

If you are to be remembered by one outstanding incident or one outstanding trait of character, how will you be remembered? If you were to be given a name in connection with some event or some outstanding trait, what would your name be?

—4207 Adamsville Parkway, Adamsville, AL 35005.

Galatians: Chapter I

Continued from page 1

He tried to teach the Jews God's complete will, and they sought to kill him (Acts 9:20-23). Even yet, he was being persecuted (5:11).

Verse 11. Paul reminded them of the fact that he preached a gospel not received from men. His accusers may have argued that Paul did not walk with the Lord while on earth, therefore, at best, his commission and teaching would have come from the twelve.

Verse 12. Men did not deliver to him the message, nor did anyone sit down and drill him in the facts. Instead, Jesus revealed himself to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-6; I Corinthians 15:8). On that very occasion, Jesus commissioned Paul and promised that he would appear unto him again to reveal other things to him that he would tell others about (Acts 26:12-19, esp. 16).

Verse 13. Paul may have told them about his past life as a persecutor when he first came to preach the gospel to them (Acts 22:3-5; I Corinthians 15:9; I Timothy 1:13). Or, they may have heard of his deeds as Ananias had (Acts 9:13-14). In either case, such a persecutor would be a very unlikely prospect to sit down and talk with the apostles.

Verse 14. Paul was comparatively young when he was persecuting the church. Yet, he had reached a high position because of his zeal (Acts 22:3). Knowing the traditions of the Jews, he would have readily seen Christianity as being the end of it. To accept that would have been to reject his upbringing; so he fought it with his might.

Verse 15-17. God had planned even before he was born to use Paul to carry the message to the Gentiles (Compare Isaiah 49:1; Jeremiah 1:5; Acts 9:15). Paul was called by the words of Jesus which were delivered by Jesus and Ananias (Acts 9:3-7, 17-18; 22:6-16). Similarly, we are called by the gospel (I Thessalonians 2:12-13). On the road to Damascus, Jesus had told Paul of the purpose for his call, which was to show Jesus to the Gentiles (Acts 22:16-19). Paul was to show forth Christ in everything he did and thereby glorify God (2:20). He did not have to ask men, whether at Jerusalem or where he was, if he should obey the vision. Having obeyed, he immediately began to preach the gospel in the city of his conversion and in Arabia, about which we know no more.

Verse 18. Because his life was threatened in Damascus, the brethren let him down over the wall in a basket by night. He went on to Jerusalem where he tried to join the disciples, but they believed he was still a persecutor. Barnabas took Paul, either because of some special knowledge he had, or because of his compassionate nature, to the apostles (Acts 9:23-28). Paul makes it plain that he met only Peter and James, the Lord's brother on this visit (Matthew 13:55). Luke and Paul called James an "apostle" either because of his close association with the other apostles, or because he was an "apostle" in the same sense that Barnabas was (Acts 14:14). Paul stayed in Jerusalem fifteen days and might have stayed longer but had to flee for his life (Acts 9:28, 29). Fifteen days would not be enough time to learn all the things he taught at Galatia.

Verse 19. Since Jesus was Mary's firstborn, and Joseph knew her not until he was born, we conclude James was one of Jesus' younger brothers (Matthew 1:25; Luke 2:7).

Verse 20. Having now set forth evidence showing that he had no time to gain his knowledge from the other apostles, Paul now attests

to the truthfulness of what he says in the full knowledge that God was a witness to his statements.

Verse 21. Acts 9:30 lets us know that Paul was first taken by the brethren to Caesarea, and then was sent, probably by ship, to Tarsus, which was the chief city of Cilicia. Luke also tells us that Barnabas went to Tarsus and got Paul to come back to Antioch of Syria with him (Acts 11:25-26). Coffman notes that Antioch was the first place where disciples were called Christians and it was Paul's sponsor church (Acts 13:1-3); so it seems logical that he would mention Syria first and then Cilicia.

Verse 22. During all this time, Paul was still not known by face among the Judean

churches. Those churches were "in Christ," as are all of the saved (3:26-27; Ephesians 2:13-16). No more significant expression occurs in all scripture, since it is "in Christ" that all spiritual blessings are found (Ephesians 1:3). The Judaizers were trying to turn the Galatian brethren aside from this most important truth.

Verse 23. While the Judean churches could not recognize him, they had heard of the great deeds Paul was doing for the Lord. What a change the gospel is able to make! (I Timothy 1:13-15).

Verse 24. That change and the good being done by Paul caused the saints to praise God.

—2576 Pleasant Valley Rd., Mobile, AL 36606.

Apostasy

Continued From Page 2

away from his saved states and the grace of God, and can be turned again to his former state of alienation. If one continues in this state until death, he will be eternally lost. We are still free moral agents after conversion. We still have the choice between good and evil. The history of the Galatian churches points out the weakness of man even after one becomes a child of God, and dramatically emphasizes that we are never completely free from the allurments of satan. As long as we can choose, we can sin; and if we choose to depart from the right way and persist in the wrong way, we will be just as lost as if we never knew God.

Let us observe some pertinent truths from the book of Galatians: 1. They were BRETHREN, thus they were saved (Galatians 1:2). 2. They were under grace (1:3). 3. They were the children of God through faith and baptism (3:26-27). 4. The Apostle Paul spoke and wrote by inspiration (II Timothy 3:16-17); therefore one cannot deny that these brethren had been saved and were under grace. However, 5. Some had been removed from the true gospel (1:6). 6. They were following a perverted gospel (1:7). 7.

They were being bewitched or deceived (3:1). 8. Some were becoming entangled again with the yoke of bondage (5:1). 9. Some were turning again to the weak and beggarly elements (4:9). 10. Those who did so were **FALLEN FROM GRACE** (5:3-4).

Some pertinent questions are in order: 1. If a person cannot fall from grace, how could the Apostle Paul affirm by inspiration that these brethren had? 2. If it can be charged that one who falls from grace was never under grace (not truly saved), how can anyone deny the words of inspiration that these brethren were?

Conclusion. The doctrine of John Calvin concerning apostasy is wholly and totally false. The facts are that the Galatian brethren were either under grace (saved) or they were not. The words of an inspired Apostle affirms that they were: Also, they could fall away from grace, or they could not. The words of the inspired Apostle affirms that some of them had. Be not deceived my friend, it can happen to you and me. The Apostle Peter tells us what we need to do in order to avoid falling from the grace of God (II Peter 1:1-10). This is written in the hope "That ye shall never fall."

—Rt. 4, Box 479, Elba, AL 36323.

God's Great Love

(No. 1)

John informed us, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

This passage is very comprehensive. It seems to unfold what the entire Bible unfolds. For this reason, Martin Luther called it "The Little Bible." For this reason it has been called "The Golden Text of the Bible." According

to an eminent preacher of the last century, the passage contains four things, namely: a spring, a stream, a pitcher, and a drink.

The *spring* is the divine love of God: "God so

loved the world." The Bible speaks of God's eternity, his wisdom, and his power. A prominent characteristic is his love. John said, "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love" (I John 4:8). The object of his love is "the world." He did not speak of the inanimate creation, nor the world of sin, but the world of humanity. Paul wrote, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). The same writer said, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Despite man's sin and rebellion, God loves him. Divine love knows no barrier. No social, racial, nor moral barriers hinder God's love. He wants all to be saved. Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

The *stream* flows from the spring or fountain. The Psalmist said, "God is our refuge and



W. Edwin Kearley

Continued on page 4

"We Must Obey God Rather Than Men"

"Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Throughout the ages of human history, God has required man to obey him. In all instances, God has blessed those who have capitulated to his will, but he has always punished those who have spurned him through disobedience.



W. A. Holley

For example, Adam and Eve would have been blessed far beyond the powers of our imagination had they remained obedient to God. But their disobedience brought untold physical and spiritual suffering, and death, into our world (Genesis 2:17; 3:1-6, 14ff). Because of disobedience on the part of the antediluvians, the great and historic flood came "upon the world of the ungodly" (II Peter 2:5; Genesis 6:1ff). The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because ten righteous persons could not be found within their borders (Genesis 18 and 19).

Man's checkered history has been one of disobedience, with relatively few exceptions (Romans 10:19-21; Titus 1:16; 3:3; I Peter 2:7-8). Sin is the cause of man's dreadful and terrifying experiences; but only obedience to God's holy will can cure man's sin-problem.

(1) WHO SHOULD OBEY? Jesus died for all men (Hebrews 2:9; I Timothy 2:6). The gospel of Christ was (and is) to be preached to all men (Mark 16:15-16). In apostolic times the gospel was preached to both Jews and Gentiles, being, as Paul stated, God's power to save those who believe (Romans 1:16). We are specifically informed that "both men and women" heard and obeyed the gospel in New Testament times (Acts 8:12; 16:14; 17:4, 12).

Jesus invites "all" who "labor and are heavy laden" to come to him for rest and peace (Matthew 11:28-30). Thus, every person, without regard to his or her social standing, or financial status, or political position, or educational accomplishments, should render obedience to Jesus Christ (Revelation 22:14). What sort of people did the gospel convert to Christ? The answer is: murderers, persecutors, jailors, business women, soldiers, treasurers, sorcerers, Samaritans, Jews, and Gentiles yielded to the compelling power of God's word (Hebrews 4:12).

(2) OBEY WHOM AND WHAT? Our text says, "We should obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Jesus is the "author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:8-9). One purifies his soul in "obedience to the truth" (I Peter 1:22).

At the second coming, Jesus will take "vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Cf., I Peter 4:16).

To obey the doctrines and commandments of men is to disobey God Almighty! (Matthew 15:9; II Thessalonians 3:14). One is made free from sin when he obeys from the heart "that form of doctrine" (Romans 6:17-18), being "then made free from sin." Obedience to the doctrines and commandments of men (however sincere) has never saved a

single soul! "That form of doctrine" refers to Romans 6:3-4, where one is baptized into the benefits of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. James MacKnight makes this comment: "The original word *tupos*, among other things, signifies a mold into which melted metals are poured to receive the form of the mold. The apostle represents the gospel doctrine as a mold, into which the Romans were put by their baptism, in order to their being fashioned anew. And he thanked God that from the heart -- that is, most willingly and sincerely -- they yielded to the forming efficacy of that mold of doctrine, and were made new men, both in principle and practice."

Furthermore, our faith must become obedient to the demands of Jesus; for "the doctrine of salvation by faith only" is not the doctrine of God! (James 2:14, 17, 19, 24, 26; Galatians 5:6). We cannot work our own works and so be saved, but we can work the works of God and so be saved (John 6:28-29; I Thessalonians 1:3; I Corinthians 16:10; Acts 10:34-35).

"And a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). What does obedience to the faith include? Well, it includes, faith, repentance, confession of Jesus' name, and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:36-38; 8:37-38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4).

(3) WHAT IS THE MEANING OF "OBEDIENCE"? One is the servant of him whom he obeys. If we submit our will to the will of God, then God is our Master; but if we obey Satan, then he is our Master (Romans 6:16). Jesus declared: "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8:34). No one can serve the devil and please God Almighty! (Matthew 6:24).

(4) WHAT IS THE CONSEQUENCE OF DISOBEDIENCE? The answer is clear and plain: "Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience"

(Ephesians 5:6; Colossians 3:6).

All sins, unless forgiven -- upon God's terms of forgiveness -- must receive their just recompense of reward (Hebrews 2:1-4). To illustrate: The disobedience of Nadab and Abihu, of Ananias and Sapphira, of King Saul, of Judas., *et al*, led to their downfall. We must remember that the sin of omission is just as damning as the sin of commission!! In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus gives a preview of the forthcoming judgment. What is the sin of those who stand on his left hand? They are lost -- not because of atrocious, heinous, outrageous, sins, such as murder, or kidnapping of innocent children, or abortion, or horrible rape--; but they shall be lost because of the sin of negligence!! One need not be the outcast of society to be lost in hell!! (Verses 41-43; Cf. James 4:17). Oh, the tragedy of the sin of negligence!

(5) WHY SHOULD YOU OBEY? One day you will stand before the Great Judgment Seat of Jesus Christ. At his coming there will be a great resurrection wherein some are raised to eternal life and some to eternal damnation (John 5:28-29). What will be your eternal destiny? Has your heart been made pure through obedience to the truth? Have you heard and obeyed the word of God? (I Peter 1:22; Romans 6:17-18). Heaven's door stands ajar for those who obey the commandments of God (Revelation 22:14; John 14:1-6). Salvation is in Christ (II Timothy 2:10), but one must be baptized into Christ in order to partake of that salvation (Galatians 3:26-27). The eternal blessings of God are pronounced upon "the dead who die in the Lord" -- but not upon those who die "out of" the Lord (Revelation 14:13).

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

God's Great Love

Continued from page 3

strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalms 46:1). "God so loved . . . he gave." The word "so" is an adverb telling us the extent of his love. God gave his only Son because he loved us sinful creatures. This is divine love in action or expression. The gift of his love is seen in his TEACHING. "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at this doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:28-29). The perfect teacher came to earth and taught. Jesus as a WONDER WORKER reveals the gift of God's love. In speaking of Nicodemus John said, "The same came to

Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him" (John 3:2). As an example we see the gift of God's love. Peter wrote, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (I Peter 2:21-23).

(More to follow).

—103 Elena Ct., Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Short Sermons

Some people are like buttons--always popping off at the wrong time.

* * *

More people get crooked from avoiding work, than become bent from too much of it.

* * *

The man who thinks the world owes him a living usually wants it a "loaf" at the time.

Some folk's minds are like concrete: all mixed up and thoroughly set.

* * *

You've got to keep on growing:
One inch won't make you very tall.
You've got to keep on doing.
One little deed won't do it all.



(USPS 691-760)

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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Looking Back

A little more than four years ago our family made the decision to go to New Plymouth, New Zealand, to help establish a congregation of the Lord's church. Following a year of fund raising and preparation our family, in September, 1982, moved half-way around the world. It has now been over a year since we returned from New Zealand. Often we



Ron Harper

have thought about our experiences and have been made to realize that we have been richly blessed. In this article it is our purpose to share some of those thoughts with the readers of the Words of Truth. We do so because many who supported us read this good paper.

The New Plymouth congregation was started in June of 1981 when brother and sister Larry Ramey moved to New Zealand to start the congregation. There were no Christians in New Plymouth at that time and we deeply appreciate the very difficult work they did in beginning that congregation. In September of that year the Allan Fowell family moved from Hamilton, New Zealand, to help with the work in New Plymouth. Allan is a New Zealander and was converted several years ago by brother Ronald Coleman who spent ten years working in Hamilton. When our family arrived in New Plymouth the attendance was increased to about fifteen each Sunday. In July, 1983 the Edwin Jones family arrived in New Plymouth to help with the work. Edwin had been the preacher for the Liberty congregation near Jasper, Alabama.

Starting a church in New Zealand is very difficult work. Conversions come very slowly, and in our case some of the first converts were unstable people. Several of them have since fallen away. After many months of struggle the church in New Plymouth is now

firmly established. According to news we received very recently, attendance at the Lord's day worship averages forty-five. Of that number only the four members of the Jones family are Americans. The new converts have shown exceptional spiritual growth. Several of the men are taking an active role in teaching the gospel of Christ.

One lesson we have learned is that if the seed (the word) is sown faithfully and persistently it will produce fruit. God told Isaiah, "For as the rain that cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10, 11).

There are places in this nation as well as in all the world where church growth is a very slow process. Working in such places requires great patience. We know well the feeling of discouragement that comes when work is carried out for several months without any visible response. In such times servants of God need to be patient. If we are faithfully teaching the word, responses will eventually come. In such times we need to be sure that we continue teaching the word. The temptation to become idle in such times must be overcome. Many times in such places there is a great temptation to stop the work. Often the church does not grow in difficult places because we are not diligent in evangelism. If you are working in a difficult field, be patient -- but be sure to continue the work. Be sure to continue, "be instant in season, out of season:" (II Timothy 4:2). If you support a man in a difficult field understand that conversions may come slowly. At the same time be sure that the man you support has not, because of discouragement, become idle. It could be, if there are no conversions for several years, that he is not working. If the gospel is taught there will be conversions. God has promised that his word will not return

void.

Another great lesson we learned is that it is extremely important to continue to study with people after they are converted. In the early months of the New Plymouth congregation there was a high percentage of converts who fell away. Brother Rod Kyle, evangelist in Wellington, New Zealand, has conducted surveys of the work of the church in New Zealand. It has been learned that when people are converted and there is no further study with them a very high percentage fall away. In such cases as many as fifty percent fall away in the first year. However, when people are converted and there is follow-up study with the new converts over ninety percent are still faithful after one year. We learned this lesson from experience. We began to do intensive follow-up study with new converts. After this practice was begun there was a very high percentage of new converts who remained faithful. This is the Biblical concept of evangelism. In giving the great commission Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in 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" (Matthew 28:19, 20). It is very important, in any area, that we continue to study with people after they are converted.

We would offer this word of advice to churches that would send men into the mission field. Be sure the man you send is well grounded in the faith. The churches in New Zealand, as well as other areas, are troubled with false teaching. Be sure you know where your man stands on such questions as divorce and remarriage, instrumental music, and unity and fellowship. We know of congregations in the mission field where the truth is not being taught in these areas. False teaching is a threat to the survival of the church in any place. That is especially true in an area where the church is weak. Be sure the man you send has his convictions settled on the Bible concerning these questions. Young men

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(USPS 691-760)

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—Acts 26:35

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Editor
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Looking Back

Continued From Page 1

who are not settled, who do not have their minds made up on the basis of God's word, can be swayed by the influence of false teachers.

Finally, we want to thank the churches and individuals who so faithfully supported us in the mission field. Without the support of faithful brethren, mission work would be impossible. Many of our supporters are readers of Words of Truth. We want to use this means to say, "Thanks." There are billions in the world who are lost and dying in sin. They need the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. It is our prayer that faithful congregations will always see the need of evangelizing the world. It is our duty. May we always put this before material considerations. Every congregation should have a large percentage of its budget designated for mission work. What will God say in the judgment day to elders who have not led the congregations they oversee to be faithful stewards in this area? It would be tragic to stand before God in judgment with a large bank account but a poor record in doing mission work.

—1115 Minerva Drive, Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37130.

Short Sermons

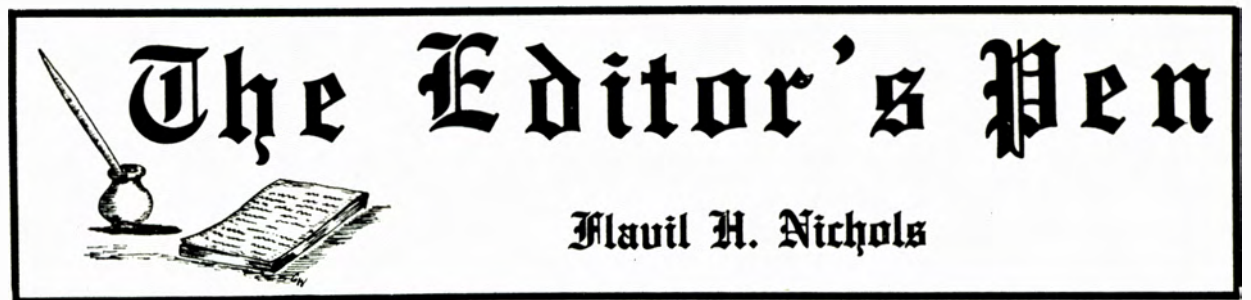
Do what you can where you are with what you have.

What a shock it would be to an audience if some men preached what they practice.

A flying rumor never has any trouble making a landing.

Prejudice is a great time-saver; it enables one to form opinions without getting the facts.

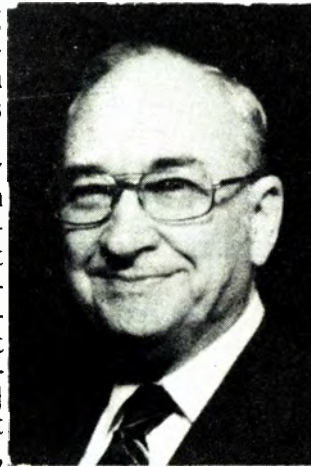
It is the weakness of man that we should fear, not his strength. It matters not what you lose if you save your soul; it matters not what you save, if you lose your soul.



Flavil H. Nichols

Is Congregational Singing Authorized?

We are now being told by some independent Christian Church preachers that there is no New Testament authority for SINGING in corporate (or congregational) worship! It has been considerably more than a century since the first mechanical instrument [a melodeon] was introduced [at Midway, Kentucky, in 1859], into any congregation within



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

the fellowship of the 'Restoration Movement.' For more than one hundred and twenty-five years those who use the instrument have granted that the New Testament does indeed authorize congregational SINGING in worship. They have sought to bring in the instrument on the assumption that the Greek word (PSALLO) which is translated SING "includes the mechanical instrument." This argument has been refuted in numerous debates down through the decades. The scholarship of the world is against it! For example, Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon* defines this word [PSALLO]: "... In the N. T., to sing a hymn; to celebrate the praises of God in song" (Page 675). Regarding the music rendered in church worship, God in his word authorizes Christians to make melody --NOT 'on a harp!'-- but: "in your heart" (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

Since the New Testament authorizes the church to "PSALLO," the truth of the matter may be clearly seen from the following syllogism:

1. Major Premise: The only music in the worship of the New Testament church is authorized in the Greek word PSALLO.

2. Minor Premise: In the New Testament, the Greek word PSALLO means only to SING.

3. Conclusion: Therefore only SINGING is authorized in the worship of the New Testament church.

Churches of Christ still insist that there is absolutely NO BIBLICAL AUTHORITY to PLAY mechanical instruments of music in church worship. It should not require a dozen passages --just ONE will suffice-- to prove us wrong! For this we have pleaded for more than six score years! But no one has been able to produce even one text!

Similarly, they should not ask for 40 or 50 texts which authorize SINGING --just ONE

should be sufficient! Yet we can easily supply more than one!

Please note that their new position is a shift in their teaching, while our position has not changed. They now seem to reason (?) like this: 'You accuse us of using mechanical instruments which are NOT authorized in the New Testament; yet you are guilty of SINGING in your worship, which we will now affirm is without New Testament authority.'

But, is singing without divine authority? Let us see. After Jesus instituted the Lord's supper, he promised his disciples that he would "drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:29; cf. Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18). Jesus therefore eats the Lord's supper "with" his disciples every Lord's day. In that same sense he SINGS with us --for of him it was prophesied: "... in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee" (Hebrews 2:12, which is quoted from Psalms 22:22). The only way this could be true of him would be fore there to be singing "in the midst of the church." How could the Lord SING "in the midst of the church" if there is to be no SINGING in the church? The very fact that God's prophet anticipated that Christ would SING "in the midst of the church" proves that God intended for SINGING to be in the congregational worship. Just as Christ eats the Lord's supper WITH us, so he SINGS "with" us "in the midst of the church."

Singing is referred to in Romans 15:9, where the apostle affirmed "That the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and SING unto thy name." In an epistle addressed to the church at Rome, we would imagine that this is a reference to congregational singing. If in such an epistle Paul had referred to playing mechanical instruments, those who use them would 'latch onto' that passage for PROOF that such is scriptural in corporate worship! However, we shall not so argue from this text, but pass to others.

In the context of his discussion of spiritual gifts at Corinth, the apostle regulates their conduct when "the whole church be come together into one place" (I Corinthians 14:23). Hear him: "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" (I Corinthians 14:15). The following verse shows clearly that Paul's meaning is that he would pray with HIS spirit (from HIS heart), and would pray distinctly so that

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

From The Editor And Staff Of The Words Of Truth. May God Bless Each And Everyone.

Redigging The Wells Of Salvation

"And Isaac departed from thence, and pitched his tent in the vally of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and they called their names after the names by which his father had called them" (Genesis 26:17-18).



W. A. Holley

Just here another passage should be read: "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3). There are some facts to be noted: (1) The wells had been dug; (2) the wells had been stopped; (3) the wells were digged again; (4) the wells were called by their original names.

Literal water is absolutely essential to physical life . . . where there is no water there is no life. Spiritual water is absolutely essential to spiritual life. Jesus, in his conversation with the Samaritan woman draws attention to the difference between literal water and spiritual water. Hear Jesus: "Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw" (John 4:9-15, ASV.).

God's blessings which bring spiritual life are often represented as living water. In John 7:37-39, Jesus said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." These passages were fulfilled on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection. Acts 2:1-47 is the inspired fulfillment of the promise contained in John 7:37-39, when living water was made available to those who would hear and obey the words of the Spirit. Thus, to drink living water is to embrace the teaching of Christ and to obey his will (Isaiah 58:11; Zechariah 14:8; Psalms 36:8-9).

But, almost immediately following the establishment of the Lord's church and the full proclamation of the gospel, the "wells of salvation" began to be closed.

The Sadducees and the Pharisees did their very best to stop, through severe persecution, the preaching of the gospel (Acts, chapters 4 and 5). Judaism waged a relentless war against the church and especially against the apostle Paul. Efforts were made to bind the law of Moses on the early Christians. Circumcision became a battleground for some Roman paganism was bound on some unsuspecting followers of Christ. There are many warnings of departures from the faith set forth in the Scriptures (Acts 20:28-31; I Timothy 4:1-4; II Thessalonians 2:3-12). Much is said about the antiChrist (I John 2:18, 22; 4:3, 7). all of which helped to stop the "wells of salvation" in early New Testament times. Truth, not

error, keeps the "wells" open!!

What are some of the more modern efforts, made by enemies of truth, to stop the "wells of salvation?" We shall note:

(1) We are forced to redig the well of salvation with respect to the Lord's command of baptism (Mark 16:16). So many preachers try to stop this well, saying that "salvation is by faith only." They claim that baptism is a non-essential; but a fair reading of Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:36-38; and James 2:14-26 will forever dispel that notion.

(2) Many have attempted to bury the New Testament church under an avalanche of human creeds -- doctrines and commandments of men (Mark 7:6-13). It is for this reason we must continually redig the wells of salvation. In the New Testament, we read of the church that Jesus established; but we do not read of Roman Catholicism or denominationalism, in any shape or form. We suggest that a few passages be read: Matthew 16:18-19; Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47; Romans 16:16. We sincerely urge our readers to become members of that church which the New Testament reveals upon its pages.

(3) A cappella singing (without mechanical instrumental accompaniment) is what the Lord has authorized (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; I Corinthians 14:15). The Roman church tried to introduce mechanical instruments of music into its worship in A.D. 670, but created such a furor the idea was abandoned. Later, in A.D. 800, its use became common. Greek Orthodox Churches, whose members know the Greek language, have refused to introduce organs and pianos into their worship. After the New Testament church was restored in the United States, L. L. Pinkerton, of Midway, Kentucky, in 1858 or 1859, introduced the first mechanical instrument into the worship of those who formerly had turned from human authority to the

authority of God's word. Thus, division occurred.

Concerning its use J. W. McGarvey (1829-1911), described by The London Times as "in all probability . . . the ripest Bible scholar on earth," made this comment: "It is manifest that we cannot adopt the practice without abandoning the obvious and only ground on which a restoration of Primitive Christianity can be accomplished, or on which the plea for it can be maintained."

(4) Others have stopped the Lord's Supper "well." Some have chosen to ignore it; some have buried it beneath mountains of human rubbish, such as the doctrine of transubstantiation. Here is a long word -- what does it mean? Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 8th, edition, states: "The miraculous change by which according to Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox dogma the eucharistic elements at their consecration become the body and blood while keeping only the appearance of bread and wine." The Scriptures teach (and chemical analysis will show) the bread and wine remain the same, both before and after the so-called consecration. We suggest that I Corinthians 11:23-30 be carefully considered.

(5) Any efforts to compromise or change the truth of God, as revealed in the New Testament represent pains to stop the "wells of salvation." Those committed to following the New Testament are forbidden to add to, or take away from, its teaching (Revelation 22:18-19). We must "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3, ASV.). Furthermore, we are commanded: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11). When we thus do, we return to the original names and thoughts as used in the Holy Bible.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Is Congregational Singing Authorized?

Continued From Page 2

OTHERS --those present-- could "understand" what he prayed. But he continued: "I will sing [Greek: PSALLO] with the spirit, and I will sing [Greek: PSALLO] with the understanding also." By inspiration he is saying: 'I will PSALLO on MY spirit' --sing from MY heart; 'and I will PSALLO on YOUR understanding also' -- I will sing so you can understand the words. This of necessity refers to corporate worship: for how on earth could Paul PSALLO on the understanding of others if no others were present to understand what he sang??? Such would be impossible.

To the church at Ephesus, Paul wrote: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19). This text says that they were to sing. It also says that, along with the singing, they were to be "making melody in your heart," thus designating the instrument (the human HEART) on which they were to accompany the SINGING. Each disciple is to SING, and *each* is to accompany the singing by making melody in his own HEART (not, on a HARP)! But it is also stated in this text

that such singing is to accomplish another purpose: "Speaking to yourselves . . ." (King James Version), or: "Speaking one to another . . ." (American Standard Version). This absolutely necessitates that OTHERS be present when the singing is being done. Therefore this is undeniable authority for CONGREGATIONAL singing.

Another text which authorizes SINGING in the corporate worship of the church says: "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16). Along with the SINGING which is here authorized, those singing are to accompany the songs with "grace in your hearts" to the Lord. The very fact that such singing is a means of "TEACHING" and "ADMONISHING" *one another* necessitates that it be done in the presence of *one another*. Therefore this is NOT individual (private) worship, but it IS corporate (congregational) worship.

(Next: What did the disciples understand these passages to mean?)

A Valid Baptism

There are many popular philosophies extant today which teach that it is not necessary for one to understand very much about the purpose of baptism in order to receive a scriptural baptism. The advocates of these views say that if one understands a reason for baptism, this will suffice. While such a position is popular and appealing, it cannot stand the test of the scriptures. It is the purpose of this article to examine just what, if anything, a person must understand about baptism in order to be scripturally baptized.



Raymond Allen Hagood

Let it be noted that in order to have a scriptural baptism, there must be understanding. Paul said in Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Vine says concerning this word "hearing" that it is "the receiving of a message, something more than the mere sense of hearing." Therefore, it becomes obvious that the "hearing" of Romans 10:17 involves within itself an understanding capable of producing real faith. A person must have understanding; but the question still remains as to *what* must be understood.

It is obvious in light of Acts 19 that a person may be immersed in order to obey God and in order to receive the remission of sins, and still

not be scripturally baptized. Those twelve men of Acts 19 were baptized with John's baptism, which was a baptism for the remission of sins; and yet they were not Christians. No one could doubt their honesty and sincerity, but they had been baptized by the wrong baptism at the wrong time and this made their baptism invalid. It was therefore necessary for them to be rebaptized. Therefore, it is possible that, in spite of complete honesty and sincerity, a person by reason of faulty understanding at the time of his baptism might invalidate his baptism.

That one must understand what he is doing is forever settled by Romans 6:17: "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." We must obey "from the heart," and that precludes valid obedience predicated upon ignorance.

Finally, the issue is settled by an understanding of what was understood by those folk who were baptized on the day of Pentecost. Those penitent believers in Acts 2 knew that they were lost, because they asked Peter and the rest of the apostles what they had to do to be saved. They understood that their baptism was by the authority of Jesus because they were baptized "in the name of" Jesus Christ. They undoubtedly understood that the purpose of their baptism was "for the remission of sins," or, for the salvation of their souls from past sins, because Peter told them so. They were not ignorant of the purpose of baptism. They were knowledgeable enough to have acceptable faith; this can speak of nothing else but understanding. They knew that they were to be baptized to have

their sins washed away.

When a person boldly declares that it is not necessary for a person to know that he is being baptized for the remission of sins in order to have a valid baptism, he is teaching false doctrine. Those early Christians knew that they were being baptized for the remission of sins.

To teach that a person does not have to understand that baptism is for the remission of sins is to teach a doctrine that leads to a faulty understanding of baptism's purpose. In Acts 19 a faulty understanding of New Testament baptism invalidated the baptism of those 12 men. To teach that one does not need to understand that baptism is for the remission of sins is to teach a doctrine that leads to a faulty understanding of New Testament baptism today, which also invalidates one's baptism.

—Rt. 1, Box 110, Indian Mound, TN 37079.

Faith vs Sight

I once read of two young brothers who were playing together. As the sun was going down one said, "Look how fast the sun has moved across the sky." The other said, "You are wrong, it is not the sun that has moved. The earth has turned. Don't you remember? Our Dad told us the earth moves on its axis."

The first boy replied, "I have been standing on this earth, and I know what I see with my own eyes."

How much this is like our world. Mankind is divided into two groups: One group believes what the Father tells us. We look to God for spiritual guidance which he gives us in the Bible.

The other group take only what they can perceive with their senses. Their actions are based on feelings, not on objective facts. These two attitudes are the difference between Christians and unbelievers.

What is wrong with following what one can "feel?" This is dangerous because each person is then his own guide. I may not "feel" like you do. But, if what I "feel" is right, then I can believe what I want to, and you can believe what you want to. If you want to believe the sun moves around the earth, I have no right to contradict you.

This was well illustrated by a recent letter to the editor in one of our local papers. The writer was opposed to prayer and Bible reading in our schools. What the students really needed, he said, was strong teaching on values.

This would have been quite amusing, if it were not so tragic. If there be no one, absolute standard, where will one learn values? If God's word cannot be used to teach us what is right and wrong, how is it possible to determine it?

There must be an absolute standard. Otherwise we are hopeless in our attempts to find God. And even more: we have no basis for any law and authority.

—8445 SW 72nd Street, Miami, Florida 33143.



Ancil Jenkins

Provoke Not Your Children To Wrath

"And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

"Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged" (Colossians 3:21).

A few weeks ago another execution took place in one of our Southern States. About eleven years ago, the condemned man and his partner had kidnapped a young boy and had thrown him into the trunk of their car. They had tied and gagged him. The gag was shoved so deep into his throat that he suffocated. Later finding him dead, they sexually abused his body and dumped it. After they were arrested, the partner confessed and turned State's evidence. The condemned man was found guilty and sentenced to die.

One of the news reporters stated that when the executed murderer was a boy, his father kept telling him he would never amount to much! He didn't. When I heard this, it gave me a sick feeling in my stomach. Perhaps the boy was a strong-willed child, and gave his parents trouble; but drilling into him that he would not amount to much, wasn't the best



Ray Hawk

way to raise him.

I recognize parents may give the best rearing a child can receive, and he may reject that background and live a wicked life. However drilling into the child negative and critical things may have serious consequences. Parents may not realize that by "putting the child down" they are slowly destroying his self-esteem. If a child thinks he is worthless, he may act in that manner.

It is sad when parents tell their child he is stupid, no good, or will not amount to anything. It is bad when one child is compared to another and continually asked, "What can't you be like your brother/sister?" This usually creates resentment in the child toward the one he is compared to. It is chipping away at his self-worth. It says to the child, "My parents do not love me because I am me. If I were like my brother/sister, they would love me. Since I am not, I am not worth anything."

If in addition to the above, parents do not show love through hugging or kissing their children, that void creates further problems and fortifies the child's loss of self-esteem. If parents lavish their love upon one child and withhold it as punishment from the other, this destroys the child's self-worth. I like the bumper sticker that asks, "Have you hugged your kids today?" Have you?

The Old Testament says, "Train up a child in the way he should go," but parents need to also train themselves (Proverbs 22:6). "Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged" (Colossians 3:21 NIV).

—39 Webb Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301.



(USPS 691-760)

Words of Truth and soberness.

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

—Acts 26:25

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What Is A Miracle?

Many good, honest people who are not Pentecostals suppose "miracles" are still being performed today. Because they imagine "miracles" continue to happen, they think the Holy Spirit is working in the twentieth century as he did in the first. What most people call a "miracle," I would call the providence of God. What they refer to as *miraculous* divine healing, I



Ray Hawk

would call "divine" healing. It is interesting to see what some call a "miracle." Birth is spoken of as a "miracle." Coming out of an automobile wreck without a scratch, when the car was totalled, is called a "miracle." Having surgery for cancer and pulling through great odds is often said to be a "miracle." Are these really "miracles" in the Bible sense of the word?

MIRACULOUS DIVINE HEALING VERSUS DIVINE HEALING

Miraculous Divine Healing

Immediately healed (Mark 1:31)
No medicine needed (Mark 1:42)
No convalescence (Mark 3:5)
No hospitalization (Acts 4:6-9)
Time involved to heal
Medicine and doctors needed
Time needed to recuperate
Hospitals may be needed

Divine Healing

Some have the idea that if prayer is offered for a person who is sick and that individual gets well, a "miracle" was performed. He did not get up from his hospital bed, put on his clothes, and walk out of the hospital fully and immediately healed. He was

operated on, spent time recuperating, took medication, and was under a doctor's care. That is not a Biblical "miracle." Healed by God? Yes. But not *miraculously*. It may be that the doctor told the family that he has done all he can and the patient is now in the hands of God; but the process of healing, though it be divine, is not miraculous. If it were miraculous, the patient would not have needed the doctor, the operation, the hospital, or the time spent getting well.

The birth of Jesus was a "miracle." But, neither your birth nor mine was. Our birth followed natural law. We had an earthly father and mother. Your mother supplied the egg and your father fertilized it, causing conception. Nine months later, you were born. That is not a "miracle." Jesus' conception was miraculous, for he was born of a virgin without the help of an earthly father (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23).

When a "miracle" was done in the first century, the enemies of the cross acknowledged that one was performed (Acts 4:16). That is not the case today. Who can calm a storm (Matthew 8:24-27)? Who can raise the dead (Matthew 10:8; Acts 9:32-41; 20:9-12)? Who can drink poison without harm (Mark 16:18)? Who can take up a serpent, be bitten, and not swell, nor die from the bite (Mark 16:18; Acts 28:3-6)? Why do those who claim to speak in miraculous languages send their missionaries to school to learn the tongue of the nation they are to enter? Those on Pentecost did not have to attend such a school. The Spirit gave them the foreign languages they spoke (Acts 2:4, 8, 11, 16, 17). Real "miracles," as described by the Spirit in the New Testament, cannot be copied today. Only pseudo-miracles are palmed off on people by the Jim Joneses of this world.

Miracles were used by the Holy Spirit to confirm the word the apostles and prophets spoke (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3, 4). They were used to prove an apostle's authority (I Corinthians 9:1, 2; II Corinthians 12:12).

Jesus performed miracles to prove he was the Son of God (Acts 2:22). IF miracles are actually being performed by those who claim them today, those miracles would confirm the teaching of that church. The teaching of that church would be the doctrine of Christ. To reject and refuse to obey that church's teaching would be to reject God and Jesus (II John 9). Who is ready to accept the infallibility of the pope of the Roman Catholic Church? or acknowledge that he stands in the place of Christ upon the earth? Who is ready to accept the Mormon idea of God and Jesus being married to multiple wives in heaven? Are you ready to accept the idea that Jesus is a created god as taught by Jehovah's Witnesses? Each of these groups claim they perform miracles. If so, that confirms that their doctrines came from God! Will you reject God's teaching? If a person believes miracles are still being done today, he is obligated to accept the teachings of those who make these claims. That would include accepting the claims of the late Jim Jones.

The New Testament gives us the divine history of the church in the first century. It points out why the Holy Spirit was given to the infant church. A new covenant needed to be revealed (Hebrews 8:6-12). This was the "all truth" the Spirit would guide them into (John 14:26; 16:13). Signs, miracles, and wonders were given to confirm that this word was from God (Mark 16:17, 18, 20; John 20:30-31). Once the period of revelation was complete, the . . . (partial) was to cease, leaving the complete (perfect) standing (I Corinthians 13:8-10). We have the product of that work in the form of the New Testament. It is the INSTRUCTION of the Spirit to guide, comfort, lead, influence, save, sanctify, and perfect us.

—1490 Campbell Street, Jackson, TN 38305.



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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

—Acts 26:35

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Walking Disorderly

Jerry Jenkins

In II Thessalonians 3:6 Paul states: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

Please note that Paul said, "We Command." Thayer's Greek Lexicon defines this word as, "order, charge" (Thayer, p. 479). The word is used in Mark 6:8 where Jesus commanded the seventy not to take anything with them "save a staff only . . .," in I Thessalonians 4:11 where Paul orders the Thessalonians to "study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and work with your own hands;" in Acts 16:18 where Paul commanded a spirit of divination to come out of a young woman in Philippi. In none of these passages is there an option. Paul was not ordering withdrawal 'if it be convenient,' etc.

The action ordered in this verse is "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." This means by the authority of; or, in the behalf of; or acting by his commission or power.

The command is: "ye withdraw yourselves." It is not cutting a man off, or denouncing him, or excommunicating him; it is to cease to have fellowship with him, not to regard him as a Christian brother in "good standing," to separate from him. We do not injure his name or standing in the community. We do not denounce him in an ugly spirit of revenge. We do cease to recognize him as a Christian brother, for he shows that he no longer is worthy to be regarded as such.

What does it mean to "walk disorderly?" It means to act in a way contrary to the rules of Christ. The word employed is *ataktos*. It denotes a soldier who does not keep rank. A soldier who is "out of step," or irregular in any way.

"Every brother" who refuses to do what God

Continued on page 3

On Using The Bible Properly

INTRODUCTION

Jesus charged,

"Take heed how ye hear" (Luke 8:18).

How important it is to listen and respond properly to the Bible (Cf. James 1:22, 25; Revelations 1:3; 2:7). Of equal importance is the need to properly use the Bible. There is a wrong way (Cf. II Peter 3:16) and there is a "right" way (Cf. II Timothy 2:15) to use the Bible.

What better way is there to learn ways to properly use the scriptures than to consider how they were used in the days of apostolic preaching? The book of Acts provides an outline of the church's progress in the days of the apostles -- note the "progress reports" which permeate the book (Acts 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:31). Such progress was intricately linked to the preaching and use of the Bible.

This study will focus on one of the many sermons recorded in Acts, that of Stephen (Acts 7:2ff). The chapter preceding introduces the "credentials" (Acts 6:3, 5), the "capabilities" (Acts 6:8-10), and the "contest" (Acts 6:11-15) of Stephen. The chapter to be studied sets forth his "comments" in response to accusations made against him. A scrutiny of this sermon will reveal at least three thoughts relative to using the Bible properly.

I. IN USING THE BIBLE PROPERLY, ONE MUST NOT NEGLECT THE OLD TESTAMENT

(1) *Stephen's sermon comprised a brief Old Testament survey. Though he did not touch on every book of the Old Testament, Stephen did set before his opponents: (a) the book of Genesis in dealing with the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph (Acts 7:2-16); (b) the books of Exodus through Deuteronomy in dealing with the Egyptian bondage as well as the birth, early life, commission, miracles and leadership of Moses (Acts 7:17-44); (c) the books of Joshua through I Chronicles in dealing with the leadership of Joshua, the conquest of Canaan, and the days of David (Acts 7:45, 46); (d) the book of II Chronicles in dealing with Solomon and his building of the temple (Acts 7:47, 48); (e) the book of Isaiah, one of the major prophets (Acts 7:49, 50); and (f) the minor prophets with their perils, prophecies, and the fact that his opponents were fulfilling some of such prophecies (Acts 7:51-53).*

(2) *In using the Bible properly today, the Old Testament must not be neglected. Like the New Testament, the Old Testament is scripture (Mark 12:10), the word of God (Mark 7:13), and sacred writing (II Timothy 3:15). It provides today's reader with a source of strength (Romans 15:4) and encouragement (I Corinthians 10:6, 10). Whereas the New Testament is God's power unto salvation (Romans 1:16; James 1:21), the Old Testament is able to make one wise unto salvation (II Timothy 3:15). Certainly a proper use of the Bible will entail a use of the Old Testa-*

ment as specified in the New Testament.

II. IN USING THE BIBLE PROPERLY, ONE MUST COME TO STAND FOR SOMETHING

(1) *Stephen's sermon stood as an answer to the accusations his enemies set against him. They charged Stephen with speaking against Moses, God, the temple, and the law because he preached Jesus (Acts 6:11-14). Standing in defense of his preaching Jesus, Stephen accused the fathers [again, those with whom his opponents would have sided] of withstanding Moses (Acts 7:39, 40) and God (Acts 7:41-43). He, further, noted that these same fathers [again, those with whom his opponents would have sided] served God in the tabernacle, not the temple; even further, the prophet Isaiah bore reference to the inadequacy of the temple (Acts 7:44-50). Finally, Stephen charged his enemies with opposing the law they were supposedly upholding (Acts 7:51-53). In short, Stephen stood up for the preaching of Jesus by turning every accusation made against him and proving that his accusers were the ones guilty of that with which he was charged.*

(2) *In using the Bible properly today, Christians must take a stand for truth. One must stand for something or he will be subject to falling for everything (Cf. I Corinthians 16:13, 14; Ephesians 4:14, 15; Philippians 1:7, 16, 27; I Peter 1:15). At times, such may even call for pointed words. Remember, Stephen described his opponents as "stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears." Too, he charged them with resisting the Holy Spirit, betraying and murdering the Christ, and disobeying the Father in heaven! He 'called a spade a spade.' Today's servant of the Lord must not refrain from doing the same "when such becomes necessary."*

III. IN USING THE BIBLE PROPERLY, A STAND MUST BE TAKEN REGARDLESS OF THE COST

(1) *Stephen's sermon sparked the fire of persecution. As a result of his sermon, his opponents (a) gnashed on him with their teeth, (b) cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, (d) rushed upon him with one accord, (3) cast him out of the city, and (f) stoned him to death (Acts 7:54, 57, 58). Such gave them the initiative to press on and, thus, "there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem" (Acts 8:2).*

(2) *In using the Bible properly today, one must be willing to suffer for the truth, but he must never allow the truth to suffer! In the words of Peter, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). God must be obeyed, without compromise and, that, in spite of one's peers, and regardless of the consequences. Such must forever undergird a proper use of the Bible.*

CONCLUSION

"All scripture is given by the 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 3:16, 17). The Bible is the product of divine inspiration. When used properly, it will enable man to be what God expects him to be and do what God expects him to do.

—P.O. Box 166, Huntingdon, Tennessee 38344.



Dan Winkler

“Pilgrim” Thomas

Of the many pioneer preachers who blazed the trail through the denominational wilderness, back to the Bible, Joseph Thomas, “the White Pilgrim,” deserves special notice. With none of the opportunities and advantages of education or books and with no one to assist him financially, he trudged the mountain trails of the eastern states preaching the gospel of Jesus.



John Waddey

Thomas was born in Orange County, North Carolina, March 7, 1791. So poor was his family that at age seven he was placed in the care of a neighboring family to work for his room and board. The people were cruel and harsh to their young charge, often leaving him cold and hungry. Fortunately his parents had taught him to read and he spent every spare moment in reading his Bible and a few other books. After two years, an older brother rescued the lad and took him to his home in Grayson County, Virginia. His brother saw that young Joseph got more schooling. In December, 1801, at age ten, he contracted what he called “the white swelling” in his knee which was so painful that he and all others thought he would surely die. Fortunately God spared his life.

At age 13 he took a job teaching school and assisting a family. He received for his work ninety dollars for the year.

In 1806 young Thomas journeyed to North Carolina to visit his aged mother. While there he attended one of the great “camp meetings” which were popular in those days. Even at age 15 he was vitally interested in his soul’s salvation. He tells us:

It was no strange thing to hear many, old and young, profess religion, and to see them in the unaccountable exercises of shouting, dancing, hallowing (sic), jumping, laughing, etc. etc.¹

Not knowing God’s plan for saving men, Joseph earnestly sought salvation in the emotionalism of the crowd, but to no avail. One night during the meeting he had a vivid dream in which he imagined that Isaiah the prophet had spoken to him, giving him a sign. Still his conscience agonized with guilt. Finally in May of 1807 he “prayed through” as it was called in those days. With the peace he found he resolved to be baptized by immersion, but had great difficulty in finding a willing administrator. The Baptists insisted that he must join their sect, the others all used sprinkling as their mode.

Finally he heard of the group called “Christians,” led by James O’Kelley. On October 19, 1807, the lad set out walking for Raleigh, North Carolina, to see if they would immerse him. When he met O’Kelley and made his request, the older preacher persuaded him that sprinkling was the Bible way of baptism. With mixed emotions he submitted, albeit he requested a tub full of water be used.² Immediately he began his life of preaching, traveling as an apprentice with an older preaching brother.

He soon made the acquaintance of Rice Haggard, another of O’Kelley’s co-workers,

and a fast friendship was formed. Haggard won his place in the history of the Restoration Movement by his determined efforts to get his peers to reject all human names and only call themselves Christians.³

The young preacher found himself shamed and ridiculed by many as he sought to tell the gospel story, but he was not discouraged by their rude reception. Most of his career was spent traversing the hills and valleys, preaching the gospel message. In June of 1810 he set out on a missionary tour that carried him south to Muscle Shoals, Alabama, across Tennessee and Kentucky, into Ohio, and across to Philadelphia. On this trip he met Barton W. Stone.

While in Philadelphia, Thomas contacted preachers who were part of the Elias Smith and Abner Jones “Christian Connexion” of New England. Thomas rejoiced when they agreed to immerse him in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It was in the first week of July when he was baptized in the Schuylkill River. Numerous people were present. He tells us:

On that day I was ordained according to the rules of the New Testament by the laying on of hands of two regular ordained elders.⁴

On April 4, 1812, Thomas married Christbiana, daughter of Michael Rittenours, near Winchester, Virginia. For the honeymoon they travelled 7,000 miles in a horse-drawn gig (a light 2-wheeled carriage), with Joseph preaching 460 times winning 92 converts.

In June of 1814, Thomas began to make a serious introspection of his life and work. From this he resolved to abandon the traditional dress of men and especially of the preachers of his day. He felt constrained to don a long white linen duster or robe. He sold his horse and set forth on foot, calling on sinners to submit to the Savior. As could be expected, he was thus ridiculed as “Crazy Thomas.”⁵ Similarly the people thought John the Baptist was “crazy” because of his strange dress and habits (Matthew 11:18). Hearing his powerful, intelligent lessons, they began to call him the “Pilgrim Preacher” hence his life-long sobriquet of “Pilgrim Thomas.”⁷

Two vivid descriptions of the “White Pilgrim” have been preserved. Chester Bullard remembered him thusly:

He was about six feet in stature, perfectly erect and gracefully muscled, a pale Grecian face, illumed with magnetic gray eyes that invited the gaze of his audience. His finely-chiseled features were draped with glossy dark hair, falling down to his shoulders.⁸

F. A. Hodge described him as follows:

In person he was tall, straight as an Indian with fair skin, gray eyes, beautiful nose and mouth, a lofty forehead, long chestnut locks, parted over the middle of his head and falling over his shoulders. Few who ever saw him forgot the wild beauty and sublimity of his eloquence.⁹

Of his labors, Bullard tells us:

Scarce a town of any importance in (North Carolina), or in Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, or valley, or plain, in those states, and even the mountain gorges but heard his voice, while Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and Maryland

were widely traversed.¹⁰

In 1835 while on a preaching journey in New York state, Thomas and O. E. Morrill engaged in a debate with the followers of Alexander Campbell at Weedsport, New York.¹¹

There in New York, Elder Thomas contracted smallpox. He expired on the 9th of April, 1835, at the home of Elder J. S. Thompson of Johnsonburg, New Jersey, and was buried there.

Few men in 44 short years have invested so much of themselves, labored and toiled so diligently and endured such hardships as did Pilgrim Joseph Thomas. Many of his converts were later gathered into churches of the Restoration Movement. With Paul we say “how beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things” (Romans 10:16).

FOOTNOTES

1. Joseph Thomas. *The Life, Travels and Gospel Labors of Elder Joseph Thomas*, (New York: M. Cummings, 1861). pp. 1-16.

2. Chester Bullard, “The White Pilgrim,” *The Christian Standard*, (n.p., n.d.)

3. W. E. MacClenny, *The Life of Rev. James O’Kelly* (Indianapolis: Religious Book Service, Reprint, 1950), p. 116.

4. J. W. West, *Sketches of Our Mountain Preachers*, (Lynchburg, VA: J. W. West, 1939), pp. 88-89.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

6. Thomas, p. 87-90.

7. Bullard, n.p.

8. Chester Bullard, “Autobiography of Chester Bullard,” *The Christian Standard*, 18 March, 1893.

9. West, p. 85.

10. Power, p.

11. Wm. Garrett West, *Barton Warren Stone* (Nashville: Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1954), p. 183.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

Walking Disorderly

Continued From Page 2

instructed is to be withdrawn from. Some say only those who are specifically mentioned in the list of I Corinthians 5:11. However, no such limitation is here (in II Thessalonians 3:6) given. In II Thessalonians 3:14 Paul says we are not to company with “any man” who does not obey *the word*. How many sins can be excused? How many does the Lord excuse?

Some say we should withdraw from the immoral, but not the indifferent. Some say we should not withdraw from one who chooses to withdraw his fellowship from the church. Such statements are not founded on any scripture of which this writer is aware. They stand in conflict with those already introduced in this article.

May God help us to have the love for the wayward we should, and the conviction to do what the Lord commanded.

—400 Roebuck Parkway, Birmingham, AL 35206.

Eating In The Church House

Several weeks ago I read an article in a church bulletin that taught that it is unscriptural to eat a meal in the church building. In that article congregations who practiced such were condemned. Is it really unscriptural to eat in the church building?

We know that it was a practice of the New Testament church to have this kind of meal together. In the book of Jude we read of "filthy dreamers" who defile the flesh: "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves" (verse 10). In verse 12 Jude wrote: "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding



Ron Harper

themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots."

According to this passage the church in New Testament times had "feasts of charity." The word translated "charity" is *agape*, one of the words translated "love" in the New Testament. In other words, these were "Love feasts." They were meals where the Christians shared their food with others. They were a common practice in the early church. The fact that the inspired writer called unfaithful people "spots in your feasts of charity" indicates that he gave his approval to the feasts.

Where did these feasts occur? The New Testament does not specify that. They were probably eaten after the worship at the place of worship.

The passage usually used to condemn the practice of eating in the church building is I Corinthians 11:22. Paul wrote: "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God and shame them

that have not? what shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not." Paul is not condemning something that takes place in the church *building*! The word "church" is never used in the Bible to refer to the church *building*. He was condemning an abuse of the Lord's supper. This passage makes no reference to how we use church *property*. In fact, we do not even know that the church in Corinth owned any property.

If people have convictions against eating in the church building, we respect those convictions. We would never encourage people to eat in the church building in violation of their conscience (Romans 14:23). We would object to their making a law and condemning congregations for practicing the same thing the New Testament church practiced. By no rule of Biblical interpretation, nor any stretch of the imagination, can I Corinthians 11:22 be rightly used to condemn eating in the church *building*. It has absolutely no reference to church property.

—2206 O'Brien Drive, Murfreesboro, TN 37130.

God's Great Love

(No. 2)

In our last article we were discussing the gift of God's love. That gift was "his only begotten Son." He sent his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. John the immerser referred to Jesus as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Of the Christ the writer of Hebrews said, "But Christ having come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more



W. Edwin Kearley

perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:11-12). In the next chapter we see why it was necessary for Christ to shed his life's blood. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4). It was necessary for each one under the law of Moses to offer once a year an animal sacrifice. ". . . In those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year." It was necessary for Christ to die once and shed his blood for our sins. Paul could say of Christ, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

The faithful Christian continues to receive forgiveness through the blood of Christ. John wrote, "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). John continues in verse 9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." How broad does God's love extend? John informs us, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any

man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I John 2:1-2). Divine love might have been proclaimed by an angel, or written with golden letters in the sky; but neither would

cost anything and, for that reason, would not convey the message. The language of love is best understood in terms of sacrifice; so God made the supreme sacrifice by giving his Son. (More to follow).

—103 E. Lena Ct., Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Hermeneutical Agnosticism: A Book Worth Reading

New Testament Christian Press has recently published an attractive paperback book, by Jody L. Apple, of 175 pages that deals with what I suspect to be the *greatest* heresy of the day. While many are talking about their love for the brotherhood, brother Apple has demonstrated his love for brethren by writing **HERMENEUTICAL AGNOSTICISM**.

The book does not deal with a false doctrine. It deals, rather, with an erroneous belief, held by many among us, regarding the nature of truth and God's ability to reveal it to man. The false notion that we cannot come to *know* truth is our greatest enemy because it is the root of *many* false doctrines and the supporter of *every* false doctrine. It also demotes truth to a "point of view" among other points of view.

Even among those who claim to believe in the inspiration and authority of the Bible, questions are being asked about man's ability to understand it. Can we ever come to certainty regarding the meaning of biblical statements? Can we ever have more than mere opinions regarding divine revelation? What are the limits of human knowledge? Is the



Tim Nichols

answer to every conceivable question subject to human knowledge? Brother Apple answers these (and related) questions.

HERMENEUTICAL AGNOSTICISM is not "light" or "devotional" material. It is, with slight modifications, brother Apple's thesis for the Master of Arts degree. While the use of formal, symbolic logic may temporarily frighten some, the arguments (also explained "in longhand") are not beyond the grasp of the average student who is willing to examine them carefully.

Preachers and preacher students will want to meticulously digest (slowly if necessary) its contents. The truths taught in **HERMENEUTICAL AGNOSTICISM** can be simplified and presented in pulpits and classrooms. No doubt the teaching and preaching of many who read this book will take on a more definite "ring" as men realize the need to present revealed truth as being objective and apprehensible. Those who teach hermeneutics will likely want to make it required reading.

I recommend this book. **HERMENEUTICAL AGNOSTICISM** would make an *excellent* gift for every preacher, elder and Bible student on your list. You can obtain a copy by sending \$7.95 (postage paid) to: **NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIAN PRESS**, P.O. Box 1694, Media, PA 19063. Pennsylvania residents add 6 percent sales tax. I predict that we will see more helpful material in the future from Jody Apple and **NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIAN PRESS**.

—Route 1, Box 211, Burlington, WV 26710.